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AN INVESTIGATION OF CRITERIA USED TO IDENTIFY
ARTISTICALLY GIFTED CHILDREN

THESIS

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By

Dee Ann Watson Schulz, B.A.

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The purpose of this study was to determine and investigate the criteria used to identify artistically gifted children and attempt to determine their validity. Sources of data included interviews with art teachers, interviews with children in combination with observations, and observations of characteristics cited in the literature.

With one exception, the criteria which these art teachers used to identify artistically gifted children correlate with criteria found in the literature. There appeared to be, however, some characteristics with which these art teachers were not familiar. One characteristic found in the literature was neither listed by these art teachers nor observed by the investigator. Results indicated that these art teachers may value different types of characteristics than the experts.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Origin and Background of the Problem

Within the past few years, educators and school systems across the country have become increasingly aware of the "diverse learning needs of special subpopulations" (Kruger, 1976, p. 372), including the unique learning styles of gifted and talented children. Efforts of concerned educators, parents, and policymakers have resulted in renewed public support of the gifted, reflected in a proliferation of school programs as well as an increase in college graduate courses devoted to the teaching of the gifted and talented. In 1972, the Marland Report, commissioned by the United States government, became the first major report on the gifted and talented; in 1973, the Office of the Gifted and Talented was added to the United States Office of Education. In addition to legislation, some federal funding was eventually provided. National, state, and local associations for gifted and talented children have emerged throughout the nation.

Definitions of giftedness vary from community to community, and depend on what levels of ability and special talents are to be included, on allowances to be made for

environmental deprivations, on the number of children to be served, as well as other factors. However, the following definition was agreed upon by a majority of an advisory panel to the United States Office of Education, and has been adopted for use by many states and school districts in this country:

Gifted and talented children are those identified by professionally qualified persons who by virtue of outstanding abilities, are capable of high performance. These are children who require differentiated educational programs and/or services beyond those normally provided by the regular school program in order to realize their contribution to self and society.
(Marland, 1972, p. 10)

The outstanding abilities, either potential or demonstrated, singly or in combination, are general intellectual ability, specific academic aptitude, creative or productive thinking, leadership ability, ability in visual and performing arts, and psychomotor ability. The above definition includes approximately 3 to 5 per cent of the school population (Marland, 1972, pp. 10-11). Today, there are few educators who adhere to a purely academic definition of giftedness. Renzulli believes that "Giftedness consists of an interaction among three basic clusters of human traits--these clusters being above-average [but not necessarily superior] general abilities, high levels of task commitment, and high levels of creativity" (1978, p. 261). They may be applied to any number of "potentially valuable" (p. 261) areas of human performance, including the visual arts.

The 1970s witnessed the emergence of new alternative programs in the arts for gifted and talented students (Carroll, 1976; Dorn, 1976; Weisberg, 1978); however, programs for gifted children and programs in the arts have, for the most part, developed separately (Kruger, 1976). Despite the broadening definitions of giftedness which characterize today's gifted student movement, most gifted and talented school programs only identify and provide for the intellectually gifted, or those with specific academic ability (Kay, 1982).

On the whole, little thought has been given to systematically exposing the gifted and talented child to all the arts. Too often, the temptation is for educators of the gifted to stress purely "academic" subject matter at the expense of the arts. If the child is exceptionally able, educators often feel the student can best be prepared for future schooling through loading his program with such course-work even though there is no justification for this practice. On the other hand, in their quest to bring "all the arts to every child," arts educators devote their time to providing arts experiences for those students who have previously shown little interest or demonstrated ability. (Kruger, 1976, p. 372)

Kruger adds that it is unrealistic to expect children to demonstrate artistic ability unless they have been exposed to the arts early in life, both at home and at school (1976). Investigators such as Rubenzer (1979), McFee (1961), Anderson (1959), and Salome (1974) have recognized and stated the importance of early identification of the gifted and talented. "Study in the arts . . . should be initiated in elementary school and certainly no

later than high school to be effective. Exceptionally talented children must be identified and encouraged" (Anderson, 1959, p. 14).

According to Szekely, "the most important outside factor in the artist's development is the teacher or mentor" (1981, p. 64). Interviews with Frank Lloyd Wright and Louise Nevelson attest to their early interest in the arts, interest which was encouraged at an early age by parents, art teachers, or both (Szekely, 1981). Picasso grew up in a climate of experimentation, surrounded by the materials and example of his artist-teacher father (Penrose, 1959). Torrance, in a preliminary report of twenty-two years of research on predicting the adolescent and adult creative achievement of elementary school children, found that "the High Creatives seem to have 'Fallen in love' during elementary school years with something which became central to their Future Career Image" (Torrance, 1981, p. 61).

While most parents and educators recognize the need for early exposure and even rigorous training in other arts, such as dance or music, it is often stated that ability in the fine arts unfolds naturally on its own and needs little special attention. Teachers who group students according to abilities for all types of other activities during the school day are often reluctant to make part-time groupings for art because they feel that all children should have the same opportunities to develop their talents and that groupings in the arts are elitist and undemocratic. (Szekely, 1981, p. 70)

However, few school art programs challenge the gifted child, and Gaitskell and Hurwitz warned that the gifted must be

properly guided and encouraged if they are in progress (1970). Lowenfeld pointed out the extreme individuality of such children, and stated that developmental characteristics, motivations, media and techniques based on the needs of the average child cannot be validly applied to the gifted in art (1957). According to Hurwitz, artistically gifted students, "whether in the elementary or secondary grades, must be identified, encouraged, and given the same degree of recognition as exists for academic achievers. It is an idea whose time has come and which will not be deterred by forces that are still reluctant to place the arts on the same footing as other subjects" (1981, p. 32).

Need for the Study

While Gaitskell and Hurwitz (1970), Kruger (1976), Lowenfeld (1957), and Szekely (1981) have written of the need for differentiated provisions or programs for the gifted in art, and Anderson (1959), Kruger (1976), McFee (1970), Rubenzer (1979), Salome (1974), Szekely (1981), and Torrance (1981) have stated the importance of early identification of the gifted and talented, there is no universally agreed upon definition of giftedness in art and, consequently, no consensus as to ways of identifying the gifted in art. Indeed, "The greatest problem is the confusion over what constitutes valid identification criteria" (Stalker, 1981, p. 49). Lack of specificity,

and a reliance upon personal appraisal, upon subjective rather than objective data, plus a lack of knowledge on the part of teachers about the behaviors of gifted students (Stalker, 1981), have been major criticisms of existing methods and criteria. Identification methods fall into two general categories: use of standardized tests and use of observation. Again, "there are no proven criteria for measuring talented students" (Kay, 1982, p. 44). Because any method, used alone, has been found to have only partial reliability (Larsh, 1979), most authorities have advocated using a combination of techniques which could include combinations of available tests, professional talent evaluation, student work (art competitions, portfolio review, auditions); opinions of teachers, peers, and parents; anecdotal records, and statements by the students themselves (Chetelat, 1981; Kay, 1982; Larsh, 1979; Stewart, 1981). Stewart noted that, "Even these may fall short, because they fail to indicate drive, motivation, values, and a number of attributes that have to do with how an individual sustains himself in such a program and goes from programs in the public school, into a school of the arts in higher education and becomes a participating professional in the field" (1981, p. 3). Kay stated that personal interviews are "a major determinant for identifying task commitment and general responsibility of candidates (1982, p. 44), and Wilson and Wilson (1981)

asked questions of children in addition to observing behavior and art products in order to identify the artistically gifted children about whom they have written.

Larsh, in "Issues and Recommendations," the findings and recommendations of the National Forum on the Arts and the Gifted, reported: "The identification of the young person with high potential in the arts is extremely difficult for the general educator. Codification of such procedures is very limited or nonexistent" (1979, p. 23), and "Instruments or procedures for the identification of artistic talent should be developed, collected, evaluated, and disseminated. Guidelines for the nurturance of artistic potential among the young should be made available to parents and others" (p. 23). Wilson and Wilson (1981) noted in regard to the difficulty in identifying the artistically gifted: "Indeed some of the key features of artistic giftedness are still generally unknown, considered unimportant, or occasionally even looked down upon by teachers" (p. 6).

A growing concern for meeting the needs of gifted and talented students, resulting in a growing number of gifted and talented programs across the country, together with increasing awareness of the importance of differentiated educational provisions for the artistically gifted, have made the problem of identifying the gifted in art a significant issue in education. Adequately providing for the

gifted in art requires that thoughtful consideration be given to what constitutes giftedness in art by examining existing methods of identification and criteria in terms of their validity in order that specific, reliable criteria may be made available for their identification.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to determine and investigate the criteria used in the identification of artistically gifted children and attempt to determine their validity. The study focused on answering the following questions.

1. By what means do art teachers identify children with exceptional ability in art?
2. What characteristics do art teachers cite as evidence of exceptional ability in art?
3. What characteristics do the children identified by their art teachers as artistically gifted manifest as observed by this investigator?
4. Do the children identified by their art teachers as artistically gifted manifest any of the traits of the artistically gifted cited in the literature by experts in the field such as Lark-Horovitz, Lewis, and Luca (1973), Gaitskell and Hurwitz (1970), Wilson and Wilson (1981), and others?

Scope and Limitations

Participants in this study consisted of sixteen children--eleven boys and five girls--in grades four through six, and six art teachers in five elementary schools in a large metropolitan area.

Definition of Terms

Because there is no universally accepted definition of giftedness in the visual arts, and because the terms "gifted" and "gifted and talented" are given multiple meanings and are used interchangeably in the literature to refer to both the academically gifted and the artistically gifted, as well as other areas of giftedness, in this study the words "artistically gifted" will be used to refer to no more than the top 2 per cent in artistic ability of those students taught by a single art teacher in a given school or program in grades four through six as judged by professional art teachers.

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CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The area of artistic giftedness is ambiguous in concept and broad in scope in that it appears to encompass many different abilities which may or may not be related. The literature which is reviewed here is, therefore, limited primarily to that which deals with artistically gifted children rather than adults, with characteristics of artistically gifted children, and with criteria used in their identification. Criteria are examined chronologically in an effort to present an historical perspective and to enable the reader to gauge the amount of progress which has been made in this area since it first became a subject for investigation.

Throughout history, almost every culture has been interested in those of its members who exhibit special abilities (Renzulli, 1978; Witty, 1951), and there remains a particular mystique surrounding special talent in the arts. Read (1937) noted that primitive man recognized art as "the existence of individual variability in artistic powers" (p. 18).

Referring to the visual arts, Stewart (1981) pointed out what a small segment of the population the artistically gifted comprise:

Roughly five percent of the total population are involved in occupations related, even remotely, with the arts. The number of talented in the arts would be much smaller than this, say one or two percent. Another estimate is that the gifted and talented comprise about five percent of the school population. The visually talented would then be less than one percent. Extend this general statistic and you have a rough estimate of the number of people who would be considered gifted in any school or district. In a school of 500 there would be perhaps five, in a school district of 1,000 there would be ten, perhaps five identifiable at the secondary level, who could be identified as talented in the visual arts. (1981, pp. 1-2)

Stewart added: "If we use the figures for the relationship between enrollment in art and in other subjects, the figures look amazingly the same," but he cautioned that the figures given are "very vulnerable approximations" (1981, p. 2).

The gifted as a whole were largely neglected from the seventeenth throughout most of the nineteenth centuries due to a political philosophy which espoused equal opportunity for all children (Witty, 1951, p. 1), but since the beginning of this century psychologists and educators have actively pursued the investigation of special ability in the visual arts in attempts to identify and measure artistic ability and ultimately predict future artistic success. Despite their efforts, there is a noticeable lack of published material on visual arts programs for the gifted and talented, and there is, as yet, no valid objective measure of genuine talent. Most of the studies which have been done have focused on adults and on those abilities which are already fully developed and easily recognizable. There is, however,

general agreement as to the ineffectiveness of the IQ test alone in assessing artistic potential (Gaitskell & Hurwitz, 1970, p. 355; Lally & La Brant, 1951, pp. 247-248; Lansing, 1960, p. 74). The reliability of standardized art tests, many of which were developed between 1920 and 1930, is questionable (Gaitskell & Hurwitz, 1970, pp. 459-461). Creativity tests likewise contain many deficiencies and do not always measure what they purport to measure (Johnson & Hess, 1971, pp. 29-30; Torrance, 1962, p. 23).

In one of the earliest studies involving artistic giftedness in children, Kerschensteiner (1905, p. xi) described the drawings of two Munich boys whose artistic abilities he believed equalled those of the German painters Albrecht Durer and Hans Thomas, both of whom had also shown remarkable ability during childhood. Kerschensteiner (1905, p. xi) could only speculate as to whether or not the Munich boys would develop as Durer and Thomas, but expressed the hope that once we are able to recognize real talent, then perhaps the talented will be given more opportunities to realize their potential (p. 486).

Kerschensteiner studied the drawings of 85,000 children in the Munich Volksschule and concluded that talent in drawing is usually an indication of intelligence. Kik (1909) arrived at the same conclusion after studying the development of thirteen artistically gifted children, and pointed

to the differences between those children with real creative ability and those with the ability to copy. Kik cited memory and imagination as important ingredients in drawing ability.

Pioneer efforts to measure ability in drawing were made by Edward L. Thorndike (1913/1926) and by Kline and Carey (1923/1926). Thorndike attempted to construct an objective scale for drawing which would be reasonably free from subjective judgment factors. Kline and Carey later devised a more elaborate scale which they revised in 1923.

In 1919, Herschel Manuel administered forty-five separate mental and physical tests to nineteen subjects "chosen for their recognized talent in drawing" (p. 11) in an attempt to identify essential characteristics of persons with superior drawing ability and to find out how the test method could be used to identify talent. Besides these tests, which included the Simon-Binet IQ Test, interpretation of fables, visual memory, aesthetic judgment and drawing itself, non-experimental data such as biographical information were gathered.

Manuel found that persons with drawing talent exhibited great individual differences in their mental and physical characteristics and appeared to be similar primarily in their ability to produce outstanding drawings. Manuel's study attested to the difficulty of devising tests to

identify talent in art. Because there are many kinds of drawing and because of the "infinite possibility of variation in the intention of the drawer as to the effect which he wishes to produce" (p. 111), Manuel concluded that it was difficult to specify the prior conditions for the identification of talent in drawing. Nevertheless, he recommended a program of tests for the diagnosis of drawing talent and listed thirteen characteristics, each an independent or partially independent variable, which seemed closely related to drawing ability.

