TOWARD INCLUSIVE AND AUTHENTIC MULTICULTURAL ARTS EDUCATION IN A COMMUNITY ARTS CENTER

by

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(Under the Direction of Dr. Pamela G. Taylor)

ABSTRACT

This paper describes three multicultural arts education programs the author directed at Lyndon House Arts Center, a county-owned community arts center in Athens, Georgia. It also provides a critical examination of the goals and contents of the programs through selected literature in multicultural education. Authenticity was achieved with representation of aspects of the Hispanic culture through the eyes of specific artists and people from the Hispanic community. The programs did not try to characterize the whole of another's culture. Rather, they allowed voices to be heard from which all community members can begin a life-long appreciation and understanding of the diversity in our own community. This examination concluded that multicultural arts education is as much an attitude as a method. Also determined was that an arts center is an effective setting for a variety of approaches to multicultural arts education.

INDEX WORDS: Multicultural arts education, Art education, Cultural pluralism, Community Arts Centers, Community Resources, Diversity

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PREFACE

From a feeling of empathy for people who uproot themselves to live in a new place in hopes of creating a better life, I began by focusing my study on how the arts could aid the recent immigrants from Mexico and other Latin American countries in their adjustment to the Athens, Georgia, community. As my study progressed, I realized the arts provided for others and me a life-enriching way of knowing the Hispanic immigrants.

I struggled with each move from Georgia, to Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Pennsylvania (twice), New Hampshire and back to Georgia. Each place had its own "culture" in certain ways. Expectations for everyday life such as housekeeping, child-raising, making friends, religious practices and work, were different in each location. In some locations the local dialect was difficult to understand. My experience differs from an immigrant's in magnitude, and I can only imagine how difficult these adjustments are for people who move from one country to another, speaking an entirely different language.

My adjustment was eased by my education and ability to obtain satisfying work in each location, as well as a measure of economic comfort. Many of these immigrants are unskilled laborers and work in chicken processing plants and other jobs which most of the other members of the Athens community consider undesirable. Many do not have the comfort of income or the resources of education that I had.

In my moves, engaging with art helped me make those adjustments. I sought out people and places where I could express my interest in art wherever I lived. It was my hope that I could reach out to those who would be interested and help them find comfort and expression in art in some way.

This hope was born before I took my position as art education specialist at Lyndon House Arts Center, a county owned community arts center with educational programs of various types and exhibitions of local and regional artists. In this position, I have both the mission to create programs and a budget, although limited, to do so. Some limitations, both perceived and real, apply because it is a public facility, but by doing this research and creating programs that include this specific audience, I am learning that there are more possibilities and audiences. The irony is that the experience has helped me probably much more than anyone to understand and appreciate some parts of the culture the new immigrants are bringing to Athens.

I have recently had the opportunity to know many people from the Hispanic community through my work at Lyndon House Arts Center. My work in the future will include helping others in Athens to have the same opportunity to discover for themselves many of the hard-working, kind, generous, loving, family-oriented people who choose to leave their beloved native countries in order to provide a better education and a higher standard of living for their families.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

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LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The community of Athens, Georgia, is currently undergoing significant demographic changes. In the last decade the population of Hispanics has increased over three hundred percent. The largest subgroup of Hispanics, by far, is from Mexico. (see Appendix A). Evidence of the new diversity can be seen in the new specialty stores owned and operated by recent immigrants and catering to the tastes of this new population. Many established grocery stores offer a wider selection of food to attract this new market. Hearing both Spanish and English while shopping in Athens is common. Some churches advertise services in Spanish and English.

The Hispanic community in Athens is very diverse within itself. People from many countries settled here. People who are well educated professionals, entrepreneurs, business leaders, and artists as well as laborers with little education settled here. Many are bilingual so that communication within their new community is easy. Others cluster together in housing, often low-income, because their skills in English are weak. So reaching out to the Hispanic community requires the same variety in programs and techniques as reaching other populations.

In Athens members of the Hispanic community are often treated in less than fair and friendly ways. Relationships between Hispanics and people of the dominant culture are often characterized by distrust, resentment and disrespect. Many Hispanics distrust the government in Athens so that an accurate count for the census was impossible. Many

in the dominant culture view the influx of this group as a burden for the schools because many of the children arrive without English-speaking skills (Gurr, 2001). I have heard comments like, "If they are going to move here, they ought to learn to speak English." Fortunately, I recently had the humbling experience of trying to learn Spanish in a university course, and know first hand how difficult it is for some adults to learn a new language.

Purpose of the Applied Project

This paper describes and analyzes three community arts center programs designed specifically to include members of the Hispanic community. The programs were a welcoming gesture from the county-owned Lyndon House Arts Center, and an opportunity to enable cultural exchange through the arts, which would promote mutual valuing among all citizens in Athens. Reducing prejudice, while a lofty goal for such brief programs, was the hope for the project. Encouraging more members of this group to take part in the education available at the arts center was also a goal.

As the person responsible for the educational events, classes and art camps at Lyndon House Arts Center, I try to address, over time, the diverse interests and cultures within the community while staying within the mission. Lyndon House Arts Center recently expanded from an eight-room facility in an historic circa 1850 house, to a 50,000 square foot facility, designed with the input of the community's artists. The new facility has five exhibition galleries, seven specialized studios and a children's wing. The historic house was remodeled into a house museum.

The mission statement of Lyndon House Arts Center has two parts, the second relating more directly to the goals of the programs described in this paper:

1. To support local artists in their creative development and present their work with dignity.
2. To provide well-balanced community education in the arts and cultural heritage and promote awareness of aesthetic concerns in everyday life.

Cultures in Mexico and Central America influence our cultural heritage, so it is a necessary part of our mission to provide community education programs exploring these cultures. Community members help the arts center plan other events such as Harvest Festival, an intergenerational celebration of arts and crafts passed down for many generations, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Celebration. With the help of members from the Hispanic community the arts center has and will in the future plan programs that interest this new audience to participate in events and classes along side other members of the Athens community. Wider participation will benefit everyone educationally and also help the groups learn to know and value each other over a period of time. Wider participation will also help us reach our mission goal of "well-balanced community education in the arts and cultural heritage."

With these goals in mind, I designed three programs to explore aspects of the art, people, customs and language of the Hispanic community. The *Posada* focused on a Christmas tradition in Mexico, and included the entire Athens community as a possible audience. The art camp for children, *Los Dias Divertidos,* explored art forms and culture from Mexico, Central and South America. Another art camp, Celebrations! *Celebraciones*! had a broader focus, incorporating art forms from Mexican-Americans and other non-Hispanic cultures. A crucial component of the content of these programs

was the involvement of people from the Hispanic cultures in planning and facilitating the programs.

Summary of Ideas on Multicultural Education

A review of the current literature in multicultural art education helped me evaluate the process and content of these programs. Sleeter and Grant (1994) provided a useful framework for identifying approaches to multicultural education, which helped me analyze the programs. Stuhr (1994) applied their approaches to practices in art education. After researching publications on current practices in multicultural education, Sleeter and Grant (1994) divided approaches into five groups:

1. Teaching the Exceptionally and Culturally Different Approach: It assumes the dominant culture is the norm and all those who are "different" need to be brought to that standard. Art forms of all cultures will most likely be examined from a Western perspective with this approach. Religious and other cultural meanings will be ignored in the attempt to study all art the same way (Stuhr, 1994). Programs at Lyndon House Arts Center avoided this approach, although subconsciously the ethnocentric lens with which I viewed the world, even though I was trying to have a more multicultural view, revealed itself occasionally.
2. Human Relations Approach: Its major purpose is helping people to accept and get along with others who are different from themselves. It also aims to reduce or eliminate stereotypes or prejudice. "Central to most definitions was the development of positive interactions between individuals and groups"

(Sleeter and Grant, 1994, p. 85). The Human Relations Approach was the primary approach I used in the Lyndon House programs.

Stuhr (1994) and Sleeter and Grant (1994) criticized the Human Relations Approach as dealing with a superficial view of social and cultural diversity because unique differences in knowledge and areas of cultural conflict would be overlooked in the attempt to teach about commonalities in diverse cultures. These theorist admit to a strong preference for more social-reconstructionist approaches. However, the Human Relations Approach is based on well-accepted theories from general psychology and social psychology (Grant and Sleeter, 1997) and is more appropriate, in my judgment, to the mission of Lyndon House Arts Center and more appealing to a wider audience. I often hear expressions of prejudicial and hurtful attitudes so it seemed apparent to me that the Human Relations Approach was a good place to start.

3. Single Group Studies Approach: It promotes equality of the identified group and responds to research which shows that people grew in pride with knowledge about themselves. It is more confrontational than the Human Relations Approach. Even though the *Posada* focused solely on a Mexican tradition, it could not be characterized as a Single Group Approach because it lacked the element of self-examination of a culture against a dominant, oppressive culture.
4. Multicultural Education Approach: It strengthens and values cultural diversity and promotes social justice and equal opportunity. Emphasis is placed on

knowledge of the arts, literature and cultural perspectives of diverse groups. It usually includes bilingual education where appropriate. Many of the instructional methods and techniques of the Lyndon House programs followed this approach although the programs did not deeply explore the arts and perspectives of others. Simply the fact that the programs existed addressed the issue of equal opportunity by encouraging members of the Hispanic community to take advantage of the educational programs at the Lyndon House.

5. Education that is Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist: It embodies the Multicultural Education Approach with the additional goal of training students to be citizens who know how to actively work toward social justice issues. The Lyndon House programs did not have an element of social activism. The very pioneering nature of these programs seemed, at times, like social activism although social justice issues and how to solve them were not addressed. In the conclusion of the paper, some programs are briefly described as possible directions for future multicultural arts programs for the Lyndon House with an emphasis on social reconstruction.

Multicultural education is complex because it is so multifaceted. June McFee's (1998) explanation of the term culture illuminates its complexity and expresses why art is useful for understanding diverse cultures:

> The culture pattern of a group of people includes their learned and shared values, their concepts of reality and belief systems, their structure of social roles and acceptable behaviors, their expectations of how others will or should behave and

> how cohesive is the power of the group on the individual. It includes their rituals, symbols of communication, their art and patterns of design and habitat. It also impacts the way they learn to see, to think and to organize their reality. It includes how the self is seen in relation to the group. (p. 83)

McFee (1998) explained that art can help us understand "what cultural values, belief systems, sense of reality, organization of space, symbols and aesthetic preferences, as modified over time, are expressed in a people's art" (p. 85). A community arts center, by its mission and position of providing educational programs for the entire community, can be an excellent location to learn about diverse cultures.

This paper discusses specifically some of the program successes and examines how future programming might better reach the goals. It was discovered in the research that programs such as these could trivialize a culture or reinforce stereotypes if not done in an authentic manner. It is hoped that future programs, over time, will build an understanding of and value to our diverse community, and help our community members avoid hurtful prejudices and overgeneralizations.

CHAPTER 2

TOWARD INCLUSIVE AND AUTHENTIC MULTICULTURAL ARTS EDUCATION IN A COMMUNITY ARTS CENTER:

The community celebrates *La Posada*

On Saturday, December 8, 2001, The Lyndon House Arts Center welcomed community members to celebrate a modified Posada, or a Mexican Christmas Party. Over the course of planning we discovered how much richer and more authentic it was because Mexican and other Hispanic community members became part of the planning process and the event itself. This was an entirely new event for the arts center and the process unfolded like a story. The entire program was printed in English and Spanish (see Appendix B) as was the flyer advertising the event (see Appendix C). The following is the English version of the scheduled parts:

Welcome to
Lyndon House Arts Center
for a
Mexican Christmas
Saturday, December 8
6:30 – 9:00 p.m.

6:45	Legend of the Poinsettia	Community Room
6:30 – 9:00	Refreshments	Community Room
6:30 – 9:00	Crafts	Children's Studio
6:30 – 7:30	Loteria game	Painting Studio
7:30	*Piñata* (ages 5 and under)	Work Court
8:30	*Piñata* (ages 6 and up)	Work Court
8:30 – 9:00	Loteria game	Painting Studio

Analysis

The idea of the Mexican Christmas Party, or the Mexican *Posada* as we later renamed it in Spanish, at Lyndon House Arts Center, began as a welcoming gesture to the growing Mexican immigrant population in Athens. It was also intended as a way to promote positive feelings among diverse communities in the Athens area by discovering our common humanity through a celebration of Mexican Christmas traditions. Our objectives provided an occasion to present some Mexican food, music, crafts, games and *piñatas* as a way of valuing and presenting a small part of the Mexican cultural traditions to the whole community.

