

My Neighbors Children: Reflections on Possible Curriculum Design for Mutual Care

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Abstract

This work is a critical evaluation of learning potential for regional and global integration and co-existence processes. Considered are cultural and psychological elements and obstacles. The paper's starting points are three current cognitive researches that may aid thinking for *Mutual Care* curriculum design. Also as antecedents and anchoring the discourse are five *community engagement* projects with discreet or stated learning intentions aimed at integration, enrichment and mutual care. These projects lead to forming of or were carried out by Artship Foundation over last 40 years. The paper's main interest is to evaluate conditions and articulate meta-questions that may point to a curriculum design that is not only intended for Balkan Counties but also as Pan-European and Global Learning project. The paper reflects on occurrences that help recognize inter-connectedness and mutual responsibility beyond specific geographies or peoples. With universality of issues understood, the study dedicates itself to Balkan and South East European conditions and needs. The paper concludes with seven topics summarizing the issues of possible Mutual Care curriculum.

Three cognitive researches

1. Empathy

A. N. Meltzoff, J. Decety from the Center for Mind, Brain & Learning, University of Washington, articulate this innate human characteristic: "Our ability to imitate others' actions holds the key to our understanding what it is for others to be like us and for us to be like them".

2. Cognition though Cultural expressions

The University of Oregon paper explores the evidence that arts training influences cognition. The authors state that the intricate brain network aiding *attention* and *perseverance practices* are directly related to motivation to express oneself. The tangible, visceral qualities of expression may shed light on issues too complex for verbal theory only.

3. Conditioning

Dr. M. Y. Brave Heart's influential study, *Wakiksuuyapi (Memorial People): Heart Carrying the Historical Trauma of the Lakota* published by Tulane Studies In Social Welfare influenced Stanford University's Research Group on Collective Trauma and Healing. These interdisciplinary projects are studying the multigenerational legacies of trauma. The Stanford Group brings together scholars from the humanities and sciences, to provide crucial insights into the effects of trauma on bodies, minds, and communities in order to propose new possibilities for healing.

Topics and community engagement projects as Antecedents

1. Curriculum for extra curricula, life long learning

Project - The reclaiming of public space at Arroyo Viejo Park in Oakland

2. Youth and Crisis of Perseverance

Project - Redefining a historic 1940 passenger-cargo/military ship for public peacetime use and a cultural space, 1999 – 2004.

3. Heritage, conditioning and Oral Histories

Project - Tarantella Pizzica as community healing process -

Fifteen years comparative cultures research inspiring contemporary play

4. Managing Tangible and Intangible Surplus

Project - Community Poles Project 1986-1991

5. Mutual grieving and understanding ancestors

Project - Imaginary Film Workshops- 1997 and 1998

6. Structured learning and nature of continuity

Projects - Educational village 1975 - 1980 and Children and architecture 1989 -1995

In closing the reality, legislative difficulty, conditioning and resistance to change are acknowledged but also similar needs, potential of sharing or bartering material surplus, wisdom, stories and songs may pave a way for a curriculum of Mutual Care.

Kay Words: *Mutual Care, Cognitive Development, Solidarity Culture*

Section 1. Cognitive Researches and *Mutual Care Curriculum*

Cultural sensitivities, diversity of views and historic and global complexity raised by the issues of this conference are approached in this paper from an inter-cultural and curriculum development angle.

Important aspect of intentionality of this paper is to critically reflect on the issues raised, not as local but as international and global phenomenon and responsibility. The paper opens with examples of cognitive research that have been studied and reflected upon in a number of Artship Foundation's and the author of this paper's previously presented and published work.

In entering into non- sectarian discourse, this paper looks at inborn and developmental traits that belong to all humans, all children, such as inborn reflexes babies bring with them when they are born regardless of geography, time in history or social structure.

The author of this discourse, S. D. Paich in his 2011 paper *Learning Body–Feeling Mind - Cultural context and the role of dolls, puppets and models in child development* for the Romanian conference *Parents' Bodies, Children's Bodies - From Conception to Education*⁴² offered this paragraph:

There are reflexes that a baby manifests from the first moment of being born that appear miraculous to the experienced or inexperienced parents. In child development theory and observation they are referred to as *Infant Reflexes*. The involuntary readiness and consistency of these reflexes makes one of the first relational *parent–child* interplays. It is like a set of non-verbal *vocabulary–reactions*, each with its own characteristic. These involuntary reflexes originate in the central nervous system and are part of normal infants' responses to specific stimuli. Through typical child development the frontal lobes inhibits these reflexes so they do not manifest as a child grows.

Relinquishing *Infant Reflexes* opens the way to other inborn responses that help a child grow and respond to its environment, its caretakers and kin.

Roots of Mutuality

⁴²Luca, G. M., Thomas, J.(edit), *Parents' Bodies, Children's Bodies - From Conception to Education*,

CORPUS - International Group for the Cultural Studies of the Body, Victor Babes University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Conference Volume, pub. Victor Babes, Timisoara 2013, p. 298

To help contextualize reflections on possible curriculum design for *Mutual Care*, a brief overview is offered here of the human's inborn ability to *imitate* and *mirror*.

There has been a lot of work done in the recent past on mirroring and imitation by cognitive psychology and neuro science. A. N. Meltzoff and J. Decety from the University of Washington's Center for Mind, Brain & Learning wrote in the paper *What imitation tells us about social cognition: a rapprochement between developmental psychology and cognitive neuroscience*, (Meltzoff 2013:491-500):

Our ability to imitate others' actions holds the key to our understanding what it is for others to be like us and for us to be like them. The past two decades of research have significantly expanded our knowledge about imitation at the cognitive and neurological levels. One goal of this article is to discuss striking convergences between the cognitive and neuro-scientific findings.

A. N. Meltzoff and J. Decety make a three-point theoretical proposal:

Imitation is innate in humans; imitation precedes mentalizing and theory of mind (in development and evolution); and behavioral imitation and its neural substrate provide the mechanism by which theory of mind and empathy develops in humans.

A. N. Meltzoff and J. Decety tell us that the uses of the terms 'theory of mind' and 'mentalizing' are interchangeable in their paper. Their view of *Developmental Science* presents the concept that **infant imitation is the seed and the adult *mentalizing, theory-making capacity is the fruit***. A. N. Meltzoff and J. Decety are proposing a 'linking argument':

Through imitating others, the human young come to understand that others not only share behavioral states, but are 'like me' in deeper ways as well. This propels the human young on the developmental trajectory of developing an understanding of other mind.

The study by A. N. Meltzoff and J. Decety brings the articulations of the human *imitative function* to the root of empathy and mutual understanding and helps us appreciate portrayals of human condition either as cultural expression or scientific exposition.

