

IATSE AGM 2008

The AGM of IATSE took place on Saturday November 22nd at the Teachers' club, Parnell Square. A vote of sympathy was extended to the family of our friend and honorary member, Barbara O'Neill on the death of her husband, Johnny. Following the formal business of AGM, Rory McDaid, Special Education Department, St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra gave a stimulating presentation on Newcomer students (other terms can also be used for these students) who learn English as a second language. Rory posed the questions why are so many of these students in learning support classes? How can we assess these students accurately? We, as teachers use

conversational language in a classroom situation which has Germanic roots. It may appear to teachers that students who speak English as a second language are acquiring this new language to an adequate level but we have to be careful that we do not fall into a trap. It takes 3-5 years to learn Academic English which has both Latin and Greek roots! Learning English as a Second Language can indeed be more complex than it first appears. It is also recommended that students continue to use their first language at home.

The session provoked many questions from the attendance. The IATSE CEC thanked Rory for his informative contribution.

IATSE ANNUAL AWARD 2009

IATSE has in recent years, established an annual award to give recognition to good practice in Irish schools in the area of Special Education. All practising teachers involved in Special Education are eligible to apply. This also includes teachers of mainstream classes where pupils with Special Needs are included.

Submissions may describe:

- A piece of work carried out with a particular pupil/group/class
- A programme of staff development established e.g. school based induction programme for new staff i.e. Teachers, SNAs
- A curricular programme or innovation

A submission may be in the form of a case study/project which would describe the practical application, methodologies and outcomes of the

innovation. It may also take the form of a narrative through which the story is told. It should be between 1,000 and 3,000 words in length. Submissions may be made by an individual or group of teachers. Up to four prizes of 500 each will be awarded each year. Only one award will be made for each winning submission.

Adjudication

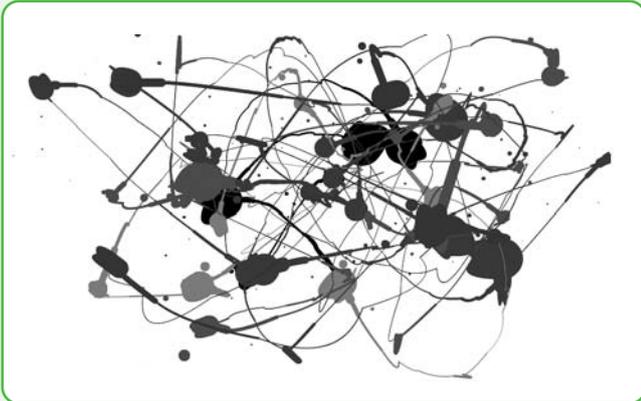
Winning submissions will be selected by a panel of adjudicators, comprising members of the IATSE CEC, representatives and members selected from a panel of readers. The CEC of IATSE will be the final arbiter in relation to the award.

Applications should be made to Annual Award, IATSE, Drumcondra Education Centre, Drumcondra, Dublin 9. Closing date for submissions is June 30th 2009.

