

ARTBEAT

Volume 7, Fall 2015



ART EDUCATORS OF NEW JERSEY: Celebrating 75 Years

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President's Message

Collage and You!

Donita Ellison

Collage is a technique I have loved doing myself and with the high school students I taught at La Guardia High School using the Aesthetic Realism Teaching Method. From one point of view it is so simple—all that is needed is paper and glue—yet the artist Robert Motherwell described collage as “the twentieth century’s greatest creative innovation.”

Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque explored the possibilities of this folk craft once used mainly for scrapbooks, and brought it into the realm of high art. Matisse is among the artists who have shown that collage is more than just gluing paper. He said that each piece of paper had to be “augmented,” “given life,” and just last year people waited in long lines at the Museum of Modern Art to see how Matisse gave life to paper in his beautiful and dynamic cut-outs.

Why have people, including students in art classrooms at all levels, loved doing collage? All art, I learned, has an important message for the life of every person. That message is in this principle, stated by the 20th century educator and founder of Aesthetic Realism, Eli Siegel:

“All beauty is a making one of opposites, and the making one of opposites is what we are going after in ourselves.”

Opposites at the heart of collage are manyness and oneness, separation and junction. Many disparate, individual pieces of paper—diverse shapes, colors, images, textures—are arranged and fixed with glue into a single composition. To introduce collage to my students I showed them several individual pieces of paper—white, brown, blue, a newspaper clipping, and a sample of wallpaper—and asked: Would a composition created by gluing just one of these pieces of paper onto a background, be interesting? As a means of exploring this question, we looked at Picasso’s *Guitar* of 1913.

Created from pieces of paper similar to the ones I had shown, this work is described in *Collage, Personalities, Concepts, Techniques*, by authors Harriet Janis and Rudi Blesh, as a “virtuoso demonstration of the...possibilities of collage.” My students and I studied the way Picasso cut, organized and combined different pieces of paper to indicate, for example, the shape of a guitar, and how he used light and dark paper as light and shadow. I asked the class: Does the newspaper clipping add something to the shape of the guitar? Does the blue background add

something to the wallpaper pattern? We saw that these single pieces of paper *did* add something to each other. I am fortunate to be able to tell the young people I teach that the beauty of a collage depends on its composition—how its many parts, with all their drama of likeness and contrast, work well together.

In his great 1949 lecture titled *Poetry and Unity*, Eli Siegel explained: “The purpose of composition is to show that through bringing something together with other things, it will have something which it would not have had alone.” As we studied Picasso’s collage, my students were excited to see how each piece he added to the composition, had something it didn’t have alone. For example, the blue background brought serenity to the wallpaper and the wallpaper pattern added a rich liveliness to the blue background.

A mistake that I have made, as many students have, is feeling that our relation to other people and things makes us less, not more. This is an aspect of contempt, which Aesthetic Realism describes as the desire to get an “addition to self through the lessening of something else.” All art, I have learned, opposes contempt. This is definitely true of collage.

As my students worked on collage compositions they were excited and thoughtful as they considered how individual shapes and colors of paper added to each other. They liked learning that collage comes from the French word, *coller*, meaning to glue; and that pieces of paper could be cut, *papier collé*, or torn, *déchiré*. As one cuts and pastes, separates and joins, collage answers yes to these questions that are central to life: How can all the many parts and aspects of our lives work together? Are we more ourselves through seeing our relation to the world, including people, in all their manyness and diversity? The technique

of collage is loved because it represents a large hope in the life of every student and teacher.



Pablo Picasso (Spanish, 1881-1973) *Guitar*. Céret, March 31, 1913, or later

Cut-and-pasted newspaper, wallpaper, paper, ink, chalk, charcoal, and pencil on colored paper 26 1/8 x 19 1/2" (66.4 x 49.6 cm) The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Nelson A. Rockefeller Bequest © 2011 Estate of Pablo Picasso/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Donita Ellison is a sculptor and printmaker, and is an associate at the Aesthetic Realism Foundation in New York City. In seminars on the relation of art and life she has spoken about the lives and work of artists, including Barbara Hepworth, Hokusai, Louise Nevelson, Constantine Brancusi, and Auguste Rodin. She has been a guest lecturer at The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and El Museo del Arte de Puerto Rico, and regularly gives staff development workshops.

Recycled Bottle Cap Mosaic

Rebecca Davenport

Central Elementary School, Warren Township

What do you do when a parent donates 6 boxes full of plastic bottle caps?

Since of course I (like most art teachers) can't handle seeing materials go to waste, I decided I would come up with a project to use the caps for. It took me one full year to come up with the perfect project idea and have my students help to complete it, but I couldn't be prouder of the results!

Since this was a new endeavor for me, I used the internet and Pinterest for any information I could get my hands on! After hunting on the computer for ideas, I decided a group bottle cap mosaic would be a great addition to our school.

Through my online research, I found tips about the type of adhesive and boards to use, as well as the best way to approach the steps in completing the project. After speaking to our maintenance staff about potential ways to hang this large artwork, my principal about the logistics, and our PTO for generous funding through their "Live it, Love it" initiative, a final project idea was born based on our districts brand: "Shining Brighter Ever Day."

My school's 2nd, 3rd, and 4th graders began by sorting the caps that had been donated by color. Students were great about saving caps at home and would bring them in to add to our collection, since we were not exactly sure how many caps we would need.

I had learned from some blogs that painting the background helps add color to the spaces between the caps. Once the caps were sorted, students took turns painting in the design I drew on the two pieces of cement board that would be used as the background.

Then it was time to actually adhere the caps! This step actually made the entire project come to life! It was wonderful to see the classes work in groups to accomplish attaching the caps in the correct painted color section. Students also saved and brought in specific color caps, once we realized which colors we were running low on.

Our original plan was to hang the finished product outside, but after worrying the caulk may not withstand our outdoor elements, we found in indoor location that worked out just as nicely. The mosaic's

final home became our school's Library. The "Central Shines" mosaic debuted at our school's end of the year Art Show and combined Choral Concert.

This learning process was wonderful to experience with my students. We problem solved and worked together to create an artwork for the entire school to enjoy. I am so proud of the hard work and time the students put into completing our recycled art project.



S.T.E.A.M. It's Not Smoke and Mirrors

Eric Gibbons

www.artedguru.com, www.firehousepublications.com

The solution to failing schools is right under our noses. It has been for a long time. Research, studies, and evidence prove it, but schools ignore it because they feel it's counterintuitive. Worse yet, when schools do decline, they cut the one program they should be strengthening. When I tell you what that program is, the uninformed will consider me an idiot or a liar and not bother read the rest of this article.

The unobvious answer is a rigorous, focused, inter-curricular, certified instructed art program. The fact is that students who take art outscore their peers on tests like the SAT by an average of 100 points. My own students outscored their peers by an average of 155 points. They are also 50% less likely to fail other State mandated exams. This is also why schools that implement and support STEAM programs, outperform schools that promote STEM.

"STEAM" is the new buzz-acronym that means science, technology, engineering, arts, mathematics. Some schools advocate "STEM," erroneously thinking that art (The "A") is somehow not part of the larger equation. STEAM recognizes that art can be the glue of a good integrated program. Some art educators hear the term STEAM and groan or bemoan new initiatives, new lessons, new curriculum, new methods, when instead they should be cheering! The unavoidable fact about it is that art teachers have been using "S.T.E.A.M." long before it was ever a term or recognized for its strength. You can't make a grid, tessellation, or clay form without touching on geometry. You can't explore Warhol or Da Vinci without talking about history. You can't illustrate a story without literature. You can't mix colors without experiencing chemistry and physics on some level because we already do it to one degree or another. It's why kids who have art outscore their peers on standardized tests. You don't need new lessons, the core connections are already there to be teased out. You may have done them for so long that you aren't even aware of it, but you do it every day! I would liken STEAM, in most art classrooms, to a manual shift car. You can get from point "A" to point "B" in first gear and beat anyone who walks or runs to your destination. Art does this naturally. We beat out all our colleagues with deeper, multi-sensory learning with a high degree of creative problem solving. But there are higher gears available that take a bit of coordination to use. You don't always have to use them, it's fun to cruise slowly with the windows open, but using higher gears (more integration)

can be fun and offer new experiences. To get into second or third gear you could take the time to bring out a prism when you talk about color and light. You could draw from observation using science lab microscopes. You could do more pre and post writing, or reflect for a few minutes on a famous quote about art once a month, or once a week. You could tell a story about what was happening in history at the same time your artist of focus was working. By adding a bit more open ended writing or even a research paper annually, students can experience extensive cross curricular content in your "Porsche." I do these things, and encourage my peers to do so as well. The results have been pretty amazing and have saved my department. They take but a few minutes during my introductions or closures and can be done at every level. I go through all of Education supply catalogs for math, science, farming, etc. and find a wealth of resources and ideas. Many of their visuals, posters, and supplies have easy and relevant connections to what we do in art.



Though I teach at the high school level, this can be done at all levels from kindergarten up. If you do drawings of snowmen, why not talk about snowflakes, crystals, water molecules, temperature, or some other simple factoid that will enrich

what you are doing. Any animal based unit can include a bit of information about biomes, countries of origin, endangered species, domesticated versus wild animals. If you show a famous work of art, and talk about the artist, include when they were alive and what was happening in the world at the time. These are small and simple modifications that can be made at every level without detriment to your program and little impact on your time.

Every year I ask my guidance department to see how my art students do on their major state assessments. As a high school teacher, I focus on the SAT. In 2013 my students did 155 points higher on average than their peers. These kind of results, any positive results need to be shared with your administration and board of education. It is the best way you can advocate for yourself. When they see the hard numbers, real figures, they begin to understand the reality of how awesome you really are. It also means my department is not cut while others are. It means my budget is stable and healthy. It means I am respected by my fellow teachers. If your results are better than average but not quite as high as you might like, try adding a little more STEAM to

your program with some simple connections like the ones I mentioned. I do two or three major integrated projects a year like exploring pollen and seed forms as the basis of sculptural projects, requiring a written research paper about an artist from history and the work they produce that has inspired that student, a unit on perspective where we use rulers, t-squares and tie it all together with surrealism. I require that every student can recognize and categorize artwork by visual clues from the renaissance to pop art, but make it a detective-like

game. Did you nod and think, "I already do that!"? Well then you are already a STEAM expert! The idea that STEAM is for some art teachers and not others, or that it becomes a point of any kind of debate, is, in my opinion, silly. We are already STEAM based teachers the moment children enter our room. The larger fact is that STEAM illustrates the absolute necessity of art in a successful school program. It needs to be embraced, or even better, shrugged off with... "Steam? Yeah, I've been doing it for years. Nothing new."

Great writers are great artists and great books are great works of art. From this perspective it is not hard to prove that. . .

Great arts education is academic.

Trevor A. Bryan

Basic thinking needed for strong reading

- find details, key details
 - recognize patterns
- recognize change in patterns
 - identify moods
 - use schema
- think about symbols
- ask lots of questions
 - identify themes
- make lots of connections
- be open to new ideas

Basic thinking needed for strong viewing

- find details, key details
 - recognize patterns
- recognize change in patterns
 - identify moods
 - use schema
- think about symbols
- ask lots of questions
 - identify themes
- make lots of connections
- be open to new ideas

Basic thinking needed for strong writing

- provide details, key details
- provide (recognize) patterns
- provide (recognize) change in patterns
 - provide (recognize) moods
 - use schema
- think about symbols
- ask lots of questions
 - identify themes
- make lots of connections
- be open to new ideas

Basic thinking need for strong drawing, painting, singing, acting, dancing, sculpting and music playing, composing and choreography too

- provide details, key details
- provide (recognize) patterns
- provide (recognize) change in patterns
 - provide (recognize) moods
 - use schema
- think about symbols
- ask lots of questions
 - identify themes
- make lots of connections
- be open to new ideas

If Picasso Went to the Zoo

Eric Gibbons

www.firehousepublications.com

What do you get when you combine history, biology, international cultures, zoology, rhyme, alliteration, and art? You get the newest book from Firehouse Publications titled “If Picasso Went To The Zoo.” This inter-curricular collection of poems and illustrations, created by 50 art teachers from all over the world and is available in English, Spanish, and Chinese!

