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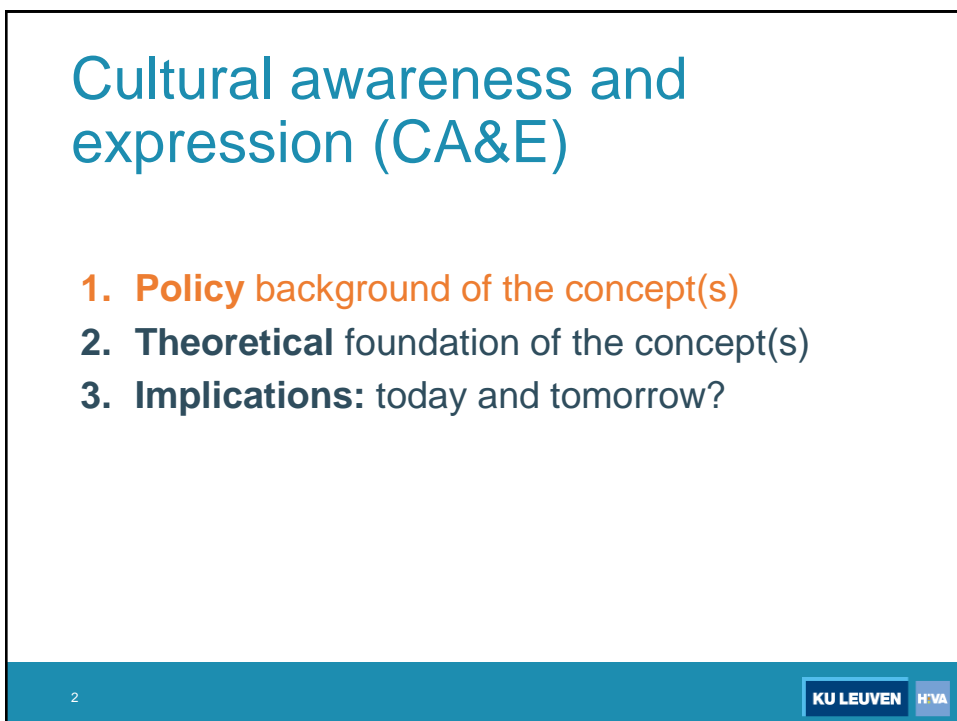
ONDERZOEKSINSTITUUT VOOR
ARBEID EN SAMENLEVING

Cultural awareness and expression

What does it mean and why is it important?

Nürnberg – May 2024
Lode Vermeersch (ENO Belgium)

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Cultural awareness and expression (CA&E)

1. **Policy** background of the concept(s)
2. **Theoretical** foundation of the concept(s)
3. **Implications:** today and tomorrow?

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Policy background CA&E

Recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning

- Date: December 2006
- By: European parliament / Council of Europe
- What: a framework on lifelong learning consisting of 8 key competences
- Why?
 - The time was right
 - "Prepare for jobs that do not yet exist" > cradle-to-grave learning
 - Need for a framework

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Policy background CA&E

8 key competences:

1. Communication in the mother tongue
2. Communication in foreign languages
3. Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology
4. Digital competence
5. Learning to learn
6. Social and civic competences
7. Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship
8. Cultural awareness and expression

Traditional, subject-specific competences

Why competences?
Why key?

Horizontal/transversal, non-subject-specific competences

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Policy background CA&E

8 key competences:

1. ...

8. Cultural awareness and expression



Definition

"The appreciation of the importance of the creative expression of ideas, experiences and emotions in a range of media, including music, performing arts, literature and the visual arts"

Why this key competence?

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Rich cultural history > a way to find unity?

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Policy background CA&E

8 key competences:

1. ...

8. Cultural awareness and expression

Some personal reflections...

