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the NYSATA news

An Official Print Publication of the New York State Art Teachers Association
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navigating the waves



NYSATA 77th ANNUAL CONFERENCE
November 21-23, 2025 Binghamton NY

keynotes



wanda b. knight, ph.d.



chris "chilly" rodriguez



ohan breiding



anna warfield

Artists' Celebration Cupcakes

Lesson Plan for Grades 3–12



Design: Cut liner and cake board from watercolor paper and design for selected artist. Form cup by joining ends of liner.



Construct: Fill liner with a ball made of scraps, covered with felt. Glue into cup.



Decorate: "Frost" cupcake. Design a cake topper to celebrate the contributions of the selected artist.

Connect with and celebrate artists with a faux cake designed to honor their contributions.

Students research a renowned artist, then design a non-edible cupcake that gives thanks to their achievements.

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President's Message



Dear NYSATA Colleagues and Friends, It is with immense honor, humility, and excitement that I greet you today as your newly elected President. To step into this role — within an organization rooted in advocacy, creativity, and equity since 1948 — is both a profound privilege and a deep responsibility. I come to this role not only as an educator but as an artist — a creator and advocate who believes in the power

of art to navigate societal currents, spark transformation, and amplify voices that too often go unheard.

In the words of Maya Angelou, "*Courage is the most important of all the virtues because without courage, you can't practice any other virtue consistently.*" Her insight reminds us that our work as artists requires bravery — bravery to challenge norms, to uplift marginalized voices, and to navigate uncertainty with conviction.

As we set sail on the journey of the 2025 NYSATA Conference, *Navigating the Waves*, I invite you to envision our mission as a courageous voyage toward resilience, connection, and hope — a journey steered by our collective creativity and commitment.

What does it mean to be an *artist* in these times?

An artist is someone who refuses to silence the stirrings of injustice, despair, or exclusion. You are the educators who guide students toward healing through color, expression, and imagination. You are the artists and leaders who center equity, inclusion, and representation in every classroom, every curriculum, every community.

Today, as NYSATA embarks on this *Navigating the Waves* voyage, we confront numerous challenges — shifting policies, evolving technologies, and the lasting impact of global uncertainty. And yet, the promise of art education remains unwavering: it fosters resilience, supports healing, and builds bridges across difference.

This year's conference invites us to explore:

- Resilience and Healing Through Art: How have we — and our students — used art to overcome adversity and nurture emotional well-being?
- Creativity in the Face of Adversity: What lessons does art offer when the world feels uncertain — lessons of adaptability, optimism, and human spirit?
- Art as a Tool for Social Change & Inclusivity: How can art carry voices toward recognition and equity? Angelou's call, "*Try to be a rainbow in someone's cloud*", inspires us to use art as a bridge to empathy and inclusion.

As your President, I pledge to sail alongside you in these explorations. Together, we will anchor our efforts in meaningful equity and inclusive practice, and harness technological tools to expand art's reach and impact.

Commitments for Our Journey

1. Empowerment Through Equity: I will champion initiatives that cultivate diverse voices — fostering representation at

every level within our organization and classrooms.

2. Community & Connection: Together, we will build networks of support — across regions, backgrounds, and experiences — to sustain one another through both calm and turbulent seas.
3. Creative Innovation: We will embrace new methods — digital tools, inclusive curricula, socially-engaged projects — to deepen the relevance and reach of art education.
4. Advocacy for Change: NYSATA represents more than 6,000 art educators in New York State — our work shapes policy, informs practice, and sustains the very fabric of creative learning. Our collective voice matters. Let us make people feel seen, valued, and inspired.

Setting Sail Together

Here's to the voyage ahead. May this conference renew our sense of purpose. May our collective art, advocacy, and courage create ripples that become waves — waves that carry our communities toward justice, joy, connection, and creativity.

Thank you for trusting me to lead. Art — and art education — continues to shape communities, spark empathy, and elevate the human spirit. I look forward to navigating these waves together — side by side, embracing this call to courageous creativity alongside all of you.

I invite you — our members — to step forward with your ideas, your passion, your vision. Whether you aspire to serve on a committee, present at the conference, lead a regional initiative, or bring a new project to life — this is your invitation to engage. Your idea, however small it seems, has the power to inspire ripples across our organization and beyond. Today, I challenge each of us to embody that courage — to navigate forward, not from the sidelines, but from the helm.

Why Get Involved?

- NYSATA thrives because members like you bring fresh ideas into leadership roles — on committees such as Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (ED&I), Youth Art Month, Olympics of the Visual Arts, Portfolio Project, Legislative Exhibit, NYSSBA, regional boards, and state-level positions. These roles help shape state-wide advocacy, amplify diverse voices, enrich programming, and ensure our organization reflects the rich tapestry of our profession.

Together, let us deepen our commitments to creativity, connection, and equity. Your voice matters here — more than you may realize. Your energy, creativity, and lived experience are invaluable. Step forward to lead. Show up to serve. Share your vision. Whether you are joining a committee, nominating yourself for a leadership role, proposing a breakout session, or simply offering to mentor a new member — know that your contributions matter deeply. Your leadership — even in the form of one inspired idea — could transform our sea of waves into a sea of possibility. I look forward to collaborating with you, learning from you, and sailing forward together.

Colorfully Yours,

Kelly Verdi, President, NYSATA

About the News

The Association shall focus on the following purposes in support of its mission:

- Secure wider recognition of the importance of art education for all
- Develop and implement strategies for statewide advocacy.
- Research, analyze, and inform the membership about current policy and practice, as well as social, legal, educational, health-related, and economic issues that affect art education.
- Provide high quality professional growth opportunities for the membership.
- Recognize the achievements of students and art educators in New York State.
- Foster leadership among members of the Association and within the profession of art education.
- Monitor and influence policies and legislation that affect art education at state and local levels.
- Eliminate discrimination; cultivate values of equity, diversity and inclusion; promote equal access, opportunity, and voice across groups of people of diverse backgrounds and with diverse needs

NYSATA News Mission Statement

The *NYSATA News* desires to bring informative content in an easy to read and understand form to the art teaching professionals of our New York State Art Teachers Association membership.

Written by art teachers from pre-K to college level, this newsletter seeks to present meaningful and helpful narratives about the challenges, failures, and successes in art classrooms. The editors feel that there are valuable resources for educational theory and practice available elsewhere – and that this publication showcases authentic classroom experiences, where art teachers reveal their insights, frustrations, discoveries, mistakes, and triumphs – personal and instructional.

Our mission is to be a platform for teachers' voices. We believe that our pages are a valuable place to share experiences, and that the honest, informal quality of the writing provides realistic inspiration and a genuine sense of community in our profession.

The mission of NYSATA is to promote and advocate for excellence in art education throughout New York State.

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, [Valerie Savage](mailto:Valerie.Savage@nysata.org). Advertising inquiries should be sent to sponsorship@nysata.org.

Inquiries about receiving the *NYSATA News* should be directed to the Membership Chair Terri Konu at tkonu@nysata.org. 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 2012, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2021, 2022, and 2025. 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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Youth Art Month.....	Patti Krakoff

NYSATA members interested in serving on this board or contributing articles are encouraged to contact Valerie Savage at valhsav@gmail.com

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			NAEA

Editor's Message

Valerie Savage



Art is a superpower! These are words used by two separate authors, Kelly Verdi and Kathleen Bushek, in this current edition of the *NYSATA News*. Looking at the educational setting, we know that art is often referred to as an “extra” or “special” but never elevated and called a “superpower”. In fact, the needs of an art classroom are often overlooked, leaving teachers to instruct in less-than-ideal classrooms, with few supplies and without student support. Left out of decision making, art educators can feel unheard, and unappreciated. Unfortunately, many schools fail to recognize the impact and value of art. Thankfully, art educators are experts in unraveling the many powers of art.

In this issue of the *NYSATA News*, authors share their responses to the theme the *Power of Art*. Some articles are personal, such as Lauren Nels’ reflection and interview with a student following a tragic accident and Heather Heckel’s reflection on her travel abroad. Two separate articles centered in the classroom written by Karen Rosner and Rachel Wright, share insights into how the power of art can engage students in discussion and in the creation of art. From personal experience and from the classroom, Nick Napierala provides insight into his recent paintings and how he builds connections with students. Extending out to the community, Thom Knab shares how student postcards can be used to spread positivity. In a similar fashion, Scott Murray and Linda Egan, describe their school wide work in using the power of art to promote character building.

Article submissions from NYSATA’s committee chairs and program highlights are also worth your attention. Check out the information on the NYSED’s newly released *Portrait of a Graduate*. Advocate and share it with your administrators! Will you participate in OVA, the Legislative Exhibit, YAM, or attend the NYSATA Summer Institute this year? How about the [2025 NYSATA Conference](#)? Attend the conference and continue to explore the transformative potential of art.

Thank you to all who shared their insights on the *Power of Art* in this issue. Let us use these and our own experiences to advocate for art education! Wishing all superpower teachers a wonderful fall.



2025

October

New York State School Board Association (NYSSBA) online exhibit

November 20

NYSATA Pre-Conference

November 20

NYSATA Board of Trustees Meeting, Binghamton NY

November 21-23

NYSATA Conference, DoubleTree Binghamton NY

November 26

Yam Flag Designs Due

2026

January (late)

NYSATA Legislative Exhibit Registration

January/February

Registration for NYSATA Summer Institute at Great Camp Sagamore

Feb. 1

NYSATA News article submission deadline

March

Youth Art Month

March

Executive Officer Self-Nominations (President-Elect, Treasurer)

March 5-7

NAEA National Convention, Chicago IL

March 13

OVA Team Registration Due

April

Self-Nominations for Region Elections (Regions 2, 4, 6, 8, 10)

April 18

NYSATA Board of Trustees Meeting, Binghamton NY

April 30

OVA Saratoga Springs NY

May 8-22

NYSATA Legislative Exhibit, Albany NY



The Power of Art: A Unique Student Perspective

Lauren Nels

Editor's Note: Lauren Nels interviews a former student regarding the impact of art on her recovery following a serious accident. The interview is honest and transparent, as the student describes the growing significance of producing meaningful artwork in her life.

During my teaching career in the Homer Central School District, I have had the privilege of observing students celebrate success and experience joy in learning. I have also seen students deal with loss and tragedy. Art class, like any class where students feel they can find success, is often a place they can open up without being judged and take risks without fear of failure. Students can step out of their comfort zone to learn more about themselves, and the art room can become the place where students process trauma and find solace.

I am fortunate to have stayed in touch with a former student, Kaelynne D., who was in a boating accident, the summer after her 2nd grade year, which resulted in her losing an arm and leg. Having taught Kaelynne in 2nd, 6th and 7th grade and coached her on the volleyball court, I have witnessed her tenacity. She has never complained about her situation and in fact, she often makes light of it. Her willingness to jump back into school activities after surgeries and her drive to work harder than other students when she could easily make excuses, is inspiring. Today she is a Scholastics Gold Key Photography winner, and a college-bound student planning to study International Relations. Kaelynne and I have connected throughout her high school career and recently sat down to reflect on her artistic journey.

Kaelynne had a lot to say about how important art has been in her life as we began talking. She has grown up in an artistic household and has an artistic grandmother. They enjoy sharing creative experiences, and as a result her grandmother has influenced Kaelynne's artistic path. Kaelynne was also eager to discuss her artistic journey in the school setting and how important her teachers have been in helping her realize how much she has grown personally while processing trauma. Currently, she is taking high school art classes with her art teacher, Mr. Wallace. She refers to him fondly as Wallace, throughout our conversation.

Q: What has art meant to you at different points in your life?

A: Meeting Wallace, I've been very fortunate that I've had him every year for studio art class. I would say Wallace and I have had a really good connection, and I think that's probably one of the most important parts because through working with him I've understood that I'm not a

productive artist at all (laughs). I'm a perfectionist. Our two-week projects, I won't have done for two and a half months. And thankfully, he's very understanding of that. He understands that if I'm going to put effort into it, I want it to look like I put effort into it.

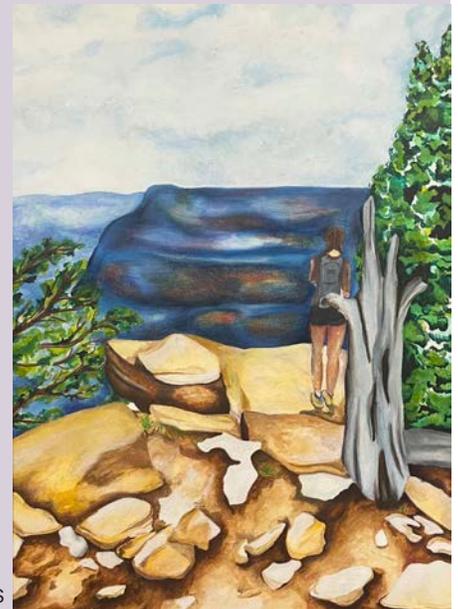
Yeah, so 10th grade was when my dad and my stepmom split. They divorced that winter. That was a really big, pivotal point in my life. Wallace and I had talked because, you know, there's obviously not much that you can do about that. Art was definitely, an escape for me.

And at that point, I did a mural in my bedroom. So, there's a mountain mural on my bedroom wall. Every time I just needed a break, or I needed a minute I would just put headphones in and paint.

In another instance, we moved houses and as crazy as it seems painting the entire house was so therapeutic to me. My dad would be at work, and I would just paint all day. And I'm not even painting anything. I'm just painting the walls.

The fall of my junior year was the start of my photography business. Sometimes it baffles me, thinking about

how far that's come, which is awesome. I love going to all the home games and taking pictures and everybody loves it. It's a very community building thing where everybody knows I'm going to be there, and I will have my camera and people look forward to that which is really nice. And even this year, I'm doing a new project. I'm vlogging all of senior year. And then for the senior awards ceremony, it's going to be one big, compiled video of all the senior events. The girls' basketball team



asked me to do a highlight reel to document their season too.

Q: Did art help you after your accident?

A: One hundred percent.

This is when Kaelynne started to explain some stages she has gone through in art class with her projects and dealing with her accident.

A: Actually, really funny story. There's a piece of me standing on the edge of the Grand Canyon. I was doing it, and it was three months later. [*Because she is a perfectionist*]

And I'm sitting in Wallace's room. I have headphones on. I'm locked in. I'm paying attention to this project...didn't even realize it...I gave myself two legs. So, I don't have prosthetics in the project. I told Wallace, and I'm like, I'm just going to leave it. It was in colored pencil too, so there's nothing I could do.

As Kaelynne got older, she moved on to another level of artmaking.

In my artist statement I talked about one of my 10th grade long-term pieces. I had finished a drawing of me kayaking and you can see my prosthetic. I had my prosthetic arm on in the kayak. And that was the first piece that I had ever done that was about me, that you could see my prosthetics and that kind of stuff.

Next was the most moving one for her family.

This past school year I did a painting. Our instructions were "Emotion", so it was any emotion, any media. I did a painting of me while I was in the hospital, while I was in a coma. And so, I painted it, and I talked to Wallace about it, and we went through that. And my parents had no idea until the art show. My mom bawled her eyes out. I don't think there was any way that I could have prepared her for that.



So that was a really big moment, and I had talked about how moving from that project [*the kayak*] to the project in the hospital, you don't realize it, but, sitting there and paying attention to every detail, I had done the one of me in the kayak in graphite. So, it was line after line after line. Yeah. That project took me forever. But it's sitting with it and understanding every aspect to it. I didn't realize it until after I was done with it. But it helps you work through trauma.

Q: I wonder if you thought that would happen, or were you naturally just ready, whereas maybe two years prior you would not have been?

A: Ninth grade me, not knowing everything that I know about art. Then it was like,

Oh, this picture looks so cute "I'm gonna draw it," not understanding the layers to it.



I had told Wallace that I wasn't going to enter it [*the painting of herself in the hospital*] into Scholastics and it was just going to stay in my cubby which would have been a fair thing. And he said, you know, ultimately, at the end of the day, that's your choice. It's your piece.

And I ended up putting it up. I am glad that I did because I think it's very important. You

know, I can sit there, and I can draw a mountain all day. But, at the end of the day, the pieces that I think matter the most are the ones that make you feel something.

Q: Is there anything else you would want to share? Think about an art teacher reading this — Anything you think teachers would appreciate reading?

A: I do like art as hefty as it is. We get a lot of work done in the time that we have. I entered 11 pieces into my show last year. Did I think I was going to get all that done? No. Did I? Yes. So, as stressful as it is, as time-consuming as it is, I do appreciate that Wallace pushes us that much.

You know, you can hand me a research paper assignment, and I'll work towards the research paper. And what I get out of it at the end matters more than the fact that I get the project done. So, like what I talked about with the (hospital) painting, not only was that something that helped me grow as an artist, I got to experience having an emotional connection to it.

