

# A Politics of Care and Responsibility: Art and Education for Sustainable Development

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## Biography

**Vincent Caruana's** mission in life is to inspire people to take action for a better self and a better world. In 2014, he obtained his PhD, focusing on education for sustainability and the social economy, through four case studies, in Egypt, Malta, Italy and Palestine. Vince is currently a full-time lecturer and researcher at CEER - Malta's University Centre for Environmental Education and Research. He is active in the Social and Development scene locally and at a European level and is an established mentor, trainer and evaluator for various organisations.

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## **Abstract**

**This article evaluates an EU-funded research project called *Visual art education in new times: Connecting Art with REal life issues (CARE)*, which studies the infusion of principles of Education for Sustainable Development in art education. It describes the central goals of this project and presents some findings related to a group of teachers' participation in an online course related to the project and lessons they implemented subsequently. Informed by a relational framework that revolves around theories of care and responsibility, the article argues that art education can promote a commitment to action on issues of sustainability, extending our sense of care towards the broader environment, other species and ecosystems, and future generations. By developing lessons based on 'big ideas' like diversity, the public and conservation and change, teachers participating in CARE helped students understand connections between things, the importance of interpersonal relations and the value of collaborative learning for sustainability. Finally, CARE also embraced and promoted the idea that tertiary institutions can play a significant role in addressing real-life sustainability problems through teacher training.**

## **Keywords**

**Education for Sustainable Development, care, human rights, big ideas, real-life issues**

## **Introduction: From Rights to Solidarity**

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is considered a milestone achievement in the post-World War II years, placing the freedom, equality and protection of human beings of any creed, colour and faith at the centre of the world's agenda. Article 27 of the declaration also stresses the value of the arts in human life by stating that everyone has "the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts" (United Nations, Article 27). Human rights have been seen as a basic indicator of progress, democracy and peace and are considered to be desirable goals in what has been termed an age of rights (Bobbio, 1996). The idea that people are entitled to certain rights is widespread in many modern societies and is a basic principle in rights-based ethics. However, the emphasis on inalienable rights in rights-based ethics has also been critiqued for discouraging the possibility of change, given that its conception of Evil is based on a priori determinations (Badiou, 2001). Others, like Gilligan (1982), have challenged the idea that moral thinking which is based on rights represents a higher level of moral development than an ethics revolving around responsibility and care from a feminist perspective. Replacing a sense of self-righteousness rooted in individual rights with a vision based on compassion, care and solidarity leads to the possibility of thinking in relational terms.

This shift from an individualistic approach to a more relational one also has implications for artistic practice (Bourriaud, 2002), art education and education for sustainable development (ESD). The field of education (including art education) is sometimes perceived as a quest for

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more autonomy; schooling is often seen as a process through which children become individuals and independent thinkers in their trajectory towards adulthood. An individualism that thrives on rights and forgets the importance of solidarity, however, nurtures a narcissistic cult of the self-made individual, overlooking the fact that education is woven out of systems of support and care (Brugère, 2016). This article argues that an art education informed by principles of sustainability helps to promote an ethics of care and awareness of broad social needs and goals. Based on research emerging from an international, EU-funded research project, this article describes an online Continuous Professional Development (CPD) course offered to specialist primary Art teachers, generalist primary in-service teachers and pre-service teachers by a team at the University of Malta. The article makes reference to the research stage that followed the CPD, i.e. the implementation of lessons by participating teachers, who developed new pedagogies that infuse principles of education for sustainable development into art lessons in the primary sector through the use of six big ideas that support principles of care and solidarity. It also aims to show that teacher training courses in universities play a fundamental role in disseminating an ethics of care that is essential in the development of sustainable communities.

### **Caring about sustainability**

Care has important, usually positive and often underestimated, meanings in domestic life and social institutions, from education to health care, pastoral care and social work. Blustein (1991) defined four types of care, ranging from a more abstract concern for others to specific responsibilities and commitment to action: to care for, to have care of, to care about and to care that. 'Caring about' is considered to be the most committed type of care, in which persons act in ways that enhance or maintain the conditions of recipients of care without necessarily benefiting from such caring acts. The relationship between care and commitment revolves around the link between simply having values or beliefs and acting in ways that serve to achieve specific

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goals on the basis of such beliefs: “Though there cannot be commitment without care, there can be care without commitment” (Blustein, 1991, p. 11). Commitments also rely on knowledge of appropriate caring tasks. According to Tronto (1998), caregiving “involves knowledge about how to care. Although we often do not think of it this way, competence is the moral dimension of caregiving. Incompetent care is not only a technical problem, but a moral one” (p. 17). In other words, caring requires knowledge and valid assessments of different situations, emotions and needs. The value of competent and well-planned care work and public health, the importance of more care research as well as the precarious situation of various types of people involved in care became much more prominent during the COVID-19 pandemic (Fine & Tronto, 2020).