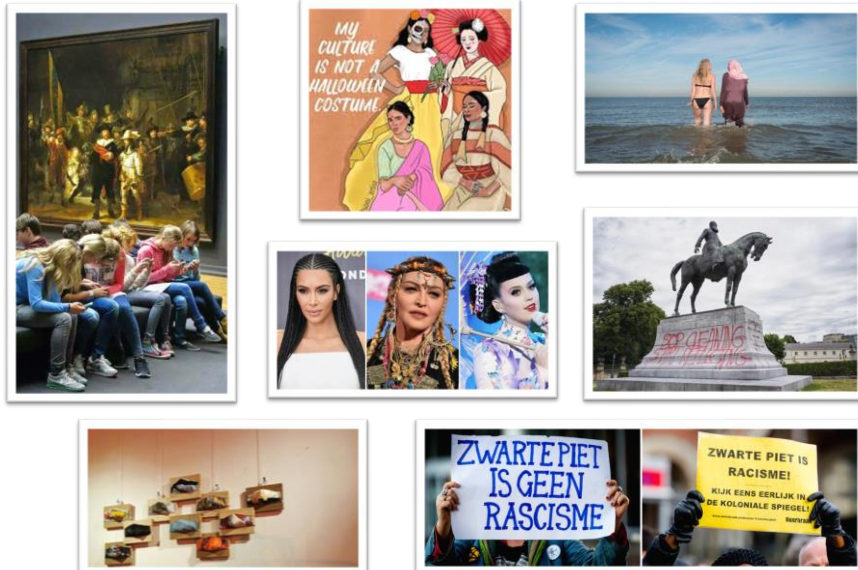
Definition

“The appreciation of the importance of the creative expression of ideas, experiences and emotions in a range of media, including music, performing arts, literature and the visual arts”

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Policy background CA&E

Cultural awareness and expression handbook



- Date: 2015-2016
- By: OMC – expert group (civil servants)
- What: terms & concepts + learn from good practices, without a “(too) strict” definition of CA&E?

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Policy background CA&E

Reassessment of the initial LLL framework

- Date: 2016-2018
- By: EU > public consultation + research
- Conclusions:
 - A broader range of **contemporary forms of cultural expression**
 - Emphasize more positive and open-minded attitudes towards other **cultures and cultural differences**
 - ...

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Policy background CA&E

(new) Recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning

- Date: May 2018
- By: Council of Europe



Definition

“Competence in cultural awareness and expression involves having an understanding of and respect for how ideas and meaning are creatively expressed and communicated in different cultures and through a range of arts and other cultural forms. It involves being engaged in understanding, developing and expressing one’s own ideas and sense of place or role in society in a variety of ways and contexts.”

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Policy background CA&E

Recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning

- Date: May 2018



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Policy background CA&E

And what about CA&E in...

- The road map for arts education (2006)
- The Seoul agenda (2010)
- Porto Santo Charter (2021) >< Action Plan for European Democracy (European Commission, 2020)
- UNESCO Framework for Culture and Arts Education (2024)
- ...

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Cultural awareness and expression (CA&E)

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Theoretical foundation CA&E

Two different concepts coming together

- Cultural awareness
- Cultural expression

... but also two theoretical paradigms coming together

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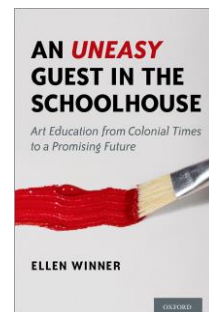
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Theoretical foundation CA&E

Cultural expression: the act of expressing one's thoughts, ideas, and feelings in a free and spontaneous manner through the use of cultural means


Expressivist tradition

- Early 20th century: arts education = spontaneous self-expression
- Why? A reaction to a vocational tradition in artistic schooling



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- Experience = paramount
- Artistic expression = giving form to that
 - Away from artistic traditions or conventions
- Why? Sense of unity or harmony + justice and social equality

- Artistic expression = the path of a bee
- Express emotions (also incomprehension, sadness or guilt), express our ideas and dreams about a better world...
- Why? Cognitive and emotional development + (like Dewey) a social or sociological argument

