



Innovative Exemplars and Curriculum Created from Online Videos of Visual Artists in Greater Sudbury

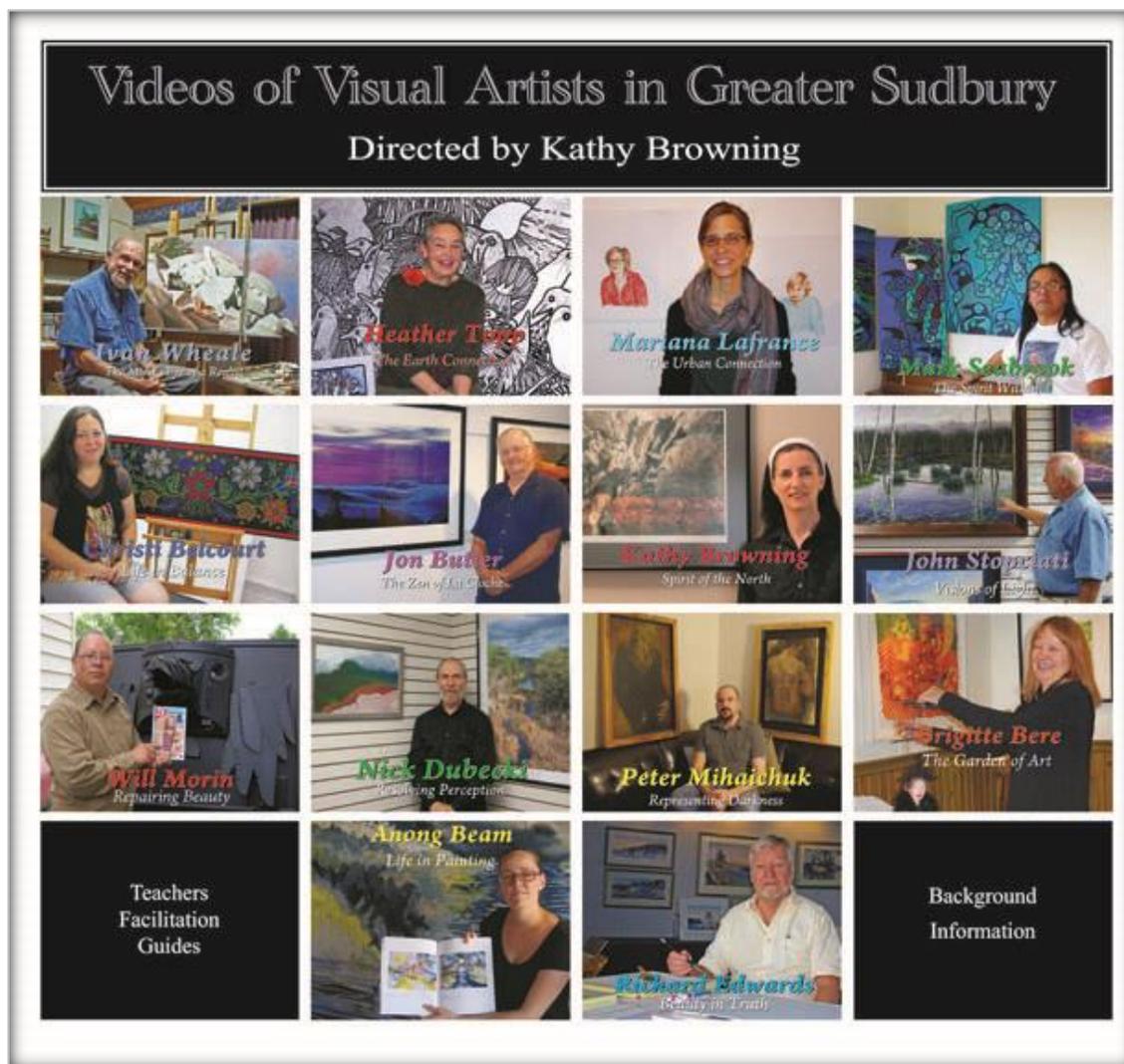
*Kathy Browning
Laurentian University*

Abstract:

The article begins with a description of the award-winning online artists' video project, *14 Videos of Visual Artists in Greater Sudbury*, and concludes with a presentation of my pre-service BEd students' creative use of this digital resource. The video series was conceived and created with the aim of filling a gap in materials that were sorely lacking to teachers of Visual Arts in Ontario. The video series includes Aboriginal, Métis, Francophone and Anglophone artists and highlights the artists' interconnections with the local community. The streamed, linked and library-accessible videos (see http://www3.laurentian.ca/visual_artists/) served as inspiration for student teachers' creation of their own innovative curricular exemplars. In the article, I describe the complex inner workings of the research project in order to establish a context for the students' work. I show how the students were able to conceptualize curriculum through being able to better see what and how to teach through creating art and making exemplars in a variety of media. Using the artists' work as a catalyst, the students worked in groups, selecting artists whose artwork spoke to them while creating exemplars and co-creating curricula that would be meaningful. The article concludes with student exemplars that offer insights into the value of focusing on local artists in order to better meet Art Education curriculum goals in Ontario and, by extension, elsewhere in Canada.

