Symbolic Self-Expression with Media

BY HORST NIESYTO AND BJÖRN MAURER

The following contribution proceeds from the assumption that promoting symbolic self-expression using media is among the most important tasks that modern media education has to perform. Discursive reflection on the use of individual and mass media is insufficient to understand, analyse and criticize what is on offer from the mass media. It is necessary to progress from receptive use to active production of and with media. Particularly to children and adolescents from educationally and socially disadvantaging backgrounds, learning environments that have been designed for certain, specific target groups reveal opportunities for creative expression.

In the first part ("Initial Considerations") Horst Niesyto outlines the relevance of media symbolism to the development of a cultural style defined by children and adolescents. He establishes principles for media education based on symbolic self-expression and goes on to integrate these ideas into the current discussions in Germany concerning the need for schools to become more open to forms of active, project-oriented media work – which is particularly important for adolescents from less academic school milieus (Hauptschule). In the second part ("Putting the Theory into Media-Educational Practice") Björn Maurer describes different learning environments which show how the introductory considerations work in practice and which clarify the significance of aesthetic learning processes and aesthetic reflexivity.

I Initial Considerations

Children/Adolescents and Media Symbolisms

The considerable importance audiovisual media have for the present generation of children and adolescents has been verified in various studies (Charlton/Neumann 1992, Buckingham 2000, Livingstone/Bovill 2001, among others). Audiovisual media offer children and adolescents opportunities for forms of symbolic creativity, for highly individual treatment of the general stock of social symbols. It is to be assumed that these media-transmitted forms of experiencing the world are always developed through the tension between pre-fabricated media symbolisms and efforts at subjective appropriation. This assumption relates to subject-oriented and culture-focussed research in the field of socialisation research overall, as well as in that of children and adolescent media research, which were able to bring out the seminal part played by *activating themes* in the processing of media symbolisms (Paus-Haase/Schorb 2000, among others). The new, digitally produced aesthetics reinforce media-transmitted symbolic socialisation because they shift imperceptibly from real-life to fictional and virtual representations. Multi-media and interactive forms of media communication lead to complex symbolic patterns. Young people learn that statements about social realities are closely linked to media constructs and modes of representation and they develop a media-related language and forms of expression for themselves. These media-related forms of language and expression become internationalised through media-aesthetic genres such as music-clips, life-style advertising and Internet presentations. The possibilities offered by media allow children and adolescents to create styles which cross local boundaries and social networks. The presentational nature of pictorial language and the synaesthetic aspect (combining pictures, music and physical movement) appeal particularly to the socio-economic needs of adolescents (Niesyto 2003).

The Promotion of Symbolic Self-Expression Using Media as a Fundamental Task in Modern Media Education

For a long time media education was chiefly concerned with protecting children and adolescents from the negative influence of the media. The central question was "What do media do to children and adolescents? How do they affect their thinking and their behaviour?" This question is still important today - what is offered by the media influences socialisation. Pedagogical support, aesthetic stimulation, and ethical discussions – by which we do not mean telling the children what to think – are needed to achieve critical and reflected ways of dealing with media.

The manner in which children and adolescents use media depends on a variety of factors. Age, social and educational conditions as well as gender-related differences are important. Children and adolescents show different styles in their dealings with, and use of, media; they have different media worlds. Anyone wishing to develop media-educational offers needs to know about these different worlds. Active media work intended to promote symbolic self-expression ties directly into the lives and media experience of children and adolescents and helps them to accomplish the step from using to producing media.

- *Focussing on Needs and Living Environments*

The needs associated with using media should be accepted and understood as an important part of the children's and adolescents' experience of their living environment. Media worlds are not special, separate worlds, but an integral part of our everyday actions. Media offer aesthetic-symbolic opportunities which children and adolescents implement in their search for meaning and orientation and which they process in the light of their individual, current, *activating themes*. As a rule, children and adolescents have at their command a large stock of media experience which can provide stepping stones into media educational work.