Another objective was to present the Lyndon House, an Athens-Clarke County facility, as a friendly place to which we hoped this newer population would return often. It was discovered early in the process how valuable community resources were in planning the event. Including people from the culture we were representing became a cornerstone. The depth of knowledge and experience they brought was found to be so essential that future multicultural events at Lyndon House Arts Center will begin with an advisory panel of people from the cultures we inlcude. I was su rprised and encouraged with the willingness these volunteers served.

The purpose of holding the *Posada* was not unlike the purpose of the study of anthropology as described by Clifford Geertz (1973). "Understanding a people's culture exposes their normalness without reducing their particularity. It renders them accessible" (p. 14). He explained that anthropology is an interpretation of culture, which brings us into touch with the lives of others so that we can establish a dialogue. The whole point of his approach is to help in gaining access to the conceptual world in which others live so

that we can, in some extended sense of the term, converse with them. While the *Posada* doesn't claim to be an anthropological study, and one celebration certainly does not render an understanding of culture, it was a small step toward bringing strangers together. It was with the hope that our common humanity, or normalness, would be discovered and our particularity would be appreciated.

The committment to the goals increased as I learned first hand about the distrust Mexican immigrants felt in their adopted city and misunderstandings, which existed among others in Athens. People's attitudes toward Mexican immigrants and themselves surfaced as I planned the event. For example, some people from Hispanic countries other than Mexico wanted us to make it a Latino event instead of Mexican because they wanted others in Athens to know that not everyone who was a native Spanish speaker was from Mexico. These were well educated people who experienced prejudicial attitudes and blamed it on the fact that people thought they were uneducated, and even illegal Mexicans because they spoke Spanish. While this was an excellent point, for this event, I wanted to focus just on Mexican traditions, because mixing too many cultures could lead to misunderstanding. We discussed having another event centered on perhaps Hispanic Mediterranean traditions.

An African-American asked, "Why Mexican Christmas? Why not Kwanza?" While a Kwanza event would be interesting and a worthy goal within our mission, the Georgia Museum of Art in Athens already has a Kwanza event, but not a Mexican event.

I also heard some confusion about who should attend the event. One small group of African American children came to me the day before and said they heard the party was "for white people and Mexicans." I explained to them that it was a party for

everyone who wanted to come but that children had to be accompained by an adult. After a long discussion of who was a "grown-up," four of these children came to the event, dressed in "Sunday best" with their 18-year-old cousin.

From our own community of supporters of the Lyndon House, we had only a few volunteers and participants. I thought I detected a lack of interest in the project, but in all fairness, it was a busy holiday weekend.

A Mexican parent laison working in the public schools confided in me how glad she was that Lyndon House Arts Center was sponsoring this community event because she was distressed that many people in Athens do not respect the Spanish-speaking people and "think we are all illegal" and a burden on the school and welfare system. This woman was well educated and well spoken and still received prejudicial treatment.

These expressions of prejudicial attitudes and hurtful behaviors show why multicultural education is important for a community. "Multicultural education emerged in the early 1960s out of the Civil Rights Movement as a means for reconstructing school and society" (Stuhr, 1994, p. 171). Sleeter and Grant (1999) likened multicultural education to "a tossed salad or a patchwork quilt" (p. 152):

> Each ingredient is dependent on the others but each is still unique; together the ingredients form a collective total that is distinguished by its diversity. Definitions suggest that cultural pluralism includes the maintenance of diversity, a respect for differences, and the right to participate actively in all aspects of society without having to give up one's unique identity. (p. 152-153)

Elizabeth Garber (1995) proposed immersing students in the history, myths, values, literature, political ideas, spirituality and the everyday lives of a culture. In her

example of study of Santa Barraza's painting, *La Malinche,* students investigated the political activities of Chicanos in combating racism, contemporary and historical Mexican-American culture, folk art, the history of the Spanish conquest over Mexico as well as daily life of Mexican-Americans. She proposed that by studying another culture in this way, students can partially assimilate the culture. This process of building knowledge and understanding of the culture of others and the students' own culture, would create a "borderland" where the two become an intersection and therefore more comprehensible. She made the analogy of building friendships over time. We don't develop into the same person as our friends, but "we value the way they do things, what they say, what they like and value," and "we grow to care and become connected" (p. 229).

Certainly the *Posada* and the other two multicultural projects provided an opportunity for learning to value and become connected to another culture as Garber described, and many aspects of another's culture were examined. However, they fell short of emersion because the contact between cultures was brief and limited in scope. Deep understanding could only be gained over a period of time and from many points of view. The *Posada* was a one evening event. However, the event was a beginning. Perhaps an event like this could be the culmination of or the beginning of a series of workshops which would examine the culture as Garber suggests. Garber's research indicated "to develop new ways of thinking and valuing, we need to be influenced by our interactions with the culture we are coming to understand" (p. 229). By reaching out, over time and with direct contact, it is possible to come to a meaningful understanding of a culture other than our own.

Garber (1995) and Sleeter and Grant (1999) might have been critical of the *Posada* saying that it "exoticized" the culture, setting up an "us" and "them" mindset; this is how "they" celebrate Christmas. However, the educators would have applauded the inclusion of Mexicans in planning and implementing the event. In describing the Human Relations Approach to multicultural education, Sleeter and Grant (1999) related that an effective technique is to invite a person from a particular group of interest to speak to the school or class. In the case of the Lyndon House programs, they were involved far more. "Using the 'real thing' – the live representation of the thing we wish to demonstrate – speaks far louder than the words we say" (p. 94). Stuhr (1992) and Garber (1995) are also advocates of involving the community and students when planning and implementing multicultural curricula.

Through my own ethnocentric lens, I organized an event around what I could find about the celebration from books and contacts in the community. I selected to teach or present what would work in the context of a community event within the Lyndon House facility with a time frame that fit my cultural expectations of a public event.

The Planning Process of the Posada

The planning process began with deciding what to include in the event so that it would be as authentic as possible and well attended by our target audiences. On a trip to Mexico, the county Arts Administrator noticed how much people enjoyed a good Mariachi band. We consulted with the owner and workers at La Parilla Taquerilla, a local Mexican Restaurant, to ask if a Mariachi would be appropriate. At this point, we were not linking the event to a specific celebration of the *Posada*, but rather a more

general Mexican celebration at Christmas. Through my broken Spanish and their broken English, they confirmed with us that an event with a Mariachi Band and some traditional food would be well attended by many people from the Mexican community. One man offered to help us find a good band.

We also consulted with the owners of *Los Compadres* Supermarket, a Mexican food and speciality store on Prince Avenue, to seek advice and support for our idea. (The words "los compadres" transulates to "friends.") The owners understood and spoke English well and said they usually provide a night of Mariachi for their patrons and would be happy to help us. They said they would contribute *ponche*, a traditional hot fruit punch, and sell us a *piñata* at a discount. We also asked if people would be likely to come on a Thursday night from 7 to 9 p.m. (a time the Lyndon House is normally open). They explained that many of "their people" worked the night shift, or often one adult in the family worked the night shift and one worked the day shift, so that Saturday night would be the best time to get a crowd together. So in the interest of accomplishing our goals, we set the event for Saturday night. At this point I knew it was crucial to consult with several more people from Mexico while planning the event to avoid other mistakes.

The arts administrator and I decided to have a Mariachi, food, ponche and a *piñata* for the children. I could have left it at that, but while we were going to all this trouble and expense, I wondered what else I could learn and present to the Athens community about the arts and culture of Mexico. I still understood the event through my ethnocentric understanding, although I did not realize it at this point.

Research taught me how limited my ideas were in planning the Mexican Christmas Party. Until I researched in the library, I did not realize how shallow a

presentation of the culture would be with only a Mariachi, food and *piñata*. Ross (1996) described a rich tradition of a community festival, *Las Posadas*, the history and practice of *naciementos*, (arranging nativity figures) and *piñata*, music and food traditions of Mexico.

Posadas are religious community wide Christmas celebrations whose traditions dated back to when the Spanish conquered the Aztecs and Mayans. They began with a blending or absorption of Christian customs with the Indian customs. *Posada*, a word meaning "inn," is a religious celebration based on the Biblical scripture of Luke 2:1-7 where Mary and Joseph seek shelter for the night upon their return to Bethlehem for the census. The baby Jesus is laid in a manger because there was no room in the inn. In traditional *Las Posadas* children dress as Mary and Joseph and go with parents and others in the neighborhood from house to house asking for or singing traditional songs for shelter. In a preplanned response, several houses refuse to let them in, but at last, one house invites everyone in for a celebration with music, food and a *piñata*. It is customary for the ceremony to be recreated for nine nights (Ross, 1996, p. 23 – 26). (See Appendix D for a more complete description)

Because Lyndon House Arts Center is a government facility, I knew a religious celebration was not possible, so I looked for parts of the *Posada* that could be celebrated at the Lyndon House. At this point, we still planned to call it a Mexican Christmas Party or Fiesta Mexicano. I also looked for other Mexican customs to include in our celebration, which were part of Christmas or family celebrations. I knew that what I was in the process of planning was a far cry from a traditional *Posada*, but hoped to present a family oriented event highlighting some traditions in Mexico. As I reflect now, I realize

that I chose the parts to create my idea of a good public event, which might be attended by about 200 to 300 people. I needed to plan how a large number of people could move through parts of the Lyndon House so that activities for families would be scattered throughout the building, not overcrowding any of the spaces. Focusing on these considerations, my desire for authenticity was compromised with my deisre for a good public event.

It wasn't until I spoke with a recent immigrant who serves the hospital as a liason to the Spanish speaking community, that we decided to call it a Mexican *Posada.* Asking for her assistance, I told her about some of the components of the event. She said that as the years have passed the traditional *Posada* has become less religious in practice, and the event could be called a *Posada*, particularly in spirit because we were inviting the community to the Lyndon House for music, food and a *piñata*, which are all integral parts of modern *Las Posadas*. According to the documentation of George Ancona (1995) who describes fiestas that Hispanic people celebrate for generations after leaving the old country, "*Las Posados* brings neighbors together to share in a traditional fiesta and the warmth of friendship" (p. 20). In many places "revelers are joined by many non-Hispanic neighbors, who have adopted the fiesta and taken part every year" (p. 20). So, in the way the event brought Athens community members together in the spirit of welcoming friendship, it was like a *Posado.*

Responses to my question, "What shall we plan to eat?" at the *Posada* were varied. Apparently there is "no set menu," but there are some very traditional dishes that are most common. It would be like Thanksgiving in the United States. Most everyone thinks of turkey and dressing, but many also think of cornbread while others think of

yeast rolls; many think of sweet potates while others think of mashed white potatoes and so on. Most traditional to *Las Posadas* are *tamales* and *Ponche* according to my community resources. Other very traditional foods suggested were Mexican hot chocolate and *bunuelos*, but the owner of Taquerillo LaParilla, who offered to help prepare the food, said *tamales* would be best because they can be made ahead and steamed just before serving. Tamales are combinations of meat, cheese and pepper wrapped in water soaked leaves from corn that are first spread with cornmeal dough. The tamales are rolled, folded and steamed in a big pot (Lomas Garza, 1990). Mexican hot chocolate and *bunuelos* (fried dough) were best made in smaller batches. We added traditional tres leches (three milk cake), flautas, chips and salsa because they could be prepared in large quantities. So, once again tradition was compromised for a large public event, but all the food served was traditional Mexican food. A bilingual volunteer helped order the food, to insure the proper quantities were ordered and also made arrangements for delivery of the food.

Lining up the Mariachi Band was a cultural learning experience for me. I obtained the name of a band from the owners of the *Los Compadres* supermarket and called myself to make the arrangements. Between my broken Spanish and the leader's broken English, I thought we reached an agreement on day, price and time. I sent him a contract. As it turns out I misunderstood his name and wrote it incorrectly on the contract. That may have been one reason he did not sign it and sent it back. After a few weeks, I began to call weekly, asking if he was still interested in coming and would he please return the contract. He always said, "*Mañana, señora,*" (tomorrow, miss) as a promise for returning the contract. Early in November, I was no longer willing to accept

"*mañana*" so I enlisted the help of a native Spanish speaking volunteer, who called on my behalf. She found out about the misspelling and also concluded that he was waiting for a better offer from someone else, for which she chastised him sternly in Spanish. I still do not know exactly what she said. Armed with a list of Mariachi bands that I obtained from a Mexican cultural center in Atlanta, the volunteer helped me call until we found a Mariachi Band. With her help, I wrote a correct contract that was returned promptly. She had a way of speaking to the bandleader with much greater authority than I had. My volunteer suspected that the Mariachi band would rather play to an audience of Latinos than North Americans, and the former band may have made the assumption that the audience would be as clueless as I seemed to be. Without the help of a native speaker, the *Posada* may have been without a Mariachi.

