

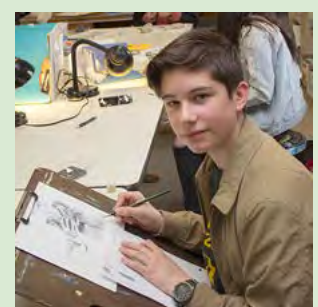


An Official Digital Publication of the New York State Art Teachers Association

Volume 45 • No. 4, Summer 2017



Art Speaks Out



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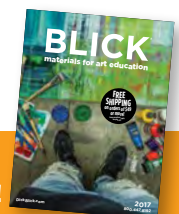
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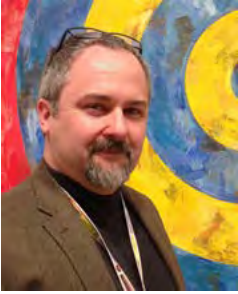
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President's Message from Robert Wood



“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

Margaret Mead

There is no doubt our world is overflowing with social issues and concerns worthy of inspection, question, and comment. While many of these issues will impact our students in their adult lives, even students in early grade levels can relate to, feel the impact of, and comment on some of the issues society presents. As art educators, we can search for ways to contribute for the betterment of our students and our society. Essential questions face us: How is what we do relevant in today’s world for today’s students? How does creating art enrich people’s lives? How does artmaking contribute to the awareness and understanding to one’s life and the lives of others in our communities?

These and other related essential questions have become the driving elements underlying a socially conscious shift in national and state art education circles. From National Core Art Standards in 2014 to new New York State Standards in 2017, the soon-to-be curriculum in the classroom, the revised Visual and Media Arts perspectives direct questions and understandings of preK-12 Art Education towards community and society, and foster artistic learning through examination of and response to social issues.

In 2015, the National Art Education Association adopted a position statement on Art Education and Social Justice, recognizing the potential of art education to raise critical consciousness, foster empathy and respect for others, build community, and motivate people to promote positive social change. (NAEA, March 2015). NAEA advances this focus in the upcoming Summer Studio: “Design Thinking for Social Equity,” in which art educators and decision-makers across disciplines will work together as innovative, socially-conscious change agents by exploring the benefits of imaginative design thinking and sharing exemplary practices for education to promote change.

Service and equity are at the core of Art Education for Social Justice. As students progress through a sequential art education program, their awareness can shift from a focus on self to a greater awareness of community and others. Service learning is one approach to education in which social justice is addressed through service with others, often in arts-based projects. The Arts can play a role in the struggle to move forward. Art making attunes people to their surroundings. Artists often engage with the issues of today, treating the

creation of art as a social practice. Visual art educators can engage students to participate in pre-existing social justice or service learning projects, often interdisciplinary in their school, district or community, or develop and launch their own from personal classroom origins. Students may create works of art about events in home, school, or community life. They may draw upon and share personal experiences and interests in creating visual and media artwork. Personal interests and experiences feed personal connection to meaning and purpose, strengthening creative ownership often leading to vibrant and impactful artistic work beginning in the classroom and growing to outside of school walls. A focus on social justice in art education weaves powerful connections to family and community cultural traditions. The arts can even grow to shape culture and influence people’s lives, attitudes, and decisions. The processes by which people create and interact with through artistic work can help them understand and challenge inequities in their lives and generate innovative solutions for sociocultural issues.

As educators, we strive to develop in our students the ability to think critically, to observe our surroundings, and to think and respond in terms of personal and social context and impact. It is the cycle of artistic learning and work. The goal of teaching for social responsibility is not to promote a personal agenda, but to foster in students an ability to think critically and develop social consciousness. In serving each other we discover, develop, and nourish ourselves.

In this issue of The NYSATA News, “Art Speaks Out,” our contributors focus on how developing awareness of social justice connects with our educational curriculum and practices. I hope their insights will encourage you to continue to foster the rich education of our students to make them critical thinkers, discoverers, collaborators, and discerning active participants in our society. I encourage you to examine your own practice in new ways as you continue to refine and enrich your role as an art educator and leader in your school and community.

Respectfully in Service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robert Wood'.

Robert Wood
NYSATA President

About the News

The **NYSATA News** publishes official announcements for NYSATA as well as commentary and research on topics that are important to art educators. The opinions expressed in editorials and articles are those of the authors and do not represent NYSATA policies. The **NYSATA News** encourages an exchange of ideas, and invites submission of news or articles for publication. To submit news or articles, please contact Editor, Marty Merchant at nysatanews@nysata.org. Advertising inquiries should be sent to Pat Groves at phgroves@aol.com.

Inquiries about receiving the **NYSATA News** should be directed to the Membership Chair Terri Konu, 9200 Sixty Road, Phoenix, New York 13135, (315) 695-2500, e-mail: tkonu@twcny.rr.com. To change your address, please log into the NYSATA website and update your own address and contact info in your profile.

Photo Submissions: Graphics should be in jpeg, tiff, or pdf format, 150ppi. Photographs and print-ready art are always welcome in jpeg or pdf format. For purposes of accurate identification and acknowledgement, photos sent to the **NYSATA News** must be accompanied by the following information: your name, phone number, and e-mail; name and address of photographer; and first and last names of persons in the photo (in order from left to right, front to back). If art work is presented, the artist's name, school name, teacher name and NYSATA Region must be included. Additionally, any photos that depict students under 18 must have parental permission to be printed.

An award-winning publication, The **NYSATA News** has been

named winner of the National Art Education Association State Newsletter Award Category 3 in 2011, 2012, 2015, 2016, and 2017. Chosen by a panel of visual arts educators from across the nation, this award honors art education publications that demonstrate outstanding achievement and exemplary contributions to the field of art education.

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Art Speaks Out

The theme “Art Speaks Out” brought responses from writers at every stage and station of art teaching. Public debate about the role of art and social justice has been keen this spring – see the April 17-27 issue of New York magazine, where the article “Is Political Art The Only Art That Matters Now?” by Carl Swanson explores the contemporary art scene as it reacts to the recent election and international movements to the political right and left. (online at <http://www.vulture.com/2017/04/is-political-art-the-only-art-that-matters-now.html>) In the article, which investigates the wave of activism that permeates current art practice, Swanson quotes controversial feminist artist Marilyn Minter saying “Art about art just isn’t working anymore for me.”

Issues surrounding the responsibility and right of an artist to speak out are challenging. This difficulty is presented by the recent controversy over a student painting displayed at the US Capitol building. This article (<https://www.artsy.net/article/artsy-editorial-judge-upholds-removal-students-controversial-painting-capitol>) documents the debate and rejection of a Missouri high school student’s depiction of police/protester confrontation in Ferguson, Missouri. The characterizations of police were objectionable to staff and elected officials in the building. The painting was removed, replaced, and removed again under court order. The editorial at [artsy.net](https://www.artsy.net), at the link above, delineates the many technical and emotional concerns that are involved.

Issues related to social justice themes appear constantly in the media, and I am sure that these issues force their way - or ought to force their way - into our dialog and instruction with students. How do we balance objectivity with the clarion call of the artist’s voice? How do we make our students aware of issues that deepen our respect and support of one another?

There are many among us who teach, and teach the teachers, who feel strongly that social justice ought to be one of the themes we have our students explore as visual artists. In this issue, Samantha Nolte-Yupari explains her efforts to create a curriculum for an art and social justice course, suggesting we consider “art as a powerful manifestation of active citizenship”.

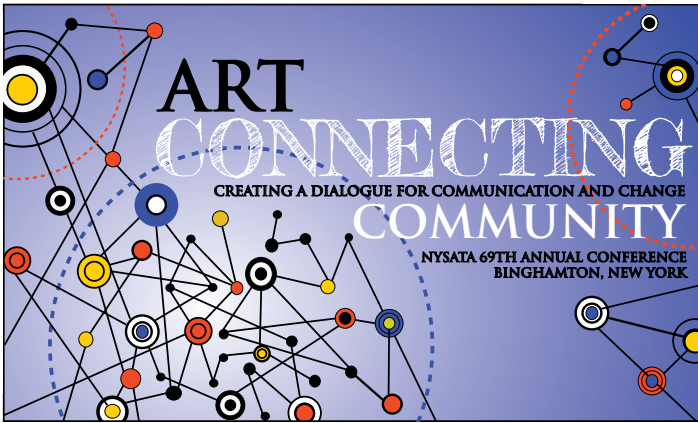
One of the important functions the newsletter (and the NYSATA organization) has, is invigorating art teachers with

new ideas for instruction and practice. A multitude of factors - budgets, tests, performance evaluations, district philosophy - influence and constrain what art teachers do and reach for. Hearing from emergent and veteran art teachers about their motivations and teaching goals is a persuasive way to revitalize practice and inspire experiment. This issue showcases numerous programs and philosophies that support a learning and teaching culture that originates from a social conscience and a devotion to equity and justice.

It’s a dense subject to plumb - traditional models in art history and pedagogy exert a powerful constraining influence in a high school art classroom. If “Social Justice” is concern with “the distribution of wealth, opportunities, and privileges within a society”, then using a narrow sample of examples as inspiration for our students, no matter who they are, surely inhibits the creative process as students solve problems of identity and representation. And if that narrow sample also excludes our students by race or gender or opportunity, then we’re not doing our jobs or being honest.

Implementing a curriculum that hopes to prompt and support young artists to find and develop their own voice can be fraught with challenges. One is navigating through the personal opinions and interpretations of your students. We want to enable and validate; yet we must somehow support a studio experience that maintains equity and respect. It prompts me to wonder how an art teacher manages to push in one direction while maintaining fairness. Do we tend to be more supportive if student work aligns with our own opinions? What is our response when it doesn’t? Do we have some internal measurement that comes into play when a certain degree of outrageousness or rudeness fulfills the assignment? When does student work become offensive or inappropriate – and by whose standards? In the Capital Building painting, policemen are depicted as warthogs. Would that be allowed in your classroom?

A regular contributor to the NYSATA News once said to me: “Art has power that terrorizes authority”. Art has the potential to change minds, subvert or support authority, sway public opinion, and visualize the entire range of the human condition. How and where do we find the attitudes and standards in our teaching that answer to our conscience and our responsibilities?



Save the Date!

69th Annual NYSATA Conference November 17-19 The Double Tree by Hilton Binghamton, NY

Conference Highlights Include...

- **Four Amazing KEYNOTE sessions!**
- **Workshops and Seminars:** You will not be disappointed in the variety and scope of workshops this year.
- **Pre-conference:** A pre-conference is being planned that will familiarize participants with soon-to-be adopted new state Standards and will also feature Dr. Julia Marshall, our Friday keynote who will focus on arts integration. More info will be coming soon.
- **10X10 Art Connects Community Member Exhibit!** We are trying a new format for the Members Exhibit. See more info on page 9.
- **The always popular Commercial Exhibitors and College Showcase!**
- **Artisan Market:** Purchase items created by your talented peers!
- **Back by Popular Demand: After Dark Art Party!** This ticketed event will be open to all and will take the place of the traditional FAD workshops. Come make art and socialize!
- **Extended Studio Workshops** for those who want a more in-depth artmaking experience.
- **President's Dinner and Reception** followed by dancing and relaxing.
- **Scholarship Fund Gift Basket Raffle!** Bid on fabulous gift baskets provided by the Regions.

NYSATA is pleased to announce we have secured artist Nick Cave as one of the 2017 keynote speakers!



Soundsuit, Nick Cave

Complete information will be available on the NYSATA website later this summer and in the Fall printed and digital issues of the NYSATA News.

2017 Keynote Speakers



Sculptor, Dancer, and Performance Artist: Nick Cave

Nick Cave is an American fabric sculptor, dancer, and performance artist. He is best known for his Soundsuits: wearable fabric sculptures that are bright, whimsical, and other-worldly. He also trained as a dancer with Alvin Ailey. He resides in Chicago and is director of the graduate fashion program at School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Nick Cave attended the Cranbrook Academy of Art (MFA, 1989), North Texas State University (1984-86), and the Kansas City Art Institute (BFA, 1982). Cave's awards and residencies include the Joan Mitchell Foundation Award (2008), Artadia Award (2006), Joyce Award (2006), Creative Capital Grant (2004, 2002), and a Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation Award (2001). Cave has had major exhibitions at MASS MoCA (2016); Cranbrook Art Museum (2015); Saint Louis Art Museum (2014-15); ICA Boston (2014); Denver Art Museum (2013); Fabric Workshop and Museum (2011-12); Seattle Art Museum (2011); and the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts (2009), among others.



Professor of Art Education: Dr. Julia Marshall

Julia Marshall is Professor of Art Education at San Francisco State University where she oversees the art education program and teaches undergraduate and credential courses. Julia is also the Design and Development Consultant to the Alameda County Office of Education (ACOE), for which she guides curriculum and instruction in the Integrated Learning Specialist Program (ILSP), a professional development certification program in arts integration and culturally responsive pedagogy for classroom teachers, teaching artists and school administrators. She also serves on the Advisory Board of the Arts Education Master Plan for the San Francisco School District. In that capacity, she leads professional development workshops in arts integration, contemporary art and curriculum development for art teachers and generalists in San Francisco schools.



Artist/Art Educator/Author: Rachel Branham

Rachel Branham is an artist educator living in northeastern Massachusetts. She holds a Masters of Arts Education from the Rhode Island School of Design and a Bachelor of Arts Education from the Ohio State University. She published her first graphic novel in 2016, *What's So Great About Art, Anyway?* A Teacher's Odyssey, which has been nominated for a Forward INDIES award in Education. She has also written and illustrated many short comics and zines, and the children's book, *The Sock Book*. Ms. Branham is most interested in art making as a tool for self-expression and social justice, and believes that project-based, individualized and holistic education is a human right for all young people. In addition, Ms. Branham is also going to be conducting a workshop on using comic books to inspire art.



Scientist/Inventor/Professor/Photographer: Dr. Jessica Fridrich

Dr. Fridrich is a professor at Binghamton University in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering who specializes in data hiding applications in digital imagery, watermarking, and forensics. She received her MS degree in applied mathematics from the Czech Technical University in Prague in 1987, and her PhD in systems science from Binghamton University in 1995. Jessica Fridrich was born in Ostrava in the Czech Republic in 1964. She came to the US in 1990 to study at Binghamton University and stayed in Binghamton, NY ever since. She is also known for documenting and popularizing the CFOP method, one of the most commonly used methods for speed-solving the Rubik's Cube, also known as speedcubing.

**Registration will be open in August
The early bird rate deadline is November 1st.**



From the Desk of Leslie Yolen

Associate in Visual Arts Education, Curriculum and Instruction Team
New York State Education Department



One strategy visual arts teachers can use to promote and support bringing contemporary political issues and controversies into your art classroom is through utilizing the Enduring Understandings and Essential Questions in the new NYS visual and media arts standards. The NY Arts Standards, like the National Core Arts Standards, have been written using enduring understandings and essential questions to help both educators and students organize the information, skills and experiences within artistic processes. Enduring understandings and essential questions focus on what are often called “big ideas.”

Enduring Understandings are statements summarizing important ideas and core processes that are central to a discipline and have lasting value beyond the classroom. They synthesize what students should come to understand as a result of studying a particular content area. Essential Questions are those that encourage, hint at, even demand transfer beyond the particular topic in which students first encounter them, and therefore, should recur over the years to promote conceptual connections and curriculum coherence.

New York’s new arts standards explore the notion of art making meaning and social consciousness. Students are

encouraged to explore personal interests, questions, and curiosity. Through standards-based arts teaching, students view, make, and discuss art works, and come to realize that the arts exist not in isolation, but within the multiple dimensions of time, space, culture, and history.

Here are only a few samples of some of the Visual Art EU’s & EQ’s that support teachers in managing divergent ideas or approaches and encouraging respectful dialogue:

Anchor Standard VA:Cr.1 Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

Enduring Understanding: Creativity and innovative thinking are essential life skills that can be developed.

Essential Questions: What conditions, attitudes and behaviors support creative risk taking and innovative thinking? How does knowing the contexts histories, and traditions of art forms help us create works of art and design? Why do artists and designers follow or break from established traditions?

Anchor Standard VA:Pr.6 Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.

Enduring Understanding: Objects, artifacts, and artworks collected, preserved, or presented communicate meaning and function as a record of social, cultural, and political experiences; resulting in the cultivation of appreciation and understanding.

Essential Questions: How does the presenting and sharing of objects, artifacts and artworks influence and shape ideas, beliefs and experiences?

Anchor Standard VA:Re.7 Perceive and analyze artistic work.

Enduring Understanding: Individual aesthetic and empathetic awareness developed through engagement with art can lead to understanding and appreciation of self, others, and the world.

Essential Questions: How do life experiences influence the way that you relate to art? How does learning about art affect how we perceive the world? What can we learn from our responses to art? How do images influence our views of the world?

Anchor Standard VA:Cn.10 Relate and synthesize knowledge and personal experiences to inspire and inform artistic work.

Enduring Understanding: Through artmaking, people make meaning by investigating and developing awareness of perceptions, knowledge, and experiences.

Essential Question: How does artmaking contribute to awareness and understanding of one's life and the lives of others in the community?

Anchor Standard VA:Cn11 Investigate ways that artistic work is influenced by societal, cultural, and historical context; and, in turn, how artistic ideas shape cultures past, present, and future.

Enduring Understanding: Works of art and design embody and influence the needs, desires, beliefs, traditions, and values of people within a culture.

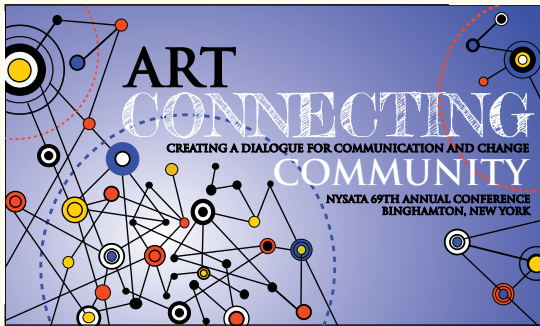
Enduring Understanding: Generating and solving artistic problems prepares people to contribute to innovative solutions within a society or culture.

Essential Questions: How do works of art and design help us understand the lives of people of different times, places, and cultures? How do art and design enhance people's lives and influence culture?

Hopefully these new standards* with EU's & EQ's will help you decide when it is appropriate to bring contemporary political issues and controversies into your art classroom.

