

Educating in the Arts

EDUCATION IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION: ISSUES, CONCERNS AND PROSPECTS

Volume 11

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Educating in the Arts

The Asian Experience:
Twenty-Four Essays

Edited by

Lindy Joubert

University of Melbourne
Australia



ASIA-PACIFIC EDUCATIONAL
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Introduction by the Series Editors

One of the key aspects of the mandate of UNESCO (the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation, with its Headquarters in Paris) concerns the celebration and preservation of cultural diversity throughout the world.

In 1972, UNESCO adopted the ‘International Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage’. In doing this it took on the task of protecting the cultural and natural assets of humanity that are deemed to possess ‘exceptional universal value’. To date more than 180 countries have ratified the Convention.

Over 800 sites from more than 130 countries have been inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. However it is important to note that UNESCO is not just concerned with cultural and natural heritage in terms of buildings, monuments, rainforests and natural wilderness areas (important as these are), but also with the ‘living cultural heritage’. Living culture refers to a diversity of matters including language, values and attitudes, culinary characteristics, clothing, music, theatre, traditional story telling and other aspects of the performing arts.

This concern by UNESCO with culture in the broadest sense is true for all regions of the world, including, of course, the large and diverse Asia region, which is home to 60% of the world's population, and in which there is enormous cultural diversity with regard to all matters concerning material culture, languages, religions, crafts and the performing arts.

UNESCO meets on a regular basis with government education officials and community leaders in UNESCO Member States in the Asia region. When discussing their major concerns for the future the question generally arises: ‘how can we modernize without becoming increasingly westernised.’ In essence, the leaders and citizens of developing and transition countries in the Asian region want to achieve the benefits of economic development, with rising standards of living, improved health care, longer life expectancy, improved diets and standards of housing, and with parents having enough resources to send their children to school. But at the same time they are concerned that such development and modernization often brings with it increasing westernization particularly with regard to their increasing adoption of western cultural characteristics, most importantly in the area of values. Countries are concerned that they are losing their indigenous cultural identities, and that with increasing westernization that there is a move from a concern with the

group to greater individualisation, and from cooperation to competition between individuals. This is often reflected in fundamental changes in the culture of the countries involved.

One of the main ways in which civilizations and countries express and preserve their cultural identity is through ‘the Arts’. The Arts refers to a broad subdivision of culture, composed of many expressive disciplines. It is a term broader than ‘art’ which usually means the visual arts, comprising both fine art, decorative art, and crafts. ‘The Arts’ includes visual arts, performing arts, language arts, culinary arts, and physical arts. Many artistic disciplines involve aspects of the various arts, so the definitions of these terms overlap to some degree.

UNESCO plays a pro-active leadership role in the arts in education, by promoting international collaborations between UNESCO and various partners in the field of Arts education. One of the major initiatives has been the proposal to establish a series of sub-regional Observatories across the Asia-Pacific region, in order to contribute to a wiser and more open communication platform for the arts in education communities.

The first UNESCO Observatory for Research in the Arts has been established at the University of Melbourne, Australia. In the words of the first Director of this Observatory, Lindy Joubert, who is also the editor of this important volume on *Educating in the Arts: The Asian Experience*, the UNESCO Observatory at the University of Melbourne ‘aims to foster a collaborative outreach between the university and multidisciplinary areas relevant to government and community networks on matters of direct importance to the public interest. Such Observatories identify new developments where the arts are the unifying principle and each one has a different scope, to address all aspects of the arts in education and the quest for maximising human potential’

Some of the key matters addressed by this book are:

- Arts in education as a central part of life skills development
- The important contributions of the arts to human development
- Importance of the arts in enriching the cultural landscape within a community and a society
- New and varied initiatives in arts education with regard to matters such as the part which arts education has to play in achieving high quality education for all, and lifelong education for all
- The Arts in education as a way of promoting multi-cultural societies

This book successfully addresses the following key matters:

- What is the role of the arts in society, and what are the social (and even political) implications of the arts in society
- What are the key contemporary issues concerning the arts? How can educational outcomes be improved through the arts? What is the impact of the digital age and ICT’s? What is the impact of globalisation? What can be done to make the arts more inclusive? How can creative capacities be built through the arts?
- The Arts have a key role to play in promoting international understanding and a culture of peace, so that people realise that cultural diversity is not something to

be worried or threatened about, but something to be celebrated and valued for its own sake.

- NGO's have a vitally important role to play when educating in the arts.
- It is clear that many countries are increasingly valuing the outcomes of educating in the arts.
- The arts in education have a major and important role to play in building educational opportunities
- Educating in the arts needs to pay more attention to most effectively harnessing the new information and communication technologies.
- What are the different types of arts education? This has implications for cultural diversity; multi-cultural societies; celebration of diversity.