However, there exists a further global dimension of care that similarly requires know-how and depends on a commitment to action. Our responsibilities towards the environment we inhabit and other species and ecosystems form part of this broad dimension of care. If we think beyond the rights and self-interest of autonomous individuals today, we do so also because our current understanding of care must cater for future generations and the connections between organisms and ecosystems as well as multiple problems associated with global warming, poverty, discrimination and unsustainable practices in cities and towns. Sustainability relies on the development of a cooperative existence based on principles of social justice and an awareness of the consequences of present actions and decisions. Increasingly, research shows that educators can forge alliances between the arts and principles of sustainability because the arts are already predisposed towards the possibility of change and diversity (Hunter, Aprill, Hill & Emery, 2018). Contemporary artists like Andy Goldsworthy and Olafur Eliasson have raised awareness about environmental concerns, often placing natural processes at the centre of their work. Some major art events like the Helsinki Biennial are increasingly highlighting sustainable practices like recycling and respect for a territory’s biodiversity.

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The field of care theory can include the arts within its parameters of vision as well as ideas such as Green Care, which is inspired by feminist ethics of care yet revolves around transformative actions and attitudes that cultivate social justice, inclusion and sustainable practices (Moriggi, Soini, Bock, & Roep, 2020). Care is attentive to others' perspectives, connections between human beings and non-humans and connections between urban and rural environments. It is also a continuous process, never a completed project, and is supported by education. Caring for and about future generations therefore also means providing younger generations with a strong basis in ESD.

### **Education for Sustainable Development**

The United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014) sought “to integrate the principles, values and practices of sustainable development into all aspects of education and learning” (UNESCO, 2021a). Education was seen as a privileged tool to create more sustainable futures. This was eventually made explicit through SDG 4.7 that aims to ensure that by 2030 “... all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles” (United Nations, n.d.).

The attainment of such an SDG however depends on grassroots initiatives that rework their curricula to be more in synchronicity with the principles and values of Education for Sustainable Development. Though this may sound simple and plain-sailing, various macro and micro obstacles exist in practice, which highlight the need for more programmes and projects that focus on the empowerment of teachers, framed outside of the dominant societal paradigm, with higher education institutions taking a leading role in producing new knowledge, innovation and experiments for the promotion of sustainable development.

The recent Berlin process reiterated that “education is a powerful enabler of positive change

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of mindsets”, that can lead towards “the well-being of all within planetary boundaries” (UNESCO, 2021b). This requires the need for big ideas that challenge the notion of development too closely linked to the economic dimension and invites us to consider links between the idea of care and that of wellbeing. This echoes thinkers such as Amartya Sen, whose notion of “functionings” within development discourses led us to consider not what we have but what we can do and achieve with what we have (Sen, 1984), as well as wellbeing economists such as Allister McGregor, whose notion of subjective wellbeing reminds us that what we have translates into a person’s subjective evaluation of his or her quality of life (McGregor & Pouw, 2016).

Environmental Education and ESD are cross curricular subjects that are no longer associated with any particular subject matter, such as geography or science, but rather require a positioning from each curricular subject matter. Each subject matter can offer a unique entry point and opportunity for the infusion of ESD, and thus if the subject matter under consideration is the arts, it is important to identify the comparative advantage of the arts in promoting a positive change of mindsets aligned with sustainability, and the subjective evaluation of one’s wellbeing. How can teachers champion such a perspective? What big ideas support this? What is the role of care and compassion in such an endeavour? There is evidence that integrating arts into the curriculum boosts learning (DeMoss & Morris, 2002), while ESD develops sustainability competences relevant to all SDGs (UNESCO, 2017). Also, the purpose of Environmental Education is to apply critical thinking and problem-solving skills that lead to informed and responsible decisions (Environmental Protection Agency, 2021). Research by Fredriksson et al. (2020) has suggested that project work can support student learning on sustainable development. When such a project creates new spaces within the classroom for the coming together of groups of people to solve problems peacefully, this echoes the perspectives of the educational philosopher and social reformer Dewey, who strongly espoused the responsibility that people have to make the world a better place to live in (Williams, 2017). This coming together can be compromised