Best wishes for a summer break with planning to incorporate these new NYS Learning Standards for the Arts into your lessons next fall.

*NYSED Regents approval of the new visual arts standards is expected mid-summer. Teachers doing curriculum work in the meantime, can access the draft standards through this link to the NYSED arts page <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/ciai/arts/>



10x10

Member Exhibit

NYSATA is pleased to announce a very special Member's Exhibit at the 2017 Annual Conference in Binghamton! 10 Regions • 10" x 10" Incredible Works of Art

In the spirit of Art Connecting Community, the theme of this year's conference, we invite all those attending the conference to participate in a special Member's Exhibit. **This will be in place of the traditional Member's Exhibit.** We are asking members who will be attending the conference to submit artwork that will be sold to benefit the NYSATA Scholarship Fund.

- Modeled after regional 6"x6" Exhibits around the state, all 2D entries must be 10"x10" unframed/unmatted works of art. 3D entries must be 10"x10"x10". Unframed, stretched canvas is permitted. These smaller, easier to transport works of art should facilitate greater participation.
- The work will be hung anonymously (artists are asked to sign the back or we will cover the signature with a post-it).
- There will be no fee to participate and all conference attendees are eligible to submit up to 2 pieces of quality work.
- The work will be sold for a flat \$25 each on Saturday afternoon and throughout the evening.

- All exhibit participants will have first choice for purchasing the work during a designated time. Other attendees will have an opportunity to purchase the work after that time.
- As with previous Member's Exhibits there will be prizes awarded for excellence. The expectation is that the work submitted to this special exhibit will be equal in quality to the work exhibited at previous conferences.
- Contributions will be tax deductible as the proceeds will go to the scholarship fund. Receipts will be available.
- All unsold work will be returned to the artist/member and must be picked up after the exhibit is over.

With plenty of lead time, we hope you will consider creating art work for this special exhibit. This is a great opportunity for regions to offer a local workshop or event to connect with your fellow NYSATA community, create art, and nurture the artist/educator within.



Illustration by Sherri Hamilton, director of the Nazareth College Visual Communication Design program

With one of the top-ranked art education programs in New York State, Nazareth College inspires and prepares graduates to be teachers, researchers, and artists. Learn more: **Go to www.naz.edu. To see a video about the Art Education Program click this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yw0ksuJdbRE&feature=youtu.be>**

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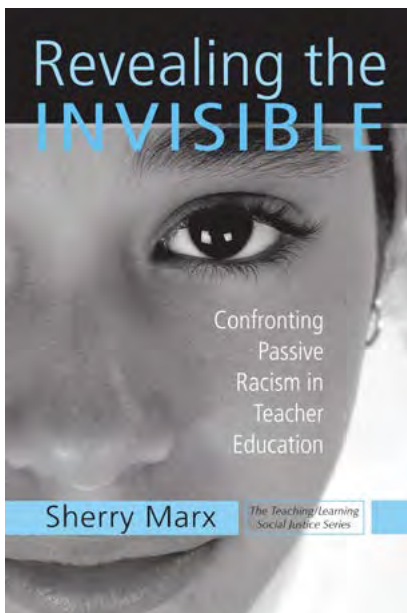
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Revealing the Invisible: Confronting Passive Racism in Teacher Education by Sherry Marx

Reviewed by Samantha Nolte-Yupari Ph.D

Samantha Nolte-Yupari actually submitted this book review for the last issue of the NYSATA News – and it made some alarm bells go off in the editor’s head. This review initiated the current issue’s examination of our attitudes and approaches to social justice with our students.



Marx, S. (2006). *Revealing the invisible: Confronting passive racism in teacher education*. New York, NY: Routledge.

I am gendered female and so targeted, but I am raced White and so privileged. Further, I understand my privilege to be a systematic advantage established historically and reinforced by the sociocultural institutions in which I inhabit. This positionality directly influences who I am as an art educator, artist, and teacher educator. It is in these roles that our current national political environment reminds me that I/we cannot be complacent about continuing to confront issues of diversity and tolerance in my/our roles as artist/educators. To that end I offer this book review of Sherry Marx’s (2004) work *Revealing the Invisible: Confronting Passive Racism in Teacher Education* in the hopes that it inspires critical reflection and conversation about the important work that we (artists/educators who are White) need to do in order to contribute to the collaboration that will carry our momentum for change forward.

90% of teachers are white women, while almost half of US K-12 students are people of color (Marx, 2004). Consequently, it becomes imperative in art education to proactively encounter our selves as racial beings. In *Revealing the Invisible*, Sherry Marx presents a qualitative study about nine pre-service educators taking a Second Language Acquisition (SLA) course that includes one-to-one tutoring of an English Language Learner. Marx interviewed the tutors over the course of the semester about their views on race, racism, prejudice, and whiteness focusing on their personal stories, histories, and experiences tutoring in the class.

Marx’s writing style is narrative, weaving between her tutor’s words, and her own words, and contextualizing research and literature about racism, social justice, storytelling, and teacher education. She points how imperative it is to have discussions about race because of the silence and taboo that persists amongst White communities. The work is striking because the tutors, while thoughtful and well-intentioned individuals, were *passively racist* towards their students of color. Marx emphasizes the tutor’s transitioning ability to differentiate between the most common definition of racism—overt acts of hatred like the actions of the KKK—and passive racism. Passive racism, Marx notes, is earmarked by subconscious assumptions that affect our actions and perceptions about people of color.

Try this test—True or False: You can go the local drugstore to buy Band-Aids, pantyhose, and cover-up in the make-up aisle in “flesh tone” or “natural” and it will match your skin? If you answered True, you are likely to be white and may or may not have considered how normalized it is that “flesh tone” in so many things is associated with Caucasian skin tones.

The work is striking because the tutors, while thoughtful and well-intentioned individuals, were passively racist towards their students of color.

“Color-blind, passive racism impedes our ability to move forward and be allies to the people of color that we teach and interact with everyday. As art educators confronting passive racism has the potential to empower us as art makers as well.”

For those of us in the arts, this kind of institutionally reinforced normalization of White culture can affect how we teach a variety of topics. For example, think about color associations that we often teach—the Western standards that white is associated with goodness, virtue, heaven, weddings, while black is associated with badness, evil, the devil, and death. Or art history—does your curriculum focus on White Western artists famous to our traditional canon, or do you (at least 50% of the time) depict artists of varied cultural, racial, and gendered backgrounds? As educators too, we must confront deficit thinking (Marx, Chapter 2) as a product of racism. For example, Marx and one of her tutors discussed the reasons why the tutor had never asked her student about his home and family—because she assumed it would be rough or bad situation and thus a deficit to the student’s success in school. This kind of deficit thinking—about culture, language, families, and esteem and intelligence (Marx, 2004)—means that as educators we run the risk of assuming that our students are not capable of succeeding because of a lack of support, knowledge, and ability.

Marx brings to us a unique perspective to the topic of learning about racism as a SLA teacher. She reminds us that learning to perceive and speak about our Whiteness and about racism in the U.S. as a system of advantages is akin to learning a second language. This must be done with a kind yet firm approach that is overtly supportive, understands that the learner is both likely to be overwhelmed and frustrated and yet quite capable of learning a complex new skill. Key to this approach is preventing racial backlash. Racial backlash is the perceived racism a White person may feel is directed toward them from people of color when they are confronted about racism. This perception is rationalized both by resentment that people of color are never portrayed as racist and resentment of the obligatory guilt a White person might feel compelled to bear. Racial backlash often occurs as a result of more aggressive confrontational strategies for building awareness of Whiteness and racism and can cement a person’s opposition to dealing with issues of race (Marx, 2004).

Marx notes, passive “racism damaged tutors by fooling them in to thinking they were not racist” (p. 149). This resulted in upset and angst amongst the tutors as they began to detect the “hidden iceberg” of racism that they would need to navigate as teachers. Color-blind, passive racism impedes our

ability to move forward and be allies to the people of color that we teach and interact with everyday. As art educators confronting passive racism has the potential to empower us as art makers as well. To this end I offer some resources as a starting place for thinking about art making from a social justice perspective:

Bell, L. A. (2010). *Storytelling for social justice: Connecting narrative and the arts in antiracist teaching*. New York, NY: Rutledge.

Dewhurst, M. (2014). *Social justice art: A framework for activist art pedagogy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

Greer, B. (2014). *Craftivism: The art of craft and activism*. Vancouver, BC: Arsenal Pump Press.

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Samantha Nolte-Yupari, Ph.D. is Assistant Professor and Program Director of Art Education at Nazareth College. She is a graduate of Penn State University. Her research interests include beginning art teacher experiences, place, story, and visual methodology. She recently won the Arts & Learning SIG of AERA’s National Dissertation Award for her research about first and second year art teachers.





Art Education and Social Justice Online

Reviewed by Cindy Wells and Marty Merchant

If you start researching Art Education and Social Justice on the Internet you will find scholarly abstracts, a variety of free and payment type curriculum sites, as well as lesson plans from individuals and museums using familiar as well as contemporary artists as resources for students to then create personal statement pieces on social consciousness. The following sites are meant to give you some context about the movement toward social justice themes, provide ideas that may help you formulate new directions and innovations in teaching social justice in your art rooms.

An overview of social justice and the classroom

<https://www.edutopia.org/blog/creating-classrooms-for-social-justice-tabitha-dellangelo>

<http://education.cu-portland.edu/blog/news/teaching-social-justice/>

<https://www.cultofpedagogy.com/social-justice-resources/>

The first two blog posts explicate the motivation and curricular influences that a focus on social justice issues bring to any classroom instruction. The last has an extensive reflection on issues that complicate the use of social justice as a driving theme, and offers a long list of strong classroom resources.

Social Justice content in the art classroom.

<http://www.aristos.org/aris-10/SJAE-Forum.htm>

Back in 2010, a controversial article by Michelle Marder Kamhi “The Hijacking of Art Education”, protested against what Kamhi saw as the emerging “politically tainted approach to art education”. She used the NAEA’s 2010 convention theme “Art Education and Social Justice” as a starting point for her thesis that art education was being taken over by left-leaning “progressives”. This link takes you to a synopsis of the article and a forum of reactions. Filled with reference links and with an extensive list of articulate reflections and responses to Kamhi’s argument, it’s a gateway to a thought-provoking online exploration of the role political and personal beliefs might, or should, or shouldn’t, inflect and direct our content and pedagogy.

Power Play: Rethinking Roles in the Art Classroom

Melanie L. Buffington, Virginia Commonwealth University

http://scholarscompass.vcu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1006&context=arte_pubs

In this essay, which originally appeared in the NAEA journal Art News, Ms. Buffington reflects on the role the art teacher plays in the art classroom – exploring the shift from student- to teacher-centered instruction and a culturally responsive pedagogy. Alerting us to the “Big Question Band-Aid” that can give the comfortable appearance of a lesson engaging with big ideas, she identifies the tendency for an art teacher to revert to the traditional emphasis on elements and principles. Exploring cultural competence, socio-political consciousness, and other dynamics in the art classroom, she argues for an increase of meaning in our art lessons. This article is a good introduction to current connection of social justice to pedagogy.

15 public art projects that boldly advocate for social justice

<http://mashable.com/2016/09/24/>

[public-art-social-good/#yBEG4ltpmOqY](http://mashable.com/2016/09/24/public-art-social-good/#yBEG4ltpmOqY)

Mashable is a news website that is advertisement laden, but this article is a great overview of some dramatically visual public art projects (some appropriate for high school only) that graphically illustrate the power visual artists have in making a civic statement.



Image: @COURTNEYHARRISTUTEN/INSTAGRAM; JOKER/ERICH HAEFELE/ULLSTEIN BILD/GETTY; APTART/ACTED/UNICEF/JOSE ARTISTA; MARK SIMMONS



Teaching Tolerance

<http://www.tolerance.org/>

This Teaching Tolerance site offers everything from a magazine to classroom resources, publications and webinars. Lessons such as: "How Art Can Be Activism" (K-5) or "Using Editorial Cartoons to Teach Social Justice" (high school adaptable to middle school) or "Using Photographs to Teach Social Justice" (5-8) include objectives, essential questions, materials, glossary, procedures, extended activities, and related content.

Toward Equity, Access, and Social Justice

<https://art21.org/creativechemistries/resources/dialogues/dialogues-toward-equity-access-and-social-justice/>

One of Art 21's "Creative Chemistries/Radical Practices for Art + Education" dialog transcriptions, these moderated discussions involve numerous contemporary artists and art educators exploring practical and ethical issues in their work. Reflective and honest exchanges about race and inequality, and how to approach art that's made for social change.

Tag Archives: Social Justice

<http://magazine.art21.org/tag/social-justice/>

Links to nine featured artists and critics who present their personal approach in creating art with social justice themes, and their reactions to other artists. Not all of these are visual artists but the projects are all intriguing and provocative – high school appropriate.

The Judy Chicago Art Education Collection (Penn State)

<http://judychicago.arted.psu.edu/>

After her 1975 seminal collaborative art work "A Dinner Party" heralded the rise of a distinct voice and identity for feminist art, Judy Chicago (nee Judith Sylvia Cohen) has founded the first feminist art program in the United States. She has continued to write and react to traditional studio practice. This website has numerous instructional approaches using lesson plans and structured discussions that explore art and its power across many cultural threads. Chicago's methodology is featured in the article by Connie Lavelle in this issue of NYSATA News.

Art and Social Justice – PBS LearningMedia/New York links to KQED videos

https://ny.pbslearningmedia.org/collection/art_socialjustice/

Video resource that explores the way artists use different media to comment on social issues and mobilize communities to address local challenges. Great for use in class or as inspiration for learning units and projects.

Social Justice and the Art Classroom Pinterest Boards

<https://www.pinterest.com/stouri/social-justice-in-the-art-classroom/>
https://www.pinterest.com/sara_nash/art-education-for-social-justice/
<https://www.pinterest.com/edematat/art-for-social-justice/>

Projects, topics, and issues about social justice projects in the art classroom. The pins will lead you to multiple links that touch on the topic in multiple ways and go many different directions. These boards are great places to browse for ideas. Remember – just because it's pinned doesn't mean its good. Use your head.

Teachers For Social Justice

This site provides online resources, events and curriculum for all disciplines

<http://www.teachersforjustice.org/2010/02/visual-arts-lesson-plan-that-allows.html>

The above link takes you to a downloadable curriculum for elementary grades and an early elementary lesson "Celebrating Personal Connections through Collage: A Lesson on Bryan Collier's Uptown" includes a description, timeline objectives, learning goals, activities & procedures, reflection, vocabulary, materials, and assessment.

Columbus Museum of Art

http://artandsocialissues.cmaohio.org/web-content/pdf/art_social_issues.pdf

Art & Social Issues uses the museum's collection of art dealing with social commentary from the 1930s - 1970s to explore the role of art and artists in social issues, particularly through printmaking. Students then created multiple images with a significant idea or theme.

Cindy Wells retired from the Baldwinsville Central School



District after 34 years, teaching elementary, and junior high art. For Fifteen years she was an adjunct at Syracuse University, School of Education, Art Education Department. Currently she is a Coordinator for the annual State Conference and has served NYSATA in a variety of offices, including Treasurer and President (1989 -

1990). If you have read a good book, discovered a website, or seen a great video that you'd like to review for the NYSATA News, contact Cindy via e-mail at cynthia296@aol.com.

Marty Merchant retired from Hastings-On-Hudson High School in 2015 after teaching for 18 years. He was a commercial photographer for 20 years prior to that. He is currently teaching and doing Student Teacher Supervision for the Art Education Department at SUNY New Paltz.

"For any marginalized group to change the story that society tells about them takes courage and perseverance."

–Sharon Salzberg, Real Love: The Art of Mindful Connection

A Framework of Feminist Theory



Judy Chicago (American, born 1939). *The Dinner Party*, 1974–79. Ceramic, porcelain, textile, 576 × 576 in. (1463 × 1463 cm). Brooklyn Museum

Equality Created Through Feminist Pedagogy

Connie Lavelle

We begin this issue's focus on social justice and the artist's voice with this article by Connie Lavelle, who approaches her art curriculum using the framework of feminist theory. Her emphasis on supporting student artist voices in an environment of equity and respect drives her teaching methods. Using techniques and approaches developed by Judy Chicago and Marilyn Stewart, Connie explains how she adapts them to her high school classes, and finds far-reaching benefits of the feminist approach.

Gender – the state of being male or female (typically used with reference to social and cultural differences rather than biological ones). *Merriam-Webster*

Equality – the state of being equal, especially in status, rights, and opportunities. *Merriam-Webster*

“Feminist pedagogy is not a toolbox, a collection of strategies, a list of practices, or a specific classroom arrangement. It is an over arching philosophy—a theory of teaching and learning that integrates feminist values with related theories and research on teaching and learning.” From the Vanderbilt center for Teaching.

The six principles of feminist pedagogy: reformation of the relationship between professor and student, empowerment, building community, privileging voice, respecting the diversity of personal experience, and challenging traditional pedagogical notions. *Feminist pedagogy: Identifying basic principles.*

Understanding a “Feminist” approach to art instruction.

We all come into the classroom with different experiences, beliefs, strengths and weaknesses. The definitions above clarify my teaching philosophy. Gender and sex are different. Sex is what you are born with whereas gender is what you associate with. Society can dictate this, but in my feminist view every student is unique and individual. Therefore gender, sex, race, age, social status or any other category should not matter. Everyone in the classroom should have the equal opportunity to succeed and fail. Without the failure in experimentation there is not success.

Students need to feel comfortable in play and not judged, so they can be confident that their own learning is valid. Supporting risk takers in the art room – students who are not afraid to fail in order to grow – can only happen in a setting of equality and acceptance. The feminist pedagogy I facilitate results in students learning to respect each other's differences while helping others reach individual artistic goals. Feminist philosophy enables me to frame the content of my lessons, and how I teach them, with a consistent point of view and conviction – that the political, economic, personal

and social rights of all my students are equally important and relevant.

Establishing this feminist approach begins through group activities rather than power points and lectures. Students discover the meaning of the lesson by discussing artwork, reading critical literature about art and relating past learning to current projects. Students need to be exposed to artwork created in a variety of ways, which provides equality in exposure. The Dinner Party Curriculum Project's "14 Encounters" developed and modeled by Marilyn Stewart, is a great place to start with group work. These encounters were created specifically for the artwork *The Dinner Party* by Judy Chicago, but can easily be adapted to other artworks.