It has been shown that: the Arts can have a unifying influence in education; the role of the arts in education is important in promoting an effective, good quality education; there are important contributions of the arts in education in promoting an effective education for all; and there is an important the social, moral and economic impact.

This book provides a rich and comprehensive conceptual framework for analysing the arts in education (and in society). One point which the authors make is that although much has been achieved over time, and continues to be achieved, new pathways are necessary if the arts in education are going to reach their full potential in what in many cases are rapidly changing and modernizing societies. In this regard, more needs to be done to harness the new information and communication technologies in support of the Arts.

There is also a need to showcase best and innovative practices, since what works in one country can, with suitable adjustment and modification, work well to meet the needs of other countries.

This interesting and highly readable book examines the arts in education in a wide range of countries in the Asia region: in developed and developing countries, and in transition countries such as those in the Central Asian Republics.

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Preface

When I was first asked to edit this book, the researcher in me delighted at the opportunity to provide case studies from different cultural traditions with a team of like-minded fellow artists, educators and researchers. But as the book took shape I also discovered a true passion for its fundamental messages.

Educating in the Arts – the Asian Experience talks about how landscapes and histories, farms and cities, the mountains, seas and skies interact with lives and form the backdrop for stories that build and link the creative clusters of a place. This book has provided a wonderful opportunity to delve into the many worlds that incorporate the arts, particularly where the arts inform, inspire and look for answers to difficult questions. Having attracted a broad range of contributors from every corner of the Asian region, a substantial collection of detailed information has emerged. Each story has an approach that is universal yet culturally unique. Close your eyes and see the colours, smell the smells and hear the voices of the children against the background rhythms of song birds, urban traffic or whistling winds.

My wish is that this book is read not only as a text providing information but as a prompt to transcend strife, to soar on wings of imaginings and build castles of hope and dreams for tomorrow. The arts in education are a powerful tool to engage different sectors of society to enrich and empower lives. The sounds of music, the rhythmic motion of dance, the call of theatrical persuasions, the poetics of prose and the lilt of the iambic pentameter draw us into the secrets and practices of little known cultures and communities. Having been an artist and an educator for most of my life, I know from my own experience that the arts in education have the power to act as indicators and shapers of our sensibilities and personal development. While shaping our imagination, they add to all creative achievements the refinement and grace that epitomises the best of human endeavour.

This is where the arts have a special place: how the beauty of the artwork, the dramatic performance, the transcension of a glorious singing voice, music in all its forms and the poetic rhythm of words and memories, recall the sorrows and joys of one's life, adding intangible elements that allow us to share experiences and bring us closer together as human beings.

The many and varied themes are united in their belief in the expression of the philosophy of art and how it permeates Asian cultures from a myriad of entrance points. A life in the arts is an education in the arts; it is something that corresponds

to the fundamental nature of human kind and great successes and moments of glory in every day life can be achieved in partnership with social, scientific, environmental and educational confluences.

An education in the arts extends our awareness of traditional pathways while simultaneously empowering us to embark on a journey that investigates the relevance of the arts to the sciences, to medicine, healthcare, to architecture, communities and environments. There are many books yet to be written to provide evidence of how truly significant the arts are in reducing mental and emotional health problems, alienation and other social ills.

The importance of deepening our understanding can add intelligence to emotion using the arts as a catalyst. Importantly, it is necessary to affirm the value of the arts by examining their long-term viability and their social benefits. This book is an attempt to gather evidence for the role of the arts in education and community arts participation, showing how it can heal communities and allow them to prosper and flourish through the nurturing of the creative potential.

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I wish to thank all the contributing authors who have provided such a rich and diverse range of experiences and case studies from around the Asian region.

I also wish to thank UNESCO, in particular Teresa Wagner, Executive Office, Senior Programme Specialist Coordination of Patronage and Cultural Events; Richard Engelhardt, UNESCO Regional Advisor for Culture in Asia and the Pacific and the Director of UNESCO Asia Pacific, Sheldon Shaeffer who have made a substantial contribution through their energy and commitment to promote the Arts in Education agenda.

Finally, I would like to thank the Series Editor Rupert Maclean and the publisher for providing this opportunity to publish a book of this nature and for their loyal commitment and patience.

Contributors

Chaiki Ajioka studied oil painting at Musashino Art University, Tokyo. She arrived in Melbourne, Australia, in 1977, studied English for a year, and then obtained a BA in history at La Trobe University; and, after studying her MA preliminary, obtained her MA at the University of Melbourne. She then moved to Sydney and worked for SBS Television as a Japanese subtitler from 1986 to 1996. She obtained her Ph.D. at the Australian National University, Canberra, in 1995 and was made Assistant Curator of Asian art from 1993 to 1996, subsequently becoming the Curator of Japanese Art at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, from 1996 to 2003.