This collaboratively created book started with the 2015 New Year and a group of die-hard certified art teachers, sharing ideas and choosing artists to emulate from history. From Renaissance works to more modern pieces of Pop, each participant chose an artist from history to emulate. From Hieronymus Bosch and Giuseppe Arcimboldo to Andy Warhol or Jean Michel Basquiat, these teachers stepped into the shoes of historic greats and created a work of art of an alliterative animal that artist might have made. This is a common project in schools across the United States and abroad—to learn about the life and work of an artist and try to make a new work within their genera—not just a copy, but a work that might fit into their portfolio.

The author is a longtime AENJ member, art teacher, and winner of the recipient of The 2015 High School Division Award by the Executive Board of Art Educators of New Jersey. “The collection is awesomely diverse!” says author Eric Gibbons, “We have artists from all over the earth, from different periods of time, male and female, black, white, Native American, and everything in between. We also chose a very diverse approach to the media including traditional paintings and illustrations, but also sculpture, pottery, and even an example of quilting in the style of Harriet Powers. My favorite thing about these projects is that I learned about so many important artists I had not really heard of, and I have been teaching art for more than a quarter century!”

Gibbons continues, “We all know Picasso, Dali’, Matisse, and Paul Cézanne, and some people with a bit of an art background will recognize names like Courbet, Ivan Albright, MC Escher, and Franz Marc, but how many know the influence and importance of Elizabeth Catlett, Rufino Tamayo, Hyman Bloom, or Fernand Léger? I had not heard of Mr. Tamayo before

writing this book, and learned that he is considered a national treasure of Mexico for his work. He is truly amazing! There is something here for everyone, no matter their familiarity with art or art history.

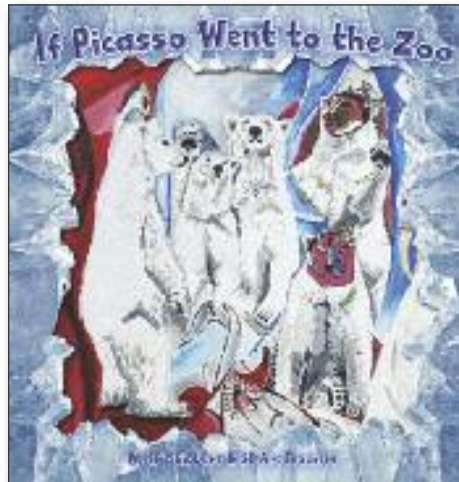
Each artwork is accompanied with a unique poem I wrote that tells a bit about the artist, their genre, and the animal subject. Each has an alliterative animal, like Picasso Pangolin, Léger Llama, or Dali’ Dodo. Each illustration has a tiny leaf nearby to help you understand if the animal is endangered, extinct, or thriving. I even created a free packet with extended learning projects readers can download and explore themes like zoology, poetry, research, history, and more.”

Gibbons continues, “People often mistakenly assume that art is a frill to help fill time in school when really it is the key to a successful program. Art combines all disciplines and makes them more deeply understood by children. Students who have art outscore their non art peers by a wide margin. Solid research shows that students who have art in high school score an average of 100 points higher on the SAT exam than their non art peers.

Art teachers know, when we grid, measure, and draw—we use geometry. When we make sculptures—we use engineering. When we mix colors—we reveal information about physics. When we create illustrations for stories—we learn about literature. When we review the styles of art from da Vinci to Bansky—we teach history. When we write about art—we strengthen these skills. When we create works of art, we solve complex visual problems in creative ways. Art is the meeting place of all subjects and should be supported in all schools around the world with certified art teachers.”

More projects are in the works including a geography focused book titled, “If Picasso Went On Vacation” and an aquarium themed version titled “If Picasso Went To The Sea.” If you would like to participate in a future book, just visit the “If Picasso” room on Facebook to learn more.

Books are available through Amazon.com and several museum bookstores across the USA., and signed editions will be available at the fall AENJ Conference as well as other fine titles from Firehouse Publications.



VISUAL ARTS PROGRAMS AT KUTZTOWN

KUVA

THE VISUAL ARTS AT KUTZTOWN UNIVERSITY

B.S. ART EDUCATION: CERTIFICATION
B.S. ART EDUCATION: ALTERNATIVE SETTINGS
B.F.A. FINE ARTS
B.F.A. COMMUNICATION DESIGN
B.F.A. CRAFTS
M.ED. ART EDUCATION*
M.F.A. COMMUNICATION DESIGN



Earn **GRADUATE CREDIT** while attending the AENJ conference!

SESSION ONE: Come join Dr. Marilyn Stewart for an informational meeting about this exciting opportunity for AENJ conference participants. You'll attend conference sessions of your choosing and then reflect online about how you'll take it back to your classroom. As an online course through Kutztown University, out-of-state tuition is greatly reduced.

Sunday, 12:30 - 1:20pm, Atlantic 3

SESSION TWO: Second meeting for those interested in this exciting opportunity for AENJ conference participants. Share Insights, experiences and plans for the future while debriefing conference sessions and workshops. Learn about participation in the online portion of the course.

Monday, 12:00 - 12:50pm, Atlantic 4

FOR MORE INFORMATION GO TO:

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Under the Sea: An Art Installation Makes a Splash

Ellen Hargrove, Haddon Twp. School District

How do we make art real to our students? How do we design art instruction that creates meaningful connections to the world around us? How do we write and teach lessons that engage and inspire, as well as meet standards and fulfill goals? And how do we ensure that the students are having fun while learning? These are questions that probably resonate, if you are a classroom practitioner. These are the questions I frequently ask myself, and I think that this past year I found the answers in our middle school installation project.

In September of 2014 I moved back to teaching high school and middle school students, after a four-year stint at the elementary level. I work in a small district, with only one middle school, and I teach all our sixth, seventh and eighth grade art students, in single marking period cycles classes. At the end of each year there is an Arts Extravaganza, at which artwork of all grades is displayed, as well as a middle school group installation project, which is created for, and presented at, this event.

Our middle school curriculum is thematic, and is based on the four elements: Earth, Water, Fire and Air. This year the school wide art theme was water, with a focus on the oceans and seas of the Earth. We studied the work and imagery of numerous artists from different genres and times, who were inspired by water, or who used water as an integral component in their work. A great deal of the learning centered on the environment and conservation, and “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle” was a phrase that increased in meaning for each of us, especially after looking at and discussing the work of contemporary artists like Chris Jordan, Nils-Udo, and Edward Burtynsky, whose ideas and visual statements offered my students new perspectives and a great deal of food for thought. I also used environmental current events as daily warm-ups. Our class discussions and conversations were deeper and richer than ever before.

We collected many types of recyclables, and used these in our classroom artmaking experiences, and to create the bulk of the installation components. My room was filled to overflowing with plastic water and soda bottles, aluminum beverage cans, plastic grocery bags, disposable drink lids, bottle tops, cardboard cartons, and whatever somebody found interesting and decided to bring in. Storage was an issue, but it was worth the difficulties to have so many collected materials on hand. Students using these objects, spending time with them, turning them over in their hands as they imagined or problem solved, gave them the opportunity to really



reflect on the deep issue of consumerism, with its layers of need versus want, and what we are doing to our planet to satisfy those ideals.

Our creative vision narrowed to our seas, and the creatures living there, who are impacted by the pollution and trash that works its way into the water in many unfortunate ways. Since my student artists are still young, and the families in our community were the intended audience, we wanted the installation to be positive and attractive, focusing on the beauty we can still find in the ocean, and the need to find better ways to protect that. We created our own version of a coral reef, complete with coral made from the cardboard packing crates I saved after the flood of iPads were unpacked during our one-on-one device roll out. A school of fish made from flattened aluminum cans swims through the scene, and soda bottles turned into fish, squid, and sea tortoises frolic through the coral and sea plants, while Styrofoam and paper plate crabs hang out below. Starfish and sand dollars, cut from the corrugated cardboard boxes saved from my supply orders, add a whimsical touch of texture to the “ocean floor”. Above the installation, dozens of circular art pieces hang from the

ceiling, images of sea creatures on one side, and facts and statistics about water, conservation and pollution on the other.

A group of twelve 6th, 7th and 8th grade students was selected to actually build the installation on one side of a hallway, taking up a length of about 35 feet. We had all the artwork and support materials (presorted into bins and boxes) ready, as well as whatever tools and hanging materials we needed, and carried these over at the end of the day on Friday. We met for breakfast the following Monday morning, and that was the day! One of my colleagues from the English department, who has worked with on previous installations, also helped to facilitate the installation. The students worked as a group to make major decisions, but mostly in pairs as the work went on. There were difficulties at times, especially when things would not stick to the walls exactly as planned, but the students were enthusiastic, and committed to making things work. They evaluated, tried things, re-evaluated as necessary, and made everything work in the long run. And it looked amazing!

My students had an in depth learning experience, about real world issues, as well as building on their art making knowledge, skills, and practices. They also had an authentic and sincere involvement with using art to share

information and send a meaningful message to the public. Art became real to them. It became personal. And the installation was one of the highlights of our Arts Extravaganza. It was exciting to watch families as they experienced what we'd created. Their comments and questions gave us valued feedback. And their compliments were well deserved, and helped build confidence in my young artists. Every student in the middle school was a part of this creative experience, and while it was a big job, and hard work, it was worth it. I'm actually looking forward to what we'll do next year. Our theme is Fire and Air. We'll have a blast with that-no pun intended.



As Art Teachers, Still Emerging

Lisa Hirkaler Murphy



I am writing this as I am sitting in my gallery, Pleiades Contemporary Art Gallery in Chelsea, New York City. This is my first solo show featuring my wool pod sculptures. Getting to this point has taken eighteen months. I have been making these cocoon like pods for the past two years as a form of expression and release.

When asked the typical questions, “How long did it take you to make one?”, I say 23 years. First, I raised my boys, who helped raise the sheep, who gave me the wool and then I started to experiment with various processes. My mother gave me the gift of fiber as a medium. I can remember sitting on the fire escape in the Bronx as a little girl. I was making clothes for my dolls, crocheting squares to add to an endless blanket and dreaming about living in the country like Laura Ingalls Wilder in *Little House on the Prairie*. Well, I did end up with a farm. Although not as romantic or easy at times, I did accumulate a lot of wool, and this became the basis of my thinking. When I exhausted my supply of natural wool (30 pods later), I looked to other local women farmers for more.

As I continue to develop my process with fiber, I am finding ways to push the medium to new shapes with strength. My partner and I search for antique tools and play with chemistry as a way to add texture to my chains and tools. The sculpture work is in two venues, the Pleiades Gallery and Monmouth Museum in Linden, NJ. My paintings are on display at Franklin Cares and Selective Insurance Corporations in NJ. The Monmouth exhibit is titled “Please Touch”, an

exhibit that encourages the participants to feel the sculptures. This is the second time my work was included in a show that provides a chance for the visually impaired community to feel the art and engage with 3D works. It is an honor and privilege to show in such wonderful space and includes sections of the museum that welcomes children to engage with other structures and works.

As art educators, we often put our work on hold as we deal with demands of teaching full time. I teach Basic Sculpture, Advanced Sculpture and AP Art History to High School students. These types of courses can be physically and intellectually rewarding yet draining at times. I feel that as art teachers, we must try to keep our artistic feeling flowing. At Teachers College, Columbia University, I studied the work of a psychologist on happiness and creativity, Csikszentmihalyi. He called the meditative state of mind in the creative process brought about by repetitive, rhythmic actions “flow.” Don’t we seek “flow” with our students, as well. Don’t we love it when the lesson goes onto its track, the students are engaged with the material, explore options, solve problems, and almost effortlessly stay on task with diligence and relish in the process. I would like to say it is that every moment is a moment of flow, that teacher moment when one can hear a pin drop, that makes it all worthwhile, but I teach sculpture and silence is not the rule. For us in the 3D arts, we love the sound of working, students don’t sit down, they need to stand at a wedding table for 45 minutes and wedge clay or hand-build their work at hip level...in the flow...



working. For us as teachers, we must make time for our own making, our creative explorations and share those highs and lows with our students. A student of mine named Tim offered me Alpaca fiber from his mom's farm and invited me to their farm to pick it up. This was my opportunity. The next day, I brought my armatures and this new fiber to class, and let my students help me wet felt a 6' cocoon with offers of extra credit to any student brave enough to touch the glorious warm fuzzy fiber and work it until its comforting, organic shapes emerged. Most of the students loved it, some were repulsed by the overwhelming textures or the over stimulation of the soap, fiber, smells, and bubblewrap, but they were in the moment.