Keywords: Art Education; artists; Indigenous; digital videos; Northern art

How do Art Education teachers inform students about artists in their geographical area? How can students get a sense of artists' work when this information is not available? How can teachers offer students a "space of possibilities" (Aoki, 1996/2005, p. 318) if there are no possibilities from local artists to choose from? In response to the above questions, I created and produced the award-winning *14 Videos of Visual Artists in Greater Sudbury*¹. The video series can be viewed by clicking on this link: http://www3.laurentian.ca/visual_artists/.



Browning (2013). Screenshot from website of *14 Videos of Visual Artists in Greater Sudbury*.

At Laurentian University, where I teach Visual Arts Education, my BEd students put the video series to creative use. For the reader to understand how the students' innovative exemplars and curricula were inspired by the local artists' work, it is important to first understand the inner workings of the project. The following is an account of the research project's objectives, its theoretical roots, and its methodology.

Project Objectives

My main objective was to generate a deeper understanding of creative culture in the Greater Sudbury region by interviewing fourteen artists in Northeastern Ontario on the subject of their art. The cultural matrix in Greater Sudbury includes Aboriginal, Métis, Francophone and Anglophone communities. It is vitally important for students to be able to identify with artists from their own cultural background. First Nation, Métis and Inuit students need to see themselves represented in the curriculum (Lewington, 2013). This is no less true for Francophone and Anglophone students from smaller communities. Identifying with artists helps students to understand their own environment, through the artists' eyes. The Canadian Teachers' Federation document entitled, *Knowing One's Community through Arts Education*, suggests that it is short-sighted to only mention artists' names in curriculum documents and leave it up to teachers to "present the artistic community to the students" (Canadian Teachers' Federation, 2015, p. 8); this adds pressure on local teachers to inform themselves on a subject with few resources. How can teachers teach about local artists, and students identify with artists in their geographical area, if there is no substantive information available to which they may refer? The fact is that very little, if any, information has been published on artists in Greater Sudbury; this lack includes books, catalogues, websites, and videos. There are only a few regional artists who have published their art in various ways (for example, see: Browning, 1982, 1991, 1993, 2004, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2015, 2018a, 2018b, in-press; Devine, 2007a, 2007b; Hill, 2006; Lafrance, 2008, 2011; The Willisville Mountain Project, 2009; Watershed, 2012). The artists featured in the series have had numerous art exhibitions yet very little has been published on their art that teachers and students can use in schools.

How are teachers with little background in the visual arts supposed to ask their students questions that the Ontario Ministry of Education (2009) suggests that they ask when they do not know the artists' work, nor have the materials on hand with which to teach? How can teachers of Visual Arts develop an aesthetic understanding of the artists' work when they are not provided with any resources or background with which to do this and there is no other information available? How are students "to interpret the works of others either individually or in a group" (2010a, p. 29), as Ontario Ministry of Education documents require, if it does not state in the guidelines how teachers and students are to interpret the artworks, or what their interpretations are to be based on, and when there is no information available on any of the artists, nor suggested ways to go about finding out? Building students' identities while supporting teachers has been a focus of this project. Both teachers and students need open online data banks of videos and teaching resources, where they can readily access research on local artists. I wanted to offer students and teachers "a landscape of multiple possibilities" (Aoki, 1992/2005, p. 271) and a "lived experience of curriculum . . . wherein the curriculum is experienced, enacted, and reconstructed" (Pinar, 2011, p. 1) through creating exemplars inspired by local artists' work.

In Ontario, and in Canada generally, Visual Arts, from Kindergarten to Grade 8, is not taught predominantly by specialists, but by generalists who have minimal training in the subject area, and who often teach numerous subjects to the same group of students. In elementary school, when the

subject of Visual Arts is undertaken, it is mostly being taught by teachers who do not feel comfortable to teach this subject discipline. Gaps in the curriculum itself are not helpful; so while the Ontario Ministry of Education encourages critical thinking in the Visual Arts program and proposes many questions for teachers to ask their students, there are no guidelines as to what an acceptable answer would be.

Lacking in art education materials in particular, at the time of research project, were descriptions of local artists' work, websites to refer to, and suggested texts to read. In the Ontario curriculum, teachers and students were not being encouraged to research lesser known artists, who, in fact, comprise most of the artists in Northern Ontario. There are very few catalogues published by art galleries in smaller communities in Northern Ontario (Sudbury is *not* Toronto). Furthermore, even if published, the catalogues are often difficult to find, especially if the teacher has not bought one at the time of the exhibition. While art exhibitions are a lot of work, often no traces remain of the exhibition. Not all artists have websites or books published. Nor do all artists have publications of their artwork with quality, full-colour photographs which teachers and students in schools can access for deep discussions of artists' works. All of this pointed to the ever-increasing need for digital videos on local artists' work, particularly from more remote areas like Northeastern Ontario. It is imperative that teachers and students identify with artists in their own community, and one important way is through digital videos and digital still photography. These could be made readily available through libraries, or online through the Ontario Ministry of Education (OME), and associations like the Canadian Society for Education through Art (CSEA), the Canadian Society for Studies in Education (CSSE) or the National Art Education Association (NAEA). However, the central problem has been that there are many Canadian artists, particularly in smaller communities, who are not mentioned in Ontario's curriculum guidelines.