CYBERCORNER



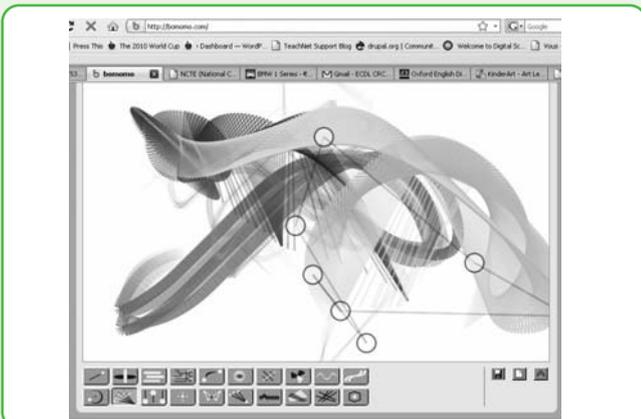
Art on the Cheap



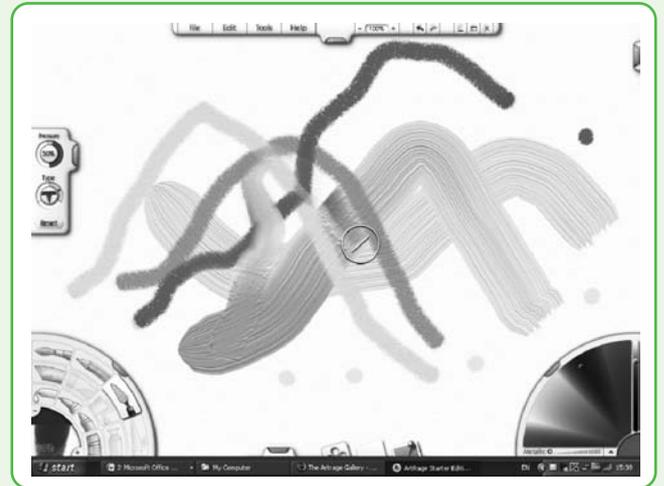
This week we will look at some excellent art tools which are available free online. For example, to create a Jackson Pollock style painting, just click on www.jacksonpollock.org. The great thing about this is that each pupil can create a stylish 'painting' with minimal effort and skill. Each time you click, you get a different colour. If you move the cursor slowly you get thick lines, while faster movement will give you spidery lines. This works great on an electronic whiteboard.

Tip: to get a new clean page, press 'space' or F5. To save your picture you can use the capture feature on your whiteboard or press the print screen ('Prt Sc') key on your keyboard, usually on the top row. This takes a snapshot of the screen and you can then paste it into MS Word or a drawing program.

If you would like to work with an art tool that gives you more control, try the new Bomomo site (www.bomomo.com). This is an amazing free site



which your students will find both relaxing and stimulating. Like the Jackson Pollock site above, you can create a lovely image by just clicking and dragging. There are 20 different effects along the bottom of the screen. Click on one and experiment with fast and slow movements and let your creativity flow. Tip: to save your image or start a new page, click on the appropriate button in the bottom right of your page.



Finally, ArtRage Starter Edition is a fully featured art program that is free to download from www.artrage.com. It works beautifully on the interactive whiteboard and is really easy for pupils to get started. The paint looks realistic and smudges and blends just as you would expect. You can also trace over an existing image that you have stored on your computer. Upgrading to the full version costs just \$25.

Now that you have created these wonderful works of art it is time to show them off! As teachers, we all know that students thrive on the idea of having an audience to see their work.

Most teachers will be aware of the excellent I Am An Artist site (www.iamanartist.ie) which has lots of suggestions and ideas for teachers and students. It also has a Gallery section displaying young artists' work. To upload your students' work to the Gallery, just click on the **Contact Us** button in the Gallery section.



NEW SOUND PERCEPTION ROOM, ST. MARY'S SCHOOL FOR DEAF GIRLS, CABRA, DUBLIN

In December a new state-of-the-art sound perception room was officially opened in St. Mary's School for Deaf Girl's in Cabra, Dublin 7. The room was the culmination of months of work with a team of employees at Analog Devices, who designed and installed the facility to specifically meet the needs of the deaf pupils in consultation with the sound perception / music teacher in St. Mary's, Margaret Farrell.

Sound perception is a very important aspect of the education of deaf children. Fundamental to any educational programme for the deaf child is the principle of enabling the child to make the maximum use of whatever residual hearing he / or she has and to promote auditory training in order to facilitate it. It focuses on training children with a hearing impairment to listen to sound and gain greatest benefit from amplification. In St. Mary's this is done through speech and language training and through our music programme. The girls' response to the new room has been fantastic and they are loving the new equipment. They are busy composing, performing and recording their own songs. St. Mary's has a long and proud tradition of dramatic performances including staging "Oliver" and a recent appearance on the "Late Late Toy Show".

The new room has been specifically designed to provide the best sound quality that technology can offer. Excellent amplification is provided by the Soundfield system which is linked to the audio-visual and musical equipment. There are 6 electronic keyboards with headphones all interconnected with a mixing board so that the pupils can practice music independently and at a flick of the switch each performance can be heard through the speaker. The new computer is linked to the keyboards and interactive whiteboard. Various software programmes have been installed so that pupils have access to their very own recording studio and a webcam allows performances to be videoed live in the room and played back via the whiteboard.