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in the times of a pandemic, yet research by Leal Filho et al. (2021) indicates that substituting face to face interactions with online hybrid formats could still attain their missions. What seems to be necessary in planning a course is an understanding of where it leads to and a clarification with respect to its goals (Simsekli, 2014).

### **Linking Education for Sustainable Development with Art Education**

The transnational Erasmus + research project *Visual art education in new times: Connecting Art with REal life issues* (CARE: 2019-1-CY01-KA203-058258) seeks to infuse education for sustainable development (ESD) principles into art education by developing and implementing teacher training programmes in different European countries. It explores teachers' competences and needs in relation to ESD in the primary sector, delivers training programmes that facilitate teachers' understanding of linkages between ESD and art education and enhances primary art curricula by developing innovative pedagogies with in-service and pre-service teachers that focus on areas such as social justice, nature and solidarity. CARE researches the potential of visual arts education, and particularly contemporary artistic practices, to respond to real-life issues related to social justice and responsible citizenship.

One of the more important stages in this project involved researchers at the University of Malta in the development and implementation of a Continuous Professional Development (CPD) course that would provide participating teachers with resources to develop different schemes of work in their own school contexts. The course encouraged educators to address ESD in a critical and reflective manner. A process of Action Research was conceptualised and designed to empower art educators to implement innovation at the intersection of ESD and art education, based on 6 big ideas, and to further their professional development through a community of practice. These big ideas were chosen to provoke teachers to think in new directions, beyond normal thematic areas such as climate change. This organic dynamic of creative



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thought and individualised support created a new space for in-depth reflections, leading to innovative lesson plans and hence change in the curriculum. New pedagogies were evaluated in a group context to reflect the horizontal dimension of peer-to-peer mentoring (teacher-to-teacher) and the vertical dimension (expert/tutor-to-teacher). Throughout the cycle of the course, the implementation of the lesson plans, and the subsequent evaluations, learners were encouraged to reflect on their own goals and action strategies, and ensure an action-oriented component linked to the wider goal of positioning oneself as a change maker, where theory and practice are interwoven together seamlessly.

Teacher participants were recruited through convenience sampling in the primary sector, targeting especially art teachers known through past research and work experience. After permission was sought from their heads of schools, these teachers approved their participation by signing consent forms. The implementation stage that followed the course involved a small number of teachers in the delivery and evaluation of lessons. This stage included five forms of 'data', all inter-linked. The digital photos of pupils' art works constituted the 'raw data' of the art lesson and provided details about the success of specific pedagogies. These photos also provided information about pupils' interpretations of ESD goals. The second data tool was the students' evaluation forms, in which they provided overall feedback about the lessons and what they learned. The third type of data was class discussions (similar to focus groups) that were normally used as introductory theme development sessions by teachers with pupils. The fourth type of data was the teachers' reports, in which they described students' views on ESD issues and ideas about imagery used in their own artwork. The fifth type of data were the teachers' lesson plans which were also collected for further analysis.

The course was delivered mostly asynchronously using the university's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) given current restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This course of ten online sessions focused on quite specific topics, including: art criticism, contemporary

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art and sustainable development and six big ideas (The Public; Ecological Literacy; Compassion; Diversity; Conservation and Change; Regeneration). The final sessions of the course presented participants with alternative pedagogies, and discussions and readings about Professional Learning Communities and Collaborative Lesson Study.

A big idea helps educators to map out the content of a curriculum; it is “a concept, theme, or issue that gives meaning and connection to discrete facts and skills” (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005, p. 5). The big ideas were carefully identified on the basis of literature and through discussion amongst the researchers. They were specifically chosen to encompass a wide spectrum of different values relating to the past (conservation), present realities (public space and ecology, for instance) and the future (change and regeneration). They were intended to help teachers make sense of complex realities related to overlapping issues in art and sustainable development and to think in terms of transformative teaching in relation to an ethics of care. Big ideas guided teachers in developing pupils’ meaning-making around research on works of art by contemporary artists (Sakatani & Pistolesi, 2009).

