

# FOUR SEASONS

SPRING - SUMMER 2016





## Learning takes place all the time and almost everywhere.

Now that Spring is here and there is more hope of consistently good weather the concept of the Outdoor Classroom becomes more important in pre school education. This means we spend more time outside in the garden and also are able to make more excursions.



### Characteristics of the Outdoor Classroom

- Most activities that can be done indoors can be done outdoors. Some activities occur best outdoors; some can only occur outdoors.
- There is a full range of activities for children to participate in, including many activities that are traditionally thought of as “indoor activities.”





- While outside, children frequently have the opportunity to initiate their own learning experiences and activities, with teachers available to support them.
- Children experience nature in as many ways as possible.
  - Children appear more happy.
  - Children display higher, more positive self-esteem
  - Effective relationship building in a cooperative, non-competitive environment is observed.
  - Children develop familiarity with and appreciation of nature
  - There is a wider, expansive view of how the world works
  - You can build stewardship skills for the environment



**Tuba Kankul**

**Nationality:** Turkish

**Education:** B Ed in Pre School Education

**Post:** Pre-school Manager





# The art of learning about Art

There are a lot of different ways to experience art. Some people like to pay a ticket for the museum to wander and dream away in front of Van Gogh's sunflowers, others stand up on their chairs in the restaurant and take pictures of their food. There is no right or wrong, there is just different. Actually art is everywhere, we just have to open our minds whether it is in a restaurant or in a museum.

In our school, opening our minds is a very easy thing to do. We are art itself with all of our different nationalities, interests and cultures. That is why we find it so important to learn more about each other's cultures and interest. The more we learn the better we can understand each other and what better way is there to learn than to experiment.

Every lesson is a different adventure. We start small and safe in the First Grade. It's important that the kids discover during the lesson. What happens if I put my pencil in the water? How can I colour with more than one pencil? Step by step we learn techniques while we are experimenting. In the Second Grade I aim to be close to the kids during



their adventures. The materials are there, the assignment is explained and off we go. There is no hesitating in our art lessons but neither is their rushing into something. We often sit in class with closed eyes, just trying to dig into our fathoms of fantasy until a wonderful idea comes out. The Third and Fourth Graders work more individually. They capture their ideas in their sketchbooks and start their journeys from there. The path we walk during the lessons is more important the result we eventually achieve.

Naturally countries and cultures are among our sources of inspiration, as are famous artists. How did they live their lives? Why did they produce that kind of art? We try to find answers in different media. We can read a book or listen to a story. Often we get our answers online.

We are fortunate to have our own "art cave", a nice and cosy place under the stairs where I believe magic happens. We have a lot of





different materials in the classroom but often we use things which normally aren't often associated with art. We "upcycle" a concept, which is very important for our school, as we try to teach our students to recycle every single day. It's a beautiful thing to see how they discover that with all those disposable things we can also make very nice things. Magic it is!

So next time somebody asks you the question "What is art?" why don't you ask your child. I am sure they have the perfect answer ready...

Magalie Jordens is from Belgium. She is a qualified Arts Teacher and member of the Expressive Arts Team.



**Magalie Jordens**

Nationality: Belgium

Education: BEd (Art Education)

Post: Primary School Arts and Crafts Teacher





# Benefits of Performing Arts for Children

Research has long supported the benefits of children engaging in the performing arts. It is known that children show more motivation, pay closer attention and remember more easily when performing arts are integrated into the curriculum.

Schools today recognize that performing arts are more than just an extracurricular activity but are an essential part of a well-rounded education for students. Performing arts include theatre, choir, instrumental performance and dance. Whichever your child chooses, experts agree that the most important factor is that he/she tries. Even if your child is not the star of the production the benefits are lifelong.



Behind the Scenes shot by professional photographer Erkin Ağsaran, the father of our student Bora Ağsaran.



Ömer Sun

Nationality: Turkey

Education: BA PgCE

Post: Primary School Principal







ERKİN AĞSARAN  
PHOTOGRAPHY



# Benefits of travelling abroad for students

Vice Principal Ali Türkdoğan is from Australia and is a keen traveller himself. He lists some of the benefits of travel abroad for students.

