

The earliest experience I remembered learning about Arts is dating back to my kindergarten age. Like most of 5 year-old girls, I liked drawing, especially drawing different Princesses. I like spending time drawing the details about their faces, hairstyles and dresses. There was curious obsession about drawing the face of every character. I remember the confidence I had when drawing the beautiful eyes and mouth for each princess; However, It was always the noses that could easily cause me a serious frustration, sometimes it would even lead to sadness and discourage of the whole drawing. Because of that, nose was always the last part I would draw. It was the part on the face, which I knew how it was supposed to look like but it could never come out right from my drawing. I tried to draw its shape as realistic as possible, or maybe just a brief outline in position to indicate the existence of it. But none of them could meet my satisfaction. One time because I kept erasing and redrawing, it ended up leaving a hole on the paper. I started crying and my Mom came over to check on me. I told her the reason for my crying and she helped me drawing on a different piece of paper. I drew the eyes and mouth, so my mom helped me to draw the nose on the face. It was not exactly what I had in mind but because it looked different from the collections of nose that I had been drawing, I was able to make peace with it. Since then, I hardly draw any Princess again in my childhood.

Later along my growth, I was introduced to various formats of Arts at different ages. My parents sent me to learn piano after I started grade one. I was sent to dance studio to learn how to dance when I was in grade three, and I spent one summer to learn sketching and drawing when I was in grade eight. Some people might say that I had a rich experience with Arts considering different arts I had been learning in my childhood. The truth is I gave up in all of them within a year. The reason for giving up varied from my busy school schedule to loss of interests. Because of this, my mom once drew a summary about how I did not have resilience towards anything at all. Given the opportunity to reflect back from these particular experiences, I found that there is a great certainty about my interests in all of the Arts education at the beginning, but what pared my interests down about Arts in my childhood? Do we always have to choose between Arts practice and schoolwork? Can Arts and other school subjects collaborate well in certain format?

During my study in different subjects of Arts, there was always one clear message being repeated. It was the message about making progress. Regardless the subject of Arts lesson I was taking at that time, progress and accomplishment had always been greatly emphasized and compared. I was drawn to different Arts in the beginning simply due to the pleasure receiving from the sound,

movement or color and shape of them. Once I started learning and practicing them, the pleasure started being diluted by the pressure of driving for progress and achievement. I was moving alone in my Arts learning with criticisms and pressure. I was never told or guided in a way that Arts was there to cultivate my creativities or use as a tool to find myself or express myself. Instead, I was always told that I had to be good with what I was doing, and the “good” is justified by teachers and parents based on a common standard. Due to the pressure from getting the recognition from teachers and parents, I slowly lost my interests and all Arts project just became a work I had to do or finish before going to bed or going outside and play.

Despite the early experience of Arts education, I still wouldn't say that learning different kind of Arts at my early age compromised my talent or interests in arts. On the contrary, being exposed to different format of Arts in my childhood did plant a seed inside of me, which allows me to be more sensitive about different elements in life. History was once a dull subject for me when I was in High school. This was changed after I started to learn and appreciate the paintings from different period. I started sketching and drawing again when I was in university. It was the time I wish I did not give up my learning in drawing when I was a child. After starting my first job, I started using my interest in visual arts towards photography. Whenever I am

holding my camera, it is always a quiet, yet expressive world through the viewfinder. In the end not only does Arts allow me to express myself, it has also helped me to find myself.

I strongly believe that Arts can collaborate seamlessly with other subjects at school in order to help students grow and learn as a whole. Learning Arts does not need to be a separate work from schoolwork like how I experienced. Arts cannot only be used as a tool to cultivate creativities and self-esteem out of the students; it also can be a subject to intrigue genuine interests from students and later to be expanded to different subjects. That is why I am truly excited about this class. I am looking forward to applying the knowledge that I learn from this class to making changes and perfecting the curriculum in the classroom.