
VIGNETTES

Editor's Introduction

Vignette: [French, *vigne*, *vine*]. Originally a running ornament of vine leaves, as used in decoration, *vignette* now refers to a short descriptive or evocative episode, or a dainty poem or artistic drawing. (.)

Oxford English Dictionary, 2008, online

Evocative, as one might expect, refers to “bringing forth [to evoke] memories, feelings, etc.” Evoke, interestingly, means “to call forth; *esp.* to summon up (spirits, etc.) by the use of magic charms” (Oxford English Dictionary, 2010, online). As I work my way through the OED on definitions of these words, I am surprised at how strong is the connection between evoke and a sense of the mysterious and the spiritual. Art often calls forth, indeed, evokes this sense. Both Chryssa’s image (The Ropewalker) and the Crowell/Reid-Marr article deal with art. Chryssa’s is creative art; Crowell and Reid-Marr describe the effect of art on the creators. John Dewey, considered by a number of educationists as the “father of the scientific method,” begins the process of scientific reasoning with a feeling, and in *Art as Experience* (1938) discusses transforming “common human experience into matters of artistic [and aesthetic] value” (11). William Bateson the geneticist, his son Gregory the anthropologist, and their neighbor Alfred North Whitehead—scientists or logicians all—considered art the epitome of human activity. Art brings in creativity and interpretation; it is these activities we hope this section will foster.

Chryssa’s Ropewalker is open to many interpretations. At first glance it shows a figure walking into the cosmos. On closer examination I see that cosmos is filled with the dynamics of *Being* and the Ropewalker feeling his/her way. Notice the placement of the feet. It is not just balance the ropewalker needs, it is a *feeling* of rope, space, tension, with which the walker must interact in order for the walking to occur. Again, for me, this lines up nicely with Dewey’s sense of where the scientist must begin and with Whitehead’s sense of the beginning of logical thought. Chryssa has her own interpretations. I asked her not to bring those forth now; rather, to leave interpretation

up to the reader. As a complexivist, I like the indeterminacy. While Chryssa graciously agreed to my/our request, she would be, I believe, happy to share with readers her interpretation (written in poem form) and hear of your interpretation. Her email is listed under the image.

Sam and David take us into the effects of creating and the importance this has to our lives. The situation they describe is a poignant one—for Dewey a prime requirement if we are to create. The meaning for educationists is quite direct. Art should neither be eliminated nor shunted to the side in the curriculum. Rather, through art the curriculum and ourselves come alive. Our very being takes on a new sense of *Being*. Like the ripples on a pond the effects radiate. Art infuses value and meaning into all we do. Again, emails are given.

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