- *Focussing on Experience*

  Children and adolescents should be given the opportunity to work through their experiences of their living environment. To do so, they use a variety of occasions and locations. Nowadays they can experience a lot more on their own, without adult supervision. This does not, however, replace educational offers and processes which provide young people, through their particular constellations of different experts, materials and perspectives, with the opportunity to extend their field of experience. Media education should offer processes: examing media messages and their aesthetic-symbolic dimensions (in particular the constructed-ness of media realities), recognising the influence media have on one's own orientation and on the development of identity, as well as considering the social aspects of modern media communication. Broadening experience on the levels described above must be undertaken in a way that is appropriate to the target group. Learning processes and settings with and about media must be conceptualised differently for eighteen-year-olds aiming for university (Gymnasium) than for children and adolescents from less academically oriented schools (Hauptschule).

- *Focussing on Production*

  Children and adolescents should be given the opportunity to produce something themselves, using media, so that they can discover through their own texts, pictures and sound which kind of expressive and communicative forms are available to them. By such practical, concrete means they can symbolically re-appropriate their environment in a new way and express their own experience, fantasies and feelings. At the same time, a production-focussed orientation offers opportunities to develop media skills, to work in small groups, to get feedback by making one's own productions available to others and to open up new areas of communication.

  Focussing on production has become – in the form of action-centred, creative media work – the ideal method in media education, particularly in educational work beyond

and outside school. Working on personal themes in combination with using media-aesthetic forms involves creative processes which are necessarily accompanied by socially communicative and reflexive aspects. It has become apparent that such activity-oriented media work is especially important for children and adolescents from educationally and socially disadvantaging backgrounds. They can easily bring in their experience of their living environments and media worlds, as well as their already acquired skills in visual, audiovisual and physical expression. In particular, a media educational approach which is oriented toward perception and symbols and which puts the main emphasis on pictorial forms of self-expression can open up new dimensions lying beyond abstract, intellectual concepts of learning and creativity. It is a matter of promoting socio-aesthetic learning processes that are consistently centred around the needs, themes and forms of expression accessible to the subjects involved, whilst concurrently offering aesthetic possibilities of experiencing difference. 'Experiencing difference' refers to those processes in which experience is formed which is open to what is 'other' or new and which, by questioning the subject's existing point of view and patterns of interpreting the world around him/her, develops them a step further.

Opening schools through activity-oriented media work and self-expression with media

Schools in the 21st century can no longer avoid letting the media into their classrooms in a way they have never done before. Means of communication through media have become so much a part of everyday life that they affect every subject taught in school, the way knowledge is acquired and the accumulation of experience. Crash courses in multi-media and media education brochures are not enough. Radical re-thinking and re-formation is called for – beginning with teacher training, going on to practical, in situ higher and further education courses, and ending with considerably more intensive col-

laboration between schools and other institutions. "Opening schools" (where it relates to activity-oriented media work) implies, above all, the following:

- Making space for the pupils' perception of the world and their media world experience: discussing their media experience, particularly in connection with media-aesthetic reflection, in all types of lessons. What kinds of media on offer do the pupils use? Which needs do they associate with them? Which central life themes are referred to in media representations? Which themes/subjects would pupils like to represent themselves, using media?

- Making space for using media in 'normal' lessons: practical exercises in using different kinds of media can be integrated into the regular curriculum. Photographic or video documentation are among the types easily integrated, visualisation of poetry ("video poetry"), exercises in expressing feelings and moods in music and pictures (co-operation between music and art departments), pictures (from different subject- or theme-related contexts) can be scanned in and processed, pictures and graphics worked into e-mails. This requires: the use of a multi-media room which is adequately equipped (double periods), basic technical equipment in the classroom (two or three computer work places with scanners and programmes for digitally processing sound and images), teaching staff who possess a basic knowledge of aesthetics and media practice (primarily gained from in-school or school-linked further education courses) and who are willing and able to teach in a pupil-centred way, using open lesson methods and offering free activities.