There have been different stages to Kaelynne's artistic development, and this became clear to both of us after my interview with her. Her work at the

start of high school was admittedly less significant than it would eventually become. In her sophomore year, she drew a photo of herself with her prosthetic in it for the first time. The following year, she painted a photo of herself in her most vulnerable state in the hospital. While painting, she “lived” with the image, reproducing every detail. This image captures a moment in time she has since grown so far from, but one that has shaped her into the person she is today. Kaelynne is thriving and proving that no barrier will stop her as she keeps looking to the future. She continues to use art as a healing process. That is powerful.



Lauren Nels, a resident of Tully, NY, is a ceramic artist, tufter, jewelry maker and art educator at Homer Junior High School. In addition to teaching, she serves as the co-chair of Region 3 of NYSATA, sits on the board of Cortland Loaves and Fishes, and owns The Artist Seen LLC. Through her small business, she offers ceramics workshops for both teachers and students, with a focus on raku-fired pottery.

Lauren is passionate about community involvement — not just as an educator, but as a community member. She strongly believes that the more time and energy we invest in our communities and youth programs, the more our families and neighborhoods thrive.

The Power of Art to Advocate, Celebrating a Return of the Live, In-Person NYSATA Legislative Exhibit

Carol Pinkans, Legislative Exhibit Co-Chair, Immediate Past President

A note from the NYSATA Archives: How the annual NYSATA Legislative Student Exhibit came to be...

“The idea for the exhibit was born in 1990 when brainstorming how we could connect the work of our member art educators with people who have a say in educational funding and policy making for the State. The idea for a Legislative Student Exhibit was born, and the first exhibit was Spring of 1991. Our aim was and still is to engage them in the art education curriculum and demonstrate to our Legislators how important art is to their constituency by seeing student artwork and meeting face to face with the young artists, their proud families, dedicated art educators, and supportive administrators. We believe that by giving the Legislators an opportunity to talk to their young artists about their ideas communicated in their images, the skills they have developed and the resources they have become aware of in the art making process, that they can better understand why we say that art education needs to be supported with funds during the school day.”

-Joan L. Davidson, NYSATA Legislative Exhibit Founder

The NYSATA Legislative Exhibit is the flagship event for Youth Art Month and is the largest public display of student artwork in a NYS government building by NYSATA. Held in the Legislative Office Building, Albany, NY, this exhibit is co-sponsored by New York State United Teachers (NYSUT) and supported by the NYS Legislators. This distinguished NYSATA program successfully commands a great respect for the importance of art education and the visual/media arts as a part of students’ educational journey. It is an honor for students to be chosen to participate in this prestigious exhibit which showcases the amazing artwork of NYS students, inspiring respect and admiration for their incredible artistic accomplishments.

From 1991 through 2019, Legislators from across the state were invited to recognize the artistic accomplishments of their aspiring artist constituents at a reception for students, parents, teachers, and administrators held in the Legislative Office Building. Families pre-arranged a meet-and-greet with the Assemblyman and/or Senator from their local district, which often included a photo session, office tour and/or written correspondences with their Legislators. The reception concluded with an inspiring and interactive ceremony, as dignitaries remarked on the importance of the Visual Arts, recognizing students for their artistic accomplishments and celebrating the important roles of family and educators in children’s lives.

March 2020 and the impact of Covid radically changed many things and when faced with extreme circumstances, the NYSATA Legislative Exhibit morphed into a different presentation, celebrating student artwork virtually through a Google slideshow. And for the following years, student artwork was celebrated via NYSATA Website. Dignitaries gave their remarks through video or written statements within the slideshow. With dignity, student artwork continued to be recognized of being worthy of honor and respect through the Virtual Edition of the Legislative Student Art Exhibit.



Gratefully, 2025 marks a year that all the stars have aligned to celebrate the amazing, inspiring, and thought-provoking artwork of NYS *aspiring artist constituents*. **The NYSATA Legislative Exhibit continues to remain in celebration of March Youth Art Month as a virtual preview of the upcoming in-person exhibit held in May. On May 21, 2025**, Legislators from across the state recognized and celebrated the artistic accomplishments of NYS students at an opening reception held on the 3rd Floor Terrace Level of the Legislative Office Building. During the ceremony, Assembly Honorary Chair, The Honorable Assemblymember Karem McMahon and Senate Honorary Chair, The Honorable Senator Jose M. Serrano, presented a New York State Senate Proclamation to exhibit Co-Chair Carol Pinkans commemorating NYSATA's 35th Annual Legislative Exhibit. Such an incredible event that had a double celebration, for in March 2025, the New York State Assembly recognized Youth Art Month with a proclamation.



The Legislative Exhibit Committee continues to work diligently to offer a NYSATA program that celebrates Youth Art Month with slideshow preview in March that is accessible throughout the year, and an in-person exhibit in May that includes opportunities for families to connect with their Legislators with prearranged *Meet & Greets* and possibilities for tours of the state capital.

The next annual NYSATA Legislative Exhibit is Friday, May 8, 2026–Friday, May 22, 2026, with an Opening Reception & Ceremony, Tuesday, May 19, 2026. Registration will open late January 2026, virtual preview March 2026, celebrating Youth Art Month. Volunteers are welcome to assist with the many virtual and in-person moving parts of this exhibit.

Thank you for supporting this NYSATA program and all you do for students and art education.

-
- **2026 Legislative Exhibit dates:**
- **Friday, May 8, 2026 - Friday, May 22, 2026**
- 3rd Floor Terrace Level, Legislative Office Building (LOB)
-
- **Opening Reception Tuesday, May 20, 2026,**
- **12pm-2pm.** •••••



The Powerful Art of Travel

Heather Heckel

Editor's Note: Heather Heckel shares how her celebratory travel abroad provided opportunities to experience art's ability to inspire, unite, and offer refuge — a message she wishes to pass on to her colleagues and students.

They say life begins at 40. This past summer for my milestone birthday I gave myself the gift of a month of traveling across Europe since I had never been before. This is reminiscent of the *Grand Tour* that began during the Renaissance, a time of rebirth, which included educating oneself by traveling through Europe with Italy as the final destination. My itinerary included England, France, Portugal, Spain, and Italy, and I educated myself by getting to know various cities on foot and visiting numerous museums. As an artist and art educator I have always appreciated art history, and I share that interest with my middle school students by exposing them to historical artists and art movements with every project. I often find myself turning to the comfort of familiar images during times of stress.

Unfortunately, we are living in emotional and divisive times in our country, and it is taxing to try to process the chaos that we are bombarded with on a seemingly daily basis. On my trip I viewed historical and contemporary artworks through the lens of self-reflection that comes with starting a new decade in my life, and my passion for art exploration as a way to foster hope, resilience, and optimism, during these tumultuous times. The life lessons that I learned on my version of a Grand Tour are good reminders for myself and my colleagues, as well as teachable moments for my students.

Look Twice, Not All Is What It Seems

While in London I visited an installation, *The Bourbon Street Chippy*, by contemporary artist Lucy Sparrow. She calls herself a “feltist” and sews everyday objects out of felt, and the result is a playful world of plush objects mimicking everyday objects. I visited a Chippy Shop where customers normally get fish and chips to go. The



photos on the wall, advertisements on the bulletin board, the fish, chips, condiments, and drinks were all hand-sewn using felt and stuffed with filling. In a world of artificial intelligence and scammers who are trying to deceive us it is important to confirm the authenticity of things, and of course to continue to make meaningful artwork ourselves, by hand. I have found that the repetitive movements of sewing, the tactile focus required to assemble a piece of artwork with fabric and thread, and the absence of a screen has an incredible calming effect on myself and my students.

Try to See The Big Picture. Or The Devil Is In The Details



While in London I also saw the solo exhibit, *Jenny Saville: The Anatomy of Painting*, at the National Portrait Gallery. Her pieces are made to see in person since they are so large — you can view them from across the gallery to see the full figure, and up close to see all the smaller colors, textures,

and shapes (elements of design!) that comprise them. A portrait by her is like a headline, and seeing all the small steps and details that go into constructing a finished work is like reading the whole story. I was reminded that when things feel overwhelming, we can take a breath and zoom out to get perspective and find clarity in a larger context.

No One Is Perfect

While in Paris I saw Alexandros of Antioch's marble sculpture *Venus de Milo* created approximately two thousand years ago. Even though her arms have never been recovered we have learned to know her in her current, incomplete form. We could argue that she is more beautiful and intriguing because of what is missing. It makes me think of Bob Ross' *Happy Accidents*,



or Barney Saltzberg's *Beautiful Oops!* I teach my students that mistakes are part of the creative process, and part of being human. Embracing failures and learning from them can lead to a better outcome. We can celebrate our differences and accept each other, flaws and all.

There Is More Than One Right Answer

While in Florence I saw two versions of *David*, the 1440's bronze statue by Donatello and the 1550's marble sculpture by Michelangelo. Although both artists depicted the same biblical figure, the differences are numerous: medium, color, size, atmosphere, and presentation. Donatello and Michelangelo were referencing the same



person, but interpreted him in markedly different ways, and as a viewer I found them to be both equally awe-inspiring. In fact, seeing both sculptures gave me a deeper understanding of the story. It reminded me that art provides infinite interpretations, and the way something is presented can influence our feelings and opinions of it. Someone can read or hear the same story and interpret it differently. I give my students parameters for each project but am endlessly fascinated to see how different their results are. Perhaps the "right answer" is absorbing different viewpoints for a deeper understanding of a topic.

Stay Calm

While in Paris I saw DaVinci's early 1500's oil painting *Mona Lisa*. I waited for over an hour in her packed gallery to get an unobstructed view, and to take a selfie with her of course. I was struck by how small the painting was, especially since her presence is so far reaching that she seems larger than life, like a celebrity. I also appreciated her serene expression.



Despite the clamoring around her she was a quiet and steady presence, like a stationary rock in a raging river. It was a lesson in finding inner peace despite the bodily chaos of fellow visitors or the mental chaos of current events. If things feel stressful, take a deep breath and try to invoke our friend Mona Lisa.

My summer travels this year were varied site-specific experiences featuring different languages, food, climates, and cultures, but I found the common thread to be my enjoyment of witnessing others viewing artworks as part of a collective

audience. We seem to be focusing on our differences as a nation lately, but this was a unifying moment because it was a shared experience with strangers from all over the world who were paying attention to the same thing. It is easy to become irritated by crowds of people and long lines, but in this case, I was thrilled to see the outpouring of visitors who were interested in seeing works of art in person. Famous artworks and artists pull people in, and visitors are still excited about something tangible in the real world despite living in a digital era. These tenets are ways of thinking that result from an art education and are often reasons that we use to justify our subject and careers, such as the importance of creativity and critical thinking skills. So, the next time we feel overwhelmed, let us turn to art to uplift and remind us to stay positive, look for the lesson, and remember why we teach art. One of my passions as an art educator is to demonstrate how art has the ability to inspire the curiosity of self-reflection and the passion for lifelong learning, and how the power of both viewing and creating art can serve as a haven of rest in the frenzy of everyday life.



Dr. Heather Heckel, EdD is an artist/art educator living in New York City and teaching on Long Island. Her award-winning artwork has been shown internationally, is in several national permanent collections, and is featured regularly in the Park Slope Reader. She is

a lifelong learner who loves to travel and has been awarded 29 artist residencies through the National Park Service and Bureau of Land Management. She is in her 13th year of teaching public school art and has taught at the college and middle/high school levels. She earned her BFA in Illustration from the Ringling College of Art and Design, her MAT in Art Education from the School of Visual Arts, her MFA in Painting from the Savannah College of Art and Design, and her EdD in Educational Leadership from the University of the Cumberlands. Her research investigated the relationships between art education, leadership, and creativity. She lives with her two dozen houseplants and loves going to the movies and trying new vegan restaurants.

**NYSATA News is seeking writers
for the 2026 Winter Edition
Theme: Refresh and Grow
Deadline is February 1, 2026
Details on page 75**



The Power of the Artwork to Engage Students in Great Conversations and The Power of the Artistic Process to Inspire Creativity

Karen Rosner

Editor's Note: Karen Rosner explains how students can feel empowered and validated by discussing artwork through observation and inquiry of the artistic process. She provides examples of these discussions, and how they help students find new possibilities and directions for their own artwork.

All art forms have the power to move us aesthetically, emotionally, and challenge us intellectually. As visual arts educators we especially appreciate the power of the artist's work to engage our students in great conversations, and the power of the artist's process to inspire students' own creativity. This article addresses both.

As visual arts educators we have experienced great student conversations generated by a work of art; the active listening resulting in a lively give and take among students, and the building of consensus help to create a community of learners. And we have our share of memorable moments. For me, when I was an art and literacy staff developer at PS 7 in the Bronx, it was a group of third-graders spending an entire art period engaged in a student-run conversation to figure out a room's unusual perspective and its animal-like furniture in [Large Los Angeles Interior](#) by David Hockney.

It was also a sixth-grader whose class had explored and discussed Claude Monet's [Bridge Over a Pond of Water Lilies](#). He added to the class conversation of the next work, [The Sunken Path, L'Estaque](#) by Fauvist artist André Derain by passionately exclaiming, "Monet would never do that!"

When fourth graders discussed [The Goldsmith in His Shop](#) by Northern Renaissance artist, Petrus Christus, the conversation turned to the meticulous attention to detail which fascinated the students, especially one young man. He claimed to know what materials the artist used...colored pencils. Of course, we can find that remark amusing, but it was a brilliant observation. If a fourth grader wanted to create a fine detailed drawing, what would they use? Crayons, oil pastels, marker? Of course not. A set of sharpened colored pencils would be perfect.

These small but wonderful moments were all products of grand conversations around works of art, with the teacher taking a back seat and allowing students to carry the conversation. Students had learned to be active listeners, responding to their peers, questioning them, and asking them to say more. They had learned to expect others to listen to them. Students who might be emerging readers, perhaps

reluctant to take part in a discussion of a chapter book, when prompted by a visual image, were eager to join the conversation.

In all three examples, students felt empowered. They had something to say and were not afraid of sharing their thoughts. Their peers listened and responded, and they felt heard and validated. These conversations demonstrate the power of art to build community, draw students out, and honor their observations and ideas.

Along with the power of the artist's work to engage our students in great conversations, learning about an artist's process has the power to spark students to examine their own artistic process, based on what they discover, and experiment with new ideas and materials.

We all are familiar with the quote attributed to Confucius, *I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand.* It has been argued that the source is actually Xunzi, a Zhou Dynasty philosopher. A rough translation of his thinking is, *Not hearing is not as good as hearing, hearing is not as good as seeing, seeing is not as good as knowing, knowing is not as good as acting; true learning continues until it is put into action.*

As visual arts educators, we get it. Whether it is *I do and I understand*, or *knowing is not as good as acting*, after observing an artist's work and learning about their process, it is in the doing, in the act of making art, where students truly understand how an artist's process can empower them to experiment and challenge themselves to make new and unique art.

In contrast to the artists mentioned above, Hockney, Monet, Derain, and Petrus Christus, all part of the male dominated Western Canon, the following discussion about the power of the artist's process to inspire our students references the artistic process of two contemporary women artists, Barbara Chase-Riboud and Rachel Jones.

As part of Chase-Riboud's enormous body of sculptural works, her commemorative steles of Malcolm X stand out.

ART: Humanities Greatest Superpower

Kelly Verdi, NYSATA President

*Editor's Note: Kelly Verdi humorously and clearly explains why art is a **Superpower**. She challenges the reader to lean into this power and to nurture the student artist.*

As art teachers, we are the keepers of culture and the sculptors of souls. We help students find their voice before they know they have one — often with nothing but a handful of markers, a cardboard box, and a vision.

To borrow from the legendary Georgia O'Keeffe:

"I found I could say things with color and shapes that I couldn't say any other way."

That is what we do every day — we help young people say the things they do not yet have words for. We help them process the world through creation, expression, and sometimes a bit of messy experimentation. (Looking at you, papier-mâché projects that somehow end up on the ceiling.)

But jokes aside, our work matters more than ever. In a world that moves fast, art slows us down. In a time of division, art connects us. And in an age of noise, art gives us meaning.

Let us be honest: art teachers are a different breed. We see the world in color swatches and metaphors. We teach empathy through brushstrokes, patience through perspective, and innovation through sticky fingers and half-dried clay. In other words, we have superpowers.

Yes — I said it. **Art is a superpower.** And you, my fellow art educators, are the cape-wearing heroes shaping the next generation of creators, thinkers, problem-solvers, and culture-shapers. I have always said I wear my superhero cape backwards; it just looks like a smock.

Think about it.

- We teach students how to observe deeply in a world that rushes past.
- We help them express truth in a society that often rewards filters over authenticity.
- We challenge them to solve visual problems, reimagine possibilities, and create meaning out of chaos.

As Henri Matisse once said: *"Creativity takes courage."*

And we help our students find that courage — whether they are painting a portrait, sculpting a self-image, or taking the brave leap of putting their work out into the world. Art gives people power. The power to communicate beyond language. To protest. To heal. To remember. To hope.