Keith Oatley in his article *Does Art Imitate Life? Fictional characters seem real, but they are of the mind* (Oatley 2011:1), states the idea that art may imitate life is at least as old as Aristotle's *Poetics*. The book, according to K. Oatley is the most widely recommended text on how to write fiction in the west. K. Oatley comments:

The idea of imitation comes from the central concept of *Poetics: mimesis*, which is about the relation of a piece of fiction to the world. In English, it is almost always translated as imitation, mirroring, copying.

K. Oatley continues by pointing to S. Halliwell's interpretation that meanings of *mimesis* have another parallel reading, as *simulation* or *world-making*. In his essay *The aesthetics of mimesis- Ancient texts and modern problems* (Halliwell, 2002:22), S. Halliwell articulates the difference between observing, knowing and naming of everyday perception from simulating, creating and evoking of artistic representation.

This innate *mimetic characteristic of cognition* is not only a necessary aspect of growing and learning, but also a daily occurrence that helps hold communal bond.

Mutual Care and Burden of inherited history

The second central aspect of this reflection and curriculum design possibility is approaching carefully the burden of history. The burden, often involving whole clans, carrying unknowingly for centuries the brand of divisive policies affecting their region through history, the politics of *divide and rule* (*divide et impera*) as exemplified in the institution of *Pox Romana* of Ancient Roman and Byzantine civilization practiced thousand years ago that is still echoing in the region of south east Europe for example.

Trauma Resolution

The Balkan burden, as a phenomenon is not dissimilar to many other places and peoples across the globe. The historic burden is both a source of identity and pride but also of isolation, oppression and even ridicule. Blood feuds, nationalism, the glorification of war and conquest, and the subjugation of peoples, all have obscured the many instances of benevolent and far-reaching interactions in certain long standing inter-cultural settings and between settled cultures and itinerants and strangers. The further study of diachronic and cross-cultural collection of samples of spontaneous solidarity may help the understanding of moments that transcend the group identity solely based on the antagonistic memories. The small example from Artship Initiatives of reclaiming public space for and with community, that this paper will discuss later, may be a placeholder for looking into solidarity as a bridge that extends beyond group identity established on inherited patterns of difficult history.

There are many projects globally that in various ways approach inherited trauma work and possible resolutions. In this paper to focus and contextualize the learning potential, a few examples are cited.

November 2014 issue New Republic Magazine published Judith Shulevitz article *The Science of Suffering - Kids are inheriting their parents' trauma. Can science stop it?*⁴³In the article J. Shulevitz Writes:

Parents may tell children that their problems amount to nothing compared with what *they* went through, which has a certain truth to it, but is crushing nonetheless. “Transgenerational transmission is when an older person unconsciously externalizes his traumatized self onto a developing child’s personality,” in the words of psychiatrist and psychohistorian Vamik Volkan. “A child then becomes a reservoir for the unwanted, troublesome parts of an older generation.” This, for decades, was the classic psychoanalytic formulation of the child-of-survivors syndrome.

Stanford University's Research Group on Collective Trauma and Healing is described as an interdisciplinary project that is studying the multigenerational legacies of trauma. By bringing together scholars from the humanities and sciences, the group works to provide crucial insights into the effects of trauma on bodies, minds, and communities in order to propose new possibilities for healing. Their recent conference in June 2015 *Soul Wounds - Trauma and Healing across Generations* echoes strongly the work of Dr. Maria Yellow Horse Brave Heart a Native American Social Worker, mental health expert and associate professor at a number of premier universities in United States. Dr. M. Y. Brave Heart coined the term *Soul Wounds*. Her contribution to the field of inherited traits and behaviors is given with the model of historical trauma resolution for the Lakota people. Since its first publication, this work is internationally known and respected and forms the basis of post-colonial re-orientation of indigenous populations the world over.

⁴³Judith Shulevitz, *The Science of Suffering - Kids are inheriting their parents' trauma. Can science stop it*, New Republic Magazine November 2014

<http://www.newrepublic.com/article/120144/trauma-genetic-scientists-say-parents-are-passing-ptsd-kids>
Accessed 9/5/2015

Dr. M. Y. Brave Heart's influential study, *Wakiksuuyapi (Memorial People): Heart Carrying the Historical Trauma of the Lakota* published by Tulane Studies In Social Welfare. Her study on transcending trauma states:

Under the theme of transcending the trauma, healthy coping strategies used to deal with the trauma, ideas about healing, and transformation of the traumatic past were revealed. Coping strategies included emphasizing traditional Lakota values, focusing on helping others and future generations. Ideas about healing incorporate awareness of and talking about the past with a focus on the commonality among the Lakota of shared trauma. An outgrowth of the first interval and the quantitative study was the formation of the *Takini* (Survivor) Network, a group dedicated to further research and promoting healing. Transforming the traumatic past involved reframing, finding the positive aspects of a painful experience. p. 260

Most citizens and parents might not consider their past as traumatic for them, just difficult and lived within the boundaries of national or social identity. This sometimes leads to regarding neighbors as inferior or someone to be blamed for outcomes. The intended learning process suggested by this paper is influenced by scientific and symbolic work of Dr. M. Y. Brave Heart, also by inter-racial reconciliations initiated by Desmond Tutu and Nelson Mandela and re-evaluation of the pioneering experiential learning practiced and advocated by educational innovator Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746 –1827). Curriculum for *Mutual Care* would cultivate respect for differences through a methodical and poetic approach.

Cognition through arts

It maybe constructive to look at elements of cognitive development as a basis of qualitative experiences children need and participation in expression through the arts as an essential part of growing.

Cultural Expression is a field of study situated between the *reality* of society and social *investigation and theory*. The tangible, visceral qualities of expression may shed light on issues too complex for verbal theory only.

The paper, *How Arts Training Influences Cognition* (Posner 2008:5) written by a consortium of experts from the University of Oregon presents neurological and psychological aspects of learning through cultural expressions. The University of Oregon paper explores the evidence

that arts training influences cognition. The authors state that the intricate brain network that aids *attention* and *perseverance practices* are directly related to motivation to express oneself:

Moreover, we hypothesized that the enthusiasm that many young people have for music, art, and performance could provide a context for [them] paying close attention. This motivation could, in turn, lead to improvement in the [personal neural] attention network, which would then generalize to a range of cognitive skills. Our training study supported this proposed theory about the mechanisms by which training in the arts can have a persistent effect on a wide variety of cognitive processes. The theory is based on the idea that each individual art form involves separate brain networks. In Figure 1 [below], we summarize some of the specific brain areas involved in different art forms.

