

InSEA: Past, Present and Future

John Steers

The Past

'The past', wrote the novelist L P Hartley, 'is a foreign country: they do things differently there.'¹

In this brief history² I wish to consider just how different the world was over fifty years ago – what inspired art educators in 1951 when the idea of International Society for Education through Art (InSEA) was formulated? But first a caveat: 'History isn't what happened. History is just what historians tell us.'³ The verbal histories of the events of over half a century ago are becoming lost. It is becoming more urgent to order some insights into the past as a way of providing both a key to understanding the present and as a source for constructive speculation about the future.

InSEA, like its parent organisation the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), was founded in the aftermath of the 1939-1945 World War. Richard Hoggart explains how UNESCO was conceived in a spirit of hope, in a heady confidence that a new style of international relations could be developed:

The world had just come through a terrible and protracted war, one initiated by false philosophies working on ignorance through massive control of free speech. The impulse, in 1945, to try to ensure that it did not happen again, and that people should *understand* each other better through education and all forms of cultural and scientific exchanges, the passionate emphasis on truth, justice, peace and the importance of the individual – these impulses were irresistible.⁴

At UNESCO's first and second general conferences, held in 1946 and 1947, resolutions were adopted to inquire into art education. In 1948, Dr Herbert Read from the United Kingdom was appointed as chairman of a 'Committee of Experts' to look into this matter. This small group comprised Thomas Munro from the USA; the Hungarian composer Zoltan Kodaly; two government education inspectors, Georges Favre from France and Edward O'R Dickey from the United Kingdom; a professor of philosophy from the Sorbonne, M Bayer; two aestheticians, Professors Souriau and Lalo; and Mme Langevin, an art teacher from France.

From these beginnings followed the UNESCO seminar on 'The Visual Arts in General Education', held from 7-27 July 1951 at the University of Bristol, England, at which some twenty countries were represented. The delegates included a significant number of people who continued to take leadership roles in InSEA as the organisation developed. For example Dr Edwin Ziegfeld from the USA, who was a 'Specialist-Consultant' at the seminar became the first president of the Society (as well as being coincidentally the first president of the National Art Education Association in the USA). Charles Dudley Gaitskell from Canada directed the seminar (he subsequently became the first president of the Canadian Society for Education through Art). The programme included general sessions, guest speakers and visits to schools and schools of art. One such visit was to the newly founded Bath Academy of Art at Corsham Court:

Through the kindness of Mr Clifford Ellis (Director of the Bath Academy) and Lord Methuen, the participants were able to make a thorough exploration of the academy proper, as well as of the experimental school for children. The programme of the school was admitted to be the most advanced and informative. Design in both art and crafts was highly original and ingenious, and the craftsmanship of the highest order. In the experimental school for children, the use of visual material, and the spirit of enquiry and intellectual adventure evident in the children's work, drew forth much praise.⁵

There is no doubt that the seminar was seen as a significant event at that time. Ziegfeld wrote, 'The effects of this seminar will leave an indelible mark on our future'.⁶ Whether he was right in this assertion is one of the questions I wish to consider.

It seems evident from all accounts of the 1951 seminar that Sir Herbert Read (1893-1968) was central to proceedings as a leading figure in the avant-garde of art, literature and aesthetics⁷. Read had been a soldier in the 1914-1918 World War and was decorated with the Military Cross and the Distinguished Service Order, but he later became a pacifist and a self-proclaimed anarchist. He regarded himself primarily as a poet, but literary and art criticism became his predominant activities.

Read spoke of the human need to strive toward self-realisation, of the importance of developing full human potential, the need of individuals to be active and productive, true to themselves, and to relate to others in a spirit of mutuality. Read set out his view of the aims of aesthetic education:

- To preserve the natural intensity of all modes of perception and sensation.
- To co-ordinate the various modes of perception and sensation with one another and in relation to the environment.
- To express feeling in communicable form.
- To teach children how to express thought in required form.