The celebration also included luminarias; a bingo-like game called *La Loteria* played in Mexico; a reading of *The Legend of the Poinsettia*; a call for *naciementos*, which are figurines of Mary and Joseph and others who are part of the Biblican Christmas story; a *piñata*, and three crafts. Excluded were the traditional songs of *Las Posadas* and the religious procession. All of theses parts were traditionally Mexican, but many were not part of a *Posada*. This could have caused a misunderstanding of the festival. A word inserted into the program to indicate it was a conglomeration of traditions would have been appropriate.

Luminaries or *farolitos* are small lanterns consisting of a candle set inside a paper bag, which we used to line the walkway up to the doorway the night of the *Posada*. Ancona (1995) documents how Mexican-Americans in many villages line the streets with *farolitos* during *Las Posadas*. In other places, people carry transparent paper lanterns

attached to a long stick with a candle inside, which are called *faroles*. Ross (1976) describes *faroles* and fireworks in Mexican celebrations, but not luminaries. Lomas Garza (1991) in her painting *Posada* showed a procession of neighbors each holding a lit candle. I decided on luminarias because they were inexpensive and safe. Fireworks are illegal in Georgia and candles for each person would have been too expensive and too dangerous in a large crowd.

The bingo-like game *La Loteria* was planned as an interesting activity for children and an opportunity for everyone to hear Spanish words and learn a little about this Mexican tradition. Amalia Mesa-Bains, in an introduction of Lomas Garza's book (1991) *A Piece of My Heart,* described the pictures and words on each card as a "cosmology of cultural meaning" (p. 20). After reading about the game, I was surprised and delighted that I could buy the game at *Los Compadres* Supermarket, in Athens. The game made a good activity for a large event because the instructions were easy to understand, it was quick to play so everyone who wanted to play could, and there were small prizes for the winners. However, the game is not part of a traditional *Posada* and is played at other family gatherings. Once again, I compromised the authenticity of the *Posada* to create my ethnocentric idea of a holiday event. Game playing is part of my family's tradition at Christmas. I wonder if the guests from Mexico felt as I would feel if they planned a traditional North American Christmas event and included an egg hunt? (See Figure 1 for examples of Loteria cards)

Figure 1. Loteria Cards. Cards like the *tabla* on the left are given to each player. From a deck of cards, like the ones on the right, the caller calls out the name and number of each picture. If a player has that picture on his/her card, or *tabla*, then he/she covers it. The first player to cover four in a row, up or down, wins.

The poinsettia plant, part of the traditional celebration of Christmas in the United States and Mexico, is native to Mexico and its legend (See Appendix E) is a Mexican Christmas tradition. The plant bears the name of Dr. Joel Robert Poinsett, the first U.S. ambassador to Mexico and an amateur botanist, who sent cuttings back to South Carolina in 1825. A botanist propagated and classified the plant, and it now bears the name Poinsettia after the ambassador. In Mexico it is still called *Flor de la Noche Buena*, or Flower of Christmas Eve (Palfrey, 1996).

To call attention to this flower and to emphasize the idea of cultures coming together, two people read *The Legend of the Poinsettia,* as retold by Tomie DePaola in English and Spanish to children. Once again, reading a story is not part of a *Posada*, but in the interest of cultural learning and a good public event, I included it. My volunteers

from Mexico were concerned about violating copyright laws but not about the authenticity of including the story.

Part of a traditional *Posada* that I was unable to include was *naciementos*. These are small figurines of the baby Jesus, Mary, Joseph, wisemen, angels, and other figures and objects. *Naciementos* are dispalyed in the home, often in an elaborate arrangement. During a *Posada*, children often offer small gifts of flowers or fruit and make a little speech to the Infant Jesus (Ross, 1976). I asked several people to help me find someone who would display *naciementos* during the *Posada*, and even advertised this in the superintendent's letter to all teachers in the district, hoping someone would set one up for the celebration at the Lyndon House. No one offered. My volunteers conjectured that some naciementos were so personally valuable that people would be afraid of theft, or perhaps naciementos were too private and sacred to show to the public. One volunteer pointed out that some families were too poor to own a set.

Both Ancona (1995) and Ross (1991) include the *piñata* as part of a traditional *Posada* celebration. A *piñata* is a hollow form usually made of paper or paper mache and decorated with colorful crepe or tissue paper. During a special occasion, especially when children are present, they are filled with candy and other treats. When the children break them open, the "goodies" inside fall to the ground and everyone scurries to gather as many as possible. The most traditional shape is a star, but shapes range from donkeys and parrots to all sorts of modern cartoon and super hero characters. The size and quality vary from a simple sheet of tissue paper wrapping up a few pieces of candy, to huge, elaborate sculptures created over a long period of time by people in a village for the special occasion (Ross, 1976). The *piñata* is tied to a long rope and hung through a

pulley or over a sturdy tree limb so that the person tending the *piñata* can manouver it to make sure it is not easily opened by the first few people swinging the stick, giving most all the children a chance to hit the *piñata*. Everyone sings a traditional *piñata* song while a child is swinging the stick to break it. (See Appendix F)

The owners of *Los Compadres* Supermarket sold me two *piñatas* at a discount as promised, and I chose the traditional star and donkey. Then they generously gave me a small *piñata* as a gift. They also loaned me a long blue rope to attach it, and instructed me on how to cut it open and fill it. One owner suggested that I fill it with individually wrapped hard candies.

Carmen Lomas Garza wrote about the tradition of *papel picado*, or cut paper art, which is used as decorations for special occasions in Mexican and Mexican American villages. For Lomas Garza, it is a serious art form. Lomas Garza's painting *La Feria en Reynosa* (Lomas Garza, 1991, p. 45) showed how the cut paper banners are strung across a rope and hung at festivals. It has a long tradition in Mexico because thousands of years ago in Mexico artisans created banners from paper made from bark (Lomas Garza, 1999).

Inspired by Lomas Garza's painting showing the cut paper banners as decorations for festivals, I decided to include them as part of the decorations for the *Posada*. When I discovered how easy they were to create, I also made it an activity for families so they could cut their own. Using Lomas Garza's instructions in *Making Magic Windows* (Lomas Garza, 1999) a group of volunteers and I created over 50 of these *banderitas*, as they are called in Spanish. They are not part of the *Posada* tradition, and once again including them was a compromise to make the Lyndon House event what was my idea of a good family event. This compromised the authenticity of the *Posada*.

We strung the banners in the children's studio and across the two story high Atrium Gallery where the Mariachi band played. To my ethnocentric eye, they were a colorful addition. After the event I asked one of my Hispanic friends if they were appropriate. She told me they were typical decorations in small towns and villages in Mexico and some people might use them for a *Posada*, but she liked them at the Lyndon House event. She was not nearly as concerned with authenticity as I was.

Another craft in the children's room, *Ojos de Dios*, or God's Eyes, is based on a ritual of the Huichol Indians, who live in a mountainous part of western Mexico. Ross (1991) included the craft with its history and directions as part of a Mexican Christmas celebration, but not a *Posada*. The Huichol Indians, who are not Christians, give thanks for the new harvest of corn with a sacrificial ritual. Part of the preparation of offerings to the gods includes making "gods eyes" of yarn wound in a special way around two sticks. The Lyndon House staff decided to include this craft at the last minute because we were concerned there would not be enough to do in the Children's studio. If I could "undo" anything about the *Posada*, I would not have included this craft without consulting the group of Hispanic volunteers. The *Posada* is based on Christian customs, and this custom might be offensive. It was insensitive for us to include this without checking. Once again, the priority of creating a good public event compromised its authenticity.

Volunteers: Key to the success of the Posada

The *Posada* was successful because of the generosity of volunteers, many who were Hispanic. One volunteer took some beautiful paper flowers off the walls in her school to use as decorations for the *Posada*. The parent laisons in each of the Clarke County

schools helped by encouraging Mexican immigrant families to attend. Through their efforts about 200 native Spanish-speaking people came from the schools. Another 100 or so were from other parts of the Athens community.

A University of Georgia student from Colombia who was not confident in her English, but was very happy to put her native Spanish to use, volunteered as a greeter and placed bilingual signs in front of every room. Members of the Cedar Shoals High School Spanish Club helped decorate the day before and attended to the crafts the night of the event. The owners of *Los Compadres* Supermarket not only made a huge pot of *ponche*, a hot fruit punch, but also worked in their store that night so that their grown children could attend. Three generations of another family and their friends attended to *La Loteria* and the *piñata*. Others translated, advised and documented the event with photographs. Our security guard, also a native Spanish speaker, directed people in the parking lot and kept people from parking in a near-by tow-away zone.

The Posada Event

The event began at 6:30. I was lighting the *luminarias*, which lined the walkways and entrance to the Lyndon House, when I heard Spanish spoken along the walkways. My heart leap for joy, for until that moment, I was unsure if we had reached our audience.

The Mariachi band, due to play at seven, arrived a half hour early, and as I had been told by some, they expected to eat before they perfomed. I was ready with special sandwiches made especially for them by La Taquerillo LaParilla, but they preferred the flautas, chips, salsa and tamales. They kept the sandwhiches to take home.

Two volunteer greeters, one a native Spanish speaker, gave program to guests as they arrived (See Appendix B). People were directed to the community room where the bilingual reading of *The Legend of the Poinsettia* was held beginning at 6:45. The room filled quickly, and others were directed to other activities if they did not have children with them. The story was well done by our arts administrator and a volunteer. Children sat on the floor in front of the readers and adults stood in back. When the story was finished, food was served and the Mariache band began to play. There were also the three crafts, described previously, in the children's studio (See Figures 2 and 3 for activities in the children's studio) and the game, *La Loteria*, in another studio. The spaces filled with people in greater numbers than I dared to imagine and for the first time, I heard as much Spanish spoken as English in the Lyndon House.

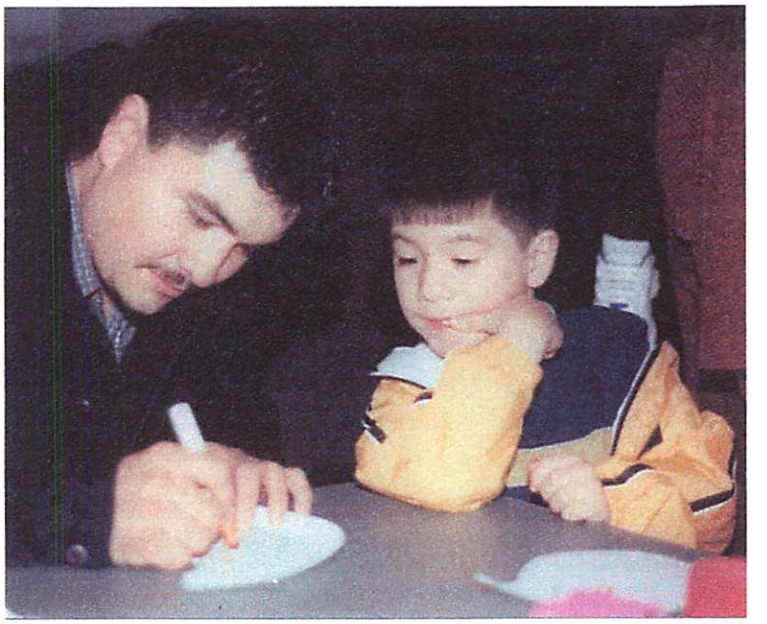

Figure 2. Son watches father create hat in the children's studio the night of the Posada.

Figure 3. Participants fold tissue paper in preparation for cutting paper banners (*Papel Picado*) in the children's studio during the Posada.

Volunteers served food, which went more quickly than I planned because of the larger crowd and because some people heaped their plates full several times. I wish I had asked the volunteer to serve the plates with a modest amount of food rather than have a buffet line. Most of the food was eaten within the first hour. (See Figure 4 for food table)

Figure 4. Festive Food. During the Posada participants ate traditional Mexican party food of flautas, chips and salsa, tamales and tres leches cakes.

The Mariachi band, Mariachi Jalisco, began playing at 7:00 p.m. Their music filled the Atrium gallery, where they played, without amplification. In fact, people could hear the music from the community room and the other studios where activities took place. The five musicians were dressed alike in short, formal white jackets trimmed with golden ornaments, white collared shirts with large scarf-like bow ties. Their trousers were striped along the sides with gold ornamentation and fitted at the waist with cumberbuns. From the reaction of many of the volunteers, the Mariachi band played

excellent music. The band had a distinctive sound, which may have been unfamiliar to some of the non-Hispanic audience. (See Figure 5)

Figure 5. Mariachi Jalisco. The music of the five-piece mariachi filled the gallery space with music. Participants in other parts of the building could also hear the lively sounds.