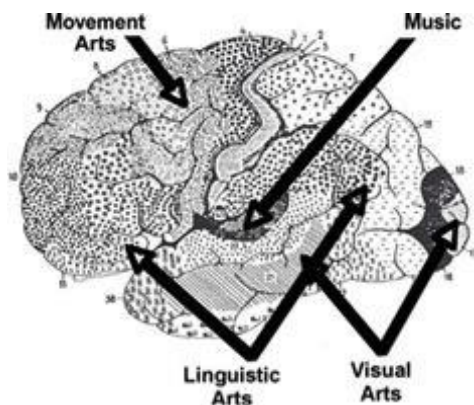


Figure 1 Arts and cognition diagram for University of Oregon cited paper

The paper opened this inter-disciplinary discourse by citing research not only about mirroring as a root of compassion, approaching inherited trauma as a means of mutual understanding but also introducing ideas about multiple stimulus centers within the brain activated by cultural expressions. There is a link to be made between various aspects of cognition and the paradigms of investigating and presenting societal phenomenon.

This type of research into processes of stylization in art coupled with abstraction and meta-thinking of inquiry promises a more complete picture. The open question remains, at what point does an abstraction lose connection to its source and become a reduction. These kinds of generalizations can become *cliché* in art and *truism* in thinking. What kind of procedures and institutions retain connection to the vitality of the samples studied or portrayed? One of the aspirations of this paper is to voice possibilities of future cross-disciplinary collaboration where

scholars and artists study and articulate societal issues that could be incorporated into a song, play and film for example or become part of written hypotheses and theory. These studies would not only focus on issues in the world but also on how they are represented, measured and defined. With numerical or statistical studies only it is difficult to meaningfully communicate the richness of issues at hand. The complexity of educating for Mutual Care would need a multi disciplinary approach congruent to child development needs. Also as life long learning programs for adult and a deep understanding of existing paradigms of identity and inherited world views as a grounding for expanded practice of mutual care and understanding.

Examples and Themes

Building blocks of curriculum for *Mutual Care* are explored in this paper through the work of Artship Foundation and related projects.

Artship Foundation main focus is shared between research into Comparative History of Cultures, Curriculum Development and Culture Making activities. The Foundation is an educational non-for profit organization. Artship Scholarly research feeds the contemporary art practice - Artship Art practice offers a context for inquiry-based expression. In the last ten years Artship's work has been presented at fifty-two international scholarly conferences in the form of papers or keynote thematic focusing.

Approaching delicate and sensitive issues of sharing among people who have inherited mutual distrust may be very difficult if it is approached head on and insisted upon. Words and theories may create barriers while growing food or cleaning polluted creek or river banks may offer a context through physical engagement toward addressing shared needs. The reason for bringing Artship projects as starting point is not to idealize a practice or to offer recipes for solutions, but to open curriculum thinking based on real projects. Seven major topics and community engagement projects as antecedents are presented and discussed.

First Topic - Curriculum for extra curricula, life long learning

Project - The reclaiming of public space at Arroyo Viejo Park in Oakland

In this inner city, troubled Public Park, an amphitheater was built in late 1930's and remained popular until 1960 when it became a nexus of crime and illegal activities. A coalition of neighbors invited Artship artists to animate city agencies, inspire repair of the amphitheater and support a series of daytime performances in the summer. At Arroyo, it was important to give voice to and represent as many people as possible, elicit memories of all kinds from the community and help stories flow through the performances. Reclaiming Public space for community use was the gathering impetus, structured curriculum activities were the means. Safe public space and learning were two inseparable goals.

In the reality and magnitude of inner-city issues, reclaiming public space through performing and visual arts could sound quaint. However, if and when it comes from citizens enlisting a cultural group, some signs change and initial impetus can, in favorable conditions yield long-term results. Rachele Kanigel, The Oakland Tribune staff writer, wrote in *Life Pulses at Arroyo Viejo Park after amphitheater sees rebirth*, 1996:

For years the old, burned out amphitheater at Arroyo Viejo Park was best known as a setting for pit bull fights, drug deals and assaults. Neighborhood mothers didn't dare let their children play there. The only sounds that came from the theater were shouts and gunshots.

But this weekend, the concrete benches were filled with families as a group of artists and community members reclaimed the 67-year-old theater with its first performance in 30 years.

The production of "Windfall of Memories," a mélange of dance, song, and performance art, was co-produced by the Augustino Dance Theater, the ARTSHIP Foundation and the Arroyo Viejo Community Center as a christening for the partially reconstructed theater. The group hopes the play, which will be staged again at 2 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, will inspire other groups to consider the site.⁴⁴

Sara Zaske wrote in her article *Moored to Oakland - The Monthly*, Berkeley, 2002:

⁴⁴Rachele Kanigel, "Life Pulses at Arroyo Viejo Park after amphitheater sees rebirth", The Oakland Tribune 1996, p. A-9

... the dance troupe aims to bring people together through the arts as much as it strives for artistic excellence. Through Artship Foundation, Paich and Ferriols restored a neglected East Oakland theater in Arroyo Viejo Park—reclaiming a space that was once known for blight and crime—and held performances every summer for four years. The success of their efforts inspired a full renovation of the theater and its surroundings, which should be completed this spring.⁴⁵

The difficult process of *reclaiming public space for communities use* in inner cities of large metropolitan areas is often triggered by pressing needs for safety from grief stricken families and neighbors who begin to look for solutions, after too many casualties. When the need to make a *neighborhood livable* is palpable and shared, there appears the will and often-spontaneous deep convening wisdom of a few citizens who are ready for action which does not use citizens for any gains outside of resolving the issues. Since the example we are citing is a disused outdoor theater that was a center of criminality, the theater performance emerged as a possible catalyst for turning the neighborhood into a safer place. Below is a partial list of ingredients that made reclaiming the space possible:

1. Someone among the convening group knew, valued, loved a troupe of performing artists who have community skills as well as mastery of their art.

2. A political climate and municipal wisdom, beyond rhetoric, is another ever-changing ingredient in the support of citizen's efforts in reclaiming public space for safe community use. All grass root initiatives always straddle the danger of being viewed as rebellion and are thus dismissed, suppressed or co-opted by some outside interest.

3. The needed-ingredient in conjunction with political climate, is an interest in the *empowerment initiatives* from philanthropic and grant giving entities and their ability to respond quickly with funds, however small, without large bureaucratic requirements thus insuring that their support is not tied to any ideology or unrelated concerns to the issues at hand.

4. Projects aimed at reclaiming a safer neighborhood create an unspoken standard, wherein events such as this performance, serve as a catalyst to bring in the *spirit of mutual*

⁴⁵Sara Zaske. "Moored to Oakland", Berkeley, The Monthly, 2002, p. 1- 9.

sharing, that is not parochial/cliqish or condescending and most importantly, is non-confrontational yet inclusive without insisting on inclusiveness.