In fact, when the world faces its darkest moments — war, injustice, trauma, isolation — artists often lead us toward light.

As President, my goal is to make sure *you* feel supported, seen, and celebrated in the work you do. Because the power of art is not just something we teach — it is something we live.

Let us lean into our power. Let us lead boldly, laugh often, and never underestimate the magic that happens when a student realizes their voice matters — and that art can carry it far. I hope we never stop being artists — and that we nurture the inner artists of all our students, from kindergartners with finger paint to high schoolers discovering their own visual language.

Let us continue to make bold strokes, happy accidents, deep meaning, and, of course, a little humor along the way. Never be afraid to color outside the lines. Let us make this year one of fearless creativity, fierce advocacy, and fantastic messes.

Colorfully yours,

Kelly Verdi

— Here to fight for art, equity, and the last clean paintbrush in the sink.



Kelly Verdi is a dedicated art educator from Long Island, NY, with over 21 years of teaching experience. Recently, after 20 years of teaching High School she has moved to Plainview-Old Bethpage Middle School and is loving every minute of it. She currently serves as NYSATA President, NYSSBA Exhibit Chair, NYCEA Rep and NY NAEA Delegate. Her NYSATA roles help fuel her passion to lead statewide efforts to promote

and support quality visual arts education. Kelly is a passionate advocate for creativity in the classroom and professional growth among art educators. Outside of her professional life, she enjoys making art, country line dancing and spending time with her husband, three children and her dog Lola.

The Power of Art: Engagement

Rachel Wright

Editor's note: Rachel Wright creates an environment where every student feels acknowledged, valued, and empowered. Her approach fosters a sense of inclusion and belonging, motivating students to explore their own artistic voices.



Figure 1: Burchfield Visit



Figure 2: Experimental Wet Cyanotype



Figure 3: Principles of Design Collage

Dialogue creates engagement. Now and over the last decade+ years of teaching different levels of visual art, I continue to navigate the waves and learn through trial and error what facilitates a powerful impact on students. I have found that in order to create an authentic and powerful learning environment where understanding and synthesis happens, I must actively engage with students in a way where they feel heard, seen, and supported.

Experiential learning is a great way to engage with students and give them real life hands-on experiences. Whether we are looking at and discussing art at a museum (Figure 1) or in the classroom, exploring the outdoors to find inspiration/materials, or taking learned techniques and applying them to works of art in the studio (Figure 2.), I continue to see how students can be excellent observers. I have learned to try to demystify critical thinking to help students interpret works of art (and the world around them). This can support students to trust themselves allowing them to think more critically and intuitively as creators and engaged citizens.

I have developed ways to present art through a basic understanding of the principles and elements. Figure 3 is an example of students exploring these principles through basic collage. I teach students that at its most basic level, visual art is using the elements of art to create the principles of art

in order to convey a specific intention. I strategically show students a historic and diverse range of contemporary artists who investigate how specific materials and applications can convey meaning. For example, we just looked at work by the artist El Anatsui, an artist who works and lives in Nigeria. He creates large scale sculptural tapestry — like installations out of interconnected bottle cap tops that grapple with post-colonial experience. Another artist we have recently looked at is artist Deborah Roberts, a mixed media artist who creates powerful art that intends to push for greater representation in gallery and museum settings. I intentionally include a wide range of diverse artists in my curricula for students to understand how and why representation is crucial and often more interesting than the same few artists throughout art history, commonly seen in a traditional art education setting. I want every student to feel represented and empowered as I show examples of artists' work and I think this helps them better express their own experiences and identity. When students begin to express their identity within a greater whole, they are able to successfully integrate both materials and meaning. Figures 4–6 show student exploration of identity through self-portraiture. This artwork (Figure 7) was part of a recent art exhibition for Nardin Academy visual art students in Buffalo, NY.



Figure 4: Identity Self Portrait Project



Figure 5



Figure 6

Utilizing one's own personal identity as it relates to a broader cultural identity while synthesizing the material(s) is the trifecta of creating powerful art.

I have the privilege of seeing how this, along with a strong foundation of technical skills and materials helps to create deeper connections, student-centered success, inclusivity, passion, and empowerment.

Rachel Wright is a visual artist and educator living and working in Buffalo, NY, where she is a faculty member at Nardin Academy. Rachel received her MFA in Studio Art Practices from the University of Colorado and earned a BA in Philosophy as well as a BFA in painting and a BFA in sculpture from SUNY Buffalo. Rachel is interested in how personal narrative can underscore the collective narrative through different artistic forms like installation art, sculpture, ceramics, experimental film/video, photography, painting, drawing, and printmaking. Rachel's work often examines ideas relating to time, memory, nature, and notions of the collective. Rachel has exhibited her work nationally in Boulder, CO; Albuquerque, NM; Lewiston, NY; Buffalo; Ashford Hollow, NY; and internationally in Meta, Colombia; Bosnia & Herzegovina; Sarajevo, Bosnia; and the City of Sable, Latvia.



Figure 7

Bold Underpaintings, Unexpected Outcomes

Nick Napierala

Editor's Note: Nick Napierala's colorful paintings are created with both control and spontaneity. He has shared his artistic process and work with students to establish credibility and foster connections.

Creating has always been a safe space for me, a place where I can find solace when the world feels a little heavy. The artistic process gives me the power and ability to make decisions, to be in control and escape the outside world. Over the past two years I have carved out time each summer and during breaks in teaching to complete a series of work that explores the tension between control and spontaneity. These paintings were inspired from portraits, travel, nature, and personal reflection.

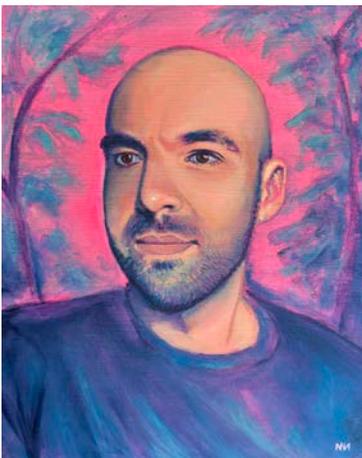
Each piece began with an unusual underpainting: layers of bold, unexpected color that peeks through the surface. Layers that intentionally disrupt perfectionism and invite process-driven discovery. These bright beginnings remind me that flawlessness is not the goal, process is. As a result, every painting is a negotiation between control and letting go, between the natural world and my own lens of experience. This practice is part of my ongoing effort to let go of rigid outcomes and embrace the playful, sometimes unpredictable nature of making art.

Nature does not start in bright pinks or electric oranges, but my paintings do. The subjects, landscapes, florals, and animals, come from places I have traveled, things I have loved, and details I have noticed when I slow down enough to look. I begin to realize that as an artist I am always searching for subjects. Sometimes I feel they are even reaching out to me. When seen together, some pieces hold dual perspectives side by side, echoing the quiet tensions of identity: softness and boldness, natural forms, and unnatural colors, seen and unseen. I hope viewers find joy in the unique colors, textures, and subjects I paint, while sensing the undercurrent of risk and revision beneath the surface.

In addition to my studio work, I am deeply committed to teaching and mentoring young artists. I believe that if students see me actively creating and showing my artwork, it will inspire them to keep creating. In addition, as I share my artistic practice with my students, I find that it helps to build connections and credibility. Thoughts from two of my students are as follows:

Keating: "For me, seeing my art teacher's work helps me figure out what they are like. It shows what they like to do as an artist, and I find that a lot of times, art represents a person in different ways. It also helps me figure out what they're looking for in an art piece, how they imagine the project to go, and whatnot. Also, I find it helps show what their skill level is! If a teacher is asking their students to make an insane realism piece, it helps to know that the teacher is experienced in realism and knows what they are doing if someone needs help."

Mackenzie: "When I see these pieces of artwork you have created it shows me how you apply your skills and techniques into your pieces. Seeing your art and knowing that they are my teacher is inspiring to me and motivating me into trying harder with my future creations."



Although it is difficult to find time to keep up with my artistic practice while teaching, the rewards are numerous for both me and my students. My students and my artistic community continually shape my creative approach, and remind me to keep asking questions, experimenting, and starting again.

Nick Napierala is an artist/art educator based in Lancaster, NY. He teaches grades 9–12 at Iroquois High School and currently serves as Vice President of NYSATA. This current series of work will be on display at the Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens from September 17th–October 26th. It was always a goal of Nick's to show his work. He is very excited that the time is finally here!



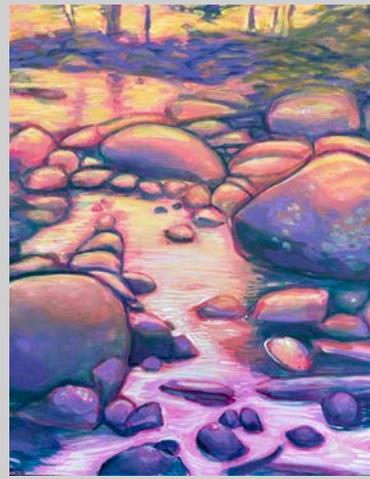
Frozen Still



Lunar Glow



Ocean Bound



Between Ripples #1



Koi at the Gardens #1

Impacting the Community with Positive Postcards

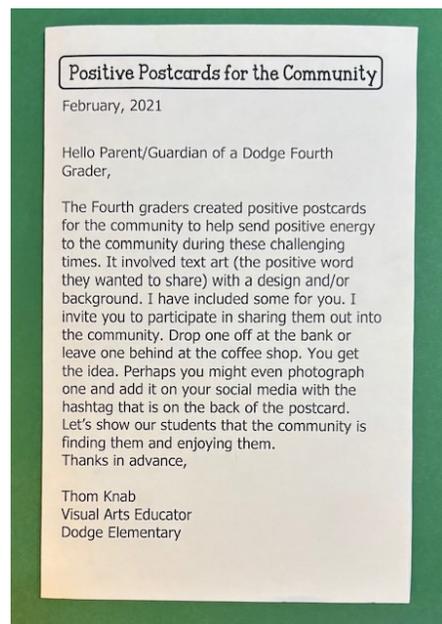
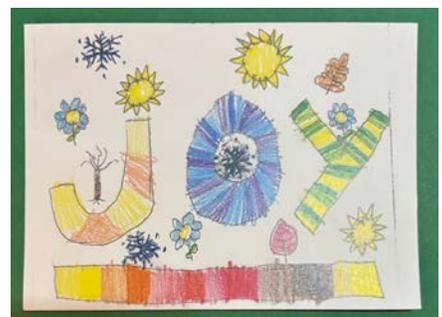
Thom Knab

Editor's note: Thom Knab's successful lesson focuses on fostering connections among students and the broader community. He engages students in the process of creating and sharing artwork.

As we began coming out of the pandemic in 2021, I created a lesson to help my students connect back with their community. After so much isolation, I wanted them to feel a sense of purpose, of regaining some control and connectedness. We created "positive postcards," and it was actually quite simple.

First, I asked my fourth-grade students to brainstorm positive words and phrases with me. After gathering their ideas I created a handout, consisting of all of them, to help them develop their ideas. Next, we looked at the concept of text. This was a great way for them to begin noticing how text styles (serif, sans serif, script, etc.) vary and how artists manipulate them for various purposes. They chose a positive word or phrase and text style to create the postcard. We also discussed how the text could be arranged in various ways such as horizontally, vertically, circular, or diagonally — to list a few examples. In addition to the word, students had to create a design or image around the word to fill the entire postcard. The ideas of how color and pattern could help support the feeling of their chosen word were also discussed.

The postcards were one quarter of an 8.5" x 11" piece of paper, so that we could fit four on a sheet. After the postcards were completed, I attached four postcards to individual sheets of paper and created copies on cardstock using our school's office copier. Each student then received an assortment of four postcards. Attached to the back of each card was a label that read:



It's Your Lucky Day! You found FREE art! Keep it, pass it on, or leave it here. We would like you to share your find with us on social media. Just snap a photo and post! #Art for the community. Art can bring us together.

Postcards also included the name of the school and our mascot. The idea was for students to take the postcard when they went to the bank, coffee shop, or store with their parent(s) and leave a postcard behind for someone to discover. And hopefully make that person's day better. They could take the card home OR take it to a new location OR simply take a photo of it to share on social media. The idea was to help promote positive feeling within the community after the despair and isolation of the pandemic AND give students a sense of control in doing so.

The postcards were sent home with a note to parents explaining the project and expressing hope that they would take part in getting them out into the community. I believe inspirational postcards can be made at any time and by any grade level to inject positive energy into our communities. Passing out a student-made postcard allows students to see how they are a part of a community and how they can impact it in a constructive manner.

Thom Knab

Thom Knab is a past NYSATA & NAEA President, as well as a past NAEA Elementary Division Director. Thom is a 2020 National Teacher Hall of Fame inductee and the 2025 NAEA National Art Educator. He retired in June 2024 after a thirty-six-year career as an elementary art educator.



Combining Our Joy of Art with Character Building Through Kindness-Themed Activities

Linda Egan and Scott Murray

Editor's Note: Linda Egan and Scott Murray provide clear examples on how they collaborate to engage students in the creation and display of art as a strategic approach to promote character development and emotional resilience.



Regardless of artistic skill level, art creation is a stress reliever, promoting well-being, reducing anxiety, and allowing the creator to be in the present moment. It offers a safe outlet of non-verbal expression, allowing a way for self-regulation of emotions. Artists learn to maintain personal motivation, become courageous risk takers, and experience working through new challenges and setbacks. A growth mindset is reinforced as mistakes and imperfections are part of the process. Presentation and display of completed work build emotional strength allowing the artist to know that their unique contributions are valued. At the same time, the artist is given an opportunity to accept criticism both positive and negative. **The process of art creation offers a unique and powerful bridge to building character and emotional resiliency that carries through to all parts of life.**

Southwest Elementary School in the Brentwood Union Free School District uses Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework for creating a positive learning atmosphere with consistent expectations and motivation throughout the school community. With a collaboration between art and the PBIS Instructional Coach, several creative endeavors have recently aligned with the school-wide building plan of PBIS. These creative pursuits have helped promote our building motto of the Southwest Four (Respectful, Responsible, Safe, and Kind) and further enhance character and emotional resilience building. These endeavors include: a collaborative doodle wall, a friendship

chain, Kindness Art Club, an Affirmation Station, and an art installation of a Peace Tree.

Community Doodle Wall: "Art Draws Us Together"

Our community art wall was a space inviting free expression and individual contribution to "make your mark". Students were invited to choose a place on the mural to either color, add a drawing, or both! They also had the opportunity to select a coloring/drawing activity to take with them. Housed near the school store, the doodle wall was used during downtime while students waited to shop with school money earned by following the attributes of the Southwest Four. Mural themes, changed out a few times during the year, followed current happenings (such as P.S. I Love You Day/ Anti Bullying and Youth Art Month).

Our Friendship Chain of Kindness

Starting out as a voluntary "early finishers" project, the idea took off and developed into a wonderful mentoring experience where a group of our fifth-grade students donated recess time to help younger students decorate and assemble the chain. The chain decorated with implied textures, kind words, and symbols of peace, harmony, and friendship proudly hung zig-zagged in our annex corridor above our Sensory Path. The chain's presence encouraged positive interactions between all classmates, reminding us that we are all connected and are one community. As we watched the chain grow and take shape over the weeks, we were reminded that we help each other grow each and every day. In addition, all interactions matter, and unkind words or actions can break a link in our community chain.

Kindness Art Club

The Kindness Art Club consisted of a group of third and fourth grade students interested in art and selected by their peers to meet before school and take part in random acts of "kindness" with a creative side. Projects also included creating pieces to be displayed at school, home, and throughout the



Brentwood community that fostered and promoted our PBIS traditions. Projects of note included gratitude leaves, where students designed leaves to show what they were grateful for, and the decorating of delivery boxes, for the school's food drive.

The Southwest Kindness Express: An Affirmation Holder

The Southwest Kindness Express was a collaborative, three-dimensional truck filled with kind notes, affirmation statements, and cheerful drawings. When someone in our school community needed a "pick me up," they could reach in and pull out a kind word that will hopefully turn their day around. Empathy, gratitude, and self-awareness were shown as students created additional pieces to cheer on and encourage others. Located next to the Sensory Path, many enjoyed visiting anytime, reaching in, and picking a random dose of positivity.



Peace Tree: A Collaborative Art Installation

Our Peace Tree, located in the school's courtyard, is an Art Installation piece designed to inspire public reflection on "PEACE," "UNITY," and "HARMONY." Created during our 2024 "Welcome Back Picnic" as a community engagement piece, wood slices were designed using words and/or symbols standing for the theme. Students, family members, and visitors were invited to create a wood slice and then select the location on the tree where they wished their piece to be hung. We all watched as the individual pieces came together in front of us creating a uniformed display. While each wood slice is unique, just like its individual creator, when they came together it became something whole and beautiful. Unity is built through kindness, respect, and by getting along with others. These characteristics are what the Peace Tree represents. It is a symbol of friendship, hope, and community. Viewers are encouraged to observe, feel, and think about the message, as it continues to be a living part of the environment, sparking conversation and inspiration.



