

# REPORT INDICATING THE MAJOR CONTENTS OF A TEACHING PROGRAMME IN THE FIELD OF THE VISUAL ARTS IN BARBADOS

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## INTRODUCTION

Popular education was, in the decade after emancipation known as religious education. Great emphasis was placed in the primary schools on the 3 R's (reading, writing and arithmetic) and religious instruction. Two types of schools evolved – the “first grade” and “second grade” schools. In the second grade schools drawing and vocal music was taught and in the first grade schools the emphasis was on classical education, and culture was to be imparted through the ‘classical’ or ‘modern’ course of study. This tradition became well established through the years. The literary emphasis in the curriculum remained at all levels of education. In 1933, a member of the British Advisory Committee on Education in the colonies, Arthur Mayhew, recommended that courses in art, along with woodwork and needlework be introduced in the girls schools to relieve the ‘stifling atmosphere’ of the Cambridge local examinations. Drawing was to be regarded as “training for the hand and eye”.<sup>1</sup> One report even stated that “the handicrafts and trades require constantly recruiting from a lower social stratum.”<sup>2</sup>

We have come a long way since then. The importance of the arts in education has been acknowledged. The government's White Paper on Education Reform- Preparing for the twenty-first Century, published in 1995, pointed the way to what currently exists today.

Its reform policy was built on the philosophy that education and training need to be on the cutting edge of national development. Among its major objectives was “enabling students to develop enquiring and creative minds” an important objective if some of its other operatives are to be achieved. Objectives such as:

- 1 “preparing our citizens for nation building” and
- 2 Revaluating the role of education in the sphere of national development,”
- 3 Fostering a greater partnership between the school, the home and the community,
- 4 Reinforcing the concept that learning is a continuous, life-long process, and finally,
- 5 Developing a workforce that is equipped to adapt to a rapidly changing environment, and that is readily retrainable.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Gordon 1963

<sup>2</sup> 1 Bid P100

<sup>3</sup> White Paper on Education Reform Pg 3.

If, therefore education is to prepare the student to be “thinkers, innovators and problem solvers” the role of the arts in education becomes vital.

Primary education, which serves children between the ages of five to eleven, forms the ‘bedrock’ of the educational system. Hence, curriculum reform at the primary level was necessary, given the current societal changes and emerging pedagogical trends. Each child leaving primary school is expected to be able to “reason and solve problems, while thinking critically and creatively.”

The curriculum comprised of:

- (i) Core Subjects
- (ii) Enrichment Subjects, and
- (iii) Vocational Subjects

The Visual Arts predictably fall under vocational subjects. A new Art and Craft curriculum for primary schools was designed and was implemented in the academic year 1996 – 1997. Aesthetic studies were among the subject areas included in the content of this revised curriculum. The utilization of indigenous materials was considered significant but so also was the use of technology. The essential outcomes of this curriculum include “developing a sensitivity for one’s cultures”. This respect for cultural heritage is an aspect of the philosophy of the new curriculum that is fully appreciated by art educators. At the 1997 CARICOM Heads of Government Summit in Montego Bay, Jamaica, it was accepted that “education is the major mechanism to bring about the necessary transformation in Caribbean Society”. The Caribbean citizen of the 21<sup>st</sup> century must have an informed respect for cultural heritage and value. Visual arts education is an obvious pathway to achieving this. The revised curriculum which came out of the government’s White Paper on Education Reform, has much therefore to encourage the art educator.

Curriculum as defined by the Ministry of Education is “an organized statement of goals and intended learning outcomes that serve a framework for decisions about teaching and learning. It represents an attempt to meet the perceived needs and interest of all students, in a manner consistent with the philosophy, objectives and expectations of our society.”<sup>4</sup>

The Visual Arts must be paramount in the reform process, which will be used to effect enormous political and social changes, which are imperative for the development of the nation’s human resource – its people. This can only be achieved if students are given the opportunity to think divergently. The Cultural Arts are perceived as being critical to the seven learning areas generally agreed to constitute the foundation of a well-rounded education for our young people.