5. The troupe in question, the performing ensemble of Artship Initiative⁴⁶, were the artists who had long standing involvement with communities, families and individuals in Oakland. The year before the park project, the troupe created a play *Growing Up Invisible* in the historic stables of an old house. The play was a re-enactment of the stories of people whose lives were not remembered. That performance was very successful and beloved by very diverse audiences. This particular group's work is not so preoccupied with self-expression for the artist, but rather with a relationship to audience that brings about deep solidarity. Also their work is not propaganda or ideology of any kind, but an inspired, poetic response to the people of the place at that time. The troupe works in the ensemble process that is best described by the classic definition of an ensemble theater: "A theater company that maintains a bond with a number of artists who are committed to working with and for each other, over a span of projects, to create performances uniquely characteristic of that ensemble and flowing from the strong personal stake of the artists." The Members of the troupe were as diverse as Oakland itself, in their program notes read:

We aspire that nothing in our work be viewed as unrelated, separate elements or virtuoso showmanship, but rather as a careful, poetically congruent service to the elusive field of art and the cultural experience.

From the moment someone enters, whether it is a theater, specific site or outdoor place, we attempt to create an atmosphere and invest our performance space. Great care is taken that every aspect of the multidisciplinary field created gives the audience breathing space for their own spirits to expand.⁴⁷

This type of theater is not in the main stream of Modernist theater where audiences are often subjected to shocks, derogation and violence. It is in its own style of poetic and communicable quality, transcending the situation and attempting to give deep personal pleasure and insight. It

⁴⁶ From 1986 to 2011 *Artship Initiative's* theater ensemble went through a number of names caring the same ethos, commitment and preoccupation: Augustino Dance Company, Augustino Dance Theater, Artship Dance/Theater and currently Artship Ensemble

⁴⁷Mark Beaver, "Snow Falling Upward – Program Notes", Oakland, Augustino Dance Theater 1998, p.1

is not a poor relative of a television or talent show, but a memorable event of its own, idiosyncratic in its quality.

Solidarity of Strangers

One small side effect from the Artship initiative of reclaiming public space at Arroyo Park, was that a spontaneous exchange emerged between two immigrant groups not envisioned originally. Often new immigrants, particularly if they are arriving in groups, find themselves in difficult urban areas. At the time of the last theater season in 1999 there was a great number of Bosnian refugee families in Oakland. The performance used multiple puppets, banners and involved an international cast of children and youth including three actors/narrators telling stories in Bosnian, Mexican and East Oakland English. As a side effect of these activities, non-English speaking Bosnian and Mexican mothers with infants in their arms, found each other while their older children rehearsed, performed. The mothers were able to help each other with food bartering, baby sitting and finding small, cash only and menial jobs.⁴⁸

We venture to hypothesize that perhaps for the Bosnian mothers and their families, the issues brought from the Balkan Peninsula were lifted in the instances of meeting through their children their Mexican neighbors carrying their own difficult stories. There was no history between the two groups of immigrants except shared performance of their children. As stated in the introduction the Balkan burden, not dissimilar to many other groups across the globe, is both a source of identity and pride but also of isolation, oppression even ridicule often involving hall clans, carrying unknowingly for centuries the brand of divisive politics affecting their native region through history.

The reason for looking at different elements of an actualized contemporary project is to reaffirm the observations of the need for multiple ingredients and the fragility of conviviality. A successful reclaiming of public space for community's use and safety is a unique entity of a union of all the social and personal elements, it belongs to the time, the place and the people who created it.

Reclaiming public space at Arroyo Viejo Park in Oakland, California provided structured learning outside educational institutions. Multiple elements of this involvement can offer material for thinking about the future of culture, education and its nexus in community. A

⁴⁸ This exchange was mentioned to the author of this paper a few months after the event by Mr. Overshown, staff at the Arroyo Recreation Center and a parent of one of the participating African-Americans children

public space for community gathering use was the impetus, and structured curriculum activities were the way of providing for *safe public space* and *learning* as inseparable goals. The multiple aspects of learning were discrete aspects of the reclaiming process, though it was never stated as such. Dependent on mixture of heritages, urban inner city life and intergenerational processes, the project created inadvertently its own culture, not exotic or different from the life of the people involved. There are many projects of this nature around the world each with its own idiosyncratic dynamic and expression. From the point of view of *Mutual Care*, the combination of having accesses to multiple skilled friends that are invited from the communities' own, internal convening impetus, and the spontaneous coalition of neighbors are the most significant aspects.

Second Topic - Youth and *Crisis of Perseverance*

Project - Redefining a historic 1940 passenger-cargo/military ship for public peacetime use and a cultural space, 1999 – 2004.

This section looks for paradigms that meaningfully respect and transform inherited legacy and its difficult and redeeming parts. We turn to L. Mumford and his *Art and Technics* where he writes:

Yes: the burden of renewal lies upon us; so it behooves us to understand the forces making for renewal within our persons and within our culture, and to summon forth the plans and ideals that will impel us to purposeful action. If we awaken to our actual state, in full possession of our senses, instead of remaining drugged, sleepy, cravenly passive, as we now are, we shall reshape our life to a new pattern, aided by all the resources that art and technics now placed in our hands.⁴⁹

One initiative that reflects this call for action was the redefinition of a historic 1940 passenger-cargo/military ship for public peacetime use and as a cultural space. The ship was (from 1999 to 2004) an exciting, ever - changing campus of cultural activities and art-making surrounding extracurricular children's activities and potential hard-core youth job training programs. *Crisis Of Perseverance*, articulated by the members of Artship's educational initiatives was a response to a global crisis and a local need that addressed a problem, particularly among children and youth lacking role models or witnessing success through perseverance. Artists of

⁴⁹L. Mumford, *Art and Technic*, Columbia University Press, New York 2000, p. 162

all types are the embodiment of achievable mastery and the tangible experience of completion, hence the name ‘Artship,’ expresses an exciting, ever changing campus surrounding hardcore training programs.⁵⁰

Frank Giunta, the Airship board president at the time, in an annual report for 2004, wrote:

When Hallie Williams—a founding member of Artship, its long time chair, and a juvenile probation officer in Oakland—and Artship artists worked at Juvenile Hall [Detention Center for Delinquent Youth and Children], it became clear that artists’ relative mastery of drawing and other arts helped the youth realize their ideas. The presence of a trained artist was essential.