During the writing of the OME curriculum guidelines for *The Arts*, I attended meetings (in both Toronto as well as Sudbury) in which I requested that the guidelines include national artists, with a focus on local artists. In fact, my participation in these curriculum meetings was instrumental in getting Aboriginal artists, particularly Ojibway, mentioned; for example, artists such as Daphne Odjig and Norval Morrisseau (Ontario Ministry of Education ((OME)), 2009, p. 156), Carl Beam (p. 145), and Carl Ray (p. 83, p. 119). I suggested others, too; for example, Inuit artist Kenojuak Ashevak (p. 130), Cree artist Tomson Highway (p. 87) as well as Emily Carr, who lived in the forest and was inspired by Indigenous ways of knowing (OME p. 130; OME, 2010a, p. 96). "Aboriginal cultures in Canada (e.g., Mi'kmaq quillwork, Inuit soapstone sculpture, Haida cedar masks)" (OME, 2010a p. 130) were also included as a result of these discussions. However, many lesser known Aboriginal and Métis artists were not included; nor were contemporary artists who bring a postmodern digital perspective. Nor did the OME guidelines include Francophone artists or artists from smaller communities. As much as I was thankful for the many suggested artists who were included, there remained many who were not. These gaps still need to be addressed. One question preoccupying the research, therefore, concerned what and who was not mentioned in the curriculum; another question concerned access.

How can art educators teach students about "constructing personal and cultural identity" or "developing a sense of self and a sense of the relationship between the self and others locally,

nationally, and globally" (OME, 2010b, p. 5), if there is no online data bank containing lists of suggested books, as well as links to videos accessible to teachers and students? Accessible data banks of videos of local artists talking about their art were not available, at the time of my research project. YouTube and Art 21 (a web site for videos on artists and art) cannot bridge this gap as they lack information on artists in rural areas. I therefore also requested that the Ministry's online data bank include biographies, still photography, and video examples of artists' works as well as of artists talking about their work. It would be a bank created *for* teachers and students and made accessible *to* them. While teachers may be able to organize a trip to an art gallery, actually seeing digital videos and still photography of these artists' work is extremely important. Teachers and students, whether in schools or universities, need to be able to access data banks of digital videos where artists from every region are using multi-media tools to share their images and ideas.

Theoretical Framework: Rurality and Digital Videos

The research project that informs this article combined theories of rurality and place with recognition of the importance of digital media.² According to Corbett (2014), "rural communities occupy an important place on the Canadian educational landscape" (p. 1). Rurality is "located in the way it represents the intersection of people and place" (Corbett, 2013, p. 3). Jokela, Hiltunen, and Härkönen (2015), in discussing the North, have pointed to "the special conditions of the rural and semi-rural urban places outside the cities and culture centres" (p. 436). To rectify the imbalance, Corbett (2014, p 15-16) refers to Castells' (2009) and Urry's (2000) notion of "spaces of place" as a concept which needs to be better understood, explored and developed for Art Education curricula from rural communities. By offering a greater abundance of information on rural artists, we might redress the paucity of information currently available and try to match the richness of resources ready-to-hand with respect to urban communities.

We have long known that digital video has the "power to translate experience into new forms" (McLuhan, 1964, p. 64), that "media are the primary vehicles through which we come to know ourselves and others" (Stack & Kelly, 2006, p. 20). And yet, very little digital video research has been done in this area (Goldman, Booker, & McDermott, 2008; Goodman, 2003, 2005; Szekely & Szekely, 2005), particularly on artists in remote areas. The Gulf Islands Film and Television School, British Columbia (GIFTS) has published some work (viz., Darts, Castro, Grauer, & Sinner, 2010; Castro & Grauer, 2010; Grauer, Castro, & Lin, 2012; Lin, Castro, & Grauer, 2011; Lin, Castro, Sinner, & Grauer, 2011). These types of programs offer curriculum possibilities in video not readily available in regular educational settings (Goldfarb, 2002; Goodman, 2003; Tyner, 1998; Weber & Mitchell, 2008). Teachers and students need to be able to access data banks of digital videos where artists are talking about their work, with cut-in digital photographs, which help exemplify these descriptions. According to Briggs (2016), "video production involves . . . still and moving images, texts, animations, visual transitions and effects, and a soundtrack that may feature audio that is tied to the visual track sound effects that are 'overdubbed,' and/or 'voice-over' narration" (p. 75). Teachers can teach students to "learn about some of the elements and principles of design and begin to describe how the elements are used by the artists", this as per Ministry guidelines (for example, see: Ontario Ministry of

Education, 2009, p. 63). Adams (2015) believes that digital tools can help rural communities in particular to better understand “practices to enact tangible changes in their community”. However, in order to do so, teachers and students need ready access to information about local artists.