The course’s focus on the visual arts was balanced by an interdisciplinary slant. In one session, for example, the lecturer modelled storytelling, process drama and roleplay and invited students to create their own example of such a pedagogy either as a video or as a lesson plan. The CPD design created a feedback system intended to support continuous improvement and help develop a learning community of educators. Art was essentially presented as an exercise in political critique and action. Below, each of the big ideas will be described and illustrated with examples from lessons delivered by participating teachers in the implementation stage.

### *Big idea - Compassion*

One session dealt with the following questions: What is Compassion? What is self-compassion? In what ways can individuals and society benefit from Compassion? How can educators cultivate compassion using art? Can working collectively promote compassion?

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Etymologically, the root for compassion, *pati* (to suffer) with the prefix *com* (with) from Latin, means to *suffer with*. Compassion, is grounded in emotion and feeling but it supersedes sympathy and even though, like empathy, it includes the ability to relate to another person's suffering as if it were one's own, it also involves action. Kanov et al. (2004) explain compassion as having three facets: noticing, feeling and responding. 'Noticing' can be a cognitive recognition of pain or even, literally, an unconscious physical or affective reaction to another's suffering. 'Feeling' is an emotional response, an 'empathic concern' taking on the sufferer's perspective to the point of feeling their pain. 'Responding' is what distinguishes compassion from empathy, in that it is a strong desire to take action in the face of pain to alleviate it for the other. This suggests that compassion is not merely affective and behavioural, but is also cognitive. Being able to be compassionate with oneself and others is thought to promote individual wellbeing and improve mental health (Cosley et al., 2010; Feldman & Kuyken, 2011; MacBeth & Gumley, 2012; Hooria, 2018). There is a spate of research in mindfulness in education and its effects on both children and educators (MeikleJohn et al., 2012; Zenner et al., 2014; Rechtschaffen, 2016; Hahn & Weare, 2017; Wigelsworth & Quinn, 2020).

Compassion featured in several lessons that participating teachers delivered, encouraging collective work, which promotes support, understanding and care in the classroom. A generalist primary teacher with various nationalities in her classroom included show and tell exercises using music, art as well as references to food and drink in different countries. Puppets created by the children were animated by them, helping them overcome any inhibitions they might have. Students learnt collaboration, bridge building, compassion and the reduction of inequalities within and among countries (SDG 10). Students were asked to practise sustainability outside the classroom in order to build on the concept of learning by living, an extension of learning by doing (Qureshi, 2020). The impact of the project extended beyond the CPD course, as one teacher volunteered with her class to create posters for a new mental health care facility that

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was opening in their town to show compassion and support (Figure1).



Figure 1. A collaborative project developed by a class participating in CARE (teacher: Lydia Zammit)

### *Big idea - Ecological literacy*

Eco art education has the potential to nurture nature-friendly actions and promote environmentally aware decision making (Sunassee et al., 2021). Training teachers to value the potential of using art as a medium to promote SDGs makes them see possibilities in how to integrate critical thinking and activism about sustainability with most subjects. Eco Art Education was introduced in the CPD course as an integration of ESD and art that contributes to an integrated/systemic understanding of the world and a more 'Earth-centred' approach to living. The sessions discussed ample examples of how to use art, critical thinking and collaborative problem solving to bring sustainable concepts and issues into the classroom to help cultivate ecological literacy.

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Most participants designed schemes of work that included various lessons about SDG 7 (Affordable and clean energy), SDG 11 (Sustainable cities and communities), SDG 14 (Life on Land) and SDG 15 (Life below Water). One of the participating teachers designed a lesson that focused on habitat loss and was inspired by the works of Shirin Neshat, Sue Coe and Barbara Kruger. Students created postcards to express their emotions and thoughts about habitat loss with the broader community. The postcards were addressed to various real persons in the political sphere, showing that the students understood care as a collective responsibility.

