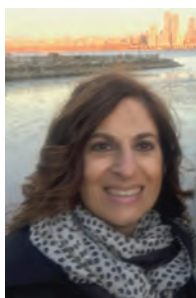


ART BEAT



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Welcome to this year's *ARTify* conference, this is my first conference “officially” as President of AENJ. I come into this position with 10+ years experience as a Youth Art Month (YAM) Co-Chair in Somerset County and in the past holding the Communications position on the board, and lastly moving up to Interim President-Elect. This June I attended a Team East Conference in Philadelphia along with some of our other board members. This was a great 3-day period to collaborate with representatives from all over the eastern state regions and speak to other art association teams with best practices. During our time the current NAEA President Thomas Knab spoke passionately about how art affects so many students, educators and all artists alike.

I can see how we all shared the same passion and drive for our art careers. I am happy to work alongside other great members who volunteer their time either on our Board of Directors or the Conference Committee who come from around the state. Whether it is hanging the NJPAC show or contributing to our wonderful YAM and PD events all couldn't happen without our members. Someone who I would like to thank and worked alongside with is Deb Greh my conference co-chair who I couldn't have done this without you or our cups of endless coffee at The Bridgewater Diner. A special thank you to our graphic designer, Melissa Fasolino and Tom Trenholm at Regal Lith Printers who provided many of the printed pieces and merchandise that you see around the conference. All of this is driven by our supportive members who makes this issue of *Arbeat* such a success.

This year's issue will not disappoint, there are topics for one and all! This variety is also represented throughout out conference. From yoga on the beach to our STEAM Lab to our fabulous keynote speakers. Todd L.W. Doney, a painter, with such a realistic style and passion for the environment and people. If you have seen the 2019 cover of the current Dick Blick catalog then you already know Frank Morrison's work. Bringing back for this year is an update on the NJ Visual Arts Standards, which I have been closely involved with for years. Also integrating with the standards is the strand of Social Emotional Learning (SEL).

This conference has lots going on in a matter of three days. Come join us for our new Scavenger Hunt, Creative Marketplace, Pop-Up members Show, our Lesson Swap, our student/division roundtables and don't forget our fun exhibitors. New this year each member will now receive an AENJ Membership#, you should have noticed this on your confirmation page. Do not worry because at the end of conference each member will be sent, via email, their membership number and membership expiration date as a reference for future use.

Please stop by and say “hi” when you see any one of us on the Board of Directors (see who we are on the back cover). Please save the dates for our upcoming professional development sessions, check out what is in your area. I hope that you go back to your school full of ideas, recharged and excited to try new lessons/techniques with your students and colleagues. It is a very exciting time of the year and I hope we will all be *ARTify*-ing together.

Yours in service,



Lisa Conklin
President, AENJ

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FRONT COVER:

Stephanie Luo

The Spectacular Show,
2019

Mixed Media, 12 x 16 in

Teacher: Cheryl Eng

Lawrence High School

SPECIAL THANKS TO ALL THOSE WHO WORKED ON ARTBEAT:

Debbie Greh, Melissa Fasolino, and all of the authors and contributors.

If you'd like to contribute to ArtBeat, please submit your article (in a Word Document) and images (jpg) following the directions on the website: www.aenj.org and follow us via WebBeat.



AENJ's 2018, Made in NJ, was attended by art educators, vendors, artists, and speakers from New Jersey and beyond. Over 650 gathered at the Ocean Place Resort and Spa in Long Branch over the course of the 3-day event.

This year's conference, ARTify, welcomes you back or welcomes you anew. We're looking forward to another successful gathering of the minds!



GET OUT YOUR ART SUPPLIES, TEACHERS!

BIG NEWS THIS YEAR!

We have added another opportunity for you to show us your creative side!

While the Member's Exhibit will continue at Kean University, We will be adding another Member's Exhibit at Rowan. Look for announcements to get more information, but in the meantime, get busy!

The photos below are from our 2019 Member's Exhibit at Kean University. Over 25 works were featured in the gallery. Works ranged from photography to sculpture and everything in between.

Special thanks to Dr. Joe Amarino and Kean University for offering the space and providing refreshments!



HONORING THE 2019 AENJ DIVISION AWARD RECIPIENTS!

By Lora Marie Durr

Each year, AENJ calls for award nominations in a variety of categories. It is always a joy to honor our classroom teachers working with elementary, middle, and secondary students through the Division Awards. This year's recipients are amazing representatives of our field and AENJ is lucky to have them as active members!



Our Elementary Division Award recipient for 2019 is Charlene Anolik. Charlene is a product of Boston University's School of Fine and Applied Arts, studied Photography and filmmaking at the University of London in the UK, and holds a School District Leader certificate.

Although, she can never picture herself truly enjoying anything more than teaching art. As a child, she traveled to 25 countries on five continents, discovering the unique geology, art and cultures that enabled her to understand visual communication on a deeper level. She presently works in the Bergenfield Public School District where she has taught everything from Pre-K to AP Art History over the years.

Charlene feels the beauty of teaching art lies in the moment when the student realizes he or she "can," and then seeing that realization spill over into other areas of that youngster's life. She feels that nothing is more powerful, rewarding or refueling than seeing a child at an AENJ art sponsored exhibition being photographed by family and friends, beaming, because sometimes it's the only win the child has ever experienced. It's times like this that Charlene says that she cannot believe she is getting paid to do what she loves to do on a daily basis.

In addition to teaching art, Charlene has been active with her students as an advisor. Charlene started an art-literary magazine with middle-schoolers, Bear Tracks Art Literary Magazine, which earned a Gold Crown Award from the Columbia Scholastic Press Association, the highest accolade bestowed upon a scholastic publication. She is a driven educator who strives for excellence in all her work.



Our Middle Level Division Award recipient is Megan Hawthorne. Megan teaches in Highland Park, NJ. Hired in 2006, she was the first solely MS art teacher in a small, but quickly growing town. Now entering her 14th year, Megan has since worked to expand the middle school art programs and

curriculum with a teaching approach that revolves around building relationships with an emphasis on diversity and social emotional learning through art.

With a passion for a creative statement, Megan is often immersed in large-scale projects around her school and community. This past January, she and her students participated in the Windows of Understanding project, a collaboration with Mason Gross School of the Arts, and the Arts Councils in both Highland Park and New Brunswick. Megan and her Community Arts Club joined with other local artists to demonstrate ways in which they "see through hate," resulting in a massive installation on the cafeteria windows covering more than 320 square feet of space, creating a breathtaking, stained glass-like mural. Projects like these, and many others contributed to Megan being named teacher of the year at her school in 2018, and she is honored to now be recognized at the state level.

When she is not teaching, Megan can be found spending time with her two daughters dabbling in various creative projects around their home in Hamilton, NJ, sharing her talents and spreading her love of all things creative to those around her.



Our Secondary Level Division Award Recipient is Barbara Russo from Hightstown High School in the East Windsor Regional School District. Barbara Russo feels she was privileged to have excellent teachers throughout her education and quickly developed a love of

learning. Many members of her family worked in education and she had respect for the field from a very young age. She knew teaching was something that she always wanted to do, but first and foremost she wanted to be an artist! She did not realize until later in life that she could do both! Barbara worked as an assistant teacher at the college, elementary, and high school levels while attending RISD, positions which allowed her to support and guide students to achieve their project goals and help to contribute to an inspiring and rewarding experience for them. In past careers Barbara worked as a Textile Designer, Freelance Artist, and Faux Finisher; all of which involved some form of art and design, learning, and teaching. Barbara's desire has always been to share her personal experiences through her past careers as an artist, and her love and joy of art making and art history with her students. In becoming a teacher, she has not only realized her true vocation, but also that it is rewarding and

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UNVEILING THE MASK

By Alex Ogle

"Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle."

Ian MacLaren

Over the last 10 years, I have seen a change in the way my students are responding to societal changes. They seem to me more politically engaged fighting for what they believe to be fair or unjust. They are not afraid to speak up and make their own statements, even in the event of challenging authority figures. How they present themselves is still a factor in defining their identities as it was 30 years ago. However, the biggest impact on students today has been social media. Social media dictates and influences a huge portion of their lifestyles. I am 32 years old, not much older than my high school / college students but the ways in which we grew up are night and day. Today, students are surrounded by digital information, coming at them in

I think the most important group I work with on this topic is with my freshmen high school students. This is a confusing "growth" period for them, and I say confusing because they are experiencing a lot of "new" conditions. They are entering into new atmospheres, people, cultures, attitudes, hormones, and more importantly growing into their own self identities. I find this project to be extremely successful and rewarding, to both my students and myself as their teacher, because it always is incorporating learning, listening, personal investigating, and acceptance.

When I first started teaching back in 2010, I originally had my students constructing a 3D "shoe" of choice that best reflected who they were as individuals. Later, I switched to a 3D mold of each student's face. I felt this was more personal and identified better with the project of constructing a form that best reflects who they are as individuals. Regardless of the form, we always started out with a lot of different writing assignments to help develop their ideas. I would have them write a "Day in the life" of themselves in which they had to document everything that happened throughout their day from the time they got up in the morning until the went to bed. We did this to help identify patterns, likes/ dislikes, and interactions with other people. I told them to



an overwhelming amount of visual stimuli. Although I do believe social media has major benefits and can be used for the positive, it definitely has its negative effects on young people, especially in a school setting.

In my own experience, I have seen first hand cyber bullying, comparison of body images, judgements on different races/ religions/ cultural groups, reduced self worth due to how students feel they should look/act, increases in broken family structures, and lack of love, much of what is also happening on social outlets. This was a problem for me because I want these young individuals that I interact with on a daily basis to be proud of who they are, and more importantly, accepting of others. I made it a mission to try to incorporate throughout all of my curriculum a self reflective project each year to help alleviate these crippling stressors.

be very specific in how they felt at different times too so they could later read and reflect. I also had them write a description of their personalities, a list of likes and dislikes, what their nationalities were, and one of the most important writing components, which asked them to state three things most people did not know about them. I always indicate at the beginning of the projects that all the writing is for my teacher eyes only, and as a result, they tended to really open up about their lives. The students would then voluntarily share their information with the class. This was the beginning of openness and acceptance. Students heard about their peers' lives/personalities and found common ground or learned new characteristics and traits they did not know before.

Once we discussed the writing as a class, we then moved

onto development of ideas. I had the students come up with two templates for what they wanted their masks or shoes to look like. They were told that everything needed a purpose, down to what color(s), shapes, etc., were going where. Everything needed to have purpose and represent who they were entirely as a person.

Next, we constructed the forms. Each student partnered up with a non friend and laid plaster strips over their partner's face. I demoed in the beginning and they followed my guidelines. This process helps to instill trust, patience, and commitment working with someone they weren't used to. Initial reactions from students were normal with them being nervous, however, they all worked together to mold each others' faces.

I specifically intended for this project to happen during their freshman year in order to lay a strong foundation for positive growth and personal appreciation. Freshmen year is a confusing "growth" period for them because they are experiencing new atmospheres, people, cultures, attitudes, hormones, and more importantly growing into their own self identities.

The end results were fantastic. Many of the students took this opportunity to push the boundaries and really express themselves, even sharing sometimes painful details about their lives on their masks. Being able to witness the appreciation each person had for their fellow classmates when they spoke on their pieces is probably the most rewarding part for me as a teacher. This project allowed for them to not only learn about themselves, but more importantly about their peers. Understanding and acceptance are the key to growth, and growing we did throughout this project. Their feedback and support for each other was amazing, and allowed them to break down previous barriers they once put up around themselves. We shed protective layers, experienced truth, and grew together as a class by accepting and appreciating what each person brought to the table. It was truly an unveiling of personal identity!



*found
common
ground*





THE SQUARE PUZZLE

By Barbara Russo

The square puzzle painting project is a lesson that is multi-faceted and complex, yet when finished, the resulting work yields a treasure every time. Usually there is a space chosen ahead of time somewhere in the school, or some other public space, where the eventual artwork will be displayed. (The space may dictate a specific size or design layout.) An image is chosen and then gridded in one inch squares. Each square is then cut out individually and attached to an index card with a letter and a number indicating position and direction. Each student gets one card. The concept of abstract art is discussed as students have no idea what they are painting. Students are then required to enlarge their one inch square onto a 12 inch square of canvas by drawing the image out in pencil, paying close attention to proportion and detail. The painting is completed by matching the color, texture, and value of the original swatch. Famous works of art, original photographs, and images of rams, the school mascot, have been used as subject matter for past paintings.

There is an interesting element of surprise in that students do not quite know what they are actually painting or how the artwork will turn out, which puts most students a bit outside their comfort zone. It is only as students start to work with each other and see progress in the classroom do they begin to recognize the image and excitement ensues. Because of the nature and size of the project, I can match up squares to each student's own unique ability, insuring that all students can achieve success with this project. Students must seek out other students whose squares meet up with their squares and they must work together to check on proportion and color. Depending on where their square falls within the original image, they may work with 2, 3 or 4

other students. As the squares are complete and students begin to put the "puzzle" together, the feedback begins. There is an incredible chatter going on about proportion, color, brushwork, craftsmanship, and the image as a whole. Students are using the visual vocabulary that they learned in class and they aren't even being prompted to do so! The students see how their one small abstract painting, when put together with all of the rest of the individual paintings, becomes a beautiful work of art. The success vaults the students confidence and they go into their next painting project with a "Can Do" attitude.

I am constantly circulating around the room so I can see first-hand which students have a handle on the assignment, which students need assistance, and which students need further positive affirmation and encouragement to move forward. Progress is the obvious measure, but constructive criticism and suggestions are given to all students regardless of talent for all to improve. Students that progress at a slower pace based on a lower level of ability or language barrier require further instruction either in smaller groups or individually based on the needs of the student. I observe students helping each other as well, and students are encouraged to circulate around the room to see examples of the work of students ahead of them throughout the process. Students also follow a grading rubric which

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OUR TRIBUTE TO THE QUEEN OF SOUL ARETHA FRANKLIN

By B Curtis Grayson, III

"Timing is everything," but as teachers we must remain flexible, to be able to shift on the fly. We were on track to working on our last portrait drawing to fulfill our second section of our "Breadth"--currently known now as "Range of Approaches"--assignment. When we received the sad news that the Queen of Soul, Aretha Franklin, had passed away, I immediately decided my class would create a special tribute and exhibition to high light the life and times of Aretha Franklin. So I prepared a 60 image power point to expose my students on the life of Aretha and celebrate 60 years of her work as a musician.

Objectives: for my A/P Studio Art students was to create a stunning highly detailed image of Aretha using one of the images that they connected with from the visual presentation, which will commemorate her life. Students were instructed to use any mediums of their choice such as pencil, water color, markers, color pencils, acrylic paint etc. The duration for the project will be over the course of 2 weeks.

Additional inspiration: As the teacher I selected various music of Aretha Franklin which would be played for the entire 2 weeks during the project for the A/P Studio Art class at Columbia High School in Maplewood, NJ.

I was extremely proud of my students for their latest accomplishment which was completed during the week of her passing, only to share with some of my closest friends and some colleagues because it was like experiencing trying to hold a juicy secret. The temptation was filled with anticipation but I remain steadfast to save the work for a special exhibition for African Heritage Month in February as a tribute directly from our A/P Studio Class.

The exhibition was a huge success, the work presented displayed a strong proficiency in color theory, demonstrating the high level of Elements of Art and Design. Students were amazed that it received appeared in the local newspaper with a full article and photos. These are just a few selected works from the exhibit which consisted of 16 A/P Studio Art Students works.

In conclusion, as Mr. Grayson always states to his students: "Creating artwork in school is more than just fulfilling a requirement for a project or as a benchmark for a grade." There are also other rewards that can accompany the work itself, such as possibility of an exhibit in the future. Many students were able to benefit financially when some of their work was sold from the show and 100% profits goes directly to the student. I would call this a complete win/win experience. 2019- 2020 I will be entering my 20th year as an Art Educator and 30 years as a professional artist. I just enjoy sharing my gifts, talent and knowledge to my students.



COMMUNITY-BASED ART EDUCATION FOR PRE-SERVICE ART EDUCATORS

By Carolina Blatt Gross, Shayla Nolan, and Estefany Rodriguez

As art education evolves to meet the needs of the twenty-first century and beyond, so too must the programs that prepare our future teachers (Walker, 2001). Preparing teachers for a future we can not yet even envision is not without its dilemmas. A growing emphasis on Social Emotional Learning, issue-based education and so-called “soft skills,” demands art teachers be prepared to cultivate both cognitive and affective skills in their classrooms. How do we equip pre-service art teachers with both the content needed for their discipline and the “soft skills” desired by employers?

Theoretically, students learn best when content is contextualized (Bransford, Brown & Cocking, 2000, Immordino-Yang and Damasio, 2007). With their long history of couching emotional subject matter in social contexts, the arts naturally contextualize content (Blatt-Gross, 2017). In addition, embodied cognition increasingly acknowledges the role of the body and its environment in learning and applying knowledge (Katz, 2013; Immordino-Yang, 2011). Notably, we make art with our bodies (Dissanayake, 2000), and the large-scale, collaborative, public nature of community art embeds this artmaking in an authentic physical, social and emotional context ripe for learning (Blatt-Gross, 2016).