The UNESCO report of the seminar summarises Read's conclusions:

... Dr Read said that in order to communicate human reaction as completely as possible, it is necessary to employ not only 'the infinite subtleties of verbal expression, but also various forms of symbolic expression'. Our educational systems have tended to ignore the various types of symbolic communication. However, we are beginning to question the adequacy of our verbal modes. The movement which has led to the liberation is beginning to recognise the fact that human beings are dependent upon symbolic as well as conceptual means of thought. Since the purpose of education is to liberate the force of spontaneous growth, and since growth is only made apparent in expression, then education is a matter of teaching children and adults how to express themselves in sounds, images, tools and utensils. In other words, 'the aim of education is, therefore, the creation of artists – of people efficient in the various modes of expression and communication'.⁸

In 1968, shortly after Read's death, Ziegfeld wrote fondly about his impressions of Read and the Bristol seminar:

To all his utterances he brought clarity of thinking and brilliance of insight. Added to this was the impact of his delivery. The clear, thin, and only slightly modulated voice seemed at first a model of understatement. But as one listened one was

aware of an almost incandescent intensity which burned behind it, and hearing Sir Herbert Read became both an intellectual and aesthetic experience.

...The highlight [of the 1951 seminar] however, which gave the whole show its impetus and meaning, was the address delivered by Herbert Read. We all remember the occasion vividly. We still see him, slight, unobtrusive, modest, his manners friendly and courteous, his humour quiet, introverted, his speech quietly voiced, but flowing, in words and phrases that brought out all the beauties of the English tongue. His delivering [sic] in itself was a work of art.⁹

The idea of an international organisation for art education was not exactly new. An international congress was held in Paris in 1900 and the 'International Federation for the Teaching of Drawing and of the Arts Applied to Industry', which had aims that were not so disparate from InSEA, was founded in 1904. A further seven congresses followed between 1904 and 1937 when its activities were suspended until 1955. The organisation adopted the shorter name 'Fédération Internationale pour l'Éducation Artistique' (FIEA) in 1957. After a good deal of wrangling the FIEA merged with InSEA in 1963 at the Montreal World Congress. (It is the existence of the FIEA, overlapping as it does with InSEA, that partly explains the curious numbering of InSEA tri-annual world congresses – for example the Brisbane event in 1999 was designated as the 30th World Congress. The congresses are numbered from 1900, not the 1950s, but there is also some dispute about which events can properly be designated 'World Congresses').

Read's seminal text 'Education through Art' was published in 1943. The British Society for Education *in Art* (SEA) was founded in 1946, springing from what had been seen as a temporary merger of existing organisations during the 1939-45 war: Read was its chairman and president for 28 years. The title of the British organisation, the Society for Education *through Art*, was only adopted in 1953 after a protracted debate – at much the same time that InSEA was coming into existence. While it is evident that Read influenced the name of the international organisation, it is not clear how much this was a matter of debate in the international forum. The idea of 'Education *through Art*' is now often taken for granted but Read saw it as revolutionary. He wrote in the SEA context:

We declare that our foremost aim is 'the establishment of an education in art which will develop the imaginative and creative powers of children', and that, to the outside world, must seem as harmless as any cause that ever brought two or three people together. But those who have followed through the implications of this aim know that it is packed with enough dynamite to shatter the existing educational system, and to bring about a revolution in the whole structure of our Society.¹⁰

InSEA formally came into being with the adoption of its constitution at the First General Assembly held in Paris in July 1954. Read opened the meeting with an address entitled 'The Future of Art Education' – certainly not the last time such a title has been used at InSEA congresses. The preamble to the Constitution (which in the intervening years has only been subject to minor amendments) reveals the idealism of the founding members of InSEA and their belief that:

Education through art is a natural means of learning at all periods of the development of the individual, fostering values and disciplines essential for full intellectual, emotional and social development of human beings in a community;

Association on a worldwide basis of those concerned with education through art is necessary in order that they may share experiences, improve practices and strengthen the position of art in relation to all education;

Co-operation with those concerned in other disciplines of study outside the teaching profession and domains of education would be of mutual advantage in securing closer co-ordination of activities directed to solving problems in common;

International co-operation and the better understanding between peoples would be furthered by a more completely integrated design and permanent structure for the diffusion of beliefs and practices concerning education through art, so that the right of man [sic] 'freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts' and to create beauty for himself in reciprocal relationship with his environment, would become a living reality.¹¹

In a spate of initial enthusiasm InSEA embarked on an ambitious programme that included preparing recommendations on the teaching of art in primary and secondary schools addressed to the ministries of education of all UNESCO members. A large international touring exhibition of children's art was assembled for UNESCO and sets of colour transparencies of children's work were distributed internationally. An international list of resource material was compiled and later extended and InSEA published regular newsletters. A key ambition was to encourage the establishment of National Committees of InSEA with a view to the Society becoming a federation of such organisations. Plans were laid for the Second General Assembly that took place in The Hague in August 1957. Not for the last time the difficulties of organising and financing a World Congress became apparent. Nevertheless, a pattern of world and regional congresses has developed over the years:

