

# Conference Proceedings

**CIVAE 2023**

**5th Interdisciplinary and Virtual  
Conference on Arts in Education**

May 24-25, 2023

Edited by MusicoGuia

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# Art and Society: an artistic and scientific-cultural reflection

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## Abstract

This work aims to promote reflections on the relevance of the process of inserting art in social activities. We recognize art as an instrument for acquiring culture and a valuable resource for the evolution of emotional and psychological aspects of the individual. The inclusion of art in social activities can also contribute to the promotion of social inclusion and the reduction of discrimination. Through art, it is possible to explore cultural differences and learn to value diversity, promoting the formation of more united and respectful communities. In this way, it offers the opportunity to add values and support progress in the formation of the individual's structure through artistic experiences of interpretation and expression. We emphasize that Art is an extremely collaborative process for social integration in a more enjoyable way, valuing the human being through its various forms of manifestation. Combining Art and Science, we address artists from the 19th and early 20th centuries who already promoted the dialogue of both cultures in a substantially artistic and scientific way, anticipating what is now proven in serious and extensive research in both arts.

*Keywords:* art, society, culture, learning.

## Arte y sociedad: una reflexión artística y científico-cultural

### Resumen

Este trabajo tiene como objetivo promover reflexiones sobre la relevancia del proceso de inserción del arte en las actividades sociales. Reconocemos el arte como un instrumento de adquisición de cultura y un valioso subsidio para la evolución de los aspectos emocionales y psicológicos del individuo. La inclusión del arte en actividades sociales también puede contribuir a la promoción de la inclusión social y la reducción de la discriminación. A través del arte, es posible explorar las diferencias culturales y aprender a valorar la diversidad, favoreciendo la formación de comunidades más unidas y respetuosas. De esta manera, ofrece la oportunidad de agregar valores y apoyar el progreso en la formación de la estructura del individuo a través de experiencias artísticas de interpretación y expresión. Destacamos que el arte es un proceso extremadamente colaborativo para la integración social de forma más placentera, valorando al ser humano a través de sus diversas formas de manifestación. Al unir arte y ciencia, abordamos artistas del siglo XIX y principios del siglo XX que ya promovían el diálogo de ambas culturas de forma sustancialmente artística y científica, anticipando lo que hoy se demuestra en serias y extensas investigaciones en ambas artes.

*Palabras clave:* arte, sociedad, cultura, aprendizaje.

## Introduction

*“Art and society have a very close connection and the main point that links them is cooperation” (Richard Sennett, 2015)*

Art and society are real participants in the construction and evolution of human beings. “Art is very much connected to the human essence, to the creative force that moves and connects people. If society is made up of people, then it is made up of art” (Blog Revolução Artesanal).

We observe that in schools, the teaching of arts usually involves visual arts, dance, music, and theater, which are adapted to educational environments and encompass diverse areas of knowledge. Based on interdisciplinarity, we have the integration of education with the perspectives of science and culture, presenting art as a historical and social mechanism. In this sense, actions involve artistic production, appreciation, contextualization, and understanding of arts as cultural and social constructions. Art is a particular way of giving structure to the expression of feelings and emotions. Our absorption and experience through art can reflect our understanding of the world. We can consider art as a manifestation that characterizes a particular group, such as customs, language, and dress. Therefore, it is closely linked to social groups as a means or sign of distinction (Redmon, 2004). Through art, the ideas and values of different cultures and ethnicities can be expressed and appreciated by society as a whole. Art is a human expression that evolves and changes over time, but it has always been present in human history. Although influenced by different contexts and cultures, art is not limited to any of them, being essentially flexible and adaptable. Thus, “every culture requires an activity, a mode of appropriation, an adoption and personal transformation, an exchange established in a social group. It is precisely this kind of ‘culture,’ if we may say so, that gives each era its own identity” (Giard, 1995, p. 10).