Introducing *The 14 Videos Project*

I am a Producer/Director/Researcher of the *14 Videos Project*, and worked in partnership with the Director of the Laurentian University Film Studio, Dr. Hoi Cheu, who acted as the Videographer/Editor. We created videos that were intended to support the implementation of the Visual Arts in Ontario’s curriculum: The Arts Grades 1-8 (2009); The Arts Grades 9 and 10 (2010a), and The Arts Grades 11 and 12 (2010b). The videos featured 14 local artists, accompanied by fourteen Teachers Facilitation Guides (Browning, 2014). The Facilitation Guides included pre-viewing and post-viewing questions, which could help in teaching and also be used across a variety of other subject disciplines including, to name but a few, Technology, Indigenous studies, Environmental studies, Women’s/Feminist studies, Media studies, Curriculum studies, History, English, Literacy studies, and Geography. As already stated, the purpose was to add to the knowledge base of artists in Canada, particularly with respect to more remote areas like Northern Ontario, this through videos, linking and online sites for information access. The completed video series has received the Curriculum Services Canada Seal of Approval (2013) and the Canadian Network for Innovation in Education, Excellence and Innovation in the Integration of Technology in the K-12 Classroom Award (2014). Teachers who have taken my workshops describe how, with these resources, they can show a clip, talk about the environment, discuss Indigenous perspectives, or have their students create a piece of art, music, or dance, or write a poem or story.

Methodology of *The 14 Videos Project*

I approached the development of *The 14 Videos Project* as a multi-case qualitative research study. After initial telephone and/or e-mail contact, followed by written permissions, I met each of the artists, conducting standardized yet open-ended interviews; Hoi Cheu digitally videotaped our exchanges. All artists were asked the same thirty questions; however artists elaborated in their own ways on such subjects as their creativity as children, educational and artistic influences, how media has evolved, sources of inspiration, use of technology, teaching, and future goals. The videotaped interviews took place in galleries, artists’ studios, artists’ homes, and outdoor locations. It was important to interview the artists where they felt comfortable and could best represent their artwork (Elwood & Martin, 2000; Morton-Williams 1985; Yin, 1989). The videotaped interviews and thick descriptions included field notes, thus forming a broad basis on which I could later develop digital stories by conducting inductive comparative analysis of emergent categories using grounded theory (Glaser, 1978), a method I had used elsewhere (Browning, 1994, 2006). NVIVO was helpful to compare video clips for commonalities. I also digitally photographed the artists and their artwork, which was later cut into the digital video footage to get the best possible high-resolution images of their work. I worked together with the editor to include footage which clearly told each artist’s story. We aspired to a respectful, inclusive process. All artists were given a copy of their video after initial editing. Their suggestions were considered prior to making final edits. Final versions were test

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screened, revised, exported, mastered and copied, before being distributed to the partners to create a video library and online data banks for research and teaching purposes. The partners included the Ontario Ministry of Education (OME), the Knowledge Network for Applied Education Research (KNAER), and Laurentian University, with links on the websites of associations such as the Ontario Art Education Association (OAEA), the Canadian Society for Education through Art (CSEA), the Canadian Society for the Study of Education (CSSE), and Inspire. Links are also included on the teaching federations' sites, such as the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO), the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF), and the Ontario English Catholic Teachers Association (OECTA). The videos were streamed at Laurentian University with links to KNAER and the artists themselves.

The project was attentive to a creative research process. Final videos of 10 to 20 minutes in length involved shooting up to 7 hours per artist while the very lengthy process of editing took as much as 20 times that, from raw footage to final cut. Further, as part of the creative research process, specific editing styles were chosen for different artists. French-Swiss film director Jean-Luc Godard's jump cut method was preferred by Francophone artist Mariana Lafrance's video as this fast-paced editing style suited her contemporary artwork. Specific music was selected for each video that could support the artists' work, for which musical permissions were acquired. I also sought out and included specific musicians that the artist requested. For example, Jon Butler requested Ian Tamblyn's music. Jon was one of the organizers for a project which included 45 artists who wanted to save the Willisville Mountain from becoming a quarry (see: <http://www.willisville.ca/Willisville Mountain Project.htm>). The artwork created for this exhibition travelled to five different locations in Northeastern Ontario, bringing attention to the beauty of the white quartzite mountain, as well as the need for its preservation. The project was successful as the mountain was saved for generations to explore. This project, the artists and artwork created was later published as a book entitled *The Willisville Mountain Project*. Ian also performed and created a CD of music about the mountain. A similar approach was used in presenting many of the other artists and their work. Aboriginal artist Mark Seabrook had a rock band called *No Reservations*. Its music and lyrics worked well with his video. The music of *Phenomenonsemble* was used for Nick Dubecki's work, as well as for the videos I created to describe this group's performance artwork, music, and musical instruments. Métis artist Will Morin sang and played a drum while his artwork was videotaped, whereas Métis artist Christi Belcourt requested traditional songs by elder ALOWHITE. Terrance Witzu was hired to create music for Mariana Lafrance's contemporary photography. In short, each video combined the work of local artists with the music of local musicians to create a complexly layered resource that celebrated the creative communities in and around Sudbury and that could serve to show students the richness of their rural identities.