The volunteers who promised a donation of *ponche*, did not deliver it on schedule. I began to get worried and enlisted the help of one of my volunteers, thinking they might have had trouble following directions to the Lyndon House. The volunteer, who was a native of Mexico, informed me that a schedule is not as important in her culture as it is here. She wasn't surprised that the *ponche* arrived late, but she assured me that it would be delivered. The *ponche* arrived one hour and a half after the event began. Actually, that worked out well since most of our food had been eaten by then.

La Loteria game was very popular as long as the prizes lasted. Families played while others created crafts in another location. One entire Spanish speaking family, from

children to grandparents, helped with *La Loteria* and it was so successful that I ran out of prizes within one hour.

When the band took its break, the children and adults gathered outside for the *piñata*. As is customary in Mexico, we had one *piñata* for the younger children and another for the older children. Some interesting and unplanned cultural learning occurred during the *piñata* breaking at the Lyndon House. One Hispanic volunteer lined the children up according to size, the smallest first. I did not know about that custom. Then, before the first child's turn to swing at the *piñata*, a man from Mexico I had never met, asked for the attention of the crowd and explained that the breaking of the *piñata* was a symbolic act. The *piñata* represented something to be destroyed like evil or a bad habit, and when you destroy it, good things come out. People began singing the *piñata* song first in Spanish, then in English, as the children took turns swinging the stick hoping to break it open. (See Appendix F for words to the *piñata* song). (See Figure 6). Both *piñatas* were broken long before 8:30, which was the time printed on the program for the older children's *piñata.*

Figure 6 a. Piñata Children line up for a chance to whack open the piñata with a stick. Volunteer on right leads clapping and the piñata song. Volunteer on left keeps the piñata from being opened by first few children. Piñata rope is usually over a tree limb

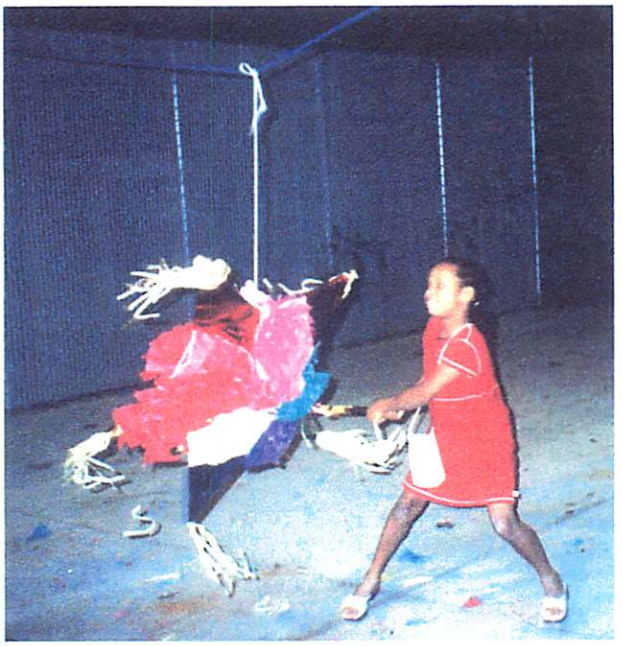

Figure 6 b. Piñata
A child gives the piñata a good whack. When someone breaks it open, the candy inside falls out and the other children scramble to the ground to get some. Usually, children are blindfolded, but there were so many children at the Posada that we were afraid people would get hurt, so we did not use a blindfold.

As people returned inside after both *piñatas* were broken, many went into the children's studio to make crafts and others went to watch the Mariachi band or have a cup of *ponche*.

The band facilitated the idea of bringing people together toward the end of their performance by leading the Christmas Carol *Silent Night* in both Spanish and English, as well as singing the popular song *I Want to Wish You a Merry Christmas* in both languages.

At 8:45, the Mariachi, who were contracted to play until 9:00, disbanded and asked for their pay. They had done an excellent job and perhaps deserved to go home a little early. As the crowd left for the evening, I got one final reward. A woman hugged me with tears in her eyes and said she couldn't thank us enough even though she used superlative after superlative after superlative. She said that her family and her "people" were homesick for Mexico, even though they liked their new home, and for one evening

she felt she had returned to Mexico. Sleeter and Grant (1999) found that presenting people with positive information about their own group was a good technique in the Human Relations Approach to develop positive concepts within individuals and to reduce stereotyping and prejudice. A successful Human Relations Approach gives correct information, as the event tried to do, and stresses the commonality of people as well as individuality. From the reaction of this guest and others, the *Posada* sucessfully met these goals. In the above description of the *Posada*, the individualities of the culture were described, but the commonalities were that participants, reagardless of culture, expressed enjoyment in the storytelling, music, food, *piñata*, family games and crafts. It is surmised that cultural learning took place through attendance of the event.

Evaluation of the Posada Event

Sleeter and Grant (1999) cautioned against a "tourism curriculum" which superficially celebrates a holiday or culture without communicating a real understanding about the people in that culture. Because of time limitations of a public event, some stereotyping and superficiality is probably inevitable, but involvement by community members can minimize oversimplification. Working and playing along side of each other, as in the planning and during the event, helps create a real understanding. Sleeter and Grant (1999) criticized the Human Relations Approach for not going far enough in addressing social inequalities and empowering a group to address them. However, an argument can be made that just by participating in a community-wide government sponsored event, people were expanding their opportunity for education and involvement.

That in itself is a step toward empowerment. Hopefully, too, some of the distrust of the government documented earlier was made less.

The planning for the Posada, as mentioned earlier, evolved as I discovered the wealth of information that people from Mexico brought to the planning and implementation process. On the following page is a list of what I did and what I wish I had done in retrospect.

What I Did

1. Consulted with local business owners about the feasibility of having a Mexican Christmas Party.

2. Researched Mexican Christmas traditions and family celebration traditions.

3. Contacted Mariachi on the phone.

4. Consulted with other recent Mexican immigrants about contents of the event and asked them to help me with Mariachi, food, publicity, translations.

5. Contacted High School Spanish Club to help decorate and volunteer the night of the event.

6. Contacted the University of Georgia seeking Spanish-speaking volunteers to help the night of event.

7. Contacted the Leisure Services volunteer coordinator to find volunteers to help make luminaries. She had a difficult time finding volunteers.

A Better Way (In hindsight)

1. Research Mexican Christmas traditions in library. I recommend doing this first so one can ask better questions.
2. Form an advisory committee of 6 to 12 people who are recent immigrants from Mexico and other interested people such as the high school Spanish Club. Potential members can be found in schools, community and church programs serving special needs in the Hispanic population, University of Georgia Foreign Students Organizations.
3. Meet with committee to discuss the goals of the Lyndon House event. Ask them for suggestions. Group discussions could be built in a creative process.
4. Brainstorm with committee on type of event, food, decorations, and other activities to facilitate sharing of cultural knowledge.
5. Have committee members suggest and find people to help with the various parts. Urge committee members to include other people they know who would like to help. Make the planning process inclusive and part of the cultural learning.
6. Assign native speakers to line up Mariachi, food, publicity within the Hispanic community and other tasks that are very difficult for Lyndon House staff.
7. Find volunteers to help with decorations and hosting if there are not enough from the advisory committee and their contacts.
8. Insert a note into program explaining more about a traditional Posada.

CHAPTER TWO

ART CAMP: LOS DIAS DIVERTIDOS

Objectives

The summer of 2001 was the first time Lyndon House Arts Center attempted to reach out to the community of people newly immigrated from Mexico and other places in Latin America. Through a week-long summer arts camp for children ages 6 – 12, I planned a curriculum, which would highlight arts and culture from several parts of Latin America and bring together teachers from Latin America to participate in the lesson planning and the instruction. The teachers taught and used Spanish on a daily basis while teaching the lessons.

In addition, the Lyndon House offered 10 scholarships for children from newly immigrated Spanish speaking families who would not be able to attend otherwise. We implemented a program through the elementary schools' liaisons to identify scholarship recipients based on need, interest and ability. The liaisons also helped parents arrange transportation for the children.

One objective for the week was for children to learn about the culture, both modern and historic, of Latin America. By looking at a variety of art forms from the past and present, and discussing daily life, it was planned that children would discover differences and similarities, and the role art plays in their lives and in the lives of Latin Americans. "The visual arts are a means of communicating, teaching and transmitting these cultural ideas and values" (McFee & Degge,1997, p. 272).

Another objective was for children from different cultural backgrounds to work cooperatively to cultivate respect and appreciation of each other's artistic expressions and

backgrounds. Sanford (1996) stressed the importance of the cooperative attitude in multiculturalism. Preferring to call it diversity, she said that "it brings everyone in at the same level" (p.7) so that one culture isn't presented as more advanced or valued than another. Each teacher's lessons and approach placed value without judgment on the art processes investigated by the children. Critical thinking skills were practiced as children compared one work of art to another and to ideas or art in their own world. Also, the technique of having the children interact in small groups, while working on ideas for their art forms, put into practice the concept that everyone's viewpoints were valued. Children, however, are often quick to advance one person's work above another's simply because they admire the drawing ability of a particular person. Observing this, teachers worked constantly delighting in all the work and affirming each person's mode of expression.

Sleeter and Grant (1999) described the goals of a multicultural educational program that was very similar to the goals of *Los Dias Divertidos*. They "organize concepts around contributions and perspectives of several different groups; teach critical thinking, analysis of alternative viewpoints; make curriculum relevant to student's experiential backgrounds; promote use of more than one language" (p. 171). This is exactly what the Lyndon House tried to do.

Fostering cooperation in learning is one of the instructional techniques identified by Sleeter and Grant (1994) as especially effective in the multicultural and human relations approaches. Summarizing numerous studies, they showed that students were likely to select groups based more on friendship than ethnicity, and that academic achievement and personal relationships were improved by this method. Since the camp was only one week long and not part of a school's academic program, learning was

evaluated informally. The instructors and I observed that the small groups allowed students to get to know each other as individuals and gave an opportunity for personal expression. Grant and Sleeter (1997) identified these outcomes as a value of small group learning.

Latin music selected and played by the instructors as well as frequent bilingual instruction was intended to add to the cultural learning. It was intended that Hispanic children would identify with these parts of the curriculum more closely than those in the dominant culture. It was hoped this strategy would give these children a sense of familiarity and comfort that they do not usually find in government institutions, such as the Lyndon House, and therefore would help them feel welcomed.

The title of the camp, "*Los Dias Divertidos*," is translated in English to "The Fun Days." After much thought, we gave the title a Spanish name to reflect the Hispanic content of the camp and decided to insert the word "fun" instead of the more obvious word "art" for two reasons. First, we wanted to emphasize that it would be participatory and therefore fun, and secondly, from an ethnocentric viewpoint, we liked the word "*divertidos*" because, through our ethnocentric ears, it reminded us of the English word "diversity," which was an underlying objective.

Staff participants and curriculum overview

The following is the schedule we followed:

Monday through Thursday

9:00 – 9:40 a.m.	Gathering time: games & presentations by special guests
9:40 - 11:00	Groups*
11:00 – 11:20	Snacks on North Lawn
11:20 – 12:45 p.m.	Groups
12:45 – 1:30 p.m.	Lunch on North Lawn
1:30 – 2:45 p.m.	Groups
2:45 – 3:00 p.m.	Clean up and gather in front of building for dismissal.

*Red Group met with teacher 1, then teacher 2, then teacher 3
Blue Group met with teacher 2, then teacher 3, then teacher 1
Green Group met with teacher 2, then teacher 1, then teacher 2
Three teachers shared one teacher position.
Each group had an assistant who stayed with the same group all week.
On Friday, the schedule was adjusted. Each Group meeting was 10 minutes shorter to allow for a 30 minute "parent sharing time" from 2:30 – 3:00 p.m. Parents were invited to hear about the week's activities and see an exhibition of children's works.

From several different viewpoints of a diverse staff, the camp explored the role art plays in life. Three additional visitors to the camp brought enrichment to the students' experiences also.