## The Middle-High School will be visiting Italy in the Spring.

Finding the right destination, putting together the programme, managing sign ups and deposits, taking students through the airport: there are lots of stressful tasks involved in organizing an overseas trip. So why bother? Is it worth all the time and effort you put in?

From my experience, students and teachers participating in a school trip abroad not only have a unique experience, but also benefit from many other advantages for weeks, months, years after their return to "normal life".

It's an opportunity to learn about another culture by experiencing it for yourself, meeting new people and making new friends. Trying out new food, testing yourself in different areas. Seeing history, art, the different way things are done.

All in all some excellent reasons to justify the time and effort you spend on preparing and running a trip. During the organizing phase, all the things that have to be organized might at times seem overwhelming, but believe me: it is well worth it and the satisfaction from seeing the students' enjoyment is very rewarding.

Ali Türkdoğan, has himself travelled extensively outside his homeland Australia and knows the benefits of travelling abroad.



### Ali Türkdoğan

Nationality: Australia

Education: BSc, PgDE

Post: Middle-High School Vice Principal







Among the cities they will visit is Rome. Director John Lees recounts his memories of the Eternal City.

*ITALY – Worth visiting, over and over!*

'Attenzione!' A well dressed yelled at me and at the same time dragged me from the middle of the small piazza where I was standing. I had been standing in the way of two mopeds roaring across the small square - standing, totally awestruck, in the middle of what turns out to be a busy street. Lesson learned, I cautiously cross to the edge of the square to continue the hilltop view which spans the city's rooftops, dotted by ancient towers, cupolas and easily recognised landmarks. I am in Rome.





## Art everywhere

The present-day Italian capital has been providing artistic inspiration for millenia, beginning with the founding of the Roman Republic in 509 BC. But the Eternal City is not relying on past achievements. Ancient masterpieces co-exist with contemporary art, and the city itself – with both galleries and architectural landmarks- feels like an open-air museum. In this culturally rich atmosphere, it's natural to follow the Romans, seeking out art everywhere I look: in the churches and museums, splashed on the side of buildings, and even on the dinner table.

Wandering through the historical centre of Rome, it's hard to miss the city's many architectural landmarks. Turn the corner and you are face to face with the Pantheon, its gaping entrance beckoning you to enter and marvel at the famous open dome. Rather than indulge in souvenir shopping I turn a corner and enter the church of San Luigi dei Francesi, whose unassuming grey facade hides the artistic treasures inside. Passing the church's ornate basilica, I continue to see a masterpiece by Caravaggio (1571-1610), and later other pieces by this master at the Galleria Borghese.



A few blocks east is the famous Trevi Fountain, a landmark so magnetic that even born-and -bred Romans slow down to admire its gushing Baroque beauty. As I move on I notice a young Italian couple approaches the fountain and follow the familiar ritual – they pull out coins, turn away from the fountain and toss their centesimi, right hand over left shoulder, into the turquoise water to ensure their eventual return to Rome.

Not to be missed of course is the Saint Peter's basilica, the most prominent building in the Vatican City. Art lovers of all faiths will want to see the Sistine Chapel and its impressive frescoes by Michelangelo (1475-1574).





## Art of living

It is now evening and I follow the local custom - passeggiata. The custom of taking an evening stroll. People begin to spill out of their homes, on their way to eat dinner. I follow a multi-generational family down an alley into a small restaurant with shelves full of jars of preserves, the smell of fresh ingredients from the nearby kitchen and the crowded tables all confirm the importance of eating. I look through the menu and my mouth begins to water. The people on the next table seem to be enquiring and commenting about the menu in detail. This engagement and passion for all the ingredients

that go into everything, from a plate of simple pasta to a salad, shows the importance of eating and drinking in Italian culture.