While we navigate the waves, we can empower and encourage our students to use art and creative expression to uplift others through kindness and promoting the positive character-building behaviors we all strive for. These actions help make our schools welcoming and special places for everyone.



Scott Murray is a PBIS Instructional Coach at Southwest Elementary School in Suffolk County, NY. He works directly with students to develop positive behavior plans and manages many schoolwide PBIS tier 1 initiatives. Some of these include the school store and universal token system platform as well as a positive behavior cafeteria system called the Golden Spatula Award. He enjoys many creative outlets and building relationships with students.

With a background in design and art history, **Linda Egan** is an elementary art teacher for the Brentwood Union Free School District in Suffolk County, NY. She has been active with volunteer work including being a member of her school's SIT Team, her district's CAC/K-12 Art Committee, and is currently on NYSATA's YAM committee.



The Power of Art, A Retiree's Perspective

Kathleen Hallam-Bushek
Retiree Committee Co-Chair

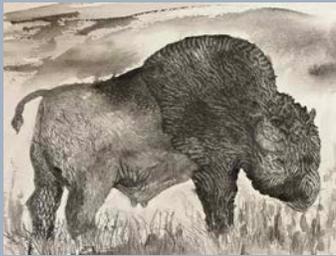
The Power of Art suggests profound contemplation. It is indeed a power that often goes unnoticed to many until awareness of the environment (social, economic, cultural, physical) is truly realized. I taught visual art, mostly elementary, for 33 years in Fonda-Fultonville CSD. In retirement, I experience the power of art through multiple lenses.

The lens of *reflection* is the first lens I encountered. I had the opportunity to think back on what I taught and how I taught it. Was I true to my personal convictions regarding my profession? How did that influence my choices? Does any of that remain, or have I abandoned that completely? Every time I encounter past students who have chosen professions in the arts, and they say to me, "I did this because of you," I have the answers to my questions. I believe many of us share the sentiment that teaching art was not about what we do but who we are. We are driven by our passions for creating, experiencing, learning, and conveying to help students experience the most authentic encounter with the visual arts that we can provide. Reflecting on my teaching experience has resulted in a sensation of boundlessness — that wonderful feeling that limits no longer apply. I am free to create and experience art without the boundaries of time, location, and weighty responsibilities! This truly opens a multitude of possibilities.

The second lens I would like to mention involves *connection/awareness*. When I was finally able to grasp that I was retired, I imagined walking into a forest of possibilities. Surveying the multitude of choices before me, I realized I could become and explore anything in that forest of possibilities that I desired. My choices led to newfound connections not only with people but undiscovered interests. I had previously regarded gardening as tedious. The discovery of what and how to grow became a very big "Rabbit Trail" adventure: flowers, vegetables, medicinal plants, plants that make really awesome natural dyes, BERRIES, and much more! Watching the plants grow became an inspiration to photograph the amazing development of organic forms as well as the display of changing color and light. The possibilities were powerful in potential as well as number.

Perhaps the most powerful lens I experienced was and is *community*. It has been my experience that in retirement the value of community increases by desire as well as necessity. Deep investments in long-term relationships and exciting new ones yield powerful returns. I have found creating within an art community to be powerful personally and collectively. The NYSATA community has and continues to be very important to me. I serve as Retiree Committee Co-Chair along with Geraldine Link. In this role we encourage retired art educators to continue to create, network, volunteer, and support NYSATA initiatives. NYSATA's Summer Institute at Great Camp Sagamore is an example of an art community that I have yet to experience. Attending the Summer Institute is very high on my bucket list. I know several friends who experienced powerful transformation during the summer at Sagamore and experienced a sense of community. I will continue to explore the power of art to bring people together and create community!

I feel privileged to have taught the visual arts. It is without question that the visual arts are powerful. Their influence is profound: forcing or gently encouraging reflection; creating and nurturing connections; and building valued communities of impactful creators. Perhaps we could even regard the visual arts as a *superpower*!



Portrait of a Graduate and the Power of Art

Samantha Nolte-Yupari and Valerie Savage
Advocacy Co-Chairs

New York State Educational Departments' recent (August 2025) release of the *Portrait of a Graduate* initiative considers six interconnected attributes of a graduate of NYS school systems. A successful graduate of NYS schools will thus be an Academically Prepared, Creative Innovator, Critical Thinker, who is an Effective Communicator, a Global Citizen, and a Reflective and Future Focused individual. How many content areas can argue that the learning they present can contribute to all six attributes? Maybe some, maybe all. But in Art Education, we can *definitively* say that quality art education contributes to all six attributes outlined in *Portrait of a Graduate*. In this article we will discuss how the NYS Visual Arts Standards contribute to each of these six attributes and then provide some additional explanations that you can use in meetings, professional development sessions, and during your classroom observations this year to proactively advocate to your administrators how art education meets *Portrait of a Graduate* goals.

Portrait of a Graduate as Seen through Visual Art Education

From the *Portrait of a Graduate* Diagram

Academically Prepared: *Demonstrates a strong foundation in the NYS learning standards and is equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve success in college, careers, civic engagement, service, and life.*

As an **academically prepared** art student, young artists engaged with art education learn the conventions of various visual art forms, to *create* and *present* expressive works from their own perspective, *respond* to artworks' meaning, and *connect* their own ideas and work to broader cultural contexts. These categories: Create, Present, Respond, and Connect, are the Anchor categories of the 11 NYS Visual Arts Standards and provide a connection point for not only a student moving on to continued study and/or a career in the arts, but the other attributes of a *Portrait of a Graduate*.

NYS Visual Art Standards:

CREATE Enduring Understanding 1.1: Creativity and innovative thinking are essential skills that can be developed.

CREATE Enduring Understanding 1.2: Artists and designers shape artistic investigations, following or breaking with traditions in pursuit of creative artmaking goals.

CREATE Enduring Understanding 2.1: Artists and designers experiment with forms, structures, materials, concepts, media, and artmaking approaches.

CREATE Enduring Understanding 2.2: Artists and designers balance experimentation and freedom with safety and responsibility while developing and creating artwork.

CREATE Enduring Understanding 2.3: People create, respond to, and interact with objects and places in ways that define, shape, enhance, and empower their lives.

CREATE Enduring Understanding 3.1: Artists and designers develop excellence through practice and constructive critique, and reflecting on, revising, and refining work overtime.

PRESENT Enduring Understanding 4.1: Artists, collectors, curators, and other arts professionals consider a variety of criteria when analyzing and selecting objects, artifacts, and artwork for presentation and preservation.

PRESENT Enduring Understanding 5.1: Artists, curators, and other arts professionals engage appropriate methods and resources when preparing artwork for presentation and preservation.

PRESENT Enduring Understanding 6.1: Objects, artifacts, and artworks collected, preserved, or presented communicate meaning and function as a record of social, cultural, and political experiences; resulting in the cultivating of appreciation and understanding.

RESPOND Enduring Understanding 7.1: Individual aesthetic and empathetic awareness developed through engagement with art can lead to understanding and appreciation of self, others, and the world.

RESPOND Enduring Understanding 7.2: Visual imagery influences understanding of and responses to the world.

RESPOND Enduring Understanding 8.1: People gain insight into meanings of artwork by engaging in a process of art criticism.

RESPOND Enduring Understanding 9.1: People evaluate art, based on various criteria.

CONNECT Enduring Understanding 10.1: Through artmaking people make meaning by investigating and developing awareness of perceptions, knowledge, and experiences.

CONNECT Enduring Understanding 11.1: Works of art and design embody and influence the needs, desires, beliefs, traditions, and values of people within a culture.

CONNECT Enduring Understanding 11.2: Generating and

NYSED PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE AS SEEN IN VISUAL ARTS EDUCATION



New York State Visual Arts Standards:
 Create, Present, Respond, Connect

Studio Habits of Mind:
 Develop Craft, Engage and Persist, Envision, Express, Observe, Reflect, Stretch and Explore, Understanding Art Worlds

Adapted from NYSED Portrait of a Graduate, additional information available on the NYSED website

solving artistic problems prepares people to contribute to innovative solutions within a society or culture.

From the *Portrait of a Graduate* Diagram

Creative Innovator: *Utilizes imagination, curiosity, and flexible thinking to solve problems creatively, and develop new ideas and products, while adapting to evolving circumstances and challenges.*

The foundation of a **creative innovator** is the ability to use imagination, curiosity, and flexible thinking. At its heart, art education prioritizes the development of imagination, which hallmark literacy and arts educator Maxine Greene (2000) noted is the ability to imagine “elsewhere and otherwise.” The playful, and sometimes labeled “silly,” imaginative play we often see in young children, in mature form, is the ability to take other’s perspectives, feel empathy, think outside the box, and generate ideas that few have ever seen before. In the art studio, every time a young artist must think about how to use a material in a new way, generate ideas and strategies to communicate their artistic ideas to an audience and express their own unique voice, they build the skills of a creative innovator.

NYS Visual Arts Standards:

CREATE Enduring Understanding 1.1: Creativity and innovative thinking are essential skills that can be developed.

CREATE Enduring Understanding 1.2: Artists and designers shape artistic investigations, following or breaking with traditions in pursuit of creative artmaking goals.

CREATE Enduring Understanding 2.1: Artists and designers experiment with forms, structures, materials, concepts, media and artmaking approaches.

RESPOND Enduring Understanding 7.1: Individual aesthetic and empathetic awareness developed through engagement with art can lead to understanding and appreciation of self, others, and the world.

RESPOND Enduring Understanding 7.2: Visual imagery influences understanding of and responses to the world.

CONNECT Enduring Understanding 10.1: Through artmaking people make meaning by investigating and developing awareness of perceptions, knowledge, and experiences.

CONNECT Enduring Understanding 11.2: Generating and solving artistic problems prepares people to contribute to innovative solutions within a society or culture.

From the *Portrait of a Graduate* Diagram

Critical Thinker: *Analyzes information thoughtfully, evaluates evidence critically, and identifies patterns and connections between different pieces of information (across multiple content areas) to address complex issues and navigate the world with insight.*

Similarly in visual art, artists **critically think** when they observe and reflect upon their own and others’ artwork as well as artifacts of visual and material culture. Analyzing for connotation and denotation, cultural implications, and emotional effect and affect means understanding the ways

images and objects carry meaning, emotion, stories, agenda, and positionality. In a visual world, critical consumption of data is essential for meaningful engagement and participation.

NYS Visual Arts Standards:

CREATE Enduring Understanding 2.3: People create, respond to, and interact with objects and places in ways that define, shape, enhance, and empower their lives.

CREATE Enduring Understanding 3.1: Artists and designers develop excellence through practice and constructive critique, and reflecting on, revising, and refining work over time.

PRESENT Enduring Understanding 4.1: Artists, collectors, curators, and other arts professionals consider a variety of criteria when analyzing and selecting objects, artifacts, and artwork for presentation and preservation.

PRESENT Enduring Understanding 6.1: Objects, artifacts, and artworks collected, preserved, or presented communicate meaning and function as a record of social, cultural, and political experiences; resulting in the cultivating and appreciation and understanding.

RESPOND Enduring Understanding 7.1: Individual aesthetic and empathetic awareness developed through engagement with art can lead to understanding and appreciation of self, others, and the world.

RESPOND Enduring Understanding 7.2: Visual imagery influences understanding of and responses to the world.

RESPOND Enduring Understanding 9.1: People evaluate art, based on various criteria.

CONNECT Enduring Understanding 10.1: Through artmaking people make meaning by investigating and developing awareness of perceptions, knowledge, and experiences.

CONNECT Enduring Understanding 11.1: Works of art and design embody and influence the needs, desires, beliefs, traditions, and values of people within a culture.

From the *Portrait of a Graduate* Diagram

Effective Communicator: *Articulates ideas clearly and confidently through speaking, writing, and the use of different types of media for various purposes, while engaging with diverse audiences and actively listening to different perspectives.*

As **effective communicators**, visual artists (and art students) learn to combine visual elements like shape, color, and line, in various ways through various media to communicate their ideas and perspectives to others. In turn, they simultaneously learn to interpret visual communications and data in and from the world. Artists are also adept at transmediating their understanding through written and verbal analyses of artworks, and into artist statements, websites and social media engagement, and gallery and grant calls for artworks. A successful visual artist works in multiple literacy modalities, verbal, written, and visual formats.

NYS Visual Arts Standards:

CREATE Enduring Understanding 1.1: Creativity and

innovative thinking are essential skills that can be developed.

CREATE Enduring Understanding 1.2: Artists and designers shape artistic investigations, following or breaking with traditions in pursuit of creative artmaking goals

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CONNECT Enduring Understanding 11.1: Works of art and design embody and influence the needs, desires, beliefs, traditions, and values of people within a culture.

From the *Portrait of a Graduate* Diagram

Global Citizen: *Acts responsibly and ethically within local, global, and digital communities, employing civic knowledge, skills, and mindsets to promote global sustainability and contribute positively to a culturally diverse, democratic society.*

Engagement in the arts through artmaking and the study of art requires a young artist to be a **global citizen**. All cultures make art, visual communication forms from mark making, symbols, pictographs, and maps are early and fundamental ways to share knowledge and make meaning together. Engaging with visual arts from all cultures leads to the awareness, understanding and appreciation of self, others, and the world providing students with entry points to increased empathy, collaboration, and cooperation.

NYS Standards:

CREATE Enduring Understanding 2.3: People create, respond to, and interact with objects and places in ways that define, shape, enhance, and empower their lives.

CREATE Enduring Understanding 3.1: Artists and designers develop excellence through practice and constructive critique, and reflecting on, revising, and refining work overtime.

PRESENT Enduring Understanding 6.1: Objects, artifacts, and artworks collected, preserved, or presented communicate meaning and function as a record of social cultural, and political experiences; resulting in the cultivating of appreciation and understanding.

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CONNECT Enduring Understanding 10.1: Through artmaking people make meaning by investigating and developing awareness of perceptions, knowledge, and experiences.

CONNECT Enduring Understanding 11.1: Works of art and design embody and influence the needs, desires, beliefs, traditions, and values of people within a culture.

CONNECT Enduring Understanding 11.2: Generating and solving artistic problems prepares people to contribute to innovative solutions within a society or culture.

From the *Portrait of a Graduate* Diagram

Reflective and Future Focused: *Engages in self-reflection to identify strengths and areas for growth, sets meaningful goals, uses social awareness to maintain supportive relationships, and demonstrates responsible decision-making that prioritizes social, emotional, and mental well-being.*

Working from an input paradigm that requires students to put learning in practice *right now* (Perkins, 2013), visual arts learning requires the art student to **reflect** on how their artmaking is going and determine next steps to succeed with this particular work and/or moving forward in **future** series or portfolio of work. Artmaking is non-linear process that requires ongoing observation and reflection. Artists determine the strengths of their current work and artmaking processes and then use that information to focus on future tasks of revision, idea development, and art making goals. This allows them to determine their current needs for communication, expression, and support from teachers, peers, and mentors as they create meaningful bodies of artwork.

NYS Visual Arts Standards:

CREATE Enduring Understanding 2.2: Artists and designers balance experimentation and freedom with safety and responsibility while developing and creating artwork.

CREATE Enduring Understanding 2.3: People create, respond to, and interact with objects and places in ways that define, shape, enhance, and empower their lives.

CREATE Enduring Understanding 3.1: Artists and designers develop excellence through practice and constructive critique, and reflecting on, revising, and refining work

overtime.

PRESENT Enduring Understanding 4.1: Artists, collectors, curators, and other arts professionals consider a variety of criteria when analyzing and selecting objects, artifacts, and artwork for presentation and preservation.

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CONNECT Enduring Understanding 11.1: Works of art and design embody and influence the needs, desires, beliefs, traditions, and values of people within a culture.

As the *Portrait of a Graduate* becomes a topic of discussion, the power of art becomes apparent. We hope you use this article and the Quick Reference Handout on page 25 (and available on the NYSATA website) to proactively advocate for your art program, and the learning and artmaking of your students.

References

Greene, M. (2000). *Releasing the imagination: Essays on Education, the Arts, and Social Change*. Jossey Bass.

Perkins, D. (2013). Foreword for the first edition. In L. Hetland, E. Winner, S. Veenema, and K. M. Sheridan, K. M. (2007). *Studio thinking: The real benefits of visual arts education (2nd ed.)*, pp. vii-viii, Teachers College Press.

NYSATA News Sketchbook Challenge

Theme: Winter Comfort

What is in your sketchbook? Add a new themed page to share with NYSATA members in the NYSATA News.