Community art is characterized by “an experiential and inclusive nature” with a unique participatory design in which an art practitioner “works with others in grassroots settings to create art in the public interest” (Krensky and Steffen, 2009, p. 11). Community-Based Art Education (CBAE), then refers to community art as a form of pedagogy. “In essence, CBAE is community art used as both a creative practice and teaching method to fulfill educational objectives ranging from creative self-expression to competency with discipline-specific standards” (p. 12). When preparing pre-service art teachers, CBAE lends itself to the task of preparing future teachers to meet the pedagogical challenges of the future informed by a contemporary understanding of how students are generally predisposed to learn in physical, social and emotional contexts.

With this framework in mind and an NJM Urban Innovation grant in hand, I designed Community Engaged Art, a course offered at The College of New Jersey last spring. Using the C.R.A.F.T. method --Contact, Research, Action, Feedback, Teaching-- (Knight and Schwarzman, 2015), students partnered with four local artists (Jon “Lank” Conner, Bentrice Jusu, Tamara Torres, Andrew Wilkinson), multiple community organizations, and members of the Ewing/



Trenton community to complete two community-based artworks. First, they participated in InsideOut, the global participatory photographic project initiated by French street artist, JR, which resulted in over 50 large-scale portraits of local residents grouped and posted in various locations in and around the city of Trenton and Ewing Township. In partnership with the East Trenton Collaborative, they also created a 24’ double-sided mural with bilingual educational signage for a local community garden. Students’ experiences, however, are best conveyed in their own words...

INSIDE OUT FROM THE STUDENT’S PERSPECTIVE

Shayla Nolan

Taking part in a college-level class focusing on community engaged art opened my mind to the innumerable and exciting possibilities for student learning that exists beyond school doors.

Through the class, I had the opportunity to participate in multiple off-site art projects, becoming involved in the Trenton art community in a unique and genuine way. By participating in JR’s InsideOut project, we were able to

meet the people of Trenton, learn about them and their art scene, and generate large-scale portraits to be displayed within the community. Our class created the theme "Fabric of Trenton," took to the streets with handmade backdrops to photograph Trentonians, and pasted the giant prints up around the city. The quilt-like pattern in the background emphasized the tightly-knit character of the community and the importance of every organization, business, and person that comprises the community. As we recruited participants, we sought to fully represent the community's demographics and to include participants in the creative process by asking them to choose their background design from the half dozen we created. We were involved in every way, and learned firsthand through action.

At this point, I cannot imagine teaching without integrating community members in some way. When thinking about future lessons I will teach in my professional career, I am both comfortable and familiar with planning projects that unite students and community members to create equally beneficial projects and events. This class has given me the tools I will need as a future art teacher to provide my students with opportunities to use their art for good, not just for a grade.

COMMUNITY GARDEN MURAL FROM THE STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

Estefany Rodriguez

As a Bonner Scholar who does 300 hours a year of community engagement in the city of Trenton, it was incredible to utilize my passion for art to address the needs of the community. Before we executed the community garden mural, we researched the history of the garden and learned about community members. Using that research to meet the needs of our community partners, we developed an interactive and educational mural that catered to both English and ESL learners. In addition to beautifying the garden, the mural also attracted and engaged visitors of diverse backgrounds. The interactive, kid-friendly nature of the mural allowed visitors to learn more about gardening while participating in a matching/scavenger hunt activity. By matching the color of the shirts on the mural to the vegetable signs in the garden, visitors were able to learn more about the specific tools and techniques used to grow those vegetables.

From this course, I learned how interdisciplinary art can be, and that community engaged art education allows for more profound meaning making and retention of

information due to the experience in which the participants are immersed. It was incredible to fulfill a need in the community while encouraging learning through the arts. I will carry the lessons from this class with me into my teaching and will emphasize the importance of research when involved with a community member and remembering that art can make an even more significant impact when it is collaborative and interactive.

CONCLUSION

While Action is the most visible aspect of C.R.A.F.T., all of its components are vitally important, especially for pre-service teachers who are actively engaged in practicing and mastering the didactic nature of CBAE. These projects challenged pre-service art educators to redefine their attitudes towards the community and their understanding of what art can and should do, thereby altering their approach to curriculum and pedagogy to be more inclusive of collaborative practices. Ultimately, the contextualized nature of CBAE may foster discipline-specific cognitive skills as well as an understanding of the affective benefits of contextualized teaching and learning.

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S.T.E.A.M.ING MARS

By Charlene Anolik



Leave it to kids to invent ways to inhibit pioneer-astronauts from going stir crazy on Mars, one of NASA's biggest concerns prior to sending settlers to the Red Planet; the impetus for my S.T.E.A.M. lesson.

My assignment's objectives include: #1: interdisciplinary exploration of Mars and the quality-of-life issues that might challenge astronaut-pioneers; #2: enabling children to accurately render the Martian landscape predicated upon data from GoogleMars.com; and #3: students drawing what they might look like as Martian colonists, wearing colorful space suits, designed by the wearer, for individuality and also for playing "tag" on the planet's surface – the latter was a student generated idea, which catapulted the original lesson into a higher orbit.

Open-ended questioning enables students to imagine and project what it might feel like to be a settler on Mars. Students create several sketches illustrating a range of emotions, some having fun, some on jet-propelled skate boards and others homesick, since round trips are impossible using present-day technology. Even if escaping the surly bonds of Martian gravity were possible with what fuel remained, the journey home might outlast food and water supplies.

Elementary students are afforded basic logistics: Martian geography, geology, climate, place in the solar system, and since the atmosphere is 1/100th of Earth's, a comparable vacuum, space suits are required. Reserve detailed scientific explanations for high school students, because human physiology and Martian thermodynamics do not get along.



Inevitably, my elementary students ask what would happen if one removed one's helmet. My response is age appropriate. I say, "Mars is a dangerously cold place with no breathable air and deadly amounts of radiation raining down from space." Done!

Scientific fact is far scarier than science fiction. In 1965, while training in a vacuum chamber for a spacewalk at the Johnson Space Center an astronaut's space suit partially ruptured. Conditions in the chamber mirrored the thermodynamics on Mars, where air pressure is precipitously low, enabling liquids to boil at fifty degrees below zero. The temperature of the human body juxtaposed to the temperature of the Martian atmosphere causes tears and saliva to boil, signaling the onset of an excruciatingly painful freeze-drying process. Prior to passing out, the astronaut did remember his saliva boiling as the air was sucked from his lungs. On the bright side, if rescued in under 90 seconds, a full recovery is possible. And since one can remain conscious for several minutes into the ordeal, one would have a great story to tell, encouraging some really bored, but enterprising Martian to make it into a spectator sport.

Notwithstanding, to make Mars more fun, students proposed playing, Tag, enacted in colorful space suits, designed by the wearer, capable of changing color like a chameleon. Imagine if "It" could blend into the surrounding terrain; tag becomes an intense game!

Presuming space suits can withstand tumbles, punctures from sharp rocks and radiation, students pictured Martian children running outdoors as kids do on Earth.

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EMPTY BOWLS: HELPING TO END HUNGER ONE BOWL AT A TIME

By Christopher Boehm

“Education and awareness are the first steps to understanding and solving any issue — and world hunger is no different.” Rise Against Hunger, an online source for social networking and awareness, sheds light on the issues of world hunger and works to inspire action. Each year, I share this site with the second grade students of the Branchburg school district as the starting point of an ongoing, school wide, STEAM based art unit which will culminate into our school’s largest fundraising event — Empty Bowls.

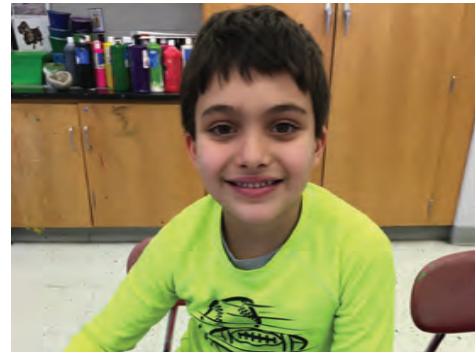
In addition to sharing quotes from riseagainsthunger.org, I engage my students in a read aloud titled, “Maddi’s Fridge.” The book shares a simple, age-appropriate story about two young friends and their adventures as one notices the other’s empty fridge and tries to help (fun fact: ten percent of the book’s profits are donated to help fight childhood hunger). After the story, the students participate in a discussion about the upcoming fundraiser and the vital role that they are about to play. In an effort to avoid overwhelming my students, I don’t share too much about the amount of work that they are about to take on. Instead, I start small and keep one main objective in mind— that each student will understand that the art they create has enormous meaning and purpose and can help solve real life problems to benefit others in immense ways.

Over the next few weeks, students are immersed into the world of clay. We cover a brief history of clay, where it comes from and all the ways it can be used. We learn about the different techniques, tools and textures we can incorporate to create our pieces. The second graders begin to sketch different designs and ideas before the real fun begins. Finally, it’s time to get our hands dirty as we create pinch pots of all different shapes and sizes! After the bisque fire, the bowls are ready to be glazed. While all of this is happening during classroom time, the teachers of Whiton

Elementary School are hard at work, donating their time before and after school hours to make creations of their very own.

Over the years, this ceramics unit and fundraising event has developed into a cross-curricular project. In 2017, I decided to team up with our school technology teacher (and now STEM coach) Erica Landesberg. We guided the students by working together in groups to create videos in which they share information about their newly acquired knowledge and skills in addition to the bowl making process. We worked collaboratively to generate QR codes for each student-created video which provided a link for viewing on any smart device. In technology class, the second graders researched about childhood hunger in America from various organizations and then created powtoons to share facts and ways to help end it. At the end of the unit, all ceramic pieces are cleaned and stored away until the big night.

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(Continued from Page 6)

gives them a basic outline of the lesson and focus on the parts as a means to completion. As students complete their reflections, I get a chance to see how they respond to certain aspects of the lesson and can re-evaluate aspects of the lesson based on their feedback.

This lesson demonstrates very clearly my belief that ANYONE can have a successful and fulfilling experience in the art classroom. Students are seen pointing out the squares that they did to their friends as they stand in front of the artwork that they had a hand in creating on a regular basis. The students that get to participate on this project get to be a part of the fiber of the school as the artwork is made public within the school. I have had students from other classes ask if there are any extra squares that they can do to be a part of the project. The project demonstrates my vision for a complete art education, as students, staff, parents, and the community, get to reap the benefits of the beautification of the school one wall at a time.

(Continued from Page 10) Examining the face of the Martian colonist, the tropical seascape and verdant landscape in her eyes suggest longing for Earth. Who knows what life might be like for Martian pioneers, but if left to people bent upon enriching life with the arts and creative innovations, colonies might yield a viable, rich new civilization. As Michael Crichton illustrated in his book, *Jurassic Park*, life has a way of adapting. Perhaps the great, great, great grandchildren of the first Martian settlers will find a way to ditch the space suits and "... dance beneath the diamond sky with one hand waving free", to quote some Earthling named Bob Dylan who the first settlers loved to listen to.

And now for the logistics:

You will need:

- An internet connected computer
- Black, brown and white oil pastels, preferably the chunky kind with wrappers removed to be used horizontally on its side. Black is the predominant color; brown as needed and white for occasional highlights.
- 8" x 18" strip of dark-orange construction paper for horizontal landscape, although any orange will suffice.
- 12" x 18" black construction paper for the background.
- White paint; a big brush for snap-splattering stars onto the night-sky background. Transform an accidentally large splatter into a meteorite by smudging.
- Glue
- Markers; thin and thick including black Sharpies.
- Scissors
- Pencil, eraser and sketch paper
- Color pencils

Procedures:

- Present Martian facts geared toward the specific grade level.
- Open-ended question discussion(s).

- A PowerPoint explains how to operate GoogleMars.com for exploring the Red Planet, which students love!
- Pupils are required to choose a cluster of craters and sketch them from their aerial perspective, noting height of craters, as per the Mars Orbiter Laser Altimeter (MOLA) data available on GoogleMars.com.
- The following class period is spent transposing aerial crater views to street level perspectives.
- Practice drawing and shading craters with oil pastel on scrap first.
- Lightly sketch craters in pencil on the strip of dark-orange paper and apply oil pastel.
- Students should consider the direction of the sun, as the shading inside the crater is directly opposed to the shading outside the crater. Cast shadow on craters and randomly placed hummocks (haphazard hills of rocky debris blown out of impact craters) should also be considered and demonstrated by the instructor.
- Draw craters using black oil pastel held flat on dark-orange construction paper. It will not take students long. Add mountains in the background.
- Constantly shimmy the oil pastel as one draws for a rough rock-like texture.
- The paper above the mountains is cut away.
- Black paper measuring is splattered with white paint to create stars, and the dark-orange landscape glued onto the bottom of the starry night, creating a highly, three-dimensional affect.
- Render highly designed astronauts space suits; the more colors and patterns in the design the better, on high quality white paper with marker.
- Face rendered with color pencil; nuances enhanced with marker as needed.
- Cut colonist out when finished.
- Glue colonist-astronaut onto the artwork.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atmosphere_of_Mars

<https://www.thoughtco.com/human-body-in-a-space-vacuum-3071106>

<https://www.google.com/mars/>

THE MESSAGE OF CONSTANTIN BRANCUSI FOR OUR LIVES: DO NOT SUM UP REALITY!

By Donita Ellison

The first time I saw Constantin Brancusi's *Bird in Space*, with its bold polished bronze and subtle curve, its upward thrust and delicate point, it took my breath away. I thought it was beautiful! Its utter simplicity continues to be astounding and yet, it is this "very simplicity," wrote the critic Eric Shane, that contains "the ultimate complexities of [Brancusi's] art."

Simplicity and complexity are matters we are in the midst of every day. How easy it is to sum up something, or judge things according to how simple or difficult they are. I have made these mistakes, including as a teacher, and I've seen the students I taught at LaGuardia High School for Music & Art and the Performing Arts, make them too. I learned there is a relation between the way simplicity and complexity are beautifully together in art to what we hope for in our lives. The answer is in this great principle of Aesthetic Realism stated by its founder Eli Siegel: "All beauty is a making one of opposites, and the making one of opposites is what we are going after in ourselves." This is the basis of my teaching and the reason that I and my students were able to see that the oneness of simplicity and complexity in Brancusi's work had something central to teach us about our lives.

The Oxford Companion to Art describes Brancusi as "one of the most important influences in abstract sculpture during the first half of the 20th century. He reduced natural forms to their ultimate simplicity." The artist said that simplicity was "complexity resolved," and he worked his whole life to get to what he described as "the essence of things."

"To get to the essence of anything," Eli Siegel explained in his 1941 essay "Art As Selection," "you have to leave out something." "In art...subtraction is for the purpose of addition; one leaves out in order to see more." Brancusi

did leave things out, but what he included brought a new beauty to sculpture!

We can see many different ways the artist eliminated details in order to get to the essence of form in the 28 individual works he created over a span of forty years on the theme of birds. Yet, "It is not birds I sculpt, it is flight," he said. All are slender, upright, curving, yet each has a unique drama of thick and thin, and a complex ratio of height, width and circumference. Brancusi's search for the essence of things was impelled by the desire to give form to reality's structure with respect, which is the purpose of all art.

WE CAN LEARN FROM THE PURPOSE OF ART

In life, we can dismiss or leave out to lessen the meaning of things and people, which is contempt—"the false importance or glory from the lessening of things not oneself." Contempt, Aesthetic Realism shows, is the greatest opposition to both art and life.

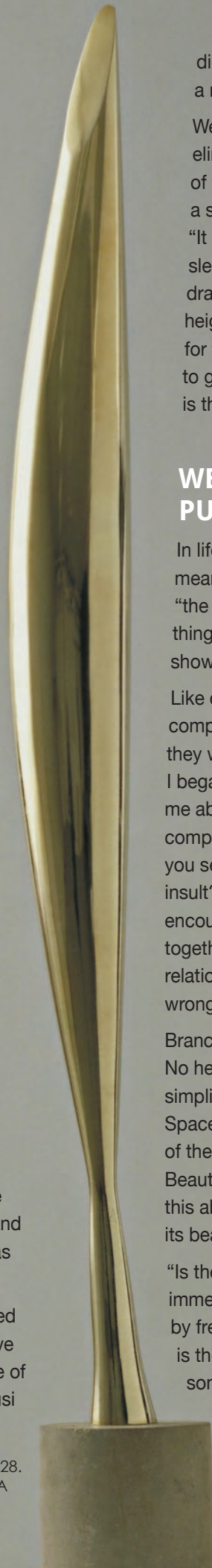
Like other people, I didn't like it when things were complex and often got impatient and angry when they were. When I began to study Aesthetic Realism I began to learn how the art I loved could teach me about myself. I was asked: "Is the matter of complexity a question of life and also of art? Do you see it as a beautiful question or as a burden, an insult?" I did see it as a burden and insult, and was encouraged to study how art puts these opposites together. And I began to be more interested in the relation of simplicity and complexity in persons I had wrongly summed up, my parents for example.

Brancusi did not see complexity as a burden or insult. No he, as an artist, saw the relation of complexity and simplicity as a means of getting to beauty. His *Bird in Space* of 1928 at the Museum of Modern Art is one of the great works of 20th century sculpture. In "Is Beauty the Making One of Opposites?" Eli Siegel asks this about these opposites which are the essence of its beauty:

"Is there a simplicity in all art, a deep naiveté, an immediate self-containedness, accompanied perhaps by fresh directness or startling economy?—and is there that, so rich, it cannot be summed up; something subterranean and intricate (*Continued on*

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Constantin Brancusi. *Bird in Space*. 1928.
Polished Bronze, 54 x 8 1/2 x 6 1/2. MOMA



TEAM CHALLENGE FRIDAYS

By Gail Fountaine

Oftentimes when a teacher presents a challenge to a class of students they either love it or hate it. Fortunately, when I suggested Team Challenge Fridays to my art classes they loved it.