George A. Attig, an anthropologist, is a staff member of the Institute of Nutrition, Mahidol University at Salaya, Thailand. He has worked in the area of children's learning for over a decade, focusing especially on tracking learning performance, identifying the causes of poor learning and introducing innovative activities to improve children's learning.

Tan Sooi Beng is Professor of Ethnomusicology at the School of Arts, Universiti Sains Malaysia. She is an advisor to the Curriculum Development Centre, Ministry of Education, Malaysia. She helped to develop the music curriculum for secondary schools and has co-authored music textbooks for schools and colleges. Other of her publications include *Bangsawan, A Social and Stylistic History of Popular Malay Opera* (Oxford University Press, 1993) and *The Music of Malaysia: The Classical, Folk and Syncretic Traditions* (Ashgate Press, 2004, co-authored by Patricia Matusky).

Alison Carroll has been an academic, critic, writer, curator and administrator of art exhibition and artist exchanges with Asia for over 20 years. She has a BA (Hons) degree and an MA degree in Art History from the University of Melbourne. In 1990, she established the Arts Programme at the Asialink Centre at the University of Melbourne, of which she is now the Director. This is the main programme for arts exchange between Asia and Australia for visual arts, performing arts, literature and arts management practice.

Darwin Chen, SBS, Chairman of Hong Kong Arts Development Council. Dr. Chen now serves as the Chairman of the Management Board of the School of Professional and Continuing Education of the University of Hong Kong. In 2001, Dr. Chen was made an Honorary Fellow of the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts in July,

and an Honorary University Fellow of the University of Hong Kong in December, respectively. In March 2004, he was conferred with the honorary degree of Doctor of Social Sciences by the University of Hong Kong.

Minming Cheng is currently working as an architect for a Melbourne-based architecture firm, and is also a tutor of architectural design with the University of Melbourne. At the time of writing of the article, she was a researching on IT and architecture in Singapore for her degree of Master of Architecture by research. She completed her secondary education in Singapore before undertaking university studies at the University of Melbourne.

Jane Cheung-Yung Wai Yee, GRSM, PGCE, MA, Ph.D. (London) ARCM, is Senior Lecturer at the Creative Arts Department of the Hong Kong Institute of Education, Hong Kong, where she teaches musicianship skills and music education courses. She was the assessment team leader of the Arts-in-Education (AiE) Project. Jane has taught in secondary schools in the UK and Hong Kong and was the Head of the Creative Arts Department in the Hong Kong Institute of Education (1994–2000). Her publications include chapters in books, journal articles and conference proceedings on technology-based learning; IT policy in music and arts education; student learning through the arts; music education research in Hong Kong; artists in schools and student-centred education reform. She has been a member of the Arts Education Committee of the Education and Manpower Bureau and the Education subcommittee of the Hong Kong Arts Development Council.

Joseph Gonzales was a founder member of faculty of the first arts institution in Malaysia – the National Arts Academy – and was subsequently appointed its head in 1999. He is a choreographer, educator and dance advocate of repute in Malaysia and presents papers, lectures and workshops on education, career development and choreography at international conferences. He is a consultant for www.dancemalaysia.com and the author of *Choreography – A Malaysian Perspective*.

Nanako Ishido is a Director General of the not-for-profit organization, CANVAS. She focuses on activities with children, media and art. She received a B.Sc. in engineering from the University of Tokyo and joined the MIT Media Lab as a visiting scholar. She established CANVAS in 2002 and also serves as a Project Coordinator at the Stanford Japan Research Centre. She is a member of a research project about the Japanese pop culture, collaborating with Research Institute of Economy, Trade and Industry and the Ministry of Telecommunications.

Sangeeta Isvaran has been studying the classical dance form, Bharatanatyam, for the past 23 years, performing across Asia, Europe and North America. With grants from various agencies, she has travelled across South East Asia studying and writing about various forms of dance. She has recently begun studies on several forms of dance from Africa. Believing firmly in the need for and the celebration of art in the childhood years, and being aware of the acute lack of interest in art by government and others, Sangeeta has worked with children both in the regular school framework and in orphanages, homes for juvenile delinquents and drug addicts,

non-governmental organizations working with street children, child prostitution and so on. She also works with underprivileged communities using dance for human rights education, AIDS awareness and self-empowerment.