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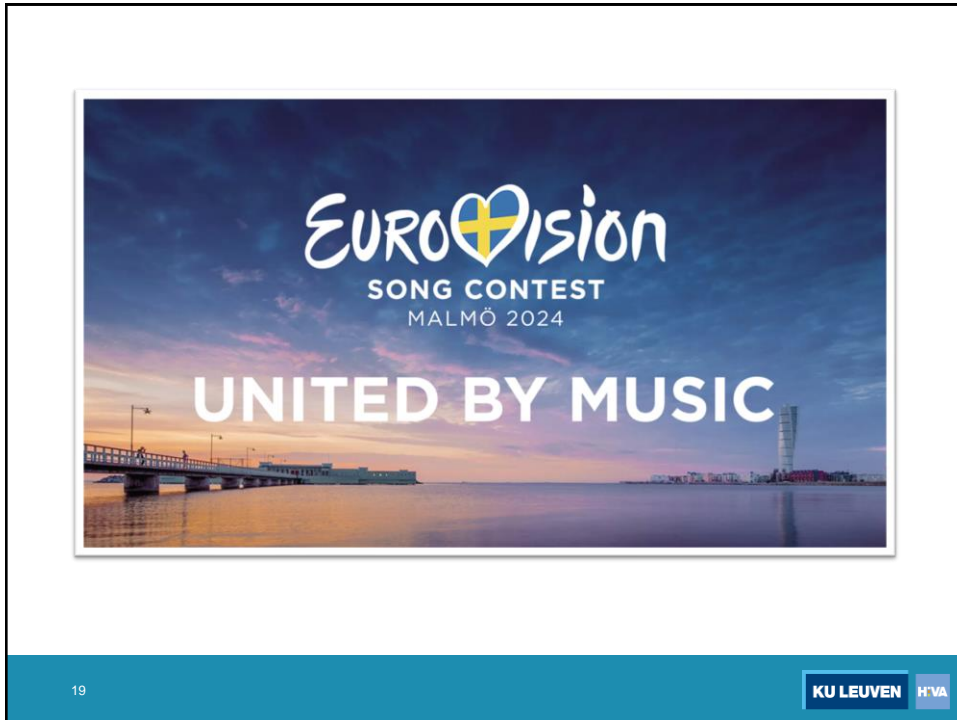
Some critical notes on the expressivist tradition...

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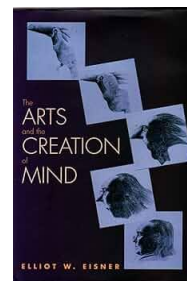
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Theoretical foundation CA&E

Cultural awareness: A state of mind that is shaped by the reflection of one's own cultural thoughts, habits, and behaviors (and those of others)

Cognitive tradition

- Mid 20th century: arts education = enrichment of the mind
- Arts & culture = also *mentifactual*
- Why? "Cognitive revolution" (1958) + growing interest in cognitive development



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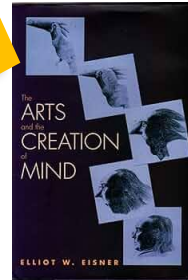
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Theoretical foundation CA&E

Cultural awareness: a state of mind, based on the reflection of one's own cultural thoughts, habits, behaviour (and that of others)

Cognitive tradition

- Mid 20th century: enrichment of cognitive science
- Arts & culture: *epistemological* and *epistimological*
- Why? "Cognitive revolution" (1958) + growing interest in cognitive development



Some critical notes on the cognitive tradition...

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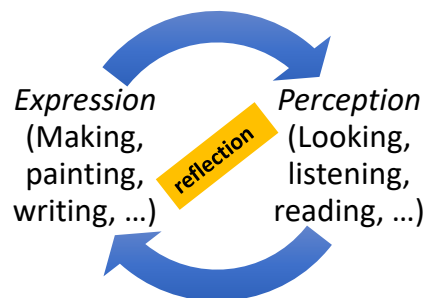
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Theoretical foundation CA&E

Bringing two paradigms together

- Very different ways of thinking
 - Different points of departure
 - Different destinations



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Cultural awareness and expression (CA&E)

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Today: what we have...

- Confusion... What do we talk about when we talk about 'culture'?
- LLL framework (and CA&E) being used in curriculum (re)development in Europe...
 - ... in different ways
 - ... certainly not in all countries
- A life-wide competence > shared responsibility
- Many 'one shot' activities / limited policy programs

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Tomorrow: what we need...

- Well-informed and self-confident teachers (not just self-confident *art* teachers)
- Perhaps put more emphasis on the 'knowledge' part of this key competence (to get away from the purely *expressivist* tradition)
- Discuss the political side of culture awareness and expression

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THANK
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