

Looking for Change

UBS and Tate share a vision to open up art and together have created UBS Openings and the Looking for Change programme. Looking for Change is a programme that, over a three-year period, seeks to address the growing need for young people to develop skills in visual and cultural literacy.

Visual literacy is the ability to interpret and ascribe meaning to images and to understand visual codes and symbols relevant to culture.

Looking for Change contributes to a cutting edge debate on how to teach young people to become visually literate by generating research through practice. This is the first programme of its kind to explore how the skills used to

understand an image (looking, discussing and making) are transferred to other forms of learning.

The programme works with four primary schools from deprived areas in London and involves children, teachers, volunteers and artist educators in a deep learning experience that develops language and cognition over time. The aim is that the research will help create new material resources for teachers around the UK.

Professor Shelby Wolf, an award-winning international researcher whose expertise lies in visual learning will form part of the team and provide field research as well as support to staff and practitioners.



Blessing, Burbage Primary School - Self Exploration. See page 2.
This portrait is a result of 4 hour long sessions. Not only does it show Blessing's obvious talent in art, but it is also full of character. We used oil pastels for these large, A3 images. The materials are similar to paint, and were used amazingly well by Blessing to produce a very expressive and textured mark.



Brook Community School, Hackney. See page 4
A student paints a "water surface" after a visit to the London Aquarium.

Self exploration

Nasteha's self portrait progression

Since September we have been looking at portraiture as a way to understand ourselves and the environments we live in. Nasteha from Vauxhall Primary School shows us the power of intense observation which resulted in the final wonderful line drawing of herself.



Stuart Bryan, UBS volunteer and Clarissa

Our UBS volunteers have been absolutely invaluable both in the schools, and especially in our days at the Tate Modern. The volunteers have always been willing to allow themselves to be advised and helped by the children. They have created a very equal partnership where there is no right or a wrong answer, everyone's opinion is important, and the ability to listen to another point of view is the rule rather than the exception.



Atlanta, Burbage Primary School

This term, pupils were asked to think something about themselves that could be revealed in a photograph. The focus had to be something that most people did not know about them or something that they aspired to be. Atlanta's outward looking gaze and strong expression leave us in no doubt that she is, indeed, powerful.



Kamil, Burbage Primary School

This project is all about being able to look, to see and to describe what we see. Art isn't untouchable, it isn't something that only other people can do. The art gallery is not a place for a chosen few - art belongs to all of us. Here, Kamil from Burbage Primary is very pleased to introduce us to his friend Boccioni.

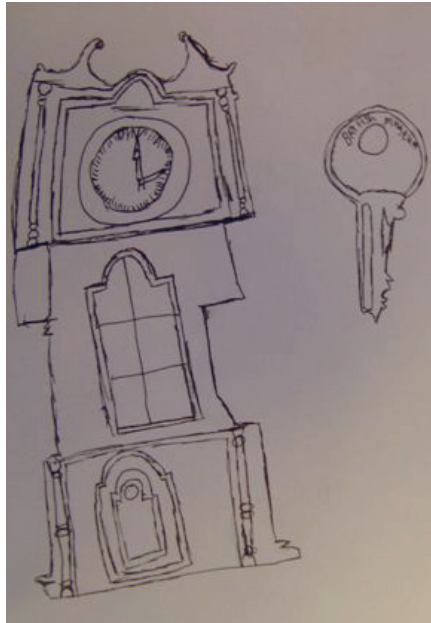
During the last week of June, Tate will feature the artwork created by the 'Looking for Change' pupils in its own curatorial space.

This will be an exciting celebration of a fantastic project. Please keep your eyes open for updates on this event.

Focus on Vauxhall Primary School



Teacher David (right) and students from Vauxhall Primary School



This term's project 'ourselves' has helped raise several important issues, such as race, which we have then explored in depth. When asked to chose an object that represents how he feels about himself, Nicholas who is Portuguese, chose a small plastic panda. He chose it because 'like me, it is half black and half white'.

We have really been able to look at skin colour in an analytical way. We have explored the ideas that white skin is not 'white' and that when we draw in monochrome, black skin actually has white areas and visa versa.

Through questioning what was important to us many different ideas have emerged. Answers gradually changed from 'my Nintendo wii' to 'being cuddled and safe in my Mum's arms, because she's just so cuddly.' We have also questioned beauty, celebrity and the issue of shallow personalities.

News of visits to Tate are greeted with a cheer, and great enthusiasm. The class seems to have an ownership of the Tate now and they ooze confidence when they're there. All the UBS volunteers are carried along by the students' confidence.

The children treat all the artists and volunteers that they encounter, not as ordinary adults, but as people with whom they can share ideas about art. The pupils have started to understand their opinions, feel empowered by them and listen to others.

During our last visit, the children worked independently in the Poetry and Dream Gallery for 45 minutes. Almost all of the pupils stuck with it for this fairly long period of time. David, their teacher, was happy with their independence and their progress, as he knew they were safe and being sensible.

Even if they stopped drawing, they didn't stop looking and experiencing. It is exciting to watch an 8 year old independently navigate a gallery space, spend time on a piece of art and then move on to the next piece and do the same. This progress is especially notable when we are not even a year into the project.

There is no need for an adult to read them the curatorial text, as they have their own valuable opinions about each piece of work.



Artist, Claire Smith, and students from Vauxhall Primary School

Focus on Brook Community School, Hackney

This term the Walnut Class has been working with observation, colour, abstraction and expression through staged activities. Each of these activities is leading to a single finished piece of work.

We began with a class visit to the London Aquarium where each child was given a sketchbook to collect visual references for use when they returned to the classroom. Those students who made a good effort to observe, draw and write at the Aquarium went on to really appreciate the value of their research once they were back at school.

From the sketchbook work the children made a series of images using oil pastels. With a careful use of colour - which they had learned about during their visit to the Tate Modern's Material Gesture collection, they used paint to create 'water' surfaces. The resulting work is now being put together as a collage, with careful consideration of colour and form.

Working over a sustained period of time on one piece of work has been a fulfilling experience for many of the children. In the past, they have tended to want to 'give up' on their work and dismiss it as 'ugly'. With their newly learned problem-solving processes, and through recognising each other's frustration at different stages of the project, the students are learning how to overcome those moments of difficulty.

During the visit to the Material Gesture gallery at the Tate Modern, the children selected and drew different artworks that they felt identified or demonstrated the words 'movement' and 'emotion.' It was surprising that the students found the collection immediately accessible. Their progression was so successful that they even began to ignore pieces which are clearly figurative or that already had a strong narrative.



To the delight of the artists, some pieces from the collection have reappeared in the children's subsequent work with no prompt from the artist whatsoever. This clearly shows that the gallery is having a positive impact on their work and that they enjoyed their time there.