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The Australian Story and the Development of Australian Curriculum for The Arts

'When I hear the words paper cranes, I reach for delete'

This paper was presented by Alison Carroll, Director Asialink Arts, at the AEF National Summit Leading Asia Literacy on 23 March 2010 in Sydney.

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1. Cultural contexts: different ways of seeing

A monk sips morning tea,
it's quiet,
the chrysanthemum's flowering.

To be or not to be – that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles
And, by opposing, end them.

There was movement at the station, for the word had passed around
That the colt from old Regret had got away,
And had joined the wild bush horses - he was worth a thousand pound,
So all the cracks had gathered to the fray.

The beauty of the arts is that the creation of artists, performers and writers display both the human condition in all its glory and horror, and the cultural reality that has made that particular experience important.

These three texts are well known. They move us with admiration for the elegance of the first, the agony of the second, and the vitality of the third. And after those emotions are peeled away they can help us understand the wider culture of their creators: Matsuo Basho, born in Japan in

1644, William Shakespeare in England in 1564, and Banjo Paterson exactly 300 years later in 1864 in Australia.

The words tell the story of those three cultures. For Japan, the 'presence of absence', the idea of 'ma' or absence, is measured, restraint of aesthetics, action, and thought is admired, part of the Buddhist idea of simplicity and lack of desire. For England, there is a new discussion and dialogue, a focus on the individual conscience, rejoicing in a freedom from the restraint of religious fervour, was encouraged, as well as an enjoyment of words at the highest level, in the full flush of new power in the age of Good Queen Bess, Gloriana. And for the bush poet, appealing to the new frontier, to the bustle and rush of manly station life, of the making of the 'man from Snowy River' who brought it all home – the appeal for the new youthful nation.

These examples are given for three reasons: they are enjoyable in themselves; they provide easy contrasts; and for the Australian version and they give us a context in which to see ourselves. We have a different reality from Basho's or Shakespeare's – different and interesting.

Extending this verbal example to the visual are some instances of the art of landscape, given in the Asialink Essay *Ignorance is Not Bliss; Art and its place in Australia-Asia Relations* (Asialink, December 2009 discussing the differences between generic 'Western', 'east Asian', 'Indian', 'Balinese' and Indigenous Australian ways of depicting the space in which these various people live. As with the Basho, Shakespeare and Paterson distinctions, these differences are based on geography, history and purpose.

Westerners are familiar with landscapes as [Claude Lorrain](#) painted them in the seventeenth century: an illusion of scientifically-measured space with mathematical one-point and atmospheric perspective, often in pictures of horizontal format, made in oil paint that enables this hazy light to be recreated, and with the desire – despite the interest in the mathematical precision of the perspective – to create an image of a past golden age, an Elysium.

In contrast, [Chinese landscapes](#) painted at a similar time as Claude had a different imperative – not to depict 'reality' of a specific contemporary or classical time but rather an ideal state in which to attain an abstract, purer state of being. The Chinese left areas free of paint, believing these spaces encouraged contemplation. They purified and reduced their brushstrokes and colour on the basis of 'less is more', a concept little understood in the materialist West. It is a process in tune with the watercolour and paper used, where changes and over-painting look like mistakes.

Equally, Balinese patterned landscape painting evolved from the 1930s from drawings and paintings of a mystical world of gods and goddesses, demons and spirits dramatically and energetically engaged in vertically defined space, reinforced by the reality of Bali's tropical environment. In [Anuk Agung Gede Sobrat's *Life in Bali*](#) of 1931, the vegetation and figures at the top of the image are nearly the same size as those at the bottom. The stories of gods and goddesses of old are transformed by contemporary Balinese artists into events of local people today, but the presentation of space and place remains true to tradition.

