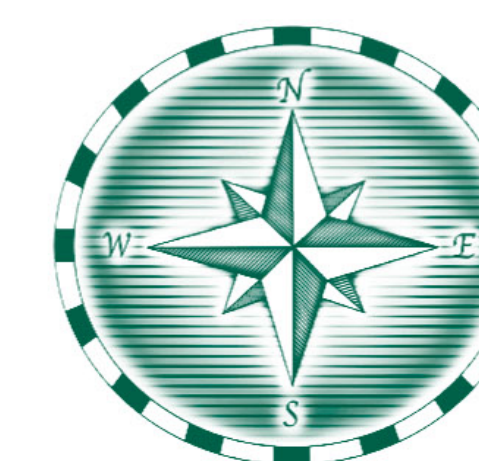


The Art of Serious Adolescent Play

Vaughan Clark
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IBSC

Impetus for the Research Question

"If I've learned anything at all...it's that young people learn more outside a classroom than in it, and they learn more from each other than from adults."

Tony Little, Head Master Eton College

Wasted, wounded, look what schooling did

Desk: sat Under and Behind; barrier

Objectives determined by standards to achieve

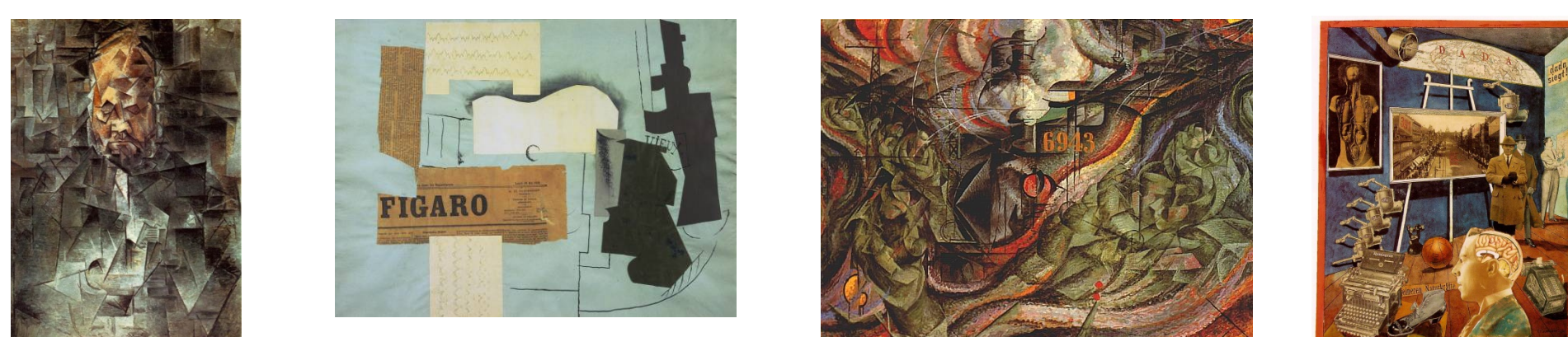


Vessels filled; lamps to be lit



The Research Question

How can 16-17 year old boys develop their understanding of art historical movements by representing them as body sculptures in performance art?



The Participants

From Eton College: roll 1350 pupils:13-18 years, full boarding, West London
Nine 16-17 year old boys on the first year of a two year art history course

Practices begun from September: re-enacting the space in paintings, manipulating materials, sketching



The Research Action (Nov-Feb)

Three interventions (each one 40 minutes), two iterations of each one
'Iteration': Make Again, Make Better; **Failure**

Viewpoints: technique, improvisation, thinking through play:
Shape, Repetition, Gesture, Space, Architecture

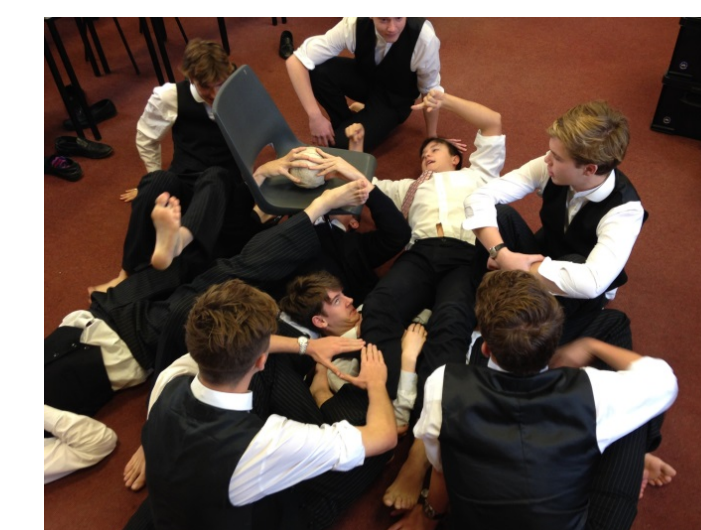
'Communicate a direction, allow infinite solutions'
'Tinkering':

Adding and subtracting, adding, subtracting, adding
Recession and projection, recession, projection, recession
Diverge and converge, diverge, converge, diverge



First Intervention:
Cubism

Second
intervention:
Futurism



Data Collection, Analysis and Key Findings



What did you understand better about Cubism/Futurism by making the body sculpture?