Table 1: FEA and InSEA World Congresses 1957-2002

Fédération Internationale pour l'Éducation Artistique	
1900	Paris, France
1904	Berne, Switzerland
1908	London, United Kingdom
1912	Dresden, Germany
1925	Paris, France
1928	Prague, Czechoslovakia
1935	Brussels, Belgium
1937	Paris, France
1955	Lund, Sweden
1958	Basle, Switzerland
1962	Berlin, Germany

International Society for Education through Art

1957	The Hague, The Netherlands
1960	Manila, The Philippines
1963	Montreal, Canada
1966	Prague, Czechoslovakia
1969	New York, USA
1970	Coventry, United Kingdom
1972	Zagreb, Yugoslavia
1975	Sevres, France
1978	Adelaide, Australia
1981	Rotterdam, The Netherlands
1984	Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
1987	Hamburg, German Federal Republic
1990	Manila, The Philippines – Cancelled for political reasons
1993	Montreal, Canada
1996	Lille, France – Cancelled for financial reasons
1999	Brisbane, Australia
2002	New York, USA
2006	Viseu, Portugal ¹

The importance of its international congresses to the life of InSEA can hardly be over-estimated. Congresses have been its lifeblood, the more or less regular focus of activity that has held the organisation and an international community of art educators together for fifty years. They are an embodiment of InSEA's aim to promote worldwide co-operation in the exchange of ideas in visual arts education and the published proceedings of these events form a valuable resource. The organisers of the 1999 World Congress expressed their purpose succinctly:

[to] ... provide a forum in which teachers, academics, artists, specialists and others concerned with the promotion and advancement of creative education, may meet and exchange information. ...an opportunity for educators, academics, artists and representatives to evaluate current ideas and experiences, debate relevant and topical issues, and establish working relationships with colleagues in associated fields.

In later years regional congresses were held in the intervening years between world congresses and these more 'local' events facilitated wider participation.

¹ This was a major InSEA congress to prepare for UNESCO World Summit on Arts Education held immediately following in Lisbon. The congress included the InSEA General Assembly postponed from 2005.

Table 2: InSEA Regional Congresses 1980-2004

1971	Otaniemi, Finland
1980	Baden, Austria
1982	Nicosia, Cyprus
1983	Sofia, Bulgaria
1985	Bath, United Kingdom
1986	Vancouver, Canada
1988	Lagos, Nigeria
1988	Stockholm, Sweden
1989	Cairo, Egypt
1992	Helsinki, Finland
1994	Lisbon, Portugal
1995	Taichung, Republic of China
1995	Manila, The Philippines
1997	Glasgow, Scotland
1998	Tokyo, Japan
2000	Poznan, Poland
2001	Sun Moon Lake, Taiwan ROC
2003	'InSEA on Sea', Stockholm, Helsinki & Tallinn
2004	Istanbul & Cappadocia, Turkey
2004	Beijing, People's Republic of China

Every successive president has brought a particular emphasis and focus to the work of the Society and to some extent has placed their particular stamp on the Society for the period of their presidency. However one fact is inescapable: the domination of InSEA by the Western world and by the English language – a majority of InSEA's presidents have spoken English as their native tongue. This is a precedent that is overdue for change.

Jane Rhoades Hudak, InSEA's archivist, has provided a thumbnail sketch of the achievements of each presidency. Throughout the early period from 1951–1960 Edwin Ziegfeld served as president and by the end of his presidency the Society had some one thousand members. He established a sound organisational structure and achieved the majority of the goals established at the early General Assemblies. Indeed, the basic structure of the organisation today would easily be recognised by Ziegfeld as it has essentially changed very little in the intervening years.

Table 3: Presidents of InSEA

1951-1960	Edwin Ziegfeld	<i>USA</i>
1960-1963	Charles D Gaitskell	<i>Canada</i>
1963-1966	J A Soika	<i>Federal Republic of Germany</i>
1966-1969	Sabura Kurata	<i>Japan</i>
1969-1973	Eleanor Hipwell	<i>United Kingdom</i>
1973-1976	Aimée Humbert	<i>France</i>
1976-1979	Al Hurwitz	<i>USA</i>
1979-1982	Jack Condous	<i>Australia</i>
1982-1985	Brian Allison	<i>United Kingdom</i>
1985-1988	Marie-Françoise Chavanne	<i>France</i>
1988-1991	Elliot Eisner	<i>USA</i>
1991-1993	Ana Mae Barbosa	<i>Brazil</i>
1993-1996	John Steers	<i>United Kingdom</i>
1996-1999	Kit Grauer	<i>Canada</i>
2000-2002	Diederik Schönau	<i>The Netherlands</i>
2003-2005	Doug Boughton	<i>Australia</i>