- Making space for project work in lessons, especially in collaboration with non-school institutions: self-made media productions should be seen not as a one-off 'special activity' during the school year, but as a basic lesson form that is going to establish itself. To do this, resources from outside school should be exploited from the start (tried and tested concepts, personnel, equipment, studios), thus making

more intensive production processes possible through a combination of lessons, extra-curricula activities (clubs) and (all day) workshops. The vital prerequisites here are: willingness on the part of the teaching staff to co-operate with colleagues from non-school set-ups, with media educators and media artists; more flexible opening times and access to educational film hire centres; the creation and funding of mobile media work forms through local communities and regional associations ('media buses' that can be ordered by schools); establishing media education profiles at different schools.

- Making space for communication with other schools and young people from other cultural areas: learning to express personal themes and to present oneself; considering other people's productions with respect, formulating praise and criticism, accepting ideas and suggestions for one's own work, acquiring and using the language of new, interactive media; trying out new forms of communication which are not limited to written language (in particular, integrating pictures, sound and music to communicate needs and feelings; cf. Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport, Baden-Württemberg, Germany, 2001).
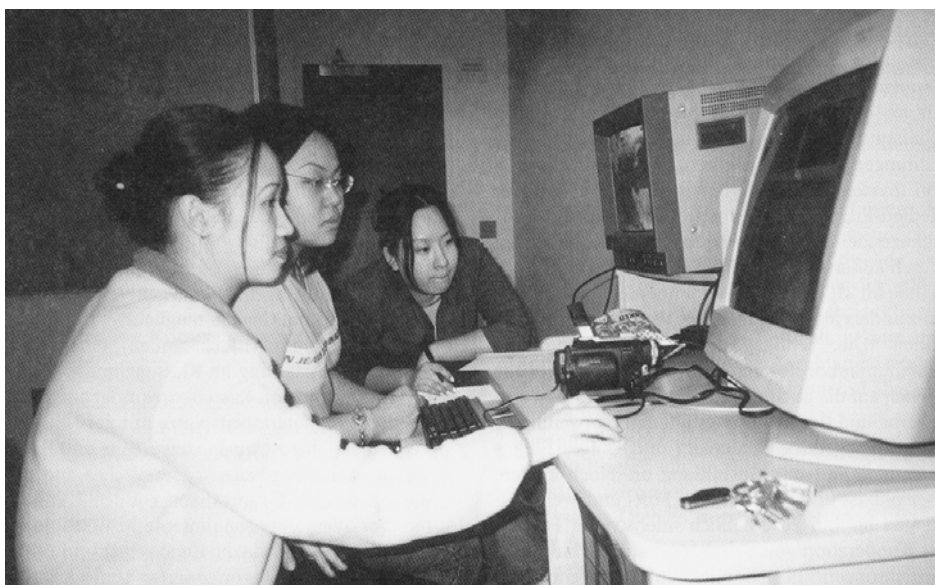
Principles of Media Education with Young People from Educationally and Socially Disadvantaging Backgrounds

De-centralised forms of accessibility

Mobile media work that goes out to find young people, encouraging local networks, offering taster courses. The following are ineffective:- offers couched in general terms, offers that are too demanding, offers that are intended to reach young people via their parents. This might work with high or grammar school pupils whose parents enrol them for a course at the local art school, for example. Experience has shown, however, that it is neither a practical nor an effective way to reach children and adolescents from educationally and socially disadvantaging backgrounds.