- Take a moment to reflect: What brings you true comfort during the winter months? Do you have a pet you love to curl up with, or a favorite spot where you love to sit? Reflect on what makes you feel cozy or content in winter, then select one idea—like a snuggly pet, a beloved retreat, or a comforting food. Once you decide on your approach to the theme open your sketchbook, use the medium of your choice, create a sketch and share your sketch with us! Selected sketches will be published in the Winter Edition of the NYSATA News.
- (Example by Samantha Nolte-Yupari)



Submission Details

- Take a photo of the page (send in .JPG format, at least 5 x 7 inches).
- Title the image with your last name (ex. Young.jpg).
- Send your entry to nysatanews@nysata.org.
- The deadline for submissions is January 26, but early submissions are encouraged.

Celebrating Creativity: The 2025 NYSATA-NYSSBA Student Art Exhibit

Kelly Verdi, NYSSBA Exhibit Chair

Every year, the **New York State Art Teachers Association (NYSATA)** partners with the **New York State School Boards Association (NYSSBA)** to showcase the incredible talents of young artists from across the state. The **2025 NYSATA-NYSSBA Student Art Exhibit** continues this tradition, highlighting the creativity, vision, and artistic excellence of New York's K-12 students.

This statewide exhibit not only brings student art to the forefront at the annual NYSSBA Convention in **New York City**, but also underscores the essential role the arts play in a well-rounded education.

2025 Postcard Winners: Student Art That Shines

Each year, two student works are selected as official **postcard images** representing the exhibit. These winning pieces reflect the heart of the show and the incredible diversity of expression from students across the state.

Secondary Winner

Student: Riley McInerny (Grade 12)

Title: Up and Up

Medium: Acrylic on Canvas

School: Bethlehem Central High School

District: Bethlehem Central School District

Teacher: Marielle Martin

Superintendent: Ms. Jody Monroe

NYSATA Region: #6

Primary Winner

Student: Stella Zappia (Grade 4)

Title: Owl Eyes

Medium: Finger Painting

School: Ogden Elementary School

District: Hewlett-Woodmere Public Schools

Teacher: Tom Finn

Superintendent: Dr. Dina Anzalone

NYSATA Region: #9

Congratulations to both artists for capturing the judges' attention and hearts with your exceptional work!

Participating Districts: A Statewide Celebration of Student Talent

We extend sincere thanks to all the participating districts whose students helped make this year's exhibit a visual celebration of learning and creativity. For a complete list of participating districts please visit our website www.nysata.org

The Importance of the Arts in Education

The NYSATA-NYSSBA Exhibit is more than a gallery of student work — it is a platform that champions the role of visual arts in developing the whole child.

- **Academic Success:** Students involved in the arts score better on standardized tests and show improved performance in core subjects.
- **Emotional Expression:** Art fosters emotional intelligence and mental wellness.
- **Cultural Understanding:** Through creating and viewing diverse works, students gain empathy and global awareness.
- **21st Century Skills:** Creativity, collaboration, critical thinking, and communication are nurtured through arts learning.

As arts programs continue to face challenges, this exhibit reminds us all: the arts are not optional — they are **essential**. Thank you to every student, educator, superintendent, parent, and district who participated — **thank you** for supporting the arts and for believing in the power of student expression. Your efforts make this exhibit a vital and inspiring part of New York's educational landscape.



Riley McInerny

Visit the 2025 Exhibit Online

The full virtual gallery will be available following the NYSSBA Annual Convention this October. Stay tuned on the [NYSATA website](http://www.nysata.org) to explore the art, celebrate your students, and share their accomplishments with your community.

Let us keep raising the voices of young artists across New York State — **one masterpiece at a time.**



Stella Zappia

NAEA Team East



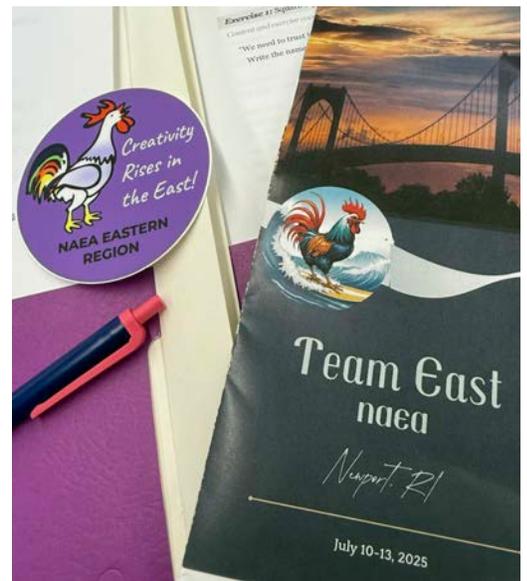
Awakened at the Coast: Reflections on the Team East Leadership Meeting with NAEA

Kelly Verdi, NYSATA President

This past July, I had the privilege of attending the Team East Leadership Meeting hosted by the National Art Education Association (NAEA) in the picturesque state of Rhode Island. Nestled between historic landmarks and the salty Atlantic breeze, this gathering was more than just a meeting — it was a catalyst for growth, connection, and artistic awakening.

The setting itself was inspiring. Salve Regina University, with its serene coastal backdrop and elegant architecture, provided a peaceful yet invigorating space for us to gather. As we walked the campus and met in its thoughtfully curated spaces, I found myself reflecting on both the leadership journey I've taken and the path that still lies ahead. Our visit to The Breakers, the iconic Vanderbilt mansion, deepened that sense of awe and ambition — a powerful reminder of legacy, vision, and what it means to leave a mark.

At the heart of the experience was mentorship. National NAEA leaders generously shared their time, insight, and passion. Their guidance was not prescriptive, but invitational — inviting each of us to tap into our own strengths, to ask better questions, to lead with authenticity. Through



conversations, workshops, and shared meals, they modeled what transformational leadership in art education looks like.

Something profound happened during those days: my inner leader and inner artist began to awaken in tandem. So often, those two identities can feel like they exist in separate spheres. But here, among passionate educators and creative visionaries, I saw how leadership itself is an art — fluid, expressive, intentional. We were encouraged not only to lead effectively, but to lead creatively. This convergence planted the seeds of a deeper transformation: becoming an artist — an artist-activist dedicated to using creativity as a tool for change.

One of the most impactful moments came when we heard from NAEA Past-President, Dr. Wanda B. Knight. Her presence, wisdom, and conviction were nothing short of electrifying. She spoke to the heart of art education's role in justice, equity, and cultural transformation. Her words challenged and emboldened us. She reminded us that art is never neutral — and neither is education. Both are powerful forces that, when wielded with purpose, can shift narratives and shape futures.

By the end of the weekend, I didn't just feel more prepared to lead — I felt called to lead. To show up more fully. To create with intention. To teach with courage. To advocate with artistry.

The Team East Leadership Meeting was a reminder that leadership is not about titles or positions, but about presence, purpose, and passion. In the quiet corners of Salve Regina University, along the opulent halls of The Breakers, and in the powerful silences that followed Dr. Knight's words, I found not just inspiration — but ignition.

I left Rhode Island not only more connected to my fellow educators, but to myself. I returned home not only ready to serve, but ready to lead artfully — and perhaps most importantly, to live the calling of an artist.



Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Committee

Jennifer Grasso-Moise, ED&I Co-Chair



Andres Gallardo, a Panamanian American artist and activist, continues to use his creative voice to amplify stories of resilience and humanity. NYSATA members had the opportunity to experience Andres' powerful presence as both a keynote speaker and featured artist during the 2024 Conference's Friday After Dark session.

Gallardo's most recent work, titled *Fatima*, is a tribute to the late Palestinian photojournalist Fatima Hassouna. Hassouna courageously documented civilian life during the Gaza war, capturing the profound human cost of conflict through her lens. Her documentary, "Put Your Soul on Your Hand and Walk", was selected for the Cannes Film Festival, gaining international recognition for its unflinching portrayal of life in Gaza. Tragically, Hassouna was killed in an Israeli airstrike on April 16, 2025, at the age of 25.

Moved by her legacy and the emotional depth of her work, Gallardo created *Fatima* to honor Hassouna's life and message. His art serves not only as a memorial but also as a call to witness, remember, and act, a hallmark of activism that bridges creative expression with social impact.

Through pieces like *Fatima*, Gallardo reminds us of art's power to connect, confront, and commemorate. His work continues to inspire educators and students alike to use art as a tool for advocacy and storytelling.



Portfolio Project

Matt Wilson, Portfolio Project Co-Chair



We put the “Pr” into Portfolio Project: Showcasing Student Voice Through Presentation

The New York State Art Teachers Association (NYSATA) Portfolio Project is a shining example of how students can meet and exceed the New York State Learning Standards in the Visual Arts—particularly the standard for *Presenting*. Through this initiative, students not only compile and submit a body of artwork, but also actively engage in the process of selecting, analyzing, and refining their work for meaningful presentation.

According to our *Presenting* standards, “Students select, analyze, and refine their artwork for presentation, conveying meaning through their chosen medium. They also develop skills in exhibition design and presentation techniques.” What better way to achieve this than the Portfolio Project which mirrors this standard at every stage. Students are asked to reflect critically on their creative choices, organize their work to tell a story or convey a message, and present it in a clear and professional format that showcases both their technical skill and personal voice.

The process encourages young artists to think like curators — making decisions not only about what to include, but how best to frame their ideas for an audience. In doing so, they gain valuable insight into the role of presentation in the art world, learning that how art is shown can be just as powerful as the artwork itself.

By emphasizing self-reflection, intentional selection, and thoughtful display, the NYSATA Portfolio Project supports the development of confident, articulate artists prepared to engage with a wider community. It stands as a model of how standards can come to life in meaningful, student-centered practice.

Learn more about our Portfolio Project and how you can use this program to support your work in all 11 Visual Art standards.

www.nysata.org/portfolio-project

Youth Art Month

Patti Krakoff & Barbara Imperiale, YAM Co-Chairs

2026 Theme: "The World Needs Art"

This year's Youth Art Month (YAM) theme, "The World Needs Art," opens the door to countless opportunities for creative and meaningful celebrations throughout New York State during the month of March.

Our goal for 2026 is to highlight how every **county in NYS** is participating in celebrating youth and their artwork. We know you are doing amazing things in your classrooms — let us showcase them! We would love to collect at least **one photo from every county** to represent the breadth of engagement across the state.

Please consider sharing a **photo of a bulletin board, students working on projects, a special classroom event, or even just you in your favorite art shirt** during March. Every contribution helps us tell the full story of art education in New York!

If you post to social media, be sure to tag your posts with our hashtag: **#nysYAM2026**



More information will be coming later this year — stay tuned!



YAM Flag Design Contest

The **annual NYS YAM Flag Design Contest** is underway! Submissions are due **no later than November 26, 2025**. The contest is open to **all New York State students from Kindergarten through 12th grade**, and all entries must be submitted by their art teacher.

This year's contest is proudly sponsored by:

- **Blick Art Supplies**
- **ColArt** (featuring **Liquitex** and **Winsor & Newton**)
- **The Art of Education**
- **Nasco**
- **Wacom**

These sponsors have generously donated **fantastic prizes** for both students and teachers! And yes — we will also be offering chances to win some **YAM swag** again this year!

All flag designs should represent the 2026 theme:

"The World Needs Art"

...and should *also* reflect the **spirit and identity of New York State**.

The **overall winning flag design** will be displayed at the **National Art Education Association (NAEA) Convention in Chicago in March 2026**.

For complete contest details, please refer to the [NYS YAM Flag Design Information Packet 2025-2026](#).

Flag Design Contest 2025 PRIZES

BLICK art materials

Elementary:
Student - \$100 Art supplies prize pack
Teacher - \$150 Art supplies prize pack + \$150 Gift Certificate

Middle:
Student - \$100 Art supplies prize pack
Teacher - \$150 Art supplies prize pack + \$150 Gift Certificate

High School:
Student - \$100 Art supplies prize pack
Teacher - \$150 Art supplies prize pack + \$150 Gift Certificate

Overall:
Student - \$100 Art supplies prize pack + \$400 Gift Certificate
Teacher - \$250 Art supplies prize pack + \$750 Gift Certificate

Wacom
Four digital tablets for winners

the art of education
NOW Conference Passes for winning art teachers

Additional Prizes from:

WINSOR & NEWTON
Liquitex

Nasco Education

Plus a certificate template will be provided for all teachers to award to students

📁 Planning Guide & Conference Workshop

Beginning in **October 2025**, the official **Youth Art Month Planning Guide** will be available on the NYSATA website:

📍 <https://www.nysata.org/youth-art-month>

This guide will help you plan and promote your YAM activities, and includes:

- **Theme-based lesson plans**
- **Sample letters** for requesting citations and proclamations from local officials
- **Bulletin board display ideas**
- And **many more resources** to support your events

✍️ Join Us at the NYSATA Conference 0515 — Binghamton

We will also be hosting a **hands-on workshop** at the **NYSATA Conference in Binghamton** titled *"The World Needs Art"*.

Come meet the amazing **Youth Art Month Committee** members who volunteer their time to support you, brainstorm creative ideas, and take home:

- **Brand new YAM swag**
- **Free resources**
- **Free giveaways**
- A chance to win a **pass to the Art of Education NOW Conference!**

Have feedback or ideas for future support? Come chat with us — we'd love to hear how we can better help you!

📄 Report to the Council for Art Education



A huge THANK YOU to all of the amazing art teachers who submitted last year's report in June and helped spread the word by posting on social media with our hashtag. Your efforts helped us showcase the powerful work happening in New York State classrooms.

The [Report to the Council for Art Education](#) was submitted at the **national level** and was judged against other state reports. The results just came in and thanks to all of YOUR reporting this year: New York State took first place in the country winning the *Claire Flanagan Grand Award*. Later this year, during Youth Art Month, we will be collecting the award on behalf of all NYS art teachers at the NAEA Convention in Chicago!

Thanks to YOUR participation, we were able to represent NYS art education and are proud to see amazing **things are happening all across New York!**

🌸 Special Thank You to Tracy Berges

We would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to **Tracy Berges**, who has served as **Youth Art Month Co-Chair** for the past **six years**. Her leadership, dedication, and passion for art education have helped New York State **win national awards** for YAM programming and reporting.

Though she is stepping down from her leadership role, Tracy will continue to support the committee and help **train the next wave of volunteers** stepping up to try and fill her shoes!

THANK YOU, TRACY! 🌸 Your contributions have made a lasting impact!



Olympics of the Visual Arts



Come One, Come All, to the **2026 Olympics of the Visual Arts** student design competition, in our 44th year. Your New York State Art Teachers Association is pleased to welcome elementary, middle, and high school level teams from all regions to the City Center in Saratoga Springs on April 30th.

The **Olympics of the Visual Arts** is an extracurricular school program for students across New York State. **OVA** presents a series of design problems that require utilizing contemporary, cultural, and historical references, brainstorming, problem solving, and creative solutions. There are two forms of problem solving: a long-term problem that will require research, planning, and creativity, which is completed prior to the state competition and a short-term or on-demand solution completed during the event. All problems have performance standards to meet through visual and media arts.

Highlights of Participation:

- Teams may consist of at least **2** or more student members.
- There are 3 grade levels for team registration:
ELEMENTARY LEVEL (K-5)
MIDDLE LEVEL (6-8)
HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL (9-12)
- ACTIVE NYSATA Individual or District membership is required to register and participate in OVA.
- Districts may **ONLY** register 1 team from each level in each category.
- Districts may register 1 team, or up to 24 teams max.
- Registration is available through a link on the OVA page of the NYSATA Website.
- Registration fees are outlined as follows:
\$150 1 Team
\$200 2-5 Teams
\$250 6-10 Teams
\$300 11 Teams +
- Payment Questions: tkonu@nysata.org and ova@nysata.org

Anne Manzella, OVA Chair

SCORING & AWARDS

Category Design Solutions:

The **Long-Term Design Solutions** of ALL teams will be scored by our volunteer judges based on rubric criteria outlined below. The **Portfolio of Research and Planning** (exhibited with the entry and labeled accordingly) will be reviewed and contribute to the overall score. Qualitative and quantitative feedback will be provided on the Long-Term Design Solution.

Scoring Criteria:

Review of the PORTFOLIO:

- Evidence of Brainstorming
- Evidence of Research
- Presentation Quality of the Portfolio (unity, thematic format, visual clarity)

Review of the DESIGN SOLUTION:

- Imagination/Originality/Risk Taking
- Addressing the Criteria of the challenge
- Quality of Craftsmanship/Technical skill in final creation

On-Demand Design Challenge:

ALL Teams will participate in the **On-Demand Design Challenge** while the long-term solutions are scored. Teams will be presented the design challenge during the opening ceremony and are limited to a specific list of supplies to develop their collaborative solution, free from any teacher or parent involvement. On-Demand solutions will be scored, and points will be combined with the score of the Category Design Solution for an overall team total.

Awards:

Awards will be presented for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place score totals in each LEVEL in each CATEGORY. At the judges' discretion, a special **HYNDMAN CREATIVITY AWARD** may also be presented in each category.

This year the Olympics of the Visual Arts design problems are all aligned with a common theme: **Natural Connections**.