The presence of trained visual artists was essential in bringing out safely and nonverbally the pent up issues needing personal consideration. In the same report Frank Giunta describes:

What we also discovered over and over again while we had the ship was that bringing people to the ship itself accelerated the motivation in acquisition of skills and mastery better than when we went to their familiar environments. It seemed that the stationary ship—too old for transcontinental voyages and therefore stationary—brought people directly to their imaginative self. They were on an *as if* poetic journey. The connection to imagination seemed to feed their perseverance and attention.⁵¹

Mastery, as achievable potential, is a core value of Artship Foundation's Work. Access, understanding, training and sharing of *mastery* for self-actualization, personal creativity, collaboration skills and appreciation of diverse cultural experiences, is the foundation’s daily practice at a verity of scales. The effect of acquisition of life and job skills on the safety and stability of a community cannot be over estimated.

Here the universal, timeless issues of mastery are framed by discussion of the skills of musicians. One characteristic of complete performance mastery is the integration of virtuosity and emotional communication, recognizable as an inexplicable visceral response by the listeners. The piece is not just interpreted—it comes to life in front of audience’s eyes, ears and in their cognitive processes. Daniel J. Levitin, writes of mastery in his book, *This Is Your Brain On Music*, in the chapter titled, *What Makes a Musician?*

⁵⁰O Fulton & R Baili, ‘Artship Master Plan’. *Oak to Ninth Avenue Waterfront Development*, Port of Oakland, 2002, p. 55.

⁵¹F Giunta, ‘Case Statement’. *Artship Foundation Archives*, March 2004, p.2

[...] ten thousand hours of practice is required to achieve the level of mastery associated with being a world-class expert—in anything. In study after study, of composers, basketball players, fiction writers, ice skaters, concert pianists, chess players, master criminals, and what have you, this number comes up again and again. Ten thousand hours is roughly equivalent to three hours a day, or twenty hours a week, of practice over ten years. Of course, this doesn't address why some people don't seem to get anywhere when they practice, and why some people get more out of their practice sessions than others. But no one has yet found a case in which true world-class expertise was accomplished in less time. It seems that it takes the brain this long to assimilate all that it needs to know to achieve true mastery.⁵²

Levitin avails us with an appreciation and understanding of the expertise accomplished musicians have, and why a good one would have been rare, and in demand.

There are many examples—from prehistory forward—of artifacts brought from distant places. Along with artifacts came people, skills, and knowledge of materials, lore and ideas. Deeper understanding of those exchanges and transmissions of skills and mastery may offer new paradigms for intercultural appreciations.

Not everyone can be a world-class master in their field, but based on Artship's practice in the community, it seems that a presence of real humans with some level of mastery makes a difference in the way a social group functions or a locality views itself.

As a response to a number of local issues such as the discrepancy in educational opportunities for urban poor and multilingual populations, the lack of accessible non-remedial job training, and the lack of access to waterfront amenities and extracurricular recreational and learning activities, a number of Oakland projects were carried out which culminated in the creation of the Artship Initiative in 1992. A legislative process was initiated that brought a decommissioned historic ship in 1999 to Oakland's waterfront for community use.

In the case of the ship's visitors, the sense of space and intricacy of the rigging and equipment was visceral and needed no words. The children visiting the ship were exposed to activities that gave them insight into ship functions, history, folklore and introduced them to maritime and arts/crafts skills. Also it nurtured a sense of wonder and met the nascent curiosity with care that

⁵² Levitin D.J. *This is your brain on music*, New York: Plume, 2006. p 197

opened the doors for systematic learning later. The fact that it was not a children's or youth ship but it belonged to and represented "all the people of the town" helped to value and treasure the learning given and assimilated in that place. There it was a machine turned into an experiential learning place, where the ever-present element of the vast ocean pointed to the relative scale of the machine itself. Although the physical ship part of Artship Foundation succumbed to the pressures from a commercial real-estate development and the vessel lost its mooring and municipal support, the programming continues through smaller scale projects. The initiative in itself is a real world sample and case study of multiple issues of continuity, interpretation, and response to acute contemporary needs, legislative processes and programming. Also Artship experiences contribute to an articulation of needs and intangible values for community gathering places potentially useful in thinking about the future of culture. The most important thing that added to the thinking of Mutual Care process was that the central activities of Artship at the time was structured job training for inner city youth in an out of school setting. Culinary and Merchant Marine skills could be acquired by attending morning classes on weekends in the last two years of high school. The relevant industries offered potentially approximately 200 jobs a year in the future to high school students completing the program. The experience showed through small pilot activities, that constructive energy of other projects of the ship provided the sustaining environment for learning and persevering. This practical and diversely cultural environment can be a beginning of a spontaneous coalition of citizens doing some groundwork for learning and unlearning needed for the practice of Mutual Care.

Third Topic - Heritage, conditioning and Oral Histories

Project - Tarantella Pizzica as community healing process -Fifteen years comparative cultures research inspiring contemporary play.

A possible ingredient to strengthen mutual care in the region of South East Europe and surrounding areas is to be exposed to stories from local Diasporas of neighboring communities parallel to one's own. The tension of emigrants in the struggle of preserving and losing one's home culture in new circumstances may offer examples and fortitude in facing the leveling effects of Globalization, political and nationalist pressures.

Materials evolved from the stories of migrants/refugees offer probing and open-ended speculation about itinerancy, vagrancy, resettlement and economic emigration as part of social plurality.

As it was mentioned before Artship Scholarly research feeds the contemporary art practice - Artship Art practice offers a context for inquiry-based expression. Collection of oral histories and recorded life stories of most diverse people provide Artship performances and storytelling evenings with immediacy and richness. In a way it is an appraisal, celebration and evaluation of the validity and necessity of hearsay, oral histories, storytelling and performative reconstruction in helping understand heritage and appreciation of difference. An example from Artship practice is the performance of an evening length play *Tarantella, Tarantula*. A delicate and poignant story of immigration and assimilation, rich with ancient Mediterranean folklore, that is a confluence of cultural elements from Africa, Europe, and Asia that persist to this day, brought to California and across America by immigrants from southern Italy. *Ancient practices and modern needs* could sum-up San Francisco 2006 and Prague 2007 performances of *Tarantella, Tarantula*⁵³.

The protagonist of the play is a young Italian immigrant girl who works as a cleaning lady in a hospital. She was forced to emigrate with her mother and sister after all the male members of her family and neighbors from her village were killed in the First World War. She was highly trained by her grandmother in the tradition of the healing dance Tarantella Pizzica. This is tradition that is practiced in intimate and protected places often temporally adopted within a home or communal spaces. These activities, gatherings and festivals are led and performed for and by women. Since these events were only carried out among the women, written documentary evidence is barely existent. Similar oral traditions to those are practiced today in some parts of North Africa, Eastern Mediterranean including Southern Italy and Asia Minor on the border of Iraq and Iran.

