

## *Creating with a Purpose*

Building on the strong desire for students' excitement to create, English teacher Jessica Trudeau has been working successfully with 7<sup>th</sup> grade students from Tuv aimag, Zuunmod soum's School #1, teaching them new techniques in learning artist's skills.

The two separate classes of approximately 25 students each have been enrolled in Humuun Complex's art classes since last September. For an hour a week, each class learns alternative adaptations to what they traditionally learn in their regular Mongolian art classes. "The students are encouraged to become very involved in their creations and not be afraid to get messy," says Trudeau.

The first project that they were engaged in was a five panel wall painting of the Mongolian countryside that was painted in the English classroom. The students had to rotate painting the wall in shifts because there was so many of them. After completion, the classroom walls were spotted with mountains, gers, rivers, and flowers native to Mongolia.

Giving the students an alternative to painting on paper was a radical success for them. Examples of other past projects, originating mostly from American art class curriculums, have consisted of making life size masks, origami, drawing circus animals, magazine collages, and animals made of found objects such as bottles and fabric. Some projects are as traditional as still life's and portraits, yet others are as alternative as drawing abstract designs to the sound of musical rhythms.

In the future Humuun's 7<sup>th</sup> grade students will be working jointly on a project with the Arts Council of Mongolia called *Rainbow Horses*. 88 horse sculptures will be created by Sereeter Gochoo and students from the Institute of Fine Arts. The horses will then be decorated using paint and mosaic by children and young people from all over Mongolia. The Rainbow Horses project will increase awareness of Mongolian traditional arts and culture as well exposing children to new art forms. It will also aim to promote discussion about social issues affecting young people today.

The Rainbow Horses workshops will commence in April and will culminate in an exhibition as part of the 2006 Street Art Festival coordinated by the Arts Council of Mongolia.



Making art is an incredible way to boost children's self esteem and promote self expression and critical thinking. Trudeau says, "Creating is not a matter of staying in the lines, but developing a masterpiece based on what comes from inside of you solely. Placing lines on a page, smudging interesting colors together, and making a space where there once was none allows us to explore opportunities for the development of our children's minds."

More information about the *Rainbow Horses* project can be found by contacting Tanya Burkhardt at the Arts Council of Mongolia, [marketing@artscouncil.mn](mailto:marketing@artscouncil.mn) Jessica Trudeau can be contacted at [jtrudeau@meca.edu](mailto:jtrudeau@meca.edu).