After dinner I walk past the Colosseum, the largest amphitheatre ever built, completed in AD 80. It makes me think of the Oscar winning film in 2013 - *la Grande Bellezza*, where the leading character's apartment overlooks the monument. The film shows Rome only from its best angles, like an unblemished painting. But the reality of Rome is more chaotic, not least because of all the street traffic and the animation on the streets provided by the Italians themselves. Scenes like this may be commonplace for the inhabitants of Rome but for visitors like me a trip to Rome is invigorating - a history lesson, a full-scale appreciation of art. With eyes wide open art of all types - everything is on display from ancient masterpieces and contemporary street art to the architectural wonders and the art of living, of which the Romans are true masters.



**John Lees**

**Nationality:** British-Finnish

**Education:** BA, PgCE, M Ed

**Post:** Director of Teaching and Learning





## Urban Arts

Social studies specialist teacher Ewen MacDonald is also a keen artist and keen to involve students in expressing themselves in all forms of art within the community.



So I gathered empty bottles. I even went and bought a pack of thirty one-litre water bottles in bulk to use over the space of a few weeks so as to have plenty of empties.

*Before I carry on here are a few questions:*

1. What do people do when they sit on a bus or a train? They used to read the newspaper, what do they do now?

**Here's another question:**

2. What do people do to relax and what makes people laugh and cry?

3. What human activity usually provides a hint in advance of the way people in broad popular culture will be thinking in the future?

(Clue: People are not usually studying maths or chemistry on the bus).

Just to continue on my little story I started above. I then spent a few hours in the belly

of Campus B where we store the paint. After an hour or so I had about forty bottles filled with different coloured paints.

**By the way, the answer to all the above questions are:**

1) People entertain themselves on their smart phones looking at videos pictures, cartoons and listen to music.

2) They watch films and dramas.

3) The arts.

The next task was to accumulate enough brushes for forty young people to use without them fighting over them. This involved a trip to Ümraniye where I'd go and strike a bargain with various hardware stores and come out with piles of brushes.

It's really interesting when you ask little children to draw or paint. They just do it as easily as switching on their parent's iPad, it comes naturally to them. When



you ask teenagers, they take a lot of coaxing and are even embarrassed to put anything down on paper. So this is the point where as a teacher I pull rank and I don't ask the kids, I tell them that we are going to a local school and we are going to paint the walls! Oh, and I try to remember to tell the parents too!

Our long-suffering sister schools in the wilds of Ümraniye watch my approach with trepidation. I roll up with a whole pile of ideas that will make them busy and stressed, but usually they can't resist! So the summer comes round and we turn up with our bus loads of kids from every corner of the planet and join with the usually delighted swarms of local Turkish children and we all attack the acres of blank walls that usually surround state schools here.

If I have the time and energy I'll prepare things on the walls to guide our young artists but sometimes we let them loose with varying results. As one of the other Headteachers said, "It doesn't matter what they paint, it's just that they are painting together and doing something different!". I guess it's his wall so he can say that!

One of our Syrian students was seen wandering around arm in arm with a group of other Turkish girls from the local state school where we were visiting that day. They were at that day giggling and enjoying themselves. They couldn't speak Arabic or English and her Turkish wasn't up to much either, but that didn't really matter. One English boy mentioned that he'd learnt you could make friends anywhere and with



anyone! Some of the painting wasn't bad either. One of my tenth grader students reminiscing about that day said it was one of the best days she'd ever had at school!

The issue is this. Art changes things. Art and community are a potent combination. Art changes culture. In the world in which we now live, people choose to be influenced by the arts through their smart phones, whether it be film, video, music or visual images. We need to release this creative impulse in our children this impulse to express, explore and discover.

If our children don't find their own way to express themselves, we will be left with whatever mass media serves up to us leaving our world monotone and drab. Let's educate our young people for the future, they need to be artistically literate.

Our Urban Arts Projects have taken the form of photography competitions and mural painting. We're working on expanding this to include serving the growing refugee community of Istanbul. If you want to help let me know.