Eighteenth century [Rajasthani landscape](#) paintings were intended to be viewed flat on the floor and from all sides, so an illusion of 'distance' was of no interest or use. Special events are painted from this bird's eye view, so horses and carriages appear to 'rear' up around the sides of images presented vertically on current-day gallery walls or in book reproductions. Also the relation of figures' sizes is dependent on the position of the viewer, as well as the importance of the person painted. The purpose of the painting was to marvel at the patron's vast estates,

therefore large tracks are included, and painted with precise and detailed line-work. Another important distinction in the Balinese and the Rajasthani work is the different depictions of time as well as space. In Bali, it is not what time it is but what *kind* of time it is that is important. The Balinese use different but concurrent calendars arranged in cycles of differing length with particularly auspicious moments occurring at their intersections. With the world understood as multiple cycles of time, instead of a Western single continuum, paintings in Bali very comfortably show the same person undertaking different activities in the same image.

Australian Aboriginal landscape is, in part, a map of ways to read the land and teach important information for survival. Contemporary Central Desert paintings, like those of [Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri](#) appear as abstract patterns to outsiders but are as clear to their indigenous readers as Captain Cook's charts were to British mariners. Originally, made in sand as an aerial map they show physical points in the surrounding lands and the important cultural information associated with various landmarks. Today, they are mostly made on canvas and placed on an internal wall and they need interpretation to people from outside this culture, as would Tjapaltjarri's ancestors need interpretation to understand Claude's visions of Rome. Western viewers know how to assess Claude's paintings and are prone to try to think of how to see Tjapaltjarri's landscape in Western terms. It is difficult to step into the Aboriginal artist's footprints and think anew about Claude.

Similar distinctions can be made about dance –the reaching outwards, extending into a space as in generic Western dance, compared with the contained, controlled, internalised movement of Eastern dance. In the West the dancer tries to leap as high as possible into space; in the East respectful contact with the earth is maintained. Pointed toe contrasts with the flattened foot, straight limbs with the bent knee or elbow, and a raised face in contrast to the lowered gaze. Many dance teachers from different traditions see their dance in isolation, they are not encouraged to see and understand the comparisons and learn meaning or context from them.

In writing, art and performance, access to this wider understanding lies both here in this multicultural, diverse country. On our doorstep is the treasure trove of the riches of Asia, unavailable in the same way to any other country such as ours.

2. The principle of embedding knowledge and understanding of Asian culture within the student's experience, not as a decorative extra

Asian culture, like all culture, is about the big issues of humanity, and Asian artists like other artists are good at communicating this.

So why not use paper cranes, or kites, or batik? These traditional crafts of Asia are nice and good to do, but what do they really say about Asian culture. This is especially pertinent for a receptive young child, with less experience of other examples of 'Asia'. There is a school of thought that divides 'north and south' in this world: the technological first world of the North, that is Europe and North America and the hand-made third world of the 'South', including South America, Africa and Asia. What is the message given teaching with computer programs from the first world and batik from the third? Does this mean that Asia is backward, to be helped, or even pitied? This is often a reaction of Australians who take the trouble in Asia 'to help' a nice response, but based on a mindset of helping people less advanced than us. To take the argument back to Asian craft and its place: is there a specifically Western craft that is similarly taught?

There is room for discussion of the role of cranes in Asian culture as a symbol of peace, similar to the dove in the West. Is it possible to weave a project about symbols of peace and perhaps also of war; or even paper folding per se: paper folding around the world, making it multilateral? Batik is interesting but it doesn't tell much of the story about Indonesia. If there is a theme on textiles, can it be made international, for example, consider cotton or wool and what they have meant in a cultural sense? South Australian artist Fiona Hall has done some major works following the history of cotton – it is marvellous art and an interesting social history as well.

In dance, it is important to teach why people of one culture express themselves in one way, structurally and conceptually, rather than just learn the hand movements. It is important to discuss the power of stillness, and the control of the body, not just the flick of fingers. More central to this essay however is the example of The Queensland Art Gallery program specifically designed around its great Asian exhibition, the Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, for young children: Kids APT. In our midst is a great program specifically targeted for young children, which has asked artists to develop projects that engage children in the central thinking of their work. These Asia artists, often with a very culturally specific story to tell, communicate first as interesting and inspired people who engage directly with the young person. This makes the artistic experience as accessible as a folded paper crane, without the 'third world' stereotypes, and therefore is ultimately much more meaningful and enduring for the learner.