These learning areas are: -<sup>5</sup>

- 1 Communication, Literacy and Language development
- 2 Numeracy and Mathematics

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<sup>4</sup> Rationale and Guidelines for Curriculum Reform in Barbados Pg 6

- 3 Social Studies
- 4 Natural Studies
- 5 Aesthetic Studies
- 6 Health and Family
- 7 Technology and
- 8 Physical Education

## THE PRIMARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM – STRUCTURE AND DESIGN

Subject disciplines in the learning areas at the primary level reflect cross-curricular integration. Visual Arts is compulsory. The Ministry of Education has prepared a Visual Arts Curriculum Guide for the Primary Level. This guide seeks to encourage teachers to use their initiative to explore, think critically and intuitively discover and experiment. The focus is on the student's interaction with the curriculum, rather than the curriculum dictating the pace of learning. It presents the art teacher with the scope and sequence of the concepts and activities in which students should be engaged to promote creative and mental development. Its activities are sequential and the attainment targets presupposes that students are provided with the art experience and adequate practice in the activities identified for the specific age group.

Opportunities are provided for teachers to incorporate the new technologies in their teaching, allowing students to work individually and cooperatively, using the computer as a tool to enhance learning. The programs are aimed at the seven to eleven age group. The Primary School curriculum is guided by the philosophy that at this age one should focus on self-worth and appreciation of cultural differences. It then uses the basic art element to derive a series of activities. These activities spring out of the desire to get across art concepts viz colour and texture or to experience the direct making of an art object viz puppets, masks or toys.

The total curriculum was conceived using this format

- (a) Scope and Sequence
- (b) Attainment Targets
- (c) Approaches to the infusion of the technologies in the teaching of the Visual Arts
- (d) The infusion of social and emotional learning activities
- (e) Suggested topics and methods of integration
- (f) Approaches to assessment and evaluation
- (g) Suggested web sites and CD-ROM suitable for enhancing the teaching of Visual Arts<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Rationale and Guidelines for Curriculum Reform in Barbados Pg 15

<sup>6</sup> Visual Arts Curriculum Guide Primary Level P vii

## CURRICULUM AT THE SECONDARY SCHOOL

The student begins secondary school at the age of eleven plus and may leave at sixteen, eighteen or nineteen. The revised secondary curriculum like the primary school curriculum shows evidence of the new curriculum reform. It is divided into six levels. A new qualification, the Barbados National Diploma of Secondary Education (BNDSE) will be awarded on the completion of Level V. Among its essential outcomes is that all secondary school graduates should “have knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the local and regional artistic, musical and cultural heritage.”<sup>7</sup>

The compulsory core learning areas required from Levels I to V represent what is to be considered as “a fundamental body of knowledge which each secondary student must study if he/she is to be a well rounded, educated citizen”.

The Visual Arts are not among those core subjects, which must be studied throughout the duration of the student’s life. The Visual Arts are to be found however within the foundation studies, a set of courses offered from Levels I to III, which complement the core subjects. All students are expected to study at least one of these subjects. Arts, Home Economics and Information and Communications Technology. Again, the Visual Arts is among the list of Electives, which students from Level IV to Level VI will have an opportunity to choose.

The Visual Arts Secondary School syllabus leads to the Caribbean Examination Council’s Syllabus – a syllabus used in the majority of the territories of the Eastern Caribbean. Students can choose from ten Production Options namely, Drawing, Imaginative Composition, Graphic Design, Printmaking, 3D Design, Fine Arts, Surface Decoration, Ceramics, Leather craft and Decorative Craft. The syllabuses offer – Art, Craft and Art and Craft Options. The successful completion and passing of examinations at this level thus launches the student into either the Associate Degree in Fine Arts at the Barbados Community College or the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE). If the student chooses to remain at high school, the introduction to this syllabus defines it as follows:

The Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examinations are designed to provide certification of the Academic, Vocational and Technical achievement of students in the Caribbean who, having completed a minimum of five years of secondary education, wish to further their studies.

The examination addresses the skills and knowledge acquired by students under a flexible and articulated system where subjects are organized in

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<sup>7</sup> Rationale and Guidelines for Curriculum Reform Pg 29

One-unit or Two-unit courses with each Unit containing three models”.<sup>8</sup>  
 Caribbean studies are one of these units.

The curriculum of the Caribbean Examinations Council is a balanced one with three options, Art, Art and Craft and Craft. The skills and abilities the programs expect to be developed in the students are:

- i      Craftsmanship
- ii     Design and Composition
- iii    Innovation
- iv     Enquiry Skills
- v      Critical Thinking Skills

## **TEACHER TRAINING IN BARBADOS**

With curriculum reform must come adequate provision for the training of teachers. This shows a “central” plank in the strategy aimed at improving education quality for all students. In service training continues to be the primary method used. The main supplier of this service is the Teacher’s Training College, which has a two-year in-service program for teachers in Primary Schools. In the first year all teachers must do Art and in the second year they must choose between Art and Music.