There are two forms from this family of traditions that had more ethno-musicological and anthropological research than the others, they are the healing dances and music of Egyptian Zar and Southern Italian Tarantella. Athanasius Kircher, ask a question in 1641 in his encyclopedic work *Magnes, sive De Arte Magnetica*⁵⁴ published in Rome: "Why cannot those poisoned by Tarantulas be cured otherwise than by Music?"

This contemporary performance and traditional practice is not only about an antidote to a spider Tarantula's bite but also about the age-old yearning to cure 'The Dark Night of the Soul'. It is

⁵³ARTSHIP Ensemble 2006 Home Season in San Francisco, ODC Theater

⁵⁴A. Kircher, *Magnes sive de Arte Magnetica (Opus Tripartium)*, Rome 1641

about human need, in spite of all possible social dysfunctions, to help each other and to continue the search to recover closeness. For migrants these issues are of paramount importance.

The production links modern needs to passionate, age-old practices of community, ritual and healing. Karol Harding's⁵⁵ description of the Zar singer/healer with her knowledge, harmonizing abilities, understanding of repression and means of relief, paints a picture of a highly trained experienced person leading a deeply structured process.

The protagonist of the play *Tarantella, Tarantula* Govannina helps, at the climax of the performance the first Italian born American trained young doctor through professional crisis and surviving traumatic betrayal and smear tactics by his more established, privileged non immigrant colleagues. Although she was thought illiterate and not intelligent enough, Govannina guides him through the Tarantella process, as he came upon it by accident. He did not know that only women traditionally danced that dance. This and other elements of the performance are a representation of the unexpected adoption and transformation that happen when traditional ways meet a new environment and a country. The portrayal of the multilayered complexity that immigrants experience, can be comprehended, contained and expressed helping understand *migrants' precarious positions*. Examples of poetic expressions of uprootedness, cultural continuity and assimilation could open a space for reflections and evaluations that may make contributions to structured learning for *understanding differences*.

Forth Topic - Managing Tangible and Intangible Surplus

Project - Community Poles Project 1986-1991

Managing surplus and creative reuse can be one of the models for spontaneous or need response community convening in preparation for and practice of Mutual Care. In the global culture scarcity is the operational mode and is often created artificially. Disposable goods have replaced the time of ingenious mechanics, repair shops, local tailors and shoemakers in most industrial countries. There are societies where resources are scarce and self-reliance is the primary mode of continuation. In these examples, solidarity versus hoarding becomes an important seed of community development. Out of the way places may offer the possibility of evolving parallel paradigms to developed nations or entities that are dependent on current saturated economic and social models. Knowing about this real life example could offer thematic elements for Mutual Care curriculum. The issue of tangible resource literacy is easier

⁵⁵K. Harding, "The Zar Revisited," Crescent Moon magazine, July-Aug. 1996 p.9-10

to comprehend and practice. If it extends to people someone traditionally considered not worthy or historically antagonist it can become an opening to a subtler more intangible surplus of solidarity, shared wisdom and care. These things cannot be legislated, they have to find space naturally among people.

The example here is one of the projects that led to the formation of Artship Foundation. It is about both tangible and symbolic objects that emerge from spontaneous coalition of diverse citizens.

Community Poles Project 1986-1991

This project consisted of a great number of semi-permanent sculptures built for and with residents of the Golden Gate neighborhood in North Oakland, California by the author of this paper and many local residents over a five-year period.

The sculptures ascend vertically, never too thick to begin with, while the forms rise and insinuate growth and let the air and sky enter them. These are poetic totems, as if messengers from other worlds, filling the urban void of sameness, grayness and decay. Intricately made, they also celebrate work, workmanship and working together.

The project grew from an inner city neighborhood of low to medium income households interspersed with homes owned by young professionals and some live work spaces, with a rich mixture of African American, White, Asian and Latino populations.

The project started in the garden of a house in the Golden Gate neighborhood that the author of this paper was renting. He began constructing a temporary vertical sculpture out of scrap wood in his garden in front of the house. Curious children from the neighborhood came to watch, and soon they were working on the construction with him. Once the first pole sculpture was completed, one neighboring family asked for a pole installation on their property, and then neighbors across the street did the same.

Lottie Rose, landlady of the rented house, liked the sculptures and invited Slobodan to make several for properties she owned in the neighborhood. She offered a shed and outdoor work space in the parking lot of a building she owned on San Pablo Avenue, a busy commercial street in Oakland, this is where the project started in earnest.

Every Saturday for five years the author of this paper was involved in constructing the vertical sculptures with the people from the neighborhood, including the future owners of the

sculptures. After having poles installed on their own properties, some of the neighbors continued to help with installations for other neighboring properties. Quietly, over the five-year life of the project, a great number of people participated.

The sculptures were given to the community free of charge. In addition to providing free space to assemble and stage the work, Lottie Rose donated the paint, brushes, nails, hardware, and even the ribbons. People from the community brought wooden scraps all the time, and later on some local businesses made in-kind donations of materials. In 1989, the City of Oakland recognized the project with a "Community Promotion Grant" award.

The Sculptural Score

To give the project visual continuity and identity, it seemed appropriate to keep on in the same vein as the initial sculptures that were installed. Those sculptures were constructed entirely from wooden elements, most of which were recycled materials. The sculptures were an accumulation of diverse pieces into pinnacles of no more than six inches in diameter, and 15 to 16 feet high that tapered upward sometimes with open forms at the top. The sculptures often included heavily white-painted, thickened and saturated cloth, crocheted -pieces and other found materials. The vertical sculptural forms were punctuated by the distinctive and colorful elements of ribbons flowing out of the sculptural forms, animating the static elements. The all-white color of the surface was the simplest means of unifying disparate elements and catching the play of light and shadow.

Each time something different from this basic score was tried, the sculptural quality and the communication of the forms were lost. When trying to paint the sculptures entirely black or brown, they became camouflaged and their immediacy and presence were lost. When we painted them red, green or yellow they lost sculptural quality as shadows became indistinct and unremarkable. When we tried to paint just one or a few of the elements, that also broke and diluted the form. When we added larger, more recognizable household elements, they made the sculptures appear cluttered and junky. When we added beautiful, specially embroidered, painted or silk-screened fabrics, they wrapped themselves around the sculptures in the wind and smothered them, so that neither the sculptures nor the materials were recognizable. In the end we returned to the basic sculptural score that emerged through the simple acts of people "doing and making" together at the outset of the project. It seems that play of shadows and texture made visible in white on white and their "otherworldliness" was the cause of the success of their presence in the community. They were clearly products of and for imagination.

