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Winning pictures!

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In my research for my dissertation “Winning Pictures – Art competitions for children 1939-2000” I have been able to analyze diverse art competitions, mainly through the Swedish child picture archive in Eskilstuna. I have examined how children’s pictures have been used to bring forth different social agendas, such as pictures from organizations like the European Union or the European milk federation, WWF or Save the children. They have all used children’s pictures to bring forth their special agendas, but at the same time with the aim of giving knowledge about and giving children attention in different ways. To see the impact these children’s pictures have had in history, and still have, is important regarding how pictures have a huge impact generally on peoples way of thinking. Even if these competitions were arranged by different organizers, with different agendas, they still made children’s voices and children’s art noticed in society. Children’s pictures could be used to restore hope that change for the better is possible for future generations, and that the art and art education play a part in this. Through the competitions the pictures got public and published, and thereby gained attention.

In my presentation I would also like to discuss how children in Eskilstuna worked together with artists in an art project, creating a sculpture together that is now put up as public art in the municipality. How children’s art and ideas can be included in society in different ways is an interesting question for the future.