I shared my experiences with the students and the outcome was sweet. At my opening reception at Pleiades in Chelsea, NYC, several of my wonderful colleagues, students, parents, family, and friends came to experience the installation. The reaction was positive and affirming. I reached out using social media, which is a time consuming job, so I sought the help of a former student, now out of college and living in Brooklyn to assist me. She is now a practicing drummer, artist and hip-hop Shaman with events in Brooklyn, and performed an improvisational dance with friends during the installation, bringing the whole traditional legacy of multiple generations of women relating to women, thanking the spirits of those past and present into a blissful event of warm fuzzy comfort. I brought this into the street by yarn bombing the bike rack on the street outside (see selfies posted via #WarmFuzzyArt).

I know that my work is "out there", but that is the point. My work comes from a place of change within my body, the ending of my physical maternal capabilities and the feeling that we have as empty nesters when we miss our grown children. Of course we want them to grow, go, be strong and find their voice, just as we want our students to grow and move onto to their next steps. But these pods with the cut orifices and yarn spilling out with the "Emergence Series" are as much about the loss of my mother. Some say that the the yarn looks like guts, others blood, umbilical cords, and I say probably. It is difficult to put work out there that deals with such raw issues but isn't that what we are selling

to our students, to engage and reach deeper, find meaning?

Art is a vehicle to provide voice and expression when words can't come near. If a picture is worth a thousand words, what is a sculpture? Some of the comments from the installation are: Fantastic, Great Job, Loved the Experience, Loved Your Pieces/Work, Fascinating, Beautiful, very inventive, original, and a great show, but the comments that keep coming back to me are: "So intriguing, so unsettling in a good way" or "Incredible tactile, frightening, and comforting!" or "Comforting and disturbing" and my all-time favorite via a critic/press "I was bewitched and beguiled but couldn't walk away." Oh no, one of the best was from an Alum of Columbia, "It was great to see your wonderful show yesterday. Your work is very deep, very personal, and extremely creative. I am reminded of Judy Burton's discussions of art being an important vehicle to understand and construct meaning of the world. Janet L." Remember, a teacher is like a candle illuminating others while consuming itself. We need to replenish, reflect, release, and take time to create. If you are at the AENJ Convention, stop by my fiber workshop to see, touch, and experience my work.

Upcoming Shows: 3rd Annual Playin' Around South Orange project, Painted Pianos Installed August and pending decision on Hunterdon, Museum, NJ

Lisa Hirkaler Murphy, 2015 - 2016 Sussex County Teacher of the Year, advocating for the ARTS!



Primary Color Line and Shape Cityscape

Cheryl Parisi

There's always a need to try to think of a different way to teach the various elements of art and principals of design in my art classes. If I keep things fresh and new, I don't get bored and hopefully this feeling comes through when I present a new project to my students.

In the past, some introductions to line, shape and primary colors have been focused on Piet Mondrian's "Composition With Red, Blue and Yellow", 1930 or having my students use foam rollers to paint straight, zigzag or wavy lines using one of the primary colors and then printing a pattern of geometric shapes over the lines with the other two colors.

Last September, I decided to do a unit which included a PowerPoint presentation that showed various photographs of cityscapes including one of our own downtown, as well as famous drawings and paintings of cityscapes. The last painting I had students view was Edward Hopper's "Early Sunday Morning", 1930. It was a perfect fit because it just happens to have the colors red, yellow and blue as part of its composition. It also showed repetition of color and shape.

After asking my students about the use of color, line and shape in the painting, I switched over to SMART Notebook® and had each student take a turn drawing a straight line, square, rectangle, circle or triangle which is what they would be using in their own cityscapes.

The next week was a quick recap and I demonstrated how to draw a cityscape on SMART Notebook®. As always, I emphasized that to be creative, it's important not to copy someone else's picture exactly. Copy paper and pencils were then handed out so that each student could create a rough draft of what they thought their cityscape would look like. This is done in order for my

students to make any mistakes on that paper instead of immediately using the oil pastels on the white construction paper. They also get used to planning out their artwork the way a professional artist would.



Most students understood the concepts and were able to move quickly onto using the primary color oil pastel. The para-professionals who assist me with kindergarten classes are my second set of eyes. They helped to make sure everyone was on track and could move forward to the next step.

As students finished but before I could have them go on to the next step, which would be using watercolors to paint the rest of the picture, they would be given a theme to create a "free drawing" using crayons. This way, they were kept busy with something that had meaning.

Because I wanted to make sure each child understood how to do the painting lesson, the para-professional and I could only work with eight students at a time. This is where it became quite time consuming. With set-up and clean-up, we could only work with one group per week. Barring lost days due to holidays, school programs, etc. it took at least four weeks to get this part of the unit accomplished. Again, while groups of students painted, other students were given meaningful assignments that were easy enough for them to do without being dependent upon us as we worked with the painters.

All in all, although it took longer than I had hoped for, I felt that each child had a successful experience and the unit not only taught them about primary colors, but also reinforced the math concepts of line, geometric shapes, pattern and repetition. And that was one of my primary objectives!



Wendell, Flo and Vincent Van Gogh

Cheryl Parisi

It seems like only yesterday but it's been a year since I had the chance to attend the Keynote Address and workshop given by the photographer/artist William Wegman and his studio assistant Emily Helck at AENJ's 2014 Conference.

I've admired Wegman's whimsical Weimaraner portraits for many years and several of his Weimaraner-based children's books have been part of my cross-curricular lesson plans. One of these books, *My Town* is a wonderful way to introduce Kindergarten students to the various jobs people do in a community.

Wegman's AENJ workshop was titled, *My Dog is Not a Dog, William Wegman and the Art of Transformation*. Using his books *Flo & Wendell* and *Flo & Wendell Explore*, he and Ms. Helck discussed three ways of achieving transformation in his work. One was "After the fact (e.g. by drawing on, or altering, an existing image)" Another was "In the moment (e.g. by dressing a dog during a photo shoot)" The third was "In the now (e.g. a conceptual transformation happens in the viewer's mind)"

They discussed several ways that the *Flo & Wendell* books could be used in the elementary classroom. At the end of the discussion, each art teacher was asked to draw a scene using color pencils and cardstock paper which had a photographic image of a Weimeraner's head that had been provided. The attendees had a great time coming up with various scenarios and, to our surprise, we were also given a copy of *Flo and Wendell Explore*.

After the conference and back at school I was going to begin my landscape project with my second graders.

Depending on the class, I usually begin my Van Gogh Landscape Unit by either reading one of the elementary level biographies from my art library or by giving a Smart board presentation. One of my second grade classes is a bilingual class. Depending on the year, most of the students can comprehend what I read but last year, there were several students who had just arrived in the United States and couldn't understand English. That's when I decided to use *Flo and Wendell Explore* as a basis for how the class would create their Van Gogh-style works. The text was very simple and there were plenty of landscape examples since they were on a camping trip.

With only 12 students in the class, making color copies on cardstock wouldn't be a big expense. But instead of using just one dog's head image, I decided to find three that were comparable in size in both books. I made a color copy of each, cut out the heads and glued them onto another paper so that they would appear to be in the foreground.

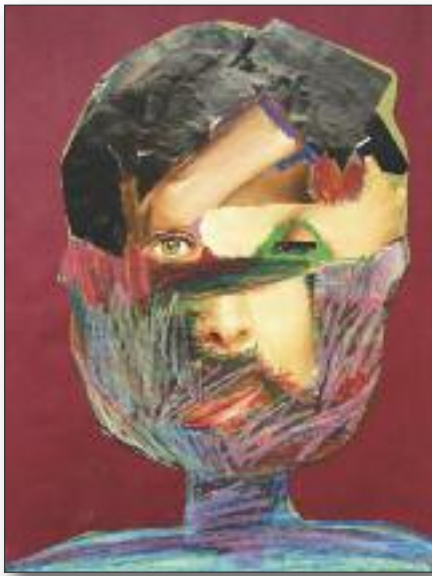
As with the other classes, I used several examples of Van Gogh's swirly-lined paintings to give my students an idea of the style we would be working with. Using the picture I created, I made copies of it in black and white and then had the students do sketches showing what they would put into their own landscapes incorporating the dogs' images.

Once the class had their landscapes planned out, they practiced using oil pastels to create the Van Gogh-style line repetition. At that point, they were ready to create their Wegman/Van Gogh-inspired landscape. They loved working on the landscapes and thanks to Wendell, Flo and Vincent Van Gogh, they were a huge success!



“Wonder Project” A Literary Response

Suzanne Pasqualicchio – Art Educator, Denbo-Crichton Elementary School



Interested in creating cross-curricular art activities, I had the idea of expanding a fifth grade literacy assignment by involving my fifth grade art students in a literary response project. The students had just finished reading a novel with an intriguing main character their own age and were asked to create a portrait of this character.

The starting point was a 2012 novel, “*Wonder*,” by R.J. Palacio. The book describes the journey of a fifth grade boy, Auggie, born with birth defects, from his very first day of school as a challenged new kid, to his eventual acceptance as a friend and peer.

I wanted to provide an authentic and meaningful art and art history lesson as a context for creating the specific literary response. As a result, my students would be exploring portion and symmetry of a human portrait, combined with the art technique of collage. The art history reference would be not only Pablo Picasso, but the collage work of Romere Bearden as well.

The ideas explored in this lesson were art as a means of expression, the proportions of the human face, and collage as a valuable technique. These goals and objectives would be achieved via the students' interpretation of Auggie, the literary response.

The first artist we explored was Pablo Picasso. Rather than trying to make the portrait look like one by Picasso, my expectation was that the students create a portrait in an expressive manner, as Picasso had done. However, the portrait was not expected to resemble a Picasso but rather recall the bigger idea behind the work, the essence of expression, resulting in the students' own personal expression.

My students also examined the work of Romere Bearden to gain exposure in the use of collage techniques in creating art. Focusing further on collage as an art medium, students learned that Pablo Picasso was one of the original

artist attributed with using the collage technique. As a class, we learned that collage did not always exist and artists like Picasso were among the first to explore its use, leaving a trail for all future artists, including Romere Bearden and the students.

The process was exciting as the students became engaged, at times unsure where they were headed. The environment, full of encouragement, was beautiful, sometimes chaotic, but focused always on self-guided decisions for maximum personal expression.

The project was in need of a foundation to build upon. Beginning with just a pencil sketch, using formal portrait techniques, a structure was provided on which to build the collage imagery. The open notion of deformity could have been contrived or overwhelming possibly for the preteen art student. Starting first with a pencil sketch made it easy for the student to then add alterations and changes a smaller ear, uneven eyes or an undeveloped jaw. As a result the creation of Auggie's deformities became organic and gentle. Students were asked to go beyond what the basic assignment required and find their own way to the end result. This task requires openness and acceptance and a letting go of the structure of the class. As an educator I had to trust the students as they found their way, which from moment to moment was different for each student.

I had concerns about class room management given the freedom the lesson required and possible immature emotional response due to the delicate nature of the subject. Instead I found educational gems and unintended enhancements and developments. Students authentically identified with Auggie, reiterating a need for lessons on the anti-bullying movement. Empathetic rather than just sympathetic, the students were deeply immersed, morphing qualities of them into the imagery of the character. We all are Auggie is the lesson I was left with.

Spirit Trees

Lesson Plan
for Grades 3-12



Legends are plentiful about connections between humans and trees — what will your special tree reveal about you?

This "Spirit Tree" is created from lengths of coiling core, glued together and wrapped with wire to impart flexibility to the branches.

DickBlick.com/lesson-plans/spirit-trees

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This Art was Made for You and Me

*Gina Yacovelli – Art Teacher grades 4th-8th, Florence Township School District, NJ (Riverfront School)
Co-Owner Art Gallery, Frandy Jean Gallery, Haddon Heights, NJ*

Woody Guthrie famously sang, about America, that "this land was made for you and me". The song touched upon the concept of open access for the people to the many wonderful riches that the country had to offer. The song even makes the case that access shouldn't be subject to "private property" signs, for who can really lay claim to a piece of nature as his own.