This process was an interesting dynamic in asking, more than answering, questions:

What is the artist's role and what does she or he do in a community setting?

How do the artistic sensibilities, vision and cohesive visual language remain while the creative process is shared with community?

We found, of course, that there is no set formula, and that each project has its own matrix and score. The one thing that remains clear is that if artistic concept, shaping and curatorial skills are not there, the project drifts from art in to another sphere which, of itself, is not a bad thing.

In the case of "Vertical Sculptural Poles," the project hovers at this edge of art and community building. The Vertical Sculptural Poles Project was a co-winner of the "Regenerating America" competition because neighbors entered photographs and description and surprised the author of this paper. The announcement read as follows:

Jeff Berkowitz judged the Regenerating America contest at the Celebration of Innovation Conference in San Francisco, selecting two winners. 'Slobodan Dan Paich and Mieilli's Products have both invented outstanding regenerative technologies,' said Berkowitz. 'Paich's is social invention and Mielli's is a material technology – both of which are essential to building a regenerative future. Paich's invention is a 'flagpole' made from discarded products. The flagpoles are distributed throughout the community and decorated by each household. This invention builds community spirit providing an opportunity for individual creative expression. (Berkowitz 1)

Vertical Sculptures engaged in a creation of a shared, tangible—but also discreetly ritualized, symbolic space of a communal experience. It is an *offbeat expression* of the symbol and sign-making faculty and desires. In this instance the interplay of elusive, symbolic and real is contained by bland urban neutrality of the medium and low-income inner city.

Fifth Topic Mutual grieving and understanding ancestors

Project - *Imaginary Film Workshops*- 1997 and 1998

Tact, patience, delicacy and selflessness are needed in approaching inherited trauma. Some period of preparation is needed involving the type of the activities and concerns mentioned earlier. It may involve convening models, critical evaluation and curriculum thinking not only by scholars but by concerned communities as well. The intention in this paper is not to prescribe

solutions and recipes for inter-cultural work on mutual grieving and understanding ancestors, but to articulate possibilities and potential accessibility to that process. The example below is toward that end.

To contribute to the curriculum research of the Peace University and create appropriate culture centered workshops, the author of this paper conceived, designed and implemented *Imaginary Film* workshops. These workshops were the experiential models of co-creating and working together and an attempt to democratize script writing. The participants drawn from all aspects of filmmaking and art making process, met at the historic Truman house in Potsdam outside Berlin.

Film and theater actors, dancers, seasoned and aspiring film directors, singers, cinematographers and photographers, costume and set designers and members of the international peace university gathered. After individually brainstorming with the author of this paper prior to the workshop participants were ready for the weekend intensive.

The theme and the methodology of these workshops was an imaginative portrayal of a family caught up in history. In this case, a German family's portrait in time from 1935 to 1965, consisting of grandparents, parents and children. Each character was played/cared for by three to four participants of the workshop. In this way a widest possible but manageable unit of collective memory was engaged. The multi-person and multi-disciplinary expressions of the characters became like synchronized work of Japanese Bunraku puppet masters, each caring for a different aspect of the character.

The final conjuring of the characters and a story was as a group narration in the dark. This narration was audio recorded and became the raw material for a possible future film script. In preparation for the final telling, on the first day the participants created mini storyboards, costumes and setting ideas, Polaroids of possible scenes and the names and simple description of the characters.

On a second day, in the morning before the final evening of the telling of the 'Imaginary film' story, participants drew on large pieces of paper silhouettes of each other. Then painted into this life size silhouette their notion of the rejected, not visible side of the character. This was shared and created deep and intense preparation for the final telling. The two-days activities created a context, familiarity with the material and each other. The final telling was improvised. The setting of the Truman house was a significant resource. A gloomy mahogany paneled

three-story house, overlooking a lake, was originally a summer residence of a progressive publisher confiscated by the Nazis. It became their local headquarters throughout the war and then for a brief period a residence for president Truman and American forces prior to becoming a Soviet lookout for possible defectors. This house was also the place where allies made the decision to deploy the atomic bomb on Hiroshima. Now after the leveling of the Berlin Wall the house is used by many groups including the International Peace University.

The choice or preparation of the venue for a gathering, as well as the content of workshops for mutual grieving and understanding ancestors, may enhance the process. Even in the classroom setting, bringing flowers, fruit, bread and cheese may mark the occasion for children and youth. Daunting and sensitive work on inherited and personal trauma begins with care for the event's place and for, with and among the participants.

Sixth Topic -Structured learning and nature of continuity

Projects - Educational village 1975 - 1980 and Children and architecture 1989 -1995

In thinking about the creation of a curriculum for Mutual Care, the big questions are where to begin and how to prepare. Within the open suggestions of this paper it seems that approaching *inherited trauma* or *dominance assertion* of ancestors could be a second phase after an extracurricular learning project which tackles other *issues at hand* has been experienced together first.

The first learning example took place at a loosely structured village of over 30 trullis (ancient conical dry-stone dwellings) in southern Italy. The dry-stone dwellings were scattered on the estate of approximately four square kilometers surrounding Masseria Fano, a ninth century AD fortified tower and house owned by Maria Vittoria Colona-Winspere. She wanted to turn parts of her agriculturally abandoned land into a different use. She read the findings of the Architectural Competition *Extending Education into Community and peoples life - Ideas for a building promoting life long learning* sponsored by UNESCO and the French Government and invited the author of this paper to start a project based on his first place winning entry. After brainstorming a decision was reached to create a summer school.

Fano - Educational Village: British Summer School in southern Italy (1975 - 1980), convened practicing and future architects, landscape architects, urban planners, established artist and art students. The central communal experiment and curriculum's intention was building a small lake that involved multiple skills. These gave the participants visceral experience of using

ancient technics and pre-industrial methods. The curriculum's intentions were to better value and understand the benefits and shortcomings of mechanization, automation, absence of toil and social bonding in contemporary culture. For thousands of years people at Fano in southern Italy have maintained almost unique fresh water streams and carefully diverted it into irrigation canals. This meticulous art deeply understands water and its potential. This tradition became the basis of building the lake at Fano. The schools improved the land, repaired the ancient dry-stone dwellings, some of them had prehistoric origin and were maintained by successive occupants since Paleolithic times. These activities in some way echo L. Mumford's thoughts on pre-industrial technics, tools and bodily engagements:

The essential distinction between a machine and tool lies in the degree of independence in the operation from the skill and motive power of the operator: the tool lends itself to manipulation, the machine to automatic action. p.10 T&C

The reason of including this example in the paper is the model of learning it offers which can be a contribution to informed responses to environmental design issues and one of the starting points for the curriculums of care. The discipline of *doing and making* is often visceral and most of the time a non-verbal process. In traditional society such rich learning surrounds children. In the modern urban life, learning is allotted to the school environment and children rarely see parents or neighbors engaged in learning, particularly visceral learning where they could participate. Most architectural, landscape and planning students come from this model of *segregated learning*. Because building, gardening, arts and crafts activities, instruction, learning and production are often considered remedial, there is significant societal atrophy of some basic cognitive processes that start with the attention span and inability to contain inner and outer agitation. In our view, witnessing and engaging in lifelong visceral learning can help children, students and adults overcome the sometimes debilitating effects of virtual and commercialized reality. *Fano - Educational Village* conceptually interrelated projects that came from continuous effort to engage learners at all stages of life in *doing and making* and in acquiring personal mastery that in turns gets shared. Commitment to children and youth in extracurricular settings is a big part of it.

