

Why the Uluru Arts Project?

One of our obligations is to awaken and heighten the aesthetic curiosity in every child -- and to push them not only to appreciate music, art, poetry, theatre and dance but also to try their hand at one or more of the creative arts. In doing this they will doubtless become more free, more natural and they will sense truths and meanings that can be grasped in no other way. The creative arts are of course in many ways merely an apprenticeship -- the larger creative art is how they lead their lives¹.

Education in the arts is an integral part of the development of every human being. Those who have studied learning processes throughout the ages, beginning with Plato, have emphasized the importance of the arts in the education process. Arts education in the disciplines of music, dance, theatre, and visual arts is integral to society. The arts are what make us most human, most complete as people.

The critically important role of the arts, as in life, is to enable children to see the world and the human condition differently, and in seeing the world through a particular work of art, to see a truth they might not have understood before².

Artists, poets, playwrights, and composers are sources of truth, order, harmony, and meaning.

Artists can unlock our imagination and stir us to pause, think, and reflect.

They raise questions and compel us to think -- and at the very least can jolt us out of complacency.

Shelley once suggested that "poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world."³ This is perhaps why artists and writers have been revered and reviled; they often disturb the peace, they stir passions, they force us to see things differently and they sometimes expose or emphasize nonnegotiable truths at times when we may have lost our way.

Composing a sonata, writing a play, dancing a dance, painting a painting, or writing a poem forces us to think in alternative ways, to hold different assumptions and to entertain different and often more instructive ways of making connections and ways of looking at things.

Imagination and a sense of discovery are often as important as knowledge. Rousseau once said that the world of reality has its limits; the world of imagination is boundless⁴. Creating is a form of play. It is a sensing of the possibilities; it is a free speculation, a learning to be ourselves. "Painting," said Picasso, "is just another way of keeping a diary."⁵

The arts can free us to think and dream and sense, and this often proves invaluable.

(As many have queried the reason for the Uluru Arts Project -- some personal and borrowed thoughts)
- Chandran 18 October 2007

¹ Thomas E Cronin

² Bob Bryant

³ Shelley

⁴ Rousseau

⁵ Picasso