An art education graduate student from the University of Georgia, and her mother, a native of Guatemala, presented, with visuals and a participatory project, an ancient tradition still practiced today in some places in Guatemala and other Latin American countries. On Easter morning, elaborate carpets of flower pedals line the streets. Artisans work all night to create highly decorative patterns of flowers on the

streets that connect to the churches. After Easter mass in Guatemala, the carpets provide the path for the processional through town. The children attending the art camp created replicas of simple flower carpets, with flower petals and tissue paper that substituted for colors they did not have in flowers. They worked in small groups on the floor of the Atrium Gallery. Students could view their work from the second floor. The graduate student led a short discussion of temporary art to build an understanding that some artwork is made to last only a short time, because the flower carpets had to be cleaned up at the end of the day. (See Figure 7)

Figure 7 a. Flower Carpet. Children created a design on a grid of a flower carpet like those found on the streets of Guatemala on Easter morning. They used real flower petals supplemented by small pieces of tissue paper substituting for colors they didn't have in flowers.

Figure 7 b. Flower Carpet. Viewed from the Upper Atrium Gallery, the flower pattern is easy to see. A picture of an actual flower carpet, which served as the children's inspiration, is on the lower right corner.

After creating the flower carpets, her father, took the children outside for a *piñata* breaking. This tradition, which I thought was Mexican, is part of festivities in Guatemala and other Latin American countries as well.

A fiber artist who is also an historical interpreter, specialized in teaching Latin American hand spinning and weaving. She helped children understand and participate in the weaving process from start to finish. She began with bringing in a sheep and an angora goat for them to see and touch. Next they learned to wash, card and spin the fleece, dye the yarn, make a simple back strap loom and weave their own yarn. (See Figure 8) This instruction was enriched with visuals and dialogue about the ancient weaving of the Aztecs, ancestors of Mexicans, and a story of how the Spanish settlers mistook it for silk because it was so fine.

Figure 8. Weaving. This girl proudly shows off the back strap loom that she created herself. The yarn she is weaving into the loom is some she carded and made into yarn with a drop spindle. Some participants dyed the yarn with cool-aid, which is not a traditional material, but much safer than other dyes.

In addition, with the help of the Hispanic staff and a volunteer, the instructor created a bilingual chart of spinning and weaving terms in Spanish and English. (See Appendix G) Her husband, a professor of Spanish philosophy during the school year, sat with the children and conversed, while teaching simple Spanish words and sentences. Another volunteer, the older sister of one of the scholarship recipients, also enhanced the informal learning environment. She caught on quickly to the processes and was able to give hands-on help to younger children.

An instructor who is a native of the Dominican Republic, presented music she enjoyed as a child and an adult while living in the Dominican Republic. She played recordings while the children made two kinds of simple percussion instruments, which they later used to keep the beat to a variety of Latino music. (See Figure 9) She also spoke to the group as a whole about some of her favorite activities as a child in the Dominican Republic showing photographs of the sandy beaches where she played.

Figure 9. Musician. This boy created his own percussion instruments and is playing to the rhythm of music the instructor brought from the Dominican Republic.

Another teacher, an artist from Colombia, instructed the two older groups on the use and design of ancient Pre-Colombian masks, a special interest of hers. Visuals from books were available all week and the students were influenced by these designs when constructing their own masks. She also spoke to the group as a whole about nursery rhymes she learned as a child. The children compared them to nursery rhymes they knew.

Yet another teacher, a musician and artist and a native of New Jersey, spent a significant amount of time in Ecuador and Mexico. She also has an academic background in cultural learning through the arts. Her contribution was to tell about her experiences in Mexico and Ecuador, showing personal articles she collected while there, and to help the children create murals. After a short study of Diego Rivera and the contemporary Mexican mural making tradition, she helped students understand that mural making today, as then, can unite neighbors and be a catalyst for community revitalization and change. She showed pictures of murals from contemporary Mexico and Athens. As the children planned ideas and colors for their murals, they worked cooperatively and creatively. (See Figure 10) She instructed them to listen to each person's ideas. Each group created two murals, one on each side of a large wooden door. She instructed children to be influenced by the recorded Latino music she played. The murals were later exhibited at the Athens public library and Fourth Street Elementary School.

This instructor also led several interactive games, which were played as a group first thing in the morning during gathering time. The purpose of the games was to encourage learning Spanish words and phrases as well as learning each other's names, likes and dislikes. The games were also designed to help the children interact with each other.

Figure 10. Mural: The Road to Friendship. These participants created two murals, one on each side of the door. The instructor promoted working in groups while listening and valuing each other's ideas. The results were very unique creations for each of the three groups.

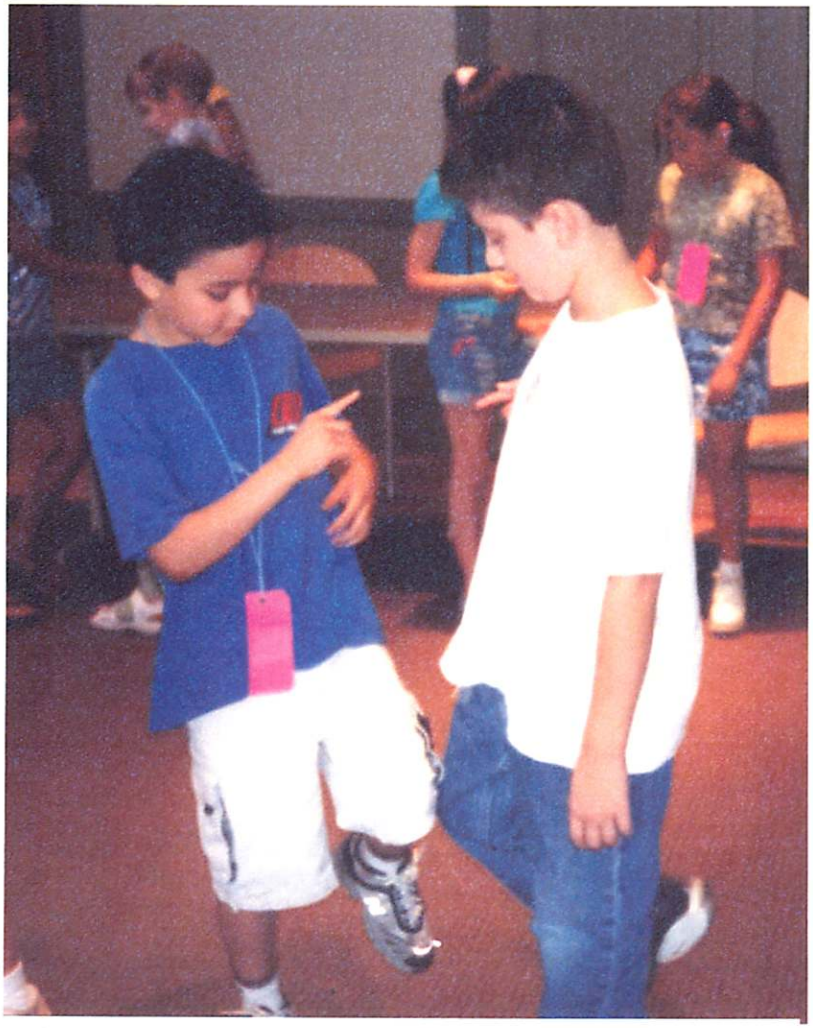

Figure 11. Bilingual game. These boys partnered "knee to knee" or *"rodilla a rodilla."*

In one of the games, pictured in Figure 11, the caller called out *"rodilla a rodilla"* and "knee to knee" and children found a partner to match knee to knee. Then the caller called out *"codo a codo"* and "elbow to elbow" and children found a different partner to match elbow to elbow. The game continued with hands, feet and other body parts.

Toward the end of the game, the caller used just the Spanish words, and those who knew Spanish took the lead.

A local Athens coffee roaster came to the camp one morning to help the children and staff learn about the process of roasting coffee and how important the coffee crop is to many countries in Latin America. He told the children about a coffee farmer's cooperative he was organizing in Ecuador to help the small farmers make a better living from the coffee they grow. Before roasting the coffee, children could touch and smell the green coffee beans. They commented that the beans were about the same color as the walls at the Lyndon House. They compared the aroma of light roasted coffee to dark roasted, as it was roasted in two batches at the Lyndon House. With both green and brown coffee beans, children created collages and added some coffee beans to their murals. They also used pinto beans and rice in their collages because these are also agricultural products of Latin America.

Yet another guest, a native of Costa Rica and currently an artist and businessman in Athens, spoke to the children about his experiences growing up and going to school in Costa Rica. He compared how things were different and the same as in Athens. He also visited the classes one day to participate with children in painting murals.

Three art education majors worked as assistants, two who were native of Georgia and from the University of Georgia, and one who was a native of Russia, but a student at Georgia State University. Each brought to the experience a deep caring to help children in their art making process and much needed organizational help.

Children, both male and female, had a variety of role models during the camp, and from different parts of the world. Grant and Sleeter (1997) advocated a diversity of

role models as part of a good multicultural education. All of the instructors were artists, by the nature of the camp. We did not have people who were openly gay or lesbian or with disabilities, but the opportunity to interact with people from around the world was very appropriate for this particular art experience.

Student participants

There were 32 student participants. Eight of the ten scholarship recipients from the Hispanic community attended the weeklong camp. Two of the Hispanic children arrived and left in a taxi, which was a financial commitment of the family and points out the need for transportation to programs. One of the older sisters who drove some other children stayed to be a volunteer. Twenty-four other children enrolled. Even this sector came from diverse backgrounds: Three whose parents were from Asia, two whose parents were from Poland, two whose parents were from India, and three African-Americans. There was about an equal number of boys and girls. They ranged in age from 6 to 12 and were grouped with children of similar chronological age. There were no chronic attention or behavior problems. In fact, the attention and level of work from these children amazed the instructors.

The children who were native Spanish speakers could all speak English well but tended to group together at lunchtime, which also incorporated a free playtime. Other children seemed more likely to select friends by age and interest.

Evaluation

Instructors and guests with such diverse backgrounds who were willing to teach about their countries and traditions lent authenticity to this educational experience. The respect with which they were received probably came from the modeling of respect by other instructors as well as the enthusiasm and caring with which lessons were delivered. The process of creating art, the attitude of instructors that art is a vehicle of cultural and individual expression and the respect shown each person and culture were the strengths of the week's activities. Planning for children to work together to creatively solve problems as in the flower carpet, mural and music making projects as well as the games encouraged dialogue and a sense of ownership among all children. An error to "exoticize" (Garber, 1995, p. 222), or make a culture seem strange and foreign, setting up an "us" and "them" point of view, was mostly avoided by the attitudes and techniques of appreciating diversity.

When each instructor and guest told his/her own story, children could differentiate the countries and hopefully the time periods of each story. However, compacting them into a week's time frame may have created the confusion of "homogenizing" on the part of some learners. Review and comparisons each day as well as viewing a time line, a world map and discussion would have helped students differentiate . Garber (1995), citing Jose David Saldivar, cautioned against "homogenizing" cultures, saying that lumping all of Latin America together, or Spanish-speaking countries together, would cause confusion and "deny the cultural distinctions between the groups and

individuals within each group" (p. 220). Similarly, she cautions, "We should be careful not to confound the past and the present of a cultural group" (p. 219).

In organizing the camp, every effort was made to assure good communication to the Spanish-speaking parents. A description of the experience, dates, times, how to register, the scholarship, and a registration form were created in Spanish and sent home for the parents' approval. (See Appendix G) Each morning, I greeted Spanish-speaking parents in my limited Spanish. Two families came to the Friday afternoon parent sharing time, and with all those native Spanish-speaking staff members, we did the entire explanation of the camp in English! It was a definite oversight, and not in the spirit of the experience. Although it was an unintentional oversight, it could have been taken as disrespectful. It was a blemish on what otherwise was an educationally exceptional week. As if to tell us all not to get too confident about our efforts, we realized the goals of the week had not translated into our everyday actions.

On the following page is a list of what I did and how I would do it differently next time.

What I did:

1. Created a general curriculum about the people, arts, music and traditions of Mexico, Central and South America. I created it with the talents of specific instructors in mind.
2. A month before the camp, I invited the instructors to a planning session where each planned with the others what they would teach. Even though they each taught different aspects of the culture, I encouraged them to know what the other teachers were doing and make reference to it when feasible.
3. Planned gathering time together. Planned for special guests together.
4. Ordered specialized supplies for each teacher.
5. Set up teaching studios with required number of tables, chairs and equipment.
6. First day of camp, each instructor arrived an hour early to gather materials and get teaching studios ready.
7. Each morning, children gathered as a group for games and to hear a special guest.
8. Children labeled items in classrooms with Spanish words as an "extra" activity when lesson was done.
9. Teachers followed lesson plans throughout the week, sometimes making adjustments for individuals within groups.
10. In parent sharing time on Friday, we forgot our bilingual mission (as the week went by the Spanish speaking children were so competent in English, it was more efficient to speak just English). So, at parent sharing time, we spoke only English.