Every Friday, a class of 24 students at Grace A. Dunn Middle School divides themselves up into six groups of four or four groups of six to create their teams. I leave it up to the students to do the math. They are charged with building a coil pot, an animal or a food group with Model Magic Clay in ninety minutes. Having students share and exchange ideas as they collectively work in teams drives the learning.

collaboration

The art objective for seventh and eighth-grade students in the Trenton Public School District is to demonstrate in their artwork the Principles of Design (Balance, Pattern, Emphasis, Movement, Contrast, Rhythm, and Unity). Team Challenge Fridays is a competition that addresses this objective with fun and engagement. Teams created a burger with potato chips, spaghetti and meatballs, a patch of tomatoes, a coil pot, a Honey Bee jar, and pancakes dripping with syrup and or adorned with fruit.

With an 8-1/2 x 11 inch sheet of white drawing paper, a pencil and colored pencils, each student in the group has to come up with a design that they will all agree upon and one that they jointly agree to build. They also have to come up with a name for their group. A discussion often ensues over the name. "We're team J Jets," says a male student. "This is not football," another student comments.

When their drawing is approved each member receives a 1-ounce package of Model Magic Clay. No student is allowed to sit idle. Every member of the group has to pick a part of the object to sculpt. Periodically, I will give the teams a time check.

"Hurry up you guys!" yells one student. "We don't want team 'Pancakes' to beat us."

Once the sculptures are designed, built and painted they are judged by another art teacher. The winning team receives a snack - essentially they are all WINNERS!



BRINGING THE LEGEND OF THE BLUE WILLOW TO LIFE IN THE MIDDLE SCHOOL CLASSROOM

By Gayle N. Gruber

Bringing elements of cultural learning to the middle school classroom creates a diverse art environment that fosters a sense of wonder and encourages story telling as well as artistic learning. One of the newest cultural lessons I like to do with my 8th grade students during our unit on Asian Cultures is “The Legend of the Blue Willow.”

The Legend of the Blue Willow pictorially tells the ancient origins of the story on the traditional Blue Willow Plate. It is a story of star-crossed lovers who are prevented from being together by the girl’s father. The father wants his daughter to marry another and locks her away but the young lovers escape and are trapped and eventually killed, turned into doves.

It’s a beautiful story that transcends time and really engages the middle school learner. It is old yet modern tale filled with just the right amount of mystery. My students are mesmerized by the story and love the visual imagery of blue and white on the traditional Willow Plate.

To begin this exciting lesson, I showed my students the “Story of the Blue Willow” by Jim Pryts Music on YouTube. It is an interesting interpretation of the story and has wonderful visual imagery. After introducing the students to the legend, we begin the artistic process of creating our own plates.

I have each student create two circles on paper using a compass. On the first circle the students begin to plan and prepare their ideas for their piece.

In my classroom we use the five-step studio process. In the first step, the students plan for their project by

brainstorming, planning and preparing preliminary materials for their composition. For this lesson I had the students evaluate the Blue Willow plate and decide what elements of the story they thought were most important and what they might want to include in their piece. Then I had the students begin sketching their ideas on their first circle. Once they feel

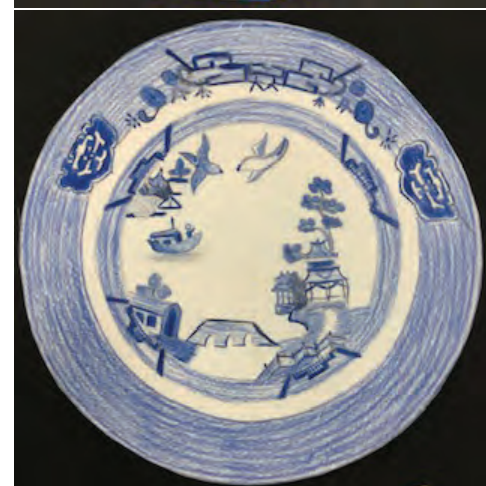
comfortable with their composition the students can move on to the creation step and begin drawing out their

final copy on the second circle.

After the creation process is in full swing the class provides feed back to one another and I provide feedback as well before the students move on to the painting portion of the lesson. This presents the students with chances for revision before they begin painting.

During the painting portion it is important for the students to demonstrate their knowledge of value. After discussing value earlier in the lesson the students were asked to display at least three different values of blue in their Blue Willow pieces. The students were also able to leave white as part of their artistic design. Upon completion the students should mount their pieces on black paper and are to reflect on their work and get the opinion of a classmate before they turn their pieces in for a grade. Learning to self critique and critique the work of another student is a vital part of the artist process.

In essence, The Legend of the Blue Willow is the perfect combination of art history and applied technique. My students loved interpreting the Legend through their own artistic creations as well as learning about value in a new and exciting way.





MIXING PAINT

By Stacy Wessi

The students we are preparing for the future are facing a quickly changing and fiercely competitive world. We strive for academic excellence and gear our instruction to show student achievement based on intellectual growth and ability. We are asked on a daily basis to assess, assess, asses. Then analyze the data and assess some more.

However, as an Art Teacher, I can't help but notice that somewhere between teaching the ABC's and preparing for the SAT's we have lost our way. When I stop and think it all comes back to a very simple thing.

Mixing paint.

Let me walk you through the lens of some students in my district.

I am 5 years old and Art Class is so exciting. Today the teacher let us mix yellow paint and blue paint and it was like magic. Green paint appeared right before my very eyes. I can't wait to mix more. While I was waiting, I remembered that I felt sad today. When Mrs. Art was pouring my paints I told her that my goldfish died. I cried a little. She sat next to me and then let me have some extra paint to experiment with. This really cheered me up. In art class I feel comfortable to share my feelings, I feel supported.

I am 9 years old. Today we are painting landscapes. I learned that complementary colors make brown. I can't wait to see what kind of brown

I get when I mix red and green! Hmmm, I just realized that these trees looks like the ones at the playground where my best friend and I play during recess. She stopped talking to me yesterday and said we weren't friends anymore. I must have been looking sad because Mrs. Art sat next to me and asked how I was doing today. I told her I was ok, but that I felt like nobody liked me anymore. Mrs. Art said that wasn't true and that she thought I was great. She also reminded me that everyone has tough days and just because today is a challenge does not mean tomorrow will be the same. This made me feel a lot better. I guess I just needed someone to talk to. Mrs. Art sat with me while I mixed my brown paint, it was perfect for the trees.

I am 12 years old and my mind is always going a mile a minute. School is exhausting and my head hurts a lot. I feel like each day is jam packed with tests and quizzes then topped off with homework. I feel like when I get to art class I can finally take a break. I go to the paint station to get the paint for my project. Mrs. Art is standing there and as I am stirring the paint I had this crazy thought. Humans are the only species not in the food chain. I tell this to Mrs. Art and we had the greatest conversation about predators and prey and how humans fit into the equation. It was awesome to just talk about random things that I find interesting. I have

so many thoughts going through my mind and sometimes I just want to share them. My friends think I'm weird but, Mrs. Art always has time to listen to me and never thinks I'm weird, I really like that.

I am 14 years old and I am losing my physical abilities. This disease has me bound to this stupid chair and I HATE it. I hate the way everyone stares at me and I hate that I bump into everything. Some days I feel like I can't do anything at all. But when I get to art class my mood lightens. I don't hate art at all. I love it really. I just wish so badly I could do more myself. Mrs. Art gets my paints ready for me. She positions my canvas so I can reach. She is patient and helps me. She puts the palette in a good spot so I can mix the colors myself. This is my favorite part. I can control the colors I want to use. I can make them dark or light, dull or bright. I feel empowered when I paint. All the choices are mine. My latest painting was an animal portrait honoring our therapy dog. Mrs. Art is so proud of my painting. I feel independent and empowered here.

I am 16 years old. I hate school. I wish I could just go back home and go to bed. All day long teachers are talking and I don't even know what they are saying. I get to art class. It's pretty chill, I enjoy the quiet freedom. Mr. Art gives us some pretty challenging assignments, but

I can handle them. Even when I can't draw he still finds the things I did well and praises me, I like that. Not like at home. All I ever hear is how I am messing up my future and I should try harder and care more. I do care, I just don't always get it. Today when I started painting I just zoned out. Mr. Art started painting next to me and I snapped back to reality. Mr. Art asked what was going on. I said I don't really know. My parents are getting a divorce and everyone is always angry and I just feel bummed all the time. I don't know. I just don't know. Mr. Art just said...I'm always here if you need to talk and the door is always open if you want to paint. From that day on I started eating lunch in Mr. Art's room just so I could paint some more. Something about mixing paint and putting it on the canvas just helps me clear my mind so I can breathe.

In my 13 years of teaching I have always found myself trying to justify the importance of art to others. My friends often tease me and say all I do is draw hand turkeys all day. When budgets get tight, it's always easiest to skim down the visual and performing

arts because they are not top priority in a country where standardized test scores dictate our rankings. And again, why invest extra money in the classes when all they really do is paint those hand turkeys anyway right?

I have reflected on it over and over and I kept coming back to one thing, mixing paint. There is something amazing that happens when you mix paint. Your mind goes into a flow state. You start envisioning the colors you need to create. You then experiment until you have your "aha" moment and you get it just right. You stir and swirl and enjoy the beauty of all the colors as they transform your colorless palette into a messy masterpiece. As a teacher, I have had some of the funniest, strangest, saddest, and most joyful conversations with students while mixing paint. Something about this seemingly mundane activity opens up the channel of conversation. Its comfortable, its familiar, it makes us feel safe.

Our students are living in a fast paced world where empathy and kindness are lacking. Students are suffering from excessive stress and suicides

among juveniles are increasing at terrifying rate. Art is more than just pretty pictures. It is the oldest form of communication between humans. It's a way to connect to one another in a way that language sometimes fails. I have discovered that my job has never been to teach shapes and lines...it has been to give children a space where they can build relationships, have a sense of belonging, feel empowered, feel successful, and let go of their worries. If I can make a student feel intrinsically motivated to come in each day and mix paint, feel excited, feel curious, and feel proud, then I have done my job because I have just helped that child develop self-worth and that means more than any grade on a test.

In a world where we NEED innovation to survive, we need art more than ever. I am not demanding that every child must learn how to draw a tree or paint a portrait for them to be successful. I am saying that every child benefits from the creative process that it takes to complete those tasks. So I urge all of us to let our students spend just a little more time mixing paint.

(Continued from Page 3)

fulfilling in myriad ways. She looks forward to each day with her students!

Barbara Russo is a strong advocate for the Arts and Art Education. She continually contributes to art education in and out of the classroom; therefore, conveying that a complete art education does not simply happen in the classroom. Involvement between students, administration, and community, mixed with art history and visual culture, make an art program whole. She accomplishes this vision by having her students create beautiful murals for all who enter the school to enjoy. She has collaborated with teachers in other content areas as well on various projects and finds that the students receive the lessons well, are open to new ideas and concepts that the arts bring to the table, inspiring them to do more artistically.

Outside of the classroom, the Artists Union, a club at the high school Barbara advises, hosts a school wide art show. The participation and quality of work also speaks volumes

for the arts at Hightstown High School. The platform that it gives students to show their talent outside of an academic setting is an incredible confidence booster and shows how even a small taste of success can carry a student through their scholastic career.

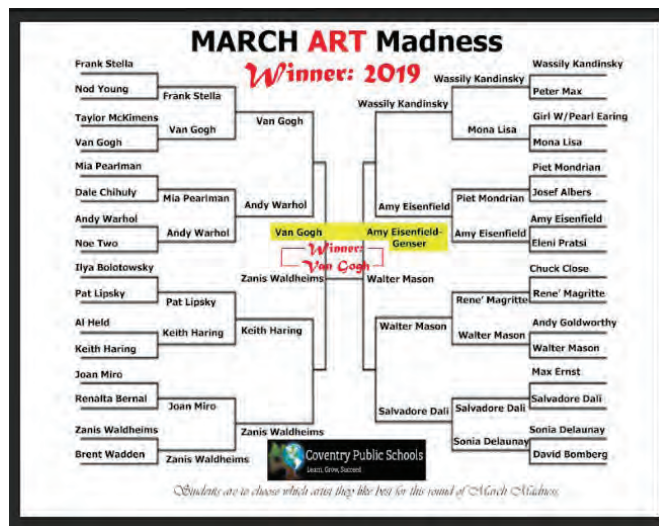
If you know of an amazing art educator in NJ who deserves recognition, please consider nominating them for a division award in 2020. Another great way to recognize your fellow members is through the Monthly Member Spotlight. Please check our website at <https://aenj.org/advocacy-learning/members-spotlight/> for more information!

MARCH ART MADNESS

By Ina Malloy

My students were very interested in the upcoming March Madness in professional basketball so I decided to tap into their enthusiasm and create a 32-artist grid/ bracket comparing/pairing famous and current artists to mimic the basketball brackets. Students were tasked with researching the artists and choosing which artist of the pairing they liked best. They then voted on a Survey Monkey query I created and each week the results were tabulated and a new set of pairings were established. Sweet Sixteen, Elite 8, Final 4 and the Finals for artists were voted on during the March Madness for Basketball. To our surprise the final vote was between Vincent Van Gogh and a Connecticut local artist Amy Gensler-Eisenfeld.

I reached out to Mrs. Gensler-Eisenfeld who lives in Connecticut and she was thrilled that she was in the Elite 8 and then she reached out to me each week to see how she was doing. She was so excited to be in finals with her



work being compared to Vincent Van Gogh's. She wound up coming in 2nd overall and the Winner was announced to be Vincent Van Gogh. Amy Gensler-Eisenfeld invited our students at Coventry's Captain Nathan Hale Middle School to come visit her studio. A trip will hopefully be scheduled in the fall.

(continued from page

13) counteracting and completing simplicity; the teasing complexity of reality meditated on."

In *Bird in Space* there is a startling economy—one form with a continuous, unified surface, and yet there is great subtlety in the way that form widens and narrows. Our eye seems to go first to the area of widest circumference, a mere 6½ inches, then upward it soars to a height of 58 inches, culminating in that delicate point that seems to become one

with all space. But, where does this flight begin? Look at the footing, so small in comparison to the whole that it's easy to miss. Within that footing is "the teasing complexity of reality." Its height is crucial to the balance and grace of the piece. It tapers upward, but just before arriving at the thinnest point, it widens slightly as if the weight of the upper form is pressing down. Downward push and upward thrust meet, and from there the flight takes off.

Students are thrilled to learn through the Aesthetic Realism Teaching Method that art and education have the same purpose: "to like the world through knowing it." This has been invaluable to me as a visual artist, and teacher, enabling me to encourage students not to settle for the easy thing, as I once did, but through welcoming greater complexity of thought about the world, becoming more like sculpture, unified and free. In its rich simplicity, the message of Brancusi's *Bird in Space* is: do not sum up reality!



Constantin Brancusi (left to right):

Maiastra. 1912. Bronze, 24 inches high. Des Moines Art Center

Bird. 1923 – 1947. Blue-Grey Marble, 35 1/8 high, 19" diameter. Fondation Beyeler, Riehen, Basel

Yellow Bird. 1919. Yellow Marble, 36 1/2 high, 20 1/2 diameter. Yale University Art Gallery

Golden Bird. 1919. Bronze, 38" high, base 48 1/8. The Art Club of Chicago

Bird in Space. 1923. Marble. 56 3/4 x 6 1/2 diameter. Metropolitan Museum of Art

ODE TO TREES AND PLANTS: THE ART EDUCATOR'S ESSENTIAL

TIE BETWEEN THE INSIDE AND THE OUT

| By Joanne Serraino

As a State of New Jersey Art Educator for almost 30 years in public and private employment at all levels, including college, being qualified to teach individuals with disabilities, and working as a freelance artist, I have arrived at the conclusion that a serious and deep gap has occurred, affecting us in our job professional capacity.

When was the last time, you have climbed a tree, or have heard of anyone, climbing a tree?

What did that feel like, the challenge, the thrill?

When was the last time you have played on the ground, or have heard of or have seen, anyone rolling around on the grass and amid the plants?

Have you gotten green stains on your skin or clothes, or felt the coolness of the lawn on your cheek?

What is that tie between the inside and the outside--between the inside of us and the outside of us?

What is that tie between the outside empirical world around us and our inside personal and equally objective and subjective world inside us?

Perhaps too often, we focus mainly on the end result, the picture to be framed, or the sculpture to be placed on a stand.

What is each person's personal communication, for himself creating a system, which makes this possible?

In addition, what does something look like, or something feel like, which has brought us through this process and to a certain outcome?

Have we forgotten that most of the paper we use, comes from trees, having resin, and most of our cellophane comes from plants, comprised of cellulose?

Are these not living things?

Did we not have to take these things down, in order to use them?

At the core of this, is my belief that many things, materials, processes and even people, are underestimated, ignored, neglected, misused, and even thrown away, without much thought or care.

Are we not then, "becoming the throw-away society?"

My intent is to inspire to aspire, so this does not happen.