The records for the presidencies of Gaitskell, Soika and Kurata have not survived. However a key achievement of Gaitskell's term was the merger of the FEA and InSEA. Soika presided over an exceptionally successful conference in Prague, attended by over 2000 people. Kurata's presidency was marred by financial irregularities of which, I should emphasise, he was unaware and uninvolved. He presided over the first New York World Congress and was characterised by Jane Rhoades who met him late in his life as '... one of the most extraordinarily intuitive, gentle and sensitive people I have ever had the chance to meet'.¹²

Subsequently Eleanor Hipwell was faced with re-establishing the Society. Jane Rhoades concluded that she: ... 'saved' InSEA. The organisational structure and processes were broken down. She put the organisation back into the black financially and reorganised the Society.¹³ The 1970s marked a period of consolidation with much of the focus of activity on organising a sequence of significant world congresses. The detailed records of the Humbert and Hurwitz era are lost but from Condous's time on there is a detailed and continuous record. Allison was a particularly energetic and ambitious president. He established the InSEA regions and set up a structure of Recognised National Organisation and Affiliates, very much in the spirit of the founders' intentions. The constitution and rules were revised and guidelines for various activities, such as organising congresses, were drawn up. Boards of Council were established to deal with research, affiliations and publications and, for a time, a relationship flourished with the Bulgarian international 'Banner of Peace' movement.

In 1982 Allison brought me into the InSEA Executive Committee as secretary and I served as member of the committee continuously in one capacity or another until 1999. I have had the privilege of working with eight world presidents between 1982 and now, as well as serving myself for a term as president. I can testify to the commitment and dedication to the Society of all these individuals and from personal experience I learned how demanding it is to try to lead an international organisation with far-ranging ideals and ambitions but with very limited financial resources. Chavanne strengthened links again with UNESCO, Eisner secured funding for an initiative that led to publication of one of the most substantive published documents in InSEA history: 'Evaluating and Assessing the Visual Arts in Education: International Perspectives'.¹⁴ Barbosa very significantly raised the profile of the organisation in Latin America and Grauer's lasting achievement may well prove to be the establishment of InSEA on the Internet. Schönau consolidated this work, strengthened the Society's finances and worked to re-vitalise relationships with UNESCO. The current president, Doug Boughton has a long association with InSEA: his fine work as co-editor of the assessment publication was followed by two further titles for InSEA where Boughton was instrumental in seeing these works through to publication.¹⁵ The key initiative at the present time is the imminent publication early in 2005 of the 'International Journal for Education through Art'.

The Present

Everywhere our world at the beginning of the 21st century is very different to that of 1951 in countless and often unimaginable ways. An obvious change is our growing awareness of the threats and immense opportunities that are presented by increasing globalisation. The word lacks precise definition, but clearly globalisation has something to do with the notion that we all now live in one world with increasingly shared experiences, economies and cultures. We are aware of processes that tend to centralise economic power. Some people believe that the era of the nation state is over and that politicians have lost their capacity to influence major international events. World trade drives globalisation and its scale is such that just for once the term 'awesome' is justified. Anthony Giddens has pointed out a fact that '...more than a trillion dollars is now turned over each day on global currency markets'.¹⁶

At the core of this transformation is the development of digital communication that have significance in many ways beyond global economics. I recently read an account and saw a photograph of members of a remote tribe living near the head waters of the Amazon settling down in their otherwise unchanged stone age surroundings to view a DVD of the destruction of the World Trade Center. It is hard to comprehend what they could have made of these events having never seen skyscrapers or aircraft before. As Giddens reminds us:

Instantaneous electronic communication isn't just a way in which news or information is conveyed more quickly. Its existence alters the very texture of our lives, rich and poor alike. When the image of Nelson Mandela may be more familiar to us than the face of our next door neighbour, something has changed in the nature of our everyday experience.¹⁷

Globalisation may be one root cause for demands for increasing political devolution and the revival of local cultural and ethnic identities in many parts of the world. In the arts, there is ample evidence of transcultural practice in the international art market. A 'school' of artists no longer needs to congregate in a particular geographical location: a print-maker in Tokyo may have close contacts with artists working in a similar idiom in Rio de Janeiro or London and might sell her work in Paris or Chicago. Transculturalism seems dependent on the opportunity to recognise 'self-similarity' between groups and individuals and the new technologies allow a meeting of minds, a meeting of worlds, uninhibited by distance, cost and increasingly, language.