Greater Integration of Presentational Forms of Expression

The term ‚presentational' was used by the philosopher Susanne Langer in her writings (1987/1942[1]). She differentiates between the 'presentational' and the 'discursive'. The *discursive* is written and spoken language which is produced and perceived in a sequential, linear, progressive way. Words have to be read one after the other in order to arrive at the meaning. '*Presentational*' means 'making present'; it designates holistic forms of expression and perception; something can be taken in and meaning is ascribed to it all in one glance. Pictures, music and body language are major presentational-symbolic forms of expression. Presentational forms of expression are especially important for adolescents who have difficulties with written and spoken language. We are convinced that educational work at all levels should employ presentational means of expression and communication much more – pictures, music, dance etc. It is our belief that an integrating concept of comprehensive literacy is needed, one which strikes a balance between discursive and presentational forms of expression and communication, allowing us to

navigate in and between the two codes. If the educational landscape is to change significantly, in particular with regard to supporting and encouraging the disadvantaged, then presentational forms of expression must be integrated in a completely different way! That is to say – not by organising the occasional project or project week, but on the basis of sustainability and lasting effect. It is a matter of systematically establishing 'visual literacy' in presentational-symbolic forms of expression as part of a foundation curriculum in communication culture.

Combining competences: the aesthetic-cultural with those related to the working world

Young people need first and foremost to express themselves, to come to grips with themes which occupy them in their free time; there they gain access to self-expression with media in widely differing ways. At the same time, they acquire competences through using media which are also important for work-related fields: aesthetic, technical, social, communicative and methodological. The possibilities for linking the aesthetic-cultural with the job-related aspects should be kept more strongly in mind on the conceptual level – instead of relying on technical, instrumental 'media courses' to mediate skills in job-related fields. These sort of courses are simply too boring for the majority of young people and they do not motivate them to go into any depth.

Encouraging creative and non-linear ways of working

In today's world people are confronted with an overwhelming mass of information of all kinds. Unambiguous, straightforward progression is not always possible and hence people are discovering different ways of making headway. We need to broaden our horizons, to take a look over the fence. To be able to do so, we have to move in a more creative, playful direction. At the same time, there is a need for a framework and well-directed stimulation – that is something else that has been discovered through education

work with adolescents from socially and educationally disadvantaging backgrounds. The term ,framework' here is meant in the sense of offering a certain structure, whilst at the same time providing sufficient time and flexibility for experimenting and discovery. This requires a relatively broad spectrum of skills on the part of the media educator/organiser/artist, but it is also a vital part of successful, participant-oriented media education. It is to be hoped that the increasing collaboration we are aiming for between media education and art, music and drama education will provide the new ideas and energy necessary to achieve such structures.

Learning Presentation and Communication

In general, self-expression with media leads to products. Products are concrete objects and can be made available to various kinds of audience. Hence, self-expression with media is potentially woven into a broad communicative setting in which the producers offer communication, present themselves, dramatise themselves, draw attention to themselves and receive feedback and recognition from others. Presenting, showing and publicising enables the producers to stand up for their product, to accept criticism and assimilate it. These are key competences which are becoming increasingly important. As we have learnt from a number of projects: presenting boosts self-confidence and encourages producers to continue with their work.

In order to satisfy their own demands and the expectations of potential audiences, the media-makers have to employ specific cultural and social forms of expression integral to the given medium. The more the maker knows about the specific representational forms, i.e. about the way in which meaning can be directionally generated with that medium, the greater the correspondence between what s/he wants to say and his/her expression of this in a particular medium. This, by the way, applies equally to discursive symbolic systems (verbal language) and to audio-visual communication. It is therefore

the task of the media educators or artists to sensitively enable the media makers to close the gap between what they want to express and their ability to express it.

Overcoming Middle-Class Predominance in Media Education

A great many educators are still too pre-occupied with symbol-socialisation based on the discursive – i.e. on verbal and written language. They are often too wary of allowing and confronting certain kinds of gestures, expressions and body language. They still proceed in a thematically fixed and educationally functional way, instead of establishing a personal relationship with their students first. By personal relationship we mean: reciprocal understanding, active respect on both sides, creating a communicative atmosphere on the basis that enjoyment and having fun together can go hand in hand with being taken seriously. That is something which is particularly important to adolescents from disadvantaging backgrounds: giving them the feeling that they are accepted as they are, with everything that implies, and providing a space in which they can be – whilst at the same time providing them with opportunities to acquire new skills and experience new things. 'Fun' in this context is a feeling of right-ness, a pleasurable going beyond oneself, learning new things, making discoveries, enjoying success and satisfaction in the creation of a product.