Inspired by the [American Museum of Natural History's](#) newest architectural marvel, the Richard Gilder Center for Science, Education, and Innovation in New York City, this year's Olympics of the Visual Arts theme embraces STEAM and invites students to explore the profound intersections of Nature, Form, Science, and Imagination.

Like the Gilder Center itself where architecture flows like a canyon, insects reveal the unseen systems of life, and

thousands of collected artifacts offer windows into our world, student work should reflect networks that connect us all. From microscopic ecosystems to monumental natural formations, and from ancient collections to futuristic design, each creative effort should capture the visible and invisible threads that define life, learning, and our place in New York and beyond.

How the Richard Gilder Center Inspires Natural Connections:

- The [Richard Gilder Center](#), designed by Studio Gang and opened in May 2023, is a striking 230,000-square-foot addition to the American Museum of Natural History. It introduces a light-filled, canyon-like five-story atrium, constructed using sculptural shotcrete, inspired by erosion, wind, and water giving the architecture a tactile, geological form.
- Its organically shaped windows and Milford pink granite facade bridge new and historic museum buildings, forming more than thirty physical connections across the campus, improving visitor flow and accessibility.
- Inside, the center houses immersive and educational experiences including:
 - A butterfly vivarium, where visitors mingle with hundreds of live butterflies.
 - An insectarium spotlighting the diversity and importance of arthropods.
 - A visible storage core displaying millions of scientific specimens behind glass.
 - The Invisible Worlds immersive experience, revealing hidden networks like neuron firings and plankton ecosystems in dynamic, multisensory form.

Teams are encouraged to use this inspiring new addition not just as a backdrop, but as a conceptual springboard for your OVA-driven creative endeavors. Whether you are drawing the fractal beauty of insect wings, designing flowing structures inspired by erosion, or capturing contrast through light and shadow, let **Natural Connections** guide your

vision toward artwork that echoes the living landscape of science, art, and innovation.

Be sure to read through the 2026 Information Packet and Guidelines, as we have a few modifications to last year's format. We look forward to the creative design solutions of this year's category prompts: **Drawing:** *Patterns of Life*, **Painting:** *Canyon of Light*, **Illustration:** *Moonlight Magic*, **Sculpture:** *Insects Inside*, **Fashion:** *Aquatic Threads*, **Architecture:** *Biomorphic School*, **Photography:** *Shifting Perspective*, and **Design:** *Natural Setting*. Consider the approach to your category design solution with your team carefully and register by the deadline of **March 13, 2026**.

As always, this wonderful event is only as great as the participants who come to compete supported by their art teacher advisors, and the volunteers who celebrate arts and creativity while adjudicating the students' long-term design and on-demand design challenges. Please consider signing up to join us as a volunteer at OVA 44! Team and volunteer registration is accessible through links on the OVA page of the NYSATA website.

Additional helpful links:

- [Virtual Field Trips](#)
- [OLogy! The science website for kids](#)
- [YouTube Video on the Richard Gilder Center](#)



Olympics of the Visual Arts

Student Design Competition



April 30th
Saratoga Springs

All New Design Challenges
Volunteer to Judge.
Advise a Team.

Be a part of the action!



Sagamore Summer Institute

Aliza Driller and Jen Locke, Summer Institute Participants

Aliza Driller and Jen Locke were two of this year's scholarship recipients for the NYSATA Summer Institute at Great Camp Sagamore in Raquette Lake, NY. Aliza received the Retired Art Educator Scholarship and Jen received the Barry Hopkins Art Educator Scholarship. They attended week #2 and were both in the Big Ink woodblock printmaking strand. These are their perspectives on the experience.



Aliza's Perspective:

It all started while I was playing around with jelly printing at my friend Gina's house. We were laughing, experimenting, just enjoying the pure fun of making art, when she told me about an opportunity through NYSATA for both retired and working art teachers: a week-long retreat at Great Camp Sagamore. I had not planned to go, and the cost gave me pause — but then I saw there was a scholarship available. I applied on a whim, and when I got the news that I had received it, I was thrilled but still had no idea what I was getting into.

Gina encouraged me to sign up for the printmaking workshop since I had enjoyed playing with print processes. I had never done woodblock printing before, but I dove in. With her help, I bought my tools and began carving a massive 48" x 24" panel of hard cherry wood. Within the first four hours, my back was aching, and I truly questioned my decision — but as I kept carving, something shifted. I found myself completely immersed in the process of drawing, carving, and designing. The

technique itself was inspiring, and I learned so much even before arriving.

Then I got to Sagamore — and my jaw dropped. The setting was majestic. Nestled in the Adirondacks, the camp is surrounded by pristine water and towering trees. My single room had a clawfoot tub to soak in and a stone fireplace I could cozy up to at night. It was the perfect mix of rustic beauty and private restoration.

The rhythm of the days was exactly what I did not know I needed: early morning hikes, photographing trees and lakes in golden light, being served delicious, thoughtful meals, and laughing around tables with new friends — fellow artists and educators who truly get the beauty and complexity of making art. Then, we would head to our studios to work. There were six different concentrations; I was in the printmaking one. The instructors were incredibly generous with their time, knowledge, and spirit. They met each of us exactly where we were in our creative process, offering support and guidance without ego. We shared materials, suggestions, and encouragement like a true artistic village.

Afternoons were flexible: we could continue working in our studios, or explore what others were making, or hike, swim, or paddle the calm water. Evenings brought optional gatherings — campfires, lectures, yoga, music, even bowling — or we could just keep working into the night, lost in our own creative flow.

It was, in every sense, art camp for grownups. And not just any grownups — people who live and breathe creativity, who cherish the act of making and the magic of sharing it.

I left with giant woodblock prints I am incredibly proud of, and smaller treasures I traded or bought from others. But more than that, I left with friendships I know will last, a renewed sense of creative purpose, new techniques to bring into my own practice, and a heart full of inspiration.

I cannot thank NYSATA enough for making this possible. If you have considered going, do it. Apply for the scholarship. Take the leap. Let yourself be surprised by how deeply nourished and inspired you will feel when you are surrounded by nature, creativity, and community.



Jen's Perspective:

I have spent the last few weeks processing my thoughts and feelings about the week I spent at Great Camp Sagamore for the NYSATA Summer Institute. It was incredible to be surrounded by artists who do all sorts of things — but at the end of the day, mostly do the same thing I do every day, teaching people to love making art. I do not think I have had a similar experience with so many talented artists since my undergrad years at RISD 25 years ago.

Additionally, though, it has been awfully rare in the last 15 years of my life (since my oldest son was born) to have had any time where the only person that I had to take care of was myself. I am pretty bad at taking care of myself — I find it a lot easier to take care of other people — but it is something that I have worked on a lot (and still have a lot of work to do!). This beautiful week where I got to walk/hike 50 miles in 6 days (without waiting for my dog to sniff the bushes or coaxing my kids up that last stretch of trail to the top), paddled 10 miles or more across the lake and back both alone and with friends, got up at 5am to watch the sunrise, did not have to remember any appointments or check any details or do any chores, and was fed delicious food all week without having to do anything except show up, was the most unbelievable luxury. Getting to make art all week was an almost inconceivable bonus on top of it. It has helped me reflect a lot on how to design my life better, mostly for my benefit but also for the benefit of those around me as well.

I was also struck by how much I grew as an artist from this experience. I have always been a designer more than a fine artist — I am much more comfortable when there is at least a semblance of a “box” to work within, a design problem with parameters to solve. I struggle with insecurity when I am judged solely on my own artistic ideas and execution and without external metrics to meet. At art school this was not much of a problem since we very quickly fell into our own majors with our own “kind”, the designers or the fine artists. When I was preparing for camp, though, I realized how concerned I was about being in an environment with so many fine artists. Would I be the odd one out? Would I feel hopelessly outmatched in my fine art skills and execution? Fortunately, I rapidly realized that my concerns were unfounded. I went through many different ideas for my woodblock print before settling on a version of a photo that I took many years ago in Barcelona, Spain. At the time these waterlilies were just something pretty, but they now hold much more meaning for me, a symbol of something beautiful rising from the mud. I simplified the design to be very graphic, drawing on many of my designer tendencies. When carving the block, I chose to carve each leaf radially, echoing the botanical structure of the leaves and offering some unpredictable texture in the printing process. I created a visual language with the carving tools, leaving rough edges to symbolize the visible edges of the leaves and smooth edges to symbolize and differentiate the edges of shadows. I am pleased with the results and benefitted hugely from the endless encouragement and support of my peers in the Big Ink strand. I had nothing to be concerned about!

A huge, HUGE thank you to NYSATA and all the teachers and professionals within it for the scholarship that made it possible for me to attend and have this incredible experience. I would never have done this for myself without that. Now knowing what I was missing, if it means advising additional clubs or getting a second job or skipping birthday and Christmas presents so that I can go again and again, that is what will happen. This experience was addictive in all the best ways.



Sagamore Summer Institute

Finding the Artist Within: My Life-Changing Experience at NYSATA Summer Institute at Great Camp Sagamore

Kelly Verdi

NYSATA President, Kelly Verdi, received a NYSATA Region 9 scholarship to attend the NYSATA Summer Institute at Great Camp Sagamore. Kelly attended week 2 and participated in the cardboard sculpture strand.



It took me over 20 years to finally say yes to something I have quietly longed for — and I am here to tell you it was worth every second of the wait.

This summer, I attended the NYSATA Summer Institute at Great Camp Sagamore, a retreat nestled in the breathtaking Adirondacks, where time slows down, creativity flows, and the inner artist you may have tucked away beneath lesson plans, laundry piles, or administrative checklists finally gets to breathe again.

If you have ever thought about going but talked yourself out of it because of the timing, the cost, the kids, the house, the “I’m-too-old-for-camp” doubts... consider this your sign.

Back to Camp... in My 40's

Let us be clear — going back to camp in your 40's is not without its quirks. My mattress had opinions, my knees had comments, and I brought more bug spray than paintbrushes. But none of that mattered. The second I stepped into Great Camp Sagamore's historic lodge, surrounded by 360 degrees of nature and fellow art educators buzzing with energy, I felt like I had come home.

The program is equal parts professional development and soul revival. Whether you are diving into a new medium, refining your practice, or simply soaking in inspiration from your peers, Sagamore gives you space — literal and mental — to grow.

“Art enables us to find ourselves and lose ourselves at the same time.”
— Thomas Merton

And that is exactly what happened. I found parts of myself I had not connected with in years. The part that loves to experiment without purpose. The part that finds joy in texture and color. The part that remembers how healing art can be when it is not attached to grades, standards, or deadlines.

No Dishes, No Grocery List — Just Joy

I would be remiss if I did not mention the food. The **food!** Delicious, nourishing, beautifully prepared meals — three times a day — and I did not have to cook a single one of them. No chopping. No dishes. No last-minute grocery runs. Just showing up and being taken care of.

There is something magical about a warm plate of comfort food after a long day of creating. Honestly, it felt like a luxury retreat disguised as professional development. (And did I go back for seconds at every meal? Yes. Yes, I did.)

Learning from Each Other

One of the most powerful aspects of the week was the sheer generosity of spirit among fellow attendees. We were all there to learn — not just from the amazing instructors, but from each other. Whether it was a casual tip over morning coffee, a collaborative session during open studio, or simply watching someone else's process, I was reminded that we are all constantly evolving.

“Surround yourself with people who are going to lift you higher.”
— Oprah Winfrey



That is what Sagamore does. It lifts you. It surrounds you with passionate, curious, brilliant minds who remind you that your voice as an artist, matters — not just in the classroom, but on the canvas, the page, the woodblock, or wherever you create.

A Grateful Heart

Of course, this adventure did not happen in a vacuum. I want to thank my incredible family for supporting my “summer camp for grownups” decision. While I was off sketching in the woods and having deep conversations about creativity by the campfire, they held things down at home without missing a beat (or at least not admitting if they did). You made it possible, and I am forever grateful.

Why You Should Go

If you have been on the fence about attending the NYSATA Summer Institute, let this be your encouragement to take the leap. Whether you are looking to rediscover your creative spark, build professional skills, or simply reconnect with what drew you to art in the first place — this program is for you.

It is never too late to invest in your creative self. Whether you are 25 or 65, teaching for 2 years or 30, Sagamore welcomes you — with open arms, incredible workshops, and just the right amount of bug spray.

I waited over two decades to say yes to this experience. Do not wait as long as I did. Find your artist. Grow through art. Learn from your tribe.

And pack your stretchy pants. Trust me.

NYSATA Summer Institute at Great Camp Sagamore 2026

Get ready for an inspiring creative journey this summer!
Week 1: July 19–25, 2026 - Week 2: July 25–31, 2026

Join 52 passionate participants each week alongside visiting artists for immersive workshops and artistic growth in one of the Great Camps of the Adirondacks. Anticipated workshops in FIBERS ... MIXED MEDIA ... RESIN ... POLYMER CLAY ... WATERCOLORS with CTLE credit.

Scholarship opportunities available for first time participants include:

- NYSATA: 1 Full & 1 Partial Scholarship
- Retiree Scholarship

Workshop Schedule Available: December 2025

Registration Opens: January/February 2026

Don't miss your chance to connect, create, and be inspired! Stay tuned for more details.

For more information

contact: sagamore@nysata.org



thank you!

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- SUNY Buffalo State College
- Maine College of Art
- Montserrat College of Art
- Art & Design at SUNY Oswego
- New York State Museum
- WMHT Public Media

make your hotel
reservations today!



DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel, 225 South Water Street,
Binghamton, NY

November 1, 2025
is the deadline for Early Bird Discount on
all registration rates and
\$134 Hotel room rate
single or double occupancy.

Reservations can be made by using the hotel link on the
2025 Conference page of the NYSATA website

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Phone: 800-322-3247 UnitedNow.com

Conference Overview & Rates

Please join us for the 2025 NYSATA Conference, *Navigating the Waves*, where we will explore the transformative potential of art in navigating challenges, celebrating resilience, and finding hope in uncertain times. This year, workshops will focus on the ways in which art education can foster personal growth, community connection, and innovation, including such topics as:

- Resilience and healing through art
- Creativity in the face of adversity
- Innovative methods
- Art as a tool for social change
- Fostering inclusivity and representation
- The role of technology in advancing art education

Immerse yourself in a conference that celebrates the resilience, creativity, and optimism that art education can foster. Learn from diverse perspectives and inclusive approaches. All levels of experience and backgrounds are welcome—whether you’re a seasoned educator or a newcomer with a fresh perspective. Let’s inspire each other to create, collaborate, and find hope through the transformative power of art.

Registration opens in September. Watch your email and www.nysata.org/2025-conference for updates.



navigating the waves

NYSATA 77th Annual Conference
November 21-23, 2025
DoubleTree Hotel, Binghamton

Registration opens the first week in September!

Details at
www.nysata.org/2025-conference

Workshop Questions?
workshops@nysata.org

Commercial & College Exhibit Questions?
exhibitors@nysata.org

Registration/Payment Questions?
tkonu@nysata.org

Other Conference Questions?
conference@nysata.org

Registration and Meal Rates

Member Early Bird	\$169
Member After November 1	\$199
Student/Retired/Unemployed Member Early Bird	\$130
Student/Retired/Unemployed Member After November 1	\$160
Non-Member (No Early Bird Rate)	\$255
Full Meal Package	\$230
Friday Lunch	\$35
Friday Dinner (Buffet)	\$55
Saturday Lunch	\$35
Saturday President’s Reception & Plated Dinner	\$65
Sunday Brunch	\$40

Inspiring Keynote Speakers • 100 Workshops • Commercial & College Exhibitors • Student Scholarship Winners • Student Art Exhibit • Hands-On Studio Workshops • Awards Banquets President’s Dinner • Member’s Art Exhibit and Silent Auction • Artisans Market • Whova App



2025 Registration & Payment Policy

If you need district approval to attend, please secure permission *prior to registering*. If paying with a school district PO, be sure you know what is allowable per your district policy prior to registering. ***You are responsible for any balance on your bill not covered by your school district.***

Full payment must be made at the time of registration unless paying by school purchase order. Payment can be made by credit card (Visa, MasterCard, Discover, American Express) or check (payable to NYSATA). If mailing payment, include a printed copy of your registration payment form along with your payment and mail to: NYSATA, PO Box 4502, North Myrtle Beach, SC 29597. **(PLEASE NOTE NEW PAYMENT ADDRESS).**

Do not mail a check or purchase order after Friday, November 14, 2025, as it will not arrive in time. If you register after November 14, please pay in full via a credit card.

2025 Cancellation & Refund Policy

NYSATA incurs costs to process registration, POs, credit card payments, and refunds. Additionally, if you reserve meals or an event ticket and cancel last-minute, NYSATA has already purchased the materials and meals and/or held space for you in the event, resulting in an expense and/or loss of revenue if no payment has been made. ***If you register with no payment and subsequently cancel or don't attend, you may be billed a cancellation fee*** plus an additional fee for any meals or ticketed events for which NYSATA has incurred cost or lost revenue to reserve on your behalf.

