

CREATIVE ARTS IN POLICY AND PRACTICE

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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In the first issue of *ACCESS* for 2009 writers from USA, Australia and New Zealand address questions of the arts and creative knowledge practices in education. The idea for this issue arose out of the *World Creativity Summit* of the World Alliance for Arts Education in Taipei Taiwan, June 2008, which brought together educators in the creative arts from over twenty countries to explore the role of arts education in the twenty-first century, to build effective networks, and to mobilise strategies for the strengthening of research and advocacy for creative forms of education. The World Alliance for Arts Education was established in 2006 at the World Congress of InSEA International Society of Education through Art, at Viçeu, Portugal, to bring together the work of international NGOs for the arts: InSEA International Society of Education through Art, ISME International Society for Music Education, IDEA International Drama/Theatre Education Association, and WDA World Dance Alliance.

Each of the writers in this issue works in the field of the arts in education bringing their experience to bear on issues of creativity in education, global policies of UNESCO, local narratives of creative practice, innovation and enterprise discourses and the politics of aesthetic production in neoliberal discourses of education. Three of the writers participated in the 2008 *World Creativity Summit* in Taipei: Janinka Greenwood, Adele Flood and Elizabeth Grierson. Their accounts present the field of creative arts practice and policy through global imperatives and local concerns. There is much to think about in these papers in the way they address the arts in the creative economies of globalisation. The writers bring local concerns to the fore drawing from actual case studies of creative educational practice as a way of problematising the dominant discourses of economic rationalism and economically driven expectations of a global world.

The collection begins with a global perspective of UNESCO policies and agendas for building creative capacities through the arts. Elizabeth Grierson's paper, *Footprints of Globalisation: The arts, creativity and inherent concerns* presents and analyses the policy field of the creative arts in UNESCO documents, and then turns to "tale-telling" of creative subjects in the arts to show the power of creativity in local sites. The case studies of creative artists, musicians, performers, gives evidence of the passion and tenacity that fires creative work. These examples speak of the power of creative knowledge in and through the arts in action. Grierson argues that macro-political discourses need to be matched with micro-political action of creative subjects and educators, coupled with robust institutional strategies, if the universalising goals of UNESCO are to be met at the local level. Elizabeth Grierson was a speaker at both the 2008 *World Creativity Summit* in Taipei and the 2009 *World Creativity Summit* in Newcastle, UK, and participated in the 2002 UNESCO regional meetings and 2006 UNESCO summit on capacity building for the arts in education.

In *Seeking Causes for the Marginalisation of the Arts in American Education*, Susan Goetz Zwirn presents a North American perspective on the arts in education. Through an historical perspective she asks why most educational reformers in USA have overlooked the role of the arts in educating the child and adult. She shows how the arts continue to be marginalised and treated as less important than numeracy, for example, and that in spite of robust research by scholars such as Elliot Eisner there continues to be a mystification and marginalisation of this field of study. Zwirn makes a final plea to those involved in arts education to take the case for the role of the arts in education “to the streets!” which she defines as “university departments of education and psychology for teacher education programs, it means central educational organisations, it means mainstream journals and magazines and ... it means the federal government.” Such advocacy is vital, she argues, if there are to be any changes in the way the arts are positioned in policy and practice.

This need for political understanding, advocacy and action is reinforced in the paper by Janet Mansfield, *Creativity and the Arts in the Curriculum under Neoliberal Regimes*. Mansfield argues for the overcoming of a literacy agenda in the creative arts in context of new forms of instrumentalism framing educational policy and practice. Building on her previous work on the New Zealand arts curriculum, Mansfield examines aesthetic education in the texts and practices of neoliberal economy. Referencing discourses of the new *New Zealand Curriculum*, and calling on a wide range of scholars to advance her arguments, Mansfield considers market-driven regimes and policies, and their deleterious impact on creativity and the arts in teacher education and schools. Ultimately what Mansfield argues for is the activation of policy and practice that understands and validates difference, and challenges power-invested processes. Although her analysis is specifically geared to New Zealand examples, the implications of this paper are wider than one location.

The next two papers are concerned with case studies of creative practices in education. Janinka Greenwood's *Creativity and Identity*, argues for a grounded sense of identity through creative practices, specifically drama. In an educational climate valuing quantitative measures of performance and achievement, Greenwood asserts the importance of learning outcomes for personal and social development. She takes four case studies to demonstrate how this can happen in practice. Specific to her paper is the mobilisation and understanding of cross-cultural ways of working as she draws attention to the value laden nature of concepts of identity. The implication for classroom teaching is a strong platform for her discussion. This paper grew from Janinka Greenwood's participation at the 2008 *World Creativity Summit* in Taipei, where she was exploring the relationship between creativity, drama education and identity.

In *Finding New Landscapes of a Creative Identity*, Adele Flood demonstrates the effective use of narrative methodologies to make sense of the world through art practices in education. The work arises from her doctorate research *Common Threads*, in which she analysed self-held beliefs and exterior forces that impact individual creative subjects. Flood makes a case for the importance of providing opportunities for self-reflectivity through art education, and by investigating individual narratives and responses she argues for the value of creativity in learning subjects. Her paper reinforces the learning principles that the learner is the centre of the educational transaction, rather than the teacher, as she argues for the value of learning as a communicative act through which a process of making sense of the world becomes explicit.

What becomes apparent through the work of these writers is that there is a great deal of work being undertaken in the creative arts at both global and local levels of policy and practice. What also becomes clear is that in spite of this work the arts in many educational systems and locations continue to be marginalised in time and resources through rationalised institutional practices. Creativity has become an instrument of the global knowledge economy and is increasingly the defining construct of information technologies, innovation and enterprise, user-generated content of web worlds, fast capital and knowledge transfers. There is an imperative for arts educators to ensure the work of creative practitioners and creative workers is not subsumed by the fast input-output pressures and institutional demands. The articles in this issue open the field to interrogation and highlight the importance of scholarly work in seeking further understanding of creativity and the place of the arts in twenty-first century education.

The issue concludes with a review of *Punishing the Discipline – the PBRF Regime: Evaluating the position of Education – where to from here?* collated and edited by Joce Jesson and Richard Smith in 2005. David Forrest reviews the book in context of the intensification of audit processes in education, explaining the way the book grew from a forum on the Performance-Based Research Fund (PBRF). He discusses how the book is organised and provides a taste of the material within its pages. Forrest comes to the conclusion that the significance of the publication is broader than the impact of the PBRF on Education as a field of study, as it has much to contribute to other disciplines. Richard Smith, one of the editors of *Punishing the Discipline – the PBRF Regime*, was the co-editor of the fully international, double issue of *ACCESS* journal, in 2008, which focused on the growing worldwide trend of research accountability and audit systems.

ACCESS thanks the generosity of international reviewers whose responses have provided much food for thought to the writers of these papers. The protocols of the refereeing process ensure a consistently high standard of publication to meet the aim of *ACCESS* journal to engage critically with the terrain of knowledge in educational and cultural spheres. As editor I thank those contributors and subscribers who continue to support the critical and philosophical approaches of *ACCESS*, and welcome new readers, contributors and subscribers to this issue, *Creative Arts in Policy and Practice*.

ACCESS journal has a long history. It was first published out of the University of Auckland in 1982, then in 2002 it was transferred to AUT University, and now in 2009 it is published by RMIT University with all articles searchable through the online database of Informit e-Library. The ARC journal rankings in Australia has rated *ACCESS* as an A ranked journal in acknowledgment of the journal's international standing in the field of communications, cultural and policy studies.

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