It is this notion of access for all that makes the work of street artist Banksy so controversial. Putting aside personal opinions on the legitimacy of graffiti as art, viewers should instead consider the idea that Banksy's work is a part of nature; made for you and me.

The fact that Banksy is a living artist makes his story more relatable to young art students who really have no way of connecting with dead masters of the genre. Although it's certainly worth it to teach students about the history of art, I have learned that students become most interested in the lessons that incorporate current artists. And Banksy in particular appeals to the students and captivates them. I showed the video Banksy Does New York, with some editing for language/imagery, and the classroom was silent. I've been witness to such enchantment on only a few occasions so it was great to see the intense interest the students displayed. It was a perfect example of the Responding process as students analyzed the art work, interpreting its intent and meaning. Some of Banksy's works led to spirited discussions among the students about freedom, ownership of "natural wonders", helping the less



fortunate in society and the selling of public art for private gain.

That last subject was courtesy of scenes featuring gallery owner and Banksy collector, Stephan Keszler. Among his infamous collection are sections of concrete wall from the West Bank which feature works allegedly created by Banksy - Banksy himself did not confirm if the works were his for legal reasons. Keszler also has Banksy's street art from other locations such as New Orleans and Los Angeles in his collection. Students had lively discussions about the ethical aspects of what Mister Keszler was doing. As a teacher, I couldn't ask for a more invigorating classroom environment full of critical thinking, impassioned communication and awareness of our role as members of a community. It was a sight to behold and the best part was that even the students who usually don't participate much in class were stating their case about the pros or cons of what Mister Keszler was doing.

When I'm not teaching, I manage an art gallery. The position has proven instrumental in allowing me to connect the educational world of teaching art to the real world experience of curating art and dealing with artists. It's a definite asset as relates to my teaching because I can offer students practical advice based on my experience.

Another plus to actually working in the art world is the connections I make from attending professional exhibits and art fairs. So imagine the reaction I got from the students when I showed them photos of me and Stephan Keszler enjoying VIP night at Art Miami in New York City a few months after watching the



Banksy video. It made things real for the students in the sense that here was a man they saw on video and their teacher knew him personally. They asked what he was like, if we talked about Banksy, "did you tell him we watched him in the video?". It was further proof that using contemporary artists to pique the student's interest was a successful method. Another segment in the Banksy video that provided a good class discussion was regarding a painting that Banksy modified and then left in Housing Works, which helps homeless New Yorkers living with HIV/AIDS. Housing Works auctioned the piece for a final bid of \$615,000 with all proceeds going to their continued effort. I used the auction as a discussion point about helping others and introduced a cynical aspect by asking if it mattered if the bidders cared to be helping Housing Works or if they just wanted a piece by Banksy. Once again, the enthusiastic students leapt at the chance to voice their opinions. And there were a lot of intelligent, well thought-out arguments. I couldn't be happier at seeing the level of serious contemplation the students were exhibiting. Here we had an example of the Connecting process as students related ideas through personal meaning and external context.

Although there were some dissenting views on how to respect Banksy's art "in the wild", most of the

students agreed on the idea that the works should be looked at as a public asset to be left alone for all to see. There was a reassuring amount of civic-minded support among my students for leaving the art as-is, a sentiment which was also witnessed in the video when a group of people stopped two men from absconding with an inflated Banksy balloon that had been set up as one of the public art works. If Banksy's New York visit has taught us anything it is that we can come together for a worthy cause: to protect the things that were made for you and me.



LESSON PLAN: Morphing Murals

SCHOOL: Eastern Christian Schools 50 Oakwood Avenue, North Haledon, NJ 07508
phone: 973.427.0900 visit: www.easternchristian.org

INSTRUCTORS: Donna Aceino & Jesse Wright

INTRODUCTION

"You need a break right? OK, grab a brush and paint on the wall."

"What should I paint?"

"Anything you want (school appropriate)"

"Anything? What if it doesn't turn out well???"

"No worries. It always does. Besides, we're going to paint over it anyway. Just make sure the camera is running."

Here are some moments we have all experienced. You walk up to a student in the middle of a project who seems to be running out of enthusiasm or focus. You want to encourage them to continue but you sense that it may only cause frustration and possibly result in them being dissatisfied with their contribution to the finished product. Maybe what they need is an invigorating,

inspiring break. Perhaps you're looking for a collaborative project or an ongoing opportunity for spontaneous creative expression. Here is where the wall kicks in. This project can be a featured activity or simply structured to make efficient use of downtime and some leftover materials.

THE WALL / THE PROCESS

Morphing murals, or "the wall" as we call it at Eastern Christian Schools, is an opportunity for ongoing creative expression for artists of any level. We were originally inspired by artist David Ellis and his Barnstormers. The Barnstormers were exactly that. They would paint a storm of visual excitement over barns. Your "barn" can be a variety of formats. Over the past several years we have left two 4' x 8' panels in the back of our classroom with an inexpensive "flip" camera pointed at them. The wall can be downsized to a white/chalk board, a large sheet of



Video stills from "RENEWAL"



Video stills from "ART FOR HOPE - Boston"

paper, or even a sketchbook. While we've traditionally chosen a theme to discuss visually on the panels, you can still arrive at a dynamic piece without a theme.

"In any class, no matter what, you want students to take ownership of the learning", Paul Beverly (Eastern Christian Schools' Supervisor of Instruction)

While teachers can introduce the skills, students should come up with the ideas of what they would like to see from one image to the next image. We've covered subjects like Renewal, Holidays, Service and Giving, but most important, while you may start with an intention, it's essential that students work out and discuss their interests and desire for self expression.

These videos increase in visual impact the more spontaneous the energy is and the more it changes along the journey.

DYNAMICS INVOLVED

- problem solving
- group interaction
- leadership development
- curiosity / exploration / personal reflection
- confidence building
- combination of tech & traditional approach (projecting images / hand drawn)

- technology (digital video / editing)
- promotion (competitions / presentation)
- interdisciplinary learning (include other classes as subject matter)

UNEXPECTED RESULT - "Did I do that?!?"

"Confidence creates an environment to take academic risks." - Emily Gallagher

As the mural morphs, students can morph in and out of the process themselves. Using a projector can eliminate the time and pressure that is often associated with transferring images to large scale. It allows for students who aren't yet confident in their drawing skills to have an outline to follow. Knowing that the image will evolve and be painted over and over, also creates an air of freedom regarding skill sets and ideas as these artists come to feel that their contribution will not be stamped on the piece permanently. Fear is diminished knowing that failure may be part of the process and collaboratively it will be turned into a successful part of the journey. Your student artists begin to enjoy (or work through) the moment and look forward to how it will change as it progresses over time. You do, however, have the option to retain the elements that you enjoy and then add more around them.

"Art is really intimidating to me. It seems so permanent at first but then when you get in there, you realize that it's okay to mess up because paint can be fixed. It also helped that I was in a very accepting setting which made me feel like my ideas and efforts were valued. It helped to have amazing artists working with me too", Elise Hartman (student)

STUDENT TESTIMONY

"Creating these murals with others who jumped in here and there was a great experience for me because I prefer working in groups over working alone. Occasionally I fell into a role of leadership while we created. As a leader, my biggest goal was to get everybody to voice their opinion because I wanted everyone's ideas to go into making this mural. Creating with this group was an inspiring opportunity." John Urciuoli (student)

FINAL PRODUCT / CELEBRATION

You may arrive at a mural that you want to display in your room, hallways or perhaps one that is even donated to your community. Time-lapse movies made from the video footage can be used to document the making of the piece. This video can be posted to your school's web

site to promote your art program and even submitted to film festivals and competitions. There are many local and national film festivals that have categories for student films. The great thing about documenting the process is that you can reuse the panels again next year.

Check out some of our videos here:

<http://ecstudents.net/boilerroom>



Students receive grand prize at Passaic County Film Festival 2015 for "Discover, Learn, Live"



Video stills from "ART FOR HOPE - Honduras" and "ART FOR HOPE - Uganda"



Video stills from "The S.T.E.A.M. Program"

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Engaging Students with STEAM Based Art Projects

Tingting Windy Wang, Rowan University

The US department of education urges a strong push for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education in the schools as a response to the lagging math and science scores and mounting need for workers in those fields. Art educators also push the artistic or creative process becoming a part of this STEM education, since more and more Americans are beginning to realize that the skills the arts teach are mandatory for success in the 21st century (Bequette & Bequette, 2012). As proven instructional tools, the arts are essential to shrinking achievement gaps and meeting standards.

Art, like engineering and other STEM disciplines, is concerned with finding answers to problems and seeking visual solutions using the design process. Both art and engineering education are problem-based learning, a way to motivate and integrate authentic learning in a discipline. Hands-on, imaginative approaches to science education, utilizing many of the methods used in the creative arts, have been shown to attract and retain young people in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (www.artofsciencelearning.org, 2011). Teaching about art as a way of knowing affords opportunities for subtler learning that includes development of serious thinking dispositions. According to the Harvard Project Zero's Studio Thinking Framework, arts education can train and develop students' abilities to attend to relationships, engage and persist, remain flexible, shift direction, imagine possibilities, and express ideas, feelings, or personal meaning (Hetland, Winner, Veenema, & Sheridan, 2007).

As a response to the STEAM trend, we planned a curriculum with the goal of integrating art, science, engineering, and technology. A series of STEAM based art projects and lessons were designed and implemented based on the concept of problem-based learning including pinhole photography, hot air balloon, artistic clock making, fashion design, architecture design, stop motion animation, etc.



Two example projects we reported here were from a community based art education program (smART) organized by the Department of Art at Rowan University during the semester of Spring 2015. Each semester this outreach smART program enrolls between 60 and 120 children who were from Kindergarten to 8th grade and from the surrounding communities in south Jersey. Preservice art teachers from art education programs were their instructors. Eight weeks of teaching and learning on Saturdays accumulated with a final art exhibition.

Among these STEAM based art lessons, clock making was a fun one for students. Clock has always inspired artists to experiment with innovative art-making approaches. The prominent Spanish surrealist artist Salvador Dalí created famous painting *The Persistence of Memory* by utilizing the visual symbols of clock. Clock-maker Roger Wood produced unique works of art with a variety of unusual materials. Contemporary artist Christian Marclay built the staggering moving-image installation *The Clock*, a 24-hour montage of thousands of film and television clips with glimpses of clocks, watches, and snatches of people saying what time it is. Inspired by these works of clock art and through presentation and class discussion, students who were enrolled in the program explored the time related science, mathematic calculation of the time, principles of rhythm and movement, pendulum, as well as clock movement mechanism. Then students were assigned a task to design an artistic clock. Through brainstorming, calculation, and online search in computer labs, students then instructed to draw their designs on a piece of hardboard with color pencils. They were also instructed to create a stencil for the shape of their clock designs. After that, students traced the designs on the board and cut them out, and then drilled a hole in the center of the clock design. Students then painted the face of their clock using tempera. The final step was to put in the clock mechanism purchased from the local craft store through the drill hole.

For life connecting design project, students were instructed to understand that people make meaning through art-making by investigating and developing awareness of life experiences and knowledge. Students in this project strictly followed a problem-based/oriented design process. First students worked on a brainstorming worksheet. On the worksheet,





students were asked to think of the following questions: What do they like to do; what is something they find difficult; What is something they would like help with to make it easier; what is something that can help other people? Then they brainstormed an object such as a device or a robot that was related to their answers and can help with the problem solution. By going through these questions, students thought hard and then found out the problems they encountered and wanted to solve from their daily lives. Then based on the problem, they sketched these ideas on a piece of paper and made a paper puzzle game. They wrote a description of what they wanted to design, either a robot, an electronic, a device, or anything else, they sketched out a draft of their ideas, and then made them visually alive by drawing on a piece of silver metallic paper. One of the students designed a poor service mobile cart. As described by the student:

My invention is a food service for poor people. I deliver food, water, and money to the poor so they can soon be a wealthy family. I hope that I will visit every poor family on earth so there will be no poor families.

While the other student designed a robot and comments: "My robot does chores for me and my family."

The students' finished work turned out to be impressive and interesting, and they truly enjoyed these STEAM educational experiences.

References

- Bequette, J., & Bequette, M. B. (2012). A place for art and design education in the STEM conversation. *Art Education*, 65(2), pp. 40-47.
- Hetland, L., Winner, E. Veenema, S., & Sheridan, K. (2007). *Studio thinking: The real benefits of visual arts education*. New York: Teachers College Press.