All group activities have a guided worksheet to keep students on track. Before the activity starts, each group's member chooses a job (secretary, presenter, researcher, etc.), which helps students see the strengths and differences of their fellow class members. This sensitivity of talents is the beginning of acceptance. Through these activities I am in constant motion, spending time with each group, modeling desired behavior. This is not an easy way of presenting material, but it is a way for students to develop a voice and interact with peers as well as myself. Initially students look for my guidance – I answer questions with new questions, and keep everything open ended. I point out opinions versus facts. I try to teach acceptance of different opinions and build on those differences. As the students become more comfortable with each other and the process, my intervention diminishes during the group work and meaningful student-led discussions take place.

On "experimental media days" students compare and discuss with their groups the results of their play. I tell stories about my creative process and encourage students to add to these stories about their art experiences. These diverse narratives build up to recognizing and honoring our differences. I routinely tell them not to compare, but to recognize the distinctly unique good qualities in everyone's work. When students comment on how good my work is, I remind them of my training and practice. This helps students recognize my classroom is not a competitive place, but rather a supportive place for building their learning.

Students begin asking other students how to create effects that student has discovered. As the students mature and become comfortable with their own abilities, I begin whole class critiques (second-year art students). Pinning all students' work up on my front board, I lead discussion with open-ended questions about what is being learned, how to push it farther, and how to take risks. As students start to validate their own experiences and develop a social understanding, I push them into a higher form of critical thinking and we never stop growing. My goal in the classroom is leading students to being a better artist and ultimately a better member of society.

Dr. Marilyn Stewart was a great influence on how I developed my teaching approach. During a week long seminar at the Kutztown University of Pennsylvania, in the summer of 2012, she and her team demonstrated a variety of ways to use the Dinner Party curriculum and how this approach could be applied to different grade levels. Since then I have read her "Art Education in Practice" series as well as kept in contact with her. She is a great resource, who is always willing to help improve our art education field. I highly recommend taking one of her summer institute classes and/or reading her books.

Judy Chicago leads the way.

This goal of social responsibility is fostered through the Circle Method described by Judy Chicago in the book *Institutional Time: a Critique of Studio Art Education* (Monacelli, 2014). The over-arching goal of this method is to help students develop a visual voice while understanding others'. Judy Chicago teaches at the college level. Her Circle Method is used whenever the class has to present anything to each other. Students face each other in a circle of chairs, without a table. She feels this creates vulnerability and prepares the students to defend their artwork. Although included in the circle, the arrangement takes teacher out of the spotlight as expert and puts her into the facilitator's role. Now the class is considered a community of givers and learners. All are there to help each other.

I start the circle method in a different way using art history (second- to third-year art students). Each student is to pick an artwork they love, reproduce it in their sketchbook, and get five facts on the artist/artwork/time period. We come together as a class around a table. Each student will then take their turn presenting their reproduction with their facts. Students learn to listen; they learn about others interests and skills. This process is very painful for some of my students. Sometimes I have other students read facts for the shy ones, but after a few sessions students ease into it and love sharing. Another layer of learning and tolerance is developed.

The true Circle Method is slowly introduced (third- to fourth-year art students). The students go from presenting their art history reproductions and research to displaying different material experimentations in the circle, ultimately using the Circle Method for all their projects. Initially I use a

self-portrait based on the poem "Where I'm From" by George Ella Lyon. It starts with students writing their own "Where I'm From" poem and sharing it in our open circle. They create metaphoric sketches based on their poem, planning their artwork. The next class starts with a circle; each student presenting their ideas and receiving suggestions from the rest of the group. Everyone is heard. Students offered technical suggestions to the others, while getting feedback on how to better express their ideas. Critiques of finished work follow the same format.

Some of the challenges – and many of the benefits.

Feminist pedagogy shares the power between teacher/student/learning communities. I think through all of this, the hardest thing for me is to give up control of the learning experience. It is a lot harder to plan when you have no idea where each student is going next. But with that being said, I have opened to new experiences within my teaching. I have introduced the students to many visiting artists building a community of support and understanding. I now co-teach a ceramics class. We have done several ceramic murals, which last the whole semester. Each mural has been completely designed by the students. As teachers, my colleague and I help to solve design and technique problems but we empower the students with skills they never thought they had. Our high school students have taught younger students as well as hosted paint nights for the community. We have started grass roots movements within the school to build school camaraderie during difficult times. Every student's involvement and struggle resulted in social understanding through his or her visual voices. Our students feel powerful, learn perseverance, understand how to work in a community with differing opinions, as well as understand methods to deal with conflict and can create their own motivation.

How does learning in the arts impact how we interact with the world? My answer is: If the students can honor other people's strengths as well as their own, knowing that there are differences and that the differences do not create a hierarchy but rather a pool of knowledge to work with, they may be able to help change societal views of equality. Hopefully they will look back in time, to past traditions, and realize the inequality within many societies. They need to honor the traditions that can build a stronger community and change the ones that create any kind of oppression. Within our program we strive to have every student's voice heard. We work to make students feel like their thoughts and opinions matter. We are building better visual communicators. This curriculum has changed my students' lives and mine. Some of my lessons and instruction recurs but I always adapt my teaching to the needs of my current students. This is why I can say I will continue to research and explore feminist pedagogy while creating equality in my classroom.

For a sample of my curriculum visit:
judychicago.arted.psu.edu

Contact: clavelle@fcsd.wnyric.org

Where I'm From

I am from clothespins,
from Clorox and carbon-tetrachloride.
I am from the dirt under the back porch.
(Black, glistening,
it tasted like beets.)
I am from the forsythia bush
the Dutch elm
whose long-gone limbs I remember
as if they were my own.
I'm from fudge and eyeglasses,
from Imogene and Alafair.
I'm from the know-it-alls
and the pass-it-ons,
from Perk up! and Pipe down!
I'm from He restoreth my soul
with a cottonball lamb
and ten verses I can say myself.
I'm from Artemus and Billie's Branch,
fried corn and strong coffee.
From the finger my grandfather lost
to the auger,
the eye my father shut to keep his sight.
Under my bed was a dress box
spilling old pictures,
a sift of lost faces
to drift beneath my dreams.
I am from those moments--
snapped before I budded --
leaf-fall from the family tree

George Ella Lyon

Resources:

Judy Chicago Art Education Collection at Penn State
<http://judychicago.arted.psu.edu/dpcp/>

The Dinner Party Curriculum Project "14 Encounters"
<http://judychicago.arted.psu.edu/14-encounters/>

Marilyn G. Stewart
<http://www3.kutztown.edu/arteducation/marilyn-stewart.html>

Art Education in Practice Series
<http://www.davisart.com/Products/1044/art-education-in-practice-series.aspx>



Connie Lavelle achieved National Board Certified in 2010. She's married and has three boys. Though family comes first, Connie's passion has been teaching for 18 years at Fredonia Central, preferably high school. She is an active member of NAEA, NYSATA, NCECA, World Organization of China Painters; she regularly takes and presents workshops. Connie's art is her inspiration, specifically ceramic arts. She has over 40 sculptures in private collections, has exhibited locally, nationally and internationally.



Teaching Art and Social Justice

Samantha Nolte-Yupari Ph.D

At many points in our teaching careers, each of us face a challenge – are my students involved in changing the world? Am I committed to changing them? Do I give them the tools and inspiration to speak up and out about issues that matter to them? Am I helping them go beyond the Elements and Principles to confront problems about living and behaving and thinking? Are the lessons in my art room just encounters with materials and form, or do they bring critical issues into the crucible of creation? In this article, Samantha Nolte-Yupari narrates her development of a course focusing on the use of art for social justice action.

I have not historically been an overtly political person. Having lived several different periods of my life in and around Washington DC, I have been over saturated, fatigued, and disillusioned, by politics. Yet the sociocultural and political events of the past year have catalyzed my search for strategies to engage politically in ways that feel compatible with my scholarship and pedagogy. I also know that I am not the only one wrestling with these issues.

As such, I briefly discuss here the theoretical foundation for a new course I am developing with a colleague on art and social justice. While the course is designed for college undergraduates (most of whom have not taken any art since they were in middle school and early high school), I hope that my thoughts might help other art teachers at all levels propel their own thinking about how to mobilize our art curricula on a variety of social justice fronts.

My cynosure for this course is the writing of Rebecca Solnit (2016) especially in her work *Hope in the Dark: Untold Histories, Wild Possibilities*. Rebecca Solnit (2016) writes of hope as a call to action because hope understands that the future is dark—inscrutable rather than horrible or terrible. This inscrutability means that action and change are not only possible, but inevitable. Further, she notes that the foundation of change is in ideas. “Belief can be more effective than violence. Violence is the power of the state; imagination and non-violence the power of civil society.” In *Hope in the Dark*, Solnit (2016) tracks for the reader the movement of ideas from the margins to the center as they concretize change.

Why art for this endeavor? Solnit (2016) states, “Hopefulness is risky, since it is after all a form of trust, trust in the unknown and the possible, envy in discontinuity” (p. 23) because “authentic hope requires clarity—seeing troubles in this world—and imagination, seeing what might lie beyond these situations that are perhaps not inevitable and immutable” (italics added, p. 20). Art is a fit for this wrestling with both the risk of trust and the development of imagination as Solnit describes here. Project Zero researchers Hetland, Lois, Winner, Veneema, and Sheridan (2013), argue that the arts foster eight habits of mind, three of which include problem-solving, envisioning possibilities, and engaging and persisting. Similarly, landmark Art Education scholar, Elliot Eisner reminds us that the arts teach “flexible purposing”—the ability to adjust to changing directions and open-ended possibilities—and also the ability to translate experiences into image, speech, and text. Elsewhere, educational philosopher and arts activist Maxine Greene points out that imagination is imperative to our ability to perceive possibilities, understand multiplicity, make connections consciously, and actively participate in the world. Taken together, these scholars situate art as a powerful manifestation of active citizenship.

What might this look like on the ground? For my students and me it may look like engaging in a discussion of

“Belief can be more effective than violence. Violence is the power of the state; imagination and non-violence the power of civil society.” Rebecca Solnit

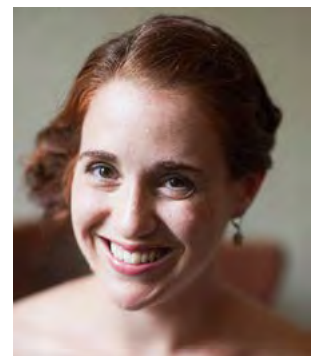
“stock stories” (Bell, 2010) about the American Dream and the status quo in which we are all embedded. For example, if students were to play the board game Life with its nuclear families, college education, and house in the ‘burbs how might they intervene and disrupt the hidden curriculum of the American Dream by using art materials to change, add, and (re)arrange the board to more accurately reflect their own stories? It may also look like making a tunnel book that tells a story in which the artist encountered a micro-aggression or was affected by a stereotype. It may also look like studying the “Zine” phenomena as a counterculture art and publishing method, and then using Zines to research and create distributable, reproducible, and interactive pages with which to engage with your local community. It may be that we consider the work of artists like David Avalos, Angela Haseltine Pozzi, Tatyana Fazlalizadeh, Faith Ringgold, the Pirate Printers, the Guerrilla Girls, and/or Craftivism as a movement.

As these thoughts develop, I am hopeful—for my students’ connection to visual art, for their own hopeful engagement for the world, for my own engagement. I invite you to the NYSATA 2017 Conference: Art: Connecting Community and to join me in a session to see how these ideas played out in my new course and how your own art and social justice endeavors are going. For the moment I leave you with these words of Rebecca Solnit’s (2016): “To recognize the momentousness of what has happened is to apprehend what might happen. Inside the word *emergency* is *emerging*; from an emergency, new things come forth. The old certainties are crumbling fast, but danger and possibilities are sisters” (italics original, p. 13).

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Samantha Nolte-Yupari, Ph.D. is Assistant Professor and Program Director of Art Education at Nazareth College. She is a graduate of Penn State University. Her research interests include beginning art teacher experiences, place, story, and visual methodology. She recently won the Arts & Learning SIG of AERA’s National Dissertation Award for her research about first and second year art teachers.



Meet Sharon Ciccone



Sharon Ciccone will take the lead as NYSATA President on July 1, 2017. Sharon is an art educator of 21 years in the Spackenkill Union Free School District in the Hudson Valley region near Poughkeepsie. Working with elementary students grades K-5 has been a rewarding endeavor. Sharon has served as NYSATA Region 7 Co-chair, NYSATA Vice President, and NYSATA Elections Chair. Under the tutelage of Bob Wood, she is currently “learning the ropes” as President-Elect. In 2015, Sharon was selected as 1 of 25 candidates to take part in the inaugural class of the National Art Education Association School for Art Leaders. Sharon plans to apply the knowledge and skill set obtained through the program as she assumes her role as NYSATA President. Sharon is looking forward to continuing the mission and goals of NYSATA to improve art education across the state.



The Making and Teaching of Art as a Social Act

Jessica Hamlin

The NYSATA News reached out to a prominent art education program director to find out how and why a focus on social justice issues will play such an important role in their careers as teachers.

This moment feels defined by seemingly endless urgencies. As digital tools expand our access to information and points of view beyond our localized experiences, many feel overwhelmed by the infinite fronts that call out for mobilized action: racial injustice, gender inequality, income disparities, political diversions, ethnic persecution, natural disasters, and global warming. This is the backdrop to a more focused discussion on the role of art in society and more specifically in schools and communities. Should art be a safe haven, a microphone, a tool, a weapon? What powers do we as artists and educators hold as we navigate 21st century realities with our students, our neighbors, and our peers?

The NYU Art + Education programs engage a radical approach to visual arts education and artistic practice with a focus on contemporary art, critical pedagogy, and social activism. Our program conceptualizes the artist-educator as cultural worker, intellectual, and activist who understands the making and teaching of art as a social act, and consider its philosophical, historical, political, and sociological contexts. The following teaching statements represent just a few of the voices from our current cohort who will enter classrooms this fall as part of a new generation of art educators eager to engage with the issues and questions that define our time and to work with their students to not only understand and represent those issues, but to create the change they want to see.

“Should art be a safe haven, a microphone, a tool, a weapon? What powers do we as artists and educators hold as we navigate 21st century realities with our students, our neighbors, and our peers?”

NYU Art + Education Student Teaching Statements

Gehan Habashy

As an artist educator, I believe in the power of the arts and its impact on our personal and political lives. This impact includes revealing untold stories, challenging and deconstructing the unjust social structures of our society. I confidently use art as a tool to teach my students about world history in order to have a deeper understanding of the diversity and commonalities across cultures. My students creatively connect and relate ideas from history to their own lives, building self-awareness and then questioning the status quo in order to change it.

I believe that each student is an irreplaceable individual who needs a safe, compassionate, and thought-provoking atmosphere in which to grow emotionally, intellectually, physically, and socially. As an artist educator, I assist students in meeting their fullest potential by providing an art environment that supports risk-taking and welcomes the sharing of ideas. In an atmosphere that fosters a celebration of diversity, my students develop empathy, preparing them to become civically engaged in their communities through careful listening. By knowing students beyond their names, my curriculum is ever-evolving with the goal of creating a place of mutual respect that is, ultimately, socially inclusive.

Paulo Freire has said, "Reading is not walking on the words; it's grasping the soul of them." In this spirit, I believe in teaching students to develop a critical eye by facilitating daily discussions and reflection about the visual culture they live in. Through a critical pedagogical lens, I am advocating for mutual learning. My role as a teacher is to guide and provide access to information rather than serve as the primary source of information. In my classroom, students are encouraged to learn through each other as I learn from them.

Brittany Kaiser

When I made the decision to pursue a career in art education, I had several converging motivations. I knew that I enjoyed working with children and that I wanted to make art, but didn't want to rely on engagement with the "art world" to sustain myself financially. Further, though, I sought a field that would allow me to have a positive, transformative impact on the world. I have long considered myself an activist, and I did not want this aspect of my identity relegated to a hobby. I hoped that teaching art would allow me to put into practice my progressive, liberation-minded ideals.

I am committed to teaching toward social justice – not as a supplementary goal, but as a driving motivator of every decision I make as a teacher. As part of a comprehensive critical teaching praxis, I will routinely reflect on my curricula and instruction to ensure that they embody the tenets of Critical Pedagogy, critical multiculturalism, and Critical Race Theory. My lessons will present and amplify the authentic voices of marginalized individuals, consistently incorporating multiple, nuanced stories to allow students to appreciate all the complexity of a given identity. I will work to help students acknowledge both their privilege and their oppression, and find ways to articulate and respond to both. I will challenge myths of neutrality, colorblindness, and meritocracy that persist in our society, and seek alternative historical narratives to contextualize human experience and to problematize dominant narratives.

As a white woman whose racial privilege is compounded by my education and my family's wealth, I pledge to use this advantage whenever possible, both inside and outside of the classroom, to call out injustice and work towards its reversal. In doing so, I hope to model the commitment to social justice I wish to inspire in each student that enters my classroom.

Sasha Spare

Art education should empower students with a meaningful and sustainable ability to question, communicate, and act on diverse ideas and viewpoints. I believe that school art education programs must foster thoughtful, consistent learning environments that offer access to an integrated, enduring understanding of visual art, history, and culture. My goal is to help young people forge a personal relationship with visual arts literacy and media production in order to become independent thinkers, creators, and citizens of the world.

Artists investigate communities and culture through an

innumerable variety of media and methodologies. I believe the role of the artist is to create social interactions that identify and creatively address critical subjects in our multicultural society. In my classroom, I introduce and welcome young people to a variety of themes, questions, and art practices that include traditional and non-traditional tools, techniques, and art-making skills. These points of entry are rooted in student curiosity, conceptual investigation, and engagement with historical and contemporary sociopolitical influences and social change.

As an art teacher, I motivate students to question and research what they see and notice. I design and implement layered, scaffolded curricula, working to create lasting, student-driven learning experiences and practiced critical thinking skills. Students acquire an embodied understanding that they, as global citizens, can utilize artistic tools to articulate, clarify, represent, and project critical experiences and new ideas that contemplate our contemporary world.

Peter Tresnan

Position

*You like to draw
Because it can not lie
Unlike words
Which can
And do
And so can you
But you do not
I think*

I believe an education is only as good as the questions it raises. I have no interest in telling someone all will be all right when it really will not. There are hard truths, which must be faced, which can hurt us if we ignore them.