All refund requests **MUST** be received in writing (email).

Registration Fees

- Until November 1—full refund less a \$25 administration fee
- November 2 through 15—50% refund less a \$25 administration fee
- After November 15—no refunds

Meals

- Full refund until meal counts are confirmed to hotel on November 7
- No refund after meal counts are confirmed
- No return or exchange of meals onsite
- If a MEALS ONLY registration for awardee/conference guest, \$25 cancellation fee will be deducted from any refunded amount

Ticketed Events (Friday After Dark Event, Extended Studio Workshops)

- No refunds
- No return or exchange of event tickets onsite

Conference attendees with meal and/or event tickets that are no longer wanted may try to re-sell them through the conference app onsite. NYSATA will not refund or exchange unwanted tickets.

Cancellations due to extenuating circumstances (i.e. death in the family, accident, serious illness) must be submitted in writing, include appropriate verification, and must be received by NYSATA via email to tkonu@nysata.org prior to the last day of the conference. No refund requests will be honored if submitted after the conference has ended. Please allow 4-6 weeks for processing of refunds.

Conference Highlights & New This Year!

Whova Conference App: Through generous support by our Platinum Sponsor, **Blick Art Materials** and Gold Sponsors, **Alfred University** and **RIT**; we are able to provide your conference agenda through the Whova mobile and desktop app. Downloading the app to both your mobile and desktop device will enable you to access all features. All participants will be able to access all workshop documents for up to three months after the conference has closed.

Workshops: Conference workshop options include hands-on workshops, product demonstrations, lecture workshops, and round-table discussions on a variety of current interest topics. Access to workshops in the general schedule is included in the registration fee.

Extended Studio Workshops: Optional Extended Studio (ticketed) workshops are available for an additional fee. Register for ticketed workshops when you register online for the conference. **Ticketed workshop fees are non-refundable.**

NEW THIS YEAR! Special Studio Sessions: Local Artist Kathye Edwina Arrington will share her expertise on African Mud Cloth painting. Don't miss this unique opportunity to learn about this fascinating art form and work with Kathye's incredible collection of mud from all over the world to create a Mud Cloth painting in a surprising array of hues. All materials are provided. \$50 fee. Space is limited, so register early.

Exhibitors Showcase: Our exhibitors have really stepped up this year with workshop sessions, product demonstrations, conference swag, and door prizes. There will be plenty of time to find out about new ideas, products, and ways of working with your students. Please visit our exhibitor's area both in person and in the app; and thank them for their generous support.

10X10 Members Exhibit and Auction: Please consider participating in this year's Members' Exhibit opportunity. Work submitted must be 10"x10" in size and may be designated as "not for sale" or donated for auction to benefit the NYSATA Scholarship Fund. See more info at www.nysata.org/members-exhibit.

Conference Student Exhibit: We will hold this exhibit onsite at the conference hotel. There is no fee to participate, but you **MUST** pre-register at www.nysata.org to reserve a space for your student work. **This exhibit is open to NYSATA members who register as attendees for the conference.** Registration is by teacher, not school district. Please do not

add work of non-registered colleagues to your exhibit. Details coming soon in your email and at www.nysata.org/student-exhibit.

NEW FORMAT THIS YEAR! Friday after Dark Ticketed Event: Collaborate and get creative in a relaxed environment with Ohio mural artist, Chilly Rodriguez! Casual, comfy clothing is recommended; an evening beverage of your choice is included with your ticket.

Artisans Market: Artisan vendors will sell their handwork on Friday night at the conference site. Each artisan will be responsible for their own sales, shipping (if applicable), and any applicable sales tax. A registration fee of \$25 per artisan applies to secure a table. Artisans will need to register by November 1 on the NYSATA website. Watch your email for details. All registered artisans must be NYSATA Members AND register for the conference to participate in this event.

Conference Registration: *PLEASE secure any district approval needed prior to registering.* All registrations take place online through our secure online registration system. When you register, you have the option of paying with a credit card or mailing a school check or PO for payment. If paying with a school check or PO, you **MUST** register online and attach a printed or digital copy of your registration confirmation to the school check or PO. Payment in full must be received before the event for you to have access to the schedule in the Whova app. Meals and ticketed events are non-refundable.

Awards Events: This year's awardees will be featured in the *NYSATA News* and conference program, as well as recognized in person at awards celebration events. Guests are welcome to register for awards events without registering for the entire conference event.

Verify Attendance and/or CTLE Hours: NYSATA is a NYSED-approved CTLE sponsor. Conference attendees will be provided with a tracking sheet to record their attendance and document CTLE hours. CTLE certification can be obtained after the conference by inputting the CTLE tracking information in our online CTLE Certification Form. See www.nysata.org/ctle-credit for more information.

conference schedule of events*

Thursday, November 20

Preconference (Ticketed Event)..... 9 AM-4 PM
(Ticket includes lunch)

Friday, November 21

Continental Breakfast (Vendor Area) 8-10 AM
 Commercial Exhibitors Exclusive 8-10 AM
 Commercial/College Exhibition 8 AM-1 PM
 Workshops 10 AM-1 PM
 Lunch (Timed Tickets) 11 AM-2 PM
 Super Session I: Wanda Knight 1-2 PM
 Commercial/College Exhibition 2-5 PM
 Workshops 2-5 PM
 Regional Hospitality 5:30-6:30 PM
 Awards Dinner 6:30-8:30 PM
 (Ray Henry Award, Special Citation Awards, Student Scholarships)
 Artisans Market 8:30-10 PM
 After Dark Event (Ticket Required) 9-11 PM

Saturday, November 22

Continental Breakfast (Vendor Area) 8-10 AM
 Commercial Exhibitors Exclusive 8-9 AM
 Commercial/College Exhibition 8-1 PM
 Super Session II: Chilly Rodriguez 9-10 AM
 Workshops 9 AM-1 PM
 Lunch (Timed Tickets) 11 AM-2 PM
 Super Session III: Ohan Breiding 1-2 PM
 Workshops 2-5 PM
 Member & Student Exhibit Opening 5:30 PM
 President's Dinner 6:30-9 PM
 (Past President Recognition, Outstanding Service, NYS Art Educator of the Year)
 Dancing to DJ 9 PM-12 AM

Sunday, November 23

Super Session IV: Anna Warfield 9-10 AM
 Region Awards Breakfast 10 AM-12 PM
 (Regional Art Educators of the Year, Vendor Raffle)

**Agenda subject to change without notice.*

2025 PRECONFERENCE

Binghamton University Art Museum, November 20, 2025, 10 AM-4 PM

Join us for an exploration of art and artifacts represented in the Binghamton University Art Museum, with a focus on exploring authentic representation of artists from many cultures and backgrounds for inclusion in the classroom. We will discuss avoiding cultural cliches and appropriation while taking a deep dive into empowering people from all backgrounds through their stories and art.

In the morning local Indigenous (Onondaga, Snipe clan) artist, Brandon Lazore will lead a discussion on his own artwork, blending traditional Haudenosaunee arts with modern techniques and styles. In the afternoon we will focus on diversity in the BUAM Galleries, with an emphasis on moving from tokenism and cultural appropriation to honoring traditions and understanding contemporary circumstances. BUAM Coordinator of Education and Public program, discusses ways that we can make art more accessible in galleries and in the classroom.

Registration and ticket information

Register at www.nsyata.org/preconference

\$90 Member/District Member

\$75 Member Student, Retired, Unemployed

\$145 Non-Member

Registration fee includes morning coffee service and a sandwich/salad lunch at the Binghamton University Art Museum. Lunch includes beverage and desert.

The museum is a short drive (under 5 miles) from the conference hotel (Binghamton DoubleTree). Carpooling is encouraged. A shuttle is available for those who need transportation from the hotel.

Preservice Student Volunteers

call for student volunteers



33 art education students from 5 college undergraduate and graduate art education programs volunteered at the NYSATA 2024 Annual Conference. These amazing artist-teachers did a great job helping with workshops, events and making sure all attendees, vendors and presenters were well cared for! Our student volunteers each spent three hours helping, then had the rest of the conference time to learn and have fun (lots and lots of fun!). They visited local galleries and had a pizza party to make lifelong connections and bonds. We were so proud of this group and can't wait to see them back as full-time art educators!

Preservice Student Volunteer Program Sign-Ups are under way for the 2025 Conference. This program gives full-time preservice graduate and undergraduate Art Education students a passport to attend the conference in exchange for up to three hours of volunteer work during the conference weekend. Students work alongside volunteer conference and program coordinators and get a sneak peek at how the conference works behind the scenes, as well as attend and/or present workshops and participate in all conference events. Participating college students purchase a student membership and a volunteer t-shirt; they sign up in advance to select their volunteer roles and then just check in upon arrival for their t-shirt, snacks, and more guidance.

Questions? Contact Lauren Ramich, Higher Education Committee Chair and Student Volunteer Coordinator, at larfaa@rit.edu.

Conference FAQs

Is there a virtual option? There is no virtual option. We cannot put in enough volunteer hours or manage a team of people big enough to pull it off with the level of quality we desire, and hiring a professional team would drive our conference registration rate too high for our comfort level.

The food cost seems high. Why? NYSATA does not mark up meals for profit. Hotel banquet meals may come at a higher cost per plate than an average restaurant meal. Providing a quality dining experience for nearly 200 meal guests at a time is a challenge. All meal tickets include appetizer, entrée, and desert plus a mandatory 22% service charge.

The projected sale of hotel rooms and banquet meals (called our *group performance*) gives NYSATA leverage to contract hotel meeting space for free or a reduced fee, allowing to keep our registration fee low for everyone.

Where do I find the schedule for workshops and other events? A detailed conference schedule will appear in the printed conference program you will receive when you arrive, as well as the Whova conference app. There are always last-minute cancellations and schedule changes, so use the app for the most up-to-date schedule information.

How do I access the Whova app? When you register, be sure to use the email address you would like to use to join the app. We usually begin inviting our paid registrants to join the Whova app about two weeks prior to our event and every few days after that. *Your bill must be fully paid before we will invite you to join.* Your email invitation will contain a link and specific instructions to join our community. Once you join, you can start planning your agenda and communicating with other conference participants.

Is there a day rate? A single day rate is not offered. There is not an easy way for our volunteer "staff" to record and/or monitor single day access and having a single flat fee for the conference allows us to keep the lowest rate possible for everyone.

Do I get a discount for presenting a workshop? NYSATA is an all-volunteer community. We cannot provide compensation or discounts for workshop presenters without increasing the cost for everyone else. All professional associations depend on people participating as part of the community, including sharing their expertise with others at events like conferences.

All the people who give countless hours year-round as executive officers and program coordinators also do not receive compensation or conference discounts for their contributions. We appreciate all the volunteers who work to make NYSATA such a great community. You will find a small token of thanks in your presenter packet when you arrive.

Can I register for the conference if I am not a member of NYSATA? Absolutely! NYSATA offers non-members the opportunity to join us for this exciting weekend of professional development, but at a higher fee than for members. Prior

to November 1, consider becoming a member and taking advantage of our early bird rate for the best value.

Can I join or renew my membership with my conference registration? Yes, you can join or renew and complete your conference registration all on one form. If you renew separately, your membership must be current and paid in full to receive the member rate when you register.

Is there a fee or sign-up required for workshops? There are plenty of options to fill your schedule without adding additional fee workshops. Workshops in the general schedule are offered on a first come, first served basis. Some presenters have set a small fee for materials, payable onsite to the workshop presenter (please plan to bring cash in small bills). Optional pre-registered Extended Studio workshops are offered for a ticket fee paid in advance to help cover speaker fees, materials, and other costs associated with those offerings.

If my school team is attending the conference together, do we all have to individually register? Everyone must register online using their own member login information. Your unique member login keeps your selections and transactions in your own record in our database. Use the instructions below for paying with a PO. Several registration confirmations may be bundled together and attached to a single PO or check for payment, as per the instructions in the registration confirmation email.

How do I register if my school is paying for me with a PO?

1. GET DISTRICT APPROVAL FIRST; know what fees the district agrees to cover.
2. Register yourself online. Choose your registration and any meal options or ticketed events you wish to attend. Choose the PAY LATER option for payment.
3. You will get an email confirmation and invoice with detailed payment instructions and address.
4. Attach a printed or digital copy of your registration confirmation or invoice to the PO. PO must be received prior to the start of the event.
5. You are responsible to pay any remainder not covered by your school district.

Will I be charged for cancellation or not paying/attending once I register? Yes. NYSATA incurs costs to process registration, POs, credit card payments, and refunds.

Additionally, the space reservation, food, and materials to fulfill your order must be purchased ahead of time by NYSATA, resulting in a loss when late cancellations occur. Please read the cancellation policy near the registration link at www.nsyata.org/2025-conference.

Where do I find the schedule for workshops and other events? A detailed conference schedule will appear in the printed conference program you will receive when you arrive, as well as the Whova conference app. There are always last-minute cancellations and schedule changes, so use the app and the large chart onsite for the most up-to-date schedule information.

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Keynote Speakers



wanda b. knight, ph.d.

Friday 1 PM Super Session I

Wanda B. Knight, Ph.D. is a Professor of Art Education and Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies and Professor-in-Charge of Art Education. Besides university level teaching both online and in residence, she has taught all grade levels (PreK-12), in vastly different locations, counting rural, urban, suburban, and United States Department of Defense schools, in both the United States and overseas. She has also served as a principal of both elementary and secondary public schools and as registrar and curator of an art museum.

Moreover, she teaches, presents, and leads workshops and seminars that foster diversity and support fair, ethical, and inclusive teaching and learning environments.

Serving as an expert diversity consultant to educational organizations, businesses, and a Fortune 500 Company, her teaching, research, and leadership knowledge and skills are informed through global travels and from scholarly pursuits that have allowed her to cross borders of technologies, disciplines, and institutions. Dr. Knight serves on the National Art Education Council for Policy Studies, is past president of the United States Society for Education through Art (USSEA) and is past chair of the National Art Education Association Committee on Multiethnic Concerns (COMC).

A previous editor of the *Journal of Social Theory in Art Education*, co-editor of a special issue of *SchoolArts* magazine, and guest editor of *Visual Arts Research*, her work concerning teacher education, culturally competent teaching, diversity and inclusion, social justice, and educational equity is published widely and her extensive presentations span national and international locations including Austria, Canada, Finland, Germany, Korea, Sweden, Taiwan, and other locations, incorporating keynote presentations sponsored by universities, cultural institutions, and national and international associations. Moreover, she has received funding for her research from local, state, and international organizations, including The Pennsylvania State University, The Ohio State University, The Pennsylvania Department of Education, the Getty Foundation, the Annenberg Foundation, and Phi Delta Kappa International, among others. Her honors include the Pennsylvania Art Education Association Outstanding Higher Education Art Educator Award, the NAEA J. Eugene Grigsby Jr. Award for outstanding contributions to the field of art education, and the Kenneth Marantz Distinguished Alumni Award from The Ohio State University, where she earned her Ph.D.



Chris "Chilly" Rodriguez

Saturday 9 AM Super Session II



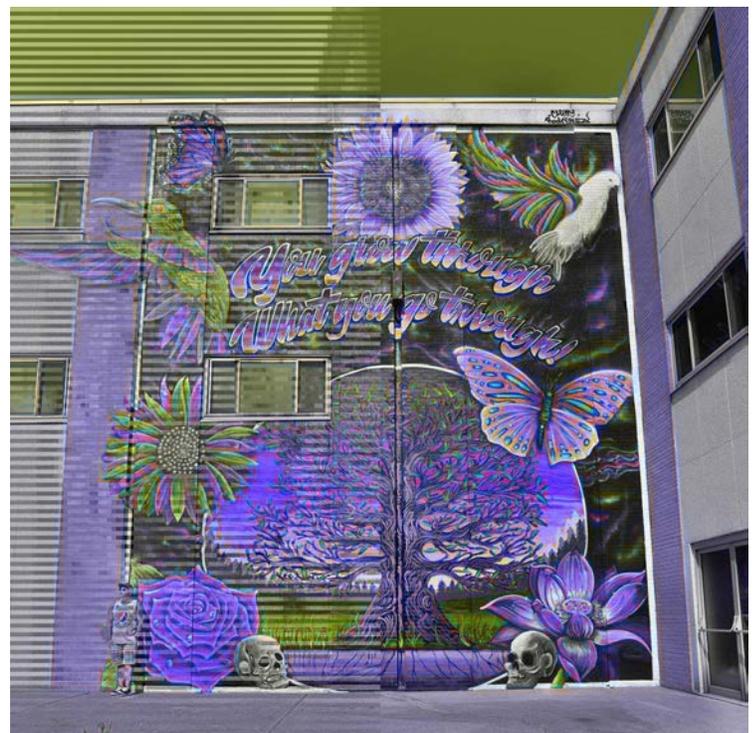
Toledo, Ohio native **Chris "Chilly" Rodriguez** is an artist & muralist with numerous murals and works spread throughout his hometown and across the country. As a troubled youth, Chilly found an outlet in art while he simultaneously struggled with the battles of addiction. After losing his left hand in an alcohol-related injury in 2018, Chris confronted his demons head on and emerged stronger by turning his passion for art into a driving force for sobriety, community revitalization, and positive change.