In Year 1 students are given a basic understanding of the meaning of art as well as the basics in Visual Arts and Craft. The second year builds on this foundation and increases the theoretical components. Teacher training in art for the secondary school teacher has been derived primarily through a two year Associate Degree Program at the Barbados Community College.

In this course of training students must take courses in Pedagogy, Philosophy of Art, Children’s Developmental Stages in Art and Art History along with studio courses and teaching practice. This two-year program has been replaced by a two-year program in the Fine Arts, which can be attained by graduates of the above-mentioned Associate Degree in Art Education. With a further two years of study this has added to the number of trained teachers in the island.

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<sup>8</sup> Caribbean Examinations Council CAPE Pg. 1

## **TEACHERS ADVANCED PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATE COURSE IN ART AND CRAFT (TAPC)**

Twenty-six teachers have been trained in a (one day release) program introduced in 1995 known as the Teachers Advanced Professional Certificate Course in Art and Craft Education. The foundation of the TAPC Courses comprises ongoing activities in curriculum design, implementation and education. The Art and Craft curriculum specialization is designed to develop the practical and pedagogical skills of art teachers in the Primary Schools.

Among its other objectives are:

- 1 To develop in teachers an awareness of responsiveness to works of art as well as the ability to make a critical appreciation of these works,
- 2 To provide teachers with the requisite knowledge and skills to evaluate student's art.
3. To develop competence in the use of the computer as an aid to the creative person.
4. To develop knowledge of curriculum Planning and development in Art Education.<sup>9</sup>

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TEACHER TRAINING**

The initiative taken to introduce an African Studies component in the Art and Craft two year in-service program should be maintained.'

The second year Associate Degree in Art Education should be reinstated.

Teacher exchange programs should be encouraged.

Art Teacher's Associations should be encouraged.

The one year Post Graduate Diploma in Education with an Art Option should be reinstated.

All teacher training programs should focus on the productive, the critical and the cultural<sup>6</sup> along with Pedagogical Courses Teaching Practice. To try to train the teacher in the shortest time possible will not guarantee that the end result will be successful. The training of Art teachers should be a wonderful, exhilarating experience, which attempts to arouse in the Art teacher the enthusiasm, which he must himself generate in his own students.

Below are possible content areas for a curriculum in Teacher Training in Art.

- History of Art Education
- Curriculum Training
- Learning Theories/Creative and Mental Growth
- Lesson Managing
- Classroom Management
- Pedagogical Approaches

- Art and Cultural Studies
- Art Making Primary and Secondary
- Assessment
- Materials and Techniques
- Studio
- Teaching Practice.

## **ARTISTIC TRADITIONS**

Barbados is a small island of only 144 square miles, 21 miles by 14 miles wide. It is the most easterly of the Caribbean islands. Its artistic origins would be found in African, Arawak and European culture. The extent to which one can draw on such traditions depends primarily on the degree of evidence of such traditions and the availability of documentation.

The painting traditions, which exist, originated in colonial times when soldiers stationed at the military Garrison recorded their surroundings. A number of expatriates trained in oils and watercolours taught Art. There were no intuitive painters as in Haiti for example. A more African tradition is to be found not in two-dimensional but in three dimensional work as in the water vessel called the monkey and in the painting of local grasses to make various items such as mats and baskets. There is no tradition of drum making or mask making as one might expect; but embroidery skills, handicraft skills, dress making skills and furniture making skills have long standing tradition in the society.

An interesting phenomenon that should be noted in the discussion of artistic tradition is the emergence of drum making, woodcarving and sculpture and the making of jewelry in the Rastafarian community. Here we have evidence of an emerging tradition, which must be taken into consideration in any discussion of acknowledging cultural heritage. It is perhaps within this community that the last retentions of African culture are reemerging. This strong cultural and artistic presence should be acknowledged in any discussion of artistic traditions.

## **ARTISTIC TRADITIONS AND THE CURRICULUM**

The curriculum of schools has made provision for the bringing about in the students Art and Craft Programmes an awareness of their cultural heritage. It will take teacher training to sensitise art teachers to the significance of allowing the cultural aspect of the curriculum to play a greater role. In this regard museum and gallery visits and visiting artists programmes become a vital part of the visual arts education process.