As a critical art educator who works in schools and museums with students age 10-adulthood, I aim to carefully craft through ways by which students can access central messages of a viewed artwork. Open questions, strategic inquiry, and thoughtful instruction/lecturing must come together to illuminate an artwork as not only a message written in the visual language of the artist, but as a position and declaration to which certain viewers may align.

In the making of art, I find deep value in the phrase "try again." I avoided it, but I have returned to it with gusto. Trying again accepts failure but not defeat; it acknowledges nuance as central to artistic success, and it shows a dual investment between teacher and student in the student's success. From here, the artwork could be about riots in Ferguson or a childhood struggle to learn to swim: the capacity to try again begets eventual success.

Personally, I think art is uniquely beautiful because it can only speak in truths. All that we believe, think, hope and fear comes out in a drawing, a video, an installation. When a student learns how to view or make art in search of truth,

conditions of the self and society become plain. As a critical educator, I believe it is my mission to elevate the work of artists whose truths can help students become aware of how society is flawed, and how experiences of inequality are not unique to myself or my students. And yet, as much as our world is steeped in inequality, artists urge us to try again, to try to imagine a more just, equitable world, and to work towards it.

When a student can identify this language of truth, they hear the artists plea. When they learn to create on their own, words become action. And they can shape their world. And urge others to shape theirs too.

Jessica Hamlin is an educator interested in contemporary art as a site for critical discourse and the potential of artistic practices to inform new pedagogical possibilities in K-12 classrooms. Jessica previously served as the interim Director of the Art + Education program. Her teaching interests include: contemporary art and artistic activism, critical pedagogy, and the intersections of art and educational theory. Prior to joining NYU, Jessica served as the Director of Educational Initiatives for ART21, founding the ART21 Educators learning community and launching Creative Chemistries – a platform for timely trans-disciplinary exchange between artists and educators.



Call for Contributors

The *NYSATA News*, an award-winning periodical in both print and digital formats, seeks talent that can serve on a Contributor's Board. These members may be responsible from time to time for writing content, but primarily they find resources that will write articles, essays and reaction pieces that inform NYSATA membership about issues, theory, and practice. As the *NYSATA News* grows, more people are needed to produce a publication that continues to be relevant and timely. We are looking for two people to be responsible for each category. These categories potentially appear in each issue:

Technology: *The Connected Classroom* (already has one Contributors Board member, seeking one more)

- How digital technology impacts and supports the art classroom
- New frontiers in technology that have an art component
- Online Resources for teachers

Professional Development:

- Innovative activities that lead us to new practice
- Comprehensive district or building programs
- Supporting art teachers.

Teaching Around the State:

- Stories about best practice in action that are unique to the environment – rural, urban, suburban, declining enrollment, consolidated staff, etc.

Current Research:

- Current thinking on theory, research, and practice by you or by preservice students.

Exhibition Showcase:

- Exemplary public display (for advocacy, celebration and beautification).

Current Issues in Art Education:

- Guest essays that tackle controversial issues, new mandates and requirements, teacher evaluation regimes, and other pertinent topics affecting membership. Student research that highlights important issues

Interested? Please e-mail Marty Merchant, the *NYSATA News* editor: nysatanews@nysata.org

nysata PORTFOLIO PROJECT



Region 7 Portfolio Project participant

The NYSATA Portfolio Project is an authentic assessment based on the work your students are already doing in your classroom. If you have never participated, make this the year that you do! It is a learning experience, an assessment instrument, and a powerful advocacy tool!

To find out more about the Portfolio Project go to www.nysata.org or Contact Portfolio Project Chair Christine Attlessey-Steger attlestine@gmail.com



Gigina Long and Cassidy Del Ofano

Gigina Long and Cassidy Del Ofano recently served as preservice representatives to the NYSATA Board of Trustees. Here they speak about their experiences with the integration of social justice issues as part of their own mission as art educators.

What does it mean to teach for social justice?

Gigina Long

I graduated from college without any clear vision of what was going to happen next. To be honest, I was scared. I desperately knew that I wanted to make a difference in the world – I just wasn't entirely sure how I was going to do it. After working for many years in a nonprofit, I knew I had to stop talking myself out of my dream of becoming a teacher. I had visions of inspiring students, of being like the teachers that I had who taught me to become a critically-thinking, socially-conscious, and caring member of the community. A grand vision. The only problem? I wasn't sure where to begin.

In high school, my English classes were the ones that pushed me to develop those skills. I hopped onto the raft with Huck, lived in an underground room lit up by hundreds of electric lights, and stood alongside Gatsby as we stared into the green light. These books challenged me to confront issues of power, oppression, class, race, and gender. More importantly, my English classes taught me to write, and in the process – think.

The art room, on the other hand, represented a safe space where I was fixated solely with acquiring technical skills. I wanted to draw and paint realistically. I painstakingly stippled drawings of my cupboards and layered watercolor washes to replicate photographs that I had taken. At that point in my life, art was just fun. It didn't challenge or stretch my capacity to think the way that English did. Technical ability trumped expression.

And then, I went to college. I was introduced to Marcel Duchamp, Janine Antoni, Felix Gonzalez-Torres, and the exciting things that were happening in contemporary art. My definition of art exploded and my world was forever changed. Art was about ideas. I could tackle ideas with clay, wire, and paint the way I strung together metaphors in English. My art making was no longer fixated on just representation or technical skills – I could explore issues of race, gender, and representation. It finally clicked. At that point, I knew that my path was to become an art teacher. I wanted to help my students develop social consciousness and critical thinking skills through art. Great. The question then became – how in the world am I supposed to do that?

Luckily I found myself at SUNY Oswego's graduate program in their School of Education. During my research on the program, I kept on seeing references to the visual metaphor of a braid where knowledge, practice, reflection, collaboration, and leadership are woven together to represent the teaching and learning process. Their website boldly states, "concern for social justice anchors the educational process; it is at the knot at the top of the braid." I knew I was in the right place.

Social justice was woven into each and every one of my classes. We had guest speakers come in from the community and interviewed parents who have children with special needs in order to break down barriers of understanding. We analyzed representation of gender, race, sexuality, and ability in children's books, textbooks, and media. We explored how

art can be used to support social justice, and we organized service learning opportunities to practice these ideas. Because of these experiences, I left not only with a more nuanced understanding of the injustices and how they impact students, I also left with concrete strategies that I could incorporate into the art room to help students achieve greater social consciousness.

Now, as a first-year teacher, here are some strategies that I have chosen to integrate into my classroom:

- Expose students to artwork made by artists of all backgrounds and abilities – throughout the entire year.
- When showing students work from other cultures, I always ask myself, “What am I presenting about this culture?” and “Am I only showing artifacts made in the past, or, am I also providing contemporary examples from the culture?” For example, it would be an incredible disservice to only show examples of historical Native American art when there are contemporary artists working today who are operating within the tradition yet also transforming it.
- Show students examples of contemporary art. Contemporary artists work with ideas – not just with materials. Because of this, it is a natural way for students to see how art can be used to tackle and confront issues that our society faces.
- Balance of Technical Skills with Expression. Especially as a first year teacher, it is incredibly easy to be lured into Pinterest-worthy “art projects” that, while visually appealing, rob students of the opportunity to explore the full expressive power and potential of art. Technical exercises are definitely necessary, but they need to be seen as what they are – exercises (NOT the final product).
- Make it Relevant. Encourage students to create artwork about issues that are relevant and personal to them. I always ask myself, “Am I fostering their voice, their ideas, and their stories? Do they have the space or opportunity where that magic can happen?” The act of creating, and more importantly, sharing helps open dialogue about our different experiences and perspectives.
- Dig Into Issues. Challenge students to create art that raises awareness concerning an issue they are passionate about. After having students brainstorm and research different social or environmental issues that they are passionate about, they created artwork to raise awareness about it. In my ceramics class, students created sculptures. In my drawing class, students created editorial cartoons.
- Go Meta. The art world itself is a reflection of the power structures that exist within our society. Have students look through art history textbooks. How many female artists are mentioned versus male? Track the sale of famous artworks – is there a trend in who earns more?

Can social justice issues motivate my students? Cassidy Del Ofano

I had just one question on my mind as my first student teaching placement approached nearer and nearer: What on Earth am I going to teach these kids? My high school student teaching placement was in an ethnically and racially diverse neighborhood, heavily populated by immigrant families. As a student teacher, it was important to me that the lessons I teach are engaging and interesting to the students. Figurative art needed to be included in my lesson due to the curriculum standards. Then, because it’s important to me and my own art, I wanted to include heritage and culture as well. But still the question loomed, what on Earth am I going to teach these kids?

The idea came to me when I sent my students with a list of paintings to see during a field trip to the MET. The list included quintessential portrait paintings that I love by Rembrandt, Gauguin, Van Gogh, and John Singer Sargent. The following day, I prepared a slideshow to talk about the paintings, and unfortunately, it did not go as I planned. The students were bored, silent, and mentally checked out after ten minutes. Though I was a little upset that they did not love the art as much as I did, I understood why. The students did not care about the Dead White Guys ([D.W.Gs](#)) in the paintings, and why should they? Not having extensive art historical backgrounds, those paintings and the [D.W.Gs](#) in them didn’t mean anything to the students. The [D.W.Gs](#) in the paintings look nothing like them, between their clothing, stance, possessions, and skin color. I had my mission: How can I get these students engaged in figurative art, while making a statement about culture, community, and race?

When discussing this issue with my professor, she brought the artist Kehinde Wiley to my attention. Directly appropriating classical paintings, Wiley replaces the [D.W.Gs](#) with his African-American neighbors from Harlem. He photorealistically paints his models in their regular, everyday street clothing. Wiley also removes his figures from the classical stuffy, and uptight backgrounds, instead placing his figures against a bright, floral backdrop. Wiley was the perfect artist for the students to look at for figurative techniques, social activism, and most importantly, the students could relate to him and his paintings.

“The students did not care about the Dead White Guys (D.W.Gs) in the paintings, and why should they? Not having extensive art historical backgrounds, those paintings and the D.W.Gs in them didn’t mean anything to the students. The D.W.Gs in the paintings look nothing like them, between their clothing, stance, possessions, and skin color.”

Then, I exposed the students to more D.W.G paintings, and asked them to emulate the poses seen in the artwork. They took turns posing and drawing each other. Holding imaginary swords with their shoulders back, chins high, and backs straight, the students expressed feelings of empowerment, pride, and confidence in themselves.

The next day, we looked at works by Wiley right beside the appropriated D.W.G paintings that we looked at the day before. Looking at the differences in clothing, background, and, most importantly, race, we unpacked the meaning of Wiley's work together. Then, I introduced our class assignment. Each student was to paint a self-portrait in an empowering pose, set against a decorative background. In the days that followed, we spoke about color, pattern, and imbuing artwork with personal meaning through symbols.

I was completely blown away as the paintings progressed. These students were genuinely excited, interested, and engaged with their art. They loved that the paintings were all about them, through and through. These were labors of love, paintings from the heart. During the creation of these Wiley-inspired self-portraits, I watched them dig deep, and blossom both creatively and emotionally. Whether they knew it or not, their paintings are about social activism and finding their voice. With these paintings, they show the world that they are strong, capable individuals, no matter the color of their skin, stereotypes, body image, or the place they come from.



Gigina is a recent graduate from the SUNY Oswego Master of Arts in Teaching program. Largely influenced by her undergraduate experience exploring mixed media and sculpture at Scripps College, she is passionate about teaching students to use art as a vehicle for investigation, reflection, and expression.



Cassidy is a fiber artist and painter from Merrick Long Island. She will graduate from Adelphi University in May 2017 with a BFA in Art and Design Education with a minor in art history. She will be student teaching this spring at the Freeport School District and hopes to be employed as a teaching artist in the fall.

NYSATA wishes to thank Gigina and Cassidy for serving as Preservice Student Representatives on the NYSATA Board of Trustees. Their participation over this past year has provided a unique perspective to our membership. We recognize their contributions as highly valuable in guiding the future growth of our organization. Best wishes as you begin your careers. Special thanks also goes to Carla Senecal, the NYSATA Higher Education Liaison, who is leaving the board in June.

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From Kara Walker's Installation "A Subtlety or The Marvelous Sugar baby"

Fostering Social Activism

Shaina Dunn

Shaina Dunn has supported student engagement with social justice issues since she began teaching. Here she gives away one of the main secrets of her success, and the process she's developed through years of student achievements.

I have been teaching art to high school students for over a decade now. Which means that I am constantly living in their transitional stage of life. It's this beautiful time of coming of age. It's an exciting time, full of exploration, discovery and testing of boundaries. And it's because of all of this that we, as high school art teachers, have a beautiful opportunity to tap into the student voice and provide an outlet to process things that are going on around us in the world.

How do I raise social awareness in the classroom? How do I delve into topics of social justice? How do I talk about race, bigotry, the Dakota Access Pipeline or police brutality in a classroom full of students from all different backgrounds? How do I not offend anyone? How do I encourage students to engage in dialogue around these topics? The answer starts way before those conversations happen. It starts with creating a community. There has to be a level of trust for all parties involved. For example, when students first arrive in my classroom at the beginning of each school year, I do some icebreaker group games to loosen up the atmosphere and get them to begin to know each other. Students learn very early on how to work together within the classroom. I teach various levels of ceramics courses, which allows students to take my classes for multiple years, and I run my classroom like a studio. There is clay to be pugged, kilns to be fired, glaze to be mixed, etc. Students become self-sufficient and, in general, move around the room as needed for tools, clay, and other equipment, and they all take different roles in cleaning up at the end of the period. More specifically, each table (which generally has 4-5 students at it) is responsible for these tasks. I don't assign specific individuals (on purpose); I just list out

what the different jobs are per table. This is important. This creates dialogue and community (at least among those 4-5 students), which then builds and grows.

I start the year off with a variety of projects that focus on the elements of art and the principles of design, providing time for exploration of color, form, texture, and technique. Some of the clay pieces are functional and some are sculptural, but there is consistency in how these projects are assigned and how students share their ideas. At the beginning of each project, students are asked to come up with three different ideas and to do some research and print out reference images. We then sit together in a circle and each student has the opportunity to share their three ideas, getting feedback and suggestions from the class and me to narrow it down. The more classes students take with me, the more familiar and comfortable they get with this process. This allows the class to brainstorm and problem solve together, and it also allows students to learn from one another – while building trust. This

“How do I talk about race, bigotry, the Dakota Access Pipeline or police brutality in a classroom full of students from all different backgrounds? How do I not offend anyone? How do I encourage students to engage in dialogue around these topics?”



Example of a Ceramics III Social Justice Project. This group wanted to shed light on the food industry and thought the location of inside a supermarket would spark the most dialogue around the topic.

process is followed up by a similar one at the end of each project focused on assessment. We have a final critique where students have an opportunity to discuss and ask questions about each other's projects and to reflect on what the original vision was. Often times, this process involves students sharing information visually on the inspiration for the project.

So, when it comes to exploring topics around social commentary, the stage has been set. The expectations of respect and trust are already there, so when we start talking about things that may be uncomfortable it can still feel safe. We live in a tumultuous time and are constantly bombarded with information about what's going on in the world, which brings up all kinds of fears and anxieties. I try to impart to my students that an artist can explore these worries in so many ways, in a process of self-discovery and wider understanding of their experiences. I strive to give assignments that initiate and support this process.

One example is a collaborative project that I assign to my Advanced Clay/Ceramics III class of juniors and seniors whom have all taken a studio level class and at least one clay elective. First, we watch *The Children's March*, which is a Teaching Tolerance video that documents the civil rights march in Birmingham, Alabama, 1963, led by youths. This sparks conversation around the comparisons and differences between the Civil Rights movement and the Black Lives Matter movement. We then look at a variety of artists who make protest art and we specifically look at public art sculptures. We watch an Art 21 segment on Kara Walker's *A Subtlety, or the Marvelous Sugar Baby* installation, 2014. Students then break up into small groups of 2-3 students. They come up with a topic that they feel inspired to research and design a prototype out of clay for a large-scale public sculpture. They photograph the prototype and learn how to superimpose the image into a background location of their choice. The final product for the assignment is an art board that includes this image plus samples of material to be used, facts on the topic chosen, and a brief written proposal. Each group then presents this proposal to the class. Students are

encouraged to share divergent viewpoints from their research, but at the same time their sculpture should clearly take a stance on the topic of their choice.

Another example would be in my sculpture class. This is a mixed level/age class, which has a studio course prerequisite. In this class we look at artists such as Jason DeCaires Taylor and Banksy for inspiration. We also watch a TED Talk given by Shirin Neshat entitled *Art in Exile*. Students then create a series of sculptures out of clay that tell a visual story about a topic of their choice. I always encourage students to do research on something that they feel strongly about or that they want to learn more about. When the projects are complete, students share a visual presentation with the class on the research from their social issue (usually created in Google Slides) where they have a chance to show and explain their sculptures. The conversation is then opened up into a class critique and students are encouraged to share their own thoughts on the work. This process allows students



Sculpture class work about censorship and gender roles.

to be exposed to a variety of social issues through their peers' research and creative lenses.

Ultimately, it's all about the process. Of course, grades are often given based on the product, but it's the process that is the most important and what I hope students take with

“For me, part of bringing social awareness into the classroom is showing, by example, how to step up and get involved within the broader community.”

them. My rubrics consider this and include a self-reflective section for students to fill out. For most projects, I look at four categories. 25% of the grade is always based on technique, 25% is always based on glaze and/or surface designs, while the other two categories reflect individual process, creativity, and effort. 25% of the grade is based on the student’s concept. Some examples of questions I ask students to reflect on in this category are, “how well were you able to express your social issue? (Explain in detail)” “what did you learn about this issue through this process?” The final 25% of the grade is determined by the student’s effort and participation. Things I am looking for here are how well they used the studio time (was there more socialization than work?), how well were they able to problem solve when unexpected issues come up, and participation in class discussions and critiques. If students learn something about their own artistic voice and self along the way, that is where the reward is!

The focus on social justice issues in these assignments does not end in the classroom. Our National Art Honor Society (led by art chairperson, Nancy Diamond) works on several projects each year that involve using art as a medium for service. In the past, they have worked with organizations such as the Pinwheel Project, which involves students painting patients’ walls and creating arts and crafts projects with children in the long-term care units at Montefiore Children’s Hospital in the Bronx. Another project involves a local school district that has had to drastically cut their art and music budget over recent years. This prompted a Clarkstown North Art Honor Society junior to start an after school art program for some of these students at one of the elementary schools, and the program is still running strong. The habit of looking outward and engaging with social issues, fostered in the art classroom, manifests in many different ways as students carry this mentality into other areas of their lives.