The objective of this research is to reflect culturally on how artistic educational procedures and performances are important for the formation and life of human beings.

## *Art and Learning*

Research indicates that artistic education in the classroom provides more plausible effects for humans, absolutely integrated into curricular disciplines, and when established, many benefits are obtained, including: a more active cooperative learning system, optimized learning in all disciplines, better-defined and comprehensive evaluation, and students improve their artistic and social skills, stimulating greater family involvement (Redmon, 2004). We observe that pedagogical practices incorporated into artistic development benefit students by promoting creativity and enhancing their intellectuality. Music is related to many brain functions such as perception, emotion, cognition, learning, and memory. Therefore, it is an artistic activity that allows us to investigate the functioning of the human brain and the interaction between its brain functions. New discoveries have been observed in the field of cortical plasticity induced by musical training (Pantev & Herholz, 2011). Bradley (2002) asserts that dancing stimulates the development of particularities of creative thinking, such as fluency, originality, and abstraction capacity. We can then conclude that school artistic activities that involve movement, such as dance, music, theater, or sports, are important at all levels, including the cognitive. We can think of art through two perspectives - expression and culture, distinctly. In expressive art, ideas are revealed through different peculiarities and forms, while in cultural art, we obtain an understanding of the description of lives and the development of art. Experiences with the arts broaden the possibility of interculturality, that is, working with different cultural codes (Swanwich, 2014). Music, dance, and theater are suitable sectors of art for education because they present relevant factors for the psychological, physical, and intellectual development of students. We recognize how much the educational environment enables social integration, contributing scientifically and culturally to the construction of knowledge with a view to uniting with the community, family, and civilization (Conceição *et al.*, 2016).

### *Art and Science*

According to Lehrer (2010), artists such as Whitman, a poet and essayist from the 19th century, George Eliot, one of the main writers of the Victorian era in England, and Marcel Proust, a French novelist, critic and essayist best known for his monumental novel “In Search of Lost Time”, defended the need for art. With the emergence of modern science, thoughts separated into anatomical parts did not divert artists’ priority to understand consciousness originating from within.

“Artists had their particular methods of exploring the mind towards art, but despite technical differences, they all shared a permanent interest in human experience... Creations were acts of exploration, ways of dealing with mysteries they could not comprehend” (Lehrer, 2010, p.13).

Art teaches us to admire what we observe, which can awaken new hypotheses. Reflecting on the proximity between art and science is essential for the rescue of interdisciplinary studies. By uniting different areas of knowledge, research is refined and valued.

“The only reality that science cannot reduce is the only reality we can know. That is why we need art. We are made of art and science. Science needs art to frame the mystery, but art needs science so that not everything is a mystery” (Santos, 2006, p. 26).

When Marcel Proust made the artistic discovery about memory, Paul Cézanne about the process of vision, Gertrude Stein about the structure of language, Stravinsky about the plasticity of the brain, and George Eliot about the biology of freedom, it became very clear that describing the brain requires artistic and scientific cultures. “The reductionist methods of science must be associated with an artistic investigation of our experience”. In light of this, we can affirm that “science is viewed through the lens of art, and art is interpreted in the light of science” (Lehrer, 2010, p. 86). This idea suggests that science and art are two areas that relate to and complement each other. Through the perspective of art, science can be seen as a source of inspiration for creating new forms of artistic expression. On the other hand, science can help us better understand the creative processes involved in producing works of art, allowing for a deeper and more comprehensive interpretation of these works. Thus, the interaction between science and art can be seen as a mutual exchange of ideas and inspirations that enriches both areas and expands our knowledge and understanding of the world.

Karl Popper (referred to by Lehrer, 2010, p. 87), considered one of the greatest philosophers of science of the 20th century, maintains that life is a cloud and as such, life is “quite irregular, disorganized and quite unpredictable” (Lehrer, 2010, p. 87).

Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971), an intuitive modernist composer, declared that our sense of beauty is plastic because the harmonies and chord progressions rooted in our brains are not sacred. For Stravinsky, “music is nothing but a fragment of sound that we learn to listen to”. Research confirms that sound perception is a progressive refinement. Neurons in the auditory cortex change repeatedly according to the habit of listening to music. As we experience art, we can say that nothing is difficult forever,

“the way science has transformed the fundamental bond that connects the artist to his art, the painter to his hand and eye, and the musician to his ear. The same thing happens to communication between the artist and his audience” (Strosberg, 1999, p. 232).

In other words, as Pombo alludes to us (as cited in Ferreira, 2008, p. 27): “If, since the Greeks, man has been doing science, it is ultimately [...] as a inhabitant of this world. It is also for this reason that man does philosophy, religion, literature, and art”.

### *The Arts in the Community: Art, Society and Education- Brazil*

Brazil offers abundant resources for education through the arts. This form of spontaneous learning has its values due to multiple factors. The regions of Brazil have similarities and affinities, but different climatic and geographical conditions provide for the significant acquisition and development of their peculiarities and cultural influences from other countries and continents resulting from the immigration of different peoples who established themselves here. We can register the wide variety of peoples who settled in our lands, contributing richly with their habits, language, and culture that were assimilated into Brazil. This universe leads us to the recognition of the existence of “many Brazils incorporated into Brazil”. The specific cultures transmitted by immigrants are experienced in different Brazilian geographical locations, promoting a lively and dynamic intercultural relationship, preserving their traditions and values in each region. In this way, we gain relevant cultural subsidies that result in significant communicative innovations through the art of the Brazilian people. Therefore, we can affirm that Brazilian pluriculturalism offers many resources to benefit our educational system. “By mediating knowledge with artistic educational practices, we can stimulate student autonomy in a dialogic and collaborative way. Popular culture is characterized by functionality, anonymity, and oral transmission” (Conceição *et al.*, 2016, p.5).

The experience of synchronized learning with artistic expressions is related to the educator’s attention to the social and cultural changes that manifest themselves in the world fostered by an educational policy. With the responsibility of contributing to the social development of children, the NGO “Favela Mundo” has been offering free dance, music, and theater workshops since 2010. “The aggression has decreased a lot”, says the project coordinator, Stéphanhy Aquino.

Social scientist Sabrina Ginga gives special attention to artistic learning in communities when she refers to how it opens horizons and works to mitigate events. Barbosa (2014, p.654) makes an important caveat about the ability of children to create with the understanding that they produce “Knowledge, or cultures, do not exist only to be transmitted but are linked to everyday activities. Children, like all human beings, are capable of creating, attributing, and understanding meanings”. Journalist Rosana Freitas on the portal (<http://portaldejornalismo-rj.espm.br>) presents some reports on art experienced in communities, describing how, among alleys and lanes, on the outskirts, art appears as a sign of hope.

### **Conclusions**

It is essential to encourage the appreciation of arts since childhood through activities that stimulate imagination, vocabulary expansion, motor skills, and sociability. When humans are integrated into a social context that includes arts, they broaden their knowledge. Arts are an important motivational factor for creativity stimulation and breaking down barriers. Wisnik (2004) makes a relevant observation about the possible repercussions that music can have on society. “Conceived as the very regulator of cosmic balance that is realized in social balance, music is ambivalently an aggregating, centripetal power of great pedagogical utility in the formation of the citizen” (Wisnik, 2004, p.101). The remarkable purpose of arts in education can only be understood and committed to the extent that it is recognized as an enriching agent of the mind, in a broad sense. Art establishes a universal language that is open to all. Moreover, the development of creativity and critical thinking skills stimulated by art can help prepare individuals to deal with the challenges of life in society. Finally, the integration of art in social activities can be an effective strategy to encourage people’s participation in social and community projects, fostering engagement and active citizenship.

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