The New Jersey Performing Arts Center and AENJ are again collaborating to bring the visual and performing arts together. Your students' artwork could be displayed beautifully in the Victoria Theatre lobby and be viewed by thousands.

The reception is a wonderful event. Parents and School Administrators comment on the quality of the work and the venue; all are proud of their students, and their teachers!

Fall Calendar Exhibit

Sunday, September 12, 2015 Install 10AM

Sunday, September 27, 2015 Reception 11AM

Winter Exhibit

Deadline for submissions: October 16, 2015

Sunday, November 14, 2015 Install 10AM

Sunday, November 22, 2015 Reception 11AM

Late Winter Exhibit

Deadline for submissions: December 11, 2015

Sunday, January 10, 2016 Install 10AM

Saturday, January 24, 2016 Reception 11AM

Spring Exhibit

Deadline for submissions: February 26, 2016

Sunday, April 3, 2016 Install 10AM

Saturday, April 17, 2016 Reception 11AM

Summer Exhibit

Deadline for submissions: May 8, 2016

Sunday, June 4, 2016 Install 10AM

Sunday, June 5, 2016 Reception 11AM

Some things to remember to participate in the NJPAC/AENJ

Student Art Exhibits:

NJPAC provides frames...so size is MANDATORY!

Artwork will mount to 12x18 horizontal image or 18x24 vertical image.

You MUST mount artwork on construction paper to make the artwork the sizes above. No other size artwork can be accepted.

10- 18x24 images and 20- 12x18 images are selected for every exhibit.

The AENJ Permission Label must be completed and attached to the back of each piece. Labels can be found at: <http://www.aenj.org/pages/njpac>

Information on when work is due to Susan Catrone and can be found on the AENJ Webbsite: www.aenj.org and in WebBeat

*Susan Catrone
AENJ Advocacy Chair
Carteret High School
199 Washington Avenue
Carteret, NJ 07008*



A Woven Collective:

Transformative Practices Through Contemporary Art

JANE GRAZIANO

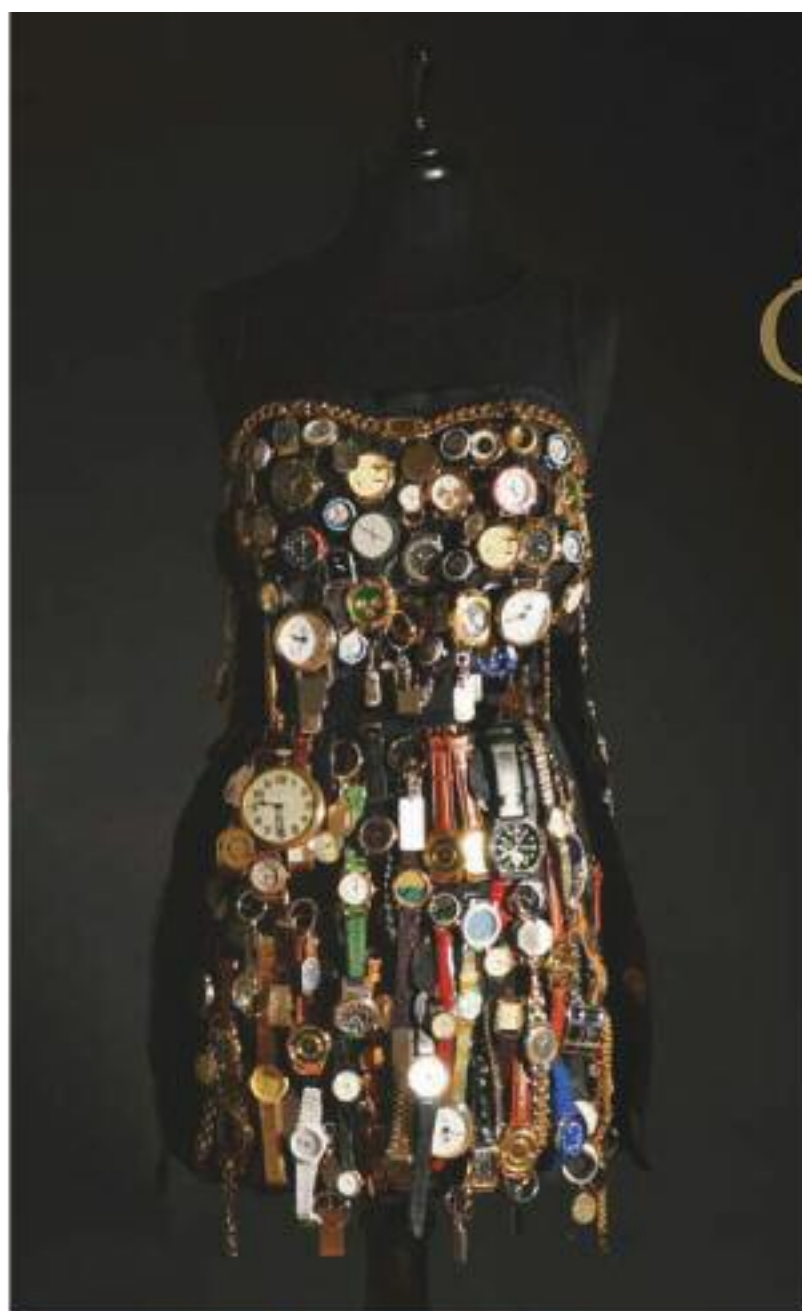
Recommended for grades 9-12

This Instructional Resource outlines an approach for art educators to engage their students with contemporary art through examining the works of two artists whose art is transformative, challenging us to connect and respond to the context of time and space in unique ways. Also in this IR are guiding questions and a suggested activity where students engage with all artistic processes to create art that is highly contextual, transformative, and wholly contemporary.

Learning Goals

Students will be able to:

- Respond to works by artists L. Mylott Manning and Beverly Semmes, interpreting intent and meaning through discussion about the artists' unconventional choice of materials, the resulting forms and the time and spaces they occupy.
- Connect with the terminology and key concepts associated with the elements of art and principles of design—texture, color, movement, direction, emphasis or exaggeration, scale, tension, and space—in discussion, critiques, and written assignments.
- Create an art form using weaving materials and techniques that symbolize one's experiences inspired by personal observations, associations, and memories.
- Present final artworks as an installation, collaborating on the selection and placement of the art forms in an exhibition space.



L. Mylott Manning, *Kiss the Dark (Dress of Watches)*, 2013. Photograph.

When first encountering contemporary art, the viewer is confronted with particular challenges—the works can be both surprising in application of materials and provocative in presentation. Contemporary art can confound its audience as they attempt to decode and interpret its meaning. As Arthur Danto (1997) suggests, contemporary art is to be “stared at, but not primarily looked at” (p. 16). In fact, contemporary art frequently stops us in our tracks, leaving us in the gaze to uncover its purpose.

Featured Artists

The artworks presented here date from 1994 to 2013. Though some works are older, they are contemporary, having been created by living artists of the 21st century (Art21, 2014).

L. Mylott Manning

Manning's work integrates sculpture and fashion through performance. She studied at Rhode Island School of Design, receiving a BFA in Sculpture; and holds an MFA in Interdisciplinary Arts from Vermont College of Fine Arts. Manning has also studied at Pont Aven, School of Contemporary Art in France. Recent projects and exhibitions include: Push It, Art Now NY, New York, NY; Fibers & Threads, sponsored by Coats, The Carlton Hotel, New York, NY; Art Inside, Baur au Lac, Zurich, Switzerland; Group Suit: A Day in the Park, presented by New York City Parks & Recreation, Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza,

United Nations Headquarters, New York, NY; and 700 Spools of Thread (Keep It Together) chashama, supported by the National Endowment for the Arts, New York, NY.

Manning's performances invite her audience in by allowing them to walk through the space as she performs. At times, her audience walks away with the art she creates. Manning's interpretative acts are based on memory associations and feelings about the spaces in which she performs. The art she creates during the performances is uncomplicated, distinctly feminine,



L. Mylott Manning, *Perennial Passage b*, 2009. Photograph. Performance, Montpelier, VT.

L. Mylott Manning, *Perennial Passage c*, 2009. Photograph. Performance, Montpelier, VT.

"We assign meaning to our memories, then turn them into something different over time..."





L. Mylott Manning, *Perennial Passage d*, 2009. Photograph. Performance, Montpelier, VT.

and expressively abstract. Manning's performances are held in public places: parks, streets, buildings, and galleries.

"My experience as a Costume Designer also contributes to my wearable art. The found objects included in my wearable pieces range from watches, clothespins, pieces of chalk, and even solar-power toys" (Arte Fuse, 2014, para. 9). Manning's goal is "to empower the viewer to think critically and to build a stronger sense of self-identity" (para. 12).

Perennial Passage (performance art). Montpelier, VT. August 3-8, 2009. This 6-day process-based performance began with a clothesline and a pile of cast-off clothing. Wearing a garment made of 2,000 wooden clothespins, Manning tore the clothing into fragments. The color, style, and texture of each fragment sparked a memory or association from which Manning used to paint images on the cloth. These "memory drawings" were hung to dry on a nearby clothesline using the clothespins from her dress and deconstructing the piece as part of the performance.

As Manning moved, the pins from her wooden dress knocked gently, adding a soothing auditory element to her process. The dress functioned as a practical means for storing many clothespins and served in its scale and form as a symbol of a bygone era when women wore housedresses and toiled with daily chores. The weight of the garment was lifted with the removal of each clothespin used to hang a memory drawing. This act could be interpreted as the spirit being lifted with the sense of accomplishment in completing a daily task. With this performance, Manning recalls the early feminist art project



Womanhouse (1972), which explored the daily tasks and rituals of women.

From another perspective, with the hanging of each memory drawing, Manning released herself from her own storehouse of memories, turning them into art and revealing them to her audience as they walked through the paths she created with the clotheslines. As the week progressed, the clotheslines sagged as if to cave into the weight of Manning's accumulated memories. Manning explains, "We assign meaning to our memories, then turn them into something different over time, layering them with emotion, embellishing or diminishing them" (L. Mylott Manning, personal communication, January 27, 2011).

L. Mylott Manning, *Perennial Passage d*, 2009. Photograph. Performance, Montpelier, VT.

Kiss the Dark (Dress of Watches), 2013, Cortlandt Alley, NY, was created for *Chronos/Éclat International Magazine* using more than 100 vintage and contemporary watch pieces. In an interview with *Arte Fuse* (2014), Manning explained:

There is a lot of mystery in time. You have to embrace it and accept the unknowns. This helps to move forward in life with confidence. A timepiece relays a form of structure. Each hour indicates a different responsibility, for example, getting to work on time, or having a meeting. (para. 5)

Manning set each watch to a different time, creating a degree of erraticism and tension.

L. Mylott Manning, *Kiss the Dark (Dress of Watches)*, 2013. Photograph, New York's Cortlandt Alley.



Beverly Semmes

Born in Washington, DC, and now residing in New York City, Semmes has a long list of exhibitions: the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington, DC; Wexner Center for the Arts in Columbus, OH; The Institute of Contemporary Art in Philadelphia, PA; and most recently, Susan Inglett Gallery in New York, NY. Her work is found in many public collections (Semmes, 2014).

Semmes' career began in the early 1990s, soon after receiving an MFA from Yale School of Art in 1987. Early works include performances, film, and photographs often depicting a figure in a landscape and dressed in outfits of pink feather coats, oversized "cloud" hats, and purple velvet bathrobes. The figure is indeed a focus—the unusual clothing (pink feather coat) or accessories (hedge and cloud hats) tell us so, while the materials used to make the clothing suggest that the figures are an essential part of their surroundings, emphasizing Semmes' interest in the landscape.

In other works, Semmes appears to flip the context from outfitting figures in a landscape to the clothing itself. Clothing flows uncharacteristically long, pooling into puddles of fabric; billowing organza, gold lamé, or saturated velvet, performing through Semmes' overindulgent and sensational use of fabric. Olga Viso, executive director of the Walker Arts Center in Minneapolis, MN, describes Semmes' art forms: "Narrative is implicit in Semmes' independent fabric sculptures... which may be said to 'perform' in their own right; they imply motion, tension, and direction via their scale and placement within an architectural space" (Viso, 1996, p. 3). The audience is left to gaze upon these sizable forms, moving beyond the association with women's apparel to sculptural forms with personalities all their own, discovered through Semmes' choice of fabric. Perhaps we can perceive of these forms as monumental vessels, the female metaphor of the Feminist Art movement. Although Semmes' began her career at the end of this movement, she moves this ideology into the present day with a minimalist sensibility through a body of work that reinvents and renews the feminist dialogue.



