

THE VILLAGE *KOLHIKO*: Three Greek junior high school art classes explore place

Abstract

This study aims to answer the question: does learning about art matter? Today, the traces of the financial crisis in Greece are obvious everywhere. In particular, the construction environment has been transformed in a collage of signs that indicate a constant change. Closed, abandoned small shops and buildings have been the sites of graffiti art that seems to be the prevailing aesthetic of the Greek town. I believe that art-based educational research is a significant means to uncover the facets of the Greek contemporary life. Art classes are a gateway to understand how the everyday experience of people is formed and transformed, and how people carry memories, disappointment and hopes for the future. This study shares my experience with my students, focusing on visual exploration. My intention is for my students to discover the identity and facets of the location.

I implemented a place-based curriculum in three junior high school art classes at a rural junior high school for three months. I involved my students in art-based research that included several visual methods, such as maps, photographs, collage, drawings and painting. The process itself and the products of the research indicated the relationship among self, community and natural and built environment. It is a case of reconnecting everyday experience with art learning.