II Putting the Theory into Media Education Practice

Specific Concepts for Specific Target Groups

The main aim, as we understand it, of the media education concept described below, using selected examples, is to enable the members of the group to express themselves through media. The target group is made up of children and adolescents from socially and educationally disadvantaged contexts. It is important to point this out at the beginning, as the didactic methods used in practice are specifically designed with this target

group in mind and to fulfill this specific aim. Had we had a group of eighteen-year-olds headed for university in mind, who were to experience media in their art lessons, then the concept would have been designed differently.

We see learning as an active, cognitive and emotive process, proceeding from the individual, during which the store of knowledge, the ability to take action and to solve problems based on acquired knowledge, expectations and subjective experience, is gradually increased (cf. Friederich et al 1997: 8). We also assume that children and adolescents already possess considerable knowledge of media aesthetics and media dramaturgy gathered from their receptive experience of audiovisual media (cf. Buckingham et al 1995: 221). Because of their media socialisation, children and adolescents outstrip many adults (including teachers) in the field of viewing literacy. This, initially passive, knowledge can be transformed into active, accessible know-how within the framework of learning processes supported in a media-educational manner. The didactic methods which can lead to this transformation have already been indicated above. Independent activity, learning through play and by creating, emphasising presentational-symbolic expression and non-linear ways of working – these are the principle didactic themes around which a concept for media education and self-expression, intended for children and adolescents from socially and educationally disadvantaging backgrounds, was built. Practical, hands-on activities do not, however, exclude verbal, reflexive learning processes. On the contrary Children find low threshold access to verbalisation through describing their own products at the end, through evaluating them and comparing them with professional examples.

Curriculum – yes, but…

Which technical, aesthetic and dramatising media skills do children and adolescents need to be able to express themselves adequately? In what order should these skills be

acquired or mediated? Anyone wishing to promote self-expression with media in the framework of educational processes will not be able to avoid putting these, or other, similar questions. A systematically constructed learning plan does not necessarily take into account the previous media experience and present competence of each individual young person. If there is no curriculum, however, there is a danger of the learning process becoming arbitrary, and, as a consequence, of neither the desired learning experience nor self-expression taking place. In our view, a practical solution is a concept which allows subject-oriented ways of acquiring knowledge through discovering and learning for oneself whilst, at the same time, incorporating facts and practical know-how in a way which is useful and appropriate to the situation. Hence, the order in which media-creating strategies are acquired or communicated is geared toward the knowledge level of the media-makers. It is crucial to obtain a balance between structured, pre-planned procedures on one the hand and associative, intuitive steps on the other. This can only be achieved if the media educator has a broad spectrum of aesthetic, technical, social and methodological knowledge at her/his disposal (internalised curriculum for shaping media) and if s/he can bring this knowledge to bear during the learning processes in a flexible way.

An Open Learning Environment – Creating Space to Experience

Active media work can be fun and provide enjoyment. It can, however, depending on the demands and educational aims, be very taxing and put considerable strain on material, cognition, motivation and time. The production sequence 'abstract, script, story-board, shooting schedule, shooting, editing' – still generally followed in Germany in video work with young people - calls for a high degree of planning, verbalisation and reflection on the part of the video-makers. The time it takes to produce the film often goes beyond what is acceptable - or even bearable. Between shooting and the finished

product days and often weeks can pass. For a lot of children and adolescents the aesthetic feedback on their product and recognition from their potential audiences come too late. Their motivation and interest have dwindled or disappeared completely. This type of systematic procedure, centred mainly on narrative principles, is better suited to target groups that have little or no difficulty in dealing with texts and (verbal) language.