Beverly Semmes, *Cornelia Walking through the Formal Garden in the Pink Feather Coat and Hedge Hat #1*, 1998. C-print, edition of 5; paper 10 by 8 in., image 4 1/2 by 3 in. Collection of the artist, courtesy of Susan Inglett Gallery, New York.



Beverly Semmes, *Rhonda, Lavonda, Yolanda, Chiffonda*, 1995. Organza and crushed velvet, 31'3" by 22' overall; each work 31'3" high by 4' wide. Collection of the Progressive Corporation, courtesy of the artist and Susan Inglett Gallery, New York.

Beverly Semmes, *Buried Treasure*, 1994.
Velvet. Dimensions variable.
Courtesy: Susan Inglett Gallery, NYC.

Guiding Questions

Reflection on the works of each artist might include the following questions:

- Why do you think the artists found a basis for their art in the form of a garment? How do their approaches differ (e.g., in materials and presentation)? What, if any, similarities exist between the two artists? Why might you describe their work as feminine?
- What is the significance of the wooden clothespin dress in *Perennial Passage*? What is the significance of the watches used to make the dress Ms. Manning used in *Kiss the Dark*? If you were to make a garment using unconventional objects, what would you choose and why?
- Why do you think Ms. Manning performs her art rather than creating singular artworks for display? What might this level of engagement do for the audience and for her? Do you perform what you wear? Explain.
- What relationships do you think Ms. Semmes is trying to build in her use of color, texture, and the exaggerated lengths of these garments? How would you describe the fabrics she uses? Why do you think Ms. Semmes' forms take up as much of the surrounding space as they do? Is it important that they do?
- Compare and contrast *Wild Child* and *Buried Treasure*. Why do you think Ms. Semmes chose these titles, and how do the titles relate to the materials used in creating them? What do these forms communicate to you?
- In what way does each artist make use of movement, direction, emphasis or exaggeration, and scale? How does the artist create tension?
- After our discussion, did you change your opinion about the artworks? How does your first impression differ from what you think now? Or does it? Explain.



A Woven Collective

The art activity that follows involved high school art students. With a focus on textile and weaving, students were able to explore the use of color and texture, and experiment with length, scale, direction/movement, and emphasis/exaggeration in some of the same ways our featured artists did. The context students chose to work from was based on recent Challenge Day¹ assemblies. They wanted to make a class piece that spoke to the feelings that remained from this emotionally charged event about harassment, intimidation, and bullying. They wanted their final exhibition to be a *collective* where they could voice a common concern against Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying (HIB) in their school.

A woven art form was also chosen because backstrap looms are inexpensive and easy to make. Prior to learning how to weave, students were given a little background history. The backstrap loom, used for centuries by the women of Mesoamerica and the Andes, results in elaborate wool and cotton textiles depicting animals, plants, and figures from this culture's oral history. The textiles had both practical and ritualistic purposes, seen in everyday clothing and the designs of sacred cloths, expressive of a given community's beliefs and its social organization (Shevill, Berlo, & Dwyer, 1996). Backstrap looms may be of different sizes, depending on the weavers' goals, and they can be easily constructed from wooden sticks. The looms are transportable, allowing for work anywhere, anytime. The weaver becomes part of the loom by using a waist or cinch belt, while the far end of the loom is fastened to a stable structure, such as a

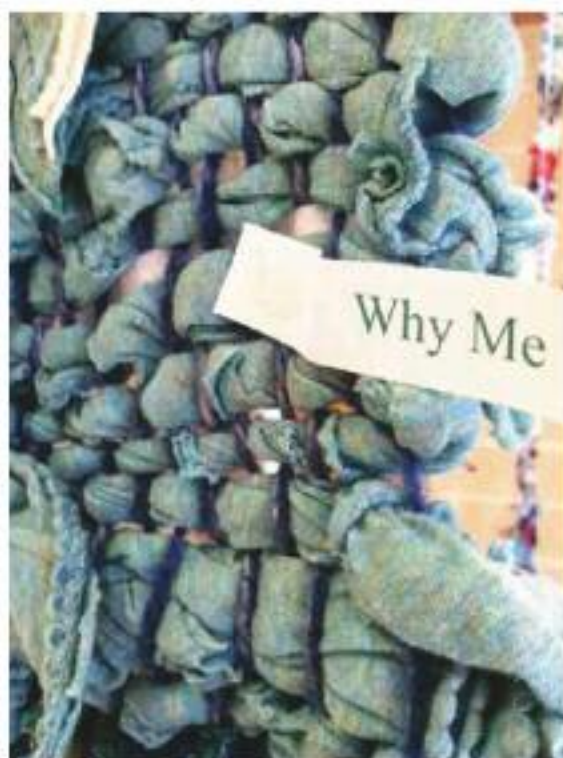


Beverly Semmes, *Wild Child*, 2009. Cotton, velvet, chiffon, faux fur, 75 by 92 by 68 in.
Courtesy: Susan Inglett Gallery, NYC.

tree or post; the weaver controls the tension of the warp threads by leaning back (*"Backstrap Looms,"* n.d., para. 10).

Students built their own loom and heddle, assisting each other in pairs. They learned the vocabulary of weaving through the process of construction. They cut lengths of yarn to create their warp and to further their understanding of how weavings are made.⁷ In preparation, students brought in old clothing such as tee-shirts, jeans, or skirts—anything that reminded them of people and important moments in their lives. As Manning had done in *Perennial Passage*, students tore clothing into long strips and combined them with colored yarns, threads, and ribbons tied end to end to use as the weft.

Students were prompted to think about how Manning used recycled clothing to elicit associations and memories of people, places, and things; and how each of Semmes' forms can be interpreted as having a personality based on the colored and textured fabrics she used. Students considered their feelings stirred by the types of clothing they brought in. We examined the qualities of denim, cotton, organza, silk, and polyester in terms of significant memories or experiences in their lives. Touching the materials led to descriptions such as stiff, soft, scratchy, and plush; associating these textures with experiences from Challenge Day helped students make decisions about what to use when making their woven forms to express their feelings or convey an idea.



TOP:
Jane Graziano, 2011. Photograph, Student Weaving.

BOTTOM:
Jane Graziano, *Why me?*, 2011. Photograph, Student Weaving, 2011.

While weaving, students anchored one end of their loom onto a hook or doorknob, or through some other stable means, so the weaving could be made quite long; as they worked, they rolled up the bottom of the weaving to maintain tension. Recalling Semmes' elongated forms, students were encouraged to think how length and scale could serve to expand their works in unpredictable and expressive ways. Some chose to add written statements and quotes about their Challenge Day experiences on ribbons that they wove through the form, partially hidden from view, while others boldly pinned written statements onto the surface of the forms.

For the exhibition, students made decisions about how to display their forms based on how they wanted to steer the "gaze" of their audience. Further, by hanging their works as a collective, they learned negotiation and collaboration. Using tall ceiling spaces allowed for length and enabled the longer forms to pool onto the floor below, similar to Semmes' pieces.

Assessment

The learning outcomes regarding student responses to the artists' works were assessed through teacher-led discussion. Students were initially skeptical about whether Manning and Semmes' works were art. When encouraged to examine the particulars, they showed interest at the artists' choice of materials by pointing out that Manning's performance would lead her to use up all her clothespins so the dress would eventually disappear, and that time would run out for the watch dress made for *Kiss the Dark*. While in discussion about Semmes' forms, students questioned the practicality of clothing that was made too long; but again, the fabrics sparked more in-depth conversations about Semmes' use of rich materials. The titles of Semmes' pieces helped students interpret and infer meaning by making connections with her choice of colors, textures, exaggerations, and sheer scale, and the physical spaces they occupied.

Other assessments included written self-reflections and a final class critique that examined students' forms similarly to the way in which we looked at the artists' works with a focus on the message/feelings they wanted to convey expressed through the use of color, textures, emphasis/exaggeration, direction/movement, scale, and space. This critique was conducted in the exhibition space to allow the students to talk about the context of their work personally and as a whole, and to participate in the transformative possibilities offered by the process and in examination of the final pieces.

Conclusion

The contemporary artworks of L. Mylott Manning and Beverly Semmes provoke us to reconsider the familiar. Through their art, they challenge us to shift our perspective about time, space, and the feminine—Manning's housedress and the chore of its weight eventually lessened by task and time and the watch dress burdened by schedules and managed time; Semmes' richly adorned and textured forms, apparel-like but stretched long and pooling to the floor, filling in the spaces they inhabit but creating new spaces in the process. Both artists invite their audience to *partake in* as well as *partake of* their art. Introducing students to contemporary art engages them with a narrative in a modern sense and can shepherd them into different kinds of engagement that can be profoundly unpredictable, highly interpretative, and transformative.

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AUTHOR NOTE

Special thanks to artists L. Mylott Manning and Beverly Semmes, who generously shared their images, and eagerly responded to my questions throughout this writing despite their very busy exhibition schedules.

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ARTIST WEBSITES

- L. Mylott Manning: <http://mylottmanning.com>
Beverly Semmes: <http://beverlysemmesstudio.com>

ENDNOTES

¹ Challenge Day is a non-profit program offering schools (grades 7-12) and community organizations workshops that assist young people in understanding what is meant by healthy self-expression. Through activities that promote empathy and community connectedness, counselors move students beyond traditional type anti-bullying practices by giving them opportunities to practice compassion for their peers—opportunities that foster positive lifestyle skills for themselves and for living with others ("Challenge Day," n.d., Challenge Day Program, para. 1, 4).

² For resources to build a backstrap loom see:
• <http://hobscrafts.com/hobstuff/backstrap.htm>
• www.snmnh.org/collections-research/cr-sub/ethnology/mayan/Technology/Backstrap.html
• <http://wearecine.com/content/backstrap-basics>

The Annual Kean Show, featuring the work of AENJ artists, held the closing reception on July 13th

Over 35 works were featured in the Gallery; the artists are featured in the group shot below! There was a wide range of work, from multimedia installations and sculpture to watercolor, drawings and photography. Be part of this exhibit next year; watch for information through Webbeat and on the website: www.aenj.org

Thank you to Kean University and Dr. Joe Amarino for offering us this wonderful space for the AENJ Members' Exhibit, and to Sue Catrone for organizing and hosting it!



Grants and Scholarship Information

Over \$10,000 worth of Grants and Scholarships awarded last year!

AENJ GRANT INFORMATION

Applications Due: April 15, 2016

The entire process for applying for an AENJ Grant has been put ONLINE This makes applying for a grant even easier!

We encourage ALL members to apply!

The AENJ Student Enrichment Grant is intended to provide AENJ art teachers an opportunity to encourage their students entering grades 1 through 11 to participate in art classes, beyond those offered by the regular school curriculum.

The AENJ Summer Workshop Grant was established to encourage art teachers to attend summer workshops to rejuvenate themselves as artists and enhance their skills as educators.

Would you like to attend our October 2016 conference or the Spring 2014 National Art Education Association (NAEA) Convention? AENJ recognizes attendance at these events as important to the professional growth of our members. Two grants are available to help you defray the costs of participating in these two annual events.

The AENJ Residency Grant presents members the opportunity to spend extended time at our fall conference. Grantees are reimbursed for ONE night's stay in the hotel to

encourage their full participation, including evening programs and activities, as a part of their professional development experience.

The Rick Lasher Professional Growth Grant was named after former AENJ President Rick Lasher for her dedication and commitment to professional growth and development of all art teachers in NJ. Grantees receive \$500 to financially support their attendance at the NAEA Convention.

Pre-Service Teachers: the NAEA Convention pre-Service Teacher/Student Professional Growth Grant. Grantees receive \$500 to financially support their attendance at the NAEA Convention. The application for this grant only is due: December 31st, 2015.

The AENJ Special Events Grant, This grant was established to support events that promote quality art education outside the traditional school setting and bring art education to a community of people. A maximum of \$500.00 will be awarded to the grant recipient.