Analog Devices are the company behind the

MOBILE PHONES AND BULLYING

The Irish Association of Teachers in Special Education is aware that students with special learning needs can experience considerable amounts of bullying and prank calls on their mobile phones. This happens despite parental and /or teacher's advice to withhold personal numbers and other identifying personal information. We are aware that an Irish company called "Sentry Wireless" has developed software for mobile phones to address and prevent these problems. Enquiries to this company some time ago revealed that none of the Irish Mobile Operators would use their product.

Since that time however it is pleasing to report that Mobile Operator "3" has launched the Sentry Wireless application called "KidSafe" on their Nokia 6220 handset. They hope to extend the handset range this year.

"KidSafe" uses a parental control function on the phone whereby a child can only make and receive calls and texts from an approved list. All other numbers including "private number"(s) are blocked and recorded in the "blocked log" for parents to monitor. If a child changes the sim card it will be overridden by the approved list on the phone.

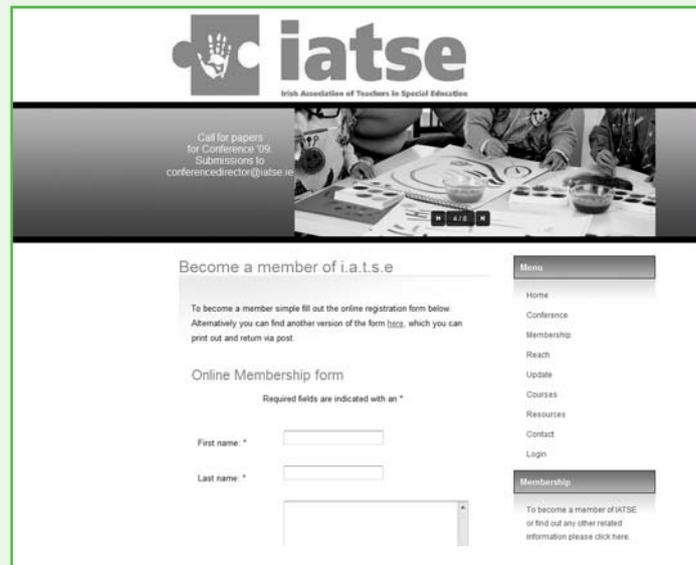
"KidSafe" User Guide which explains in detail how the system works is available from this website: <http://kidsafe.com/>. It is hoped this information will be of help to parents and other adults who are concerned with furthering the safety and well being of children.

new room, which specialises in designing circuits that play a fundamental role in converting and processing sound, light and pressure into electrical signals to be used in a wide range of electrical equipment. They are probably best known for developing the circuits for the Wii and airbags for cars. It was a chance meeting at The Young Scientist Exhibition that began the journey towards the designing and installing of the high-tech room in St. Mary's.

www.stmarysdeafgirls.ie

New Online Membership Form

Joining IATSE has never been easier. We now have an online membership feature on our website. Check us out today at www.iatse.ie.



IATSE REGIONAL SEMINARS 2009



7th March 2009
Clanree Hotel,
LetterKenny
Registration 9.30am

21st March 2009
Malton Hotel,
Killarney
Registration 9.30am

The Irish Association of Teachers in Special Education would like to welcome to you to attend our Ulster and Munster regional seminars.

9.45-10.45

The A-Z of Childhood Psychiatric Disorders

Aileen Murtagh, Department of Child Psychiatry, St. John of God Hospital, Dublin. (7th March)
Fiona McNicholas and Aileen Murtagh, Lucena Clinic, Rathgar & Department of Child Psychiatry, Our Lady's Hospital for Sick Children, Crumlin, (21st March)

11.00-12.30

Handwriting difficulties remediation A practical approach

Sandra Patton, Occupational Therapist, Trinity College, Dublin

Everyone is welcome!

*Free for IATSE members and 5 Euros for all other participants.