For children and adolescents from socially and educationally disadvantaging contexts other concepts are more appropriate, namely; those in which, particularly at the beginning, a one-sided, verbal, reflexive stage is unnecessary and the media-makers are given the opportunity to handle authentic material in a playful, creative way right from the start. Open learning environments with fairly clearly structured aesthetic tasks stimulate media-aesthetic solution-seeking and independent learning experiences. They also result in small, hermetic, finished products within a short time. The media educator can gain an insight into the media-making competences of the participants by observing their problem-solving strategies and hence provide assistance where and when appropriate, as well as demonstrating or suggesting creative alternatives. Three open learning environments are described below as examples:

Learning Environment 1: „Jelly Baby Studio"

The aim of the „Jelly Baby Unit" is to produce a variety of situations, themes and moods by experimenting with camera angles, focal lengths, lighting and frame composition. The focus here is on activating and extending passive knowledge about media in the framework of an aesthetic problem-solving task. The learning environment offers little ‚production studios' in which the children and adolescents can work independently in small groups. Each studio consists of a table, two adjustable desk lamps, pieces of polystyrene, sheets of coloured paper, various props, jelly babies and a camera on a tripod.

Jelly babies are easily obtained; they are translucent and hence can be lit from behind, producing interesting effects of light and shade; they are small in size and encourage the media-makers – depending on what they intend to express – to use close-ups and detail shots.

As an introduction, a simple theme/feeling/mood was to be suggested. The feeling of fear is both a part of the children's and adolescents' living world and of the media world (thrillers, horror films, crime stories). It is a characteristic feeling which can be presented in many different ways and forms. The media educator(s) can, for example, first of all set the producers the task of photographing a jelly baby in a way that makes it appear threatening to the viewer and the next one so that it appears to feel threatened and is therefore afraid.

Frightening jelly babies can be photographed from a low angle (worm's eye view) in extreme close-up. If lit from below, dark shadows are cast above the 'extremities' and the nose, similar to the lighting effects typically used for figures in horror films. The warmth or coldness of the light can be altered by using coloured paper. Frightened jelly babies, on the other hand, can be shown from a bird's eye view, as a long shot including a lot of background. With the appropriate lighting the lonely jelly baby's insecurity and fear will be emphasised.

Producing dramatised „Jelly Baby Photography"

There are a number of possible solutions. The important aspect here is evaluating the material that has been produced together. If the small groups have been given different subjects at the beginning, they can show each other their results and guess the feeling or subject that has been interpreted. Another part of the evaluation could consist of the media educator(s) showing some stills from professional feature films in which the theme or feeling is represented. The children/adolescents can then compare their results to the professionally produced material and discover and name the differences.

To round off a session, a selection of the jelly baby pictures can be printed out and the children given the task of arranging them in order so that they create a short narrative sequence. When trying out different sequences and negotiating with each other, the children discover how the overall meaning of the story can change when the sequence of the pictures is altered. Depending on the educational purpose and the time available, they can create dialogues or a soundtrack for some of their scenes. The best stories (stills + dialogue + sounds) can then be filmed with a camcorder.

Instead of the jelly babies, all kinds of every day objects can be used in a similar associative manner. A media educator or artist could awaken the young people's awareness to how unusual camera angles and lighting can turn a familiar object into something strange or render it unrecognisable. A blackboard sponge can take on a different meaning; becoming, for example, a hovercraft, a gym mat or a loaf of bread.

Stills from an experimental „Watering Can Production"

Learning Environment 2: The Leaning Tower of Pisa Effect: Space and Overlapping

> „Because the cameraman/woman is in charge of selecting both angle and focus, s/he can also choose which objects s/he wishes to have in the frame; s/he can decide what to hide, what s/he doesn't want to show or is going to reveal later.(…) S/he can push things together or put them on top of one another, depending on the relationships between them that s/he wishes to demonstrate; relationships which can only be visually transmitted by using a particular angle and focus." (Arnheim 2002: 62/63).