What I would do differently

1. I would create a large map to identify where each special guest was from, and review it each day as another guest came.
2. I would create a time line so the children could put into perspective when the Aztecs were weaving, then conquered by the Spanish, and when masks were important part of rituals.
3. I would make certain that the "parent sharing time" was done in both English and Spanish.

CHAPTER THREE

ART CAMP: CELEBRATIONS! CELEBRACIONES!

Objectives

In the summer of 2002 Lyndon House Arts Center offered a program for children ages 6 to 12, which would explore celebrations from other cultures and encourage children to create art about some of their own celebrations. At the initial stage, we planned to offer scholarships to Hispanic students again, but there was not money in the budget when the time came. At the last minute, because of a gift, we were able to offer two scholarships, which we ended up giving to African American neighborhood children identified by Tommy Lay Park program leaders. That was far easier than reaching the Hispanic community, as the program the previous summer did, because it was too late in the year to use our Spanish-speaking contacts through the public schools.

The objective of the program was to bring children together to work cooperatively, emphasizing respect and appreciation for each person's visual expression and cultural background. The goal was to foster appreciation and understanding of their own celebrations as well as those in cultures other than their own. We worked toward teaching authentically about diverse cultures by drawing from the direct experiences of the artist-teachers, the children and other artists. The other artists were selected for their diverse backgrounds and expression of their culture in a manner easily accessible to elementary school-age children. The content developed as staff, drawn from the Athens community, agreed to teach about their diverse backgrounds while planning the program. The children augmented the content as they shared some of the special celebrations in their lives.

This objective and means of accomplishing these goals reflect a primary concern of current thought in multicultural art education: to present the art of racially and ethnically marginalized groups in the United States and cultures around the world in an authentic manner so as to "dismantle dominant stereotypic representations of race, ethnicity and culture" (Desai, 2000, p. 114).

Other objectives were for the children to examine and discuss various art forms and develop skills to work in several media. Children examined reproductions of paintings by Chicano artist Carmen Lomas Garza; quilts by African-American artist Faith Ringgold; illustrations by Norman Rockwell; architecture and music from Korea; pottery and stained glass windows from Italy. Then, learning to work in clay, paint, mixed media, graphite, colored pencils, and fabric, the participants created artwork of their own about their own family celebrations or about a culture they were studying.

Garber (1994), who advocates emersion in a culture as the best way to learn another's culture, would probably have been critical of presenting so many cultures at one time. She would have said we were using a "sprinkle and stir" approach because we studied many cultures without changing our "Eurocentric" way of looking at culture. That criticism directly relates not only to the number of cultures studied, but also the activities in which students engaged:

> In the classroom, the most common examples of "sprinkle and stir" that I have seen are teaching about the rituals that masks are often made for their originary cultures followed by having students make masks having to do with their own daily rituals – such as brushing their teeth. This approach not only brings the student back to his or her own culture (a practice that encourages ethnocentrism),

but of course mangles the different significances and meanings of ritual in non-secular derived cultures. (p.234)

While I can see Garber's point that "brushing teeth" trivializes a more deeply ingrained and sacred ritual of another's culture, teaching young children who may not even have a reference to the concept of "ritual" may be difficult. I would hope that the altars the children created (described below) and the masks inspired by the study of Korean masks, reflected an understanding of the culture of origin, but it is far too ambitious to hope the children would ever understand the cultural significance in a way that people from their originary culture do.

One of the artist-teachers for the camp, helped the children examine some paintings by Lomas Garza, telling them about the artist as a Chicano artist so children would understand the motivation behind her work. "Every time I paint, it serves a purpose – to bring about pride in our Mexican American culture" (Garza, 1996, p. 2). As they examined the paintings, children noticed the altars in many of them. They talked about the religious significance of these altars, and also a more general significance of altars as a way of honoring someone dead or alive, even pets or ideas. O'Brien shared a personal part of her life with them about how she honors and celebrates the life of her mother by writing music and raising money for breast cancer research. Sara's mother died of breast cancer when Sara was a child. Children became very involved creating their own altars to honor and celebrate people or pets, living and not living, from boxes, beads, paint, and a large assortment of found. The older students understood and used objects for symbols of ideas. Younger students were more responsive to the idea of making the altar decorative as a way of honoring someone or something. (See Figure 12)

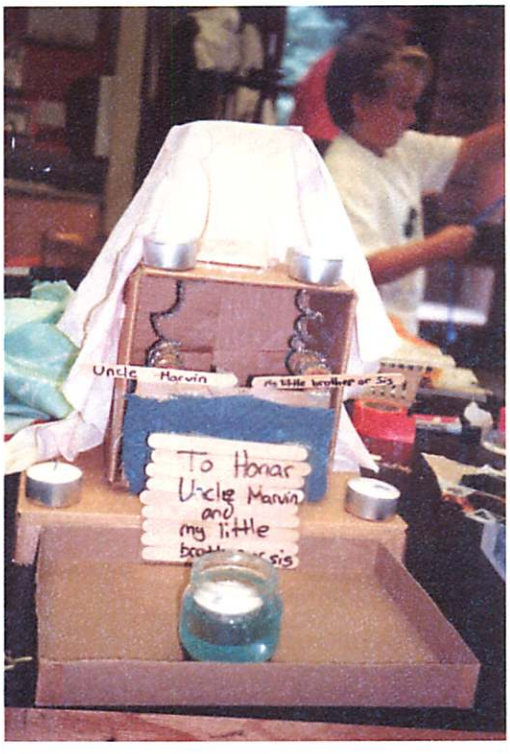

Figure 12. Altars. Children show off their altars which they created to honor and celebrate the life of someone living or not, pet or person. This older group enjoyed working with symbols. For example, a candle symbolized love. Other "found objects" took on other meanings.

Sleeter and Grant (1994) might support responsive art activities on the child's level such as this altar making. They advocate making "the process as well as the content of learning as compatible as possible with that of the student's home culture" (p. 184).

While the camp in 2001 was more bilingual, in this experience, children learned a few words and phrases in Korean, Italian, Spanish and Hebrew. Even though the language was a smaller part of the experience, the fact that the children brought in words and phrases themselves met with guide lines for multicultural art curricula, that is, to utilize the student's knowledge and experiences in the formation of learning and teaching (Stuhr, 1992).

Staff participants and curriculum overview

The following is the schedule we followed:

Monday through Thursday

9:00 – 9:30 a.m.	Gathering time: games, sharing family traditions, language
9:30 - 10:50	Groups*
10:50 – 11:10	Snacks on North Lawn
11:10 – 12:30 p.m.	Groups
12:30 – 1:20 p.m.	Lunch on North Lawn
1:20 – 2:45 p.m.	Groups
2:45 – 3:00 p.m.	Clean up and gather in front of building for dismissal.

*Red Group met with teacher 1, then teacher 2, then teacher 3

Blue Group met with teacher 2, then teacher 3, then teacher 1

Green Group met with teacher 2, then teacher 1, then teacher 2

Lunch times were used to share food from different traditions, some brought in by the instructors, and some by the children. The last half hour of the camp on Friday was a parent sharing time in which parents gathered to see the artwork and hear and see a performance about the week's work. Schedules were adjusted on Friday so that instructional time was 10 minutes less in each group.

A high school art educator in Athens, born in Korea but now a U.S. citizen, taught a unit about Korean culture she created during her teacher training at the University of Georgia. She said she thought she would never have the opportunity to teach it and was very enthusiastic. Included among the projects were drawing lessons centered on an ancient Korean Temple, mask making and percussion instrument making, which incorporated discussion about how these were used in celebrations. Children also shared how music and mask wearing fit into their own celebrations. As if to validate the authenticity of her part of the program, a parent sitting near me during parent sharing time whispered that the music sounded just like what he heard on a recent trip to Korea. Children enjoyed eating the rice candy and rice cakes she bought from a Korean food store in Atlanta. She explained that rice was plentiful in the Korean diet and eaten at nearly every meal and sweet treats, like the candy and cakes, were often made of rice. She also shared that most Korean children did not eat sweet treats except on special occasions. This was in stark contrast to our participants whose lunch boxes almost always included cookies, cake or candy.

Another instructor based her projects on her Italian ancestry. Majolica decorative tableware, which was used as decorative art and in celebrations, was part of the children's study. They saw examples from pictures of 15th and 16th century majolica as well as contemporary pieces of this tin glazed red earthenware glazed finally to a high gloss. Then children created their own majolica-like bowls in their own designs from which we originally hoped to eat cannoli on Friday, but the pieces did not cool from the kiln in time. While working with clay, children learned to create slab structures and pinch pots.

This instructor also taught about rose windows as architectural mandalas in cathedrals in Italy, where many important celebrations take place. Children drew parallels to their own lives sharing where celebrations in their families occurred.

She elaborated on the idea of mandalas in many cultures, their meaning and use, and the children created their own elaborate mandala designs both with colored pencil on paper and with cut paper and colored cellophane. Children, using the colors of the Italian flag, also created a design on fabric with paint. On the last day, children met in the kitchen and created several kinds of cannoli, a traditional Italian dessert made from a fried dough shell and filled with a mixture of ricotta cheese and various sweets.

One of the instructors played games designed to help the children get better acquainted in preparation for a cooperative mural design and painting exercise. She taught about the role of murals as a way for communities to express ideas as well as a way for people to build a team spirit where everyone's ideas were important. She directed the mural project as little as possible and some real communication and problem solving took place among the children. They were validated with her guidance using her questions and positive comments about listening to each person's ideas, building new ideas from many suggestions and incorporating something of everyone's suggestion into the mural. (See Figure 13) Actually, the children needed very little guidance once they felt ownership of the project and knew how important it was to the assignment to work cooperatively.

Figure 13. Murals of Celebrations. Pictured are two of the three murals created during this camp on canvas with paint. Each group was given the opportunity to plan the content of the murals. The group on the far left created a mural with a theme of parties, with balloons, confetti and other things in the air. The group on the right divided the space four ways and put symbols in each part.

A special guest who grew up in the Dominican Republic brought in samples of foods that are commonly eaten in the Dominican Republic. Being able to see and hold this interesting food interested the children. However, I had not communicated well and I thought she was also going to talk about a favorite celebration of hers, *El Dia de Los Muertos*, or Day of the Dead, which fit in so well with the altars the children created.

The approach of this camp was a "Human Relations Approach" rather than an "Multicultural" or "Social Reconstructionist" approaches. (Sleeter and Grant, 1999). However, with a different emphasis on the same lessons, a fruitful discussion of dominant vs. oppressed cultures would have been very appropriate. We might have a discussion of oppression of cultures from the work of Lomas Garza, mural making in Mexico, and the life of Faith Ringgold. Participants might have been encouraged to identify and become involved in issues of oppression in their own communities.

Students Participants

Twenty-two students participated. Most students were children of University of Georgia professors and other well-educated professions from the community. There were four scholarship students. Two Jewish students added much interest to the camp by teaching a few Hebrew words and sharing food and rituals. Four were African American

children, two Asian American, one Mexican American. Demographic information was not collected formally so some diversity may not be documented.

Evaluation

Authenticity in the curriculum was attempted by incorporating the direct life experiences of invited guests and teachers from different cultures. Incorporating discussion of reproductions of artworks from other artists was also included. It is important to include both in order to obtain many perspectives.

Relying solely on reproductions brings into question the issue of authenticity. Desai (2000) takes issue with authentic representation in museums, from which art educators often gather their information for multicultural education. She points out that museums, by engaging in a selective process, re-present a culture from a specific "location and position which is mediated by unequal power relations" (p.117). She discusses the problems of speaking for and about others. Her argument poses the problem of selectivity, and voices the concern that art forms from marginalized parts of the culture will not be included. Therefore, the notion of authenticity is challenged because museum collections lack inclusiveness.

In the Lyndon House programs, including the direct experience of artists and other people from the culture, other voices can be heard. Characterizing a culture through either reproductions from museums or people from a culture will never lead to absolute authentic representation. Inclusion of all classes, locations, and points of view is impossible, and students and teachers need to learn inquisitiveness about and respect for the culture of others rather than a characterization.

Desai (2000) notes that authenticity is a commodity marketed to tourist and art collectors and gives examples of how "cultural diversity" has been packaged by museums and corporations making otherness sought after for its exchange value in the marketplace. The act of selecting what is representational of a culture leaves out other possibilities, and presents a culture through a lens of the collector(s). Some collectors and museum educators have reflected in recent years on this process of selection and how it shapes knowledge about race, culture and history of marginalized groups. The trend is to "redress this problem by emphasizing the cultural contexts of art production and consumption when studying art from other cultures" (p. 121).