Ki-Beom Jang is a Professor of Music Education at Seoul National University of Education, Seoul, Korea. He earned a doctorate degree in music education from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, Michigan, United States. He is a chairman of the Korean Society of Music Educational Technology (KSMET). Prof. Jang has written nine books, numerous articles and theses on music education and arts education in general. In 2000, he conducted a national project entitled ‘a comparison of music education systems between South Korea and North Korea’. This national project was sponsored by the Korean Ministry of Human Resource and Education. Recently, Prof. Jang has created the ‘Korea Music Aptitude Profile (KoMAP)’, a Web-based project sponsored by the Korea Research Foundation (KRF).

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Lindy Joubert is Director for the UNESCO Observatory on Multi-Disciplinary Research in the Arts. Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning at The University of Melbourne, Australia. A painter with 34 national and international exhibitions of paintings, 6 in New York City. Consultant at UNESCO Headquarters Paris, France. from 2000 to 2003. Researches in mental health through the arts and education and collaborates with major hospitals internationally examining the impact of the arts for healing environments. Director of the Asia Pacific Confederation for Arts Education, organiser of the 2003 UNESCO Pacific Regional Arts Education Expert Meeting and contributes regularly to UNESCO expert meetings. Team Leader for the Australia Council Arts Health Strategy; the Community Arts Development Scheme Evaluation for Mental Health 2020 for Vic Health and the Children’s Cancer Centres Healing Arts project for hospitals across the state of Victoria.

Akbar Khakimov is the author of more than 100 articles concerning the history of the arts in Central Asia, including modern art and art education in the region. As a Vice-President of the Academy of Arts of Uzbekistan, he coordinates art education in Uzbekistan. He has been a participant and a speaker at the UNESCO Symposium in Hong Kong (‘Art Education in Uzbekistan’) dedicated to art education in Asian countries.

Mahmoud Mehrmohammadi is a specialist in the field of curriculum and instruction and has always been interested in the roles arts can play in education. Arts education as a subject on the curriculum, however, is only one channel, albeit an important one, through which the arts can enter education. His sabbatical leave in Canada and the States, which took place in the year 2000–2001, was an excellent opportunity for him to concentrate in this area and to gain fresh insights. Cooperation with the relevant planning and decision-making bodies within the Ministry of Education has been a parallel line of activity, both challenging and expanding his understanding of this domain.

Ichiya Nakamura is Vice-President of the not-for-profit organization CANVAS and an Executive Director at the Stanford Japan Research Centre. He is also a visiting scientist at MIT and an advisor to CSK Corp. Until 1998, he was a policy maker at the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications, Japan. Until 1984, he was a rock musician at Shonen Knife.

Subodh Patnaik, after graduating in theatre from a local university, became a theatre activist with a social motivation, and a theatre director aiming to take modern theatre forms closer to the people and challenging the dominant imported forms of theatre. He is involved with different developmental networks and is a consultant on applying the theatre in various forms, such as community theatre by non-governmental organizations and training street theatre groups. He also advises on campaigns wishing to use cultural resources of communication, like the theatre and puppetry. In addition, he networks among amateur theatre groups who are committed for creating a specifically Indian theatre for artistic purposes.

Bob Smith's curricular expertise evolved across years served as National Music Adviser to the Fiji Ministry of Education, as a curriculum writer for the Inner London Education Authority and, more recently, as international music education consultant in Sri Lanka. In the latter post, he reviewed the national music curriculum and coordinated the development of a new pre-service music teacher-training programme for Sri Lanka's National Colleges of Education. He is the immediate past President of the Australian Society for Music Education Inc. and the President of the Northern Territory Institute for Educational Research.

Tatsuko Takizawa is a professor at the Aichi University of Education Music Department, where he is responsible for ethnomusicology and comparative music education. Other positions include being a CMA commission member (2000–2006) of the International Society for Music Education; (an ISME member since 1982); sitting on the ISME World Music Advisory Panel chaired by Bruno Nettl (1994–1996 and editing *Musics of the World's Cultures: A Source Book for Music Educators*, published by the Callaway International Resource Centre for the Music Education in 1998. In 1992, he was organizer of a seminar for Asian Music Educators (with Thailand, the Philippines, Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia as participants), which was funded by the Japan Foundation. In 1997, he was project planner for the Singapore seminar for Asian Music Educators at the National Nanyang Technological University (sponsored by the Japan Foundation).

Yuewai Wong was born and bred in Hong Kong. His venture into the arts, culture and education started in 1987 with his active involvement in performance arts and visual arts as director, producer, administrator, curator, critic, performer and art educator. At the time of publication of this book, more than 130,000 participants and 150 schools have been involved in these programmes under his curatorship and directorship.