Exemplifying Rural Creative Culture

Regionally developed resources can play a special role in art education. By focusing on the unique diversity of cultures and themes in the Sudbury area, and by extension, highlighting the importance of developing regional resources to support art education outside of the big urban

centres, the research gathered exemplary artists and shared their work in digital forms that were *affordable, accessible* and *enriching*, not only to teachers and students in the region, but provincially, nationally and internationally. The project also offered a *method* by which to do so. Through the videos created, the fourteen artists exemplified creative culture around Sudbury even as they discussed their relationship to the landscape and described environmental projects. For instance, in her video *The Urban Connection*, Francophone artist Mariana Lafrance talked about what it was like to grow up on Manitoulin Island, how she identified with Sudbury, and how the city affected her. She offered “new perspectives of place, understanding, translation, and anxiety” (Browning, 2014). For his part, in his video *Repairing Beauty*, Métis painter and sculptor Will Morin discussed misconceptions about Aboriginal people and the importance of educating others about Indigenous culture. He talked about his own art and how it gave him confidence, as well as about his education and influences on his art. For instance, he spoke about elements found in his artworks, referring to a modern expression of a raven sculpture and explained the significance of ravens in the Ojibway culture. Will also explained the Sudbury Green Stairs Project wherein he worked with local schools to display students' artwork so it can be “heard and seen in public places”. He created the frames from recycled materials in which the students' artwork could be displayed annually. His goal was to inspire youth. Will went on to describe his re-appropriation of images in his totem pole sculpture that is created out of car parts. The car parts are made by companies that use names of Aboriginal tribes (e.g., Cherokee). He has created many sculptures from recycled materials that can be found throughout Sudbury. Will believes in reusing materials so as to reduce the pressure on the environment (Browning, 2014). By viewing the work of these selected artists, students and teachers can gain a sense of design, relationship with the land, and the cultures that make up this vital Northern community.

Having now provided the objectives, the rationale, the rurality of place, the background and the methodology of the project, I will next discuss the ways in which this online videos series inspired BEd students to create innovative exemplars and conceptualize curriculum for teaching Visual Arts.

Students' Creative Responses to The 14 Videos Project

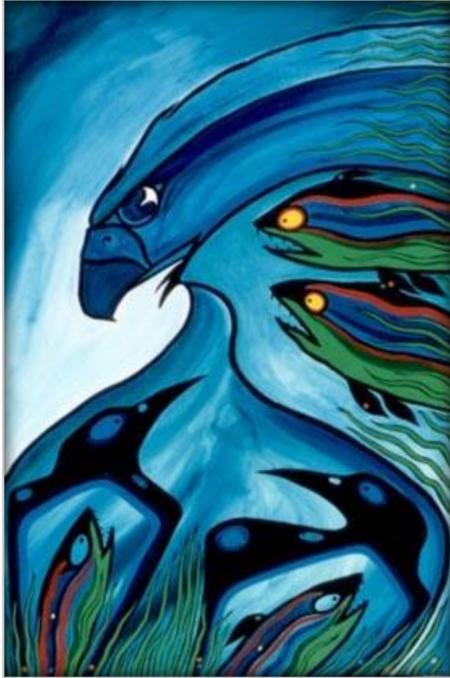
I teach Primary/Junior, Grades K-6 and Junior/Intermediate, Grades 4-10 Visual Arts in mandatory pre-service BEd courses. There are mostly Physical Education majors in my courses. The majority of students have very little experience in visual arts and have not used a variety of media before. One assignment, called the Artists' Video Curriculum Planning Project, inspires students to use the artists' works as catalysts for their own creation. Through creating art and making exemplars for teaching in a variety of media, the student teachers conceptualize curriculum while being better able to see what and how to teach. Students in groups select artists whose artwork speaks to them while creating and co-creating curriculum that works in relation to each other and the artists. They research and investigate how to best represent their ideas and the artists' works, including the plurality of their voices. The students are transformed through this process and many feel it to be cathartic.

Multi-modal artwork uses several modes/media. Materials, placement and organization of the content all create meaning communicated through multimodal visual literacy. Corbett (2014) suggests that “it [multi-modality] may be a more academic, creativity-based, and innovation-focused curriculum that fits best with this new reality and the real challenge for 21st-century rural education” (p. 14). As in Berry, Hawisher and Selfe’s (2012) born-digital book, the digital video project was conceived to encourage digital literacy by helping students understand the artistic perspectives of local—here rural—artists. Combining ideas through re-composition allowed the students/creators to understand their local artistic community, through a lived experience inspired by video. This transformative process was accomplished by using stills of the artist’s work from the videos while understanding the message in that mode and using it as inspiration to create something new. Video clips were incorporated into PowerPoint presentations. Students also learned how to download video clips and still photographs from streamed sites and DVDs and integrate them into their PowerPoints. Students cut and pasted from Windows and Mac computers using a variety of paths to import video stills and clips from the online streamed videos, which were then embedded in their presentations. These streamed, linked and library-accessible videos were then re-imaged. One student even created and included her own video of how to do quilling in her PowerPoint.