I plan to encourage students, youth and adults, to take, and use the most simple of materials, such as scotch tape, Elmer's glue and magic markers, and experiment with them together, encounter something more, not realized previously- DISCOVER!

My own conceptual and technical skills have been developed through all art forms- drawing, painting,

sculpture, architecture, etc., including art history and research.

I have applied these skills to art and art education, at all levels.

Again, through all this and because of all this as well as other influences, I became more and more convinced that as human beings, we were losing the basic qualities of resilience, self-reliance, resourcefulness, experimentation, innovation, invention, risk-taking, and striving to continue on, when there seems as if there were no chance, or hope of surviving, or as if it were useless.

We were becoming so digitally oriented, that we were losing our humane genuineness and belief and respect for ourselves and that of others, whatever

Perhaps too often, we focus mainly on the end result, the picture to be framed, or the sculpture to be placed on a stand.





their backgrounds, no matter how imperfect, or perfect. We were losing our meaningfulness.

I want to promote individuals, whatever the age, to look deeper, search further, strive to create and to develop no matter how simple, ridiculous, or foolish, unnecessary, by taking something which might first appear to be nothing- and make it into something more and bigger- to remember that the spirit never dies- a tree to what, a plant to what?

An eventual product or object can be made as of and from, and after, such realization.

How often do we throw away a piece of paper because it is wrinkled, or a piece of cellophane because it is sticky from candy?

Were these not from a tree or a plant and all of the living and surviving processes that they had to endure and surpass, in order to continue living?

How often do we dismiss these things which can be used further and in other ways?

When we dismiss these, we are we losing our sensitivity and respect for other things?

Are we not losing the tie between the actual once living thing and how we feel about them?

Are we not passing over, in order to get to something else, or the end result?

As art educators, artists, etc. we can do more to develop respect for the tie that binds our inside to our outside.

In so doing we are strengthening this tie to the inside and outside of others, in asking how does something look, how does something feel?

We thus can improve respect for ourselves, our students respect for themselves, and therefore the respect of and for others.

A visual and textual record of examples should be kept and put on a website so others can see and be encouraged.

(Continued from Page 11)

Come spring, at our Empty Bowls event, the student's ceramic bowls are on display "museum style" in the gym. The second grade students and their families purchase tickets to attend the evening event to see their finished pieces along with the group centered projects and videos that they generated. The teacher-created bowls, plates, mirrors, tiles and other interesting creations are placed on display and raffled off to ticket winners. We also hold a silent auction of larger ceramic pieces created by myself, our Superintendent Rebecca Gensel and other art teachers in the district. One of my favorite parts of the night is the excitement on the student's faces when they win their teacher's artwork — priceless! At the end of the event, students are asked to claim their bowl, bring it down to the cafeteria and celebrate a job well done at an ice cream social, where many students choose to eat out of their own bowl! A few days later, students assemble in the gym to see how their hard work has truly paid off as we present an oversized check to our local food bank. To this date, all proceeds, donations, and auction bids from our Empty Bowls events have raised close to \$20,000, all of which has been donated to the Somerset County Food Bank.

On a personal note, I am not only proud of my students, but the faculty that I work with. It is a humbling experience to be a part of a school community that works together to accomplish such an incredible mission. It wouldn't be possible without our dedicated teachers, our administration and our PTO, working hard behind the scenes to make this event the success that it is each and every year. These combined efforts allow our students the chance to bring their art beyond the classroom walls and present it in a way that clearly demonstrates how a visual arts program can help strengthen a community. All you need is education and awareness— and a few empty bowls.

Do you want to raise money to feed the world's hungry, increase awareness of childhood hunger and related issues while advocating for arts education? Why not start an Empty Bowls Fundraiser of your very own? If your school is interested in starting your own Empty Bowls event, I can help answer any questions you might have.

"Education and awareness are the first steps to understanding and solving any issue and world hunger is no different."

Feel free to reach out— my contact information is Cboehm@branchburg.k12.nj.us

PIÑATA MAKING

By Debbie Buechler (Art teacher) and Gail Haudorff (Spanish teacher)

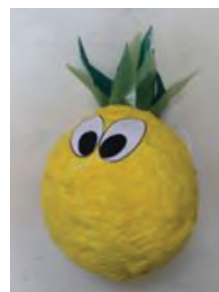
This year for the first time we tried a collaborative project combining our Spanish I class with the Art I elective class. We embarked on a piñata making opportunity for our ninth grade students. Both of our classes meet at the same time, and we decided to combine them for this enriching opportunity.

At our first session, the freshmen were educated about the history and significance of the piñata in the Latin culture.

The initial step of piñata making is for each student to choose a balloon and establish a shape for their individual piñata. We all got down and dirty mixing the Paper Mache compound in a bowl with water. (Blick's Mix Instant Paper Mache). For the next two- three days, students covered their own balloons with the compound. We instructed them to leave a 2-inch opening around the knot of the balloon in order fill the piñatas with candy upon completion. It was important to make two small openings near the top to thread a string to hang the piñata while the paper mache was wet. It took a lot of attempts to cover the balloon because the ratio of water to paper mache is critical. After they learned the proper consistency to use on their balloons, they were covered and left to dry.

While the balloons were drying, we looked at different piñata images. We noticed the traditional piñatas were very colorful. They have an authentic look, showing bright and neon colors with fringes on them. We observed piñatas that looked like animals, monsters, and objects. This gave students inspiration for their own work. Students noticed that piñata designs are not always realistic and true to life and demonstrate an individual artists' expressions.

Next, they looked at the shape of their balloon and tried to decide what



it looked like to them. How were they going to make their piece into something recognizable? They were given paper, pencils and markers to create thumbnail sketches to plan the next step. The class worked until they were ready to proceed with their design. They were shown supplies to use to decorate the piñatas. There was a large selection of streamers, ribbons, tissue paper, cello paper, facial features, pompoms, feathers and paint.

When our Paper Mache was dry (after a few days), students popped their balloons and were able to see inside. Using their drawing as a blueprint, along with glue and the supplies they began to bring their piñatas to life. For the next two days, students created their masterpieces. On the third day, they put string through the holes for hanging, and added the finishing touches (including eyes and facial features). Each piñata was presented in class. As an option, candy was supplied, proving the piñatas' functionality.

The final part of the assignment was to reflect upon their completed work. How well did they follow their plan? Was their piñata strong enough to hang? Was it successful? Every student completed a self-evaluation rubric for the project.

As teachers, we felt the students were successful in mastering the art of piñata making. When asked at the end of the project, if we should repeat this assignment in the future all of the students said YES! They felt this was a meaningful and worthwhile lesson.



THE FELLOWS EXPERIENCE AT THE LOWELL MILKEN CENTER FOR UNSUNG HEROES

| By Lora Marie Durr

In November 2018, I received an email from Norm Conard, the Executive Director of the Lowell Milken Center for Unsung Heroes (LMC) in Fort Scott, Kansas stating that I had been recommended for a Lowell Milken Center Fellowship. Having never heard of this organization, I was completely confused. As I took some time to process this email and research the opportunity and the work of the LMC, I became increasingly excited for this one of a kind learning program.

The mission of the LMC “works to transform classrooms and communities through student-driven projects that discover Unsung Heroes from history and teach the power of one to create positive change.” Through project-based learning

featured 5 art educators from around the country who attended during one of two week-long programs in an effort to improve the Art Effect Project and spread



“You can’t teach kids empathy from a textbook. The experience of seeing it for themselves is so powerful—it’s beyond anything I could provide for them in a classroom.”

—LMC Fellow Shannon Garrison



engaged in deep, primary source research of historical figures who have not been widely recognized for their contribution to the world, teachers act as facilitators for their students as they discovery and design a presentation for their information. Students can select to create websites, performances, exhibits or documentary films to represent their learning. Though not required, the LMC encourages participation in their two competitions – the Discovery Award and the Art Effect Project – both of which are open to students in grades 4-5, 6-8, and 9-12. The 2019 class of Fellows



awareness to others.

My class included Thom Knab (NY), NAEA President, Megan Clark, Elementary Art Educator and Kansas Teacher of the Year finalist, Wesley Hedgepeth (VA), NCSS Executive Board Member, and Heidi Albin (KS), 2017 Milken Educator Award Recipient.

My week in Fort Scott was packed with useful information on research in the classroom and working closely with other art educators to unpack the Art Effect Project. We were able to talk with the program’s director, Sarah Haufrecht and hear from Brad LeDuc, a nationally recognized art educator about how he helped to design the program with LMC. Rubrics and

lessons for the project are available online, as well as numerous examples of past winners of the competition.

For art educators, the Art Effect Project is a great way to engage students in research-based artmaking in the production of narrative art. There is an extensive list provided by LMC of intriguing historical figures who are categorized as Unsung Heroes. Students can use the information generated by previous student researchers to guide their narrative piece or they can choose to uncover their own unsung hero and create art from that research. I see this project working nicely as a pre-AP lesson to engage students with research to inform their artmaking.

If you are interested in learning more about the LMC, please visit <https://www.lowellmilkencenter.org/> for more information or contact me directly at ldurr@aenj.org. Even though I didn’t know about the LMC before my visit, I am excited to say that I was a participant in their program and honored to have been selected as an LMC Fellow.

AENJ @ TEAM EAST 2019

By Lora Marie Durr and Antonia Germanos

AENJ is your state organization affiliated with the National Art Education Association (NAEA). During odd years, NAEA sponsors regional leadership meetings to allow state organizations to connect and collaborate in hopes of building stronger, more vibrant organizations to serve the membership. As part of Team East, members of AENJ's Board of Directors join art education leaders from: Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Labrador, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Brunswick, New Hampshire, New York, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Overseas Art Education Association, Pennsylvania, Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Rhode Island, Vermont, and West Virginia. This year Team East was hosted by Pennsylvania Art Education Association (PAEA) in Philadelphia on June 27 through 30, 2019. AENJ was represented by Lisa Conklin (President), Debbie Greh (Executive Director), Lora Marie Durr (President Elect), Teri Trumpbour (Advocacy Chair), Tamika Diaz (Membership Chair), and Antonia Germanos (Communications Chair).

During our time in Philadelphia, we attended Thursday evening's "Welcome Reception" at the Attico Rooftop lounge. Attendees were greeted by PAEA hosts and took part

in an icebreaker; creating unique name tags. The cozy Attico lounge provided a lovely rooftop view of the city and allowed everyone to learn each other's names and information about their home states and organizations. The group consisted of art education professionals with a breadth of experience in the field; ranging from novice teachers to veterans who now supervise departments in their states.

On Friday, each state's representatives attended a welcome presentation by Diane Wilkin, NAEA Eastern Region Vice President. This presentation featured President and CEO of the University of the Arts, David Yager. Mr Yager spoke of the impact we as art educators have on the world, and he mentioned Forbes citing creativity as a sought after trait of successful employees. He spoke of art educators' perseverance in the face of adversity and continual cuts in funding from their districts. His words were encouraging, motivating and echoed Team East 2019's slogan - Rise Up. It was the perfect transition to each state's summary report; an opportunity for state organizations to share their focus and achievements throughout the past year. Friday also featured an improvisational activity inspired by artist Oliver Herring, called

"TASK," and a private tour of the Philadelphia Museum of Art's New Chinese Collection, as well as the rest of the museum.


Saturday began with a Mural Arts Trolley Tour culminated with a view of the newly completed Amy Sherald mural. The tour allowed us to learn more about how Mural Arts began in Philadelphia and the impact the program has had on the city. Their program is a model for cities around the world because it empowers artists to connect with the community and make a positive change through art.

We also had the opportunity to visit The Fabric Workshop and Museum to meet with artist Sonya Clark. Ms. Clark discussed her latest installation, Monumental Cloth, The Flag We Should Know, work that explores fiber arts and social practice artmaking. This 2 floor exhibition focuses "specifically on this Confederate Flag of Truce, ... [exploring] the legacy of symbols and challenges the power of propaganda, erasures, and omissions."

On Sunday, NAEA President Thom Knab presented recommendations from the National Task Force on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (E, D & I).

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EXPLORING STEAM: THE AESTHETIC-SYMBIOTIC BETWEEN PAINTING, THE BODY AND BACTERIA

By Shaiioching Wang | Edited by Dr. Joseph Amorino

INTRODUCTION

Exceptional learning experiences are of particular value when shared with colleagues! I completed my master's thesis at the Art Education Program of Kean University in the spring of 2019. I would like to share that special journey as a way of encouraging teachers to pursue their interests and artistry towards developing cross-curricular learning experiences. As an artist, dancer and educator, I became interested in the movements of the human body on levels that are both visible and invisible to the naked eye.

THE CURIOSITY

When I began work on my thesis, I wanted to explore the kinesthetic dynamics of the human body but had yet to identify a focused question. Meanwhile, my art education professor, Dr. Joseph Amorino, and Kean University science professor, Dr. Marshall Hayes, had established a collaborative relationship in which art and science students were coming together for informal activities within labs and studios. The notion excited my curiosity. I started to work with both professors to observe the structures and movements of cells and bacteria under a microscope. I became increasingly interested in the dynamics and aesthetics of these microscopic entities.

As a dancer, I was always aware of the sensory and visual movements of my body. However, peering into my own cellular world made me realize that seemingly invisible machinations are part and parcel to movement within my full being. Essentially, another layer of movement that is invisible to the naked eye represented a natural "dance" that was taking place inside me.

THE QUESTION

Gradually, my question became clarified. Was there a kind of aesthetic/symbiotic relationship between these inner and outer worlds of bodily movement? And if so, might I not investigate—and perhaps celebrate—the aesthetic harmony between these two worlds through

an artmaking process? Further, what implications might this have to my insights as an educator?

THE PROCESS

My investigation would take place in stages. Under the mentorship of Dr. Hayes, I used an antiseptic cotton swab to gently scrape the inside of my mouth and then smeared it on the center of a microscope slide. I added a drop of methylene blue solution, placed a coverslip on top, and positioned the slide on the microscope stage to examine the cells at higher magnification. I repeated the process using additional scrapings from my hand and other body parts. I then inoculated Petri dishes (containing agar) with these scrapings to evoke bacterial growth. The bacterial deposits evolved daily, building upon themselves and growing into aesthetically pleasing forms. I photographically documented the developing images as the process unfolded.

Meanwhile, my artistic journey under Dr. Amorino's guidance was a carefully executed negotiation, beginning with a series of charcoal drawings that would evolve into smaller color studies and eventually, a life-size oil painting. I elected to depict my body in a diagrammatic, static position, so as not to distract from the layered translucent movement of the "glaze painting" process. This process allows stratified pigments to "dance together" and create the visual sensation of looking "through" rather than "at" color. This approach recapitulated the evolving cellular behaviors that I observed as the bacterial images evolved under the microscope, albeit in a different idiom. Hence, the behaviors of observed cellular movements can influence and shape artistic method. Interestingly, this process harkens back to traditional glazing methods used by historical artists such as Van Eyck, Rubens and Rembrandt. Through this approach, viewers might sense the commonality between layers of movement in the outward body and those within the world of cells and bacteria, as both are given visibly aesthetic form within the final painting.

PHILOSOPHICAL IMPLICATIONS

Stated succinctly, this process led me to a deepened philosophical understanding that “flux and change” are not qualities to be feared, but rather embraced as natural and necessary ingredients that contribute to the growth and well-being of the developing individual. Physical and psychological realities are composed of “layers” that are in a constant state of flux, as they shift, evolve, live, and die. In cellular and bacterial relationships, these dynamics are co-dependent, with each player receiving messages from the other, a process that mirrors intrapersonal and interpersonal relationships. Heraclitus noted that the very nature of life is flux and change, and that to resist this change is to resist the essence of our existence.

IMPLICATIONS TO TEACHING

As art educators, our own studio-based investigations are especially relevant to our practice when we view them as springboards for a variety of themes, topics and processes. For example, we can interpret the process described above in any number of ways to formulate age-appropriate themes through which to make art: How can movement tell us about what someone is trying to do? How can movement tell us about how people are thinking or feeling? Are our movements always visible to others? Do we ever feel inner movements that are not visible to others? If you could view your head from the inside like a cave, how would it look or move when it is happy, sad, surprised, worried, or confused? Can you create art about moving cells with personalities? Can you create a team of “supercells” that could solve a problem? Can you create art about “imaginary cells” that would evolve into a cranky person, a happy person, a sad person, a nervous person, a person with a cold, a person with the mumps, or an entirely new life form?

For older students, themes might evoke more reflective and philosophically charged artmaking experiences: Can you think of a time in which you heard or saw something that caused your inner body to feel a change? Can you make art about how your cells -or inner self- moved at the time? Did you feel that others could see the change? If you could show cells changing due to opposite kinds of experiences or emotions, how might those cells look, move, act, and interact?

I’ve found that an investigation into STEAM-based inquiry can not only enrich my artistic repertoire, but when reflected upon through divergent lenses, stands to broaden my pedagogical resourcefulness as an educator. Hopefully, this article will encourage educators to engage with their own artistic interests and cross-curricular approaches in ways that lead to exciting classroom experiences for themselves and their students!



Ms. Shiaoching Wang was a recipient of the 2019 “Outstanding Intern with Distinction Award” in the State of New Jersey.

Dr. Joseph Amorino is the Art Education Program Coordinator at Kean University and an internationally published artist, author and researcher.