Priyanka Malhorta



Lauren Eckert



Priyanka Malhorta

A full description of all the AENJ Awards, Grants and Scholarships as well as the necessary forms, can be found at our website: www.aenj.org

SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

High School Scholarship Applications Applications Due: February 21st, 2016

The DUE DATE for the High School Scholarship is February 21st, 2016. ALL Applications and Portfolios will be completed ONLINE!

In 2015, AENJ provided over \$10,000 in scholarships to students at all levels. Take advantage of this opportunity to help your students further their education; they are the future of our profession. Candidates for this award include high school seniors interested in pursuing the study of visual art or art education in any public or private school of higher learning. It is our intention to select a student whose submission is diversified. The nominator must be an active member of AENJ for a period of not less than two years.

The deadline for High School scholarship applications is February 21st! You need to submit your student applications by February 21st, 2016 so that the scholarship committee may evaluate them. Students selected to receive scholarships are honored at the Governor's Awards in Art Education ceremony in May 2014.

Graduate & College Applications Applications Due: April 15, 2016

The entire process for applying for an AENJ Scholarship has been put ONLINE. This makes applying for a scholarship even easier! We encourage ALL members to apply!

Are you a college student majoring in visual art or visual art education? Are you an AENJ member pursuing a degree in art education or an art teacher pursuing a master's degree in an art related field such as Art Administration, Art Supervision, Museum Education, Art History, Art Curriculum or Studio Arts? If you answered yes to either of these questions, you are eligible to apply for AENJ scholarships of at least \$1,000 that are paid directly to your college tuition.

Information about all scholarships can be found on the AENJ website: <http://www.aenj.org/pages/scholarships> Descriptions of the AENJ Past Presidents' Graduate Scholarship and College Student Scholarship can be found on this page along with links to their Application Information Sheet.

AENJ'S 2015 High School Scholarship Winners

Laura David – \$2000

Wallkill Valley Regional HS
Art Teacher: Amy Fairweather

Priyanka Malhorta – \$1000

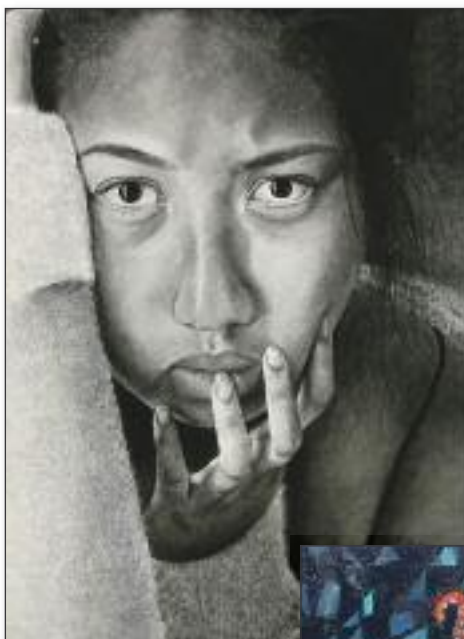
Piscataway HS
Art Teacher: Dorothy Amme

Jillian Milne – \$1000

Wall HS
Art Teacher: Mychelle Kendrick

Lauren Eckert – \$1000

Clearview Regional HS
Art Teacher: Sandra Koberlein



Laura David



Jillian Milne

AENJ Award Winners for 2015

Congratulations to:

Distinguished Achievement Award:

Established to honor a member of the association whose long term dedication to the visual art profession and dedication to AENJ goals, leadership and teaching experiences are recognized as exemplar

Founders of the AENJ Student Chapter:

Dr. Jane Graziano

Kelly DiGioia

Melissa Fasolino

Dave Johnson

John Pappas Award

Established to honor former President John J. Pappas, whose dedication to the idea that arts education is universal and inclusive involving those who support arts experiences from a wider perspective. This Award is appropriate for supporters of the arts who are in the commercial or corporate fields OR in art related organizations that are not specifically educational by nature

Bob Morrison, President, NJAEP

Division Awards:

Established to honor those members who are actively involved in teaching visual art and whose teaching methodology and results are exceptional. An award may be presented to a teacher from each of the divisions: Elementary, Middle, High School and Higher Education.

High School: Eric Gibbons

Middle: Gayle Gruber

Elementary: Janice Chassier

Guadadiello Service Award:

Established to honor former President, Anthony Guadadiello, whose dedication to the joy of service was a major part of his tenure in office. It recognizes outstanding contribution and service to AENJ

Dawn Carson

Patricia Branche

Special Executive Award:

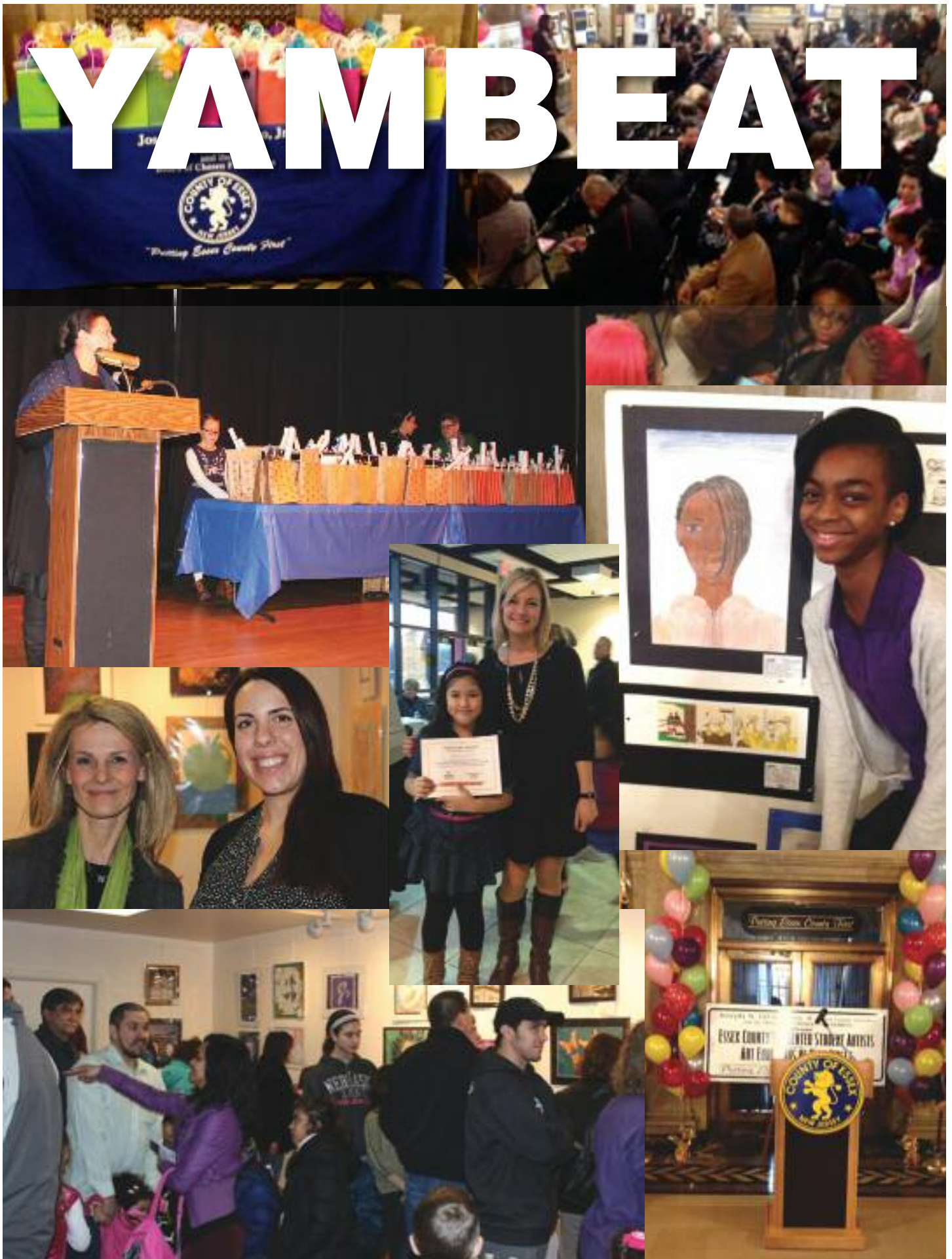
Marilyn Stewart

Bonnie Gaspar

YAM Donations

to be published in Artbeat and online!

\$5	Celine Collado
\$10	Anonymous
\$10	Jeremey Lamar Jones
\$10	Jana Ortiz, in honor of Celine Collado, Angel Alexander and Gustavo Rojano
\$10	Edward H. Allen, Woodrow Wilson School 19 Choral Director, in honor of Celine Collado, Angel Alexander and Gustavo Rojano
\$10	Caroline Cespedes, in honor of Celine Collado, Angel Alexander, and Gustavo Rojano
\$25	Cate Dougherty
\$25	Gianna Qiu
\$25	Parents of Jake Barth, in honor of Jake Barth & Diana Bjorge
\$25	The Rossi Family, in honor of Emmie Rossi
\$50	Andy Zhao
\$100	New Jersey 20th Legislative District-Assemblywoman Annette Quijano
\$100	Rick Lasher
\$200	Teri Trumpbour, in honor of YAM students
\$200	Lynn Dodson
\$100	Debi Greh, in honor of student artists
\$50	JoAnn Onnembo, in honor of Art Students and teachers everywhere
\$25	Ellen Hargrove



Atlantic/Cape May County

Once again, the Noyes Museum of Art graciously opened their doors to host this year's Youth Art Month exhibit.

The Noyes Museum is located in Oceanville NJ. It is tucked away near the Historic Towne of Smithville and just in front of the Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge. This quaint and spacious museum was named after the founders Fred & Ethel Noyes. It's the only fine art museum in the region and maintains a strong dedication to celebrating the arts.

The Young At Art Gallery, within the museum, features student art throughout the year. During the month of March, our 2 counties were showcased for the YAM celebration. We collaborated with 12 local schools and 13 teachers whose love for the arts really showed through in their student's artwork and enthusiasm. There were over 230 artists, family, friends, & teachers in attendance. We had a wonderful outpouring of donations! A big thank you to those teachers who so thoughtfully brought food/drinks which helped to make this such a successful reception, and of course to the amazing artwork of super talented students. This was a huge success with Superintendent from Vencor City School in attendance as well as our very own Barbara Calvo.

The sun was shining and the art was all a-glitter. What a wonderful group of steadfast art educators, whose consistence is always appreciated and welcomed each and every year. A huge Thank you to all of you for making this year such an amazing success!



Essex County

For the month of March 2015, The Hall of Records in Newark, NJ, was turned into a vibrant art gallery. 75 pieces of student generated artwork were exhibited for the entire month from students all across Essex County. Participating schools ranged from technical schools to public schools to parochial schools. Students, parents, caregivers, administrators, and teachers were invited to attend a gala reception at the end of the month hosted by AENJ in conjunction with Essex County Executive Joseph DiVincenzo. On hand to provide remarks, as well as presenting certificates

of achievement to Essex County students were Essex County Executive Joseph DiVincenzo, Senator Theresa Ruiz, and Freeholder-At-Large Patricia Sebold. In addition to be called up individually to receive their certificates, students were provided with a goody bag of art supplies, courtesy of General Pencil Company. A professional photographer was on hand to take photos of the students and teachers with their families, as well as with the Essex County government officials. At the conclusion of the awards ceremony, all in attendance were provided with a lunch. A week after the program took place, students and teachers were provided with copies of all photos, generously donated by the county.



Camden County

Youth Art Month was celebrated in Camden County at the Camden Country College, Regional Emergency Training Center. Families and friends of the artists whose work was recognized during the month of March visited the center to see the artwork and support the young artists. Dr. Kenneth Koczur, Mr. Jim Vacca, and Ms. Heidi Daunoras- all administrators at the Pine Hill School district, were among those who attended the event. Students and their families enjoyed viewing the artwork as well as having a chance to sit draw and create together at the art table! Students were so proud of their artwork and eager to show their families what they had created. After each young artist

received a gift bag of art supplies and a certificate to mark their participation in the event, a feast of cake and other goodies were enjoyed by all. Many thanks go to the schools PTO's, the Fine Arts Guild, as well as the participating teachers, whose donations of time, materials and money made the event possible.