1. The ability mentally to note a visual form, and, by certain lines and areas, to reproduce it or significant features of it.
2. Ability to observe.
3. Ability to select from a complex visual situation the most beautiful aspects.
4. Memory for visual forms.
5. Ability mentally to manipulate visual forms.
6. Ability to control hand movements in accordance with visual percept or image.
7. Ability to invent, to bring together into new artistic combinations the elements of different visual experiences.
8. Ability to judge the beautiful in line, form, color, and composition.
9. Ability to discriminate differences in color.
10. Ability to discriminate differences in visual magnitude.
11. Acuity of vision.
12. Interest in the act and products of drawing.
13. General intelligence. (p. 133)

Cox (1926) listed thirteen artistic geniuses, almost all of whom showed great interest in art as children, but Goodenough (1956) found almost no evidence of early accomplishment comparable to that of young musicians and hypothesized

that ability in art either has a slower rate of maturation than musical ability, or that it was not yet possible to identify its early stages. Goodenough claimed that, despite an extensive search, she was "unable to locate a single child under the age of twelve years whose drawings appeared to possess artistic merit of a degree at all comparable to the musical genius occasionally shown by children of this age" (1926, p. 53). She concluded that children's drawings could be used as an index to intellectual level up to age ten, after which drawing appears to become a specialized ability rather than a general means of expression (Goodenough, 1926).

Meier (1928) reviewed the literature since 1920 which dealt with the measurement of appreciation and talent prognosis, along with creativity in art and related experimental aesthetics. Meier (1928) cited studies by Jones (1922/1928), Karwoski and Christensen (1926/1928), and Newcomb (1926/1928) in which attempts were made to measure appreciation and talent and to identify potential talent. Meier's own investigations led him to the conclusion that "aesthetic sensitivity" (1928, p. 269) was the most important variable in the complex which makes up ability in art.

According to Meier, artistic aptitude depended upon six factors: (1) manual skill or "craftsman" ability, (2) energy output and perseveration in its discharge, (3) general and

aesthetic intelligence, (4) perceptual facility, (5) creative imagination, and (6) aesthetic judgment (Meier, 1939/1966). Meier attributed the first three factors primarily to heredity, and maintained the latter three are primarily acquired, yet also conditioned by the hereditary factors. Although he placed the greater emphasis upon "constitutional stock inheritance" (p. 105) with regard to the first three factors, he pointed out that "There can be no adequate understanding of artistic aptitude without both being taken into account" (p. 105). He believed all six factors were interlinked in a unique way and evolving.

Although Meier spent years attempting to develop tests and measures of artistic abilities, his instruments were, like Manuel's, primarily descriptive. They "were not generally used for identifying artistic aptitudes" (Wilson & Wilson, 1981, p. 6) and, according to Alexander (1981), today appear culture bound and of doubtful use with children under twelve.

Other early investigators in the area of artistic talent included Ray Faulkner (1941), and Florence Cane (1936). Cane attempted to give educators more than an intuitive manner by which to identify giftedness in art. Cane used what she considered to be four essential factors of body, psyche, mind and spirit, and the degree of their development as manifested in children's art products to identify children gifted in art.

Munro, Lark-Horovitz, and Barnhart (1942) mused that it might be possible to devise a test or scale similar to the Binet and other tests of intelligence aptitude which would identify art ability. They wondered if such a test, "combined with tests of musical and other types of art ability might even yield a measure of aesthetic age, comparable to 'mental age,' and a numerical quotient in relation to chronological age" (1942, p. 98).

Although no such goal was sought or attained by the studies at the Cleveland Museum of Art which Munro, Lark-Horowitz, and Barnhart described in the Journal of Experimental Education (1942) and which were carried on between 1935 and 1940, some objective differences were found between the "Average" and "Special" (those with superior art ability) groups studied. The investigators concluded that the gifted or "Special" children represented "heightened Averages; that the top-group of Specials represents a still more heightened average (especially as to perception) plus certain intangible qualities--whether inherited or native or acquired--that are, as yet, unexplained. The main difference between the two groups is neither intelligence, nor of a developmental nature. It is the phenomenon that specially gifted children express themselves (and think primarily) in a visual medium: that is, they translate all their experience into this mode of expression; while average children lack this ability, even

though their experiences are as powerful and their gift of expressing them as strong" (Munro et al., 1942, p. 111).

Lark-Horovitz, who was given detailed management of the Cleveland project in 1936 (Munro et al., 1942), wrote more than twenty years later that "Talent may appear in three ways: accelerated development and technical skill; an unusually early awareness of artistic form and quality; or a unique and skillful adaptation of existing art styles in preadolescence" (Lark-Horovitz, Lewis, & Luca, 1973, p. 188). Her extensive list of characteristics of artistically talented children included as follows.

1. At a very early age, their drawings have a more individual character.
2. They usually demonstrate accelerated development and technical skill beyond the norm of their age group.
3. They may excel in compositional arrangement, "enriching their decorative approach, and producing work of aesthetic quality within their childhood schematic style" (p. 178).
4. Talented children "usually have a burning urge to express themselves. They draw and paint in every available moment, . . . (p. 178).
5. They usually have high general intelligence which is specifically channeled in a given direction.
6. They possess a richer "storehouse of images" (p. 190).
7. They are able to present commonplace subjects more imaginatively.
8. They "show greater variety within the range of subject choices, especially at the true-to-appearance level" (p. 190).
9. They are "both original and fertile" (p. 191) in their fantasies and possess extraordinary imaginative abilities.
10. Talented children are adept in representing movement.
11. They surpass average children in the conscious and deliberate grouping of objects and people" (p. 193).

12. They are able to achieve "effects of brilliancy and contrast by well-balanced and integrated coloring. He sometimes blends and tints with subtlety" (p. 193).
13. They are more aware of the potentials and limitations of media and are more eager to explore new media in original ways.
14. Talented children "are more willing and able to extend their interest to subjects that are challenging and provocative" (p. 194).
15. They demonstrate effective interplay between selective visual observation and strong visual memory, and are able to retain impressions of things seen long ago.
16. Talented children demonstrate a genuine desire to learn by asking for explanations and instructions.
17. As they grow older, they "are far more responsive to unusual subjects in art than are others of their age, and they are more stimulated and influenced by such work" (p. 198).

According to Lark-Horovitz, Lewis, and Luca, "accelerated development is one of the most pervasive and significant characteristics of the talented child" (1973, p. 190), and in The Art of the Very Young (1976) Lark-Horovitz documented the exceptionally early development of one young child and described remarkable, adult-like "aesthetic" quality in the work of two others--an aesthetic quality which appeared to be intentional, yet within the framework of child art. Case histories documented further individualism of interest and expression.

Viktor Lowenfeld cautioned that "'special talents' usually refer to attributes which appeal to adults" (1957a, p. 36), and he distinguished "between children who are especially gifted in creative art and those who, through their special skills, only appear to be gifted" (p. 37),

i.e., those who can copy well. Lowenfeld characterized creatively gifted children as (1) independent and original in their concepts, and having the power to express them; (2) expressing themselves with ease and confidence in their own art expression; (3) making art that is not always "pleasing" in terms of adult taste; and (4) needing less particular motivation than other children, or those less gifted or inhibited.

In Creative and Mental Growth (1957b), Lowenfeld isolated five major factors in the art of the gifted:

1. Fluency of imagination and expression;
2. A highly developed sensibility (in certain areas; especially with regard to movement and space);
3. The intuitive quality of imagination;
4. Directness of expression;
5. The high degree of self-identification with subject matter and medium. (pp. 421-422)

Italo de Francesco (1958) addressed the subject of the artistically gifted, stressing the importance of early identification and the need for adequate and continued provision for them, beginning at the elementary level. However, he dealt with identification in a very general way, offering no specific criteria, and suggesting "that the art coordinator make a careful survey to ascertain the number of children judged as gifted by the classroom teachers in those grades or school levels in which the program is to be initiated" (p. 409).

Conant and Randall (1959) cited the general unreliability of teachers' judgments as a method for identifying

gifted children, as well as the questionable value of intelligence tests in identification of the creatively gifted. He added, "To a large extent, however, brilliance in art can be determined by the interest of a young person, by his persistence, and by the attention his work receives from others" (p. 183). Conant and Randall cited the following distinguishing characteristics:

1. Heightened visual acuity and interest in both idea and detail;
2. Greater ability to see the underlying artistic structure of realistic subject matter;
3. A greater degree of interest and persistence; and
4. Ability to work with equal facility from memory or direct observation: have a photographic mind, acute powers of visualization, and draftsmanship ability. (pp. 182-183)

Mendelowitz described the talented child as one "who has received, for one reason or another, sufficient satisfaction from a certain kind of activity to participate in it more frequently and with more intensity than most children in the same age group and so has developed his capabilities beyond the average of his group" (1963, p. 24). One of the few art educators to offer a definition of giftedness in art, Mendelowitz added, talent "simply means an above-average level of achievement" (p. 25). He wrote, talent, as opposed to genius, is not rare, it is "abundant, and the culture which encourages talents creates the atmosphere in which genius can flower" (p. 24).

McFee (1961) proposed the perception-delineation theory as an alternative to the use of developmental stages for determining art behavior. In it, the individual variables that affect art production and abilities in art are identified and include "responding, expressing, designing, and creating" (p. 147). McFee added that "All artists of note do not necessarily excel in ability to use all these traits" (p. 148).

According to McFee, "Fluency in art may be determined partly by intelligence and partly by culture, reward, and opportunity" (p. 134). She described a study of artists and non-artists in which the most important single difference between the two groups was found to be that the artists received early recognition of their abilities--recognition which set in motion a cycle of recognition leading to satisfaction (in experiences and relationships) leading to activities which crystallized in later vocational choices and performances. McFee added that "Children's ability in art depends not only on their creative ability but also on their past experiences in art" (p. 138). A child may have many ideas, but lack a suitable means and medium to express them.

Eisner (1966) addressed the issue of special programs in the arts and suggested that two types of students be enrolled in them: those who display high degrees of ability and interest, and those who display little ability

but do express interest in such programs. The latter may show great promise under capable art instructors. Eisner added, "Instruments capable of identifying with confidence the artistically gifted are unavailable" (p. 500).

Eisner argued that many art activities are essentially cognitive and not, as is generally assumed, totally affective, and he took issue with those who suggested "that art ability, unlike intelligence, is like the measles: something you have or you haven't got. . . . And it is puzzling to me that those who would be the first to claim they have no talent would be the last to claim they have no intelligence. I have argued theoretically that artistic ability is a consequence of qualitative intelligence; art schools have demonstrated empirically that such ability can be developed" (p. 500).

The concept of "Creative Intelligence," as opposed to the concept of intelligence as it is commonly measured, was voiced by Viktor Lowenfeld in 1960 and reiterated by Torrance in 1980. According to Torrance, "Intelligence and creativity are interacting or overlapping variables and . . . trying to force clear distinctions would create false distinctions that do not exist in real life" (p. 9).

Lansing said of intelligence and art ability: "Art involves thinking, feeling, and perceiving" (1963, p. 14). He broadly defined gifted children "as those individuals

who do consistently remarkable work of any kind" (p. 14) without making distinctions between kinds of giftedness.

According to Alexander (1981), Paul Witty made the first list of characteristics of children gifted in art and believed potentially artistically gifted children usually show various combinations of the following traits:

1. Tries to reproduce many things he has observed in pencil or crayon drawings;
2. Is adept in drawing pictures of animals and people at an early age--much younger than is typical;
3. Shows at an early age an appreciation for colors in his crayon drawings and in his painting;
4. Shows an appreciation for design when very young;
5. Is original in his use of finger paints and combines colors in effective patterns;
6. Is interested in pictures and picture books;
7. Reproduces his own experience in some art form;
8. Works effectively with paints, models from clay, or carves soap, with unusual success; and
9. Shows an early interest in other people's creative work--at exhibitions, in museums, in school, and on other occasions. (Witty, 1958, p. 59)

Witty broadly defined as gifted "any child whose performance in a worthwhile type of human endeavor is consistently or repeatedly remarkable" (1971, p. 7), a definition which seems to have been echoed by Lansing (1963).

Children's paintings classified by Yochim as "perceptually above average" (1967, p. 95) showed the following characteristics:

1. Indications of the students' unusual conceptual ability and of their skill in organizing thoughts visually in a given space;
2. A keen awareness of environmental factors;
3. Technical skill in the depicted images; and
4. A genuine concern for detail and a decided interest in filling the space with carefully delineated and well thought-out ideas (p. 95).

Yochim suggested that artistic skill "is best judged visually by competent observers" as "few tests have yet been devised which can measure successfully those intangible values that emanate from the never-ending interaction between the very essence of a living organism and its ever-changing experiential and physical world" (p. 96).

Art teacher Miriam Lindstrom described the following characteristics of two artistically gifted children whom she identified out of many hundreds whose work she observed:

They were able to conceive and create images much more complex than could be achieved by others of their age, and they were extraordinarily perceptive of both objective fact and subjective effect. Their drawings indicated a clear sense of structure in the inter-relationships of parts and also showed the artists' appreciation of significant, expressive gesture or attitude so that the total concept declared its affective meaning. (1970, p. 49)

Lindstrom also described the wide range of subjects chosen by these children, their vivid recall, inventiveness, and disciplined energy. She was impressed with their readiness to respond to the challenge of new experiences and their relative lack of the frustrations which plague most children.

Through a longitudinal study of art students at the School of Art Institute of Chicago, Getzels and Csikszentmihalyi (1976) were able to develop a profile of future artists in an attempt to find out what makes a person decide to become an artist and in efforts to shed light on

the sources and processes of creativity; however, as Alexander (1981) pointed out, "This information, although interesting and important, is unlikely to help art teachers, school districts or administrators in their quest for identification of the gifted, programs for the gifted, and evaluation of these programs at the elementary and secondary levels" (p. 42).

Gaitskell and Hurwitz, in a chapter devoted to the artistically gifted, synthesized characteristics found in the literature to develop a profile of the gifted in art:

A gifted child observes acutely and has a vivid memory; he is equally adept at handling problems requiring imagination. He is open to new experiences, yet can delve deeply into a limited area. He takes his art seriously and derives great personal satisfaction from his work. (1970, p. 358)

The authors added: "Such a child will almost inevitably possess above-average intelligence, display skill beyond the ordinary, give noticeable evidence of sensitivity in organizing the elements of design, and be capable of producing work bearing the stamp of a distinctive personality" (p. 363). They suggested identification based upon opinions of well-informed people, or specialists (artists and art teachers) over a relatively long period of time.