BUILDING CHARACTER WITH COMICS

By Michael Markman

Since I was a child I had a profound love and appreciation for comic books and cartoons. I always wanted to create my own comic. In October 2012, one of the deadliest storms in our history hit the U.S. East Coast, Hurricane Sandy. In my attempt to stay sane during the nine days without power I decided to create a visual diary of my family's experiences. What started out, as a way for me to record the events during the storm soon became a full color comic book, titled "Surviving the Storm."

After receiving emotional and positive reactions to the book I decided to use it as a platform to teach, counsel and help young people overcome obstacles through art. I teamed up with the Language arts teacher at my school, Mrs. Faisal, and we devised an interdisciplinary unit regarding how art is a form of communication and comic strip development. Our goal was to use these lessons to teach our students preparedness, overcoming obstacles, self-expression and character education.

During the launch of a unit on comic strip design, students observe a presentation on the history of sequential art and cartooning. Students discuss how comic strips illustrate a narrative, communicate ideas and reflect history and culture. Students discuss how obstacles are a part of life, and the importance of moving forward. The class identifies various drawing styles and naissance's related to comic strip design.

Then students are introduced to various components of a comic book design such as anatomy, proportion, gesture, character development, and camera angles. Students read the comic book "Surviving the Storm." After reading the book the class has a discussion about the obstacles the characters faced in the book as well as in their own lives and how to prepare and overcome them. Some students

opened up about very personal, emotional and traumatic experiences such as peer pressure, learning disabilities, bullying and family issues. These discussions are very enlightening for me because I am able to witness a side of my students I have never seen before.

The next phase of this unit is to write a short story, which details an obstacle, that students have faced in their own lives. Fellow students and the language arts teacher will edit the stories. The student's create preliminary thumbnail sketches of their stories. Once they are clear on the layout and design of their comic they begin production on a larger paper. They can use templates to create panels and illustrate their stories with various camera angles. The students can use a variety of materials to color their comics

such as markers, colored pencils, crayons and paint. Students choose a medium and color in their comic strips with an emphasis on creating contrast and unity on their pages. After the illustrations are complete they paste word balloons and narrative boxes on



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CANTASTIC CREATIONS

By Laura Comppen

Materials needed:

- 1 aluminum can (anything between soup and coffee can size is good)
- Recycled remnants: cardboard & paper scraps, tin foil, wire, toilet paper cores, egg cartons
- Clay tools, popsicle sticks
- Hot glue
- Plaster wrap
- Gesso
- Acrylic paints & gloss medium

Like most art teachers, I enjoy projects using recycled materials. Cantastic Creations, for middle schoolers, not only utilizes multiple such materials, but the end product is pretty cool, cost effective, and can be used in a variety of ways.

For this project, I put out the call for clean empty aluminum cans well in advance of the project start and even put notices in the teachers' room for some. Anything from a soup can to a coffee can is acceptable (tuna cans are too small).

As cans start arriving, students write their name in Sharpie marker on the bottom, and then start looking at Google Images of animal heads (both real and handmade from clay, cardboard etc.). They begin sketching images—front and profile views, of what they want their animal to look like. Animals can be realistic or created from their imagination; horned fish and spiders are not uncommon.

The next step involves students creating their animal heads by fashioning them from a box of recycled finds: cut up egg cartons, toilet paper rolls, tin foil, cardboard remnants, pieces of wire, and construction paper scraps (great for support stuffing within toilet paper core scraps). I recommend that students use small pieces of tin foil to roll into balls for the eyes, as they stand out and are easier to paint. Some students like to create additional 3D appendages—legs, tails, wings, etc. This is a great learning moment—bringing their 2D drawings to 3D life.

At the same time, using hot glue, they firmly secure a 1" square (or so) piece of corrugated cardboard to the outer upper center of their can. This will provide a secure base upon which to glue their animal head. For many students, this is their first time using hot glue, so supervision is needed, at least in the beginning.

After the heads are completed (no open gaps), students can use clay tools to further define the details,



followed by securely hot gluing the heads to their cardboard base (already on the can). When all is firmly glued to the can, I put out some bowls filled with strips of plaster wrap, and using a spray water bottle, I demonstrate how to apply the strips—activating as much of the plaster as possible so as to give a smooth finish to the end product. Students really enjoy this part of the project.

When plaster is dry, students then apply gesso to the head and entire outer can. After the base coat dries, they can now bring their animal heads to life by using small amounts of acrylic paint to their desire, painting the head first, and later the outer can. Some students get very creative here—painting a grassy field on the can to serve as a background for their dog or cow head, or a fantastical swirly ocean background for their fish head. I encourage students to save any fine details for the final paint application, as they will stand out more. When done, students may seal their cans with any type of acrylic gloss medium (glitter gloss is a big hit!).

This project touches upon nearly every single Element of Art and Principle of Design (with a splash of S.T.E.M.!), and will take several class periods to complete. You might find that students arrive to the art room and eagerly get right to work on their can, as they enjoy the autonomy and construction aspects of the project. Although Cantastic Creations can be done at any time of year, I like to have students work on this in the winter or early spring—leaves plenty of time for a nice school display (a total winner for a school art show!), and can later be wrapped up and brought home for a Mother's Day present. Mom will be thrilled with a custom-made holder for pens and pencils!



WHY ART? By John Mungiello

SPEECH TO MY STUDENTS ABOUT ART AFTER HIGH SCHOOL

Before we can understand how, we have to dream about why? Why do we continuously dedicate ourselves to these elusive clouds of ideas? Why do we spend backbreaking hours making the perfect brush stroke on the canvas, writing a jewel of a sentence in a story or poem, pulling guitar strings with our teeth until they chip to the gum? Why are we ok with diving into a pool of uncertainty, anxiety, doubts, and debt? Why any of it? Why art?

“You grow up and you calm down,” Joe Strummer belted out. I heard these words while walking through High School halls feeling totally alone. Something was missing and there was a prickly sense of anger boiling in the pit of my stomach. I tried my best to understand what that was and acknowledge it rather than shun it. At first I thought it was bad gas, but when I took the time to speak to it, I understood it. What it was was the art spirit. The refusal to let myself be dampened, made numb by the drudgery of life and the vice-like grip of society. I did not want to be calmed down. I wanted to free of what was happening in me, but liberating the art spirit is hard work when you feel like your living in a box, stuck and alone.

You’re not alone. We are all stuck and “clamped-down” in more ways than one. We’re stuck inside of the big unknown, the universe—stuck inside this solar system, earth, country, state, social systems, economic systems,

familial systems, our own homes, our own jobs and rules established by them. We’re stuck inside of our cars, our cubicles, and our technology. We’re stuck inside our friend groups and even inside of ourselves, our hunger, our love, our hate, our wants, our needs, etc. How do we free ourselves from this? We use what is inside to open ourselves up even more. The best tool for this is empathy and that is what the arts are all about.

Empathy is our strongest muscle and art is the weight to build it with. By understanding others we are able to understand ourselves and speak

Art is only made when energy is used, energy is the spark that brings life, so burn energy, refuel, and burn again.

honestly about our lives. Empathy rips the veil down and shows the truth—life, death and everything in between. It’s in this space that art floats. Use it like a Jedi and manifest it in every aspect of your life. If you are sweeping the floor, sweep it artfully—If you are preparing tax returns, prepare them artfully—If you’re teaching, teach artfully—If you are building homes—build artfully. By doing this you will be able to live the art life, meaning, you will extract the deepest joys and sorrows from the world—living your life to the fullest,

always inspired.

But how do you do stay empathetic when you have bills to pay, when you have to stay up hours on end taking care of your dying grandma with cancer. How do you do this when other people are so quick to cut you down at the knee? How do you do this when the world is in turmoil and atrocities are being committed every day? How do you do this when you just want to sit on the couch and watch massive amounts of sitcoms? The trick is mindset. If you act empathetically and in the interest of art all the time it will become second nature. Your mind will become tuned to the frequency of creation. It will become a part of you rather than a phantom limb. It will become so connected to you that even when you are tired, hungry, and poor—used up you will be able to see clearly, think keenly and make art. Art reflects life; life is all around us. So why separate the two?

How do we get this mindset? We observe. We extract meaning from everything, even aspects of life that aren’t very pleasant. When you’re tired and realize that you forgot to pay a bill and your back aches and you ran out of milk and you drove to the store and sat in brutal New Jersey traffic, filled with lunatic drivers and everything is pissing you off and you just want to go home and rest, you have to find art somewhere. The only way is to use these experiences to see and think—to invent based upon what you saw. Can you find substance while sitting in traffic? Yes, you can. Notice the anger that builds in you and validate it,

ONE OUTFIT 100 DAYS

By Julia Mooney

If you aren't beholden to a uniform policy, would you voluntarily choose to wear one thing every day? How would that be received? How would that make you feel? Why?

In September of 2018, I came in to set up my classroom in a simple gray dress. The next day we met our students, and I wore the same dress. I planned to wear that dress for 100 days straight, and in the end that is what I did.

To clarify the goals of my project, I started an Instagram account.

@OneOutfit100Days. "A challenge to be mindful of what, why, and how we consume. Let's use our energy to do good instead of looking good."

I'd never been an "instagrammer" but I knew it was the realm in which my students operated. The account shared facts about the environmental consequences of "fast fashion" and examples of our wasteful culture of excess and disposable consumption habits. I suggested we shrink our wardrobes to something more sustainable and posed questions about prioritizing our physical vanity over a greater good. Bullying, using social media for good, and even gender issues came up. I hoped that students would be empowered by seeing how their voices could be heard if they are willing to stand up and go against the grain.

It was my first year in the middle school after nine years teaching art at the high school. I knew nobody in this building.

Friendly faces soon became more familiar, but nobody seemed inclined to come out and ask me about my one and only outfit. Soon I learned that some were indeed bringing it up out of my earshot. Amused, I kept at it, but part of me was also uncomfortable! I am not an exceptional beacon of confidence – I am just a normal American woman, beholden to the same social norms as the rest of us. It became a test of my own convictions.

I was breaking an unwritten cultural rule. I soon learned first hand that culture is perhaps the strongest law around. We live by unwritten rules subconsciously absorbed from within the culture in which we exist, and it does not matter if they are irrational – we rationalize them. It does not matter if a more practical path presents itself – we balk. Some of the most open-minded of us shake our heads and shake our fists and laugh at the suggestion of cultural change that makes us

uncomfortable. Yet as teachers, we all agree that confronting the uncomfortable is what results in growth. Change is progress.

After studying art history as an undergrad and teaching it for nine years, I've decided that this is the ultimate, invaluable, and wholly necessary role of art in our society. It challenges all of us to question a status quo and ponder new paths. Art presents new ideas in ways that words alone cannot. When I realized this, I knew that I would sleep well going forward with this project. What better way to model the value of art to my students?

To demonstrate that art need not be a painting or a sculpture. Art can be a thing that happens. Art is intentional and sometimes the best art doesn't have a clear meaning – it gifts the fun of interpretation to the audience.

Soon the media found out and the spark that was the local news grew into a bit of a viral explosion. After articles were published in places like USA Today and I missed a day of school to be a guest on Good Morning America and BBC World News, I no longer walked the halls wondering if people thought I



was crazy. The Instagram engagement skyrocketed to over 6500 followers. Students and teachers in my district and around the world began copying the project or doing their own version. I was scheduling speaking events and organizing clothing swaps and sewing workshops and speaking to film producers. The media had more or less validated my project. The media will do that to your ideas.

People will also try to invalidate it to suit an agenda. I was advised not to use the word “sustainability” on TV, so as not to offend members of our school community who are “uncomfortable with change”. One TV interviewer asked me, “What’s next? Are you going to stop wearing

makeup?” Another said, “I know you are just a school teacher and not an economist, but have you considered that you might be hurting people in the fashion industry who rely on people buying fast fashion?”

Criticism presents a welcome challenge, because if nobody’s feathers are ruffled by what you are saying, are you really saying anything? Furthermore, in this climate of dysfunctional discourse, I was eager to have a chance to model something different. A byproduct of this project was an opportunity to respond to criticism assertively but not defensively, with evidence and grace.

On February 13th I reached 100 days. For the final three days, teachers in

my building joined in and repeated a single. The dress was still in great shape! I now adore hemp fabric, which is sustainably grown, biodegradable and proved to be durable, breathable, and versatile! And yes, I washed it as needed, often quickly hand washing and air drying, and I did not “stink”. That night, I cut it up and sewed it into two brand new dresses to demonstrate that we can reuse what we already have if we are up for the creative challenge! The next day, I went to work in the same dress bodice with a brand new skirt and up cycled buttons. My students are still very young, but I hope as they mature they will put the pieces together and benefit in some way from the impact of “One Outfit 100 Days.”

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you can take the time to observe the tree’s outside your window or the light reverberating off the chrome of a car. If you’re stuck in line at the grocery store look at the people. Notice the lines on their faces that tell their story. Did they have to declare bankruptcy because they couldn’t afford their house anymore? Were they up all night taking care of their sick child? Is this the cashier’s third job so she can afford health care for her anxious asthmatic daughter? None of these things might be totally true, but these are ideas that can bring you closer to the world and the lives that affect it. This is what helps you create. The end goal in any situation is to create, to find meaning in beauty and in heartbreak.

When practical issues set in (and they will) try to stick to these three principles.

1. **Make Art.** To be an artist (which entails all art, painters, writers, illustrators, directors, musicians etc.) you have to make art. Even when life is strenuous and busy, you have to create. Set aside some

time every day to create and think. If you have 5 minutes make art. If you have 20 minutes make art. If you have 5 hours make art. Even if all you can devote to your work is one minute, make it count. One minute of writing every day can become a novel in time. Send out an artful post, write a quick poem, make an artful gesture, teach an artful lesson, cook an artful meal. Apply your creative thoughts and energies into your life all the time.

2. **Finish Art.** This is the one I’m still working on myself. If we don’t finish our work then we can never share it with anyone. Finishing work also allows you to learn and understand that you can actually do this and next time, you can do it better. Setting this goal for yourself will allow you to build a body of work, which is the only way you can gain a true audience.
3. **Live your life and live it the way you want.** To stay inspired every day we have to live. Go out, explore, meet people, get your heart broken, fall in love, get

broken again, fall in love again, see other places, learn how to balance a check book, know what it feels like to not be able to pay a bill, feel stress, anxiety, and pure bliss. This is the only way we can understand who we are and what we want. These experiences will become a part of you and when you are creating you will draw them out and use them to inspire someone else. Art is only made when energy is used, energy is the spark that brings life, so burn energy, refuel, and burn again.

There is always more time. Keep working despite any bad feelings you have about an idea. You don’t know the value of your idea until it reaches an audience. Attune your mind to create rather than destroy. Invent rather than copy. Express rather than withdraw. We have a long time to die and even longer to live. So live artfully—live fully. Don’t pass through, dreaming, until the day you die. It’s the work of a lifetime, but it’s worth it. Thank you.

A SHIFT IN SEEING

By Laura Powell

Women have inspired countless works of fine art throughout all of history. Women have been the focus of academic exercises, demonstrations of mastery, and highly regarded genres. They have been painted, sculpted, etched, and drawn by countless artists who hoped to command their skills.

One of the first representations of a female in Western society was sculptor Praxiteles's rendition of the goddess Aphrodite called the Knidian (c. 400-301 B.C.). Created during the mid-fourth century B.C., Knidian Aphrodite aided in the establishment of the female as a subject in art. Aphrodite was the goddess of love, beauty and pleasure. Praxiteles created her in marble with idealized proportions based on mathematical ratios to incite curiosity, desire, and even the notion of erotic possibilities. She was created to represent one woman as an object of male desire and pleasure. Throughout subsequent art history, the female has been seen in a similar perspective better known as the "male gaze".

The term the male gaze was originally coined by feminist film theorist Laura Mulvey in 1975, in her essay "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema". According to Mulvey, film has reinforced socially established sexual differences placing females in a passive role in cinema and males in an active position; women become objects for male pleasure. Through her observations of film, Mulvey makes it clear, that in visual images seen through the male gaze, or those constructed from a masculine perspective, the gaze projects desire onto the female who is styled in a traditional exhibitionist role. Mulvey's theories are crucial in art and society's understanding of perspective. Additionally, in 1972 art critic and novelist John Berger presented *Ways of Seeing*. In this

novel Berger reinforces Laura Mulvey's conclusions on gender and visual imagery. One example compares the face of the female subject in Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres' *La Grande Odalisque* (1814) and the face of a photographed woman in a "girly magazine." According to Berger both women are maintaining an expression of

calculated charm and sensuality to offer their femininity to those men they believe are looking. Berger argued that because the visual image was made from a man's perspective, the assumed and ideal spectator would also be male. Due to this overwhelmingly patriarchal presence, the image of women was designed to flatter men. The similarity between Berger and Mulvey's conclusion is clear; both authors proved that throughout history women have only been portrayed through men's eyes.

Artists of any note in every art history book, such as Titian, Edouard Manet, Pablo Picasso and Henri Matisse, to name a few, have all been men. They created works through their own perspective and painted female figures in their patriarchal view. From the conception of the Knidian Aphrodite forward, the depiction of the female as an object for male pleasure is the only perspective of her which society saw until the Feminist Art Movement of the 1970s.

So...why is this information important? Why should we as art educators contemplate the information presented through this brief exploration of art history?