But globalisation is not necessarily benign in all its consequences:

To many living outside Europe and North America, it looks uncomfortably like Westernisation – or, perhaps, Americanisation, since the US is now the sole superpower, with a dominant economic, cultural and military position in the global order. Many of the most visible cultural expressions of globalisation are American – Coca-Cola, McDonalds.¹⁸

Perhaps we need to be alert to the dangers of the potential development of an insidious international pedagogy and recognise that alternative approaches to curriculum and assessment are increasingly being erased by the dominant ideologies of some governments and influential, wealthy organisations. For example, there are some extraordinary similarities of approach to curriculum design among the majority of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries. Governmental thinking, understandably, is dominated by concerns about how to sustain economic growth and national competitiveness, and how to maintain social stability, cohesion and harmony. As Skilbeck has remarked, this is often manifested by:

The remarkably rapid accession of 'knowledge', 'skill', 'competence', to the prime place on the totem pole of national survival/development, combined with economic anxiety and with the susceptibility of public schooling to political/administrative control, combine to provide impetus to the current reform movements. A fear - often exaggerated - of falling standards fuels these concerns and helps explain the pervasive emphasis on quality.¹⁹

In the sphere of state-maintained education and training, central or provincial governments tend to exercise curriculum control through legislation. However, they may just as effectively choose to work through the influence or control they exercise over intermediary bodies such as curriculum councils and development agencies, syllabus committees, examination boards, awarding bodies and so on. Linked to this are inevitable demands for greater accountability from the teaching profession leading inexorably to ever-tighter control of the curriculum and its assessment and, through these mechanisms, to control of teachers in the vain search for a 'teacher proof' education system. This can be very destructive for creative and cultural education: we need to resist the search for some kind of a universal panacea, and to learn to tolerate a rich variety of curricula appropriate to the needs of diverse people and cultures.

Through InSEA, a relatively small organisation, there exists an international and supportive professional community of art educators that has had a disproportionately significant role in

disseminating ideas and research internationally – not least through the success of its congresses and published proceedings. But, crucially, our aim must be to encourage, appreciate and tolerate diversity, and to resist any moves towards a stultifying international uniformity devoid of all real individuality, originality and creativity.

The Future

How well founded was the founders' idealism and has InSEA lived up to expectations? Or has it become what economists call a 'shell institution', that is an organisation that has become inadequate for the tasks it is called upon to perform? Sometimes it is necessary to reconstruct the institutions we have or, maybe, create new ones, in a form that is both appropriate and capable of taking advantage of the opportunities presented by the global age.

I am not suggesting that InSEA has had its day, but I do believe we can re-visit some of the original intentions, review the achievements, recognise weaknesses and look for new opportunities. For example, membership numbers are still similar to the early years. A well-organised and well-attended congress boosts membership for a year or two in that region. How can we account for this? Perhaps InSEA does not have enough to offer the classroom teacher? But is that beginning to change with the launch of the InSEA web site? Does InSEA have at last a relatively cheap and immediate means of communicating effectively with members and prospective members? Another intractable problem that concerned InSEA from the outset was membership subscriptions. How to set a fair rate when faced with the inequalities of teachers' salaries in different parts of the world and currency restrictions that often prevented payment in 'hard' western currencies? Electronic transfer of money is helping to solve the problem although, depressingly, the gap between the richest and poorest countries shows no sign of closing.

The original intention of InSEA's founders was to create an International Federation for Art Education and an 'International Institute for Information and Research in Art Education' both of which were expected to have the '...full co-operation and financial help of UNESCO'.²⁰ A few years ago, Bill Barrett, the New Zealand representative and last survivor of the 1951 seminar, reminded me:

Another focus not yet realised. The idea that InSEA needed a permanent base as a research centre, a clearing house and a place for art educators. 'A hub of the wheel', as it were... Maybe this should be revisited?²¹

In recent years the Society has had semi-permanent homes with the National Society for Education in Art and Design (NSEAD) in the United Kingdom and with the Dutch Institute for Educational Measurement (CITO) in Arnhem. But these are dependent on individuals and the goodwill of the host institutions. I agree that a new initiative should be launched and although a physical base is needed for the secretariat, the research centre, clearing-house for information and 'a place for art educators' might best be located in cyber space at www.insea.org.