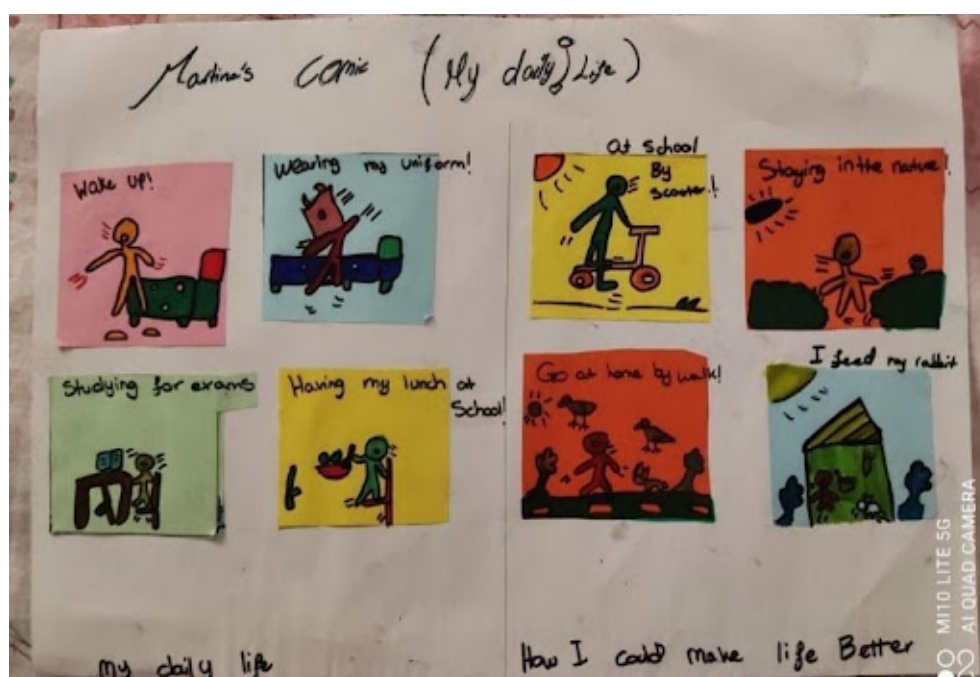


Figure 2. A student's comic narrating her daily life, aiming at a healthy lifestyle and ways to reduce air pollution (teacher: Kamy Aquilina)

The same teacher planned another lesson inspired by comics and Keith Haring's stick figure drawings and narration. Students were asked to draw and narrate their daily life at home and explain how caring for the environment contributes to their well-being and sustainable development (Figure 2). The children's art work portrayed ways of reducing air pollution by riding a bicycle and walking to school amongst other things.

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### *Big idea - Regeneration*

Education for regeneration, "the capacity to bring into existence again" (Rhodes, 2017, p. 104), is crucial to life on earth. This big idea builds on to the idea of collaboration and co-operation discussed in the Compassion sessions. While sustainability in terms of social progress, equality, environmental protection, conservation of natural resources and stable economic growth is key to balance our economic, environmental and social needs, humanity needs to progress towards a regenerative human culture that is healthy, resilient and adaptable (Wahl, 2018). It is necessary to learn how we can participate with the environment—using the health of ecological systems as a basis for design (Reed, 2007). This CPD session emphasised the importance of a shift from a fragmented approach to a systemic approach, and showed how the combination of art education and ESD can help nurture this approach. What is the role of ESD in restoring and regenerating what we have already destroyed?

One participant's lesson yielded ideas for regeneration targeting SDG 15: Life on Land. The lesson introduced students to ways of maintaining or regenerating biodiversity by planting trees, cleaning public areas and protecting different species. Children were asked to recycle junk to construct a bird house. When materials rescued from rubbish are reinvented creatively or combined with others resulting in upcycled art, new meanings are created on several levels, in relation to environmental considerations, as well as in relation to the significance of materials and materiality (Odegard, 2012). Surplus materials from industries or companies are often also used in the classroom and given a new lease of life through the students' ability to construct and be creative to come up with functional objects such as birdhouses. The participating teacher planned this in such a way that once the birdhouse becomes unusable it can be returned to the waste stream. It is important that no trace of waste is left when artworks are no longer needed. In other words, the artwork produced should not generate more waste eventually (Boldrick, 2015).