If you take a hard look at our daily society the reason becomes very clear. It is almost 2020, fifty years after the Feminist Art Movement, and to this day women are still presented as objects for male pleasure. The children in our elementary, middle, and high schools habitually scroll through

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Praxiteles, *Knidian Aphrodite*, 400-301 BC, Marble (Athens, Greece (destroyed))



Cindy Sherman, *Untitled (Lucy)*, 1935-2001, Gelatin silver print, 26 x 31 cm (Metro Pictures, New York)

THE ENCHANTED LOOM:

USING THE IMAGINATION TO FACILITATE THE VISUAL ARTS

| By Mary Ann Smorra, Ed.D.

The good news is we each have the ability to change our brain!

We do this through the growth of new connections (dendrite growth through synaptic connection). If you have ever changed a bad habit or a specific thought about something, you have carved a new pathway in your brain. The stronger the connections created by the synaptic process, building dendrites, the stronger our memory and our knowledge base. With repeated and directed attention toward your desired change, you can rewire your brain!

Think about your experience in the arts... music, visual arts, drama, dance, writing. What role do the arts play in your life? To which art form do you feel most attuned? How are the arts used with your students? The inner artist is within each of us, perhaps not as prescribed for societal celebrity, but certainly as a means of self-expression. It has been said that George Bernard Shaw suggested we use a mirror to see our face and the arts to see our soul.

When we look at our human history, we find the arts in a starring role. Whether they're akin to the oral storytelling tradition or the cave drawings of Lescaux, the arts have recorded humankind's presence on our planet in a myriad of ways.

Let's look at three strategies that can work in the visual arts classroom, with the intention of building students' imaginations and facilitating creativity in their visual art.

ONE: Observe and Describe

The goal is to not just look, but also, to see. In creating the potential for more connections, students have more divergent power, more images from which to draw and create. New focus areas can be used for every class. Students practice observing and describing the world around them. A divergent to convergent framework is used, allowing the brain to process and retain more and more images.

Try it... "Look and See" is an exercise that can increase a student's powers of observation and description. "Look!"

Sir Charles Sherrington, neurophysiologist and Nobel Prize winner, conceptualized the brain as an "Enchanted Loom".

"millions of flashing shuttles weave a dissolving pattern, always a meaningful pattern, though never an abiding one."

-- students observe intuitively, while a gestalt approach evokes thoughts and feelings. "See!" -- students use details to describe what they saw, while writing down the details they want to remember. Growing new connections in the visual, language and association cortices can be a benefit of this exercise. When asking students to observe and describe, we are asking them to focus attention and gather sensory data. The students' curiosity is aroused and they become investigators. They create and build their own understanding, providing additional power for the imagination.

TWO: Open Your Mind

Spend time every art class practicing meditation or simply "thinking", being in the moment. Simply allowing time for quiet breathing, settling down before beginning the art period, thinking of placing themselves in the current place and moment can help students prepare to use their imagination in creating with the visual arts context. The brain responds by allowing the emotions to balance and center, possibly decreasing cortisol and increasing dopamine, creating a perspective that limits threat and opens possibilities.

Try it... Mindfulness Meditation is an exercise that facilitates a mindful awareness. It takes time to practice observing one's inner experience that facilitates awareness without judgement. When asking students

to do mindfulness meditation, we are asking students to focus on other aspects of who they are. Mindfulness allows students to calm down and focus, while potentially improving their sense of self. Students are able to reflect upon themselves and what it is that helps them feel confident in their creative thinking abilities.

THREE: Imagine

This exercise calls on the brain's capacity for imagining as another resource for creativity. What comes forth from the imagination can be represented by corresponding symbols and images. When asking students to imagine, we are asking students to use a powerful tool which can make learning more enjoyable and meaningful. When students are able to actively visualize information, they inspire their creative selves -- creating new insights and deepening understanding. Students are able to "see" possibilities while thinking critically and creatively.

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HELP YOUR STUDENTS ENGAGE WITH ART MEANINGFULLY

By Trevor Bryan

Not only does The Art of Comprehension (AoC) help students develop the academic skills they need, but it actually helps students explore, think about, and discuss artworks more meaningfully and personally. The goals of AoC are to help students to enter into works of art, make meaning of them and provide a means so they can effectively share their voices. Perhaps surprisingly, the approach is not complicated and it doesn't take long to implement.

The key to AoC are the two tools that help students notice important details, synthesize those details and build their conversations. One tool is the *Access Lenses* which was graciously illustrated by Peter H. Reynolds (Yup, the author of *The Dot*).

The other tool is the Framework which is made up of the following six steps:

- 1. List everything you see**
- 2. Determine the mood and support your thinking with textual evidence**
- 3. Think about what is causing the mood (or could cause the mood)**
- 4. Determine a big idea, topic, or theme of the artwork**
- 5. Think about symbols or metaphors**
- 6. Make a text-to-text, text-to-world, or text-to-self connection**

You may have noticed that the word “mood” appears in both tools. Mood is an excellent entry point into works of art. As humans, everything we do, everything we experience is driven by mood. If you think of the most significant moments of your life (positive or negative) they are wrapped up in various moods. Additionally, moods are accessible to nearly all students, even very young ones. This means that when conversations are built around moods, the vast majority of students can become active participants.

Let's look at the Framework more closely to understand how these six steps help students.

1. List everything you see

This first step has two main purposes. The first is to help students to see or “decode” all the information provided by the artist. Anything that they can put their fingers on should be mentioned. This assures that students gather all of the textual evidence in the artwork. It also allows every student to participate and helps ELL students build vocabulary.

2. Determine the mood and support your thinking with textual evidence

Based on the information they gathered, students should be able to determine a mood or moods of the artwork. Is it calm? Peaceful? Turbulent or intense? They also should be able to support their thinking using the evidence they gathered during step one. Using the evidence to support their thinking not only helps students strengthen comprehension but it also helps them to explore craft and communication. The Access Lenses cue students as to what kind of information to look for to help them to determine the mood. The Access Lenses essentially point out the potentially relevant textual evidence that students can use to support their thinking.

3. Think about what is causing the mood (or could cause the mood)

Although sometimes there are enough clues to complete this step, in singular pictures, it's not always evident what is causing the mood. If it's not evident based on the information, in the picture then students must draw upon their background knowledge and experiences. When doing this, students are essentially jumping to step six and making a connection. Understanding what is causing the mood or could be causing the mood depicted is essential to discussing an artwork personally while at the same time understanding an artworks' universality.

4. Determine a big idea, topic, or theme of the artwork

Big ideas, topics or themes are often directly tied to the mood and what is causing the mood. For instance, an artwork that looks lonely, isolated or hopeless is basically about loneliness, isolation or hopelessness. Yes, it's pretty much that simple. If the viewer knows the direct cause of the mood then the theme can be expanded to something like, “when _____ happens it can make us feel _____.”

5. Think about symbols or metaphors

There are two ways to think about symbols and metaphors. One is thinking of the entire artwork as a symbol or metaphor. For example, a painting of the rough sea can be thought of as a symbol of the turbulence of life. The second way of thinking about symbols and metaphors is homing in on various details within the artwork. If a small ship, a touch of sun and a speck of land are included in the picture then symbols of hope are now in the artwork as well.

6. Make a text-to-text, text-to-world, or text-to-self connection

One way that humans make sense of new information is by connecting the new information to familiar information. We categorize things. Once we learn what a fish is, each time we encounter a new species of fish, we recognize it as a fish. When we recognize a mood in an artwork, we can engage that mood, even if what causes it is unfamiliar, by connecting it to our own familiar experiences and personal knowledge. Making meaningful connections to artworks also helps to

the ACCESS LENSES

Thinking about **MOODS** is an excellent way to access a text.

Artists, Writers & Performers show **MOODS** using the following information...



Don't forget to make strong connections through moods, lenses and symbols.

© TREVOR BRYAN © ART BY PETER & REYNOLDS (MR. WINTER OF THE DOT)

make artworks more personally relevant to individual viewers.

The Access Lenses and the Framework assist students to enter into artworks, think about them and discuss them personally and meaningfully. They are simple tools

but like so many simple tools, highly effective in helping people to do their work. If you are looking for new ways to help students engage with works of art and looking to show that the arts are academic, these tools might very well help you too.

CREATING THAT “SPARK” IN THE ART CLASSROOM

By Lori Raggio

One of my favorite quotes comes from Dante Alighieri, the great Italian poet who wrote *The Divine Comedy*, “from a little spark may burst a flame.” This quote can be applied to many things including education. The spark that ignites the passion for learning in children comes from within. Children are always seeking new ways to learn. They want to be able to learn something new that has value to their lives. In the school environment, students seem to be more inclined to complete projects for grades. Imagination and creativity are more often than not, lacking. The spark that Dante speaks of has vanished. School thus becomes rote memorization, reiteration, and standardized testing aimed at regurgitated content leaving students content with giving back what they think is the expected response. Independent thinking takes a back seat to routine expectations. Heidi Jacobs even admits, “Critical thinking, problem solving, and creative production had given way to memorizing often loosely connected facts that might be tested and therefore ‘had to be learned’” (2010, p. 121). Childhood wonder and fascination for learning has been suppressed.

One of the things I have noticed in the last 24 years of my educational career is the need for students to problem solve. Students tend to stick with a problem to find a solution when personal meaning was introduced. The focus of my graduate thesis was on the creation of an open ended project which critically engaged students to search for meaning. Constructing personal meaning in art allows for independent thinking and creativity. Students who concentrated on finding personal meaning in art had a greater level of creativity and were able to reflect their own ideas. Students of the 21st Century need to make a real life connection to what they learn. Students want to be challenged. The spark needs to be ignited. A personal connection to what a student learned can be applied to a real life situation. Students have a deep understanding and ownership of their work. They are able to draw upon this experience and knowledge in the future. Unless an assignment provides a transfer of knowledge that connects the assignment to the real world, students will find little significance in it.

A student’s engagement in school addresses the culture in which they live. Students today seem to be the product of instant gratification. Their need for a one solution fits all approach has directed itself to less internalization on their part. Instead of internalizing to find a solution, students give the impression of being in a mindless state of instant gratification. There seems to be no longer a relationship with a project but a sense of immediacy to finish it. This

relationship is what needs to be nurtured. Schools need to make learning irresistible by nurturing the relationship. The principal and staff should successfully ignite the flame. Students need to be authentically engaged in their own learning. There should be more activation on the student’s part as well as a great sense of ownership. Students find meaning in their work and wanted to share their findings with the community. Peer pressure can also become a great motivator when used properly. Outside of the classroom, the school staff needs to display a wonderful sense of caring for the students. This in turn creates the intrinsic motivation the students needed. Again to quote Dante, “from a little spark may burst a flame.” This little spark is what students need to give them a sense of pride and accomplishment. There also needs to be that deep exploration of technology that students are familiar, enabling them to construct their own meaning and an application to real world connections.

In my school environment, open-ended lessons provided an opportunity to tailor projects to suit the personal interests of students. I have updated my curriculum to reflect open-ended lessons. I wanted to be able to provide students with the opportunity to construct their own meaning in their artwork. My position in the classroom has shifted from being the teacher to the moderator. This has been a welcomed



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FOOTBALL HAS CHEERLEADERS!

By Susan Catrone

Football season is in full swing. Towns all over the states are showing up at high school stadiums to cheer on their local teams. And, at every game you can hear the cheerleaders getting the crowd excited and together they are supporting their students. Parents, teachers, and administrators are all there beaming with pride over the culture of support that is so apparent.

But, where is that support when it comes to the Visual Arts programs? So many of us struggle to be considered an integral part of the educational framework, much less be seen and cheered on. So, what do we do about that? Hmmm..... Football has cheerleaders.

That's right! We need to add something else to our job description. Cheerleader. And how do we do that? Well, it's really quite simple. You'll need to invest a little bit of time, but all cheerleaders need time to practice. Consider that time. With social media becoming the way of communication for so many districts, why not pick up your megaphone, I mean cell phone, and set up a page to post your students work and accomplishments, remembering to tag as many administrators and schools in your district and beyond? We all know our job can seem isolated and getting the news out there is one way of communicating.

Done that already? Great! Now what about the next step? There are numerous opportunities within AENJ to highlight your students' work. Why not submit art for one of the shows at NJPAC? Or, start considering work for Youth Art

Month in March. Start off the year early by submitting work for the NEA convention in Atlantic City.

But don't stop there! One only needs to google "Art Contests for Students" and you'll be flooded with a list of never ending possibilities. "Doodle for Google", Nasco's "Sketchables Art Contest", and NOAA Marine Debris Art Contest are just a few. Now I know there are people reading this and saying, "I don't have time for this, I can barely get the things done that I need or want to with my students!" Are we not creative thinkers? Find a way to connect to the objectives you are addressing. I know first hand the positive impact that a student receives when their work has been featured. You must see that too. Highlighting student artwork in the school as an Artist

of the Month can go a long way in boosting student self esteem.

Most importantly, reach out to your administrators and invite them to attend award ceremonies. You can ask anyone of my administrators, including the superintendent and they will tell you that I am one of the most persistent, and yes sometimes annoying cheerleader for my art students. However, it

gets the job done.

What's the payoff for being this dedicated cheerleader? I think you know the answer to that.





STUDENT TRAVEL

By Lisa Winkler

When I decided to become a high school art teacher, I knew more than anything else that I wanted to travel with my students. I was fortunate to work with a colleague who shared my love of travel. Over the next few years we took groups of students to Italy, Greece, and Turkey. There's nothing better than riding a gondola in Venice, touring the Parthenon in Athens, or shopping in a market in Selcuk, Turkey and sharing that experience with your students. After taking groups on several successful trips abroad, our district made the decision to stop approving international trips. At the time I was terribly disappointed. I happened to get a call from one of my college friends who was working as an animator at DreamWorks in Los Angeles. He encouraged me to take my class to LA to visit him. I realized that domestic travel could be just as interesting as going abroad. Our Los Angeles tour was born!

To get started, I reached out to my friend and colleague, Dani Armano. Dani teaches TV Production/Film. Since I also teach Digital Photography, we have a lot of the same students. We set out to develop a custom trip that incorporated career exploration, exposure to college programs, and opportunities to see works of art. We knew that we needed to limit the number of students who could go on this type of trip. We were going to be visiting people's workplaces

and we settled on a maximum of 20 students. At 20, we felt it was a manageable group, but also large enough to keep the cost well under \$2,000. We contacted friends in the TV/film industry and developed a custom tour. We've taken this trip over 5 times now and each time we've added or changed something to make the trip exciting for everyone. On each trip, we visit the offices of DreamWorks animation and FOX Sports. Both give the students an in-depth tour of their facilities and allow students to go behind the scenes to see what roles people have at their companies. We also include an animation class through the Disneyland YES program and tours of LA landmarks such as Mann's Chinese Theater, Walk of Fame, and Dolby Theater (we go in February when it is set up for the Oscars). We visit art museums and sites such as Urban Lights, Watt's Towers, Wacko Gallery, and the Getty Museum. On certain tours we've included a trip to Universal, Griffith Observatory, Santa Monica Pier, Warner Brothers Studio Tours, and the Reagan Library. Finally, we always take time to visit a college campus and tour their art and film programs. There's so much to see and each time is so different that this trip never gets old.

If you are planning a trip in the future with students, here are some things to consider:

1. Does my school district allow international or even overnight travel? My school board no longer approves international travel, but teachers may still take international trips when school is not in session. Consider the risks/benefits of traveling with or without school board approval. Know and follow the rules for travel established by your school board.
2. Carefully select a student travel company. I've been using Explorica since 2006 and have had the same tour consultant, Amanda Blizzard, for several years. Developing a good rapport with your travel consultant is key to planning a successful trip.
3. Will the location/time of year of trip/cost of trip overlap with any other activities/trips happening at the same time? If so, you might consider planning a different itinerary. Competing with another trip is never good, as it limits the amount of students available to sign up for your trip. Senior year is very expensive. If you limit your trip to seniors only, it might not get enough students to run. When planning our trip, we approached our administration to get approval for the timing of our trip. We carefully price it under \$2000 to be less expensive than other school trips.



4. Customize your trip. You don't have to choose a trip from a catalog. It can be a good starting point, but if you really want the trip to be meaningful to your students, don't be afraid to try to book something "behind the scenes" for your group. It never hurts to ask!
5. Always keep in mind that you are traveling with teenagers. Spend the time planning fun activities to do at night to keep them busy instead of hanging out in their hotel rooms. We've booked things like Cirque de

- Soleil shows, dinner in Santa Monica and then going to the Pier, even getting some local ice cream is fun. Some of the most Instagrammable locations in LA; Urban Lights and Griffith Observatory are free.
6. Keep in mind that the people booking things for you at the travel company haven't necessarily been to those places or know how best to navigate from one location to the next. Make sure to ask your tour company to get you in touch with your tour director who will be the person on tour with you. I like to email the tour director the itinerary and then get his/her feedback. Then I try to fine-tune the itinerary with my tour consultant so that we can limit the amount of time in traffic.
7. Do your research to see how other people rated the locations you plan to visit. I've literally Googled "Visiting Los Angeles with teenagers" to get an idea of things that would be appealing to teens.
8. If you don't think you can get enough students for a private tour, consider reaching out to a colleague at a neighboring district. You could also ask your tour company to pair you with another group with similar interests.
9. I always recommend taking another colleague. Between the two of you, you'll be able to recruit more students.

