*How* we do the art is as important as the fact that we're doing it. After all, it's quite possible to do arts in education in ways which potentially undermine children. For practitioners of all kinds, I've sketched out a checklist to keep in mind how best to ensure that arts education experiences are worthwhile for all.

Children and young people involved in the arts should:

1) have a sense of ownership and control in the process;

2) have a sense of possibility, transformation and change **– that the process is not closed with pre-planned outcomes;**

3) feel safe in the process, and know that no matter what they do, they will not be exposed to ridicule, relentless testing, or the fear of being wrong;

4) understand that their artistic process can be individual, co-operative or both;

5) know there is a flow between the art forms, culture and humanity and understand they are not boxed off from each other;

6) be provided an environment that welcomes their home cultures, backgrounds, heritages and languages;

7) be supported so as to feel that what they are making or doing matters – that the activity has status within the school and beyond;

8) be encouraged and enabled to find audiences for their work;

9) be exposed to the best practice and the best practitioners possible;

10) be encouraged to think of the arts as including or involving investigation, invention, discovery, play and co-operation and to think that these happen within the actual doing, but also in the talk, commentary and critical dialogue that goes on around the activity itself.

As young people work, they will find their minds, bodies and materials changing. As agents of that change, they will inevitably change themselves. They will find out things about themselves as individuals – where they come from, how they co-exist with people and places around them – and they will pick up (or create) clues about where they are heading. They will also find new ways to talk about the arts, demystifying them and providing greater access and understanding of art and how to relate, produce and interact within the arts. Let us call for a set of humane and democratic educational practices for which the arts provide an amenable home.