## CONCLUSION

In Barbados the art teacher is well armed with well-constructed art curricula and curriculum guides at both the primary and secondary level and at the tertiary level for teacher training. These programs can only work however, if the necessary funding is available for materials and equipment. Underlying all programmes must be the creative energy of those who deliver them. This energy must be fuelled by funding and facilities to keep the ideals of curriculum reform a reality.

## APPENDICES

1. Course outline of the Teaching of Art and Craft for Diploma in Education (U W I)
2. Cultural studies module from Caribbean Examination Council CAPE Syllabus
3. Toy making module from syllabus for primary schools
4. Course content of two-year Associate Degree in Art Education of the Barbados Community college

***NB: Appendices 2, 3, and 4 will be included in the original document.***



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Division of Fine Arts – Barbados Community College – Syllabus. Art Education Associate Degree Program.
2. The Ministry of Education Youth Affairs and Culture – A brief on the Activities and Policies of the Curriculum Section.
3. Michael Hoyte 1995 – Art Education Perspectives and Proposals for Implementation.
4. Barbados Secondary School Certificate – Syllabus for Art, Craft and Art and Craft 1991.
5. Ministry of Education Youth Affairs and Culture – Visual Arts Secondary Syllabus Level I.
6. Teachers Advanced Professional Certificate – September 1995 – 1996.
7. Ministry of Education Youth Affairs and Culture – White Paper on Education Reform July 1993.
8. Ministry of Education Youth Affairs and Culture. Curriculum 2000 Barbados – Rationale and Guidelines for Curriculum Reform in Barbados.
9. Ministry of Education Youth Affairs and Culture – Visual Art Curriculum Guide Barbados 2000 – Primary Level.
10. M E Hoyte (Art Education Officer) – Update on Curriculum Reform Art Education Document.
11. Caribbean Examinations Council – Visual Arts Syllabus 2001.
12. Elliot Eisner - Educating Artistic Vision – McMillan Publishing Co. 1972.
13. Hartley O Marshall – An Examination of the Aims and Methods of Four Teacher Training Courses in Art in England and their Relevance to Teacher Training in Art in Barbados – Leeds University 1978 –, Dissertation for the Diploma in Art Education.
14. Caribbean Examinations Council 20001 – Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examinations  
Art and Design Syllabus

## CONTENT

1. Overview of Art Education and artistic learning from a local Caribbean and international perspective.
2. The Development of Artistic Learning:
  - a. Development stages and influential theories of artistic learning
  - b. Psychology of creativity
  - c. The role of the art teacher
  - d. The student in an art class
  - e. The physical environment for artistic learning
  - f. The use of audio-visual aids/media
3. Curriculum development and classroom practices in artistic learning. (Art and the School Curriculum)
4. The teaching of Art/Craft at the secondary level;
  - a. Writing objectives for creative learning
  - b. Approaches to lesson planning
  - c. Evaluating creative learning
  - d. B.S.S.C syllabus
  - e. C X C syllabus
  - f. G.C.E 'A' syllabuses
  - g. Field trips – Secondary schools, at least one with 6<sup>th</sup> form
5. Methodologies and Approaches to the teaching of:
  - a. Drawing and other 2-Dimensional Art Forms
  - b. 2-Dimensional Design
  - c. 3-Dimensional Art/Craft forms
  - d. Art Criticism
  - e. History of Art/Craft
  - f. Art/Craft Appreciation
  - g. Theory of Art/Craft
- 5b. Teaching the slow learner and 'problem' children.

6. Management of equipment, materials and resources.
7. Innovation and the use of substitutes.
8. Art Education and Society
  - a. Historical and contemporary perspectives
  - b. Why teach Art?
  - c. Stereotyping (Art, the Creative individual and society)
  - d. The status of Art Education in Barbados and the Caribbean
  - e. Current trends in Art Education:
    - § North American
    - § Western Europe
    - § Far East
    - § Latin America
    - § Africa
9. Non-Traditional Areas
  - a. Computers in Art Education – application to classroom use, industry and industrial design
  - b. Art Therapy
  - c. Museum Education/Studies
  - d. Cinematography – Film/Video – Cinematic Types, etc.
  - e. Field trips:
    - Barbados Museum and Historical Society
    - Industrial Design plant. (Computer aided work in 2 and 3 Dimensional Design)
    - Half-way House (Art/Craft as a therapeutic technique)
    - Barbados Industrial Development Corporation (new design strategies for industries and school curriculum)
    - C.B.C (Graphic Advertising Design and the use of technology in Design and Art.
10. The status and future of Art Education in the developed and developing world.