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change since it establishes a sense of ownership and the students are authentically engaged in their own learning. Unfortunately, the school culture sees students taking Art as a subject they need to complete with little application to the rest of their lives. The school schedule is changing this coming year to allow for a one-hour lunch/learning period during the middle of the day. Hopefully as Jacobs states, "Class time can be used in differentiated instructional activities based on students' prior learning and interests in exploring the curriculum at deeper levels" (Jacobs, 2010, p. 131). My hope is that there will be more students engaged in Art when the boundaries are extended. My goal is to engage more students who were not able to choose Art as a subject due to scheduling constraints. By engaging students in Art, my expectation is to facilitate the intrinsic motivation the students need. The engagement might be the motivator or spark my students need as an intrinsic motivator to complete art for art's sake.

The way educators teach must change and reflect the current times. One of the initiatives and part of my improvement plan for next year is the incorporation of digital portfolios. Students no longer see the need for tangible artwork. For most, they see their personal artwork as not important, therefore when it is handed back at the

end of the year, it is discarded. My biggest struggle in 24 years of teaching has been, "what am I doing wrong?". I realized that I have asked the wrong question. I should be asking myself, "What can I do to make learning relevant?". I need to go beyond the low-level mindset to being about a culture of thinking critically of Art. Incorporating digital portfolios and making them part of the curriculum instead of focusing on individual skills that can be put together at the end of the year into a larger project can make Art more meaningful and significant to my students. Each and every student has access to google docs, e-mail and cameras on their phones nowadays. I need to embrace the technology and make it an asset to my teaching. Students can thus come to class with their digital media products already assembled thus freeing up the valuable time in the classroom. My vision for the 21st Century classroom is to engage students on a deeper level with differentiated instructional activities that build problem solving, imagination, creativity and critical thinking using digital portfolios. Hopefully the spark will be ignited.

Jacobs, H. H. (2010). *Curriculum 21. Essential Education for a Changing World*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

ART TEACHERS HELPING STUDENTS DEVELOP LEADERSHIP SKILLS

By Karen Goldberg

Recently I was asked to speak about art and leadership. As a practicing artist and art educator in a NJ public school, I decided to look at how teaching art and making art can inspire young students to become tomorrow's leaders. At first, this seemed like an unlikely connection; after all, we often think about leaders in other fields like business, science or technology; but art...?

With this in mind, I decided to actually look to leaders in business to find out what qualities/characteristics leaders have in common. What makes a leader, a leader?

Diving into the connection between leadership and art, I looked to two articles; one from Inc. Magazine and the other from Forbes, which helped me understand its correlation. In the Inc. article titled, "This Study of 300,000 Leaders Revealed the Top 10 Traits for Success," a study was administered by two leadership development consultants. After interviewing 300,000 leaders in business, the study revealed 10 of the most common leadership characteristics. It has been my experience as both a practicing artist and as an art teacher, that I recognized that several of these characteristics/skills and/or dispositions

are encouraged in an art classroom. According to this article written by Peter Economy, the following traits are exhibited in leaders. These traits include but are not limited to; leaders inspire, they are problem solvers, they strive for results, they display technical or professional expertise and are good communicators.

To begin, the most common trait of a leader is that he/she inspires others. Art educators encourage their art students to get inspired to create. Art educators bring literature, music, nature and artwork from other artists into the classroom to inspire their students. On the flip side, art students create art that inspires others. Inspiration is plentiful in an art classroom. Students learn what inspires them and learn how to inspire others through their art.

Leaders also analyze issues and work to solve problems. Art making as a process is a problem solving process. As the student artist creates, he/she automatically assesses what they have accomplished, figures out what needs to be done next, experiments with materials, and corrects or adjusts their work. This sequence continues on and on throughout the art making process as the art

There's great value in recognizing different perspectives in conversations because these enable us to hear and react to things very differently.

is created. The entire art making process is a cycle of create/assess/adjust over and over until the work is complete. The goal of completing an artwork leads us immediately to the next leadership characteristic which is that leaders strive for results.

"Great leaders have a higher level of perseverance, stick-to-it-ness and drive than most anyone else, and they can be counted on to get things done," Economy says in the article. In art class, we practice perseverance. In an art classroom, when a student/artist is not satisfied with his or her work, that usually means that he/she has not completed the process. Continuing on and persevering through challenges until the student artist is happy with the product, are habits that are nurtured in the art classroom. Often times in life we see and enjoy completed art products. We hang these products on the wall, read published novels, or enjoy a film in the theater. We tell our students that you have to "keep at it" or "nothing

good in life comes easy"; and in art class, we art educators put these phrases into action. Art making embodies perseverance.

In terms of skill set, "most leaders start out in business with a specific skill, such as selling or accounting or designing software. The best leaders build on their technical and professional skills over time, becoming valuable experts in their field and skilled at leading their team." Economy uses this to refer to how leaders exhibit expertise in a specific field of study. In a perfect world, art teachers practice what they preach. Not only would they be facilitating the artistic process with their students, but they themselves would be engaged in art making/experimenting. On a personal note, I continue to explore other forms of expression often becoming frustrated that I do not easily master a new medium. My practice forces me to work through these challenges until I am satisfied with the quality of my work. Working as an artist helps me

understand the challenges and frustrations of my students, and enables me to encourage them to take risks and see where the process leads them.

Economy also touches on the power of communication. In this article he writes, "great leaders communicate with their people often and in a variety of ways. Whether it's by means of one-on-one conversations, team meetings, blog posts, email messages, phone or Skype calls, or any other medium, leaders don't talk about communicating—they just do it." An art product is a communication. Student art on display in schools promotes conversation and gives color and life to the surroundings. "Marcel Duchamp, a pioneering artist and leading figure in the Dada movement argued that both the artist and the viewer are necessary for the completion of a work of art. He argued that the creation of art begins with the artist—often working in isolation in the studio—and is not completed until it is placed out in the world and viewed by others." (MOMA.com) Art products are unique to the creator and

interpretive. Art not only communicates in a way that says "Look at me!....and think," it promotes interaction/engagement within its environment and amongst its audience.

A Forbes Magazine article written by Steffan Surdek, "Why Understanding Other Perspectives is a Key Leadership Skill", underscores yet another example of how art education promotes the development of the skills and dispositions for creating tomorrow's leaders. In art class we discuss art. We ask the questions: "What do you see in the work?; What do you think the artist is saying?; Why do you think that?...etc." Students interpret art through the lens of their unique life experiences and their personal knowledge. According to the article, "there's great value in recognizing different perspectives in conversations because these enable us to hear and react to things very differently." Hearing

different ideas through art discussions in art classrooms helps students grow and understand others. Surdek goes on to say, "a perspective is not right or wrong by default. It is just what it is: the point of view of a single person based on their life experiences and values, among other things. We each have one; sometimes we share it with others and sometimes we do not." The discussion that occurs in an art classroom after viewing a single piece of art exposes

a variety of different perspectives, different experiences that are unique to each student in the classroom. This discussion helps students develop empathy and understanding of others.

Leaders can be found anywhere. In any field and in any profession, in art class, art educators provide a safe space for students to explore these leadership skills and develop the disposition to become tomorrow's leaders.

Montclair State University

MSUNER Conference

Artist Educator Pop-Up Exhibit



(Continued from Page 26) their comics.

The conclusion of these lessons lead to full color comic strips with themes related to preparedness and overcoming obstacles. The students are always receptive to this project because it gives them an opportunity to have a voice. Since the first time I have introduced this unit, my students' comics were showcased in 2015 at the Remembering Sandy and Emergency Preparedness Fair at City Hall in Jersey City. In 2016, my class was featured on Classroom Close-up NJ. The show taped a segment entitled "Comic Relief," which was nominated for an Emmy Award.

Over the past four years I have had the honor of conducting workshops in colleges and public schools throughout the country. However, the greatest joy for me is gaining insights about my students and helping them develop lifelong skills, which prepare them for the challenges, they may face in their lives.

(continued from Page 31) internet and social media sites crowded with women presented in the male gaze; as unrealistic, idealized, objects. Social media “influencers” as they are fittingly named are constantly molding the minds of our students. They have the largest access to technology and information and because of conventional societal norms, they are reminded daily of how a woman should look and act. But, are the women on their social media feeds real? Are the influencers and models who photoshop themselves, permanently change their natural faces and bodies, and wear radical exhibitionist clothes considered the average? And how can a woman be seen as more than just an object for sexual pleasure when they are presented in such a way?

Because of historical societal norms, the male gaze has become the overwhelmingly influential perspective of the 21st century, however, there is alternative view. As art educators, we are the basis for students’

understanding of visual imagery, we are the people that teach them how to create, how to look, and how to truly see images for more than just their face value. Because we give visual imagery depth, we are the key to creating a shift in seeing. Instead of the next generation seeing women through the male gaze, it is crucial for all students to be exposed to an alternative gaze, a gaze which shows women for what they are, as more than just objects.

To do this, art educators must become more aware and responsible for the images they use in class, whether its for lectures, examples, or demonstrations. We’ve become accustomed to picking up the old laminated posters of perfectly chiseled marble goddesses, or women with porcelain skin and flowing hair. To be clear, these images are extremely valuable in understanding art and art history, but it is also incredibly necessary to dig deeper and find the alternative view. Artworks created by both male and female masters

are the key to opening our classes’ perspectives on societal norms. Feminist Cindy Sherman, for example, used makeup, wigs, prosthetics, and costumes to photograph self-portraits. She impersonated a plethora of female stereotypes found in advertising, cinema and TV, as seen in her piece *Untitled (Lucy)* (1970). Through her work, Sherman was attempting to make a statement about the artificial way women were portrayed in visual images.

As time progresses, so too should our society. In order to facilitate this progression, art educators must become more aware of the perspective they are allowing their students to see, the history they are teaching, and the values within visual imagery they are instilling. We are responsible for allowing a shift in seeing and provoking our audiences to ask questions about society’s traditional feminine embodiment, establishing a contemplation of what “beauty” in art actually is.

(Continued from page 23) This presentation allowed the states to compare their progress toward creating a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive organization to serve all members. If you are interested in becoming involved with AENJ as we begin to address the task force recommendations, please reach out to our communications chair, Antonia Germanos, at communications@aenj.org.

In early July of 2021, AENJ will be the host of the Team East leadership meeting! We are looking for suggestions of locations, speakers, and activities to share with our friends from the East. If you are interested in helping AENJ to welcome Team East in 2021, please reach out to Lora Marie Durr (ldurr@aenj.org) to get involved!

References:

The Fabric Workshop and Museum: <http://fabricworkshopandmuseum.org/Exhibitions>
Mural Arts Philadelphia: <https://www.muralarts.org>
NAEA ED&I Task Force: <https://www.arteducators.org/community/national-task-force-on-equity-diversity-inclusion>

(Continued from page 32) *Try it...* Simply having the students close their eyes, providing them with prompts to images different sensory aspects, what they see, hear, touch, smell and taste, of “their” apple facilitates an awareness of what the imagination can do. An important aspect of the debriefing that follows is the students’ awareness that everyone’s imagination is different. When they discuss their images and hear the different colors and impressions of their classmates’ apples, it is a boon to discover how unique their own imagination actually is. Each brain is like a personal fingerprint – unique as to how we think and imagine.

These three exercises, although straight forward, can help in developing a student’s awareness of their own breadth and capacity in the visual arts. They are three tools that a student can implement at any time to expand their vision, expand their inner resources and imagine possibilities.



NEW JERSEY PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

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 Exhibit

Sunday, September 8, 2019	Install	10AM
Saturday, October 20, 2019	Reception	11AM

Winter Exhibit

Deadline for submissions:	Friday, October 25, 2019
Sunday, November 10, 2019	Install 10AM
Sunday, December 8, 2019	Reception 11AM

Late Winter Exhibit

Deadline for submissions:	Friday, December 20, 2019
Sunday, January 12, 2020	Install 10AM
Sunday, February 16, 2020	Reception 11AM

Spring Exhibit

Deadline for submissions:	Friday, March 27, 2020
Sunday, April 26, 2020	Install 10AM
Sunday, May 17, 2020	Reception 11AM

Fall 2020 Exhibit and Calendar Contest

Deadline for submissions:	Friday, June 5, 2020
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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 may 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: www.aenj.org/pages/njpac

Information on when work is due to Jennifer O'Brien and can be found on the AENJ Website: www.aenj.org and in WebBeat



AENJ 2019 AWARD WINNERS

HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

CELEBRATING THE VISUAL ARTS



STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

Mia Tomasino

Teacher: Dorothy Amme
Piscataway High School

Emma Broggi

Teacher: Dorothy Amme
Piscataway High School

Stephanie Luo

Teacher: Cheryl Eng
Lawrence High School

Emily O'Shea

Teacher: Caren Stichter
Donovan Catholic High School

Catherine Epps

Teacher: Rebecca Singleton
Steinert High School

Anaya Malagi

Teacher: Valerie Snyder
North Brunswick Township High School

Meredith Taggart

Teacher: Lora Durr
Hopewell Valley Central High School

ART EDUCATORS

Charlene Anolik
Harry Bower
Megan Hawthorne
Cathy Kondreck
Lisa LaJevic
Katina Lampropoulos
Patty Ann Nehrbauer
John Perillo
Barbara Russo
Aaron Weber

2019 AWARDS

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.

Harry Bower

GEORGE DIBUONO RECOGNITION AWARD

Established to honor former President, George DiBouno, whose dedication to arts education in New Jersey was marked by a realization of the power of leadership in education to move the arts to the forefront. This award is for those who are "within" the field of education, but not Art Educators.

John Perillo

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.

Elementary:

Charlene Anolik

High School:

Barbara Russo

Middle:

Megan Hawthorne

Higher Education:

Lisa LaJevic

YOUTH ART MONTH AWARD

Linda Lora Pugliese YAM Award

Katina Lampropoulos

Patty Nehrbauer

Aaron Weber

COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

Estefany Rodriguez

GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIPS

Megan Belluci

Laura Raggio

Donna Sinisgalli

SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS DUE: FEBRUARY 22, 2020

ALL APPLICATIONS AND PORTFOLIOS WILL BE COMPLETED ONLINE!

In 2018, AENJ provided \$7,000 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 22! You need to submit your student applications by February 22, 2019 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 2019.

GRADUATE & COLLEGE APPLICATIONS DUE: APRIL 15, 2020

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: 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.

Do you know someone who deserves recognition as an outstanding art educator?

Does your Principal or Superintendent support the arts?

Is there a community leader in your area who has been supportive of your art program?

Please take the time to nominate someone! Everything you need can be found on our website: www.aenj.org/awards

AENJ GRANT INFORMATION

APPLICATIONS DUE: APRIL 15, 2020

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 2020 conference in Long Branch, NJ or the Spring 2020 National Art Education Association (NAEA) Convention in Minneapolis? 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.

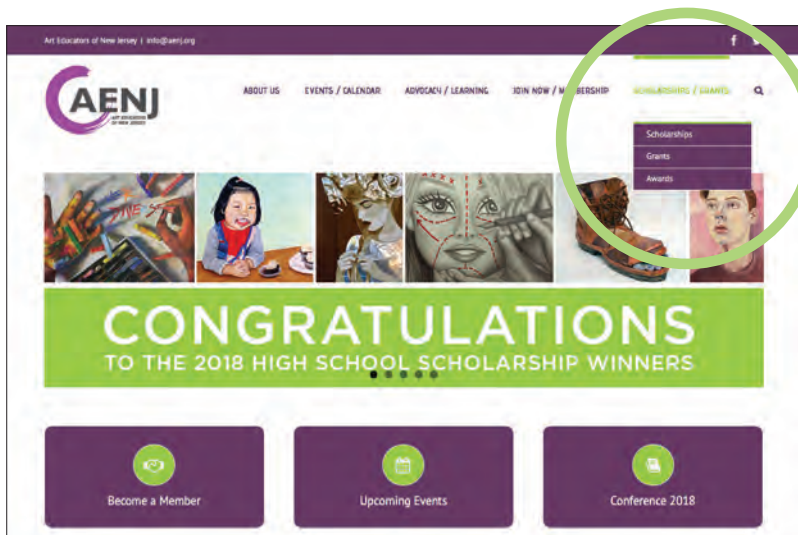
The **AENJ Residency Grant** presents members the opportunity to spend extended time at our fall conference. Grantees are reimbursed for ONE night's stay in the hotel to encourage their full participation, including evening programs and activities, as a part of their professional development experience.

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 Preservice Teacher/Student Professional Growth Grant** provides Art Education majors at the undergraduate/graduate level with \$500 to support their attendance at the NAEA Convention.

The **AENJ Special Events 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 will be awarded to the grant recipient.



The entire process for applying for a grant has been put **ONLINE**—making applying for a grant even easier!

We encourage ALL members to apply!

OVER \$10,000 WORTH OF GRANTS AND SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED LAST YEAR!

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



2019



YAM BEAT



Somerville High School's Katie Updegrove was awarded the billboard and overall statewide winner for the 2019 YAM Design contest. Katie developed her design in art teacher Susan Shelton's art class.



Congratulations

to Karen Mannino and Kristy Lopez
the 2020 recipients of the Clare Flanagan Grand
Award of Excellence!