The following are some examples from recent Kids APTs; Tibetan artist [Gorkar Gyatso](#) in the 2009-10 APT asked young visitors to cover pristine white Buddha sculptures with popular culture stickers, reflecting his interest, he says, in the ways contemporary culture continually absorbs images and ideas. This idea can be explored in a myriad of ways.

Filipino artists, now living in Brisbane, [Isabel and Alfredo Aquilizan](#) invited children to make model aeroplanes out of household detritus, reflecting their own journey and displacement. The stack of each plane or journey added to a feeling of belonging to a large group of people dealing with this issue, not just being alone. 'I am telling my story here too.' The images show one of the final pieces, and the other shows the two artists thinking about how to assemble all the made planes.

Indonesian artist [Heri Dono](#) makes puppets in the tradition of Yogyakarta where he lives, but in his own special way, he includes angels with electronic bodies and shoes. His culture is one of an easy belief in the supernatural, with commonly lurking angels and demons. Here, he says, he wanted his angels to represent freedom for people to dream and imagine, for 'without imagination, life is very dull'. Heri Dono has made numbers of art works (<http://www.wepainting.com/heri-dono>) about the importance of the imagination for children, fearful of the poor rote education they can receive. Queensland Art Gallery has published children's responses to Heri Dono's work, Stelio, aged 9, saying his angels, very like Heri's, 'protect us from evil things and that is why we like them', while Oliver also 9 extends this idea of freedom to a man's idea of being 'smashed'.

Taiwanese artist [Michael Ming Hong Lin](#) paints huge walls of flowers, he says, 'like a bouquet of flowers in the home, there to make us more comfortable'. These are taken from domestic textile patterns, painted oversized. It is about the role of flowers and their general pleasantness in our daily lives. Ruby, aged 9, in her response makes a profound statement in her art: "In my picture, I have drawn repeated jacarandas because in year 11 and 12 the tests come out at the same time each year – when the jacarandas bloom. Year after year, the jacarandas bloom, exams come, jacarandas, exams, jacarandas, exams..."

3. That experience and understanding starts with the present and works back

Access to Asian culture seems blocked by the belief that it is hard to understand, that it requires much study, knowledge of language, and that it is basically not for the average Westerner. It is true that to know other cultures takes effort, and that to know a lot about Asian culture means making a choice about giving up something else.

However, to be open to Asian culture more generally is not hard if there is access at some point, the most obvious point for Australia is contemporary culture. What happens now affects everyone; understanding the pressures of living today is universal, and will increase as global communication breaks down political and physical boundaries. In teaching Asian culture it seems important to start with the present, and, where appropriate, to work backwards. In turn this gives richness to the teaching objective or idea encountered in the moment.

The APT is the most successful exhibition held at the Queensland Art Gallery because the work produced is exciting and accessible. Visitors enter an Aladdin's cave of cultural discovery. The exhibition of traditional, historic Asian art was very popular, especially with children.

[Lee Ming Tse](#) is from Southern Taiwan, and paints the village landscape of his own place. It is clear he loves this place and he wants to share it with us, but usually for Lee there is comment about the juxtaposition of old and new, destruction and renewal. It is not all as sweet as it seems. His work can be discussed in universal terms, and peeled back to show his affection for local folk traditions. He uses acrylic but with a feeling for the light-filled washes of traditional Chinese painting, the colour of folk art with a different sense of space to the three-dimensional 'Western' perspective.