Hudson County

The Liberty Science Center was the host of this year's Hudson County YAM. The exhibit ran from March 16th through March 31st. Displayed in the windows of the LBS's lobby, visitors were able to see over 40 artworks from both in and outside the building! The reception was held on Sunday, March 22nd. YAM alumni came to help facilitate the event which included booths that visitors could make their own buttons, puzzles, photo frames and notebooks! Jersey City's Deputy Mayor Marcos Vigil gave the opening remarks as a slide show of all the students work played continuously on the large wall in the back of the room. As awards were given out, recipients were given certificate and gift bags full of art supplies. Teachers, parents and students enjoyed taking pictures, posed in front of their student's oversize work. After the ceremony, everyone had a slice of the YAM sheet cake that had all artwork printed on it. As everyone left they signed the oversize YAM Proclamation on display. Congratulations to the 40 students who had their art displayed. We look forward to seeing your work again next year!



Mercer County

Youth Art Month (YAM) is a time for art educators to showcase the work of their talented students for the community. This year, students from Mercer County schools, including East Windsor Regional School District, Hamilton Township Public Schools, Princeton Township Public Schools and Hightstown High School, had their work exhibited at Artworks Trenton. Artworks Trenton is a non-profit based in the capital city working to connect "community, culture and creativity through the arts" in the greater Trenton area. Artworks generously donated their "Community Gallery" space to East Windsor's, Tamika Diaz, and Hamilton Township's, Lora Marie Durr, who co-chaired the Mercer County YAM exhibit. The Mercer County reception was held on March 14th and featured the artwork of over 100 students. Mr. Aquaviva, vice principal at Crockett Middle School in Hamilton Township, visited the opening reception and created a video of his experience at the show. The video can be viewed by visiting the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T6JWDjDUnCc>

Students enjoyed snacks and drinks and were honored at the reception with participation awards. Guest artists, Addison Vincent, Frank Bardaccino and Michael Kembler spoke with students and their families about the qualities that make a great artist and what life is like as a working artist. During the reception, students and their families were able to participate in the installation



of a piece of art created by Jesse Vincent in Artworks' Art Lab space. Ms. Vincent created a time-lapse video of the install. Students and their families were also able to make their mark by contributing to the creation of a banner for YAM using a simple printmaking technique.

Middlesex County

It was a snowy, spring day. The artwork was hung in the third floor gallery as Middlesex County College hosted the 2015 Youth Art Month Exhibit. Students and parents were engaged, full of smiles, as photographs were snapped to celebrate the many artistic talents of the students of the county. High school students volunteered their time and skills to assist with taking photographs and making buttons. Presented by co-chairs Susan Catrone and Kristen Barth, each participant received an award certificate and goodie bag with materials donated by Deco Art, Dibble and Dabble Art Center, Dick Blick Art Supplies, Dynasty Brushes, General's Pencil Supply, Sargent Art, and School Specialty. The day was joyous and another successful year commenced because of the hard work and dedication of the educators and students of Middlesex County. Participants were from Carteret, Colonia, East Brunswick, Edison, New Brunswick, North Brunswick, Old Bridge, Perth Amboy, Piscataway, Sayreville, South River, Spotswood, and Woodbridge.

We would like to thank all of the hard-working art educators across the county and to those, Sherry Yee, Jesse Angatia, Patricia Branche, Karen Bonjavanni, for their assistance with the exhibit. Thank you to the dedicated teachers, the executive director of the Central Jersey Arts Commission, Lindsey Erben, and Middlesex County Freeholder Ron Rios who came to spend the day celebrating the talents of the students in the county. We appreciate the support of all of the students, educators, administrators, and school districts throughout Middlesex County who recognize the importance of the arts and difference it makes in lives. Without their dedication, art would not afford every one the opportunity to make their mark.

Susan Catrone & Kristen Barth – Co-chairs, 2015

Monmouth County

There was excitement in the air at the Middletown Arts Center in Monmouth County where the Monmouth County YAM reception took place. The Arts Center was filled to capacity, viewing over 100 pieces of art sent in by 20 art educators from more than 10 different districts from Monmouth County.

While people were viewing the artwork, they could listen to the quiet folk music sung live by the duet, "Donohue and Flarity" Manasquan High School students, Sean Flarity and JD Donohue sang a repertoire of music setting the mood for almost seven hundred people to calmly appreciate the many pieces of 2-D and three-D creations displayed by our Monmouth County students.

In one corner of the gallery people were amazed as Tucker Ritchie showed his expertise in architecture by folding paper into intricate origami sculptures.

In another separate area of the building were four hands-on activities that adults and children both participated in. They created a variety of different pieces, all having a different theme. One table's activity was "Bump it Up with Art," where participants, young and old, could create a bumper sticker with their own designs advocating for the arts. It was inspiring to see cars pulling out of the parking lot with bumper stickers calling out for the Arts! The second table was the "Puppet Art Parade," where many artists were able to use paper by folding, curling, crimping and cutting into three dimensional puppets. You could also find many of the visitors taking photographs of friends and families at the "Take a Screaming Selfie or an American Gothic." Here is where a life-size painting of "The Scream" and "An American Gothic" stood for others to have their pictures taken placing their own heads in the spaces of the subjects of the painting.

The reception provided four tables of healthy foods such as: cut fruit and vegetables, cheeses, chips and dips, small sandwiches and drinks which were served as refreshments. There was also a beautiful palette of cupcakes garnished with icing in the primary and secondary colors. The refreshment table itself looked like a piece of art.

After an hour and fifteen minutes of viewing the artwork, the crowd was asked to move into the beautiful theatre at the Middletown Arts Center. The crowd, with their colorful puppets in hand filled the well-appointed theatre in anticipation of the awards ceremony. The AENJ Executive Board, Patricia Branche and Teri Trumbour, (State YAM Chairs for NJ) School Administrators, teachers and parents were thanked for all of their hard work. The Executive Director, Maggie O'Brien and her staff from the Middletown Arts Center were also given great thanks for their help in making our Monmouth County YAM possible. All students then received an official YAM certificate along with an invitation from Artsonia. Each student also received an ample stuffed gift bag with donations from many companies such as: General Pencil Co., SAX, and Triarco as well as from the AENJ. Teachers were thrilled to be honored with a self-selected hardbound book from Abbe-Ville Press for their personal art library. Monmouth County YAM recipients were thrilled to have some of the AENJ Executive Board members attend, including: Dr. Deborah Greh, Historian, and Jude Harzer, past Communications Officer

Everyone from Monmouth County left having had a great YAM experience!



Ocean County

The 2015 Ocean County Youth Art Month exhibit was hosted by Magnolia Gardens Assisted Living in Toms River. This is the third year Magnolia Gardens hosted the event. The staff and residents truly appreciate having the students exhibit their work. The resident got involved by voting for their favorite pieces and handing out gift certificates to the winners. Magnolia Gardens advertised the date and then bought sketch books and a set of charcoal pencils for every student in the show.

One hundred pieces of art were submitted by 9 teachers. From those County winners six were chosen for the State Show in Trenton. Several of the State winners and their teachers attended the reception at the State.

The Ocean County Youth Art Month Show started on March 1st and ended with a reception on March 26th. The art hung in the main area where the residents could congregate and sit to look at the art. There were an estimated 200 attendees at the reception. Cookies, cupcakes, coffee and tea were enjoyed while the attendees sat at tables to watch the award ceremony. Students were given certificates and goodie donated by Magnolia Gardens. At the end of the evening, after Teachers and Chairs took the remaining art down, several residents begged us not to remove it. They said they enjoyed being able to see the art all month. It made the show even more special knowing that it had uplifted their spirits.

Sussex County

Sussex County's 18th annual March Youth Art Month Exhibit had been proudly showcased at the Sussex County Arts and Heritage Council Gallery in Newton. The gallery graciously offered us the use of their space to host the display and reception, which had been held on March 12, 2015. Artists ranged from excited, bright-eyed Kindergarten students to proud high school seniors. The reception was hosted in two sections: Grades K through 5 were honored at 6:00pm, while Grades 6 through 12 were honored at 7:00 pm. Upon their arrival at the gallery, each artist was presented with a small treat bag and name tag. The tags allowed us to spot the honored artists. A toddler - sad and crying because she did not have a name tag - was given one to wear in hope of one day being a future YAM artist. The treat bags consisted of various art supplies, candy, and YAM button.

Exclamations such as, "Mom, my painting is over here!" and "I'm so proud of you!" could be heard as you paced through the gallery. One of the most memorable comments that we overheard was made by a teen who had come to support his friend's achievements. He excitedly stated, "That's it! I'm so inspired by everything here - I'm going to improve my artwork!" Parents eagerly took photographs of their children standing next to their artwork. Together with their families and educators, the students shared refreshments while admiring all the artistic achievements. After allowing time for all to view the artwork and enjoy the refreshments, certificates of participation were distributed to the student artists. After all guests had departed for the evening, we tidied up the gallery. Exhausted and pleased with the evening's events, we departed as well - already planning and anticipating YAM 2016!

Written by: Kate Del Vecchio and Elizabeth Wassel, Sussex County

Somerset County

By Susan Bivona

The Somerset County Youth Art Month Exhibit was hosted by the Center for Contemporary in Bedminster, NJ and in partnership with the Art Educators of New Jersey to celebrate Youth Art Month. The chairs for this event were Susan Bivona & Lisa Conklin who worked with CCA Executive Director, Elie Porter Trubert on this event. All three were honored this Fall at the AENJ Conference. Ms. Trubert was the 2014 recipient of **The John J. Pappas Recognition Award**. This award, established to honor former AENJ President John J. Pappas, recognizes "outstanding leadership, dedication and service to art education in New Jersey." Bivona and Conklin received the **2014 Linda Lora Pugliese Youth Art Month Award** for their outstanding work in Somerset County. Together with Trubert they expanded annual programming for participating children, their families and art teachers.

Part I of this exhibit showcased works created by Somerset County students in grades K-5 and ran March 1-8, 2015 with an artist's reception on Sunday, March 8, 2015.



Part II showcased works from Somerset County students in grades 6-12 and ran March 16 - 22, 2015, with an artist's reception on Sunday, March 22, 2015.

Over 18 art teachers from Somerset County participated from the following schools: Liberty Corner, Mount Prospect, both from Basking Ridge; Central Elementary

School from Warren, Stony Brook/Whitton Elementary Schools from Branchburg; Green Brook Middle School in Green Brook, Montgomery Upper/Lower Middle Schools both in Skillman, Bridgewater-Raritan High School in Bridgewater, Smalley Middle School and Bound Brook High Schools both in Bound Brook, Somerville High School and Immaculata High School both in Somerville, Triangle Elementary School and Hillsborough High School both from Hillsborough, and Montgomery Academy and Gill St. Bernards both from Gladstone.

James Kelewae did an artist demonstration of his graffiti at the March 22nd reception. Students had the opportunity to join him and explore certain graffiti techniques.

The Center for Contemporary has hosted this event for 15 years, we are so fortunate to have their support!



Union County

The Union County YAM exhibit celebrated its second year at the Plaza @ Elizabethtown Gas Company/Liberty Hall Center in Union, NJ. The exhibit was held from February 28th through March 20th.

This year, 116 pieces of K-12 student artwork were on display in the Plaza atrium! Student artists, families and art teachers came out in record numbers to the closing reception on March 20th despite the snowstorm in March! Dr. Deborah Greh, AENJ Historian, stopped by to show her support.

At the reception, each student artist received a special YAM award and tons of art goodies donated by Blick, Crayola, Crystal Art Resources, Faber-Castell, General Pencil, Makins Clay, Nasco, Pacon, Sargent, Sax-School Specialty, Sketch for Schools, Utrecht. Artsonia also donated some gifts from their online gift shops for parents to view.

Delicious refreshments were generously donated by Elizabethtown Gas Company. A huge thanks goes to Joseph Suttile from the Plaza for helping us secure the exhibit space.

It was a wonderful night for all who attended. Everyone enjoyed the exhibit and the food. Many comments were made on the beauty of the natural light of the exhibit space. Kudos for another great year of YAM in Union County!

To view a slideshow of the event, go to:

<https://sites.google.com/site/njunioncountyyam/home/teacher-files/uc-yam-2011-pics>

To view the Union County YAM exhibit online, go to www.artsonia.com/unioncounty1







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