And Congratulations to:

Cumberland/Gloucester/Salem County YAM
Chairs Patty, Aaron, and Katina recipients of
the Linda Lora Pugliese YAM Award
Essex County YAM Chair Cathy Kondreck
recipient of the Lynn Dodson Yam Award



Left to right: Adriana Maranhao-Neto, Grade 4, Union, Katherine Updegrove, Grade 10, Somerset, Alexandra Lipshutz, Grade 8, Middlesex, Emma Engle, Grade 8, Ocean, Ashley Rodriguez, Grade 8, Hudson.

ATLANTIC/CAPE MAY COUNTIES



The Noyes Arts Garage of Stockton University graciously opened their doors on Saturday, March 30th, to host this year's Atlantic/Cape May County Youth Art Month exhibit.

The Noyes Arts Garage of Stockton University, located in the heart of Atlantic City, is host to a vibrant new cultural arts center, artist studio spaces, and exhibit space. This modern urban setting is the perfect arena for our young artists. The working artist studio spaces allow for the student, parents, family, and friends the ability to experience various cultures and styles of art.

The central gallery space features student art throughout the year. During the month of March our two counties were showcased for the YAM celebration. We collaborated with 11 local schools and 12 teachers whose love for the arts really showed through in their student's artwork and enthusiasm. There were over 200 artists, family, friends, & teachers in attendance. There were 150 pieces of art hung that represented grades 1-12 including special needs students. 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.

What a wonderful group of steadfast art educators, whose consistency is always appreciated and welcomed each and every year. A huge thank you to all of you for making this year another amazing success!

BERGEN COUNTY

For the third year in a row, Bergen County celebrated Youth Art Month at the Bergen County Administration Building in Hackensack! There were 175 students from kindergarten through 12th grade who displayed their art pieces for an entire week on the first floor.

On Thursday, March 21st a reception was held from 4:30 until 6:00 pm for the student artists and their families and joining the festivities were principals, superintendents, and Bergen County Freeholders. It was a wonderful afternoon for all who attended! There were snacks and drinks available for everyone, art activities set up around the room for all the kids, and plenty of smiles as students took pictures and enjoyed the art work from the ten schools who participated!

We received generous donations from several art companies which enabled each student artist to receive a gift bag containing colored papers, drawing pencils, watercolors, oil pastels, acrylic paints, and more!



CUMBERLAND/GLOUCESTER/SALEM COUNTIES

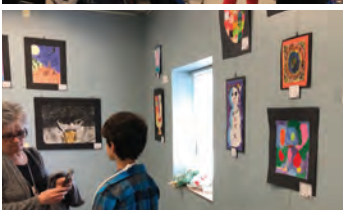
This year's TriCounty YAM show, which represents Gloucester, Salem, and Cumberland counties, was held at Rowan University's Art Gallery.

The show which was co-chaired by Aaron Weber, Katina Lampropoulos, and Patty Nehrbauer, showcased approximately 100 pieces of art from 20 different teachers representing K-12 art programs throughout the 3 counties. The show welcomed friends, loved ones, and administrators from the region, as well as some very excited artists. With a donation from a local Domino's Pizza, guests were well fed while enjoying the excellent work of our regions' artists!



OCEAN COUNTY

We were very excited to have our annual Youth Art Month Exhibit this year at the Ocean County Library, Brick Branch on Chambersbridge Road. Our show was displayed from March 1st until March 29th and had many visitors during the month, with over 200 people who attended the artist reception! We displayed 46 students, grades K-12, art work in all different mediums; including 3D sculptures from both public and private schools. We gave all our exhibiting artists a sketch pad and artist drawing supplies to further their crafts along with their certificates of achievement.



ESSEX COUNTY



For the month of March 2019, the Hall of Records in Newark, NJ was turned into a vibrant art gallery. Nearly 115 pieces of student generated artwork were exhibited for the entire month for students all across Essex County. Participated schools ranged from technical schools to public schools to parochial schools.

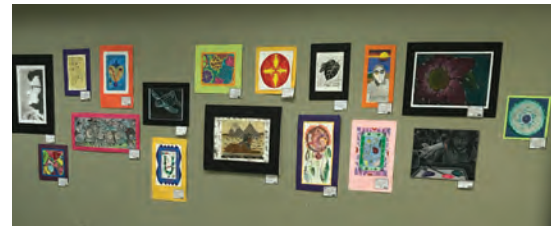
Students, parents, caregivers, administrators, and teachers were invited to attend a gala reception at the end of the month hosted by AENJ in conjunction with Essex County. Executive Joseph DiVincenzo and almost 300 people were in attendance!

On hand to provide remarks, as well as presenting certificates of achievement to Essex County students was Essex County Executive Joseph DiVincenzo. Students were called up individually to receive their certificates from Mr. DiVincenzo. 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.

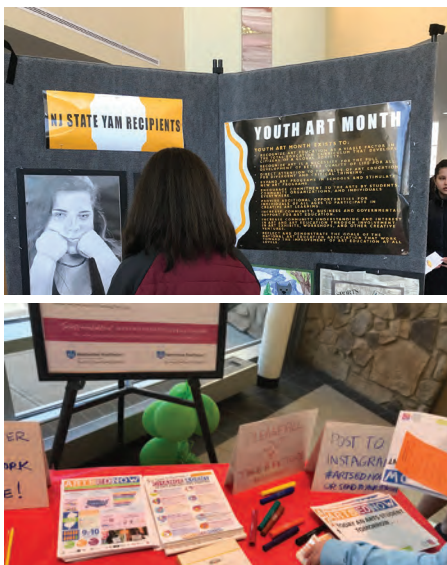
At the conclusion of the awards ceremony, all in attendance were provided with a lunch. A week after the program took place, students and teachers were provided with copies of all the photos, generously donated by the county.

HUDSON COUNTY

Kelly Wenz and Martha Garcia held a Youth Art Month celebration for Hudson County Teachers on Wednesday, March 20, 2019 at the Bethune Center in Jersey City. There were approximately 30 pieces of artwork displayed at the event ranging from elementary students up to high school students. We had a good amount of people attend the event to show their support for the artists. The Visual Arts supervisor from Jersey City and the Academy 1 principal came out to express their appreciation for the visual arts. A certificate of participation was awarded to each participating student artist along with a YAM pin. There were light refreshments and snacks for everyone to enjoy as well as fun color pages for all to do! We look forward to next year's Youth Art Month celebration and hope to have more art teachers participate.



HUNTERDON/WARREN COUNTIES



MERCER COUNTY

The Mercer County Youth Art Month Exhibit enjoyed continued success again this year at Artworks in Trenton. The exhibit opened on March 30th and highlighted student artwork ranging from K-12 from two private schools; Mercer Street Friends School and the Cambridge School, and the following five public school districts and multiple levels: East Windsor Regional School District, Ewing Township Schools, Hamilton Township Schools, Hopewell Valley Regional School District, and Lawrence Township Schools across the county.

There was a strong representation of Mercer County AENJ members including chairpersons Barbara Russo and Danielle Davis with educators Rosanna Bua, Tamika Diaz, Lora Marie Durr, Cheryl Eng, Robert Esposito Jr., Gay Hong Hua, Lauren Huchel, Gwyneth Jensen, Amy Kijowski, Heather Lisk, Melissa Mack, Carolyn McGrath, Alexandra Seervai, Rebecca Singleton, Mariagrace Welsh, Megan Wilson, and April Zilai. Over 200 student artists participated and there were nearly 230 works of art exhibited. The response was overwhelming as we had approximately 300 guests attend the show.

This year's YAM theme, Made in New Jersey, was celebrated as visitors shared their talents by creating fingerprint art to take home. They also added their fingerprints to letters that spelled out the county name to be used in future Mercer County student art events.

Prior to the exhibit opening, superintendents from 4 districts and 1 head of school signed proclamations declaring their support for Youth Art Month in Mercer County and the efforts of AENJ to promote the Arts in New Jersey.

Student Exhibitors each received a certificate of participation and at each grade level, Elementary, Middle, and High school, had a chance to win a door prize consisting of art supplies, some of which were supplemented by Col Art. Additionally, students received a handmade ceramic pin donated by the art department at Fisher Middle School in Ewing.

Light refreshments were provided for all visitors, some of which were donated by Wegmans in Princeton. Additional funds were provided by AENJ for refreshments, art supplies, and the awarded Certificates for students and participating educators.

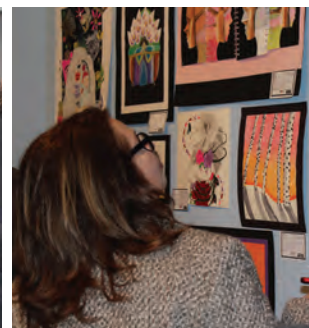


With the continued support of AENJ, The chairs, participating art teachers, the students and their parents/guardians, and the generous donation of gallery space from Artworks, we are on a path to continuing a long standing tradition of student art exhibits with YAM in Mercer County.

MIDDLESEX COUNTY

It was hot in the George Street Playhouse! The 2019 Middlesex County Youth Art Month Exhibit shined as we celebrated our sixteenth year in artistic style! Proud students, families, and friends were full of smiles as photographs were snapped to celebrate the many artistic talents from around the county. A special acknowledgement was given to Metuchen teacher, Margo Banner, and her student, Alexandra Lipshutz, by State chair Kristy Lopez for creating the winning flag design sponsored by Sargent Art. Also, Shayna Fernandez from South River High School was presented with the "Random Artist of the Week" plaque and certificate from Artsonia by the county chairs. Student participants were acknowledged with a certificate and drawing set donated by General Pencil.

Hosted on a Tuesday night with over a two hundred guests, another successful year commenced to a standing-room-only crowd because of the hard work and dedication of the educators and students of Middlesex County. Eighty-four student participants, kindergarten through twelfth, from twenty-six teachers from Carteret, Colonia, East Brunswick, Edison, Metuchen, New Brunswick, North Brunswick, Piscataway, Sayreville, and South River exhibited artwork in various mediums. Thank you to the hard working and dedicated educators, students, families, principals, and community members of Middlesex County!



MONMOUTH COUNTY

The County of Monmouth celebrated Youth Art Month on Saturday March 30th at the ChaShaMa gallery in Matawan, NJ. Thanks to our partnership with the ChaShaMA gallery and the generosity of the gallery, we were able to host over 250 people from 12-2 pm to celebrate and recognize 80 incredible artists from across Monmouth County. ChaShaMa proudly advertised our event on both their local and national website. Both residents from the local community as well as our artists and families came to celebrate Youth Art Month with us.

Additionally, several ChaShaMa artists in residence came to support Youth Art Month as well. Artwork from kindergarten through high school students was proudly displayed in ChaShama's gallery.

Artists and their families were invited to partake in artmaking stations in rooms down the hall from the main gallery. Artists could choose to make small crafts, add some color to a group coloring mural, or have fun coloring in artwork. Our artmaking stations were sponsored by Sax and Dick Blick. Students were

invited to add to our ArtsEdNow Wall, explaining that although today they were arts students, tomorrow they could be whatever they wanted! Lastly, we had two door prizes that contained amazing art supplies as well as a \$25 gift card, all courtesy of Dick Blick.

Refreshments and cake were provided. The event concluded with an awards ceremony where students received certificates of recognition for their hard work and accomplishments.



MORRIS-SUSSEX COUNTIES

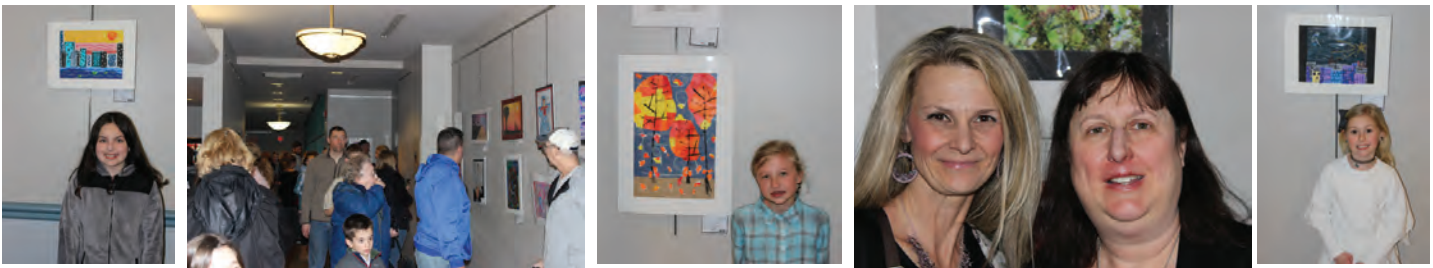
Returning county chair, Elizabeth Wassel was joined this year by Pamela Dean to co-chair both Sussex and Morris Counties. This year's YAM exhibit was hosted by the Newton Judicial Center in Newton, New Jersey. Fourteen schools from the two counties participated in this event, with sixty-two pieces of art represented. This included thirteen pieces that were state selections and had been previously displayed at the New Jersey State House in Trenton.

The county exhibit ran from March 11 - 21, with a formal reception on March 21 from 6:00 to 7:30 P.M. Because of the generosity of the Newton Judicial Center in Newton, New Jersey, the 2019 Sussex and Morris County YAM exhibit had the ambiance of a real museum. The artwork was showcased throughout three rooms, complete with seating so that visitors could relax and

take in the phenomenal artwork. A refreshment table of fresh fruit and cheese completed the gallery night feel. Approximately two hundred people attended the event and were amazed at the talent of the young artists.

Each student received a YAM certificate of participation. The night concluded with what has become a popular part of the Sussex and Morris County YAM exhibition. Each student received a ticket toward a raffle at the end of the night. Two baskets were raffled, one for grades K-5 and one for grades 6-12. Each basket contained over \$100.00 in art supplies, and the excitement was infectious as the numbers were called. The winners were elated!

We are anxiously awaiting the 2020 YAM and the opportunity to see more amazing pieces of art created by the counties' students.



PASSAIC COUNTY

On March 15th, 2019 the YAM Passaic County show opened at the Louis Bay 2nd Library, in Hawthorne, New Jersey. During a two-week period the show was available to view during library hours.

We greatly appreciate the generosity of the Hawthorne Library for letting us exhibit our students' works of art and have our reception. Adam Keeble is in charge of the programs and use of the available space at the library and was very helpful accommodating our county schools for this show and reception. There was no fee for our use of the room.

The 58 pieces of art that were exhibited represented grades K-12. A wide range of techniques and media were displayed including cloth dolls, clay masks, paintings in tempera and acrylic, pencil drawings, photography, and mixed media. Art was matted or framed and several pieces were displayed in glass cases and on pedestal.

Over 200 people attended the closing show on Thursday, March 28th from 6:30 to 8:00p.m. I planned a scavenger hunt listing a description of several pieces of art and a line to write the first name of the artist when found. Students and adults enjoyed finding the different artworks among which were a pink dragon, 3 versions of the cat in the hat, and a photo of a woman sitting in a Laundromat.

Each teacher and student had a moment to shine as they handed out or received award certificates at the podium. Handmade donuts, cookies, a cheese platter, juices and water were served at a buffet table. The tables around the room were covered with cloths and several had helium balloons as centerpieces to add some excitement to the event. The Art Educators of New Jersey provided funding for refreshments and decorations and several teachers also donated food and drink.

This was my first time assembling, hanging and running the Passaic County show and I really enjoyed the result. All that attended were appreciative of the event and proud of their art, students, and schools. Julie Chrobak of Clifton High School has run this event for the previous 3 years. Her support was essential in the planning of the event this year and I thank her for her assistance.



SOMERSET COUNTY

The Somerset County Youth Art Month Exhibit was hosted by the Center for Contemporary in Bedminster, NJ in partnership with the Art Educators of New Jersey to celebrate Youth Art Month. The chairs for this event were Susan Bivona & Lisa Conklin.

Part I of the exhibit showcased artwork created by Somerset County students in grades K-5 and ran from March 18 – March 24, 2019 with an artist's reception on Sunday, March 24, 2019. Part II showcased works from Somerset County students in grades 6-12 and ran March 26 - 31, 2019, with an artist's reception on Sunday, March 31, 2019.

Exciting news for Somerset County: this year, Katie Updegrave of Somerville High School was awarded the billboard and overall statewide winner for the 2019 YAM Design contest. Katie developed her design in art teacher Susan Shelton's art class. The billboard was displayed on North Bridge Street in Somerville for the month of March.

Over 20 art teachers from Somerset County participated. The Center for Contemporary has hosted this event for 19 years, we are so fortunate to have their support!



UNION COUNTY

The Union County YAM exhibit celebrated its ninth year at the Plaza @Elizabethtown Gas Company/ Liberty Hall Center in Union, NJ. The exhibit was held from February 11th through March 1st.

This year, 92 pieces of K-12 student artwork were on display in the Plaza atrium! Student artists, families and art teachers came to the closing reception on March 1st to view the beautiful artwork and to be honored at the award ceremony. YAM Proclamations from 17 mayors and all of our local assemblymen and freeholders were on view for guests to view.

At the reception, each student artist received a special YAM award and an additional award from the Union County freeholders! Students also received a bag filled with tons of art goodies donated by Chroma, Crystal, Davis Publications, General Pencil, Nasco, Ooly, Sargent, School Specialty-Sax, Sketch for Schools and Twisteez. Artsonia also donated some gifts from their online gift shops for parents to view and color prints of State YAM artists. Goodies were also donated by the Art of Education for the participating teachers.

Delicious refreshments were generously donated by the Union County Art Teachers.

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 the Union County YAM exhibit online, go to <https://www.artsonia.com/museum/gallery.asp?project=1707844>





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