The visual representation of what Arnheim describes above, particularly in the last sentence, is familiar to us all. Who hasn't seen them? Those holiday snaps showing someone holding up the leaning tower of Pisa with one hand. It is a way of constructing a relationship between two objects which in reality are completely unconnected. The apparent relationship can be constructed through transforming three dimensional reality into the reality of two dimensional film or photography. Space is simulated by 'depth' lines running diagonally and by overlapping. These structural characteristics can be used to produce optical illusions linking unconnected objects. To achieve the effect described above a suitable place for the active figure has to be found, as well as the right camera angle. In practice, the amateur photographer on holiday 'directs' his/her model until s/he has found the correct position.

Children and adolescents can learn this little trick in an experimental, playful way. A set-up is needed in which a camera on a tripod is connected to a television or video beamer. Various scenarios can then be suggested. A group of girls dancing hip hop on a boy's hand, or the children could jump one after the other from a table into a dustbin. The possibilities are endless. Through this exercise the young people can develop a feeling for space in terms of film media. They intuitively grasp the potential offered and the

limits set by a two dimensional medium. Furthermore, they acquire an awareness of dramatised photography and cinematography, foregrounding and backgrounding.

Learning Environment 3: Bringing a Model Car to Life

The aim of this learning environment is to confront children and adolescents with portraying *movement* in films. There are three possibilities to be explored: object movement (the camera is static), camera movement (the object is static) and a combination (both object and camera are moved). As sequences involving movement can only be created in chronological order, the focus in this learning environment is on becoming sensitive to continuity and to the fourth dimension – time.

The children and adolescents are set the task of filming a model car in such a way that it appears to be a real, life-size, moving vehicle. The didactic prompting behind choosing a car as the object was: driving and the corresponding dynamic camera movements are intersubjectively shared media cultural patterns which are familiar to children and adolescents from and through various media genres. Furthermore, the activity ties directly into their individual media preferences and their receptive experiences of media. As in the two previous learning environments, the aesthetic challenge can be taken up in a number of different ways. For example, the car can be filmed in close-up and moved by an invisible hand (object movement).

Focussing on the main subject – the hand re-   Model car in front of a moving background.
mains invisible in extreme close up.

To instigate the discovery of other possible solutions, the media educator(s) can make it
a condition that the car is not to be touched. The producers are thereby forced to use the
camera in a specific way, so that the illusion of movement is created. Panning over the
vehicle from left to right (in the opposite direction to which the car 'is going'), without
revealing the wheels (as they are not turning), would be a practicable method. If the
children have been given postcards with pictures of landscapes, then they can use these
to provide a moving background by drawing them from left to right across the scene
framed by the camera viewer.

A further possibility is to have the camera roll hectically from side to side, thereby
achieving an effect similar to the shots in chase scenes when the horizon seems to rock
and sway, the purpose being to create a more dynamic scene.

Rocking and rolling camera „Chase Scene Aesthetics"

In the setting of the evaluation phase the media educator(s) can gradually introduce
some of the technical terms used in film-making (panning, dolly shot, zoom etc.). S/he
could also take this opportunity to point out the meaning of the term *cinéma* (in Greek
kinema – moving) or of the English terms *movie,* and *motion picture*.

A similar exercise can be carried out using stills. The children are given the task of cre-
ating the illusion of a moving car with the help of a few stills. Comparing the groups'

results can be an interesting exercise, too. The time dimension and the creative possibilities it brings with it become apparent when compared directly with static photography. Time is experienced as the immediate present and not as a moment that has been frozen. It is important to realise this, as time and movement play a central role in twentieth century art.

Outlook

The media educational approach briefly outlined here emphasises the importance of implicit learning procedures and advocates aesthetic reflection and aesthetic learning processes in dealing with aesthetic material. As is apparent from the above description of the didactic, methodological and practical consequences of this approach, the result is a kind of media-aesthetic basic education scheme or early learning course which lays the foundations for producing and forming media. These basic learning experiences will obviously not suffice to enable children and adolescents to produce something complex. For those who come from socially and educationally disadvantaging backgrounds they can, however, provide low threshold access to symbolic self-expression with media.

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