1960 - 1975

Politics above success



By 1962, the school admission age was increased to 11-16, a 60 pupil, two form entry was standardised, and a sixth form was added. To accommodate these extra pupils the school had to add a new building in Lime Grove and lease a nearby Methodist Chapel.

Changing teaching philosophy of the school

During its last 15 years, teaching at the school evolved away from "instruction and practice" towards an emphasis on creative universities. Headmasters Bill Davies (1964-1968) and Jack Taylor (1968-1975) both appointed young graduate teachers with fresh ideas.

In 1971, under John Swift as Head of Art, a Fine Art Foundation Course was developed for the upper sixth form - a Bauhaus influenced study programme

Run in parallel with 'A' Level study of Arts and Craft subjects and



<u>KOSELET ROAD ART SCHOOL</u> The school is a TWO form entry co-educational establishment for these best educated by yimul means. The school is now unique. The school is now unique. The pupil in his or her first five years follows a general academic course couldned with an art and craft specialisation, creaturily sitting '0' lowel or C.5.2. examinations where suitable. The beside of the school of the successful pupil to follow other areas. The sixth form puppers the student for one of the following: The sixth form puppers the student for one of the following:





imagination.

"Tasks from the first year onwards, sympathetic tutoring, individual guidance, group criticism, background reading, illustrated research projects, gallery and museum visits all played a vital role." Paul Bartlett

Greater emphasis was placed on qualifications for general education to satisfy employers. A minimum of five 'O' Levels for all pupils became the school's ambition.

Printing, modelling and other industry-linked vocational crafts were replaced by nationally defined subjects, such as graphic design and woodwork, that could be examined as 'O' Levels

School aspirations increased with the introduction of a sixth form. 'A' Levels allowed entry to higher occupations, colleges or occupying 75% of the students' time, this was unique within Secondary Art Schools.

Political changes in Education

The last nine years of the Art School were challenging. Control of Birmingham Council alternated with a Labour or Conservative majority, each preparing educational change then having it blocked at the election box or an opposing national government. There were different plans proposed in 1966, 1968 and 1971. As soon as Labour won the General Election in 1974, there was a headlong rush to reform with a pre-planned comprehensive scheme. The school was effectively closed the following year.

"After nearly a hundred years a school where those who thought more fluently through their hands and eyes with a curriculum to match their abilities, was lost." John Swift College of Art (Direct entry to Dip.A.D. or Vecntional courses). College of Art Foundation Course. College of Education.

University. A careor in 'Commercial' art at 17 or 18.

A one year course of 'o'levels, where necessary. A one year vocational graphic course. A where year of 'A' levels is available, including

A wide range of 'A' levels is available, including English, cogrephy, History Fainting, Seulyture, Art History, Grephic Design, abroidery, Dress Design, and Art & Craft. Facilities, environment a starting make this possible in this school, with specialist starf n each more.

All the pupils in the sensel have a common link; their relative out ability and interest. This not only serves to unity their aims and interests, but, due to staffing, this can be fully exploited, and ean lead to subject stifanction and a sense of achievement which pervades the other areas where their ability is not so marked. If the fatesephere' of a school is a product of roligiouships, the size of this school is important. It canbles staff and pupils to know each other, not only in the teacher/pupil sense, but as people.

A significant propertion of the school's pupils enter art areas on leaving school at 16,17 or 16, and find satisfaction and progress in their jobs. We believe that at this school we can best prepare them for their future, due partly to solection on art ability, and partly to the visually based education they will receive. The artistically gitted child is generally more sensitive than average, and meeds a personal and sympathetic environment to enable his or her potential to flower. In a large school, this very thing may be part--ially obseured through sheer size. It has already been found that large purpose-built neighbourhood schools coresens, have had to be partitioned to enable ease of management, and improve teacher/pupil contact.

Another important factor is time. The visual creative process cannot be learned by rote or destrine, but through the lengthy procedure of practice. Due to staffing and space, the school can office this to all its pupils, where necessary. The element of time is checkutaly with for the emotional satisfaction and self-fulfilleont the pupil modes, and is the correct educational approach for their

In the sonior classes, it is possible to give the student individianl positive tuition, based on a real understanding of his artistic meads, and to encourage discussion, a sense of ortificiem and cararenoses of follow students work who are all sharing similar visual, anotional and mental experiences. This unity of direction and common aptitude is a major difference between this school and others. This school has a fine record in placing its puils in 'commer-

-cial art areas at 16+, in graphic design studies, in display, and in apprentice-hips in artistic crafts, o.g. Jewellery, and indeed Birsinghan's industry meeds such people.