Students also used the Teacher’s Facilitation Guides, artists’ websites, and DVDs. The resulting group assignments (which included PowerPoints as well as their original exemplars) were presented with artists’ background information, images of their inspirations, photographs of their exemplars, explanations of the relationship to The Arts guidelines, lessons (plans) for schools, and assessment tools. Each student in the group created in a different media while choosing a different inspiration from their chosen artist. Students were encouraged not to mimic the artists’ work. Each student chose a different artwork by the group’s selected artist to inspire them. Through my research and in my teaching, I have helped students learn how to interpret artists’ works and create art that informs their professional teaching practice. Students can create, reflect, analyze and critically discuss these artists’ works by using these digital videos, which support presenting, responding, exploring and valuing visual forms, thus offering a sense of identity in cultural contexts while making connections beyond the classroom. This rich student art education experience has encouraged others in turn to use these ideas and resources in their classrooms while making connections with their own communities.

The following are some examples of artists’ stills from the videos and inspired exemplars that the pre-service BEd students created. They represent only a few examples of what the students have created in my Visual Arts courses, inspired by the videos of *14 Visual Artists in Greater Sudbury*³.

Anthony created an artwork that represented Ojibway artist Mark Seabrook’s description of being part of the Bird and Fish clans.



Artist: Mark Seabrook



Student: Anthony Scola

During her presentation, Mackenzie described both Mark's and her artworks through the elements and principles of design, emphasizing unity and showing how her photographs work together as they are all about the environment and create visual harmony.



Artist: Mark Seabrook



Student: Mackenzie Hamlin

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In his video, *Visions of Light*, landscape painter, John Stopciati was “inspired by the beauty of Northern Ontario landscapes and historic structures. . . . He discusses how he became a painter and the imagery that inspires him to create” (Browning, 2014). Amber was inspired by the red chairs in John Stopciati’s painting. She then photographed her painted clay chairs in front of different backdrops and also placed the chairs looking out her university residence window. She encouraged others to get their students to create in clay and then make backgrounds that can be drawn, painted, photographed, or photoshopped.



Artist: John Stopciati



Student: Amber Tulloch

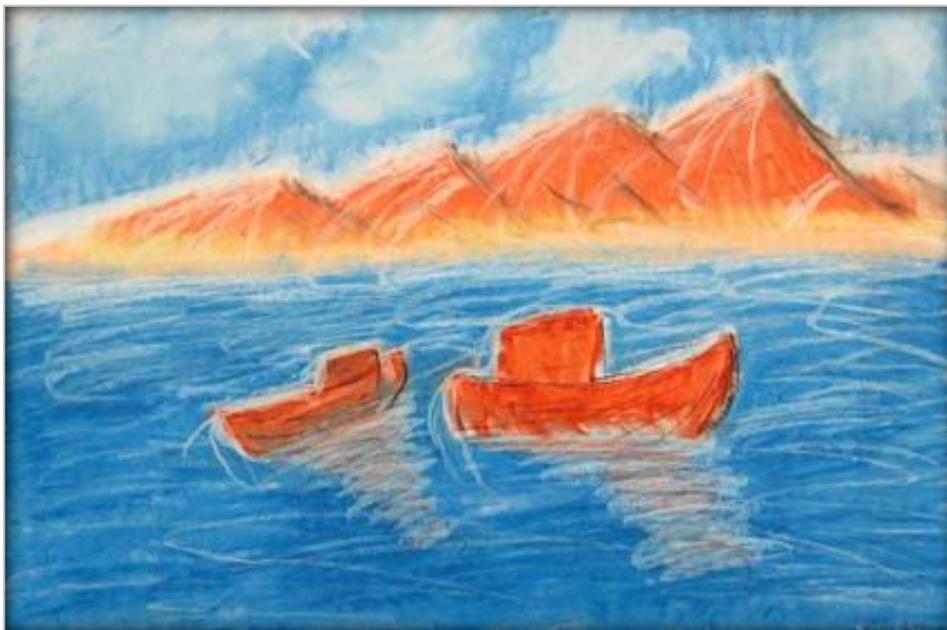


Student: Amber Tulloch

Justin talked about pattern, emphasis and proportion. He discussed many of John's paintings while sensitively describing his use of colour and light.



Artist: John Stopciati



Student: Justin Batman

Samantha's goal was to have her students choose a Canadian Aboriginal artist to research and to have them take a photograph inspired by their artists' work. They would then photoshop the photo to create an artwork desired and present it to the class, along with providing a short biography of their Canadian Aboriginal artist.



Artist: Christi Belcourt



Student: Samantha Jones

Laura talked about the elements and principles of design, emphasizing lines, shapes, colours, textures, space and balance, in both Christi's and her artwork. She simplified the image for cut and paste with paper for elementary school.