For me, part of bringing social awareness into the classroom is showing, by example, how to step up and get involved within the broader community. In 2011, I got involved with the Inside Out Project after I watched the TED Prize winner, photographer JR speak about his wish for the world: “to turn the world upside down by exploring personal identity through art”. I was inspired by his photographs and his story and his vision and wanted to get involved right away. Several art teachers and I, along with a group of students in our International Baccalaureate (IB) program, began to participate in this ongoing global art project (over 260,000 people participating in 129 countries). The message about our own Inside Out Project spread and we managed to have 75 students and staff pose for photographs that showed some insight into their individual personalities. These photographs were blown up large and plastered around the outside of the school for several months. Here’s one student’s written reflection on the project:

The Inside Out Project is an incredible mission that essentially promotes doing art for the sake of doing art. As an IB group project my peers and I brainstormed for our school’s personal statement to go along with our mini-mission to get more people on board. We eventually decided on the phrase “Each face, one body”. The phrase touches upon the TOK (Theory of Knowledge) idea of multiple perspectives and the ability for people to address the similarities and differences. I along with about 24 other IB students acted as the “guinea pigs” by getting our photos taken with different facial expressions and having them sent to JR’s headquarters to get transformed into 3x4-foot portraits. My favorite aspect in participating in the Inside Out Project was spending a Saturday outside of school with a few teachers,

“For me, part of bringing social awareness into the classroom is showing, by example, how to step up and get involved within the broader community.”



volunteers, ladders, and buckets of wall paper glue, posting our “guinea pig” shots on the side of the main building for all to see that coming Monday. Being the tallest one there I quickly found my niche as the ‘go-to girl’ for pasting the top row of images. I really enjoyed those 6 hours because I got quite messy and sticky from the glues and had great company from all the other volunteers. I greatly look forward to helping post the next round of images from not only IB students but other students from throughout the school. Our faces do truly let the community know that while we may be independent individuals we all have at least one thing in common, we are members of the Clarkstown High School North community. It will be interesting to analyze the cultural differences between our school’s faces and expressions compared to other groups of participants such as a school in Germany.

My students and I have often participated in other activities, such as the Memory Project and the Empty Bowls Project. The Memory Project’s objectives invite art teachers and their students to create and donate portraits to youth around the world who have faced substantial challenges, such as neglect, abuse, loss of parents, violence, and extreme poverty (we’ve worked with children from Honduras and Uganda in the past). Our students are given a photograph that they use to create a portrait that is sent back to the child usually with a note attached. The larger goal is to help the children feel valued and important and to know that others care about their well-being. The Empty Bowls Project is a national initiative started by a ceramic teacher to help feed the hungry. The motto is “nobody should have an empty bowl”. We have had sales in which students sold handmade ceramic bowls and donated the proceeds to local food banks. Last year we raised almost \$800 for People to People of Rockland County, which does tremendous work supporting local families in need. All of these projects are voluntary and happen outside of regular class time, for students are often looking for community service opportunities.

Finally, the exploration of the student artistic voice is complex and multifaceted. Inspiring students to use this voice to bring awareness to social issues both in and out of the classroom is something that continues to inspire me as a teacher. My mission is to help facilitate and foster a culture that supports and cultivates a certain level of consciousness. Social activism becomes something that naturally grows out of art-making experiences that ask students to explore ideas outside of their own comfort zone while in relationship with others and the broader world. This work is something that feels even more important in the current political climate.

Resources

Inside Out Project <http://www.insideoutproject.net/en> JR’s TED Talk https://www.ted.com/talks/jr_one_year_of_turning_the_world_inside_out

Art21: Kara Walker <https://art21.org/artist/kara-walker/>


Memory Project <https://memoryproject.org/>

Empty Bowls <http://www.emptybowls.net/>

Shaina Dunn has been teaching at Clarkstown High School North since 2006, and has her BS in Art Education, BFA in Ceramics and a Masters in Studio Art from SUNY New Paltz. She has been involved with several school-wide projects and led service/trek adventures internationally. In 2013, she travelled with students to Nicaragua, and in 2015, to Costa Rica, where students worked directly with small schools – in Nicaragua they painted school buildings, and in Costa Rica they helped with the construction of an aqueduct and painted a mural. Shaina is NYSATA Region 7’s 2017 Art Teacher of the Year.



“...the exploration of the student artistic voice is complex and multifaceted. Inspiring students to use this voice to bring awareness to social issues both in and out of the classroom is something that continues to inspire me as a teacher.”




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Students responding to photographs taken by refugee children.

The Most Important Picture: Life through the eyes of Syrian refugee children An Exhibition Curated by City Honors Students

Becky Moda

In this article, Becky Moda tells us how a professional photojournalist – who has devoted his voice to international refugee crises – brought an illuminating series of photographs taken by Syrian refugee children to her art classes, and the way she framed and crafted her students' encounters with the images to foster insight and understanding.

In my pursuit of encouraging students to find inspiration in social justice issues locally and globally, I've made it a common practice to seek out and teach artists that work to bring about change.

Over brunch one spring morning in 2016, Brendan Bannon, an internationally recognized photojournalist and neighbor, suggested a collaboration with my students on a school-based exhibit of images made by his Syrian refugee students. It was the perfect opportunity for my students and the community of Buffalo to learn, first-hand, about the victims of one of the world's worst humanitarian disasters. We hear the word refugee on the news all the time but there isn't any context. Who are these people? How are they that different from us? These questions seem increasingly more important especially under the current administration of the United States government. Do we as a society value certain people more than others?

Bannon worked with students ranging from 5th grade through 12th at City Honors School in Buffalo where I teach. Over the course of several visits, he shared personal stories about what drove him to make pictures, the challenges of working as a photojournalist, and his work with refugees. Bannon shared a moving series of photographs and videos that showed the full spectrum of his work. My students have never been more riveted by a guest artist. Here is Bannon talking about how making pictures can help people – how you can shed light on a group of marginalized people through art.

In 2014-2015, Bannon spent 5 months leading workshops on photography and writing for refugee youth in Lebanon and

Jordan. Bannon provided these Syrian children the opportunity to share their story with the world through their pictures. The pictures they made are an eye-opening witness to their lives and the survival of their families and the toll of war. The United Nations and the International Rescue Committee funded the project.

Bannon brought the photographs that were made at the camp into my classroom. Students worked in groups to



Brendan Bannon talking to students about his work.

Participation in the development of this exhibition was not just an endeavor of aesthetics for our students, it was a much needed window into the lives of children their own age living in a startling reality. They were jolted out of compartmentalization into the realization that our world is not about 'us and them', it is about 'us.' The awesome power of the visual arts was in full force. Dr. William Kresse, Principal, City Honors School

decide which photographs were the strongest. The students participated in lessons on media relations, interpretation, curation, and presentation of the refugees' pictures. The exhibition was mounted in the two art galleries at City Honors and was open to the community. The response was overwhelming. Students learned a multitude of important lessons – the most important being that our common humanity is stronger than anything that drives us apart. This exhibition showed my students the true power of art as a fundamental tool for sharing information. My students were completely unaware of what was happening in Syria. The children who made the photographs my students were curating, were children who used to have lives like theirs. These young Syrian photographers went to school, played in green-space, went on vacation, played sports and ate good food with their families. In my classroom there is a poster that states, 'Artists are the eyes of society.' This statement never rang more true than it did during this learning experience. Through this project, Bannon gave his students – these Syrian refugee children – the opportunity to speak for themselves. In our popular broadcast and print media, too often adults from unrelated cultures do the signifying and interpreting. Representation is by proxy and inauthentic. Our students hear interpreters, not original voices.

It was captivating to watch my students pour over the pictures, to listen as they described them to one another and categorize them based upon the message of the photograph. This project stood out for them for multiple reasons: visual art curriculums traditionally emphasize making things – this lesson was all about making an exhibit, sharing an experience, and most importantly helping a marginalized group of people.

I continue striving to bring a parallel experience to my students. To foster a close reading of the refugee children's work, while supporting a collaborative immersion in their dramatically different – yet strangely parallel world – I asked my students to work through the editing process and to please keep in mind our goal with this exhibition: to show our audience the common humanity between us and displaced people or Syrian refugees. Under the category of "Common Humanity", I asked them to select photographs that show we are more alike than different. Under "Camp Conditions", I requested that they choose photographs that show where and how refugees live. I asked them to pay attention to what the conditions were like. Then, lastly, for the category of "Scars of War", I asked them to select photographs that show how war has had a lasting effect on the student photographer and their family. Working in groups of 5-8, these middle and high

school students were told to put a sticky note on the photographs their group wanted to edit out, explaining why they thought, as a group, the image should be eliminated. Each student in each group was asked to select two photographs that they really think should be incorporated – by placing a sticky note on each explaining why they think this photograph should be included.

This collaborative, deeply immersive experience made normal gallery visits into a gateway for my students – introducing and connecting them to human and humanitarian themes that invigorate art and compassion.

I would be more than happy to share my experience with teachers who would like to bring this project to their classroom. My email beckymoda@gmail.com

Here are some quotes about *The Most Important Picture Exhibition* from my students:

Syrian refugees have faced many struggles including death and pain. Photography helped them express this feeling and helped change their lives. They can help others see their world and how they live and the struggles they face. Just one picture shows so much emotion. – Addie Perez, City Honors, Gr. 7.

I took away that their life was just like ours. Then the war affected them so much, now their life is harder, a lot harder. They used to be a lot like us living happy, normal lives. – Luke Sheehan, City Honors, Gr. 6.

Through this project I learned about the Syrian refugees. If Brendan Bannon didn't go to the refugee camps and talk to the refugees then they wouldn't have a voice. He gave them cameras to let them express themselves. – Elizabeth Ferguson, City Honors, Gr. 7.

Brendan Bannon is committed to bringing this project to classrooms worldwide. He continues to develop a downloadable exhibit free for schoolteachers. In addition to the pictures, Bannon has developed a tool kit for interpreting, curating, and publicizing the exhibit so students are able to participate in all parts of organizing an exhibition. Here is a link to the website: <https://www.mostimportantpicture.org/zaatari-refugee-camp>

Some other online resources for Brendan Bannon's work: <https://medium.com/insecurities>
[the-most-important-picture-of-syria-children-explore-life-in-refugee-camps-through-pictures-and-8eaf4eb4345c](https://www.mostimportantpicture.org/zaatari-refugee-camp)
<https://www.pinterest.se/source/brendanbannon.photoshelter.com>

... and some online resources for photojournalism: International Center of Photography collections <https://www.icp.org/collections>



Getty Museum curriculum on reading news photographs http://www.getty.edu/education/teachers/classroom_resources/curricula/headlines/background1.html
New York Times Lens blog <https://lens.blogs.nytimes.com/>

Becky Moda is a Visual Arts Teacher at City Honors School in Buffalo, NY and she is the Assisting Art Editor for The Public.



Student's personal interpretations of "Uncle Sam"

Asking the Right Questions in Art Class

Erin Kaminski

This high school art teacher challenges her art students with incisive questions about the symbols and icons that represent the American experience. She finds her students lead the way, through discussions and art making, to honest reflections about their culture.

The mark of an educated individual is the ability to view an issue, understand its complexities, develop an opinion, and respect the thoughts of others on the subject. It is with this thought in mind that I embarked on a quest to teach my students to analyze and evaluate not just the art I was presenting but the world around them.

I am in a unique position as the sole teacher of an academy program in my building. This allows me to map topics and scaffold concepts across a student's high school career. The students got their feet wet in the concept of social justice last year as juniors, when we began studying characters, caricatures and cartoons of Uncle Sam. After learning the history of the character, the students were asked to consider if our current Uncle Sam should be redesigned to reflect the times. I asked my students to consider their own unique perspectives when they approached this discussion.

*What does the typical American look like?
What is the American Dream?
and ultimately
What should Uncle Sam look like?*

As an international school many of my students are not born and raised in America. Some have come to this country as recently as a few months ago, some have lived here for many years and still others consider themselves "Buffalonians" through and through. This diversity often adds distinctive culturally-based points of view to our deliberations. This discussion led to students creating a personal "Uncle Sam" and describing how they felt it reflects our current nation.

This year when the students returned in September I knew they were ready. The groundwork was laid, the discussion protocols had been practiced, and my students were eager to exercise their right to an opinion. Each project began with candid discussions of the work of contemporary artists and the issues they explored. Students learned about Nikki Lee, Barbara Kruger, Kara Walker, and the Gorilla Girls. Our discussions focused on both process and product. Students learned to separate shock value from fact; to analyze what was the message and how it was delivered. The simplistic visual nature of many of pieces forced students to think beyond elements and principles to meaning. This led to discussions about general societal issues, which I then steered back to our community. Students were asked to think of issues in their immediate circle: at school, their neighborhoods, in our greater Buffalo community, before stretching to more national or worldly issues. Through the work of the Gorilla Girls, the students had seen the importance of statistics and through Kara Walker how an artist must understand fact before putting their mark on a piece. Students were given a wide berth as they selected the statement they wished to make with the cautionary guide to not make zealous rants but instead educated statements.

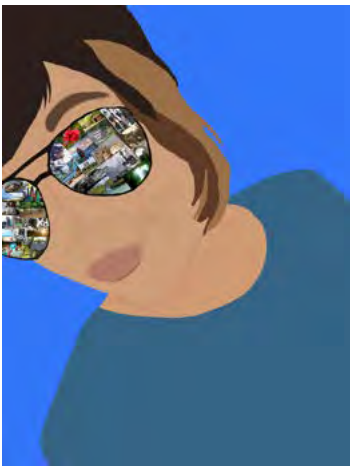
"The groundwork was laid, the discussion protocols had been practiced, and my students were eager to exercise their right to an opinion."



No No and Marima McCoy use appropriated imagery as the canvas for their texts for the Barbara Kruger assignment.



Caleb Graham



Astrid Ribot Lopez

This text-based project was our jumping off point for the year. Students explored far-reaching issues from gentrification and disparity of wealth, and to perceptions of sexuality. From here we turned to more timely matters. The 2016 election cycle proved a great jumping off point. Issues of the election, particularly immigration peaked the interest and passion of my class so the work of Shepard Fairey was a natural progression. As computer art class students, they were able to explore his artistic technique and his social message.

How does a person become a representative for an issue? How do symbols become interwoven into art?

After reading about how his “We the People” posters were received and banned by another school district, students were asked to reflect on Fairey’s message and its perceptions by others. Thinking about layers of meaning and public perception versus factual reality led to the natural inclusion of the work of Njideka Akunyili Crosby. My students were instantly intrigued by the multitude of images that she used to create a single artwork. That depth in imagery led students to explore topics they felt passionate about that had natural layers to their story or misunderstood viewpoints as they created a capstone piece to the unit’s work.

Do perception and reality echo each other? Is there more than one story present? How do artists create subtle and blatant statements within a single piece?

Reflecting back on our semester-long exploration of viewpoints in art, I set out with a goal in mind, of creating analytic thinkers, but my students steered the conversation. I merely followed along guiding discussions, probing opinions, providing images and artists to help the conversation. Exploring political and social issues is a part of a well-rounded arts education. Artists tackle the problem of illustrating their voice every time they begin a new piece. Students need to be able to recognize how this is done and how they can find their voice. If one can accomplish this, they are truly “college and career ready.”

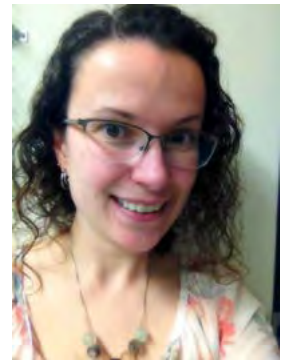
Shepard Fairey: <https://obeygiant.com>

The full range of his street and gallery work can be found at this Obey Giant website, named after one of his most recognizable street icons.

Njideka Akunyili Crosby: <http://njidekaakunyili.com/>

Her website catalogs her images that pay homage to the history of Western painting while also referencing African cultural traditions.

Erin Kaminski has been able to share her love for art as a teacher in the Buffalo Public Schools for the past 10 years. As the current teacher of the Architecture and Design Academy she enjoys allowing students to understand the depth and connections of the art world by weaving together contemporary topics with historical movements; giving the students an understanding of the visual world across time and cultures.



“Reflecting back on our semester-long exploration of viewpoints in art, I set out with a goal in mind, of creating analytic thinkers, but my students steered the conversation. I merely followed along guiding discussions, probing opinions, providing images and artists to help the conversation.”



Selling Socks in the Classroom

Donna Proper

A college professor asks herself if her graphic design students should be pursuing a higher goal – is there an additional purpose for their creative talents than commercial success? Should they be concerned with selling ideas in addition to products and services?

I teach undergraduate graphic design at Farmingdale State College. Our design programs prepare students to be creative problem solvers in traditional and emerging fields. In the coursework, design terminology, technological competencies, and typographic skills are covered; students design and execute products to sell something, to make more money, or provide a service. Because at a basic level, graphic design supports businesses in the pursuit of financial success. And that is the reality of our economy—design makes meaning out of chaos and adds structure and beauty to communication. In most of my classes, I pursue projects using the business model because I believe it is important for students to experience the practical application of design work and produce portfolio pieces demonstrating specific skills required to become professional designers once they graduate.

I have often wondered, is there room for socially conscious course content in our curriculum? If I incorporate social issues in my coursework, will the students participate on a level that is meaningful? Can I make my students design activists and still prepare them for gainful employment? This spring, I was assigned Senior Project, the capstone course of the Visual Communications program where students develop commercially viable design projects. I picked a new theme for all projects, “Design to change your mind” and showed my students a video featuring James Victore, an award winning Graphic Designer in an interview by Hillman Curtis. In it, he said, “the sociopolitical stuff, the cultural stuff, that is what graphic design is for...not to sell socks...design is good for selling socks. But it is not FOR that.”

Afterward, they looked puzzled. I reminded them of our Graphic Design History when world events influenced the

profession—designers published manifestos, protested against war, rejected tradition, explored art outside the confines of academic tradition, called for the end of producing useless things, and had a sense of responsibility to society instead of personal expression. I asked “Is there anything going on in the world or your community that affects how you view the world? Is there some social injustice or issue you want to participate in or feel strongly about?” No response. Some students looked to see if they were in the right class.