Even more obviously [Shahzia Sikander](#) from Lahore in Pakistan shows in her [Scroll](#) of 1989-91, her life as a young woman in Pakistan, taking the old tradition of miniature painting as her stylistic guide. There are multiple views of her, with a dislocated architecture, precise love of detail, outline, but it is an image of a modern girl. Sikander painted this as her graduating work for the School of Art in Lahore, the only place still to teach miniature painting in a traditional way, with wasli paper and ground pigments. She has gone on to show at Venice Biennale, the Whitney in New York and have many solo exhibitions around the world, extending her knowledge of this traditional thinking, into the modern world.

[Tatsuo Miyajima](#) makes works with electronic lights, switching on and off, in seemingly random patterns. In [Sea of Time](#) he uses contemporary means to take us into analyzing a universally accessible idea of space and time. This is underpinned with very accessible ideas to make everyone comfortable with the East Asian attitude to the 'spaces between', the idea of the presence of absence. East Asians will understand the way Miyajima is thinking, and will probably think about the expressiveness of *relationship* of the lights to each other in this particular arrangement..

[Roberto Villanueva](#), from the Philippines, in his installation, [The Cordillera Labyrinth](#), makes a great maze of bamboo and runo grass as something celebratory and fun, with the central area of the picture the key focus and special moment. To experience the work by finding your way into the centre, increases the special sense of occasion and moment once achieved. The work makes the participants' actions and responses open to everyone albeit coming from both pre-Hispanic and Catholic ritual celebration, the actions in the pre-Hispanic villages around local gods and shamans, and the particular sensory pageants still very strong in the Philippines today

in honour of Christian belief. Villanueva purposefully uses local materials as a political act in the face of imported Western goods.

[Mariko Mori](#), in her piece [Sharman girl's prayer](#), 1996, video project she is the shaman wearing translucent contact lenses, transforming herself into a supernatural being, looking into infinity, or the future. She uses Japanese figures of goddesses in her work. They float across high-tech screens in mesmerising and fun ways.

Korean [Choi Jeong-hwa](#) makes [inflatable figures](#) in plastic and rubber, very often of flowers, that have a pump to enable them to droop and then revive as in nature. That is what he says: in Korea today plastic flowers are more natural, or more normal, than those that grow in the earth. In his piece *I, too, want to go to your side and become a flower – Super Flower*, 1995 he is having fun, referring to the ubiquity of consumer goods, but also acknowledging a mantra of the importance of nature in Korea that is no longer a reality.

Indonesian [Semsar Siahaan](#) plays with the idea of Manet's *Olympia*, the Parisian prostitute with whom Manet scandalised society by painting her as a Greek goddess, and making an acceptable nude of an ancient Greek goddess into the unacceptable naked form of a modern French girl. In her [Olympia, Identity with Mother and Child](#), 1987, oil on canvas, Semsar takes this one step further, making her the Western tourist, pandered to by the authorities, keeping the poor farmer's family out in looking in through the window. One stylistic aspect is particularly relevant: the flat stage and the gesticulating figures, which even in an image like this comes from the world of the wayang. It is a moral story, with evil and good, action, people, performance and drama enlivening this stage. It is very doubtful that this image could have been done by an artist from another culture.

[Jim Supangkat](#), also from Indonesia, scandalised his own society with the sculpture [Ken Dedes](#), 1975, making the point about worshipping of the female form.

[Amanda Heng](#), is of a Chinese family living in Singapore. Her moving installation work, [Another Woman](#), 1996 is about her attempt to communicate with her mother. It is a reference to mothers and daughters, everywhere. Her attempt is more poignant, she says, because of the focus in Chinese families, on boys, and her lack of attention, always, from her mother. She writes' sadly, that even this attempt through her art, for which she has international acclaim, did not bring the closeness she so desired.

[Egai Fernandez's Pintang Hindi Tapos ng Kasalukuyan](#) (*Unfinished painting of the present*), 1990-1993, an oil painting of 10 panels each 150 x 120 cm. This large work tells the whole story of his country, the Philippines where the central Madonna, a nationalist figure, mother, young peasant girl, from which all things emanate together with all aspects of Filipino life, including pre-Hispanic writing across the sky. This work is part of the Filipino response to the mid-century Mexican muralists who the Filipinos saw as leading international visual art role models for non-white artists. The scale, politics, huge ideas and canvases, emanates from Mexico.