Luca and Allen, in a guide for teachers of gifted children in grades four through six, suggested that classroom teachers or art specialists could identify children "whose skill and interest are obviously high" (1973, p. 13).

Indications of artistic ability which they listed included (1) persistence in doing art work, (2) unusual skill or marked independence of ideas, (3) fluidity and flexibility of ideas exhibited in any subject area, (4) exceptional manual dexterity, (5) enjoyment in building things, and (6) excellent color sense. Luca and Allen further warned teachers against neglecting the slow worker who, nevertheless, may be a dedicated student and capable of delving deeply into an area or idea, as well as the child with many ideas.

Few attempts were made to develop instruments to identify the artistically gifted until the 1970s (Wilson & Wilson, 1981). In 1969, Lewis and Mussen published a study in which they described efforts to develop and validate an instrument for the identification of artistic creativity in preadolescents. Art products were evaluated for aesthetic merit and originality, which may, according to the authors, be separate categories in the production of art.

Ellison, Abe, Fox, Coray and Taylor (1976) advocated the use of biographical information to identify the artistically gifted and Stalker (1981) recently used tests of cognitive complexity, executive ability in drawing, and affective intensity to identify the gifted and talented in art. Like Manuel (1919), Meier (1939/1966), Horn and Smith

(1945), and Getzels and Csikszentmihalyi (1976), Stalker found that executive ability in drawing correlates with success as an artist and, in this study, executive ability explained the largest amount of variance. However, cognitive complexity and affective intensity were also found to provide important information for assessing art ability.

The most recent studies dealing with childhood giftedness in art include those of Brent Wilson (1974, 1976) and Brent and Marjorie Wilson (1976, 1981). Wilson wrote about the work of ten-year-old J. C. Holz and hypothesized that the boy's extraordinary drawings, which were spontaneous as opposed to structured art classroom art and occurred mainly outside of school, were a form of play rather than art in the sense that adults produce it. Wilson defined play as "arousal-seeking behavior" (1974, p. 3) and suggested that the motivation for J. C.'s prolific drawings was "a strong predisposition for fantasy and an acute need for non-redundant stimulation and excitement or, as seen from the negative side, a strong drive to avoid boredom" (p. 3). Wilson added: "When young people such as J. C. play continually at their art-making, they quickly move through something akin to developmental stages and begin absorbing or assuming the cultural traits of the art around them--comic books in J. C.'s case. Young people can move to this point without the assistance of an art teacher" (p. 4).

Wilson (1976) applied Hans and Sculamith Kreidler's theory of the psychology of the arts to child art and used autobiographical studies in an effort to illuminate the motivations for early artistic behavior. In "Visual Narrative and the Artistically Gifted," Wilson and Wilson (1976) described the narrative aspect of exceptional child art and stated their belief that "the narrative process may produce--and probably does produce--the outstanding adult artists" (p. 432). Through studies of autobiographies and interviews with well-known artists, as well as observations and interviews with exceptionally able young people, Wilson and Wilson came "to see the motivational dimensions of boredom and stimulation as they relate to the drive to produce visual narrative" (p. 433). They presented four case studies of highly gifted young people--four "among the small handful standing out from the literally thousands of young people whose productions we have observed as art teachers and researchers" (p. 437).

Wilson and Wilson allowed that

artistic giftedness is not easily defined, indeed it is not just one thing, nor does it subsume one standard set of characteristics; nevertheless, as a group, the artistically gifted children that we have studied have possessed the following characteristics:

1. A strong need to be intellectually stimulated, or contrarily, a dread of intellectual boredom. The seeking of stimulation or the escape from boredom frequently leads to the need to create other realities through drawing.
2. An awe at the magic of their own ability to give visual form both to the known and to the until-then-unknown with pencil and paper.

3. An ability to depict, with competency and accuracy, characters and characterizations, settings and actions, dimensionality, shading, and space--usually years ahead of most of their peers.
4. An unusual visual memory that enables them to remember in vivid and accurate detail the contents of pictures and objects of their own daily perceptions.
5. An early ability to masterfully mimic the styles, contents and techniques of the drawings, paintings and illustrations of adult artists.
6. An active imagination and the ability to combine fluently and inventively images and ideas from diverse sources and to synthesize them into new totalities.
7. A preference (at times) for drawing and other symbolic activities to first hand encounters with people and objects in the world.
8. An extraordinary ability to solve graphic problems such as ways to depict objects in new positions, actions, and from differing points of view by extending and altering their current patterns of drawing.
9. An intensive personal agenda of skill development to which page-filled with endless variations of objects positions, actions, etc., give evidence.
10. An early realization of their own artistic ability, often accompanied by the decision to be an artist.
11. A strong sense of visual order and a sensitivity to the tensions of visual disorder.
12. An unusual awareness of sensory qualities and the aesthetic outcomes of artistic techniques. (1981, pp. 3-5).

Wilson and Wilson added: "The most artistically gifted children possess almost all of these characteristics. Less gifted, but still unusual children, possess some of them--sometimes to an exceeding degree. Some children may indeed be graphically gifted--in the depiction of objects, in rendering or in producing extraordinarily realistic reproductions--while lacking, for example, the visual memory or

the ability to combine and incorporate images in new and imaginative ways" (p. 5).

Based on assumptions and principles developed through ten years of research regarding artistically gifted children and dozens of case studies, Wilson and Wilson proposed a set of instruments which they believed would predict "specific potentials for unusual artistic productions" (1981, p. 7).

Concern for the gifted alternated with apathy from the early 1920s until today. Alexander (1981) remarked upon the coincidental interest in art and creativity which emerged out of the literature of the 1950s, and among numerous articles which related creativity to art were those of Lewis and Mussen (1969), Peckham (1967), Saunders (1968), Rossman (1976), and Khatena (1977).

The current general concern for educational needs and opportunities for the gifted and talented has led many school districts and state education departments to search for or develop criteria for their identification. In the Oregon Series on Talented and Gifted Education: Identifying the Talented and Gifted (Bagley, Frazee, Hosey, Kononen, Siewert, Speciale, & Woodfield, 1979), artistically talented students are defined as "those who show exceptionally high potential for expressing themselves aesthetically in the fine arts, crafts, graphics, music, dance, drama and mime" (p. 47).

Great caution is urged in their assessment and direct observation of performance by experts in the particular field is recommended over results obtained from test scores. In Unicornucopia, a guidebook for teacher nominations of gifted and talented students prepared by Human Individual Potentialities, Kyrene School District Number Twenty-Eight, Tempe, Arizona, which is included in the Oregon series, are listed the following characteristics of children with artistic talent:

1. Draws variety of things (not just jets or horses or people);
2. Puts depth into pictures, plans pictures, and uses good proportion;
3. Takes art work seriously. Seems to find much satisfaction in it;
4. Shows originality. Draws things in ways no other children do;
5. Is willing to try out new materials and experiences.
6. Fills extra time with drawing and painting activities;
7. Uses art to express his/her own experiences, his/her own feelings;
8. Is interested in other people's art work. Can appreciate, criticize, and learn from other's work;
9. Likes to model with clay, carve soap, or work with other forms of three-dimensional art. (Human Individual Potentialities, 1977, p. 77)

Two nomination forms are used to identify the artistically gifted in the Frederick County Public Schools, Maryland (Kehne, 1981), one consisting of a scale for rating creativity characteristics and one consisting of a scale for rating artistic characteristics (Renzulli, Smith, White, Callahan, & Hartman, 1981). The Renzulli forms on artistic

and creative identification used in the Frederick County Schools include the following list of artistic characteristics:

1. Likes to participate in art activities; is eager to visually express ideas;
2. Incorporates a large number of elements into art work; varies the subject and content of art work;
3. Arrives at unique, unconventional solutions to artistic problems as opposed to traditional, conventional ones;
4. Concentrates for long periods of time on art projects;
5. Willingly tries out different media; experiments with a variety of materials and techniques;
6. Tends to select art media for free activity or classroom projects;
7. Is particularly sensitive to the environment; is a keen observer--sees the unusual, what may be overlooked by others;
8. Produces balance and order in art work;
9. Is critical of own work; sets high standards of quality; often reworks creation in order to refine it;
10. Shows an interest in other student's work--spends time studying and discussing their work;
11. Elaborates on ideas from other people--uses them as a "jumping off point" as opposed to copying them. (Renzulli et al., 1981)

A pilot project for gifted and talented elementary children in the visual arts was described by Pittsfield, Massachusetts, Public Schools art coordinator Winifred Bell (1981) at the National Art Education Association Conference in Chicago. Criteria used for identifying gifted and talented children in the visual arts was adopted from Conn-Cept IV, Connecticut's Programming for the Gifted and Talented--Task Force Report on Identifying the Talented in the Creative Arts. These criteria included

drawing ability; manipulative skills; quality of original art produced; use of mistakes or the unplanned in creation of a work; inventiveness and willingness to explore; adeptability to change, new ideas, media, and methods; interaction and interest in other arts; use of visual arts media for general classroom projects; enthusiasm for art; imaginative insight through interpretive reaction to art; problem solving ability using visual art media; ability to elaborate; perseverance; commitment; and self expression is creative rather than destructive.
(Bell, 1981)

Other characteristics of artistic talent used were identical to those listed by Kyrene School District Number Twenty-Eight in the Oregon Series on Talented and Gifted Education (Human Individual Potentialities, 1977, p. 77).

Various alternative programs in the arts, such as the Houston High School for the Performing and Visual Arts and the Pennsylvania Governor's School for the Arts, have indicated criteria, based on performance, for the selection of their students (Carroll, 1976). Advanced placement programs in studio art (Dorn, 1976) and in art history (Weisberg, 1978) have focused even more attention on the need for adequate criteria.

Al Hurwitz, in The Gifted Child Quarterly (1976), described differing attitudes toward the gifted in art between United States and Soviet societies. He also described several special programs which he created in the Newton, Massachusetts, schools. The following statements summarize the prevailing attitude of most art educators

toward the gifted in art in this century, and the resulting reluctance to specify criteria of artistic giftedness:

In no case, however, is there any screen process. It is first come first served and it is assumed that no one comes unless their interest is high, that they are all self-motivated in art and that they are capable of extended periods of concentration. The students on the secondary level do have a tendency to pursue art beyond high school, but no one has been interested enough in the history of the elementary and junior high participants to make a follow-up study. While we are indeed dealing with the gifted, we believe that what we offer the high interest child is in reality what all children should be receiving. This is the basis of our philosophy and also reflects the goals of the aesthetic education movement. (p. 459)

Ironically, Wilson and Wilson's attempts to identify potential artistic abilities by giving their instruments a "surgical precision" (Wilson & Wilson, 1981), recall Meier's early hopes of making art education a science (Alexander, 1981). In some respects, attempts to identify the gifted seem to have come full circle.

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CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to determine and investigate the criteria used in the identification of artistically gifted children and attempt to determine their validity. The study focused on answering the following questions.

1. By what means do art teachers identify children with exceptional ability in art?

2. What characteristics do art teachers cite as evidence of exceptional ability in art?

3. What characteristics do the children identified by their art teachers as artistically gifted manifest as observed by this investigator?

4. Do the children identified by their art teachers as artistically gifted manifest any of the traits of the artistically gifted cited in the literature by experts in the field such as Gaitskell and Hurwitz (1970), Lark-Horovitz, Lewis, and Luca (1973), Wilson and Wilson (1981), and others?

Subjects

Participants in this study included sixteen children--eleven boys and five girls--in grades four through six

identified by six art teachers in five elementary schools in a large metropolitan area. Because of the scarcity of information about artistically gifted children at the elementary level and because fourth grade is the lowest grade in which art is taught as a special subject by a special art teacher in the public schools in this area, children in grades four through six were selected for the study. Schools were selected on the basis of geographic location in an effort to reflect a sample of artistically gifted children from different racial and socioeconomic groups and availability of special art classes taught by special art teachers. Art teachers in these schools were certified in art education and were selected because they were currently teaching art to grades four through six and were willing to participate in the study.

Of the five schools, four were public elementary schools (K-6) in a large metropolitan school district, and one was a private elementary-middle school (pre-school through eight) within the same metropolitan area. Of the four public schools, one was located in a rural area on the outskirts of the school district, yet within its jurisdiction. Two of the public schools were located in low socioeconomic areas and consisted primarily of minority students. However, both schools were designed to attract students from all parts of the city. One of these schools was a "vanguard"

or magnet school for the expressive arts, and the other was a Montessori school. Both schools accepted and enrolled students from other parts of the district. The fourth public elementary school was located in a high-income area, although, because of federal desegregation orders, minority and other students from other parts of the district were also enrolled. The private school included primarily upper-middle-class, white students.

Of the six teachers, all were professional art teachers, teaching art almost exclusively in a special art room. The length of teaching experience ranged from two years to more than twenty-five.

Sources of Existing Information

Authoritative statements about criteria of giftedness in art and characteristics of artistically gifted children were gleaned from a thorough search of the literature. Unpublished information was sought and obtained directly from art educators who are actively involved in researching and writing about artistically gifted children. Other criteria used in identifying artistically gifted children were sought and obtained directly from school districts and state departments of education.

Collection of Original Data

Two interview schedules were used in this study; one administered to art teachers (see Appendix A) and one

administered informally to children (see Appendix B). Each art teacher was asked to list (1) any child or children (no more than three) in grades four through six whom he or she would identify as artistically gifted or as having superior ability in art, (2) by what means he or she identified the child or children selected, and (3) the characteristics which he or she felt were indicative of superior art ability in the child or children selected.

It was felt that, by limiting the number of students selected by a teacher to three, greater selectivity would be achieved (Goodenough, 1956, p. 33), and those students selected would necessarily fall within the limits set by the definition of artistically gifted as defined in this study and indicated in the literature (De Haan & Wilson, 1958, p. 176; Stewart, 1981).