I was flabbergasted and disappointed. I know they care about something. I tried again, “Don’t you want to create design work that makes someone stop and think for a moment? Don’t you want to do something meaningful?” I showed them more examples of design changing people’s behavior. I assigned articles to read which we discussed in class. I broke them up into groups for brainstorming sessions. I talked about the issues I cared about. I asked them to research the issues they cared about. I assigned presentations on these topics. After three weeks, the students came up with some ideas to pursue including becoming a vegan, demystifying mental illness, helping people with disabilities find independence, bringing awareness about body shaming and judging people by their appearance, paying attention and moving over for emergency vehicles, and student loan debt. One of my students recently said, “I am glad you didn’t let us land on a commercial product, I never would have ended up

“The sociopolitical stuff, the cultural stuff, that is what graphic design is for...not to sell socks...design is good for selling socks. But it is not FOR that.”
James Victore

where I did if I didn't push myself". Clearly some got there, and some didn't and that is okay.

So the answer to my question is, yes, social issues can be incorporated in the course work, students will meaningfully participate and they will still be able to gain meaningful employment. The work they are producing is just as creative, beautiful, and technically proficient as the projects created for commercial purposes. In fact, I believe my students will be better designers even if they choose to sell socks because social engagement has changed their perspective and will affect the work they do and perhaps the companies they choose to work for.

Introducing students to empathy, compassion, and social awareness is important, not because it is on the syllabus but because we are citizens of the world. As educators, as designers, as citizens, let's take some lessons from our design ancestry and encourage our students to find a way to contribute and use their own voice in the challenges we face as individuals, as communities, as a nation. After all, advocacy is often a discovered activity. If we don't challenge our young citizens to pause and look around beyond their immediate environment and connect with people who are not like them, they may never know anything beyond the borders of their own lives.

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Donna Proper is a Long Island native who has been teaching for 16 years in the Visual Communications Department at Farmingdale State College. She currently serves as the Department Chair. Donna also chairs the team tasked with developing the evolving design curriculum and assessment protocols. The courses she teaches range from Graphic Design History to Advanced Design Classes (courses incorporating interactive technology and web design) to Career & Industry Preparation coursework. Donna's professional career as an independent designer now spans three decades. Her early print design work has appeared in numerous regional publications. Today she maintains an extensive client base for web design and consulting work. Donna also earned a BA in political science from Pace University and a JD from the University of Miami School of Law. She was admitted to the New York State Bar and United States District Court in 2003.



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George Catlin Painting the Portrait of Mah-to-toh-pa - Mandan

American Indian Arts and the Politics of Representation within Museums

Kevin Slivka Ph.D

If art can speak to issues of social justice, it can be an active voice that quickens contemporary art making about current topics. But the art of our modern world is a small portion of the art that has been made throughout and before our Western history – countless cultures, remote and distant in time and place, inhabit our consciousness through institutionalized display devised by members of our culture with our world view. Here Dr. Kevin Slivka unpacks the layers of lens distortion that western society places between us and the genuine voices of other cultures. He also highlights the systematic misrepresentation of First Nation cultures by artists and art institutions. One aspect of social justice is artistic justice – honest, respectful and unprejudiced witness that allows for the authentic voices to be heard.

What do you think about when you enter an art museum that presents Native American Art? Do you reminisce about the previous visit, coupled with anticipation about the new exhibit? Do you pass over the long-held collections exhibited as unchanging spaces? Are these particular spaces indicative to non-Western art? In other words, are the non-changing spaces comprised of African, Asian, Oceanic, or Native American art? If so, take another look.

Many Native Americans, or Indigenous peoples, behold the museum space as a space in constant negotiation; meaning an art museum space that exhibits Native American works, albeit, artifacts described as functional objects, such as spear heads, cups, bowls, baskets, caches, garments, etc. authorize a particular type of knowledge and may be positioned within non-art museum spaces. Within these spaces an all-knowing type of knowledge is proffered; riddled free of any confrontation, any differing stance, any criticality at all. Many times the exhibition of Native American peoples' cultures will be displayed as a diorama within a natural history museum rather than an art museum. These two spaces aren't to be conflated, only their representational practices are to be examined through a critical lens.

Historical Contexts

Museums began as nascent cabinets of curiosities, composed while European imperialist ships sailed the global waters in search of their desires. Along the way, subjugation of the Indigenous peoples became imperative for an acceptable transaction for desirable goods. Measuring and creating difference is an important component in the formations of early social, cultural, political, economic, and racial relations between Europeans and Native peoples throughout the so-called Enlightenment period of the West. The perceived visible differences of the Indigenous peoples are exemplified

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by Benjamin Franklin who stated, while in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, that the Native peoples were “dark colored bodies, half naked...[and] resembling scenes from hell” (Truettner, 2010, p. 28). Visible differences were folded into measured differences under the guise of science to establish racial differences (e.g. craniology and physiology) as a means to create social spheres for their respective identities and their respective cultures. Colonialists’ efforts to know their discovered lands and peoples were positioned as an objective endeavor, one of rationality as historian George Levine states, “To know nature, one must make it alien, perceive it as fundamentally other” (1993, p. 370, quoted in Willinsky, 1998, p. 51). Therefore, colonialists efforts were formulated in opposition to nature, as an entity to be tamed, conquered, or controlled since they perceived themselves as being of a cultured society; one that has advanced, seemingly in contrast to the Native’s lived experience, while romanticizing it as part of their lost past.

One arts example that is historically contingent to the Enlightenment ideology is painter George Catlin. Catlin produced paintings of North American Indigenous peoples throughout the early nineteenth century not from a studio, but “in the field” as “ethnographers of a sort, dedicated to observing Upper Missouri Indians on their home grounds and to transcribing not just characteristic features and dress –the ‘true’ look of a precontact Indian –but customs and rituals as well” (Truettner, 2010, p. 78). One of many issues arising from these works is the entrenched ideological notion from which the paintings were conceived. Truettner (2010) posits that Catlin “set out to demonstrate that Indians were locked into an immutable past...Catlin went so far as to call Indians a vanishing race” (p. 81). Catlin ultimately set out to produce representations of stereotypical Indigenous peoples pre-defined by the colonizing Anglo-discourses, those describing a racial hierarchy with whites at the pinnacle of intellectual capability. His representations were often staged, requiring a Mandan chief, Blackfoot or any other to dress-up, or down, while employing a decontextualized environment connoted in the abstract figuration of the background, which signifies a universal American Indian identity.

Catlin’s paintings are an important component to satiating, while manufacturing, knowledge of the Native population from a White perspective, to those who received his works in the eastern United States as decontextualized representations. Catlin’s patrons had little interest in actually meeting and knowing between physical bodies since they had

his paintings serving as metonymy. Truettner (2010) likens Catlin’s, as well as several other artists of the time, work as “ethnographic tourism” which encompasses repetitive subject matter from buffalo hunting scenes to domestic activities carried out within lodgings” (p. 95).

Further, Indigenous material culture objects were conflated as being from nature: “Native objects [were] perceived as belonging to nature rather than culture because of their materials and the nonindustrialized mode of their production and exposure to Indian culture was part of the drive to redress the effete-ness of civilization” (Hutchinson, 2009, p. 30-31). This perception distorts Indigenous peoples cultural production and represents a lack of complexity and civility. Additionally, this colonial discourse perpetuates yet another power/knowledge relationship aimed at fixing and romanticizing an American Indian identity, sociocultural, and political position.

Indigenous peoples were also positioned as spectacles in museums where body casts were made and assembled for public display (Willinsky, 1998) and they became part of the display as live beings representing their tribe and craft in public spaces (Hutchinson, 2009). Through this social, political, economical, and racial positioning Indigenous peoples and their cultural productions were subjugated and relegated to a deficit model in cultural capital and social status among White, Anglo-Euro-American identities. Additionally, Hutchinson states, “Craft production was an aspect of traditional culture that was not viewed as threatening to American assimilationist efforts. It offered a means of physical and cultural subsistence, helped usher in a cash economy, and sometimes spurred artistic innovation” (2009, p. 33). It is within this rhetoric that Hutchinson claims that Indigenous material culture production serves a greater good while being non-threatening to contemporary aesthetics.

Beyond the museum, domestic spaces also became a locus of decontextualized Indigenous cultural products and a displays of wealth. Hutchinson (2009) refers to the purchasing, displaying, and the philanthropic support of Native American goods and artists during the early 1900’s as the “Indian craze” (p. 3). The ‘craze’ for Native goods was so mainstream that department stores such as Wanamaker’s often included an “‘Indian Section’...located adjacent to, and sometimes within, the ‘Oriental Department’” and employed Native artisans who were sometimes incorporated as part of the display by having them work within an enclosed glass vault (Hutchinson, 2009, pp. 46-48). Interestingly, Hutchinson states that Native

George Catlin ultimately set out to produce representations of stereotypical Indigenous peoples pre-defined by the colonizing Anglo-discourses, those describing a racial hierarchy with whites at the pinnacle of intellectual capability. His representations were often staged, requiring a Mandan chief, Blackfoot or any other to dress-up, or down, while employing a decontextualized environment connoted in the abstract figuration of the background, which signifies a universal American Indian identity.

material objects being included in modern settings such as “department stores, settlement houses, world’s fairs and avant-garde artists’ organizations” calls for a “reexamination of the notion of primitivism, which is frequently understood as situating Indigenous cultures outside of and in opposition to modern culture” (2009, p. 4). Although this sentiment seeks to empower the influence of Native art/craft work, ultimately the power dynamic was predetermined and established by the European sensibility and hierarchy of race that positioned the Indigenous population as a commodity to be owned and displayed over the course of 300 years that led up to modernism.

Contesting the Past: Brian Jungen & Gregg Deal

1st Nations artist, Brian Jungen is a self-identified Dunneza and Swiss artist currently working in Vancouver. Jungen describes his work as a “return to the use of whatever a Native American artist has at his disposal” (Gambino, 2009, website), a contemporary bricoleur. Jungen’s *Prototypes for New Understandings* comprised of reconceptualized Nike Air Jordan basketball shoes is reminiscent of Haida Indigenous peoples’ cultural production of the Pacific Northwest coast. His deconstructed/reconstructed forms attend to issues of identity, recognition, and commodity fetishism. Commodity fetishism preferences exchange value over the in-tended or original use clearly divorcing the cultural object from its meaningful context (Sturken and Cartwright, 2009). Here, Jungen reverses capitalism by a thorough deconstruction of American iconography and commodity signs and appropriates the connoted wealth communicated through the Nike symbol of corporate power. Further, Cuauhtémoc Medina states, “If they [non-Native philanthropists] want masks, why not sell them their own reflection” (Hopkins, 2009, p. 11). Jungen’s juxtaposition frames a complex counter narrative to America’s co-onial past between Native and non-Native relations. Jungen says, “When a product breaks, it’s kind of liberated in my eyes” (Gambino, 2009, website). Furthermore, Jungen also attends to the history of colonization, land removal, collecting, and exhibiting of Native artifacts in homes and institutions (see resource website: <http://www.nmai.si.edu/exhibitions/jungen/works.html>).

Additionally, Gregg Deal (Pyramid Lake Paiute), was the Denver Art Museum’s (DAM) Native Arts Artist-in-Residence during the fall of 2015 and he performed “The Ethnographic Zoo,” late-November around the weekend of Thanksgiving Day. Deal, dressed in stereotypical Native American regalia made in China, and sat outside the front entrance to the Denver Art Museum (see website: <http://denverartmuseum.org/article/artist-gregg-deal-challenges-fantasies-and-stereotypes-about-native-people>). Interestingly directly across from Deal’s DAM studio space and Deal’s promotion was a wall devoted to Edward Curtis’ work, who sought to capture and preserve the American Indian before they vanished from existence during Western expansion (see website: <http://denverartmuseum.org/object/1991.101>). This complicated conversation generated issues related to the gaze, proximity, content, intent, and called into relation historical ramifications directly related to power/knowledge relationships generated

from Curtis’ documentary-style work. Ultimately, Deal challenges Curtis’ prominence and importance in the art-world as an ethnographic photographer and his inescapable relationship with American Indian peoples, which has resulted a static and romantic ideology concerning them.

Both Jungen and Deal attend to the complex issues of colonialism, capitalism, and continued hegemony of Euro-American world-views. My hopes are that you, the reader, will take up further research pertaining to contemporary Indigenous artists who contest the past, enact the present, and envision the future.

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Kevin Slivka, Ph.D. is currently Assistant Professor of Art Education at the State University of New York [SUNY] at New Paltz. His areas of research are intercultural relationships, Indigenous arts, refugee resettlement experiences, and the intersections of art, literacy, and play.



Discover National Youth Art Month!

As you finish the school year and reflect on the past year, think about how great it would be if you were able to share the rich dialogue and engaging work your students are doing with others by getting involved in Youth Art Month. This coming year, we invite you to bring this dialogue and production out of the classroom to share with the greater community during the month of March 2018. Use our national YAM objectives including:

- Recognition of art education and its value in developing the creative minds of our students as they become global citizens
- Implement additional opportunities in creative art learning, acknowledging that art is a “necessity for the full development of better quality life for all people”
- Increase community awareness and understanding of arts education, to broaden support and encourage commitment to the visual arts
- Decide how you can use our new theme of “United Through Art” as a part of your own community art advocacy program!

Participating in YAM art activities promotes your classroom goals, efforts, and production. It is a great way to share student thinking and art. Become a YAM partner this year with your fellow art teachers this March!

For inspiration, visit our link at <http://www.nysata.org/youth-art-month> for ideas, forms, press release writing tips, and much more! Jump in quickly with our YAM bookmark project – that unifies content areas with art! Download our brand new, national YAM logo, to

use in your events and press releases! Don’t forget to check our Pinterest board for instant inspiration:

<https://www.pinterest.com/cr8tive/nys-youth-art-month-unity-through-art-2017/?eq=NYS&etslf=NaN>

Check out our weekly advocacy idea postings on the Artful Advocate blog: <http://artfuladvocate.blogspot.com/>

Share your YAM activities with us on our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/YouthArtMonthNewYorkState/> and on Instagram at [yam_newyork](https://www.instagram.com/yam_newyork).

Seize the art-ful moment to demonstrate how art can unify others in our schools and communities this March!

Creatively Yours,
Julia Lang Shapiro
Donnalyn E. Shuster
Heather McCutcheon
NYSATA Youth Art Month
Co-Chairpersons



Inside Outside

Young Artists Unite Against Bullying

Dr. Androneth Anu Sieunarine, Joan Davidson, and Mario Asaro

Dr. Androneth Sieunarine, a past contributor to NYSATA News, along with Joan Davidson and Mario Asaro of NYSATA Region 8 in New York City, with the support of COPE NYC, recently coordinated a city-wide open-call exhibit of student work that addressed a pervasive topic in our schools – bullying. The goal of the project was for students to share their concerns about bullying in visual form, with the belief that understanding a problem is the first step in finding a solution. What follows the text is a gallery of student work that is poignant, incisive, informative and passionate – these young artists have used their voices to speak out in protest and in affirmation.

“He bullied me,” Danny wrote about one of his former friends. “They did it constantly until I went into a fight.” Danny Fitzpatrick wrote in a letter before his suicide in the summer of 2016 that described the ordeal of dealing with bullies at his Catholic school in Brooklyn, New York. Danny was just a child, at 13 years old he hung himself in the attic of his home.

Having returned from a fellowship in Australia, Dr. Anu Sieunarine read about Danny’s death in the New York Post and was brought to tears; she asked “what can we do to commemorate Danny’s life?” In Australia she had seen a powerful exhibition of students’ artwork. “Inside/Outside” asked students to visualize bullying and the suffering their victims often hide behind their smiles.

Anu suggested having our own Inside/Outside exhibition that addresses the feelings of the children we teach in New York City. The idea was born to invite teachers to ask their students to voice their concerns about bullying and intolerance in a visual and written form, to share their inside thoughts to the outside world.

NYSATA Region 8 Chair Joan Davidson, who had been working for a year on researching and developing an article on Bullying for NYSUT Educator’s Voices, spearheaded the process of organizing the task. Her research became the basis

for the exhibit guidelines and resources for teachers that was posted on the Region 8 web page. Soon we had collected over 60 images from over a dozen citywide schools. The beauty, truth, and strength of these pieces spoke to the complex realities our young people are experiencing and it was clear that these works needed to be shared with others.

The United Federation of Teachers sponsored the exhibit by providing funding, helped publicize the event to teachers, and most importantly gave us an exhibition and reception space at their Manhattan headquarters. Student prizes were generously donated by Sax Arts and Crafts, Dick Blick, Sargent, and Faber-Castell. Peter Yarrow of Peter Paul and Mary committed the support of his organization, Operation Respect and Vida Sabbaghi of COPE NYC, an early supporter of the project has partnered to help continue the exhibit after it ends at the UFT.

We thank NYSATA for allowing us the opportunity to share our students’ images and writings and highlighting the NYC teachers that participated. Introducing this project allowed many of us to breach a subject matter that our students often don’t get to express authentically. “INSIDE/ OUTSIDE, Young Artists Unite Against Bullying” gives us a peek into that enormous darkness that sits upon our students’ precious hearts. If these works can help just one Danny then we will all be better for it.

Jackie Cruz, Art Teacher, P.S. 1K, Brooklyn

"In this political climate where many immigrant students are fearful that their parents will be taken away by a bully government, we must provide opportunities for discussion and to draw their solutions to bullying. We need to help kids feel a sense of empowerment and control of their lives."



Student: Nathanael Garcia, Grade 2

Title: We Unite to Stop Bullying

"If you bully you are seriously treating people with no respect. So if you don't want to be bullied, treat people the way you want to be treated. I was thinking about people coming together to hold hands to stop bullies."



Student: Andy Chen, Grade 4

Title: Stop Bullying

"I think that people have to think about how it is not right to bully others. We have to convince others that they should not bully anyone. My work shows many colors with a design of peace to remind all that peace is better."

Erica Fairfull, Art Teacher, Robert Goddard High School, Queens

"Students learned about DADA and how DADA artists represented the world around them through collage. I gave them 5 categories for them to choose from, two of them being bullying and equality. Students were incredibly surprised at how strong images can tell an incredible story and they are as proud as I am of their compositions."



Student: Lily Chau, Grade: 7

Title: We are all but a Rainbow

"If you bully you are seriously treating people with no respect. So if you don't want to be bullied, treat people the way you want to be treated."