[Aro Soriano's Jak En Poy](#) (*Sticks and stones*), 1987 is a political work in the same tradition but more satirical as Egai's, Cory Aquino, Cardinal Sin, all of them. Think of the stories to weave around such a work, going back into an oral communal tradition as is the Philippines.

Performing arts also can lead from the World Music of Eastern Indonesia, going back to gamelan; from Bollywood then back to Kathakali; from Butoh then back to Noh. In literature,

starting with Pramoedya then back to Rizal's *Noli mi tangere*; Vikram Seth and Roy then back to the Ramayana; Murakami then back to Basho.

4. That parallels with Australian experience expand that experience, rather than being a separate entity

One metaphor, to understand this idea is to think of a regional egg, with, Australia the yoke, (Indonesia would be the yolk for their version of this picture), with the rest of the Asian region as the white of the egg. Consider that the yolk can exist by itself but it is naturally a part of something richer. If this notion is used in creative ways it can lead to all sorts of enriching and creative outcomes.

[Professor Tony Milner](#), argues for the Australian story to incorporate engagement with Asia into the story of this country. It is very important that these experiences should be embedded in the way this story is told. The following gives examples of ways to do this in visual arts, with for senior secondary students.

- **The Indigenous**

The Indigenous in the Asia-Pacific is a fascinating field, which is very under-studied across national borders. Almost all of the nations of Asia have marginalised indigenous people. . Australia, on the A-Z of this trajectory, is at about G; New Zealand perhaps at N, and most of Asia around A or B. In Australia Aboriginal, culture was ignored and trivialised until the 1980s. It is now a major business, and widely admired. In the mid 1990s in India there was inclusion of images by Tribal people in a New Delhi museum exhibition which were described as art, raising considerable consternation from the urban, educated arts community. It is still contentious there. There is a similar situation for the minorities of China, the Ainu of Japan, and the hill people of Indo-china. Malaysia and Taiwan are two areas further along the alphabetic route, certainly recognising Aboriginal culture in similar ways to Australia.

Starting with the contemporary on the discussion of Indigenous culture is an image by [Tracey Moffatt](#), [Something more#1, 1989](#), series of nine images sees herself as the central figure in the drama. Moffatt is of Aboriginal background and while does not describe herself thus, images of the story of Aboriginal Australia abound in her work. And a comparative work by [Santiago Bose](#), an Ifugao from the Cordillera mountains of northern Luzon. He talks about the history of colonisation in the Philippines, with similar with, humour and pathos as Tracey Moffatt.

By comparison and in stark contrast the artist [Sonabai](#), not described as indigenous or, in India, Tribal, but certainly a marginalised person, not speaking Hindi, she is kept at home by a husband in her village. She does not have children, so resorts to making figures at home, she says, for company. Her art pieces have been shown in Delhi and called 'art' to the consternation of academically trained practitioners. She was shown to great acclaim at a [Brisbane APT](#).

- **The colonial experience**

As is well known, all of South East Asia except Thailand was colonised by European powers, as was south Asia by Britain. North Asia was different, it was not colonised by Europeans, but by China. Taiwan and Korea were colonised by the Japan, and economically and culturally, it might be said, by Europe. The 1860s were at the apex of British colonial power, including in Australia, with the work of [Eugene von Guerard](#), [View of the snowy bluff on the Wonnangatta River, 1864](#), tells the story of white settler heroism in the face of splendour and the threats of the new environment.

By comparison with the great nineteenth century Javanese, artist [Raden Saleh](#), [Six horsemen chasing deer](#), 1860. Saleh painted the aristocracy of Europe and of Java, as well as the great icon of Indonesian artistic nationalism, the [Arrest of Prince Diponegoro](#) of 1857. Here the independently minded prince is tricked by the ruling Dutch into captivity. Such images as this are rewarding for the symbolism of the powerful and the powerless, the hunted and the hunter, and who is who in Saleh's mind. These were the issues of importance to him as the power of nature was to von Guerard.

