

# Art For All

## ESL Course Offered At Library

The Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library is offering a basic course in English as a Second Language, which will run weekly from Sept. 24 to Nov. 19.

The nine-week course is designed for newcomers with limited English language skills, and the cost is \$84, including GST. Instructor Shirley Young will introduce and build vocabulary with conversation and role-playing in practical situations, such as visiting the doctor or attending a job interview. Sessions run from 10 a.m. to noon.

Classes will be cancelled if there is insufficient registration. For more information, or to register, drop into the library or call 905-642-7323.

By Cass Reimer

"Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once we grow up." Pablo Picasso

But why bother? Is art really a useful life skill or should we be more practical? The answer depends how you look at the world -- is art only on the gallery wall, or is art everywhere?

From the first perspective, art is a specialized niche that only artists, designers and curators are involved in. From the second perspective, art is everywhere: in galleries, books, websites, ads, CDs, gardens, architecture, jewellery, cars and so on. Professionals of all kinds use innate artistic and creative abilities every day, and there is a continuum between, for example, hairdressers and avant-garde artists.

North Americans often make too strong a distinction between what constitutes art, putting "art" into the luxury category and "non-art" into the category of daily

life. But what if art were inseparable from everyday life? This is the case in many cultures, and it's a lot more fun that way. More Europeans make art part of the everyday. Their quality of life exists not in spite of the resources poured into art, but as a product of it; they cultivate their creative classes and thus they cultivate their economies.

A good education is a must for youth with ambition. Research proves that art education is also good for us, having many of the same ingredients as other disciplines, as well as emphasizing and rewarding innovation and independent problem-solving in a way few other disciplines do. Risk-taking and original thinking, considered problematic among teens, are central values in current visual art training. They also happen to be vital drivers of economic growth.

Art training includes such transferable skills as imagination, flexibility,

geometry, colour theory, communication skills, hand-eye coordination, self-discipline and self-confidence. A successful artist needs all of these, plus strong marketing and business skills. The majority of artists are self-employed, independent workers accustomed to setting and meeting their own goals and keeping track of current trends.

The Latcham Gallery exists for public contemporary art education for all skill levels, not just the connoisseur. Our motto is, "educate, challenge and inspire." Everyone is welcome to drop by and discuss the current exhibition with us or enjoy an artist talk. The gallery offers education programs for all ages with free family days and a monthly drop-in program for families, as well as art classes for children, teens and adults.

For more information visit [latchamgallery.ca](http://latchamgallery.ca).

Cass Reimer is education program coordinator at The Latcham Gallery



Angel displays her beautiful artwork at Latcham Gallery's summer camp.

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