Parent and student responses to the experiences of the week of the Celebrations! *Celebraciones*! program were very positive. What people seemed to appreciate the most was openness and appreciation for different ways of living and the opportunity for the children to create "original and real art" (a quote from two parents). By that, I think they meant that many of the projects were expressions of meaning from their children's lives. Two Jewish children and their parents participated by bringing a special Sabbath bread to share with everyone with a story about the special meal they have each week. Another parent, who had lived with her family in different parts of the world, expressed appreciation for the camp and a frustration with Athens for being less open to diversity than she experienced in other parts of world. Attendance was lowest of all the summer's offerings in the multicultural themed camp, but appreciation seemed to be highest.

CHAPTER 3

REFLECTIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Reflections

By discussing culture in terms of artworks of specific artists and personal experiences as in the art camp Celebrations, *Celebraciones*, as well as in *Los Dias Divertidos*, and using community resources in the *Posada*, Lyndon House Arts Center attempted to present the study of art and culture "authentically." It was authentic in the terms it was presented, because it did not try to represent the whole of another's culture, but rather presented aspects of some cultures through the eyes of specific artists and people. This approach enriched students by providing an opportunity to broaden their understanding of art and life outside their own experiences. It avoided stereotypic thinking. The lessons did not attempt to characterize a culture, but rather listened to a voice within a culture from which children and adults could begin a life-long appreciation and understanding of the diversity in our own community and the world.

Leading an inclusive and authentic program of study through the arts requires discernment. It is important to consider the implications of what is taught and how it is taught. It is important for Lyndon House Arts Center as a leader, to avoid perpetuating stereotypes, which are usually hurtful. It is necessary to foster respect for the cultural diversity in our community, and in particular the Hispanic community, since it is a fast-growing, large and relatively new presence in Athens.

Creating programs that are diverse, authentic and inclusive is a special challenge in a community arts center. Participants elect to spend leisure time and often money to participate in the programs so the programs have to be of a quality and content appealing to audiences. The multicultural arts programs offered so far are a means of learning more about each other to foster appreciation for our differences and our common humanity. Programs designed to be social reconstructionist and empowering might have less popular appeal, and therefore a less inclusive audience. However, the potential outcomes are promising.

Community arts centers have particular advantages when offering multicultural programs that schools do not. First, they can include people who do not have school-aged children. I have heard of interesting programs within the schools that addressed the same goals as the Lyndon House programs, but they are not typically open to everyone.

Secondly, community arts centers are not bound by state and local curriculum requirements. Their operation hours are usually more flexible and open. Arts centers can create programs, within the mission, directly responding to needs of the community in both content and schedule. Sleeter and Grant (1994 & 1999) noted that to meet the goals of the two approaches that involve social activism, entire educational programs would need to be redesigned. The potential for community arts centers to address not only a "Human Relations Approach" to multicultural education but also to address the social action concerns of a community is great because their design and mission is typically to be open to needs of the community.

Schools could and do plan multicultural arts education using community resources just as art centers do, and work with art educators to help children learn about

culture through the study of art and artists. Visiting artists are often available to schools and could be linked to this goal. Cooperative teaching methods and attitudes of respect for cultural diversity modeled by teachers and other staff cultivate good multicultural arts education without making curriculum changes.

The *Posada* was specifically designed to interest the Mexican community. Ideally, the Lyndon House would publicize other events, such as the Festival of Trees, Dr. Martin Luther King Day Celebration and studio art classes in Spanish and through the media most often read or listened to by the Hispanic population to encourage their participation in other diverse cultures in Athens. It is my experience that each event has its own audience and while all events will continually be open to everyone, the programming itself needs to address themes and art processes appealing to a particular audience. Even so, events like the *Posada* might also appeal to people from other cultures who enjoy or have a curiosity about Mariachi music, Mexican food, or crafts and games with their children.

The enormity of the task of creating cultural diversity in programming when examined in all its complexities is almost overwhelming. The definition of culture itself reveals the complexity of the task. As mentioned earlier, within the Hispanic community there are multiple cultural realities. Add to this complexity Desai's (2000) observation that even after "thoughtful self-consciousness about the politics of who speaks, how, and to whom, art educators' representation to their art classes are received by different audiences in different contexts and in specific ways, perhaps with contradictory readings" (p.127). I would add community members participating in programs to that dialogue.

Recommendations

Finding people to share their culture was not as difficult as I had imagined. I was surprised by the willingness of people to help with my projects. Art centers and schools could begin asking parents and fellow staff members to teach about their own culture and art. If there are no immediate community resources in school, contacts can be found through co-workers, friends, commercial businesses, schools, hospitals, social service agencies and churches. Art reproductions can be found in library books and commercial catalogues, although specialized resources such as CRIZMAC Art and Cultural Education Materials, Inc. are more inclusive than general school supply catalogues. (See Appendix H for titles of paintings by Carmen Lomas Garza used for visual reference in these programs)

Allowing for plenty of time to build trust and understanding between the programmers/teachers and the community resources is essential because the whole idea of sharing cultural knowledge this way may need time to develop. I found that trust and understanding is built over time with frequent contact. After listening to the stories of the volunteers, the programmer or teacher needs to be specific about which of the stories should be included in instruction to students. This helps student learning by enriching the frame of reference they are building. Volunteers, who often have many, many stories to share, need specific guidance. Each of the Lyndon House programs had over three months of time for planning, although some of the best moments were created by volunteers who participated spontaneously.

Guidelines for community arts centers

From both practical experiences and study of the literature, I am developing guidelines for multicultural arts programming. I use the process approach intentionally because, as I gain experience and continue reading what others have accomplished and learned, I hope that my guidelines will continue to grow in effectiveness and wisdom.

1. Create programs that explore the cultural diversity of the local community and the world.
2. Continue to make connections with people in the Hispanic community and enlist their knowledge, input and active participation as often as possible.
3. Use teaching techniques that cultivate respect for cultural diversity and individuals.
4. Use art images of contemporary culture that voice contemporary concerns of people within a culture.
5. Collaborate with other groups, artists and agencies to plan programs that address community needs.

The following is a fuller explanation of these points:

1. Create programs that explore the cultural diversity of the local community and the world. Encourage artists in the Hispanic community to propose events, exhibitions and classes. Develop a sensitivity to proposals that have potential to include the interests of the Hispanic community. Also, research to find other programs that explore cultural diversity for ideas. Research to learn more about the various Hispanic cultures. Because the University of Georgia

is part of our community we have potential resources to explore cultures through the world.

2. Continue to make connections with people in the Hispanic community and enlist their knowledge, input and active participation as often as possible. Establish a Hispanic advisory committee to help plan and implement programs. For many reasons, some members of the Hispanic community may be reluctant to participate in programs. Arts center staff and volunteers need to make personal connections with community members. It is the best way to encourage active participation. Create bi-lingual promotional flyers and advertising. Place the announcements where they are likely to be seen and heard by the Hispanic community. Create outreach programs that serve the needs of the Hispanic community. Try to arrange transportation to programs within the government from neighborhood that need it.
3. Use teaching techniques that cultivate respect for cultural diversity and individuals. Techniques which encourage respectful interaction among diverse groups include working in small groups, promoting critical thinking about social issues through art, promoting learning from more than one point of view, and avoiding overgeneralizations. Most importantly, hire teachers who have an attitude of acceptance of all human beings and a desire to explore cultural diversity.
4. Use art images of contemporary culture that voice contemporary concerns of people within a culture. It is much easier to be Eurocentric or focus on fine art from the past for two reasons. One is that most of Lyndon House Arts

Center's staff has an art education reflecting that cultural bias. We teach what we know. However, even when teachers are willing to add other kinds of art forms to help their students learn, reproductions can be very scarce. Some commercial art education suppliers are addressing this concern. Contemporary gallery exhibitions such as those at Lyndon House Arts Center can be useful, but there is not always an example of work addressing the point of view a teacher would like to address. Images from contemporary publications such as Lucy Lippard's *Mixed Blessings* (1990) can be helpful. Many websites offer information and images of contemporary artists.

5. Collaborate with other groups, artists and agencies to plan programs that address community needs. For the past two years, Lyndon House has collaborated with Volunteers In Service to America (VISTA), East Athens Development Center and other community agencies to organize a day of service in celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday. "A Day On, Not a Day Off" has been successful in cleaning up neglected African American cemeteries, building ramps on homes where needed and other projects (Lee, 2002). The morning of service is followed by an afternoon of arts at the Lyndon House. Celebration with music, food, talks and crafts for family focus on the life, accomplishments and goals of King. Collaborations such as this could address Hispanic issues and be opportunities for cultural learning through the arts.

My personal goal is to be "on guard" that my own ethnocentric lens doesn't limit possibilities, promote stereotyping, or disseminate incorrect information. Even with the

best of intentions I find that I often slip back into a "they and us" mindset and have to fight a tendency to overgeneralize.

Future directions

Multicultural art education is as much an attitude as a method. It is a sensitivity to present information and related art projects in as authentic a way as possible. Artists who plan and deliver the programs are chosen for their strong feelings of valuing cultural diversity, human rights, and social justice as well as their multicultural attitude toward nurturing children. The teaching staff itself is as diverse as possible, considering that successful art educators who are willing to teach on an occasional basis are hard to find. Teachers are sensitive to stereotyping and work to counter it. Non-sexist behavior is encouraged in children in that there are no role stereotypes. Girls and boys participate in dancing, carrying lunches in big baskets, washing brushes and tables, etc.

This research has brought to my attention another possibility for arts education programming which might include the Hispanic community. Sleeter and Grant (1999) and Stuhr (1992) characterize it as social intervention. Others call it art as activism (Fehey & Frickman, 2000) or art of social concern (Sommer, 1998). This particular form of expressive art combines the process of making art with raising awareness of social problems or actually contributing to the alleviation of an undesirable situation in a community.

For example, North East Coalition of the Homeless (NEOCH) and Volunteers In Service to America (VISTA) organized a program to raise awareness of the complex issues of homelessness. Professional artists and school children examined the issues and

created many forms of art to visually comment on homeless issues. The works were exhibited in several locations in the Cleveland, Ohio area (Sommer, 1998).

Art educator Mario Asaro (1991) worked with Artist/Teachers Concerned (ACT) to help his students actively engage in art criticism and art making about issues in society of concern to them. At an ACT sponsored exhibition "Seen and Heard" his students performed a multimedia anti-war piece based on "The Last Flower" by James Thurber. "It is crucial that students be given the opportunity to be social critics through their art making" (p. 107). Art as social criticism could help children grow up with a sense of empowerment and involvement with positive social change.

Yet another project (Garber & Pearson, 1998), brought high school artists together with pre-service teachers, community business owners and neighbors. "We want students to recognize these constituencies as part of their community and for residents to overcome some of the fear and distrust they have of the high school students" (p.22).

An example where artists and students combine commercial enterprise and art in a successful project ongoing since 1988 is the work of YA/YA (Young Aspirations/Young Artists). Adolescents learn art and entrepreneurial skills. Businesses such as Burger King and Swatch Ltd. are their clients and they learn under an apprenticeship system (Fahey & Frickman, 2000).

Pamela Taylor (2002) described a service-learning after school project in which college students met regularly with an underserved population of Central Appalachia in the Beans and Rice program with the "goal of moving community members toward proactive citizenship" (131). Also, in January and February 2003, the University of

Georgia student chapter of the Georgia Art Educators Association organized a bowl-making project to support the Foodbank of Northeast Georgia in the annual "empty bowls" fundraiser to combat hunger in Athens, GA. (P. Taylor, personal communication, January 8, 2003)

A practical source of concrete multicultural lesson plans in many disciplines is found in Grant & Sleeter's (1998) *Turning on Learning*. The book shows how to modify lessons so they include a multicultural perspective, including the human relations approach. The last chapter outlines in detail ideas for lessons that are multicultural and social reconstructionist.

The programs mentioned above served different needs in different ways. They each partnered with community, agencies, artists, students, etc. Learning and serving was mutually beneficial to all parties instead of top-down authoritarian instruction. Respecting one another, promoting positive feelings among people and groups who are different from one another, and working to reduce prejudice are worthy goals for a community arts organization. Multicultural arts education could move beyond, but not replace, the human relations-based approaches. Future programs could actively address community needs such as transportation to summer and after school community arts programs for children. I would hope to facilitate programs in which members of the Hispanic community were colleagues and collaborators, and we would all benefit from knowing and serving each other.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Growth of Hispanic or Latino Population in Athens-Clarke County

1990-2000

	1990 Actual	1990 % Total	2000 Actual	2000 % Total	% Change 1990-2000
Athens-Clarke County Total	87,594	100	101,489	100	15.9
Hispanics/Latinos (of any race)	1,490[1]	1.7	6,436[1]	6.3	331.0
Mexicans	N.A.	N.A.	4,109[1]	4.0	N.A.