The children selected by their art teachers as artistically gifted were interviewed informally in their respective art rooms. Characteristics determined from interviews with children include those which are not easily discernible by examining art products and observing behaviors in a formal classroom environment. Questions asked of children were drawn from characteristics and criteria found in the literature and from unpublished materials obtained from experts in the field (see Appendix B for complete derivation). Many of the questions were adapted from Wilson and

Wilson's Instruments for the Identification of Artistic Giftedness, "Cognitive Orientation to Art" (1981). Because it was hoped that children would feel free to volunteer information about their art, the interview schedule was used primarily as a guide--the order of the questions and the ways in which they were worded were sometimes changed according to the situation.

A synthesis of observable characteristics and criteria found in the literature and obtained from experts in the field was compiled and used as a checklist. The checklist consisted of twenty-seven observable characteristics, some of which were, in part, overlapping. The checklist consisted of the following characteristics:

1. "Asks for explanations and instructions" (Lark-Horowitz, Lewis, & Luca, 1973, p. 195);

2. Likes to be left to own devices in the execution of his art (Gaitskell & Hurwitz, 1970);

3. Shows accelerated development and technical skill (Gaitskell & Hurwitz, 1970; Lark-Horowitz, Lewis, & Luca, 1973, p. 188; Yochim, 1967, p. 95);

4. Has an unusual visual memory and acute powers of observation (Conant & Randall, 1959; Lark-Horowitz, Lewis, & Luca, 1973; Manuel, 1919);

5. Shows an early, outstanding ability to mimic or adapt the styles, contents, and techniques of adult artists (Wilson & Wilson, 1981);

6. Art reveals an active imagination, independence of ideas--ability to combine forms and ideas fluently and inventively (Lowenfeld, 1957; Luca & Allen, 1973; Wilson & Wilson, 1981);

7. Ability to make use of mistakes or the unplanned in art (Bell, 1981);

8. Art shows "a strong sense of visual order and sensitivity to the tensions of visual disorder" (Wilson & Wilson, 1981);

9. Is better at organizing and composing; work shows a clear sense of structure in the interrelationships of parts (Lindstrom, 1970);

10. Is better able "to see the underlying artistic structure of realistic subject matter" (Conant & Randall, 1959, p. 183);

11. Art reveals "an unusual awareness of sensory qualities and the aesthetic outcomes of artistic techniques" (Wilson & Wilson, 1981);

12. Exhibits "directness of expression" (Lowenfeld, 1957, p. 422);

13. Shows a "high degree of self-identification with the subject matter and medium" (Lowenfeld, 1957, p. 422);

14. Art reveals a highly developed sensibility in certain areas, particularly with regard to movement and space (Lowenfeld, 1957);

15. Art shows a greater variety of subject choices; has a greater graphic vocabulary (Lark-Horowitz, Lewis & Luca, 1973);

16. Work has an aesthetic quality which does not depend on similarity to nature or reality (Lark-Horowitz, 1976; Lark-Horowitz, Lewis, & Luca, 1973);

17. Is adept in representing movement (Lark-Horowitz, Lewis, & Luca, 1973);

18. Art reveals an excellent color sense; well-balanced and integrated use of color (Luca & Allen, 1973; Manuel, 1919; Witty, 1958);

19. Is eager to explore new materials (Lark-Horowitz, Lewis, & Luca, 1973);

20. Adapts technique to the medium; is more aware of the possibilities and limits of media (Lark-Horowitz, Lewis, & Luca, 1973);

21. Is more responsive to unusual subjects in art; willing to go beyond likes and dislikes to judge on aesthetic merits (Lark-Horowitz, Lewis, & Luca, 1973);

22. Total perception is visually oriented and more discriminating (Lark-Horowitz, Lewis, & Luca, 1973, p. 195);

23. Art reveals "the artists' appreciation of significant, expressive gesture or attitude" (Lindstrom, 1970, p. 49);

24. Art tends to be narrative in character (Wilson & Wilson, 1976; 1981);

25. Has ability to conceive and create more complex images; has "a genuine concern for detail and an interest in filling the space with carefully delineated and well thought-out ideas" (Conant & Randall, 1959; Yochim, 1967, p. 95);

26. Exhibits a disciplined energy; greater ability to concentrate, to delve deeply into an area (Conant & Randall, 1959; Gaitskell & Hurwitz, 1970; Lindstrom, 1970; Luca & Allen, 1973);

27. Shows an interest in other people's art work--can appreciate, criticize, and learn from the work of others (Human Individual Potentialities, 1977; Renzulli et al., 1981; Witty, 1958).

Procedure

Arrangements for visits were made through principals of individual schools. Two visits were made to each school or classroom. Length of the visits varied according to the length of each art class period. During the first visit, art teachers were informed of the purpose of the study and asked to point out those children (three or less) whom they considered to be artistically gifted. The interview schedule, along with a stamped, self-addressed envelope, was left with each teacher, who was asked to complete and mail it after he or she had time to consider his or her answers.

Children were observed at work during their art classes. Observations made in regard to art work were recorded on a checklist or composite of characteristics and criteria drawn from the literature and from materials obtained from experts in the field. The personal comments and observations of this investigator were also recorded. Teachers were often able to contribute valuable information about individual students--their work habits, interests both inside and outside of school, personalities, family life, and abilities in other subject areas. In some cases, past art work was examined. In three schools, art work was taken home by the investigator for further study. In two schools, art work done by four students was also examined where it hung in public exhibitions.

Because the literature appears to support the hypothesis that the most reliable instruments for identifying the artistically gifted are related to drawing (Manuel, 1919; Stalker, 1981; Wilson & Wilson, 1981), efforts were made to observe art classes when children were drawing or painting, and to examine drawings and paintings which the gifted children had done earlier in the school year.

During the second visit, children were again observed at work during their art classes, and interviewed in an informal manner using, as a guide, the questions drawn from the literature and from materials obtained from experts in

the field. The children's answers were recorded, along with any information they might volunteer and any observations made by the interviewer.

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CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to determine and examine the criteria used in identifying artistically gifted children and attempt to determine their validity. Interviews with art teachers, observations of children and their art work, and interviews with children were conducted between the first of January and the twenty-first of April, 1982. Results of the research have been summarized into both chart and narrative form. This chapter has been organized according to the following sources of data: interviews with art teachers, observations of children and their art, interviews with children, and observations of characteristics of artistically gifted children cited in the literature. Observations of children and their art and interviews with children have been combined under the heading Case Studies in order to present more fully developed profiles of individual children.

Interviews with Art Teachers

When asked by what means they identified artistically gifted children, all six of the art teachers interviewed listed personal observations. Three teachers stated that

the gifted children were acknowledged by their peers as outstanding in art. Two art teachers listed comments from parents as a means of identification, while one teacher listed comments from adults other than teachers. One art teacher listed awards received in competitions. Three out of the six teachers cited more than one means of identifying artistically gifted children--that is, at least one means other than the teachers' own observations.

Art teachers were asked to list the characteristics which they believed to be indicative of artistic giftedness. No one characteristic was listed by all the interviewees as indicative of giftedness in art. However, some characteristics were listed by as many as four out of the six art teachers and include the following: demonstration of commitment to making art; persistence; is self-directed, has self-confidence in his or her own art ability; originality, makes a purely personal statement; produces neat and careful work, works with precision; and is consistently successful with art work.

The second group of characteristics most cited by art teachers were: rarely asks for assistance; has a talent for drawing, painting, etc., draws extremely well. These characteristics were listed by three out of the six art teachers interviewed.

The following characteristics were listed by two out of the six art teachers interviewed: demonstrates high

interest in and enthusiasm for art; takes obvious pleasure in making art, enjoys being complimented on art work; sets high personal standards; art work shows a sense of humor; assumes responsibility, often assumes the role of a teacher among peers; is able to draw in perspective; usually completes assignments ahead of other students; skills are mature and highly imaginative; ideas for subject matter are unique, seems to have a vast source of fresh ideas and never copies others' work; work consistently stands out from the group.

Characteristics listed by only one art teacher out of the six interviewed included: prefers to sit with students who excel in art; understands the fundamentals of art; makes use of overlapping; is able to draw proportionally; is able to draw from different viewpoints; uses foreshortening; makes use of forethought; uses a minimum of eraser marks; makes use of the whole page; produces work of a sophisticated and sensual nature; work shows sensitivity and refinement; challenges the art curriculum--demands answers and reasons-- is not afraid to take risks, to express concerns; exhibits an unusually quick grasp of assignments; would rather excel than finish in a hurry; feels the art class period is too short, asks to spend more time in art; handles new media easily and skillfully; is able to give the illusion of three-dimensionality; is intelligent, well-read, and pulls

ideas from this; ability to think of an idea on his own and create it on paper in a believable and realistic manner; can be very direct in his thinking; has a confident sense of color--usually manages subtle, but effective contrast; exhibits talent which is in the world of design, color and expression, work that is non-representational; has a clear simplicity of expression in all his work; work shows great detail, repetition, and embellishment; shows a meticulous facility; work has a lovely finished effect; work is totally honest, speaks a language all his own.

There is admittedly much overlapping, both in the teachers' minds with regard to methods of identification as opposed to characteristics of giftedness in art, and among the characteristics which they listed. For example, "demonstration of high interest and enthusiasm for art" was listed both as a means of identification and as a characteristic of artistic giftedness. While two art teachers stated that the gifted students "draw extremely well," other teachers listed specific abilities, such as the use of perspective and foreshortening. For purposes of accuracy and greater objectivity, attempts were made to reproduce the teachers' words exactly as they appear on the interview questionnaires. Minor changes in wording were made only for the sake of grammatical consistency in the text.

Characteristics listed by the art teachers appeared to fall into three general categories: artistic skills or

technical proficiency, imaginative-cognitive abilities, and personal characteristics (see Table I). The few characteristics which did not seem to fall exclusively into one category are listed separately.

Characteristics listed by art teachers which did not appear to fall into any one of the categories because they are so ambiguously stated included the following: is consistently successful with art work, usually completes assignments ahead of other students, work consistently stands out from the group, and uses a minimum of eraser marks.

Examination of characteristics of artistic giftedness listed by the art teachers (Table I) reveals that the characteristics are fairly evenly distributed among the three categories: artistic-technical skills, imaginative-cognitive abilities, and personal characteristics. There is a certain amount of overlapping, and certain characteristics, such as "skills are mature and highly imaginative" and "produces work of a sophisticated and sensual nature," could possibly be placed in both the artistic-technical skills category and the imaginative-cognitive abilities category. Examination of the contents of the three categories also appears to show that the art teachers interviewed are aware of many of the traits of the artistically gifted cited in the literature (see Table II), and that they value all three types of characteristics in evaluating children's art

TABLE I

CHARACTERISTICS OF ARTISTIC GIFTEDNESS LISTED BY ART TEACHERS

Artistic-Technical Skills	Imaginative-Cognitive Abilities	Personal Characteristics
<p>Produces neat & careful work Works with precision Has a talent for drawing, painting, etc. Draws extremely well Is able to draw in perspective Makes use of overlapping Is able to draw proportionally Is able to draw from different viewpoints Uses foreshortening Handles new media easily and skillfully Is able to give the illusion of three-dimensionality Shows a meticulous facility Work has a lovely finished effect</p>	<p>Originality--makes a purely personal statement Ideas for subject matter are unique, has vast source of fresh ideas, never copies others Skills are mature & highly imaginative Understands the fundamentals of art Makes use of forethought Makes use of the whole page Produces work of a sophisticated and sensual nature Work shows sensitivity & refinement Exhibits an unusually quick grasp of assignments Is intelligent, well-read, & pulls ideas from this</p>	<p>Demonstration of commitment to making art Persistence Is self-directed, has self-confidence in his or her own art ability Rarely asks for assistance Demonstrates high interest & enthusiasm for art Takes obvious pleasure in making art Enjoys being complimented on art work Sets high personal standards Art work shows a sense of humor Assumes responsibility, role of teacher Prefers to sit with students who excel in art</p>

TABLE I--Continued

Artistic-Technical Skills	Imaginative-Cognitive Abilities	Personal Characteristics
<p>Has a confident sense of color--usually manages a subtle, but effective contrast</p> <p>Exhibits talent in design, color, expression, non-representational work</p>	<p>Ability to think of an idea on his own and create it on paper in a believable and realistic manner</p> <p>Can be very direct in his thinking</p> <p>Work has a clear simplicity of expression</p> <p>Work shows great detail, repetition, and embellishment</p> <p>Work is totally honest; speaks a language all his own</p>	<p>Challenges the art curriculum--demands answers and reasons</p> <p>Is not afraid to take risks, to express concerns</p> <p>Would rather excel than finish in a hurry</p> <p>Feels the art class period is too short, asks to spend more time in art</p>

abilities. The teachers' responses appear to reflect the thinking, feeling, and perceiving which are involved in art making, as well as the current belief that giftedness in art does not consist of any one thing or group of characteristics.

When the seven characteristics listed most often by the art teachers interviewed are categorized (see p. 57), characteristics are equally divided between artistic-technical skills and personal characteristics, with only one characteristic falling into the imaginative-cognitive abilities category. The fact that most of the art teachers interviewed emphasized artistic-technical skills and personal characteristics may indicate that these two types of characteristics are valued more highly.

