

# **Best Practices in Contemporary Art Education: Visual Arts New Media Programs in three Canadian Secondary Schools**

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Target Groups: T1

Key Topic: The Art of Looking

Teachers often struggle with successfully integrating new media into classrooms in creative and transformative way. Dr. Black will describe art educators' teaching practices in three model art programs in Canada. Among educational researchers it has been found there is a critical need for extensive research to improve our understanding and practice of ways technology can have a positive, creative and transformative impact upon art educational practice. Dr. Black will discuss her case study research concerning three high school model art Canadian programs. These exemplary programs will be examined for the purpose of helping teachers transform their teaching. She will outline ways in which educators successfully work within digital arts based programs integrating new technologies with visual arts in their curriculum. Using case study research, she will talk about the schools, their mandates, and the specialized visual arts programs. Specific technology approaches that make these specific high school art education programs successful will be discussed. In the research conclusions many concepts emerged. It was found that in all three schools "visionary" educators were directing the programs. These educators approached teaching using and advocating for the use of the following pedagogical strategies within their programs: (1) developing a program with at least three teachers and a maximum of eleven working together; (2) integrating the visual arts with technology and with other areas of the secondary school curriculum; (3) breaking down the "walls of the schools" so that students showed their work within a local, national, and international community via the usage of the web and festivals,

competitions, and community events; (4) having professional visual artists, new media experts, computer advisors visit the schools to speak and share their knowledge with students; and finally (5) ensuring students visit institutions and/or work with experts within the new media visual arts community.