- **New nationalism**

Diponegoro didn't live to see Indonesia become independent. The Filipinos won independence from the Spanish in 1898 (before the American Australia became a Federation in 1901 – a similar time period. The artists of the time celebrated with the following examples.

[George W Lambert's](#) image of [A sergeant of the Light Horse](#), 1920, shows the valued qualities of men and Australian manhood in the new land. Here the male is from the country, casual, laconic and humorous which downplays his heroism. A female equivalent can be seen from the Philippines by [Fernando Amorsolo](#), of a real young woman [Fernanda de Jesus](#), painted as the Madonna again but also as a beautiful village girl, symbol of the country, proud, straight, looking forward with direct eyes into the future.

At the same time in Japan which was not colonised, so the issues were not the same, the artist, [Tetsugoro Yorozu](#), in 1911, painted his *Nude Beauty* using the expressive qualities of oil paint to convey his provocative vision of a resting woman. [His Self Portrait with clouds](#), 1912, shows a young man - the artist, dealing with the modern industrialised world of fast change, and Japan's response to it.

Nothing so visually challenging was painted in Australia at this time

- **Mid century turmoil, leading to new independent identities**

[Albert Tucker's Victory Girls](#), 1943, the street girls of St Kilda with their soldier boyfriends, is one of Australia's strongest response to the changes this war time period produced. [Arthur Boyd's](#) work is not so obvious, but equally speaks of change, in [The Hunter](#), 1944 the isolated man chased by a literal beast, lost in his world of, in this case, the bush near his army base. He wanted to tell the story of this country, in his own personal way, through his particular experience. His [Mining town](#) of 1946, shows Melbourne in chaos, an almost Bosch-like scene of mayhem. The war brought change, especially a change to see this place as ours – to show and tell our stories, of St Kilda girls, or the man in the bush, or Melbourne, not translated stories from somewhere else.

And so it was for this whole region. The Chinese woman soldier of 1938 by [Tang Yihe](#) is a strong image of resolution to fight for the cause. This was only thirty years after the displacement of the Qing dynasty, with the place of women then so low and now shown with such steely hope.

Similarly [Hendra Gunawan](#), in Java, celebrates a new sense of self-confidence with his *Hello hello Bandung*, showing the liberation of Bandung from the Japanese, before the on-going fight for independence from the Dutch. He shows his affection for the spirit of these women soldiers, painted with his characteristic exaggerated wayang gestures.

Similar artistic energy was felt in Japan, but with different focuses. The heroic but desperate movie-size image of Japanese forces and their loss on Saipan Island by [Tsuguharu Fujita](#), *Compatriots on Saipan Island remain faithful to the end*, 1945 . Fujita only saw this from photographs and descriptions, hence the monochrome, but these images were made to buoy the spirits of the Japanese people in the face of, at this stage, despair at the way the war was going.

Other works as by [Toshio Shimizu](#) depict a different mood: the calmly positive, 'backroom' work the Japanese soldiers in Malaya, building a bridge. It is very far from the Australian images of the Japanese in Malaya and closer to stories of our own. Imagine translating the features and uniforms in the painting to Australian ones, it could then be our side in this conflict.

[Demetrio Diego's](#) *Capas*, 1948 image, is closer to Australian versions of the death marches in the Philippines. He painted it at the end of the war from memories of those very brutal days .

Le Thanh Duc painted a joyful image *Hanoi, Night of Liberation* , 1954, celebrating independence in Vietnam, following French withdrawal after Dien Bien Phu. The great Indonesian, [Sudjojono](#) painted two versions of the destruction of central Java from war. They are eerie, memorable, universal but personal. In particular *Guerrilla Guards*, 1949, oil on canvas.