Characteristics of artistic giftedness found in the literature (see Table II) appeared to fall into the same general categories as those characteristics listed by the art teachers (see Table I). However, the majority of the characteristics found in the literature fell into the imaginative-cognitive abilities category. The other characteristics fell evenly into the other two categories. This was in contrast to the characteristics listed by the art teachers, which were more evenly divided among the three categories. The characteristics listed most often by the art teachers fell primarily into the artistic-technical skills

TABLE II

CHARACTERISTICS OF ARTISTIC GIFTEDNESS FOUND IN THE LITERATURE

Artistic-Technical Skills	Imaginative-Cognitive Abilities	Personal Characteristics
<p>Shows accelerated development & technical skill</p> <p>Shows an early, outstanding ability to mimic or adapt the styles, contents and techniques of adult artists</p> <p>Exhibits directness of expression</p> <p>Is adept in representing movement</p> <p>Art reveals an excellent color sense</p>	<p>Art reveals an active imagination, independence of ideas</p> <p>Ability to make use of mistakes or the unplanned</p> <p>Has an unusual visual memory and acute powers of observation</p> <p>Art shows a strong sense of visual order and a sensitivity to the tensions of visual disorder</p> <p>Is better at organizing and composing; work shows a clear sense of structure</p> <p>Is better able to see the underlying artistic structure of realistic subject matter</p> <p>Art reveals unusual awareness of sensory qualities and the aesthetic outcomes of artistic techniques</p>	<p>Asks for explanations and instructions</p> <p>Likes to be left to own devices in the execution of his art</p> <p>Is eager to explore new materials</p> <p>Is more responsive to unusual subjects; willing to go beyond likes and dislikes to judge on aesthetic merits</p> <p>Exhibits a disciplined energy; greater ability to concentrate, to delve deeply into an area</p>

TABLE II--Continued

Artistic-Technical Skills	Imaginative-Cognitive Abilities	Personal Characteristics
	<p>Shows a high degree of self-identification with subject matter and medium</p> <p>Art reveals a highly developed sensibility in certain areas, particularly with regard to movement and space</p> <p>Art shows a greater variety of subject choices; has a greater graphic vocabulary</p> <p>Work has an aesthetic quality which does not depend on similarity to nature or reality</p> <p>Adapts technique to the medium; is more aware of the possibilities and limits of media</p> <p>Total perception is visually oriented and more discriminating</p> <p>Art reveals the artist's appreciation of significant, expressive gesture or attitude</p> <p>Art tends to be narrative in character</p>	

TABLE II--Continued

Artistic-Technical Skills	Imaginative-Cognitive Abilities	Personal Characteristics
	<p>Has ability to conceive and create more complex images; has a genuine concern for detail and an interest in filling the space with carefully delineated and well thought-out ideas</p> <p>Shows an interest in other people's art work--can appreciate, criticize, and learn from work of others</p>	

and personal characteristics categories, with only one characteristic falling into the imaginative-cognitive abilities category.

A comparison of the characteristics listed by the art teachers with characteristics found in the literature appears to show that the art teachers value all three types of characteristics in assessing children's art abilities, whereas the experts rely more heavily on one type of characteristic--the imaginative-cognitive. This study appears to show that the art teachers interviewed may value different types of characteristics than the experts. Or, it may be that the types of characteristics listed most often by the art teachers (artistic-technical skills and personal characteristics) are easier to identify and to talk about.

Case Studies

Case studies were undertaken in order to determine what characteristics the children identified by their art teachers as artistically gifted manifested as observed by this investigator. All of the children discussed here were judged by their art teachers to be among the top three students in artistic ability of those students taught by a single art teacher in grades four through six in a particular school. In only one school were more than three children selected for study--a school which was designed as a "vanguard" or magnet school for the expressive arts and, therefore

attracted, it was assumed, more than its share of children with high interest and ability in art. Six children were selected from the vanguard school for the expressive arts, three each by two different art teachers.

Lionel, James, and Brigett attend a public elementary school located in a more-or-less rural area on the edge of a large metropolitan school district. Their art teacher emphasizes drawing and painting almost to the total exclusion of three-dimensional art activities and crafts, so all three children had in-depth exposure to drawing and painting throughout the school year and were engaged in drawing, both from still life and from memory, during the time of the interviews. Art class periods were fifty minutes long.

Brigett is in the fourth grade. Her non-assigned art work shows a strong narrative quality, effective use of overlapping, and some diminishing size of objects in space. Although Brigett had a difficult time with the assigned still life (there are numerous eraser marks and re-drawn areas), her drawings are generally well-balanced, compositionally pleasing, and show close attention to detail. Although her art shows that she has abandoned the base line for the most part, objects and human figures indicate that she has not altogether abandoned schematic generalizations.

Brigett feels she has a lot of natural talent for art, draws when she is bored, and spends at least a few times a

week making art outside of school. According to Brigett, she gets better at art by practicing and has learned a lot by watching older kids. Her parents think she is good in art, and friends often ask her to draw things for them.

James, a fifth-grader, shows evidence of being able to draw well-proportioned figures, many engaged in sports, from a variety of viewpoints. Drawings are well organized. There are not-always-successful attempts to use perspective and foreshortening, which would seem to indicate a willingness to take risks in order to extend his drawing ability. There is a great deal of detail. His art indicates an ability to deal effectively with a variety of subject matter. A pencil portrait indicates an awareness of gradations of line and tone, and of their use in creating subjective, emotional effect. His drawings are personal; they are identifiable from the rest of the class. He seems to have the ability to see and depict the most significant aspects of a subject.

James stated that he spends a lot of time making art outside of school, although not every day. At one point during the interview, the boy seated next to James interrupted to ask James' help with a drawing problem. James says he learned to draw from an older brother. Pencil is his favorite medium, and he draws Superman figures in pencil all over his notebook. He says he gets ideas from

"superheroes" characters on television and reads Superheroes comic books. Although he likes art a lot, James wants to be a doctor when he grows up.

Lionel, also a fifth-grader, appears to be more developmentally and technically advanced than either Brigett or James. He is able to depict a wide variety of subjects with great accuracy and with a wealth of detail. Figures are proportionally and anatomically correct, and are drawn in a variety of positions and movements. His art shows a fairly sophisticated use of perspective and adult devices for showing texture and three-dimensionality. Drawings seem to flow with a direct and continuous movement of line; there is little or no evidence of hesitation. He possesses superior representational ability. His work is individualistic and stands out easily from the rest of the class. Asked to make a drawing of his own choosing of something he remembered, Lionel drew a mechanical space creature--confidently, with great accuracy and detail, and in a relatively short period of time.

Lionel is quiet, appears almost withdrawn, in class. According to his art teacher, Lionel likes to work alone and hardly ever speaks. Lionel said he draws a lot outside of school, almost every day, and likes to use pencil. He believes he has learned to draw by looking at grown-up art. He likes television and comic books, and gets most of his

ideas from television. His favorite comic book character is Darth Vader. Other kids often ask him to draw for them, and he would sometimes rather just draw by himself than be with friends. His parents also think he is good in art. Lionel feels he is already a good artist and would like to be an artist when he grows up. He has been, but is not now, in the Talented and Gifted Program at his school.

Steven and Moises are sixth-grade students. They attend a "vanguard" or magnet Montessori school in a low-income area of a large metropolitan school district. The art teacher has involved the students with a variety of media and techniques. Class periods are an hour and thirty minutes long.

Steven possesses outstanding representational abilities. Overall, his art is very polished and adult-like in technique and concept. His drawing skills are well in advance of his peers. He uses sophisticated adult devices for depicting modeling and depth, such as cross-hatching, and parallel and broken lines. He successfully uses perspective and foreshortening. He is able to draw in great detail and apparently possesses an unusual visual memory. He is able to show movement. Figures and animals are well-proportioned and anatomically correct. In addition to representational facility, there is evidence that he is able to use line and color for purely subjective, expressive purposes. Subject matter is individualistic: a favorite subject is goats and

rams, drawn in different positions and from different viewpoints. Variations of these animals are repeated in different settings. Some of his art is narrative in character. A string print portrait is executed with an eye for the most essential, expressive elements.

Steven says he draws and reads a lot when he is bored, but does not draw as much as he used to because he has more interests now (he likes to make puppets). He likes to draw with pencil and felt tip markers. He believes he learns to draw from books and from other people. He gets ideas for his art from daydreaming, movies (likes Darth Vader), likes television cartoons rather than comic books, and owns a few "how-to-draw" books. Steven says he draws all over his notebook and likes to practice Popeye until he gets the character just right. Friends often ask him to draw things for them. His parents think he is a good artist and sometimes buy him art supplies. Drawings from Steven's "free time" sketch book include mythological fantasy creatures, Darth Vader, and Popeye--all accurately drawn from different viewpoints, some in action poses. Sometimes he makes up his own "superheroes." He wants to be an all-star basketball player and an artist.

Moises' art also stands out among his peers for its representational precocity. One particular tempera painting is filled with action, violent confrontations and

explosions--space ships, rockets, and extraterrestrial beings and machines--all are engaged in a fierce battle amid the planets. The composition is dynamic and there is a complete and effective use of the entire paper surface. Asked to draw something of his own choosing, Moises chose to draw a cactus plant setting on a window in the art room. His drawing showed superior drawing skills, accuracy of observation, close attention to detail, sophisticated modeling and shading techniques. It indicated a directness of expression and a sensitive, expressive use of line and texture.

Moises draws and reads when he is bored. He draws at home several times a week because he lives in a business district where he has few friends to play with. He said, "I usually draw what I read, or try to." He likes drawing science fiction subjects and drawing from nature. According to Moises: "Maybe years from now people won't know how a tree looks." He usually uses pencils, markers, and pens. He likes paint, but usually does not have it at home. Moises says he learned to draw well from watching Steven. He likes television and movies (especially the movie character Indiana Jones). He says his father, especially, has encouraged his art. He wants to be a scientist, artist, and actor when he grows up. Moises has taken a university-sponsored photography class outside of school. According

to their art teacher, both Steven and Moises are above-average students in other subjects. Both boys had drawn cartoon characters and other objects all over their art folders--many action figures, many characters from Star Wars. Moises had drawn "superheroes" on his art folder--some from movies, and one he invented himself.

Jorge, Marybelle, and Allison attend a "vanguard" or magnet school for the expressive arts in a low-income area of the same large school district. They are exposed to a variety of subject matter, media, and techniques in the art program. Class periods are forty minutes long.

Jorge is in fourth grade and comes from a family of three brothers, all of whom have been retained in school and all, according to Jorge's art teacher, very good in art. Jorge speaks very little English, but his art appears very sophisticated and conceptually advanced for his age level. Design seems to be intuitive, to come naturally and easily for him. His work is easily recognizable from the rest of the class. He has abandoned the base line, makes effective use of the plane. Colors are well-balanced, integrated, and appear to be chosen for aesthetic and expressive effect. Line is used with sensitivity, in great variation as to texture and contrast. His art is superior representationally, but also contains aesthetic qualities which are unusual and apart from representational drawing. Although there is

little modeling, he makes maximum use of overlapping, diminishing size, and surface detail. One of Jorge's favorite subjects is birds, either constructed or drawn from different angles and in different positions in order to depict a particular movement or gesture. He effectively uses various bird shapes in different contexts, adapting them to different media. He is able to handle different media effectively and with ease, and to move flexibly from one medium to another. He works confidently and directly. Although he likes to talk about art, and even suggests placement of art work in the art room, Jorge seldom asks for assistance with his own work. His art sometimes contains evidence of a subtle, surprising, and very personal sense of humor. Jorge's graphic symbols are sometimes taken over and used by others in the class.

Jorge draws at home "for something to do," especially when he is sick--not every day, but a lot. He likes to use pencil, pen, and colored pencils. He draws birds, funny faces, "low riders," and names all over his notebook at school. He says he also draws trucks and cars, horses and cowboys, designs, and "just doodles." Jorge says he sometimes copies from books, and likes comic books--not to read, but to look at the pictures. He says his older brother draws a lot too. He sometimes practices things over and over until he gets them right.

Marybelle, a fifth-grader, incorporates a "sea horse" shape into much of her art work, both representational and non-representational. She uses this symbolic shape for different purposes and in different ways, elaborating on it and changing its meaning. It may have a representational function or merely be a design element. Like Jorge's, her symbol is often seen in the work of other children in the class. While her drawing abilities do not appear to be developmentally far in advance of her peers, her work is imaginative, contains a wealth of decorative detail, and is compositionally well organized. Colors appear to be highly subjective, are integrated, and richly contrasted. Her drawings contain a variety of line and texture. She has a personal style which stands out in the class. She effectively adapts her techniques and ideas to different media. She works independently and confidently.

Marybelle draws when she is bored, sometimes every day, and likes to use pencils and markers. She likes to draw animals and designs, and gets most of her ideas from "just imagining." Marybelle does not read comic books, but draws from magazines, mostly animals. She sometimes prefers drawing by herself to playing with friends. She says her parents think she is a good artist and that her mother has helped her draw. Her friends ask her to draw things for them. She thinks she may be an artist when she grows up.

According to her art teacher, Marybelle reads on a first-grade level.

Allison is a sixth-grader. She has a unique graphic vocabulary, is highly inventive. Her compositions are daring and often dynamic. Her art shows a subtle, but imaginative use of color. She is able to handle various media easily and is able to take advantage of the qualities inherent in different media. Line is used expressively, for variety and contrast--thick against thin, curved against straight. Unusual cropping appears in some of her art--objects seem to be moving in and out of the composition, and the whole composition has a feeling of energy and movement. She sometimes achieves a sophisticated balance of diagonals with vertical and horizontal lines or shapes. Her drawing skills appear to be in advance of her peers.

Allison draws in her spare time, at least a few times a week at home, and on her notebook and book covers at school. She likes to use colored pencils and felt tip markers. She reads Superman comics, but not very often, and likes Norman Rockwell books. There are times when she would rather draw than play with her friends. She believes her parents think she is good in art and will sometimes spend a lot of time practicing drawing something until she can draw it to her own satisfaction. Like Jorge, she likes to talk about art with her art teacher, but seldom asks for

help with her own work. Allison is an A and B student in other subjects.

Bernardo, Leobardo, and Juan are all sixth-graders, and also attend the expressive arts vanguard school. Bernardo speaks almost no English, but his art is richly detailed, with a great deal of decorative embellishment. Subject matter, although not unique, is presented imaginatively and in a personal manner. He appears able to combine forms and ideas fluently and inventively. His drawing skills exceed those of most of his peers. He goes about his art confidently and his art shows a directness of expression. His work is compositionally outstanding--parts are integrated with the whole; he makes effective use of the entire paper surface. Color is integrated and well balanced.

Bernardo sometimes draws when he has nothing to do. He often draws people, houses, and animals on his school books and notebook. His favorite medium is paint. He believes he has learned to draw well from looking at books and television. He likes comic books and sometimes copies from them. He says his parents do not think of him as a good artist, but some of his friends do, and friends sometimes ask him to draw things for them. Bernardo wants to be a baseball or soccer player when he grows up, and "maybe an artist."

Leobardo's art stands out among that of the rest of the class because it tends to be non-representational and appears highly personal. His imagery is unique in its simplicity and he is able to combine forms in new and unusual ways. His compositions are pleasing in arrangement, with a decorative quality, but also with an underlying simplicity of form. Figures are much simplified, almost abstract. Compositions are rhythmical; movement is achieved through repetition of figures and objects. Figures and objects often float in space, but are related to the whole. Color appears to be used for subjective effect, is integrated and well balanced, and used to achieve both subtlety and contrast. Leobardo works independently, seldom seeks help, and obviously enjoys making art. He appears to be deeply involved in what he is doing. He appears to have a more discriminating aesthetic sensitivity, which is not used to reproduce any perceived reality.