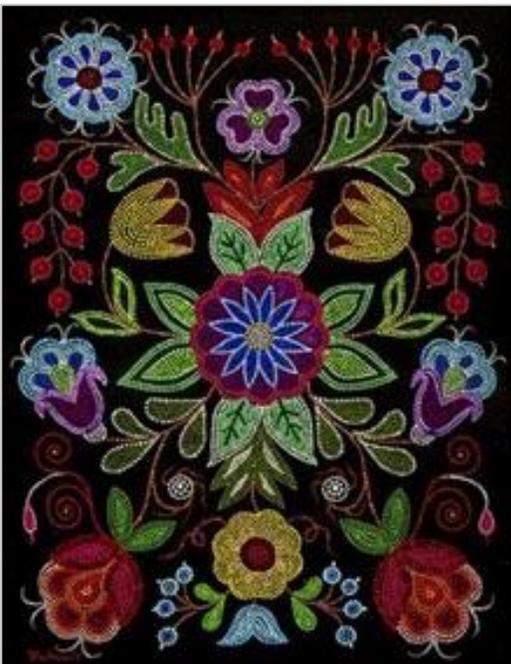


Artist: Christi Belcourt (detail of larger work)



Student: Laura Gilmore

Student Hunter Truong-Nguyen talked about space, line, colour, directional movement, value, texture and beadwork, balance, and rhythm. Christi Belcourt's artwork has been adopted by Italian fashion designer Valentino. According to Hunter, it was based on Valentino's respect for collaboration with Indigenous cultures and environmental practices. The reproductions are faithful to Christi's original paintings (for commentary and images, see https://www.google.ca/search?q=christi+belcourt+valentino&rlz=1C1EODB_enCA573CA634&tbn=isch&tbo=u&source=univ&sa=X&ved=0ahUKewiqu4KY8YPcAhUhxoMKHdjxBBgQsAQIjg&biw=984&bih=856). Hunter designed a T-shirt inspired by Christi's artwork, which could be done in schools. She felt that this would be of high interest to students.



Artist: Christi Belcourt



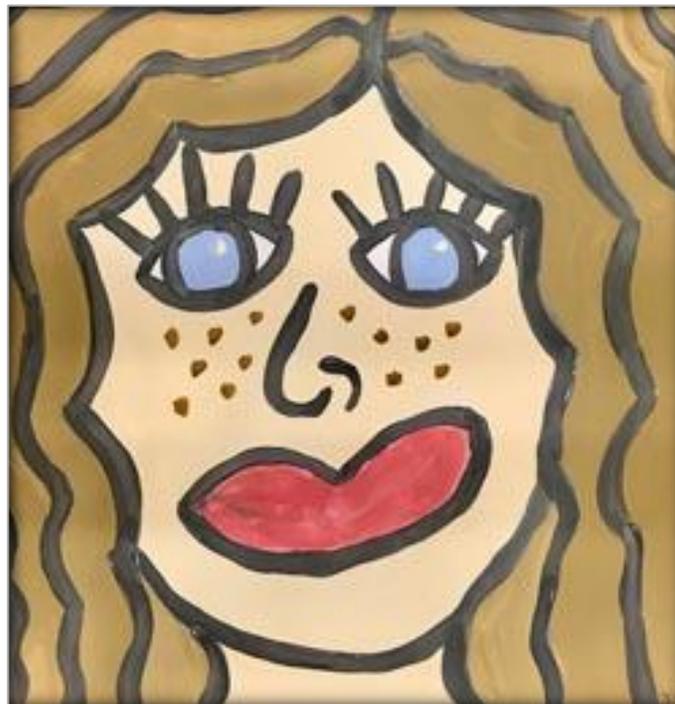
Student: Hunter Truong-Nguyen

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Jennifer discussed Heather's inspiration and her own artwork in terms of the elements of design: line, space, form, colour, texture and value.



Artist: Heather Topp



Student: Jennifer Lester

Inspired by Richard Edward's artwork, Cole took a photograph that reminded him of Richard's work. He felt that Richard's painting illustrates the beautiful colours and changes a river goes through during the beginning of the winter months. Cole's photograph was taken at Onaping Falls in early October when the water level was low and leaves had started to change color. He then affected the image numerous times, a few examples of which follow.

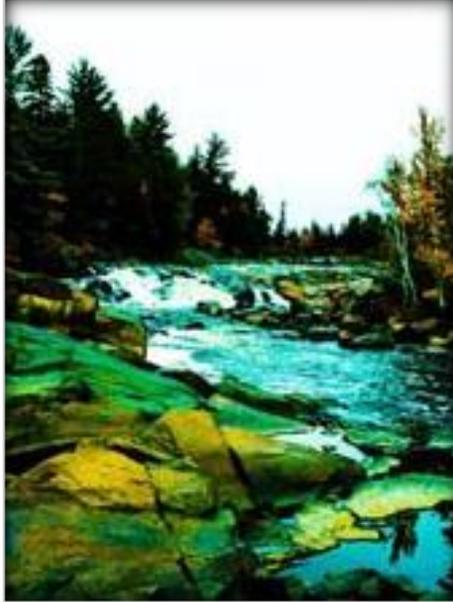


Artist: Richard Edwards



Student: Cole Lynch

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Student: Cole Lynch.

