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From: Brian McArthur [Brian.McArthur@uk.aedas.com]
Sent: 22 September 2004 18:45
To: info
Subject: The view of Brian McArthur, Architect and amateur sculptor.[Scanned]

It starts in childhood. We see Sport Scotland in the schools, where is "Arts Scotland"? Under current education procurement routes would a Castle Toward be possible?

Our education estate is receiving a major upgrade and improvement, much of it through PPP/PFI procurement routes. In England primary school classroom dimensions are smaller for the same number of pupils (between 5-10 m2 bigger classrooms in Scotland). If 5m2 was taken from each room, added together to make a 50m2 classroom in every 10 classroom school, we could have specific classrooms for the teaching of Art! (Secondary schools have specially kitted out Art departments; they smell different, look different and for me, the art department was sensational when first encountered as a small boy starting a new big school. We could bring this encounter forward and enchant our younger pupils in almost all schools. Specialist teachers, like gym teachers, could visit our primary schools.

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The Scottish Stone Liaison group advise a dearth of candidates presenting for stone mason apprenticeships. Glasgow School of Art does not run a stone sculpting course, there is only 1 full-time sculptor working in stone in the Glasgow Sculpture Studios. We have all these marvellous stone buildings that attract visitors, who is championing and promoting the traditional arts? The French Government apparently sponsor traditional craftsmen to visit areas to demonstrate traditional skills: to jaw droppingly inspirational effect!! Will we provide similar support.

Outside the GoMA in Glasgow congregate 100s of kids every weekend. How many step inside? How many are welcomed inside? For many years I have viewed via the press/media many complaints about the effect of the congregation of these future adults. Only once do I recollect an attempt to engage with these Moshers and Goths (by a portrait photographer I think. The very adoption of their very stylised garments suggests an attraction and attempt to embrace drama and self expression. Over the years the Gallery has curated many exhibitions. These kids dress like it is Halloween every day of the week: can an exhibition that would appeal to the kids not be possible, perhaps annually every Halloween? Set in an atmosphere, with suitable musical accompaniment and lit to suit their particular tastes and subject matter.

The regeneration of local run down areas has benefited from the de-institutionalisation and de-centralisation of the people-who-can-do. The smaller bodies (local housing associations) can make a huge difference locally, to individuals. They can tailor their works and solutions to suit the area. They appear able to be more flexible and responsive while having to work within defined parameters and meet agreed targets. These small organisations have an umbrella organisation

(Communities Scotland) which can provide the clout at National level. The Arts need a similar structure, responsive to their particular Art or re-mitt, or region but with an umbrella body capable of drawing together all the

various strands and providing clout on the national and perhaps International stage.

Trust the enclosed is of some value to you.

Brian McArthur
Architect and Amateur Sculptor.

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