Leobardo says that he draws every day outside of school, and primarily draws people. He likes to use crayons for color. He copies from comic books and magazines, says he gets ideas from them, and his favorite comic book is Dynamite. At times, he would rather draw than play with his friends. Leobardo believes his parents think he is a good artist. His father would like for him to be a baker when he grows up, but Leobardo thinks he might like to be

an artist. Sometimes his friends ask him to draw things for them. He does not practice drawing things over and over in order to get them right.

Juan's drawing ability appears to be well in advance of his peers. Figures are anatomically and proportionally correct. His art is carefully executed, even meticulous. Careful attention is paid to detail. Colors are blended and used to achieve both subtlety and contrast. Subject matter is imaginative and diverse. Compositions have a definite structural arrangement; parts relate well to the whole. His art indicates an unusual visual memory. He makes effective use of media and handles two-dimensional media with ease.

Juan draws outside of school at least twice a week, and says he often engages in contests with his brothers (see Jorge, pp. 74-75) to see who can draw a particular subject best. He draws designs on his school notebook and says making art "makes me feel good." His favorite medium is pencil. According to Juan, his older brother often drew monsters, flowers, hearts, and cars. Juan tried to draw like him, and later took art in school. Cars are his favorite subject. He often looks at walls, patterns, designs--remembers them at school, and draws them "different." He likes comic books, and says he often makes up his own characters or "superheroes." Juan believes his parents think he

is good in art, but he does not take his school art home. He shows the art he makes at home only to his brothers. He says friends often ask him to draw for them, and he spends a lot of time practicing a subject over and over until he is satisfied with it. Juan's art teacher says he usually receives awards in competitions. Juan, like Bernardo and Leobardo, obviously enjoys making art and works with a sense of confidence in his own abilities. He has been retained in school.

Loren, Julie, and Rene attend a public elementary school in a high-income area of the same school district. All three are in the sixth grade. Their art teacher stresses design in the art program over representational drawing or drawing from observation. They are apparently exposed to a wide variety of media. Art classes are one hour long.

Loren's art shows accelerated development and technical skill. His representational drawing ability is far in advance of his peers, an observation which was reinforced by examining art which Loren had done the previous year. His art shows a sensitive use of texture and color, accomplished with adult-like techniques in different media. Color is blended and managed successfully for tone and contrast. Effective use is made of space--there is overlapping, diminishing size, successful use of foreshortening and

modeling. Techniques used by adult artists, such as exaggerated close-ups, are adapted and utilized in Loren's art. Non-representational art is sophisticated in organization--light against dark, thick against thin, large against small. His art indicates an outstanding visual memory, unusual powers of observation, fluidity of ideas, and the ability to deal successfully with a wide range of subject matter. He displays an interest in some unusual subject matter. He is able to use a variety of media with ease and to best advantage. Drawings and paintings reveal confidence and directness of expression. He is able to represent movement, both in depicting actions and in the dynamic organization of abstract compositions. Some of Loren's art is narrative in character. He appears eager to accept challenges and seems to have the ability to quickly solve visual problems.

In his spare time, Loren plays "Dungeons and Dragons," video games, and makes art. He says he draws and sketches a lot at home, practicing his art, at least a few hours a week. He sometimes takes his school art home to work on it. Loren likes to use pencils and felt tip markers best. His Math spiral is covered with drawings. He says he used to draw cartoon characters from television and comic books, but now likes abstract designs and still life. Loren believes he mostly draws from experience and from what he

sees, but elaborates on them, or makes them abstract. At home, he likes to draw busy street scenes with lots of people walking--action scenes, men dueling. Two of Loren's friends started to describe some "magical" things that Loren likes to draw, but he stopped them and seemed to want to keep the drawings secret. He likes art because there is "no certain right or wrong to it. I like to see how creative I can be with what I draw, make it different." His younger brother likes to draw funny people. Sometimes, he would rather make art, do school work, or read than play with his friends. When asked what he would like to be when he grows up, Loren replied, "Not an artist, if that's what you mean." He wants to go into science or politics.

According to Loren, friends often ask him to draw for them, but his parents do not say much about his art. Both musicians, his parents would like for him to become a cellist. Loren has attended art classes outside of school at an art museum, a university, and a city recreation center. He has one of three works on exhibit in a state-wide competition at the state capitol.

Julie works with confidence and is self-directed. Her strengths appear to lie in organizing ideas and art elements visually in unique ways, in design rather than in draftsmanship. Her art indicates that she is imaginative, and is able to combine thoughts and forms fluently and inventively.

She makes a personal statement; her art is identifiable from that of the rest of the class. She can solve visual problems quickly and seems to enjoy the challenge of doing so. Her art reveals a sensitive, well-balanced, and integrated use of color, as well as a deliberate, well thought out, structural organization. She is sensitive to juxtapositions of color, line, and value, and uses them to achieve nuances and contrasts. Julie handles a variety of media easily and is able to see and to take advantage of the unique possibilities which different media afford. Julie's classmates obviously respect her talent: during the course of these observations, at least one friend sought her advice regarding an art-design problem.

Julie sometimes draws in her spare time--not a lot, maybe once a week, or when she is sick. She says she drew more when she was younger. More than drawing, she likes building things and crafts. She says of a friend; "Mandy Williams taught me how to draw people." Julie likes to design birthday cards and sometimes looks at commercial greeting cards. She sometimes practices drawing things from books. She has drawn umbrellas and raindrops on her notebook. She does not like comic books, but likes the Snoopy character on television. Julie says she would seldom choose to make art by herself rather than play with friends. She believes her parents think she is a "pretty good" artist.

She says her sister is good in art. She wants to be a newscaster, movie star, or police person. Julie has taken a summer art course in clay at a city recreation center.

Rene is good at organizing her thoughts visually. She incorporates principles of design into her work. She is sensitive to gradations of tone and color, and to textural qualities. Her art reveals a careful attention to detail and a concern with decorative qualities. Rene works with precision; she seems to be meticulous, careful, not quite so willing to take risks as Loren and Julie. Of the three, only Rene sought assistance and advice from the art teacher during the course of the observations. Rene handles a variety of media easily and makes effective use of different media.

Rene jogs and makes art in her spare time. She says she makes art outside of school "about every other day," and likes art because she can express her own ideas and individuality. There are no drawings on her school notebook. She likes to draw with felt tip markers. She mostly draws things she sees, but also gets ideas from television (Tom and Jerry), and does not read comic books. She says she does like cartoon books such as Donald Duck. She believes she has been influenced in art by her grandfather, who is an artist. Rene would usually rather be with friends than making art by herself. She believes her parents think

she is a good artist, and friends often ask her to draw things for them. She would like to be an architect like her dad when she grows up. She says she sometimes practices drawing a thing over and over, erasing a lot, until she gets it right. Loren, Julie, and Rene are all enrolled in the Talented and Gifted Program at their school.

Jason and Clint attend a private school in a high-income neighborhood of a large metropolitan area. Both are in the sixth grade. They have been more involved in drawing and painting than in three-dimensional art experiences throughout the school year. Class periods are forty-five minutes long.

Jason's art indicates a large graphic vocabulary, the ability to generate a lot of ideas. He draws well, is advanced in development and in technical skill, but his work also contains aesthetic qualities which are not dependent upon representational drawing abilities. His art is well organized; parts of the composition are related to the whole; the composition is imaginative in organization. Color is used effectively. It is well-balanced, integrated; there are gradations of tone. He is sensitive to the expressive qualities of line, texture, color--is able to use color, especially, for effect--to create a mood. Jason is eager to try new media, is not stymied by failure: Although he feels that his first attempts with acrylic paints were

unsuccessful, he is eager to try again, this time trying a new technique. He works independently, seldom seeks or seems to need help, works confidently. Jason's art indicates an outstanding visual memory in addition to acute powers of observation, an observation which was reinforced by examination of art work done from memory and from nature. He adapts and makes use of such adult devices and techniques as radical cropping of subject matter, people and objects drawn from a variety of viewpoints, foreshortening. His art indicates some understanding of linear and aerial perspective. He is able to use media to advantage, adapts technique to media.

Jason conducts science experiments, draws, or swims in his spare time. He says he draws at home "when I'm in the right mood," mostly on week-ends as he watches television. He draws subjects from medieval times, dragons, monster-creatures, imaginary beings, and cartoon characters at home and on his school notebook and book covers. He reads comic books only when he is bored, and "not too often." Sharp pencils are his favorite medium. Jason says he would sometimes prefer making art to playing with friends, and gets ideas from daydreaming. He wants to be a doctor when he grows up, but may collect art. He says his parents think he is a good artist, and younger kids often ask him to draw for them. Jason says he spends a lot of time practicing

over and over until he can draw a thing just right. He has taken Saturday art classes outside of school.

Clint's art is representational. His drawing skills are well in advance of most of his peers. Subject matter for paintings is sometimes copied from books. His art reveals an ability to draw people, objects, and animals from different viewpoints, at times an unusual photographic cropping of subject matter, effective use of color line, texture, and space. Use of line is particularly bold, direct, confident. Compositions are well-organized, apparently with forethought. Clint's art indicates acute powers of observation, attention to detail, a meticulous rendering of objects according to perceived reality. He is able to deal graphically with a wide variety of subject matter. He is able to use different media to advantage, to adapt technique to media, and appears eager to try new materials.

Clint plays golf, watches television, and draws in his spare time. He estimates that he spends about 10 per cent of his time making art outside of school. He draws a lot on his notebook at school: planes, cartoon animals, and characters seen in movies. He does not read comic books. Clint likes to paint with acrylics. He says his mother has helped him learn to draw. He sometimes prefers making art by himself to playing with friends, and thinks he gets ideas from imagining and daydreaming. He believes his parents

think he is a good artist, but says friends do not often ask him to draw things for them. He spends a lot of time drawing things over and over until he can draw them to his own satisfaction. Clint wants to be an electrical engineer, but plans to make art as a hobby.

Case studies, including observations and interviews, revealed both commonalities and differences among the children identified by their art teachers as artistically gifted. Almost all preferred to use pencils, pens, and markers. Almost all of the selected children appeared to be greatly influenced by all kinds of adult graphic production, especially comic books, television, and movies. Most indicated that they liked comic books for the pictures, not to read. All of these children exhibited a high interest in art, especially adult art, and appear to be constantly learning from the adult art around them. These children appeared willing to spend more time making art than their peers, both in and out of school, drawing on notebooks, book covers, and scrap paper during free moments. They spend time practicing their art in order to improve skills. They are able to concentrate for longer periods of time. They set high standards for themselves. Most indicated that they would sometimes rather make art than play with friends, and most stated or indicated the importance of having time to daydream or just imagine--time that is unstructured.

For most, art appears to fulfill a need, possibly for stimulation or relief from boredom. Most are self-directed, exhibit independence of ideas. Parents or other adults, and peers, apparently reinforce the self-confidence which they exhibit in their own art abilities. Most revealed large graphic vocabularies, but at the same time, interviews and observations indicated that many, such as Steven, Jorge, Marybelle, and Leobardo, had favorite subjects or graphic symbols which they were constantly trying to perfect and elaborated upon, sometimes using in different contexts. Their art is highly personal, and because of its individuality, tends to stand out from the rest of the class. There are apparently as many differences in kinds of art, techniques, and subject matter among gifted children as there are among adult artists.

Although all of the children identified as artistically gifted appeared to take art seriously, they gave a wide variety of responses when asked what they would like to be when they grew up. Only three felt certain that they would like to be artists. Although almost all the children drew superheroes and characters from comic books, movies and television, interviews and observations revealed fairly wide differences in subject matter chosen for art classroom assignments. These children also indicated a wide variety of outside interests and activities in addition to art.

Observations of Characteristics of
Artistically Gifted Children
Cited in the Literature

In order to determine whether the children identified by their art teachers as artistically gifted manifest any of the traits of the artistically gifted cited in the literature, observations were made by this investigator and summarized into chart form (see Table III).

Only one of the sixteen subjects in this study actively sought assistance with art work during the course of these observations. All of the art teachers interviewed confirmed the observation of the investigator that the selected children, as a group, preferred to be left to their own devices in the execution of their art. Although art teachers sometimes offered advice or suggestions, the selected children generally did not seem to need help with their art; almost all appeared to be self-directed and confident in their own abilities.

Nine of the sixteen children studied showed accelerated development and technical skill, i.e., development and technical skill in advance of their age group. Seven of the sixteen children showed evidence of an unusual visual memory in drawings and paintings executed from memory. In such cases, subject matter was either assigned by the art teacher or freely chosen by the children themselves. It was not possible, however, to determine whether or not this

TABLE III

 INVESTIGATOR'S OBSERVATIONS OF CHARACTERISTICS AND
 CRITERIA SYNTHESIZED FROM THE LITERATURE

Literature & Experts' Citations	Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D	Student E	Student F	Student G	Student H	Student I	Student J	Student K	Student L	Student M	Student N	Student O	Student P
Asks for explanations and instructions													x			
Likes to be left to own devices	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x
Shows accelerated development, technical skill		x	x		x	x				x	x			x	x	x
Unusual visual memory		x	x	I	x	x	I	I	I	x	I	I	I	x	x	I
Acute powers of observation	x	x	x	I	x	x	I	I	I	x	x	I	I	x	x	x
Able to mimic or adapt styles, contents, techniques of adults		x	x		x	x			x	x	x			x	x	x
Active imagination, independence of ideas; combines fluently and inventively				x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x
Makes use of mistakes or the unplanned					x											
Strong sense of visual order	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Sensitive to tensions of visual disorder		x		x	x				x	x	x			x		
Better at organizing & composing; work shows clear sense of structure	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Sees underlying artistic structure of realistic subject matter		x	x	x	x	x		x		x	x	x	x	x	x	
Unusual awareness of sensory qualities & aesthetic outcomes of artistic techniques	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x
Directness of expression		x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
High degree of self-identification with subject matter & medium					x			x	x	x						
Highly developed sensibility, especially with regard to movement & space				x			x		x							
Greater graphic vocabulary		x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Aesthetic quality which does not depend on similarity to nature				x	x		x	x	x			x		x	x	
Adept in representing movement		x	x	x	x		x		x	x	x			x		
Excellent color sense	x	x	I	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	I	x	x	x
Eager to explore new materials	I	I	I	x	x	x	I	I	x	x	x	x	I	x	x	x
Adapts techniques to medium; aware of possibilities & limits of media		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
More responsive to unusual subjects in art	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	x	I	I
Total perception is visually oriented & more discriminating	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Has artist's appreciation of significant expressive gesture or attitude		x	x	x	x					x	x			x	x	
Art tends to be narrative in character		x	x							x	x			x		
Ability to conceive & create more complex images; concern for detail	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Disciplined energy; ability to concentrate longer	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Shows an interest in other people's art work					x	x					x					x

x, Characteristics observed; I, Insufficient information.

characteristic was present in all cases because of time limitations, the availability of art work, and the nature of activities in most of the art classes. Ten out of the sixteen subjects appeared to possess acute powers of observation. Again, in the cases of the other six, it was not possible to make any judgment because of the nature of art activities and available art products during the time of the observations. The seven children seen to possess an unusual visual memory also appeared to possess acute powers of observation.