Nathaniel Garcia Gr. 2



Student: Aryanna Austin, Grade 7

Title: Brave

"In this picture I felt that I needed to put pictures and a quote that a lot of people might relate to. I chose this because I felt that not enough people think before they speak. I have been bullied verbally and sometime physically, so I chose the pictures behind the quote because I felt with the quote it might really mean something to anybody that thinks it's ok. When you bully someone physically or verbally it may sound like it's a joke, but it really hits deeper than you might think."

Mario Asaro, Art Teacher, Marie Curie Middle School, MS 158, Queens

"I have seen a rise in students who are genuinely concerned and scared for themselves, their friends and others. The artwork and insights my students shared shed a light on the importance of speaking out against intolerance in our schools and communities."



Student: Cynthia Li Grade 7

Title: Signs (above)

In this world, people are always defined by the people around them. Whether their definition is good or bad, they can never really have a word about who they are. My artwork shows a crowd of people all with signs in front of their faces. The ones in the front are the positive signs and the signs in the back are more negative. People who are in the front are holding up their own signs, showing that they can take control of who they are. The people in the back are just shadows, letting others define who they are.



Student: Julie Li Grade: 7

Title: Smiling On The Outside (above)

Many people are victims of bullying. They may get hurt physically, mentally, emotionally or all. My artwork symbolizes the pain one feels when getting bullied. It shows how deep down they are hurt badly, but how they try concealing their pain by faking a smile. The person in my artwork has a piece of paper over her mouth with a smile on it. However, she is crying, showing the pain she's going through. The paper symbolizes how she is trying to be happy, but her tears convey that she is hurt deep down.

Art Teacher: Amie Robinson, PS77K (ungraded-D75)

Student: Anthony Rychalski Grade 12

Title: Protecting Friends from Bullies (at Left)

My graphite drawing was inspired by the artwork of Kathe Kollwitz. It shows a mom holding her three kids in a big hug. In the hug the children feel happy and safe and when they feel sad their mom makes them feel better just like my mom does for me. I don't have a bully problem, but I think bullying makes people feel upset and when that happens you should ignore them or help your friends if they are being bullied to feel safe.





Deborah DeStaffan, Art Teacher High School for Health Professions & Human Services, Manhattan

"An Advisory lesson on cultural diversity and tolerance was inspiration for this art making activity. Students worked in multimedia to create an image that reflected these ideas in a 3D design, a mask meant to be displayed as a reminder of our diversity."

Student: Esma Ahmed, Grade 9

Title: All United

This mask represents all people united. The word freedom is represented in different languages as the facial features. The bird crown is about being gay because we are all different in our likes and interests, and the hands on the shoulders reach out to all. Today, I live in the US with great diversity and hope for acceptance of all.

Dr. Androneth Anu Sieunarine, Art Teacher, August Martin High School, Queens

"I asked a group of 5 students in my art club at "How many of you have been bullied by someone?". They all raised their hands. Then I asked. "How many of you have bullied someone" And again they all raised their hands. This started our discussion, which lead to a series of important and powerful paintings."



Student: Leonora Rojas, Grade 11

Title: The Two Halves (2)

A person could have two sides to themselves – What they want people to see and what they see in themselves. A person creates these beings because of other people attitudes towards them. These attitudes create demons inside oneself and thus new personalities emerge."

Erica Fairfull, Art Teacher, Robert Goddard High School, Queens

"The theme of the assignment was Social Injustices. Students artwork was based on social injustices that had an effect on them. As a result their artwork reflected to current social issues, such as LGBTQ Rights, Marriage Equality, Black Lives Matter, Gun Violence. I am so proud of the honesty they had when creating these pieces."

Student: Anisa Purai, Grade 11

Title: Target Practice

The piece "Target Practice" was created to portray the nation-wide bullying on specifically African-Americans. We all like to think of bullying being within the boundaries of a school or on social media, but it is bigger than that. I wanted this piece to show police brutality on targeting a specific race. What inspired me to create this was the powerful movement: "Black Lives Matter". Being a part of this generation inflicts a form of responsibility on me to speak out and expose what is wrong with the present society. Topics like these are what need to be brought to attention and I believe that this sort of bullying that has continued over too many years fits the criteria.



"What inspired me to create this was the powerful movement: "Black Lives Matter". Being a part of this generation inflicts a form of responsibility on me to speak out and expose what is wrong with the present society.."



Farragut Middle School, Hastings on Hudson, NY

Photo Courtesy Jim Henderson

One Community's Road Map to Racial Consciousness

**Martin Merchant, collaborating with
Jenice Mateo-Toledo, Naomi Gilbert,
Ezra Elliott, and Nate Morgan**

Our busy lives and the pace of our work can shape us into accepting behaviors and circumstances that are inappropriate and disrespectful to others. We can't reflect and examine everything we do, and consequently we may find ourselves tolerating prejudice out of ignorance or complacency. Most of us firmly believe that we don't willfully commit actions or use words that offend others. But that ability to avoid facing the effects of our inaction or lack of understanding is a threat to our teaching missions. In addition to guiding students to find their personal voice and produce artwork, we want them to have good hearts – to treat others with respect and dignity. We want good citizens and good artists, but most of all we want good human beings.

In this article we examine how art plays a role in one district's comprehensive approach to fostering an appreciation of diversity and mobilizing students to recognize and resist prejudice.

It's notable when an entire school district addresses racial and diversity issues with multiple programs throughout all grade levels. In Hastings-on-Hudson, a village of 8000, on the Hudson River 25 miles north of New York City, the school administrators and teaching staff, along with several parent and community groups, are pressing forward with inventive ways to address the perceptions and behaviors of their students. Hastings is a high performing district, with Hillside Elementary, Farragut Middle, and Hastings High School all achieving US State Department of Education Blue Ribbon School of Excellence status.

In the past, when acts had occurred that involved racial epithets or negative behavior, the district had sent home letters to parents, held "sensitivity" assemblies, and dealt directly with individuals who had committed censured actions. However, a group of faculty members decided that it was time to come together as a school community and become more proactive about issues of race, rather than reactive. When this idea was shared with administration, the teachers were encouraged to form a committee that would lead the district on issues of race. The Race Matters committee was the result.

As a founding member of the Race Matters group, Jenice Mateo-Toledo, coordinator for the English as a New Language department, conceived and spearheaded a project called the Multicultural Book Fair. The committee's mission is to get books written by authors of color into the hands of all students. The committee understands that there are students who often recognize themselves in literature, and there are others who do not. Scholars posit when children cannot find themselves reflected in the books they read, or when the images they see are distorted, negative, or laughable, they learn a powerful lesson about how they are devalued in the society. Furthermore, readers from all social/ cultural groups must be given windows to view the world around them. These readers need books that show them their place in our multicultural world and teach them about the connections between all humans. Books are sometimes the only place where readers may meet people who are not like themselves, who offer alternative world views (Tsichda [et.al](#), 2014). One way we chose to address this concern is by hosting a multicultural book fair.

An ENL teacher, the idea, and the evolution of the Multicultural Book Fair



Jenice Mateo-Toledo has been a member of the Hastings school district since 1999, and is currently the ENL (English as a New Language) Coordinator and teacher. She oversees a K-12 program that sees 40-50 students every year. Jenice points out that her student demographic is very broad – there might be children of parents from countries in

Europe, Africa, Asia, North America, and South America. These children may have escaped political oppression or war, while others may have moved into the district because their parents want their children to have the American schooling experience. “There has always been strong support from the district and the Board of Education,” Jenice says, “because you need depth to your resources. Learning a new language and culture is a 5-7 year process. These students are not just learning a language to get by, but they are acquiring academic English – that students need to command to pass exams in many different disciplines.”

Jenice and two other teachers were sponsored by the district to attend a Border Crossers training in NYC. After sharing their experience with the Race Matters committee, it was decided that perhaps other teachers may want to learn about issues of race and diversity. So, the committee applied for and received a Hastings Education Foundation grant to train 70 faculty members. Attendance to the training was voluntary, and over half the staff attended. Jenice noted, “There was some discomfort among the participants – though the experience was good, the discussions it started pointed the way to something needed.” Jenice is working towards her doctorate at Columbia University Teachers College, and her studies in social justice helped to inform her thinking, “How can we talk about race in school without people feeling uncomfortable? The annual PTSA used book fair had been a traditional event in Hastings – why not a Multicultural Book Fair? Why not put literature into the hands of students to help them explore and talk about racial issues?”

Initially Jenice approached publishers of textbook and learning materials about furnishing titles for the fair. However, the publishers told her that they would only furnish books using the usual high ratio of Euro-American authors and titles to a small percentage of authors of color. Frustrated by that response, she approached Bank Street Book Store, which welcomed the challenge with open arms. Access to a supply of authors from diverse backgrounds will allow the Multicultural Book Fair to look through other windows and reflect on the mirror that literature can be.

In addition, Jenice contacted local and regional authors with diverse racial and cultural backgrounds and was thrilled by the positive response. Ten writers are scheduled to attend

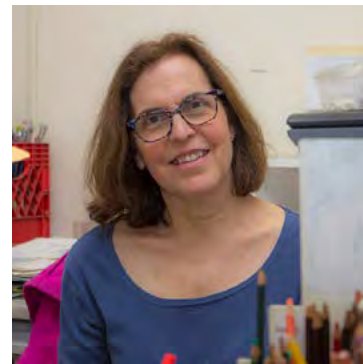
and sign their books over the three-day fair, some at the book fair site and others in classrooms. Momentum was building for the event – the challenge was to fully engage the students and community so that attention and attendance was as strong as possible.

Art as a Window and Reflection

“It has been said that books can be windows and mirrors for readers. Windows provide readers opportunities to see the world. Mirrors provide readers opportunities to see themselves.

This is the statement that the Race Matters committee used for their Race Matters committee art competition. Meeting almost every day in an informal lunchtime walk, Jenice, Naomi Gilbert, and Alysha Horstman, colleagues and high school art teachers, shared thoughts about bringing the visual arts into the next stage of the event preparation. “The idea of windows and mirrors applies to art making as much as reading,” observed Naomi. Two primary objectives are achieved by involving students in visualizing social justice, prejudice and race relations – young minds are stirred by the dramatic depiction of the issues, and the visuals can be used as posters and in promotional materials. The student artists in the schools would have a critical role in igniting dialog and awareness about the book fair. The “assignment”, which art teachers K-12 made optional or democratically agreed upon as a class project, gave students a voice and choice – it engaged their thinking and enriched their understanding of what the issues were. From the choice of symbols and the creation of symbolic content to the emotional pitch of the graphic, students had to analyze the issue’s elements and decide what components to visualize and how to embody them in paint, marker, pencil.

Naomi Gilbert, art teacher in the high school



Naomi, who has been in the district for 22 years, appreciated the description of books serving as doors or windows for readers since she believes visual art works function in the same way. She discussed this with her Drawing and Painting classes along with the themes of multiculturalism and personal identity. Her students were excited by

the ideas generated and chose to participate in the poster contest. Naomi emphasized that they should utilize the themes for inspiration, but should focus on making art rather than a literal interpretation of the subject. In other words, the contest was utilized as an expressive opportunity rather than as a commercial art or illustration venture. She told the students that, just as writers are told to write about what they know, they should focus on expressing their own experience. She told them to, “Investigate (their) own feelings and opinions to create unique and personal imagery, and avoid the pitfall of the cliché.”

The “difficult to read” aspect of the emerging work became a factor to consider. As students mined their personal experiences and formulated imagery, their artwork became less explicit and more visually demanding. “I realized it was necessary to include artists’ statements with the work for it to be fully appreciated,” Naomi states, “and the students were eager to explain their ideas.”

Ezra Elliott, art teacher in the middle school



Ezra, a middle school art teacher in Hastings for grades 5-8 for over a decade took a slightly different tack in approaching the poster contest. When asked about how he discussed the project with his classes, he responded, “One of the aspects of visual art is that you use the artwork to express your thoughts. We didn’t have a lot of discussion

about imagery or content. Since I’ve taught these students all through middle school [Hastings includes art at all grade levels], I was able to draw on past lessons and units. Middle-schoolers usually need more of a prompt than high school students – they’re full of questions like ‘What does this mean?’ or ‘What are the rules?’ They also tend to approach the subject of windows and mirrors more literally – and find it a challenge to respond to so broad an assignment.”

“With 8th graders, I reviewed the symbolism and metaphor work we did when they were 6th graders – with 6th graders it was a natural extension of what we were doing, as we studied literal meaning and symbolic expression. The 6th graders get involved with Native American artist Jaune Quick-to-See Smith’s imagery that combines outlines, maps, and figures with different kinds of type treatment, so this assignment acted like an extension of their independent art project. Smith’s work is an excellent example of how a visual can behave as a mirror or window – when students explore her work, the process prompts reflective thinking, and they begin to understand how symbols act as gateways to meaning. It also sensitizes them to the importance and power of visual signs – how representations can carry multiple meanings based on context and cultural significance.”

Nate Morgan, art teacher for Kindergarten through grade 4



Nate Morgan has been teaching at Hillside Elementary School in Hastings since 2001. He has used contemporary art and art historical references in his curriculum with elementary school students since the beginning – designing units that explore work by artists like Faith Ringold, Dave the Potter, Romare Beardon, Andy Warhol, Bryan Kim, and Wangechi Mutu – with

“...we can no longer just be researchers of different cultures’, but we need to be witnesses, we need to participate with different cultures and begin to consider race as a contemporary issue.”

the intent on bringing perceptions and cultural differences to his students on the appropriate cognitive level.

When the Multicultural Book Fair poster contest came along, Nate brought it to the students with a similar sensitivity to their emerging sense of race and diversity. He distributed the flyer from the Race Matters committee that announced the contest, then opened his classroom for several lunch periods to accommodate students from any grade level who wanted to work on their poster. For each group of interested young artists he invited assistant principal Farid Johnson to give a brief introduction to race and its issues.

“At an elementary level students reflect on issues of acceptance and tolerance – they’re still at the ‘we’re all together’ stage where everyone belongs which doesn’t necessarily create obvious distinctions along racial lines.” Recently there had been white supremacist flyers put up on trees in the Hillside woods, along with other incidents, common to many towns and communities. Nate knows that his students are starting to become critically aware of racial issues, but students have traditionally “explored the issues of race as an historical narrative, not always as a contemporary concern. But we can no longer just be ‘researchers of different cultures’ [he feels he is quoting someone here], but we need to be witnesses, we need to participate with different cultures and begin to consider race as a contemporary issue. I think that our school is moving towards that approach in dealing with race”. Nate feels that making artwork like these posters helps young students start to frame their attitudes and emotions. “Some art work came directly from home completely finished – I made no contribution – so there are families in this community that take the issue seriously”.

Based on the enthusiasm of the students, all the art teachers look forward to including this kind of assignment every year in the curriculum. Ezra Elliott thought it would become a fixture in his classes. “It’s got graphic design, understanding type and layout, and offers creative leeway grounded in a specific goal”. These colleagues share a belief that giving children and young adults an avenue to visualize their feelings and convictions is an integral part of an art teacher’s responsibilities. Art can be made independent of literal reference to contemporary events and political currents – but the artist’s voice can be, should be, an important part of civic and political discourse. Helping these young artists find that voice and build its force is an important part of an art teacher’s responsibility.

Tschida, C., Ryan, C., & Ticknor, A. (2014) Building on Windows and Mirrors: Encouraging the Disruption of “Single Stories” Through Children’s Literature *Journal of Children’s Literature* (40)1 (2014) pp.28-39.

Student work and thinking for the Race Matters book fair poster contest...

The following are excerpts from interviews with students who participated in the contest and the two winning students conducted by NYSATA News editor Marty Merchant, as well their entries and the artist statements written by the high school students.



HIGH SCHOOL

Maria Simone Sarmiento - left (Gr. 10)

"I worried about how to incorporate everyone but not make it too complicated. I used a simple androgynous person centrally as a symbol, to represent everyone, and experimented with the background – leaning toward water, then skin color, then a map-like surface... and I used the words on the figure's chest [Remember Me] as a statement".

ARTIST STATEMENT

Remember Us is a piece that tries to incorporate the idea of race through the single androgynous face presented and the different continents, showing how everyone, no matter where they are from, needs to be remembered. The continents around the figure help to capture that idea of race and culture through the various places that everyone comes from. With the figure in the middle I chose to leave [it] without color because I thought that the background would help incorporate the idea of coming from different places. "Remember Us" is the statement I thought best represents those who have been annoyed by stereotypes that form when people believe that "every Hispanic person is Mexican" or "all Asian people are the same", or "all black people are African". "Remember Us" highlights the fact that we all come from different places and that we should respect and learn from one another. – Maria S.



Ana Sofia Sarmiento - top photo right (Gr. 10)

"We were all once little kids and all brought into this world innocent. While I was working on this piece I was listening to a song "Volver a los 17" by Chilean singer Violeta Perra. The song chronicles a young woman "going back" to memories of her childhood. "It reminded me of how once you step into adulthood you enter a much more complex, murky world"

ARTIST STATEMENT

My piece is called Girasol, which means sunflower. Girasol is a depiction of a mixed-colored baby that is surrounded by a rainbow of color. The sunflower that circulates around the baby's head is not its natural golden yellow: it's meant to depict the diversity of different people. Each petal is how I tend to look at the world: we are all made of different creeds. I chose to include an infant because we all grow up learning how the world is supposed to be seen from past generations. I gave the baby different shades of brown and ink to represent that amount of melanin that each of us have in our skin: whether it be peach or dark brown. - Ana S.



Ani LeFevre (Gr. 10)

"My family, its generations and cultures, are always in the background of my mind. And I don't believe the Armenian genocide is fairly or honestly represented. We're studying WWII in history, and the Holocaust is fully documented over many pages – as it should be, but the Armenian holocaust only got a short paragraph. You can't find time to examine them all – Africa, Armenian, Vietnamese ["Native American" pipes up a nearby student] – but there should be a broader amount of coverage."

ARTIST STATEMENT

This piece of artwork expresses how during the Armenian Genocide thousands of Armenians were destroyed (along with their families) and lost hope due to the Turkish government. The red background represents all the blood lost during this awful attack on the Armenian people. Our nation's tree, the olive tree, is covered with eyes of all different races, colors, sizes, and shapes. They are all covered with blood but are seeing straight through it, both metaphorically and physically, because for a time the Turkish government did not consider the slaughter of the Armenians genocide, therefore, the eyes keep open and stare straight ahead. The feathers are a symbol of hope and protection as they are in the poetic novel "Like Water on Stone" by Dana Walrath, yet they are covered in blood because they were "murdered" by the Turkish government". – Ani L.





