



Road area. It photographed all the areas in an Ed Ruscha style panorama, delved into archives to look at the history of the area and presented this information in a large panoramic document.

Year 9 (ages 13-14) produced the 'Hymnal', while year 10 (ages 14-15) art students made drawings and illustrations, took photographs and collected research into various self-created themes on the locality. Year 8 (ages 12-13) students interviewed local residents and leaders in youth and migrant support groups. All of this research was added into the larger databank created by Camp for the Edgware Road Project.

Many of these works were included in the final exhibition *RE: ASSEMBLY* that drew from the documentation of these activities and conversations. Our transcriptions of the flipchart papers were composed into an alternate 'hymnal' taken from the school's own hymn books. Choreographed performances of a selection of these songs were offered as a video letter to the citizens of Edgware Road.

With artists-in-residence projects, it is often this 'creative license' that allows risk taking in lessons, bringing a kudos and a rogue element that allows work to happen in the classroom, as well as discourse that would not normally be part of the everyday curriculum.

Students gain from being given the opportunities to critically investigate their own institutions. They gain a better understanding of their own environment, who and why constraints are made, and learn to recognize the impact of their institution on the wider community.

With this thinking at the heart, the last project involving the students was the making of the audio guide. Students were chosen from a variety of year groups and subjects for their involvement in school council duties. They carried out collective research on local histories and delved into the data bank created through all the

different projects in the school, and discussions about their own place within their community and the education system. Students spoke about examinations, expectations from peers, teachers, parents and the wider community.

This artistic practice allowed students to reflect on the expectations placed upon them, to respond to what they hear in the media about examinations and their worth. Students spoke about how exams are often criticised as being too easy, but that the extent to which they work to achieve those high grades would suggest that is not the case. The expectations for the students to achieve is much higher than in the education their parents experienced, and a culture of fear drives their parents and the students themselves into working extremely long hours for exemplary exam results which are then deemed valueless because too many students achieved highly!

Students put into context their learning, and that expectations and experiences are transient dependent on the social and cultural context. For instance, currently society is living through a period of 'austerity', and people are working longer hours for less money because they fear losing their jobs. That culture of fear drives every aspect of our society and our young people are feeling the pinch. We know that the corporate world of teaching, created by policy changes from central government, has impacted on pupil choices, school structures, staffing and departmental funding. Therefore, in education today, the immeasurable has become non-valuable.

In addition to raising standards there is a need to break down the boundaries of subject disciplines and create opportunities for students to engage in broad learning. Artists in residence help to overcome some of these obstacles and can, at their best, change the practice of teachers, leaving a legacy of analysis and critique. Residencies at their best create a forum for

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discourse concerning the barriers to providing a valuable education and like-mindedness. It opens the doors to working together in partnerships based on a mutual trust and respect.

The 'artist in residence' has a license and the ability to take risks, and so pursue radical educational approaches that would not be otherwise possible. The artist has the power to reach beyond the institutional limits, allowing them to advocate the arts and use multidisciplinary approaches to fight against the received wisdom of whoever happens to occupy the Department of Education.

With artists' projects students have the opportunity to enter into a dialogue about art, to discuss its value and learn how to use art to explore the issues important to them. A great start would be to address the language used to describe the subject areas and recognise that science is creative, art is academic and that the language used by students, teachers and central government does not always promote public perception.

The legacy of The Edgware Road Project is that we're now working on a series of classroom studies called 'The Subverted Curriculum'. There are no set outcomes by which to measure its success as the students and teachers evaluate this by looking at their own set of criteria. These can be linked to National Curriculum and GCSE content, and will be published by the Serpentine this year. ■

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