

THE MAKING®

PARTICIPATION AND LEARNING STRATEGY

Summary

Philosophy & Methodology

The Making's participation and learning philosophy is:

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Philosophy & Methodology Detail

The Making's participation and learning philosophy is;

- **Community specific**
- **embedded in priority areas**

We focus on key areas and communities in the South East that do not have good levels of cultural provision, with a commitment over several years to avoid 'one-off' interventions. Decisions are influenced by both local and regional cultural, social and regeneration agendas and priorities.

The Making promotes;

- **sustainable participatory programmes**

The Making has a commitment to developing long term partnerships with venues and organisations throughout the south east region, to build on experience and develop mutual benefit and understanding. Its main tool for this is the touring participatory crafts programme *Theatre of Making*.

- **access/social inclusion**

The Making encourages access to high quality creative experiences through its targeted education programme, aimed at priority groups. It aims to provide free community transport where possible, negotiates free entry (to those venues which

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- **cross-curricular applications**

The Making encourages collaborations between schools and artists whose own practice explores the crossover between art and science, mathematics, ICT, photography, language, drama, literature and more traditional craft and applied art skills. Contact with professional artists opens up career options and encourages both pupils and teachers alike to be more self-reflective and experimental. The Making embraces new collaborative approaches and risk-taking in this context, emphasizing the intrinsic value which can have far-reaching effects on social skills, empathy and confidence (rather than just the measurement of improved academic performance).

- **intergenerational/family learning**

The Making promotes the social benefits of communal making, of parents working together with children, not just alongside. These benefits include improved family dynamics and intergenerational understanding, and improved social cohesion amongst fellow community members who, as a result of the learning programme, have new common ground.

We focus on;

- **experiential learning/ learning through making**

Experiential learning is key to our approach and the benefits to participants involved in our programmes are clear. Through non-didactic techniques such as active dialogue, interpretation, observation and hands-on participation, learning is viewed as a self-reflexive process where knowledge is made, not simply discovered. The high quality nature or excellence of the experience is also one of our main concerns.

- **development of visual and tactile literacy**

Of all the visual art forms, the crafts are the most accessible and utilise 'spatial intelligence' above linguistic or mathematical ability. This form of intelligence could also be interpreted as hands-on skills, also known as 'tacit' or 'craft knowledge', a combination of brain and hand often referred to as 'intelligent making'. Here at The Making we believe it is necessary for experiential learners to develop their own personal vocabulary, not only some form of visual literacy but a *tactile literacy*.

- **personal development and progression**

We encourage participants to develop their own potential and explore avenues for further study and progression. Signposting and networking are key to providing the right up-to-date information for the individual that is learner-centered.

The Making uses;

- **action research**

Staff approach every project as action researchers, reflecting on their own practice as craft specialists and education professionals. They allow their focus to

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be led by the nature of the sessions and the response of participants as they come to know them over a period of weeks and months.

- **qualitative enquiry**

The Making employs a hybrid methodology, utilizing qualitative research strategies that are participant focused. All the evidence gathered is from learning programme participants, artists, volunteers and partner venues. The resultant evaluation and case studies use a triangulation of methods to reveal the data for analysis; questionnaires, observation and field work during participatory workshops and interviews. This approach is balanced with quantitative data and audience profiling using the latest techniques.

- **empirical evidence and longitudinal studies**

The Making values the importance of empirical evidence about its programmes and the experiences that affect individuals, often producing measurable change. It plans to introduce longitudinal study into its methodology to capture the long term impact of participation in the crafts for artists and participants alike.

Strategy for Delivery

Delivery is through the following programmes and events:

- Theatre of Making
- Crafts Network South East
- Street Art (youth arts)
- Creative Partnerships (artists in schools)
- Public Art Commissioning Projects

with the following Staff Team:

Director (f/t)

Education Manager (f/t)

Finance & Administrative Officer (p/t)

Youth Arts Co-coordinator -Street Art (p/t)

Freelance Project Managers

Freelance Education Co-ordinators

Freelance artists/practitioners

Freelance external evaluators

and work placement/volunteer assistants (arts students/graduates)

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Sources:

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Ellis-Taylor, S. *The art of making: an investigation into experiential learning through contemporary craft activity*. Institute of Education, University of London, 2005

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National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education. *All our Futures: Creativity, Culture & Education*. DFEE/DCMS, 1999

McMaster, B. *Supporting Excellence in the Arts: From Measurement to Judgement*. DCMS, 2008

Roberts, P. *Nurturing Creativity in Young People: A report to Government to inform future policy*. DfES/DCMS, 2006

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