[1] Stella Sailors, who helps provide aid for working-class Hispanics...said the number is closer to 10,000." "An accurate count is unlikely because of distrust new immigrants have historically shown census takers." (Gurr, 2001).

Posada Mexicana

Mexican Christmas Party

The Lyndon House Arts Center is a facility of the Department of Leisure Services, Athens-Clarke County Government.

This program is sponsored in part by the Georgia Council for the Arts through the appropriations of the Georgia General Assembly. The Council is a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts.

Special Thanks to
Muchas gracias a

Josefina and Manuel Robledo
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Teresea Hermoimosillo for Tamales and Tres Leches
Taquerillo LaParilla for flautas, chips and salsa
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Roxinette Lauderdale
Nicholas Kraft
Arthur Taylor
Luz Santibañez
Gabriel Waite-Santibañez
Hannah Waite Santibañez
Tamara Waite-Santibañez
Mary Thomas
Sara O'Brien
Tiffany Tooley
Catherine Cox
Reggie Vipperman
Anne C. Cook
Cassie and Jadalee McCarty
Clara Londono
Sara May
Courtney Jackson
Wenjie Sun
Tien-Hui Cheng
Susan Wilson
Carmon Jordon
Rachael Horton
Sarah Frey

Julia Paolina
John Nagao
Sarah Willis
Kristin Smith
ACC Leisure Services, Arts Division
Martha Lowe
Lois Thomas-Wright

Posada Mexicana

Mexican Christmas Party

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Welcome to

The Lyndon House Arts Center

for a

Mexican Christmas Party

Saturday, December 8

6:30 – 9:00 p.m.

Program

6:45	**Legend of the Poinsettia**	**Community Room**
6:30 – 9:00	**Refreshments**	**Community Room**
6:30 – 9:00	**Crafts**	**Children's Studio**
7:00 – 9:00	**Mariachi Jalisco**	**Atrium Gallery**
6:30 – 7:30	**Lotería game**	**Painting Studio** (upstairs)
7:30	**Piñata (ages 5 and under)**	**Work court**
8:30	**Piñata (ages 6 and up)**	**Work court**
8:30 – 9:00	**Lotería game**	**Painting Studio** (upstairs)

Have Fun!

Bienvenidos al

Centro de Artes Lyndon House

a la

Posada Mexicana

Sabado 8 de Diciembre

6:30 – 9:00 p.m.

Programa

6:45	**Leyenda de la Poinsettia**	**Salón de la Communidad**
6:30 – 9:00	**Refreshments**	**Salón de la Communidad**
6:30 – 9:00	**Crafts**	**Estudio deNiño**
6:30 – 7:30	**Lotería**	**Estudio do Pintura** (2do. Piso)
7:30	**Piñata (Para niños de 6 años en adelonte)**	**Area de Trabajo**
8:30	**Piñata (Para niños hasta 5 años)**	**Area de Trabajo**
8:30 – 9:00	**Lotería**	**Estudio do Pintura** (2do. Piso)

!Diviertanse!

APPENDIX B

Program of *La Posada*

APPENDIX C

Bilingual Flyer

Bienvenidos todos a la

Posada Mexicana

En el Centro de Artes Lyndon House
Sábado 8 de Diciembre de 2001
6:30 – 9:00 p.m.

Banda de Mariachi

Comida Mexicana

Piñata

Juego de Lotería (**Como el BINGO**)

Manualidades

Lectura de La Leyenda de la Poinsettia

Exhibición de Nacimientos

Centro de Artes Lyndon House
293 Hoyt Street
Athens, GA 30601
706-613-3623

The Lyndon House Arts Center is a facility of the Athens-Clarke County Leisure Services Department and is supported in part by the Georgia Council for the Arts through appropriations from the Georgia General Assembly. The Georgia Council for the Arts is a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts.

Everyone is Welcome to a

Mexican Christmas Party

At the Lyndon House Arts Center
Saturday, December 8, 2001
6:30 – 9 p.m.

Mariachi Band

Mexican Food

Piñata

Play Lotería, a Mexican game like Bingo

Mexican Crafts

Hear a dramatic reading of The Legend of the Poinsettia

Exhibitión of Mexican Nativity Figures

The event is free, but donations at the door are welcome!

Lyndon House Arts Center
293 Hoyt Street
Athens, GA 30601
706-613-3623

The Lyndon House Arts Center is a facility of the Athens-Clarke County Leisure Services Department and is supported in part by the Georgia Council for the Arts through appropriations from the Georgia General Assembly. The Georgia Council for the Arts is a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts.

Appendix D

Description of a Traditional Posada

Descriptions of *Las Posadas* vary with the source. That is not surprising. In my own experience, different families vary the Christian celebrations of Christmas. In the United States, people decorate trees and houses, give parties for friends and neighbors, and go to Church services in many different ways. However, as with a traditional Christian Christmas celebration, which varies from family to family, it seems the *Posada* celebrations vary also. However, there are many parts that are the similar that I have noted below.

Las Posadas are a nine-night series of processions reenacting Joseph and Mary's search for lodging in Bethlehem for the census according to the Christian scriptures of Luke 2:1-7. Several sources note that the tradition began when Christian missionaries noticed the similarities between their commemoration of Christ's birth and the Aztec's celebration of Huizilopochtli's birth in December. The early *Posadas* began as solemn occasions in the church, but in a few years moved to people's homes and became more festive.

Families in a neighborhood will schedule a night for the *Posada* to be held at their homes, starting on the 16th of December and finishing on the 24th, on *Noche Buena*, or Christmas Eve. Each night the hosts of the home are the innkeepers, and the neighborhood children and adults are *Los Peregrinos*, or pilgrims Mary and Joseph.

The processions begins when it gets dark. The children, followed by adults, lead the procession. Everyone carries small lit candles except for a few children, who carry small statues of Joseph leading a donkey on which Mary is riding sidesaddle. Sometimes

a child dressed as an angel leads the procession, and many children dress as either Joseph or Mary. The adults follow, and musicians singing or chanting special Posada songs, are in the rear.

When the procession reaches the house chosen for the evening the procession divides into two groups. The pilgrims line up behind the angel, and walk through the house until they find a closed door. They knock at the door and sing a request for lodging.

Voices from the other group sing or chant, "Who knocks at my door so late in the night?"

The Pilgrims reply: "In the name of Heaven I beg you for lodging – my beloved wife can no longer travel, and she is weary."

The harsh response is "This is not an inn. Go away."

After repeated requests (in songs and chants) the pilgrims explain, "Mary will soon give birth to the Son of God."

Innkeepers then welcome everyone in. "The night is one of joy, for here beneath our roof we shelter the Mother of God."

Everyone enters the room and kneels in prayer. After the prayers are said, the party moves outside and festivities begin. The children break a *piñata* filled with peanuts, tangerines, sugar canes, and hard candy. The *piñata*, made of a clay pot long ago, is made of cardboard and paper mache and colorful paper shaped like a star, donkey, or many other shapes including cartoon characters. Children, blindfolded and one at a time, swing a stick to try to break the piñata, which hangs from a rope above them.

When a child finally breaks the piñata, and the treats pour to the ground, all children rush to pick up as many treats as they can.

For eight nights, the same ceremony is repeated at other houses. On the ninth night, the festivities often take on more ceremony and beauty, according to sources. Sometimes children dress in robes, and everyone is dressed up. Inside the house there may be a beautiful elaborate display of *nacimientos*, figures of Mary, Joseph, wise men, shepherds, angels, and other figures as collected by the hosts. The baby Jesus may be placed by a child in the manger in a special ceremony. Many times children offer small gifts of flowers or fruit and make a special little speech to the baby Jesus.

In some locations, the Christmas Eve *Posada* will have live people enacting the roles of the Holy Family, with Mary riding a donkey, and the procession concluding at a manger scene set up in a field. A special feast often follows with tamales, hot chocolate, fruit punch, and other traditional foods. Neighbors often contribute their share of the expenses and food and celebrate together.

Appendix E

The Legend of the Poinsettia

The following account of the legend of the Poinsettia is quoted directly from the website of Paul Ecke Ranch. As with any legend, the details vary from teller to teller, but the essence of the story is the same in the versions I have read. (Ecke, no date). Tomie dePaola's version of the story, which was read at Lyndon House Arts Center's *Posada*, was more embellished.

> A charming story is told of Pepita, a poor Mexican girl who had no gift to present the Christ Child at Christmas Eve Services. As Pepita walked slowly to the chapel with her cousin Pedro, her heart was filled with sadness rather than joy.
>
> "I am sure, Pepita, that even the most humble gift, if given in love, will be acceptable in His eyes," said Pedro consolingly.
>
> Not knowing what else to do, Pepita knelt by the roadside and gathered a handful of common weeds, fashioning them into a small bouquet. Looking at the scraggly bunch of weeds, she felt more saddened and embarrassed than ever by the humbleness of her offering. She fought back a tear as she entered the small village chapel.
>
> As she approached the altar, she remembered Pedro's kind words: "Even the most humble gift, if given in love, will be acceptable in His eyes." She felt her spirit lift as she knelt to lay the bouquet at the foot of the nativity scene.
>
> Suddenly, the bouquet of weeds burst into blooms of brilliant red, and all who saw them were certain that they had witnessed a Christmas miracle right before their eyes.
>
> From that day on, the bright red flowers were known as the *Flores de Noche Buena*, or Flowers of the Holy Night, for they bloomed each year during the Christmas season.
>
> Today, the common name for this plant is the poinsettia!
>
>
>
> http://www.ecke.com/html/h_corp/corp_legend.html

APPENDIX F

Piñata Song

Everyone sings and claps as a child, who is usually blindfolded, tries to break open the piñata with a stick.

Come on Pepe, don't lose your touch,

Your aim from a distance misses the piñata.

With your eyes blindfolded and a stick in your hands,

Break the jar* to pieces without compassion.

Hit it, hit it, hit it, don't lose your touch,

Your aim from a distance misses the piñata.

*Piñatas were once made with clay pots, but modern piñatas are made with paper because they are safer. Small pieces of shattered pots often cut the children as they scrambled to gather the treats from broken piñatas.

In Spanish:

Andale, Pepe, no pierdas el tino,

Que de la distancia se pierde el camino.

Con los ojitos vendados y en las manos un baston.

Se hace la ollita pedazos sin tener le compasion.

Da le, da le, da le, no pierdas el tino,

Que de la distancia se pierde el camino.

Reference:

Fiesta, Mexico (1997). (p. 10). Danbury, CT: Grolier Educational.

APPENDIX G

Bilingual Poster of Fiber Art Terms

Latin American Fiberarts

El arte de la fibra en América Latina

Textile Terms

La Terminología Textil

Shear
To clip the wool from a sheep

Recortar o Esquilar
Quitar con la tijera la lana de la oveja

Scour
To wash the wool fleece with soap to remove the dirt and grease (lanolin)

Escurar
Lavar la lana para limpiarla y quitar el aceite.

Card
To untangle wool with a comb or brush

Cepillar
Desenredar la lana con peine o con cepillo

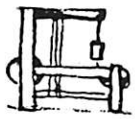
Spin
To twisl wool into thread or yarn

Hilar
Convertir en hilo las fibras textiles

Dye
To put permanent color into the fleece or yarn or cloth

Teñir
Poner color permanente en los textiles con una tinta

Weave
To twist thread or yarn into cloth



Tejer
Formar en el telar la tela con la trama y la urdimbre

Sew
To fasten together with thread

Coser
Unir con hilo los pedazos de tela

Cloak
A coat without sleeves

Poncho o Ruana
Manta cuadrada sin mangas

APPENDIX H

Titles of Paintings by Carmen Lomas Garza used as Visual References

1. The Fair in Reynosa (La Feria en Reynosa).
2. Birthday Barbeque (Barbacoa Para Cumpleaños)
3. Joseph and Mary Seeking Shelter at the Inn (Las Posadas).
4. Healer (Curandera)
5. One Afternoon (Una Tarde)
6. Blessing on the Wedding Day (La Bendicion en el dia de la Boda)
7. Razor Blade 'do (Las Pachucas)
8. Full Playing Card (Loteria, Tabla Llena) etching.