

ABSTRACT

This research report involves an evaluation of a street children art programme delivered by Imbali Visual Literacy Project a non-governmental organisation based in Johannesburg, South Africa. Little attention has been given to evaluating art programmes aimed at ‘marginalised youth’. This marks a gap in current theorising in the area. The programme is presented in terms of the “progressive” and “liberal democratic” ethos that is identified as informing Imbali’s approach. This approach is critiqued by drawing on Grant Kester’s ideas of ‘dialogical aesthetics’. A new participatory and collaborative model for initiating art programmes aimed at marginalised youth is proposed. This model draws on Kester’s ideas as well as the value Imbali places on art-making processes. It is advocated that participants on such programmes should be encouraged to play an active role in taking responsibility for their own development through both art-making and dialogue. If programmes are conceived of in this way it is claimed that there is more of a chance they can effect sustainable change and development.