Ten of the sixteen subjects indicated, through their art, an early or unusually pronounced ability to mimic or adapt the styles, contents, and techniques of the work of adult artists. Thirteen of the subjects gave evidence in their art of an active imagination--the ability to combine forms and ideas fluently and inventively--as well as independence of ideas. Only one was seen to make use of mistakes or the unplanned during the course of these observations. A strong sense of visual order was evident in the work of all the subjects; all sixteen appeared to be unusually good at organizing and composing. The quite different ability which "sensitivity to the tensions of visual disorder" implies, was observed in the art of seven of the subjects.

Twelve of the sixteen subjects appeared to possess a greater ability to perceive the underlying artistic

structure of realistic subject matter. An unusual awareness of sensory qualities, and the aesthetic outcomes of artistic techniques, was especially apparent in the work of fourteen of the sixteen subjects. Directness of expression, an obvious lack of hesitation in the execution of a subject or idea, was apparent in fourteen of the subjects' work. In only four of the students' art was there any real evidence of a high degree of identification with the subject matter and medium--due, possibly, to the fact that, in most art classrooms, both subject matter and medium are usually assigned. However, in those cases where "play" art or "free" art could be observed, self-identification with subject matter and medium was indicated.

A highly developed sensibility in certain areas, such as movement and space, was apparent in the art of four of the sixteen children studied, and fourteen of the sixteen children were apparently able to handle a wider variety of subject choices--they possessed a greater graphic vocabulary. An aesthetic quality which is not dependent upon similarity to nature or reality, was seen in the art of eight of the sixteen subjects, and facility in showing movement, either through depiction of action or the organization of a dynamic composition, was evident in the art of nine of the sixteen subjects. A well-balanced and integrated use of color could be seen in the art of fourteen out of the sixteen subjects.

For the other two subjects, no art work was available in which the use of color could be observed.

Ten of the subjects indicated, through behavior and art products, an eagerness to explore new materials. In the case of the remaining six subjects, use of media was too limited during the time of the observations to make any valid judgment regarding eagerness to try new materials. Fifteen out of the sixteen subjects appeared to have a greater ability to adapt technique to medium, as well as a greater awareness of the possibilities and limits of certain media.

In only one subject was there any evidence of more responsiveness to unusual subjects in art and a greater willingness to go beyond likes and dislikes to judge on aesthetic merits. However, it was not generally possible to observe the prevalence of this characteristic during the course of this study. Eight of the sixteen subjects appeared to show, in their art, an artist's appreciation of significant, expressive gesture or attitude. Some evidence of an emphasis on narration was apparent in the art work of five of the sixteen subjects. Again, due to the fact that subject matter is most often assigned by the teacher in art classes, the narrative character in children's art is not always apparent (Hoff, 1982; Wilson, 1974; Wilson & Wilson, 1976). However, information gained from interviews with the sixteen subjects indicated that art done

outside of the formal art classroom may more often be narrative in character.

In all cases, it could be said that the perception of the selected subjects appeared to be visually oriented and more discriminating. The art of all sixteen subjects indicated a genuine concern for detail and a decided interest in filling the space with carefully delineated and well thought-out ideas, and all sixteen could be observed to exhibit a disciplined energy in the execution of their art. Four subjects were observed or found to show an interest in others' art work.

Observations of children identified by their art teachers as artistically gifted, along with information drawn from interviews with teachers and children, indicated that the selected children manifested many of the characteristics of the artistically gifted cited in the literature. A majority of these children were self-directed, self-confident, and generally preferred to be left to their own devices in the execution of their art. Most of these children appeared to be accelerated in development and technical skill, appeared to possess acute powers of observation, and the ability to incorporate the styles, contents, and techniques of adult artists. A majority of the selected children gave evidence in their work of an active imagination--they were able to combine forms and ideas fluently and

inventively--as well as independence of ideas. All showed a strong sense of visual order and all appeared to be unusually good at organizing and composing. As a group, they appeared to possess a greater ability to perceive the underlying structure of realistic subject matter; they appeared to be unusually aware of sensory qualities, and were more direct in the expression of their art. Most of these children appeared to possess a greater graphic vocabulary than their peers. A majority exhibited aesthetic qualities in their work apart from nature or reality, and were more adept in representing movement. Most were able to achieve a well-balanced and integrated use of color. Most were eager to explore new materials, exhibited flexibility in the use of media, and in most cases, successfully adapted technique to medium. Most seemed to be more aware of the possibilities and limits of media. Many of these children showed in their art an artist's appreciation of significant expressive gesture or attitude. All of these children appeared to be visually oriented and more discriminating than their classmates. All indicated in their art a genuine concern for detail, apparently used forethought and care in the delineation of ideas and subject matter, and exhibited a disciplined energy in the execution of their art work.

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CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In this study, the criteria used in identifying artistically gifted children were examined and an attempt made to determine their validity by studying a small sample of the population--sixteen children and six art teachers--and answering the following questions concerning this sample.

1. By what means do some art teachers identify children with exceptional ability in art?
2. What characteristics do art teachers cite as evidence of exceptional ability in art?
3. What characteristics do the children identified by their art teachers as artistically gifted manifest as observed by this investigator?
4. Do the children identified by their art teachers as artistically gifted manifest any of the traits of the artistically gifted cited in the literature by experts in the field such as Gaitskell and Hurwitz (1970, Lark-Horovitz, Lewis, and Luca (1973), Wilson and Wilson (1981), and others?

Summary of Findings

The results of this study indicate that art teachers, when asked to identify artistically gifted students in their

classes, rely primarily upon personal observations of children in art class, and upon their own personal appraisals of children's art products. Only half of the art teachers interviewed indicated, by their responses, that they valued the opinions of others, such as peers, parents, previous teachers, and other adults in the identification-assessment process. While most authorities advocate using a combination of a variety of techniques (Larsh, 1979; Stewart, 1981), personal observations of art products and behaviors, and nominations, remain the most widely used identification methods (Bagley, et al., 1979; Bell, 1981; Chetelat, 1981; Kehne, 1981). Therefore, it appears that half of the art teachers interviewed were, for the most part, employing the same identification procedures that are being used in most gifted and talented programs, but that they may not be aware of other methods or of the importance of using a variety of techniques.

When asked to list the characteristics which they believed to be indicative of giftedness in art, the art teachers interviewed gave a wide variety of responses. Although no one characteristic was listed by all the art teachers as indicative of superior art ability, some characteristics were listed by as many as four out of the six interviewees. The second group of most-cited characteristics were listed by as many as three out of the six art

teachers interviewed. Those characteristics of artistic giftedness listed most often, or by at least half of the art teachers interviewed, included the following:

1. Demonstration of commitment to making art; persistence,
2. Is self-directed; has confidence in his own art ability,
3. Originality; makes a purely personal statement,
4. Produces neat and careful work; works with precision,
5. Is consistently successful with art work,
6. Rarely asks for assistance, and
7. Has a talent for drawing, painting; draws extremely well.

Characteristics listed by art teachers appeared to fall into three general categories (see Table I): artistic-technical skills, imaginative-cognitive abilities, and personal characteristics. The few characteristics which did not seem to fit into any one category were listed separately. These included, is consistently successful with art work, usually completes assignments ahead of other students, work consistently stands out from the group, and uses a minimum of eraser marks. Characteristics appeared to be fairly evenly distributed among the three categories, although there was a certain amount of overlapping, and some characteristics, such as "skills are mature and highly imagination" and "produces work of a sophisticated and sensual nature," could

possibly have been placed in both the artistic-technical skills category and the imaginative-cognitive abilities category. Examination of the contents of the three categories appeared to show that the art teachers interviewed were aware of many of the traits of the artistically gifted cited in the literature (see Table II), and that they valued all three types of characteristics in evaluating children's art abilities. The teachers' responses appeared to reflect the thinking, feeling, and perceiving which are involved in art making, as well as the current belief that giftedness in art does not consist of any one thing or group of characteristics.

When the seven characteristics listed most often by the art teachers interviewed were categorized, characteristics were equally divided between artistic-technical skills and personal characteristics, with only one characteristic falling into the imaginative-cognitive abilities category. The fact that most of the art teachers emphasized artistic-technical skills and personal characteristics may indicate that these two types of characteristics are valued more highly. Or, it may be that these characteristics are easier to identify and to talk about.

All of the children identified by their art teachers as artistically gifted appeared to demonstrate a commitment to making art. When interviewed, most stated that they

spent a significant amount of time (most said at least a few times a week) drawing or making art outside of school, and most indicated that they were serious about art, that they spent time practicing their art in order to improve skills and technique. A majority stated that they sometimes preferred drawing or making art by themselves to playing with friends. At least three of the children stated that they intended to become artists when they grew up.

Conant and Randall (1959) and Gaitskell and Hurwitz (1970) cited commitment to art, or seriousness about art, as characteristics of artistically gifted children. Wilson and Wilson (1981) described gifted children's "preference (at times) for drawing and other symbolic activities to first-hand encounters with people and objects in the world" (p. 4), as well as "an early realization of their own artistic ability, often accompanied by the decision to be an artist" (p. 5).

Closely related to commitment is persistence. The selected children were observed to be persistent, not only in time spent outside of art classrooms practicing their art, but in their apparent ability to follow through to completion with an art problem or project. All appeared to be deeply involved in their work, to pursue it with seriousness and fervor. They appeared capable of pursuing particular subjects in depth. According to Davis and Torrance

(1965, p. 51), "Persistence as well as good speculation or guessing are invaluable attributes to productively creative individuals." In their study, they found that art educators seem to under-emphasize both of these characteristics. Stalker (1981) noted that persistence reflects a high level of motivation. As a characteristic of artistically gifted children, persistence is borne out in the literature: Conant and Randall (1959), Luca and Allen (1973), Meier (1939/1966), and Renzulli et al. (1981).

Observations confirmed statements by a majority of the art teachers that the selected children were self-directed, i.e., capable of initiating problems, or developing independently a suggestion or idea, and that they displayed great self-confidence, and went about their work with a sense of purpose. During the course of the observations, only one of the selected students was seen to ask for help from the art teacher. On the contrary, several of the selected students appeared to assume the role of teacher among their classmates. Lark-Horovitz's statement that the talented child "asks for explanations and instructions" (1973, p. 195) was not supported by these observations or by the teachers interviewed. Lindstrom (1970) and Lowenfeld (1957a, 1957b), however, remarked upon gifted children's lack of hesitation and of the frustrations which plague most of their peers.

Originality, either of subject matter or technique, or presentation of subject matter in unique and unusual ways, was observed to be present in the art of most, if not all, of the children selected by their teachers. The work of most of the children selected contained qualities which made it distinguishable from the rest of the class, in spite of the fact that subject matter and medium are usually assigned in the formal art classroom situation. The selected students, as a group, were able to take an art "assignment" and make it their own. According to Wilson and Wilson, the artistically gifted child possesses "an active imagination and the ability to combine fluently and inventively images and ideas from diverse sources and to synthesize them into new totalities" (1981, p. 4). Inventiveness, originality, are cited by virtually all authorities as characteristics of creative individuals.

Although a few of the selected students were observed to work with precision, even to be meticulous, in most cases "directness of expression" (Lowenfeld, 1957b, p. 427) appeared to be more descriptive of their mode of working. Almost all of them drew or painted with a noticeable lack of hesitation or uncertainty. As Lindstrom observed, "relative freedom from some of the ordinary frustrations most children have to cope with" (1970, p. 52). It seems possible that the gifted children's sense of visual order and balance, close attention to detail, and certainty of

expression may have prompted the art teachers' use of the phrases "produces neat and careful work; works with precision." These characteristics are not found in the literature in descriptions of artistically gifted children. Their use may point to an inability on the part of these art teachers to analyze and articulate observable characteristics of the artistically gifted.

The children identified by their art teachers were, indeed, observed to be consistently successful with art work, although observations of children and their work over a considerable period of time would be necessary in order to determine the certainty of these initial impressions. Lindstrom described "their habit of success, their easy comprehension" (1970, p. 52). Paul Witty defined as gifted "any child whose performance in a worthwhile type of human endeavor is consistently or repeatedly remarkable" (1971, p. 7), and Stewart (1981) proposed that the potential of the artistically gifted could best be assessed across a long period of time.

During the course of these observations, only one of the selected students was seen to ask for assistance from the art teacher. The other children identified as artistically gifted by their teachers were, on the other hand, quite often seen giving assistance to others in the class. In the literature, only Lark-Horovitz, Lewis, and Luca

(1973) included "asks for explanations and instructions" (p. 195). Lowenfeld (1957a) described creatively gifted children as needing less particular motivation than other children. Szekely listed "ability to execute self-initiated problems and see them through to conclusion" (1981, p. 70), and Wilson and Wilson described the often private, independent nature of gifted children's art production (1976).

It appears significant that a majority of the art teachers interviewed listed drawing ability as an identifying characteristic. Almost all of the selected children were observed to possess advanced or outstanding technical skill in drawing, and the literature appears to support this observation (Conant, 1959; Lark-Horovitz, Lewis, & Luca, 1973; Luca & Allen, 1973; Manuel, 1919; Stalker, 1981; Wilson, 1974; Wilson & Wilson, 1976). Stalker (1981) noted that, in art, drawing is the basic executive skill. In a proposed set of instruments designed to "predict specific potentials for unusual artistic productions" (Wilson & Wilson, 1981, p. 7), Wilson and Wilson used graphic production exercises designed "to assess skills, fluency and imagination" (1981, p. 1) in addition to a cognitive orientation instrument.