In his lesson Cole included possible integration ideas for the classroom:

- Language: Write about your inspiration piece. What did you see/hear/smell/feel during the nature walk? Why/how did you choose your inspiration?
- Science: Compare how your nature piece would change if done in a different season.
- Music: Choose a piece of music that you feel represents your artwork.

Photographer Jon Butler in his video, *The Zen of La Cloche*, describes the importance of composition in his photography. Jon also writes Haiku poetry to invoke the sounds and sensory details in his landscapes (Browning, 2014).



Artist: Jon Butler

Inspired by Jon Butler's photography, Jordan went and took a photograph that reminded him of Jon's work.



Student: Jordan Walker-Martin

When describing his lesson, Jordan suggested that teachers:

- Show students exemplars of Butler's sunrise work and ask them to explain colour relationships and the feelings they get out of looking at the photos.
- Get students to take photos of the sunrise when they're getting ready for school or of the sunset before they go to bed.
- Allow them to create either a digital or print photo montage with their group members.
- Have students present a brief two-minute presentation of what feelings their montage is portraying and how it relates to Butler's work.

Conclusion

Through my research that resulted in the *14 Videos* project, I hoped to facilitate student teachers' being able to interpret artists' works in a rural cultural context (Browning, 2013a-n), particularly artists in Northern Ontario where there is otherwise very little information available. The artists gathered, as cases for the videos in this study exemplify, from the creative culture around Sudbury. The 14 artists discussed their relationship to the landscape and to environmental projects. It is imperative that teachers and students in schools identify with artists in their own area, and one way is through online digital videos. Knowledge of the presence and practices of local artists can in turn inspire students to create. Art then becomes a part of the students' own experience as a part of their community, not just an experience in the classroom, or an occasional gallery experience.

Specifically, the *14 Videos* project was used to inspire students to create, reflect, analyze and critically discuss northern artists' works. The videos then supported the student teachers themselves in presenting, responding and exploring visual forms, offering a sense of identity in cultural contexts while making connections beyond the classroom. The *14 Videos* project inspired students to create in a variety of media, thus extending their understandings of multimodality as it becomes more

common in classrooms through the creative use of technology. When “students are exposed to a variety of stimulating artistic activities, reflect on—and give meaning to—their artistic learning, and celebrate their success, thus reinforcing their identity building and their positive relationship” with art, the Canadian Teachers’ Federation (2015) reminds us, learning can become “meaningful and relevant,” leading to “exploration, investigation, use of various materials, creation and problem solving” (p. 12).

The pre-service BEd students confirmed that the research project embodied the essence of the artistic ways of knowing of these fourteen artists while also resulting in the creation of artworks that exemplified their understandings of the artists’ aesthetic in a smaller community. Students and teachers using these videos now have a better understanding of the sense of place which affects these Aboriginal, Métis, Francophone, and Anglophone artists and what it means to be creatively living and working in a rural community in Northeastern Ontario. As with Adams (2015), I believe that “insights gained from such research can better inform us about the potential of digital tools and spaces, and how we might foster similar applications elsewhere”. It is the start of a much larger curriculum project wherein videos of other artists’ work can be contributed from other rural areas where there is also a lack of information and resource materials.

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- (2013f). John Stopciati: Visions of light.
- (2013g). Jon Butler: The zen of La Cloche.
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- (2013i). Mariana Lafrance: The urban connection.
- (2013j). Mark Seabrook: The spirit within.
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Endnotes

¹ Educators are encouraged to use these videos and facilitation guides in their classrooms while making connections with the community. These 14 videos and Teacher's Facilitation Guides (Browning, 2014) can be viewed on the Laurentian University website (https://www3.laurentian.ca/visual_artists/) along with background information. It is best to view them with the latest browser version and Microsoft Silverlight for smoother streaming. You may click on the images to stream the videos. Each of the Teacher's Facilitation Guides have photographs of the artists, descriptions, and specific questions in relation to each artist for pre-viewing and post-viewing, such as making

connections and inferences to engage the viewer. Links and information are available at art education, education, and artists' web sites. The DVDs of artists' work are also available through the Curriculum Resource Centre in the Faculty of Education and the Desmarais Library, Laurentian University and the OISE/UT Library as well as other universities, and Watmedia for future teachers of Visual Arts and other subject disciplines in pre-service BEd degrees as well as other faculty, staff, and students at universities and colleges and elementary and secondary schools, and the public in general. These videos add to the knowledge base of artists in Canada, particularly more remote areas like Northern Ontario, through videos and online sites for information access. This video series has received the Curriculum Services Canada Seal of Approval (2013) and Award of Merit (2014) in the Integration of Technology in the K-12 Classroom stream from the Canadian Network for Innovation in Education. A review of these videos was written by Dr. Liz Ashworth (2014) for *Canadian Art Teacher* 12(2). The information gained from this research project can encourage a transnational website where other artists from other countries can mobilize, stream, link, and share their videos for teachers and students in school.

² The author, Kathy Browning, would like to gratefully acknowledge support for this project from the Knowledge Network for Applied Education Research, the University of Toronto, the Ontario Ministry of Education, and the Laurentian University Research Fund.

³ The artworks of artists and students, as well as their commentaries, are used with permission.