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### *Big idea - The Public*

The adjective ‘public’ concerns the people as a whole while the noun ‘public’ refers to “the [members of the] community in general”; the public space par excellence being the “pub” - the abbreviated form of public house (Lexico Dictionaries English, 2020). The public includes many different sub-spheres, civil services, and institutions, each with several voices in terms of race, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, and class. Thus, “discussions of public art might rather start from the recognition that complete consensus is impossible” (Kelly, 1996, p. 15). The different ways of thinking about ‘public’ inevitably lead to several ideas of public space, which need to be defined before being able to determine the possible role of art in it (Matossian, 2005). The term ‘public art’ is often used as an umbrella term covering any art that is not displayed in art galleries or museums and ranges from a reference to government commissioned monumental sculpture to subway graffiti (Hunting, 2005).

The sessions in the CPD that dealt with ‘The Public’ concerned the participants’ definition of the terms ‘public’, ‘private’ and ‘public art’, their awareness of the impact of public art and their planning of lessons that engage students with public art. Challenged by thinking questions (for example, what relationship do you see between a town’s public spaces and its public art?), participants could reflect on the physical, social and cultural impact that public art can make. In addition, participants could propose designs for public art in local sites, share images of their sketches and suggest activities that engage students with public art at the primary level. The participants’ ideas and designs shared on the online platform served to provide them with a space where they questioned the designs, reflected further and inspired each other. These discussions about public art led to lessons with similar goals during the implementation stage (Figure 3).

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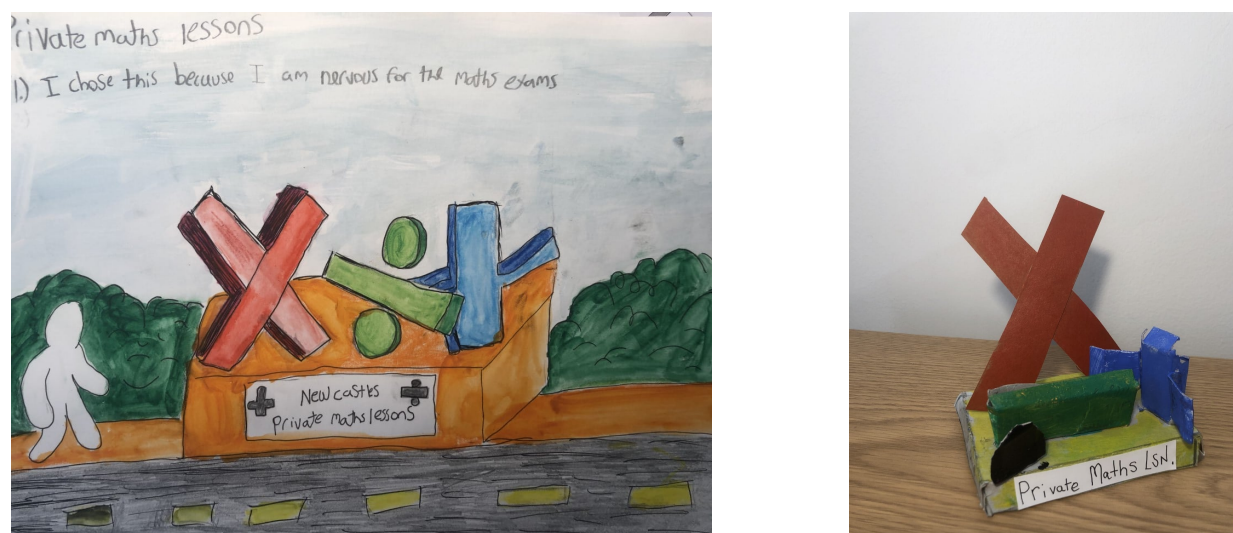


Figure 3. Student's 2-D design and 3-D model for public art (teacher: John Paul Muscat)

### *Big idea – Diversity*

Art education has a strong track record in “challenging hierarchical paradigms which reinforce prejudice and stereotyping . . . (and encouraging) reflexive processes and critical engagement with diversity and pluralist perspectives (Bianchi, 2011, p. 279). The big idea ‘diversity’ can address multicultural and intercultural issues to equip young people for their role within a pluralist twenty-first century society.

In the course, diversity included references to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic backgrounds, mental and physical abilities and even biodiversity. Participants read the first three articles of the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2002) concerning identity, diversity and pluralism. They also thought of ways in which they could work with other teachers and stakeholders in their school to help students understand the significance of biodiversity. Participants became aware that teachers need to introduce topics related to ESD across the curriculum and think beyond their personal specialisations.