All of the characteristics of artistic giftedness listed by the art teachers interviewed, with the exception of "produces neat and careful work; works with precision," were also cited by one or more authorities in the literature

and observed to be present in the behavior and art work of the selected children. They, therefore, appear to be useful criteria for identifying artistically gifted children. This study supports the validity of these criteria.

It would first appear that these art teachers placed too much value on "produces neat and careful work; works with precision." Although these traits are highly valued in our culture, particularly by teachers in other subject areas, they are not considered characteristics of creative individuals, nor are they listed in the literature as traits of artists or of the artistically gifted. "Neatness" is a trait generally looked down upon by artists. However, terms which seem closely related to "neatness" and "precision" are found in recent literature. Wilson and Wilson (1981) used the word "accuracy" twice in their list of characteristics of the artistically gifted, as well as terms such as "polished," "masterful," "accuracy of depiction" (1976, p. 445) and "perfection of . . . style" (1976, p. 437). Many of the selected students were, indeed, observed to be highly skilled, to pay close attention to detail; their work was often carefully executed, polished, accurate representationally, even meticulous, and accomplished with an apparent certainty and ease of execution. Wilson and Wilson suggest that when artistically gifted children can not make a drawing look the way they want it to, they "do

it again and again until it comes out right" (1981, p. 4). While "precision" in the art of the artistically gifted seems to be implied, it may be that the art teachers' use of the word "neat" is an indication that they are not sufficiently skilled at analyzing and articulating characteristics in the children's art work.

Interviews with the children selected by their art teachers indicated that a majority of the children spend at least a few times a week drawing outside of school, and most draw "for something to do," when they are bored. The interviews supported the idea that artistically gifted children are motivated to produce art (to draw) as an alternative to intellectual boredom (Strang, 1958; Wilson & Wilson, 1974, 1976, 1981). Most of the children interviewed (thirteen out of the sixteen participants) said they sometimes preferred making art or drawing by themselves to playing with friends, and most felt that daydreaming and picturing imaginary things in their minds were "good things," and often gave them ideas for making art.

Wilson noted: "We can easily spot them [artistically gifted children] as we visit art rooms and general classrooms. We observe what and how children draw on and in their notebooks" (Wilson & Wilson, 1981, p. 5). Most of the children included in this study were observed to have drawn on their school notebooks or on book covers during

the school day, and others indicated verbally that they did so. These observations, along with what children said, lent some support to the theory that the narrative process-visual narrative--may be the catalyst which motivates and produces outstanding child artists (Wilson & Wilson, 1976, 1981). Non-assigned art work, and art done on notebooks and book covers indeed appeared to be often narrative in character, and included a preponderance of mythological and cartoon characters, and superheroes, many drawn accurately from memory, others invented.

According to Wilson and Wilson, gifted children possess "an early ability to masterfully mimic the styles, contents and techniques of the drawings, paintings and illustrations of adult artists" (1981, p. 4), and often adopt the conventions and techniques of comic book art (1974, 1976). Paul Witty described children's interest in reading comics, and also their interest in making their own, much earlier than Wilson (1941). Observations of art done on school notebooks and book covers, and interviews with children, indicated that the children identified as artistically gifted in this study appeared to be influenced as much by the graphic content of television and movies as by comic books. Observations and interviews seemed to confirm Wilson's (1976) belief that children assimilate adult cultural influences in their art. The children observed and

interviewed in this study appeared very conscious of adult art and greatly influenced by it--not only comic book art, but illustrations in books (including art books), magazines, and greeting cards, in addition to television and movies. Several children indicated that they learned from other children (often an older brother), and a few from adults-- a mother, a grandfather.

Stewart wrote, "the most important determinant of the development of the gifted is whether or not the individual student is aware of his gift, whether he values it" (1981, p. 4), and because he considered beliefs about self, general beliefs, goals, and values relating to artistic achievement "the key to the identification of giftedness" (Wilson & Wilson, 1981, p. 1), Wilson incorporated questions concerning these four belief types into his Instruments for the Identification of Artistic Giftedness. In this study, only three of the selected children stated that they definitely wanted to be artists when they grew up, two that they "might become artists," one that he intended to become an art collector, and one that he intended to make art as a hobby. A possible explanation for their leaning toward other occupations may have to do with society's traditional view of the artist as a nonconformist, as one on the fringes of society rather than a valued, contributing member of it. Also, in a society which values technology and materialism, artists are

not seen as benefitting from society in terms of prestige or monetary rewards. It appears significant that, of the three children who said they would like to be artists when they grew up, two added other professions to that of artist: "artist and all-star basketball player;" "artist, scientist, and actor." According to Strang, "Often a gifted child is caught in a conflict between the attitudes and expectations of his family or his social group and his own inner-growth urges" (1958, p. 72). However, a majority of the children interviewed stated that they believed their parents thought of them as good artists, and some stated that they were even encouraged in making art by their parents; therefore, if the children's reluctance to specify art as a future occupation reflects society's view of art and artists, it apparently does not reflect, in most cases, the attitude of the parents. Another explanation may be that, because "Gifted children are usually versatile" (Strang, 1958, p. 77), they just have many more interests and areas to explore.

A number of authorities listed intelligence, or general intelligence, as a characteristic of giftedness in art (Kerschensteiner, 1905; Lark-Horovitz, Lewis, & Luca, 1973; Manuel, 1919; Meier, 1939/1966). While appropriate tests were unavailable for examination as regards this study, it seems worthy of note that seven of the sixteen selected students were, according to their art teachers, above-average

students in other subject areas as well. Of the seven, three were enrolled in the Talented and Gifted Program in their school (in some schools, no talented and gifted programs were available), and another had been, but was not at the time of this study, enrolled in his school's talented and gifted program. At the other extreme, one student was known to read on a first-grade level, and two were known to have been retained in school. The two who had been retained, brothers, spoke very little English, and another student spoke no English at all, which leads to some speculation regarding their unusual and outstanding visual production.

Results of the study showed that, with one exception, the criteria which these six art teachers used to identify children gifted in art correlate with criteria found in the literature and obtained from authorities in the field, as well as some school districts and state department of education. One characteristic, "produces neat and careful work; works with precision," was not found in the literature, although "precision" seems to have been implied by some experts, and was observed to be present, in some respects, in the art and behavior of the children studied. The listing of "produces neat and careful work; works with precision," by at least half of these art teachers, may indicate the placing of too much emphasis by these art teachers upon

qualities which are not basic to the artistic-creative process, and particularly to the artistically gifted. One characteristic found in the literature, "asks for explanations and instructions" (Lark-Horovitz, Lewis, & Luca, 1973, p. 195), was not listed by these art teachers as a characteristic of giftedness in art, nor was it observed to be present in the children studied.

From interviews with the children identified by their art teachers as artistically gifted, data were obtained to support the idea that artistically gifted children spend a lot of time drawing or making art outside of art classrooms, and that they are motivated to do so by boredom. Drawings done on notebooks, on school book covers, and in "free time" sketchbooks indicate that art which the gifted children make outside of the formal art classroom may be narrative in character, as Wilson and Wilson suggest (1976, 1981) and, in at least one case, was apparently of a private or secret nature (Wilson & Wilson, 1976, 1981).

Cultural influences were readily apparent in the art of the children studied, as Wilson (1974, 1976) and Wilson and Wilson (1976, 1981) suggested. The children who participated in this study appeared to be influenced as much by television and movies as by comic books, and other sources of adult graphic production were also found to influence their art.

While a majority of the children interviewed indicated that they did not plan to make art their profession, a majority did state that they received parental encouragement and support for their art. A majority of the selected children stated that they preferred to use pencils, pens, and markers to other art media, which may stem from the easy availability of such media, but may also indicate some support for Lowenfeld's theory that artistically gifted children may possess a high degree of self-identification with medium, as well as subject matter (1957b).

Implications for Consideration in Art Education

The art teachers interviewed in this study appeared to be genuinely interested in the problem with which this study was concerned and eager to cooperate with the interviewer. A traditionally egalitarian concept of art education (Alexander, 1981; Gaitskell & Hurwitz, 1970; Salome, 1974) and a healthy distrust of competitions and contests, together with a fear of the exploitation which may accompany early identification of the gifted (Stewart, 1981), have made art teachers generally reluctant to single out individual students as "gifted" or "talented." Because the art teachers who participated in this study expressed an awareness of the current interest in gifted and talented children and a desire to increase their knowledge of the gifted in art,

this study appears to lend support to contemporary literature which calls for reliable measures of identifying the gifted in art so that provisions may subsequently be made for them in the way of rich and challenging art programs. It seems important that art teachers be sufficiently informed that they are able, not only to identify gifted children and thus provide for their needs and encourage them in their pursuits, but that they can articulate the characteristics of artistic giftedness to parents and other professionals, and help guarantee inclusion of the arts in gifted and talented programs.

The criteria which these art teachers listed generally appeared to correlate with criteria described in the literature, but there appeared to be characteristics with which these art teachers were not familiar, among them certain characteristics which teachers may even attempt to suppress (Wilson & Wilson, 1981). None of the art teachers included in this study indicated that they had any knowledge of the art children made outside of the classroom. There was a tendency, on the part of most of the teachers, to identify too many children as artistically gifted rather than too few. They gave a wide variety of responses to the questionnaire-- from short and generalized phrases to elaborate and detailed descriptions of individual students and their work. Some gave more thought to their answers than others, and some were apparently more knowledgeable than others.

Because of the need for greater knowledge about the gifted in art on the part of these art teachers, which this study indicates, there would seem to be an ever greater need to disseminate information about the gifted to the general classroom teacher. The lack of art specialists at the elementary level often places the responsibility for identification and nomination of gifted children, in the arts as well as in academic areas, in the hands of the general classroom teacher, who may or may not have some background and experience in the arts. Alexander (1981) noted that, in the future, gifted programs may be mandated, just as programs for other exceptional children, such as the handicapped, are today.

It is important that criteria related to art be included in gifted checklists which are being developed and used in school systems throughout the nation. According to Alexander (1981), only about half of these scales contain items related to art. It is ironic that those scales which do deal with art criteria have been developed not by artists and art educators, but by educators and psychologists in other fields (Bell, 1981; Kehne, 1981). Renzulli's Scales for Rating Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students (1981) are among the most widely used. It seems important that art criteria be developed by artists and art educators, and that it be stated in terms or

vocabulary which those untrained in art can understand if we expect classroom teachers and parents, as well as art teachers, to use that criteria in identifying the artistically gifted. The dissemination of information and the development of specific, reliable criteria may have positive implications for "accountability" in art teaching and for evaluating all children's art by making art educators more conscious of how and why they are influencing children in the art classroom.

Finally, this study indicates that it is important to know, not only the ways in which the artistically gifted differ from most other children, but that great individual differences exist among the artistically gifted themselves. Because many of the children interviewed appeared to have a variety of interests in addition to art, and because many of these children appeared to do well in other areas besides art, it would seem that great caution should be used in placing children, at an early age, into slots or categories of giftedness to the exclusion of certain other areas, be they arts or literature or science. Possession of a high intelligence quotient often rules out its being used in the pursuit of the fine arts, and vice versa. Stewart recommended "development of a system to allow the talented experiences in the visual arts that would begin early in the learning sequences and have many entry points" (1981,

p. 4), one which would provide entry and exit points for those "whose values change and talents develop at varying or different times" (1981, p. 4).

Recommendations for Further Study

There are, assuredly, "degrees" of giftedness in every field of endeavor. Some of the children who participated in this study appeared to possess more of the traits of the artistically gifted than others. Because children in different classrooms and in different schools were usually involved in different activities, in solving different art problems, it was difficult to determine the presence or absence of all of the characteristics in every situation. It would seem to be advantageous to observe children and their art over a longer period of time than this study allowed. Because art teachers are themselves involved with children on a long-term basis and have the advantage of getting to know each student personally, they appear to be in a position to be natural researchers and, with sufficient knowledge and opportunity, could add immeasurably to the existing data about artistically gifted children.

Although the children studied here were chosen from a variety of ethnic backgrounds and socioeconomic areas, it is recommended that, in future studies, a larger population be studied--both children and teachers--in order to shed more light upon the validity of existing criteria and to

discover possible characteristics or areas of artistic giftedness which have not yet been revealed. Methods of identification and criteria especially need to be examined in terms of the poor and the culturally different. How can the artistically gifted best be identified in all groups of our society, not just the affluent? Will the children in this study who spoke little or no English continue to make exceptional art as their verbal skills improve?

A follow-up study of the children who participated in this study could be made to determine whether and how their interests, values, and abilities change with time. During the course of this study, certain children were observed to possess characteristics of artistic giftedness which were not noted or pointed out by their teachers. A study could be initiated of these children and their characteristics subsequently compared with those children selected by the art teachers.

Although some of the art teachers interviewed in this study were able to supply information about children's abilities in other subject areas, a more thorough investigation could be made in which test scores and other data were examined, and other teachers interviewed, to determine whether there appears to be any relationship between giftedness in art and high ability in other subjects, and, if so, in which subjects.

How aware are art teachers of alternative programs for the artistically gifted, what do these programs have to offer, and might art museums play a more active role in the education of artistically gifted children? Parents are a possible source of important information regarding children's interests and behavior, and of non-assigned art made outside of the art classroom. Interviews with parents might further illuminate the area of giftedness in art.

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APPENDICES

Appendix B

Cognitive Orientation to Art

Name _____ Grade _____ Sex _____ School _____

1. What do you do in your spare time, or when you're bored?
2. Do you ever draw on your notebook or on scraps of paper?
3. How much time do you spend making art at home or outside of school?
4. Why do you like to make art (draw)?
5. Do you have a favorite medium (pencil, paint, etc.)?
6. How do you think you learned to draw?
7. Where do you get your ideas?
8. What are your favorite comic books?
9. Is there something you sometimes like to do just by yourself, rather than playing with friends?
10. Do you think it's a good (or bad) thing for kids to day-dream and to picture imaginary things in their minds? Why?
11. What would you like to be when you grow up?
12. Do your parents think you are a good artist?
13. Do friends ever ask you to draw things for them? Often?
14. Do you sometimes spend a lot of time practicing one thing over and over until you get it right?

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