Throughout the region, the wars and their aftermath caused great change and upheaval. A painting by [Lee Boon Wang](#), *Road Workers*, 1955 celebrates the physical workers of Singapore who are so far from the sweet tropical landscapes of previous images of the area. This was something that made the new government nervous, especially in this time of increasing communist influence and power. Such images were not seen for quite a while in Singapore, and only now is the extent of such work becoming better known.

In contrast, [Carlos Francisco](#) a Filipino celebrates rural life after the horrors of war, in *Fiesta*, of 1946, oil on canvas. Compare the previous death camp work paintings and realize the diversity of new response to the world and order in each country.

- **Post war challenges to authority**

The 1960s was the counter-culture challenge to all things in authority. In Australia [Oz Magazine](#), was part of it. In Japan [Butoh](#) combined village shaman culture, [Noh](#), and international performance ideas to create strong imagery that is still powerful today.

[Yoko Ono](#) was part of the Japanese challenge to authority, saying *she* was the art work here and the cutting away of her dress an action of importance. It is a reflection of earlier points made, about the actions in North Asia, and the importance of being able therefore to see this work with more understanding by more people in the West

Two final reference images from the period, both [political graphics](#), come from the same source, ultimately Germany, Britain and Russia, via Russia to China, then to Vietnam, and to a degree to Australia. The same left-wing political spirit is alive in an image of the two Vietnamese farmers carrying their guns with their farm implements, as seen in [Huy Oanh's](#) *Grandfather and granddaughter*, 1964 woodcut. And the poster from the Earthworks Collective, Sydney, 1971-80, taken from the French Revolution for their party, with the pricing: "kids free, \$3 usual, bludgers discount".

5. The future

Looking at cultural material, of any variety, from other countries enables us to see other people's history, and, in the mirror of this, our own more clearly. It also gives us examples of work that make our own cultural material more real.

The interchange in the arts in Australia's last 200 years is salutary for how our backs have been turned on Asia. Information about Asian culture, like Chinoiserie or Japonisme came through Europe. The great modernist painter Margaret Preston was an exception, in the 1940s foretelling the looming importance of the Asia Pacific region. The 1960's saw some exchange with Japan, with ceramics in particular, and with further changes in the last decades of last century. While direct exchange has been limited, the parallels in our national experience are not, and the reflection of Asian understanding in ours is an excellent way to increase the relevance and reality of this material.

This essay talks about the rewards of cultural difference, of how to engage with the core of cultural creativity (not just the outside details), of gaining access by starting with the contemporary and working backwards, and how our culture *can* and does relate to a wider whole.

How to include this in the curriculum is, however, easier said than done. We don't know enough, and it is not enough just to acknowledge this: it needs action. Having quotas on learning to ensure Asian content is covered is perhaps the key way forward. It needs a specified amount of funding for action, for training, for curriculum materials, for an amount of time within the curriculum, or all of this will be being said in 10 or, worse, 20 years time, again.

List of images from original paper:

Claude Lorrain *Seaport with the Embarkation of the Queen of Sheba*, 1648, oil on canvas, 149 x 196 cm National Gallery, London

Cha Chi-tso (1601-76) *Conversing Midway up the Mountain in Late Autumn*, c.1600, ink on Paper

Anak Agung Gede Sobrat *Life in Bali*, 1931, pen, ink and tempera on board, 180 x 120 cm

Jugarsi Maharana Ari Singh II *hunting boar*, Udaipur, 1762, opaque watercolour gold and silver paint on paper, 46.4 x 65.8 cm, National Gallery of Victoria

Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri *Water Dreaming at Napperby*, 1983, acrylic on canvas, 183 x 155 cm, Flinders University Art Museum

Kids APT 2010: Gonkar Gyatso *Funky Buddha*
Isabel and Alfredo Aquilisan *In flight project*