**Ewen MacDonald**

**Nationality:** British

**Education:** BA in Medieval History PgCE in Education

**Post:** Geography and History Specialist Teacher





## Visual Arts

Visual Arts have an important role in every student's life as they express ideas and feelings. Through the experience of producing artwork students develop an understanding of history and culture.

In the first semester students were introduced to the Elements of Arts. With each Element they experienced and learned a new skill, knowledge and context. First was Line, an art element, which was connected to Japanese Art - Calligraphy. Inspired by Haikú poems, students captured the personification of a Singing Tree, a Lonely Mountain or a Dancing River.



Another element explored was Colour. Learning how to mix colours and therefore discovering the colour families division to apply in our work of art - a Tree of Colours with which students learn how to create contrast between warm and cold colours.



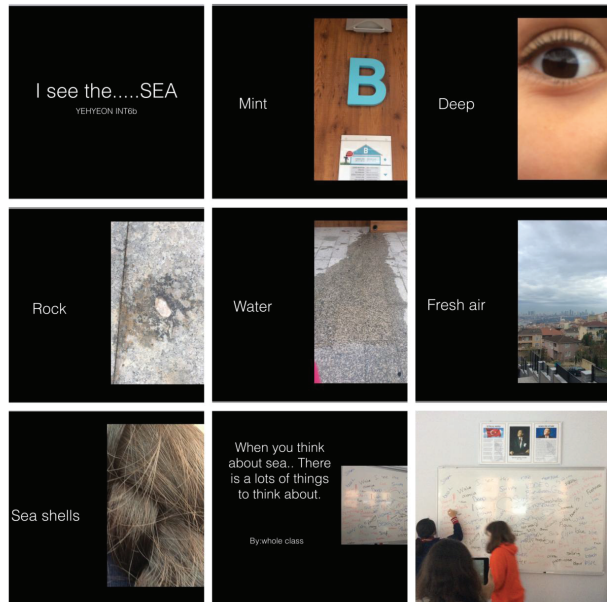


With Surrealism we spent a long time in the land of Dream. Meeting Freud and his explanation of dreams connected to great artists of that era like Miró and Dalí. Trying to understand the hidden meanings and symbols of Art, students analyzed the art works of surrealist artists. Students demonstrated their understanding of the topic by performing A Dream Landscape, inspired by Miró's artwork and using Frottage technique as the artist did.

A new project called I See the Sea opened a new perspective for Art Photography, looking for sea aspects around us by using metaphors. Before this students had to perceive and observe what actually sea is and what it represents. Wavy like hair hair, scary and dark as night, unknown and deep as empty room... for these descriptions students were creating a photographic metaphor in abstract or a realistic way. In the end they created a photo-poem about sea. Students used their iPads all the time and they found it a great experience. Upper classes such as Grade 8 developed this theme creating a double exposure with fused application. By combining self portrait and photographic metaphors they created original photography with the sea theme.



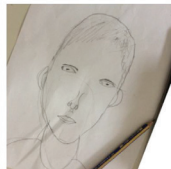
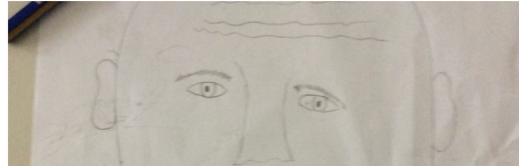
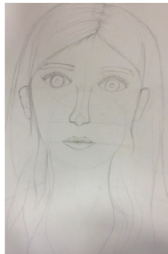