Children and Architecture

Mumford in his book *Myth of the Machine* insightfully points to the core issue of the industrial age by pointing to the eighteenth century roots of mechanistic thinking:

Descartes could not of course foresee that this one-sided effort to "conquer nature" would bring a special danger, the closer it approached realization: that of dispossessing and displacing human himself. But though we must now confront the ultimate threat.⁵⁶

This understanding permeates Mumford's critique of the one-sidedness of contemporary architecture. As a public intellectual and architecture critic of the influential magazine in his time, the *New Yorker*, he points in many ways to the shortcomings of the Le Corbusier's, *International Style* fostered architecture branded as *Machine for Living*.

By the final decades of the twentieth century the crisis of this architectural style was palpable among the users who had to live with these threatening environments. Mumford writes:

The great problem of our time is to restore modern man's balance and wholeness: to give him the capacity to command the machines he has created instead of becoming their helpless accomplice and passive victim; to bring back, into the very heart of our culture, that respect for the essential attributes of personality, its creativity and autonomy, which Western man lost at the moment he displaced his own life in order to concentrate on the improvement of the machine.⁵⁷

One spontaneous response among many to this crisis of the built environment was expressed in the intentions and methods of the *Children and Architecture* project, which involved structured learning outside of the school setting. The project's intention was to integrate children's internal wisdom of playing with learning about the world of architecture. The program focused around free form model making of architectural principles and indigenous dwellings. It took place twice weekly from 1989 to 1995 at the Museum of Children's Art in Oakland, California, USA.

The project was an extracurricular activity where parents brought their children to the museum as a treat and an educational outing. Regardless of developmental theories of the day, the project allowed children of mixed ages and abilities to work together. Children from 5 to 12 worked together around the table. Each session had a thematic framework. For example, one

⁵⁶L. Mumford, *The Myth of the Machine*, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., New York 1970, p. 79

⁵⁷L. Mumford, *The Myth of the Machine*, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc., New York 1970, p. 48

of the themes was an enactment, making a small model of a *primeval dwelling* as if building a first ever shelter. To accomplish this, basket making materials were bundled up in a number of sizes, eventually tied with string to hold them together as a model making material and as an example of tying and lashing. Dry and fresh leaves or fabric scraps were available for cladding. Simple non-toxic, water-soluble glue and paint was always at hand. Also during the class parents were allowed to sit around the table instead of in the waiting area for parents. The class, with this inter-generational mix and adults present became an ever-changing mini community. Dynamics of this mixture are worthy of reflection in a separate paper. To open possible discussion and to focus on the activities of the children, a summary of some key issues of this learning / containing exercise are below:

1. *Framing concept*: Simple learning of a building tradition or architectural principle.
2. *Openness to the process*: Attempt to represent the theme in three dimensions as best as one can.
3. *Community building*: Helping each other.
4. *Valuing and cherishing*: Enjoying and finishing *the object* as **it** is, regardless of traditional prototypes.
5. *Shared meaning*: Owning the object and encouraging respect for its duality, of being both one's own and also helped by others.
6. *Intimacy of play*: Qualities of enactment usually not associated with architecture and architectural models.

The antecedents

Paradoxically the most important antecedent of the *Children and Architecture Program* was not the architecture itself, but working with children and their involvement with puppets. The scale, the anthropomorphic simile of puppets, the intimacy and relatedness they invoked, helped in encouraging a creation and reflection on the architectural model as an extension of the human figure and presence. The multiple layers of this project point to a need for de-conditioning and creating *Learning Communities* that offer cultivation of sensibilities apart from de-humanizing solutions.

The two projects cited are examples of possible coming together of small learning group that may after working meaningfully side by side be ready to tackle inherited trauma or inherited ancestral insistence on dominance and conquest and to understand and forgive both types of inheritance after structured learning and bonding.

Closing Remarks and Summary

The necessity for structured learning about differences and ways of mutual care is a response to the conference theme Perspectives of Integration in the European Union: The Balkansheld at Albanian Epoka University in Tirana. Legislating for Mutual Care by any parliamentary decree however noble would stay at the level of rhetoric and political posturing. Because work on mutual care needs deep individual and community work at the place where people are, such mutuality may be misunderstood and discouraged by wasted interest. The open suggestions in this paper of themes addressed by some projects of Artship Foundation over last thirty years may help articulate a variety of types of first phase preparatory projects dealing with issues at hand before entering work on mutual care and collective inherited trauma. Brief summaries of themes and projects may offer an overview of possible diversity of approaches and the need to link *Mutual Care* to cultural and community projects relevant to the time, the people and the places that want to engage and understand their neighbors.

In summarizing the curriculum for extra curricula, life long learning was explored through the number of projects and themes. Reclaiming of public space at difficult crime ridden Arroyo Viejo Park in Oakland. Youth and *Crisis of Perseverance* were explored through the youth programs part of the process of redefining a historic 1940 passenger-cargo/military ship for public peacetime use and a cultural space, 1999 – 2004. Heritage, conditioning and oral histories were explored through a contemporary play inspired by fifteen years of comparative cultures research into a community healing process exemplified by the Italian Tarantella Pizzica and the Egyptian dance ritual Zar. Managing Tangible and Intangible Surplus was explored through the dynamics of Community Poles Project 1986-1991. Mutual grieving and understanding ancestors' articulated example and issues was explored with the process of *Imaginary Film* Workshops- 1997 and 1998 at the international Peace University in Berlin. Structured learning and the nature of continuity were reflected upon with examples of the Educational village initiative 1975 - 1980 and the Children and architecture program 1989 - 1995.

The intention of the paper was to offer thought realized cultural projects that had mutual care as their subtext and an undercurrent way to approach Balkan integration in the European Union not as regional or local set of issues but Pan-European and Global responsibility.

Solidarity, compassion and mutuality are inborn traits, lets celebrate and study them next to mathematics, chemistry, geography and computer science.