At the outset it was fully expected that UNESCO would fund the organisation on a permanent basis, or at least until such time as its future was secure. The founders' shopping list include the launch of an international journal, although as an interim measure they expected UNESCO to sponsor '...a popular inexpensive illustrated bulletin devoted to the furtherance of art education' while supporting a range of other publications and the necessary translation facilities. It seems that 'the interim' was destined to last for half a century, but now at last the Society is about to launch a peer-reviewed academic journal.²² Although UNESCO has supported some InSEA activities from time to time – the occasional publication grant and more recently some support for the new web site – the reality is that UNESCO backing has never been consistent.

Some of the initial aims have been realised; for example, the exchange of exhibits, often in association with congresses, and the international interchange of teachers and students. Although the latter exchanges are extensive, they develop as a consequence of informal links between those members that have an opportunity to meet, often on a surprisingly regular basis, at InSEA and other international events. InSEA has sometimes been accused of being an international travel organisation for rich art educators – although that excludes most InSEA members I know! Time as well as money was a factor – when Bill Barrett attended that 1951 seminar in Bristol he relates how at that time it took six weeks to travel from New Zealand by sea, or, for the privileged, nearly two weeks by flying boat. Today travel problems are lessening in an era of increasingly mass travel and tourism. Even so, the accusation of exclusivity contains more than a grain of truth seen from the perspective of classroom teachers from many parts of the developing world.

Up to now InSEA has succeeded in establishing a relatively small but often influential community of art educators. But we may be on the brink of establishing – in fact it is already happening – a virtual network of transcultural art educators. For example, we can have on-line seminars, virtual galleries of children's art, on-line research databases and Internet portals to a vast range of teaching and learning resources. These include access to the majority of the great and less well known museums and galleries world-wide or to a host of curriculum materials such as those available for example from www.nsead.org or the Getty Center for the Arts. One of the Society's future roles should be to try to bring some order, or at least to map a way to navigate the plethora of art and art education sites that are springing up on the World Wide Web. A very modest start has been made but InSEA must not be caught unawares. For good or ill growth in use of the web will continue to expand exponentially. Giddens points out that it took forty years for radio to gain an audience of fifty million in the USA. By contrast, only four years after it was made available fifty million Americans were using the Internet.²³

Ziegfeld held the view that Herbert Read's ideas on education would become more relevant as time passes rather than less so. He believed Read saw in clearer and more humanistic terms than most, the nature of what they both perceived as a profound cultural crisis. Ideas for the resolution of this crisis are at the core of *Education through Art*, a book that Ziegfeld believed:

... is a distinctly prophetic work dealing as it does with what the nature of education should be. Furthermore, Read, during the last several decades, has

been almost the sole world figure who has spoken out on the place of the arts in all of education. Indeed, Sir Herbert's ideas on education may well be his most important legacy, not only for Americans but for all art teachers. The fact that they are not yet clearly understood is a testament of their ultimate validity and proof of the fact that they require basic changes in the outlook and the values of modern man [sic]. The fact that the world organisation of art teachers has incorporated into its name the basic idea of Read's educational views is proof that they have a universal, rather than a national or regional validity.²⁴

I believe that InSEA is needed now more than ever provided it is capable of adapting to the challenges of ever-changing global circumstances. We have to realise, 'Globalisation is not incidental to our lives today. It is a shift in our very life circumstances. It is the way we live now'.²⁵ My experience of InSEA has confirmed my belief that we should strive for truly idealistic and humanistic forms of art education that at their core value diversity. What emerges from interaction with art educators from other countries is not just the realisation that we share many concerns, but appreciation of the rich multiplicity of ideas and solutions worthy of consideration. One of the key qualities of creative individuals (but one seldom shared by organisations) is the ability to tolerate ambiguity and to forestall closure – to keep a range of possibilities in play. If art education is to avoid atrophy we need to cherish multiple visions of teaching and learning *about, for and through* art. In his book 'Celebrating Pluralism: Art, Education and Cultural Diversity', InSEA colleague Graeme Chalmers, draws attention to the need to accept and respect the '... co-equality of fundamentally different frames of thought and action characteristic of diverse cultures'.²⁶ This, I suggest, should be a fundamental tenet of all InSEA's actions.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

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