References to personal and cultural identities were common in participants’ planned lessons; teachers used contemporary artworks to encourage students to reflect on, explore and commu-



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nicate their understanding of their identities (Mason & Vella, 2013). One of the participants (Liliya Cauchi) taught her students to use clay to mould sculptural variants of food inspired by local cuisine. Another teacher cultivated her students' respect for different nationalities and cultures. She described her experience of teaching this topic as "a lesson for life. My students learnt to appreciate each other, and they are being united in diversity" (teacher's lesson evaluation). Another participating teacher focused on biodiversity and referred to works by Max Ernst and Anselm Kiefer's textural textured paintings to inspire students to create a surreal landscape using different natural materials. She asked students to collect natural materials outdoors and to apply texture-rubbing techniques on uneven surfaces found in the school yard.

### *Big idea - Conservation and Change*

As most celebrities are in arenas of sports or entertainment, the role models offered to the young are usually limited to those transmitting the message that a successful and meaningful life is dominated by money or fame. Gioia (2008) argues that education is the only social force able to potentially counterbalance the profit-driven commercialization of cultural values. In schools, the big idea 'Conservation and Change' can address cultural values by encouraging young people to consider the idea of welcoming change while appreciating heritage and preserving the natural and built environment. 'Conservation' refers to the preservation and protection of things like natural resources, while 'change' refers to the transformation of a part or whole item, attitude, and so on.

The session that introduced the big idea 'Conservation and Change' explored the Conservation-Change spectrum, challenging teachers with questions about the appreciation of heritage, conservation of the natural and built environment as well as the welcoming of change. Thinking questions included: Can you think of examples of products or initiatives that were presented as ecological and sustainable but you felt were really about allowing a business-as-usual scenario? The course also included examples of art activities related to the same topic; for instance, stu-

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dents could design posters that can be hung around the school premises to show other students and school staff how to conserve resources used at school (such as electricity).

A participant linked her lessons with SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production. One of the main goals of her lessons was to raise awareness about material consumption through the creation of sustainable artworks. After eliciting students' understandings of sustainability, the participant invited them to brainstorm their ideas concerning 'Sustainable Art' and materials they needed to start collecting to create sustainable art. Crafted objects in her class included wearable items and accessories made of a mix of paper collage and other junk materials (Figure 4).



Figure 4. A student wearing her sustainable artwork (teacher: Lisa Pace)

## Conclusions

Various conclusions may be drawn from the course and subsequent developments in classes taught by teachers participating in CARE. Firstly, at a pedagogical level the use of big ideas helps students and teachers to see and explain connections between things, including connections between the visual and the ecological. Artistic and non-artistic materials used in class are not understood merely as media but as an integral component of a much broader network of concepts and processes that have a direct impact on people's lives. Students are not only encouraged to care about future impacts of present actions, but learn *how to care*.

Secondly, the infusion of ESD into art curricula carries with it the possibility of underlining the importance of interpersonal relations and the ability to care about others' perspectives and the future of materials we make use of today. The connections this course explored between principles of sustainability and those of art education and contemporary art revolve around an understanding of education as the development of one's character through values like respect for diversity, compassion and the wellbeing of a community. An artwork in a public space is not only an aesthetic statement but exists within a communal environment with its own traditions, culture, residents' needs and histories. Art can work towards sustaining these needs and histories if artists first care about the work's context, looking at it through the lens of reciprocity rather than autonomy or simply 'rights'.

Thirdly, the research project CARE has indicated that art is an important vehicle for engaged and collaborative learning for sustainability. When one looks at the current challenges the globe is facing, the status of art within educational establishments needs to be reevaluated and revalued. The teaching of art in CARE is redefined within a broader political dimension that shows solidarity with vulnerable persons whilst developing an ecologically sound philosophy within a professional learning community.

Finally, CARE has confirmed the leading role that universities have in addressing real-life

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sustainability problems through teacher training. Beyond the practical processes inherent in any teaching environment, universities as well as schools need to recognise wider, transformative and future-oriented goals of education that are inspired by social justice. The passion and engagement of teachers, sometimes beyond their formal job descriptions, is key to nurturing the development of transformative lifestyles in young children. In order to scale up impact, however, this dimension needs to be supported by policy and relevant institutions like universities. The urgency of sustainability challenges requires that teachers are not left to swim against the hegemonic currents on their own.

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