Kids APT 2002: Heri Dono *Angels*
Stelio and Oliver
Michael Ming Hong Lin
Ruby

Lee Ming Tse *New Ming De Village* 2004, acrylic on canvas, 332 x 240 cm

Shahzia Sikander *The Scroll* 1989-91 dry pigment, watercolour, gouache on prepared wasli paper, 33 x 162.6 cm

Tatsuo Miyajima *Sea of Time* 1988, installation, LEDs, circuits, electric wire, 700 x 700 x 5 Cm

Roberto Villanueva *The Cordillera Labyrinth* 1989, installation, bamboo and runo grass, Cultural Centre of the Philippines

Mariko Mori *Shaman girl's prayer*, 1996, video project, 4 mins

Choi Jeong-hwa *Superflower*, 1995, coll, National Museum of Contemporary Art, Korea

Semsar Siahaan *Olympia, Identity with Mother and Child*, 1987, oil on canvas, 145 x 295 cm

Jim Supangkat *Ken Dedes* 1975, mixed media, 180 x 40 x 30 cm, Singapore Art Museum

Amanda Heng *Another woman*, 1996, installation, (detail)

Edgar Fernandez *Unfinished painting of the present*, 1990-93, oil on canvas, 10 panels, 150 x 120 cm ea.

Lazaro Soriano *Sticks and Stones*, 1987, oil on canvas 150 x 150 cm Ateneo University Collection

Tracey Moffatt *Something more #1* 1989, series of 9 images, cibachrome, 98 x 127 cm

Santiago Bose *Garrote* 2000, mixed media, 97 x 176 cm
Sonabai, figures and nature, wall and screen of house

Eugene von Guerard *View of the snowy bluff on the Wonnangatta River* 1864, oil on canvas, 93 x 150 cm, National Gallery of Victoria

Raden Saleh *Six horsemen chasing deer*, 1860, oil on canvas, 188 x 106 cm, Smithsonian Institution, Washington DC

George W Lambert *A sergeant of the Light Horse*, 1920, oil on canvas, 74 x 59 cm, National Gallery of Victoria

Fernando Amorsolo *Portrait of Fernanda de Jesus* 1915 80 x 51.5 cm

Tetsuro Yoroza *Resting Nude*, 1911, oil on canvas, National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo

Albert Tucker *Victory Girls* 1943, oil on board, 64 x 58 cm, National Gallery of Australia

Arthur Boyd *The Hunter* 1944 oil on cotton, 63 x 75 cm, National Gallery of Australia

Arthur Boyd *The Mining Town* 1946-7 oil on board, 87 x 109 cm, National Gallery of Australia

Tang Yihe *Woman Guerrilla* 1938-44, oil, 82 x 64cm, National Art Museum of China

Hendra Gunawan *Hello Hello Bandung* 1945 oil on canvas, 210 x 300 cm

Tsuguharu Fujita *Compatriots on Saipan Island remain faithful to the end*, 1945, oil on canvas, 181 x 362, Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo

Toshio Shimizu *Engineer's Bridge construction in Malaya* 1944, oil on canvas, 159 x 128 cm, Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo

Demetrio Diego *Capas* 1948, oil on canvas, 86 x 117 cm, National Museum of the Philippines

Le Thanh Duc *Hanoi, Night of Liberation* 1954, 50 x 79 cm

S Sudjojono *Guerrilla Guards* 1949 oil on canvas, 174 x 194 cm

Lee Boon Wang *Road workers*, 1955, oil on canvas, 82.5 x 96.5 cm

Carlos Francisco *Fiesta* 1946, oil on canvas, 264.2 x 269.2 cm

OZ Magazine, published Sydney 1963-69

Tatsumi Hijikata performing *Revolt of the Flesh*, Seinen Kaikan Hall, Tokyo, 1968

Yoko Ono performing *Cut Piece*, Yamaichi Concern Hall, Kyoto, 1964

Huy Oanh *Grandfather and granddaughter*, 1964, woodcut, 30 x 40 cm

Earthworks Collective, 1971-80