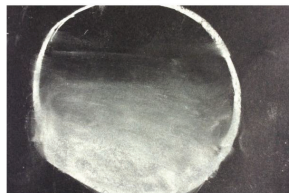
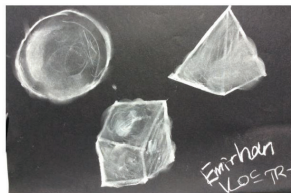
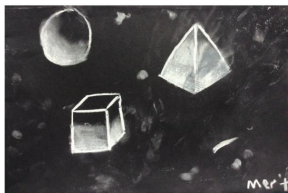
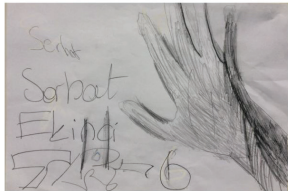
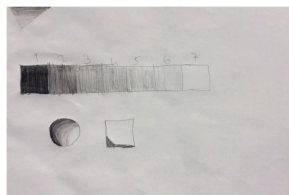
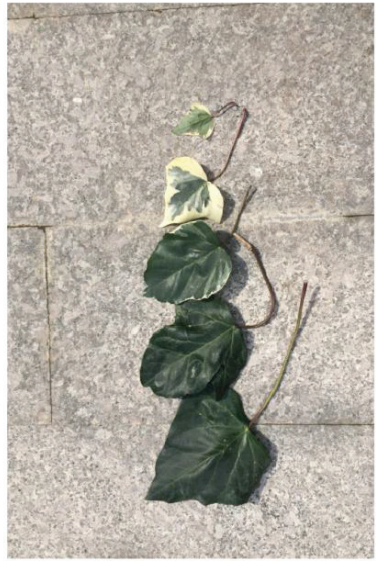
How to look at sculpture is another question for our students. How to describe forms, shapes or texture of surface. The main aim is to increase the sensitive perception and expressive communication. We have looked and analyzed artworks of Giacometti and Moore and exercised Living Sculptures, where students became sculptures themselves. We continued with clay exercises, how to prepare clay for use and also how to use the sculpting tools. Higher grades students were introduced to rules of figure drawing and portraits.



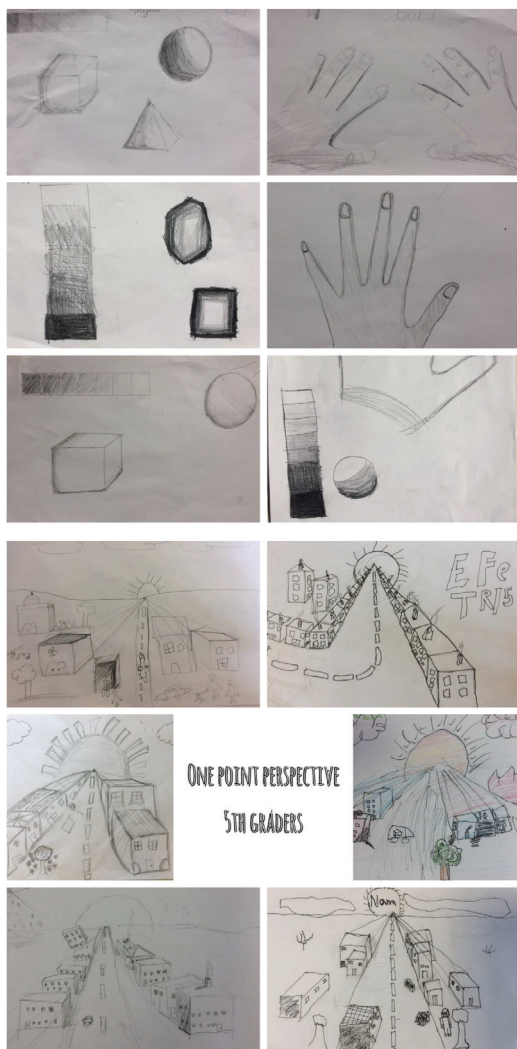












We have still a lot to explore till the end of school year.

For all students we have Free Sketching time every Wednesday during the lunch break. Students who are eager to develop their drawing skill are very welcome! You can follow the Visual Arts on Instagram: [VISUAL\\_ARTS\\_ISTANBULINT](https://www.instagram.com/VISUAL_ARTS_ISTANBULINT)

Arja Trtikova is Czech and a trained Visual Arts specialist teacher in the Middle and High School programme at Istanbul International School

**Arja Trtikova**

**Nationality:** Czech Republic

**Education:** BEd (Art Education)

**Post:** Middle – High School Visual Arts Teacher





Wherever  
you come from,  
there is a place for you!

Students come from more than  
40 countries and teachers from  
over 10 different countries