Owen Routhier (Gr. 10)

“These issues have been happening a lot – there are bigger topics in the news. I used an abstract pattern I’ve been exploring in my work with patterns, so I chose the zebra because of its extremes – black and white – so I wouldn’t have to use human shapes. Plus no two zebras are exactly the same, and the black and white characteristic is just the skin of the zebra, not the zebra’s ‘essence’ - I’m happy with the result. I thought it was important to relate to the topic, and not just come up with an image that looked cool, but had deeper meaning”.



ARTIST STATEMENT

In this piece I used zebras to represent humans. A zebra contains black and white, both extremes. This drawing shows that a zebra in any color is still a zebra. I also replaced their stripes with contour lines, to show how we are connected to the earth and how we should care for this earth. No matter what color, shape, or size we are all the same. – Owen R.



“What color should I be for you to be able to like me?”

No matter what color, shape, or size we are all the same.”

Bryant Pintado (Gr. 10) asked What color should I be for you to be able to like me? “At first I started out with a generic man – because we are all the same – and then while I was working with the background tones they evolved to a gradation of skin tones – to show that no matter what color we are we’re all the same. I just came to use more vivid colors because they were unusual – and though they are a rainbow of different colors, we are still all the same underneath.”



MIDDLE SCHOOL

Charlotte Bourdain (l) and Hannah Kozak (r), 5th graders who made their “Race Matters” artwork in Mr. Elliott’s art class, tried to use mirror and window metaphor in their visualization of the theme. “How is it [a book] a window when you read?” Charlotte asked reflectively, then self-responded “when you read, you picture a story in your mind – the book becomes like a movie. But it’s also like a mirror – you see stuff that is like your own life

– you see similarities, reflections of your own stuff”. Hannah wanted her artwork to be “...about race, the color of your skin”. She drew the outer covers of her book as two mirrors – two people, who are friends, but in separate places – looking at each other. “When you look in the mirror you see yourself, and these two friends meet through the window – it shows how they both are friends because they both see each other and they see themselves in the other person.” The recursive nature of reflection and looking through allowed her to appreciate the complex nature of the issue. “But they could be opposites. There’s different kinds of friendships – it’s easier to become friends with someone like you.”



HILSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

1. Sophie Starosta (Gr.4) envisioned a world with a smile and attached a variety of faces that stood up from the surface of the happy planet (complete with stars, sun and moon).

2. Penelope Krapf (Gr. 4) has friends in a powerful fist-bump that emphasizes togetherness.

3. Ethan Lesser (Gr.4) created a diverse character that stands in front of a rainbow flag that echoes the sentiment common to many of the art pieces.



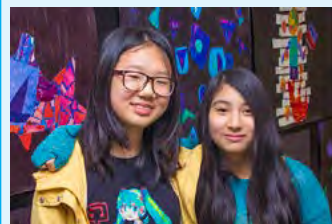
4. Johanna Nollen (Gr. 4) used pop-up signs that rise up off the campus that tell us how to behave (Doesn't Matter What U R", "Help Others", "Don't Make Fun Of People", "Be Kind") while her figures embrace and wave to each other through a mirror.

5. Julia Serbee (Gr. 4) simply shows her hand holding a mirror that has friends holding hands.

6. Gabriel Lesardo (Gr. 3) has a unique approach – in this window that's labeled "Sports Unites All People" are featured activities like baseball, swimming, and football.



7. Samantha Torres, Victoria Lugomer-Pomper, and Kaleigh Maloney (Gr. 4) collaborated on these quadrants for *Race Matters*, shows 3 sections which reflect the backgrounds of each of the artists – in this art work rainbow curtains, shamrocks and distinctive patterns all come together to present the three friends – whose faces are featured in the first panel, and their heritage.



The Contest Winners

8th graders Joan Moon (l) and Lynette Serrantes (r), won the contest with their horizontal diptych that combines their two different, yet complimentary, approaches to the mirrors and windows theme.



When asked why they collaborated on a poster, their first reaction was that they simply didn't want to work alone. But because they were long time friends, "we understand each other's artistic abilities and style – we're friends who talk, know each other's limits, and what we do best so we could create a more coherent piece – more meaningful to each other," says Joan.

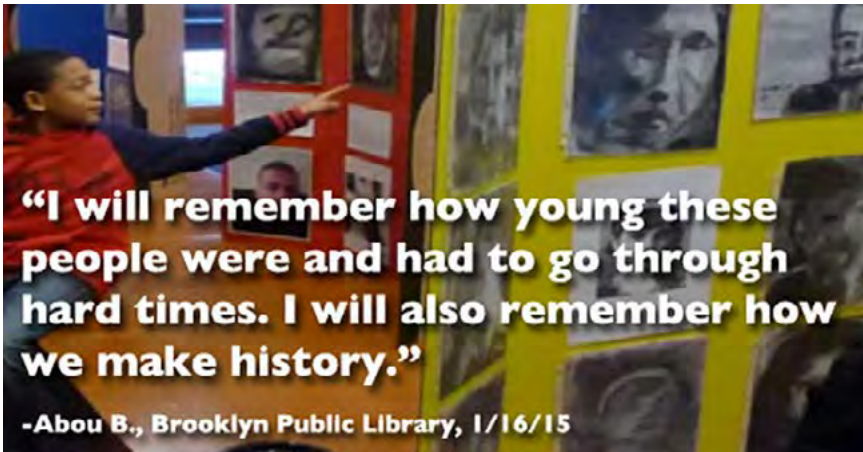
"In my picture along the top," relates Lynette, "the kids are in a classroom reading books about what goes on in the world – all looking straight ahead out a window". The classroom is the ENL classroom, which contains all kinds of students. "Books really teach children about real things that happen in the world" she continues, "like 'A Long Walk To Water' by Linda Sue Park (HMS Books, 2011) based on a boy from Sudan [displaced by] war and has to survive by joining a local tribe while he looks for his parents... it's like living another life".

Joan points out that her painting in the lower register is "more like fantasy – since she [Lynette] was drawing first so I tried to take Race Matters to different aspects of race and equality. The disabled person, the multi-racial couple, a person with the rainbow LGBT flag – I tried to represent more. The path in the middle shows a woman carrying a jug of water – it's an image from 'A Long Walk To Water', which unites the two young artists' intent. "The couple are people from a third world country, and that comes from the book too."

They both feel that their town is a safe place – and they believe that by people knowing each other more – when a person "is educated about diverse people and issues they're more able to help and help more effectively". They are happy and surprised by their winning the contest – the Race Matters committee certainly has the right to be proud of the results.



Making a Difference: Service through art



The Memory Project Productions: Face-to-Face

Linking the Past with the Present to Promote Historical Understanding and Compassion Laurie Weisman with Roz Jacobs

In this article, educator Laurie Weisman describes her collaboration with painter Roz Jacobs on documenting the painting process and constructing a curriculum that explores how the voice of the artist can address current issues of prejudice and injustice through an examination of the past. Using the stories of families lost to the Holocaust of Nazi Germany, students investigate their own personal and family narratives.

The Memory Project: Face-to-Face learning segment uses portraiture to connect personal narratives, past and present, through the experience of making portraits and sharing stories.

Roz Jacobs is the daughter of two Holocaust survivors. She's also a painter and an art educator. Around her 50th birthday she started to take stock of who she is and where she sits in history – both in terms of her art and her own heritage. The questions she asked herself led to a discovery that changed the course of her work.

It began with a photograph

For a few months in 2006, Jacobs had been playing with the idea of how to bring people into the painting process. Most people look at a painting and see only the end product and nothing of the struggle to arrive at what ends up on the canvas. She wanted to videotape the canvas itself as it developed, perhaps with glimpses of the palette and its changing swirls of color. "I hadn't fleshed out this idea, but I suddenly realized the subject would be my mother's younger brother, Kalman, my uncle. My mother told me a lot about what a bright child he was and how dear he was to her. He was the only person in the family



Jacobs family portrait



Enlargement of Kalman Jacob

who might have survived the war. Everyone else had been killed," Jacobs said. Though many survivors have no family photos, she was fortunate to have two photographs of Kalman. Jacobs decided for the exhibit about illuminating the painting process, she would use her Uncle Kalman as a subject.

"I envisioned videotaping myself painting Kalman nine times and making an exhibit that would juxtapose those paintings of him with nine video monitors showing the painting process in a time lapse, kaleidoscopic way." (Image below)





A wider view of the video installation with oil paintings

Laurie Weisman's background is in curriculum and educational media at companies like Sesame Workshop, Time For Kids and Bank Street College. "I came into the project to help with the video production, and ended up developing an entire curriculum as well as co-founding a non-profit."

"We interviewed Jacobs' mother and wove the story of their attempted escape from the Warsaw ghetto as teenagers, into the visual narrative of the developing paintings," Weisman explains. And what began with an idea for a multimedia museum exhibit led to a documentary film, a book that Jacobs wrote with her mother, and a curriculum project that's been used by thousands of people in the U.S. – translated into Polish and Hungarian and used by thousands more in Europe and Israel to date. It's a model that has been effective for students from fifth grade through university level and one that helps people deal with the past and the present in healing ways that promote communication, empathy, and resiliency.

The power of the process to engage young students was apparent at the exhibit's premier in 2006. Art teacher Carol Routman brought her students into the gallery and asked them to choose a favorite canvas, draw it, and write about their reaction to it.

Face to Face: Memory Project Curriculum

Launching the classroom project

The project begins with a 10-minute video that was the prototype for the exhibit.

The screen is divided into nine sections and in each one you see a painting developing as Jacobs' mother tells the story of Kalman and their attempted escape from the Warsaw ghetto. Jacobs talk about the moment she felt her uncle. "As I painted his head for the third or fourth time, I felt him looking up at the photographer behind a big box camera in a photography studio." She felt she was reclaiming his identity and his humanity by painting him. Nazi propaganda and policies dehumanized people, stripped them of their identity and humiliated them. This creative process was about humanizing and reclaiming identity.

Art Lesson in Light and Shade

Depending on the amount of time available, we pause after the video and give students a chance to write or draw their response to the video. What images stood out to them? What did it make them think or feel? Then we show a 6-minute videotaped lesson on using charcoal and black and white pastels to make a portrait based on black and white photographs looked at upside down. Why upside down? Because we want people to focus on observation and the movement of light and shadow – not on "making a picture" or on any preconceived notions they might have.

Touching the Past

We distribute a set of "Portrait Cards." On one side are photographs of 30 people who are Holocaust survivors, victims or rescuers. Their stories are on the back. Before reading the stories, the students work on pastel portraits based on those photographs. They quickly make a ground with charcoal and then begin working with the black and white pastels – moving with the shadow and the light. We allow about 20 minutes for this activity; then students turn over the pages and see what has emerged. We ask them to share with the whole group both their portrait and something about the person and/or the experience that touched them.



Connecting to the present

In a following session, we follow a similar process but the subjects of the portraits are members of the students' own families. For homework, they choose someone to interview about a life-changing experience. They scan a photograph and make an enlargement of their subject's head in black and white. They use the upside down technique for these subjects, and then share these portraits and stories with each other. This is a very special moment as students share their struggles, courage, and resilience or joy. There are often stories of immigration, of leaving difficult situations and assimilating in new environments where they weren't always welcome. There are stories of illness, loss, and courage. The interview experience is often a discovery for the student who hadn't known these stories before. They speak of newfound respect for family members, for each other's stories and for the suffering of the people who suffered during the Holocaust.

After sharing we hand out a reflection sheet that asks students four questions:

- What was it like to spend so much time looking at a photograph and making a portrait based on it?
- What do you think you will remember about this experience?
- Do you think it's important to understand the experience of your ancestors? Of other people's ancestors? Why or why not?
- What did you like and dislike about the art experience?



For closure, we divide the class into small groups and each is given a display panel. They use the portraits they made, come up with a title for their panel and captions for each image. Then they become the tour guides for their classmates and explain each panel. When the exhibit involves a reception, with guides, families are very moved to have their children share their stories.

Excerpts from the student reflections on participating in the Memory Project:
I felt connected to the unknown victims.
 Jordan R., Florida Holocaust Museum

My understanding is no longer about the amount of people killed in the Holocaust, but about the lives and precious moments each individual contributed to the world.
 Jorge A., Manhattan College



Being able to put faces to stories...I felt connected with the person after drawing them.
 Jenny B., Manhattan College

I really, truly enjoyed this project. I also loved hearing about my classmates' experiences. I never really knew how much I don't know my classmates. It has taught me not to assume I know everything about someone.
 Tonya K., Gr. 10, New York, NY

What I learned about my friend's experience, which relates to the Holocaust, is that no matter what happens, keep trying to go on.
 Brian S., Gr.10, New York, NY



I thought the entire process was really cool because when I was interviewing my mom, she got really emotional about some things and laughed about others. I felt like there was a new connection between my mom and I, and my mom and her family.
 Morgan J., Gr. 10, New York, NY

I think that the connection of art to history is very important because it can help you visualize things more. Also, when you are actually doing something you are able to form even a deeper connection to the subject, or at least I am personally, because you are doing something with your hands as well as your mind.
 Ariel C., Gr. 10, New York, NY



I will remember how to draw upside down. I will remember this because it made drawing easy and helped me to make it look better.
 Thomas M., Whitesville Central School, NY

Connecting Past and Present

It's not a big leap to make connections to current events. It seems to me that the more we know each other and discover our commonalities, the better we'll be able to communicate and take better care of each other as a community and ultimately as a nation. Making these portraits and linking the past with the present is a potent tool for communication and community.

Resources

Free curriculum materials including the videos, Portrait Cards and curriculum guide can be downloaded at memoryprojectproductions.com

We encourage you to use the project and send your work to us to become part of the International Portrait Gallery. <http://memoryprojectproductions.com/remembrance-portraits/>

“Making these portraits and linking the past with the present is a potent tool for communication and community.”

Participating teachers will become Memory Project Ambassadors promoting creativity and compassion. We'll send a certificate and create a community page on our website for your school so you can share your work and stories. We also offer workshops for a fee for schools or districts. You can contact us for more information. <http://memoryprojectproductions.com/community/>



Laurie Weisman has had a 30-year career in educational publishing, leading teams that created award-winning programs at Sesame Workshop, Scholastic, Time for Kids and at Bank Street College of Education. She has a Masters in Museum Education from Bank Street College.

Roz Jacobs is a New York City painter whose work is exhibited in galleries and museums around the world. Her film projects include the award-winning "Finding Kalman". Her book, *Finding Kalman: A Boy in Six Million*, co-written with her mother Anna Jacobs, was published by Abingdon Square Publishing and released as an e-book by Pearson.



Together, Weisman and Jacobs launched non-profit Memory Project Productions in 2008, and created its exhibits, programs, website, and the film *Finding Kalman*. They lead Memory Project workshops around the world.

MEMBERSHIP

Why Your NYSATA Membership Matters



NYSATA NEEDS YOU!

Your support, through your individual and district membership, helps to sustain the organization. We need your professional expertise, creativity, and willingness to serve to assure art education remains strong in our public schools. Becoming a member and getting involved at the local level allows you to take a more active role in the future of art education.

YOU NEED NYSATA!

There is much to be gained from belonging to a professional organization such as NYSATA. The Mission of NYSATA is to promote and advocate for excellence in art education throughout New York State. NYSATA works for you in numerous ways:

STRONG ADVOCACY:

NYSATA has served as watchdog for visual art education in New York State for 68 years! NYSATA has been integral in the establishment of mandated art education at all levels and in the development and now revision of the state standards for the visual arts. NYSATA's vigilance and advocacy efforts have kept the existing mandate for visual art at the Middle Level and High school intact. NYSATA sponsored art exhibits such as the NYS School Boards Show and the NYSATA Legislative Exhibit, and programs such as the Portfolio Project and the Olympics of the Visual Arts are advocacy tools that showcase the work of many students throughout the state.

Powerful teacher networks can be a way to make professional connections that not only support your career, but also enable powerful change, encourage growth, and ultimately make your classroom a better place.

Scholastic Inc. Contributor Megan Everette

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

Whether it is on a local level in each region or at the state level, NYSATA (who is now an approved CTLE provider) offers discipline specific professional development for visual art educators. Many regions offer workshops, and seminars, as well as gallery and artist studio visits. NYSATA's annual conference provides members a chance to see nationally recognized artists and experts in the field of art and art education. At the conference, we offer over 100 workshops that focus on advancing the profession, as well as development of artistic and intellectual skills. There are vendor exhibits, student and member exhibits, as well as round-table discussions. In addition, NYSATA is working together with other organizations and with higher education pre-service programs to bring more opportunities for professional growth to our members.

RESOURCES & INITIATIVES:

NYSATA provides members with many resources. Through professional development offerings, the NYSATA website, and the award winning *NYSATA News*, members can learn about current trends in art education and pedagogy. Programs such as Camp Sagamore Summer Institute, The NYSATA Portfolio Project, and The Olympics of The Visual Arts, NYSATA offers many learning opportunities for students and members alike. The Portfolio project is a NYS standards based assessment process that provides students with an opportunity to present specific directed portfolios at regional adjudication sites. OVA is an exciting and challenging opportunity for art students to demonstrate their creativity, ingenuity and critical thinking skills in friendly competition. The Summer Institute at Camp Sagamore offers members a week long opportunity to renew their creative spirits and re-energize themselves in a beautiful natural setting.

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Region	Region Name	Counties Included in Each Region
1	Western	Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Genesee, Niagara, Orleans, Wyoming
2	Finger Lakes	Allegany, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Wayne, Seneca, Steuben, Yates
3	Central	Cayuga, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga, Oswego, St. Lawrence
4	Southern	Broome, Chemung, Chenango, Cortland, Delaware, Otsego, Schuyler, Tioga, Tompkins
5	Adirondack	Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Hamilton
6	Capital Eastern	Schoharie, Albany, Columbia, Fulton, Greene, Montgomery, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Warren, Washington
7	Southeastern	Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, Rockland, Sullivan, Ulster, Westchester
8	New York City	New York, Kings, Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens, Richmond
9	Long Island-Nassau	Nassau
10	Long Island-Suffolk	Suffolk