Where in your essay is there evidence that the performance art/body sculpture helped you to express your knowledge and understanding?

Perception and understanding grew from Making

Data from essays on Cubism: as identified by students as understanding being partly the product of the making exercise:

'The movement itself completely shredded the idea of reality...and distorted every viewer's conception of space in a painting.'
'...he (Picasso) introduced the ...theory that the subject matter and surrounding must constantly relate and amalgamate into one...image.'
'...it presents to us a uniformed sense of fragmentation.'

Different; better; accelerated; embedded?

The body sculpture inforces (sic) your short-term knowledge

Forces you to engage with the ideas of the movement...how you would apply those ideas to your art

Nice to have contexts

..Cubism fragmented...acting it out, it makes a lot more sense to me

Useful at the beginning of a subject to get to know how the artists would have thought

...a good way of breaking it down... analyse it better when you're trying to get people to re-create a similar composition

Data from essays on Futurism:

'it presents to the viewer a sensory experience that can only be understood by someone that has experienced the technology that is the cause of the event.'

'...new ways of representing movement in painting...abandon the tradition of depicting static, legible objects. The challenge he (Balla) believed, was to represent...the experience of flux, and the inter-penetration of objects.'

Conclusions; Interpretations

(Making) The Work Of Wonder In The Age of 'Pretend Learning'



Evinced cognitive abilities and actions that can, at least, be understood as partly the result of the body sculpture as performance art:

grasping, plugging-in, shaping, measuring dimensions, making concrete, associating, receiving, integrating, reflecting, revealing, authoring, empowering, amplifying...

Also, the participants have considered where best in the process of their learning such a Making activity should go, and they have valued it when they have not been able to express an idea in a body sculpture. The ideas that are left behind in the Makerspace are mentally stored elsewhere and used.

Transform the classroom into a Makerspace

Spacethink: increase the range of verbs done

Tinkering: feedback at the point of need and comes from many sources

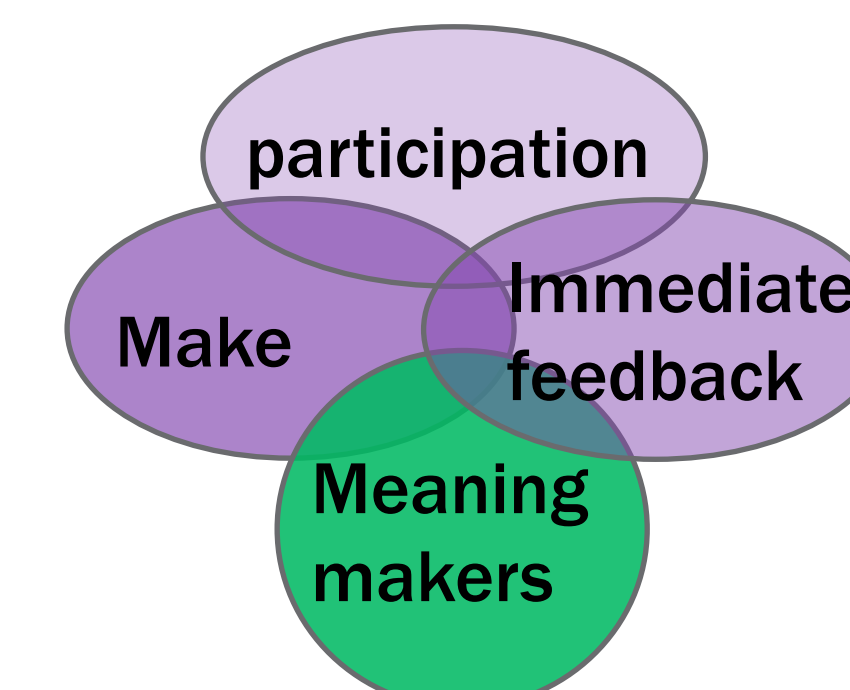
Authentic activities: meanings emerge, made by the participants

These help with writing essays but discursive practice is complex

Focus on the process not the product; knowledge will be embodied

Thinking is enriched and leveraged through play

Transforming bodies led to transformed thinking = aesthetic engagement



A change to make better habits = evolution in culture of learning

Key Readings

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Further Information

This poster and further information is available at <http://www.theibsc.org/>.
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