Rodriguez's art reflects his personal evolution, capturing themes of trauma, addiction, sobriety, fear, and love. Through murals, paintings on canvas, and sculptural pieces, he explores the complexities of the human experience, using vibrant colors, abstract patterns, typography, and realism to illustrate the transformative power of art. As a self-taught artist with roots in graffiti and street art, Rodriguez views his creative practice as a tool for healing and personal growth, with each piece marking a step in his ongoing journey.

According to Rodriguez, "Art is more than just color on a wall or canvas—it's a tool for healing and empowerment." His work serves as a visual narrative of his resilience and dedication to the transformative power of art. Through his work, he hopes to inspire others to embrace creativity as a means of healing and self-discovery.

Rodriguez's commitment to public art is evident in his murals, which have revitalized neighborhoods and brought art to underserved spaces. His work can be seen throughout his home city of Toledo and in cities across the country, serving as a testament to the power of art to uplift and inspire communities.

Chris's journey underscores that the transformative power of determination and creativity pays off. In 2022 Chris opened The River East Gallery providing a platform for local and regional artists which serves as a reminder that with resilience and dedication, anyone can overcome their past and achieve their dreams.

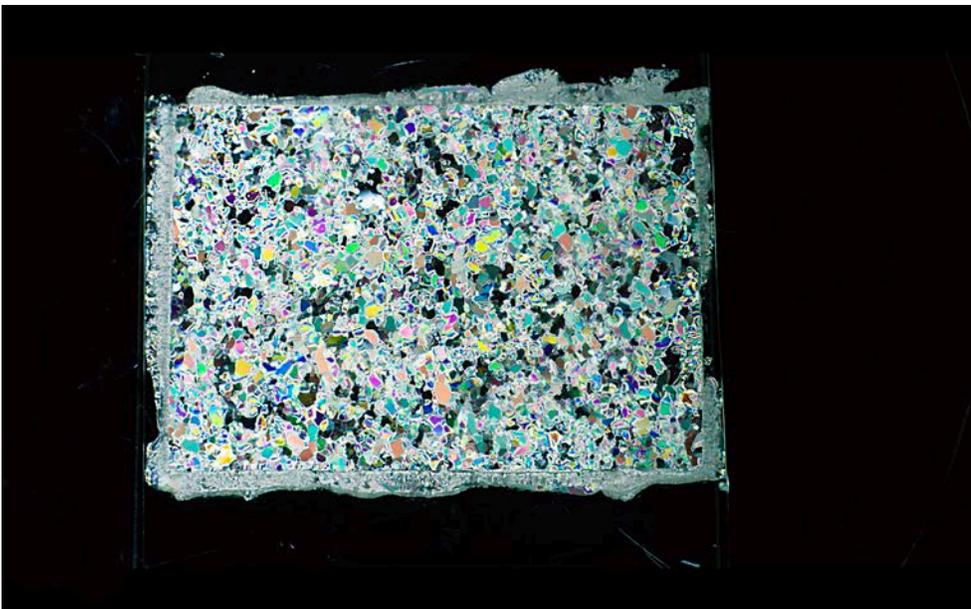


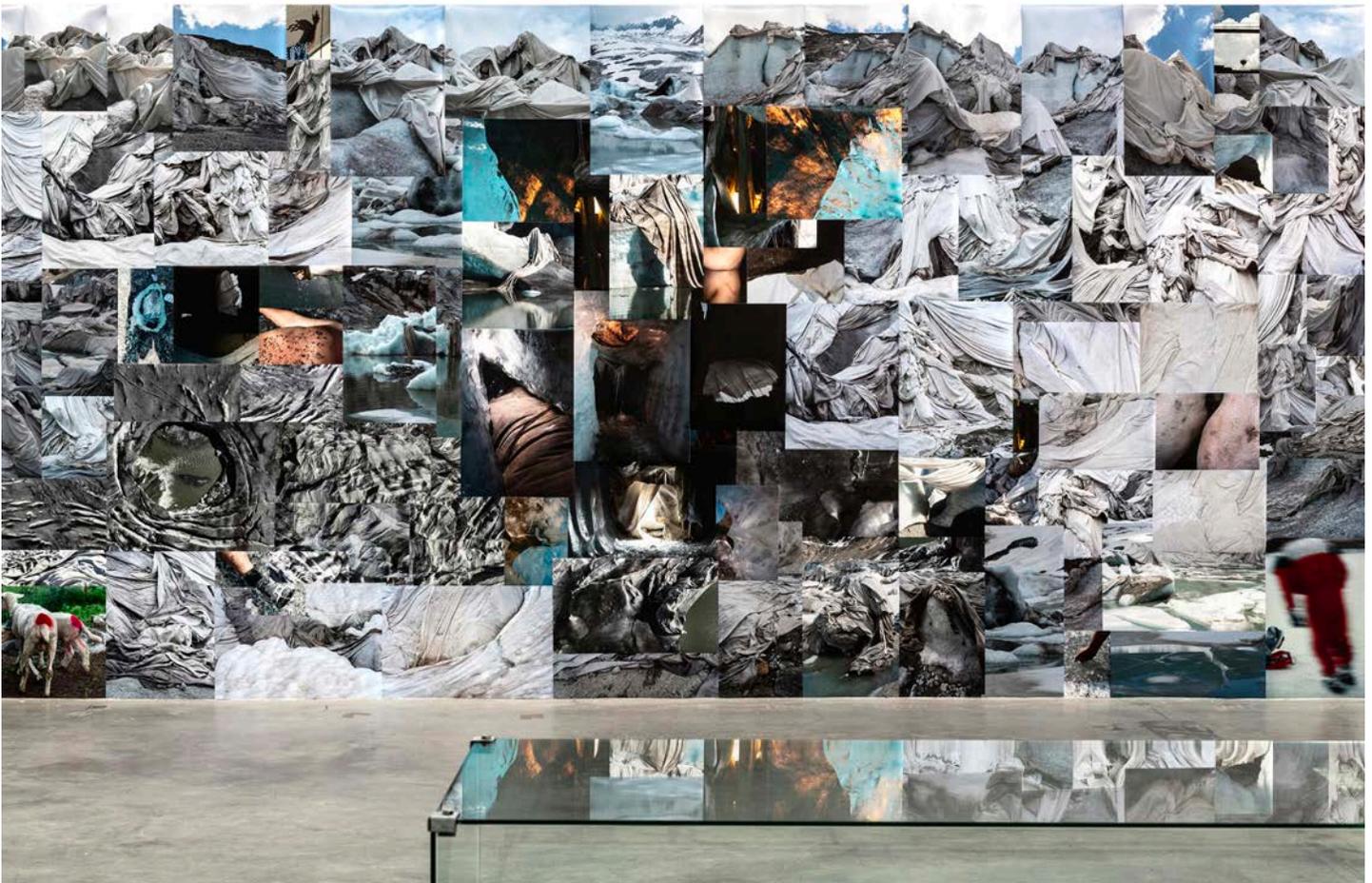


ohan breiding

Saturday 1 PM Super Session III

Ohan Breiding is a Swiss-American artist, raised in a Swiss village and living between Brooklyn, NY and Williamstown, MA. They work with photography, photographic and filmic archives, and video in a collaborative practice that reinterprets historical events, putting the past into a meaningful transformative relation with the present. They employ a trans-feminist lens to the discussion of ecological care to amplify the systemic failures and violence of the Anthropocene. Breiding has presented their work at numerous museums, galleries, and film festivals including ICA LA, Photo LA, the Armory Center for the Arts, LAMAG, LAXART, Human Resources, Oakland Museum of California, Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, Haus N Athens, Sharjah Art Foundation, IKOB Museum of Contemporary Art, Kunsthaus Zürich, Hallwalls Contemporary Arts Center (Buffalo, NY), Frac des Pays de la Loire, and Oceanside Museum (as part of the Getty's PST Art — Pacific Standard Time). Breiding is a 2024 A.I.R. Fellow, a 2024 FIAR resident, a 2024 Triangle Artist Resident, a 2021 TBA (Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary) Academy Ocean Space Fellow, a 2019 Millay Colony Resident and a 2018 Shandaken: Storm King resident. They are the recipient of the 1945 World Fellowship Award, the Hellman Award, the SIFF (Swiss International Film Festival) Award for The Rebel Body, a short film made with Shoghig Halajian and the participation of Silvia Federici, the Rema Hort Mann Emerging Artist Award, and the DAAD Award. Their practice has been written about in Artforum, Art in America, BOMB, e-flux, Hyperallergic, and Whitewall. Breiding is an Assistant Professor in the Art Department at Williams College and is represented by OCHI Gallery in Los Angeles.







anna warfield

Sunday 9 AM Super Session IV

Aнна Warfield (they/she, b. 1995) is a soft sculptor, poet, educator, and community builder. Their text-based fabric works explore unlearning, communication, and identity. Interested in connection and understanding, they routinely create artworks in concert with community.

They've exhibited solo in recent years at the Rockwell Museum (Corning), the Everson Museum (Syracuse), and Roberson Museum (Binghamton). Warfield is the recipient of a number of grants and awards the most notable of which include two New York State Council on the Arts Grants in 2023 & 2025, a Corning Museum of Glass Residency in 2025, and a Constance Saltonstall Fellowship and Residency in 2023.

Education and opportunity creation are pillars of their practice. Warfield is one of twenty-six participants in the 2025 NYC Teaching Artist Roundtable Mentorship program. Warfield teaches working artists professional skills throughout New York State as a consultant with NYFA, and started the "Artist Grant Navigation Project," in 2024 through which they coach artists on grant writing. Warfield partnered with ChaShaMa in 2025 to activate storefronts in Binghamton with arts and culture programming by emerging and experimental artists through her pop-up, Praxis Project Space and Gallery.

Warfield spoke as a panelist in the 2023 Text and Techne Conference at Trinity College, Dublin and gave talks at the Smithsonian Affiliated Rockwell Museum, New York Foundation for the Arts, Alfred University, Binghamton University, and Cornell University.

Warfield is a NYFA Artist Advisory Committee member and holds a BFA and BS in Communication both from Cornell University where their 2018 thesis received the Charles Baskerville Painting Award.





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Technical

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Sculpture Dimensional Studies

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Friday After Dark

An Interactive Art After Dark Experience

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and one raffle ticket

Join us for an unforgettable night of creativity and fun! Create your own mini black light masterpiece! Collaborate on a large scale work! Contribute to a vibrant collaborative mural with guest artist, Chris "Chilly" Rodriguez! Extra raffle tickets can be purchased throughout the conference. One lucky winner will take home the mural designed and curated by Chris!



Toledo, Ohio native Chris "Chilly" Rodriguez is an artist & muralist with numerous murals and works spread throughout his hometown and across the country.

As a troubled youth, Chilly found an outlet in art while he simultaneously struggled with the battles of addiction. After losing his left hand in an alcohol-related injury in 2018, Chris confronted his demons head on and emerged stronger by turning his passion for art into a driving force for sobriety, community revitalization, and positive change. Chris's journey underscores that the transformative power of determination and creativity pays off.

In 2022, Chris opened The River East Gallery providing a platform for local and regional artists which serves as a reminder that with resilience and dedication, anyone can overcome their past and achieve their dreams.

Workshops

*Due to many circumstances beyond the control of the conference planning team, workshops are subject to change without advance notice. Please see the conference Whova app for the most up-to-date schedule during the conference.

Each workshop is labeled with a letter representing the grade-level band toward which the content of the workshop is most suitable.

E = Elementary
M = Middle School
HS = High School
C = College
A = Administration

Listening to Trees

Explore the artistry of George Nakashima in this hands-on workshop. Create your own wood-inspired art while learning about trees, lumber, and furniture-making. Celebrate the joy of creativity and leave with a one-of-a-kind piece to treasure. Supply fee: \$2. Don't miss this opportunity to experience Nakashima's legacy!

\$2 fee at time of workshop

Patricia Stork, Carolann Lally E, M, HS

Collaborative Community Building Through Contemporary Art

Get ready to spark big ideas and bigger collaborations! This hands-on workshop dives into Art21's dynamic resources and contemporary artists to inspire bold, meaningful, engaging collaborative art projects. Walk away with ready-to-use lessons that amplify student voice, celebrate diversity, and turn your classroom into a hub of creativity, connection, and joy.

Lara Tyson E, M, HS

Celebrating Excellence in Visual Arts: The NYSATA VISION Awards

Discover how the new NYSATA VISION Awards recognize K-12 schools and districts across New York State for their commitment to robust, high-quality Visual Arts programs. This session will outline the nomination process, eligibility, and criteria while highlighting how the award can serve as a powerful tool for advocacy, visibility, and program growth.

Janis Boremski E, M, HS, A

Youth Art Month

Navigating the waves and using art as a tool for social change through Youth Art Month activities! Create art with us while you learn more about Youth Art Month! YAM is a month-long celebration that provides the opportunity for your entire community to experience the importance of the visual arts in education. We will be providing you with resources, art making ideas, and swag giveaways!

Patti Krakoff, Tracy Berges E, M, HS, C, A

Portfolio Project 2.0

Portfolio Project 2.0, The NEW and IMPROVED version, is finally here! Come learn about the changes to our beloved program. This workshop will not only inform you as a potential teacher of student participants, but also provide information on becoming an adjudicator through the CTLE credit-eligible adjudicator training process.

Matthew Wilson, Barbara Imperiale E, M, HS

Rube Goldberg Explorative

Come learn about Rube Goldberg, the American Cartoonist and creator of "Rube Goldberg Machines." This session will connect Art and Simple Machines (STEAM). We will participate in drawing and building our own Rube Goldberg machines from a variety of available supplies. Let's have some fun together!

\$3 fee at time of workshop

Thomas Knab E, M, HS

One Object Many Ways

Explore a dynamic drawing project that helps students apply their understanding of Art, Design, Media and Techniques! Using a single object, experiment with techniques like positive/negative space and color schemes. Leave with an accordion fold book and ideas to use in your classroom. Bring an object or 4"x4" sketch!

Jennifer Armbruster E, M, C, A

Your ArtWORK Will Lead You to a Work of Art

Understanding and allowing your artistic process to lead the way. Motivate your students, generate ownership, identify artistic tendencies, increase understanding and reveal what's behind the art! Active art-making included!

Thomas Finn E, M, HS, C, A

Creative Community Vend: Vending Free Art and Highlighting the Markers in Your Community.

In this session we will share the story of how we got the idea to distribute free art from a vending machine, how we acquired funding for the project, and the logistics involved in bringing an art vending machine to your school or community. Spend a little time creating a piece to donate to the project.

Brandy Noody, Mackenzie Sheldon M, HS, C

Creativity and Joy: Multilingual Learners in the Visual Arts Classroom

Breathe in and breathe out as you take the time to acknowledge the joy of small moments in your classroom. This session will focus on those moments within an urban, secondary multilingual learning community. Explore how mindfulness, heterogeneous groupings, and scaffolding of curriculum creates a nurturing environment where students can explore their inner artist voice.

Melissa Birnbaum HS

Artsonia: Upgrading the Art Room with Online Portfolios, Lessons, Fundraising, and More

Artsonia is an online platform allowing teachers to bring their art rooms to the next level by integrating student artwork and lessons with families and communities. Teachers can publish student art, connect parents to student galleries, organize projects, connect them to national standards and fundraise all through artsonia.com.

Kris Mulfinger E, M, HS

Museum Activities in the Classroom

Discover activities that museum educators use in galleries for quick engagement with works of art. Whether you are looking at reproductions or actual artworks, Lindsay Kranz from the Buffalo AKG Art Museum will showcase a few fun ways to get students thinking and talking about works of art!

Lindsay Kranz E, M, HS

Hands-on with Wacom Drawing Tablets

Get inspired to level up your digital art lessons! Explore Wacom tablets, test out devices, and discover creative web-based tools in this energetic, hands-on session. Bring your laptop and leave with ideas, resources, and the confidence to bring digital art to life in your classroom.

Michele Dick E, M, HS, C, A

Charles Demuth-Inspired Number Drawing

Charles Henry Buckius Demuth was a Precisionist that emphasized clear geometric shapes and sharp lines. Create your own Demuth-Inspired drawing using basic classroom supplies, jumbo number stencils and colored pencils.

Jen Deaton E, M, HS

Printing on 3-D Bisque Surfaces

Transform plain bisque forms into stunning art! Explore techniques for printing on curved, wheel-thrown, or hand-built bisque surfaces, both over and under glaze, through engaging discussions and hands-on practice.

Kyleigh Gribble E, M, HS, C, A

Inner Harmony: Abstract Pen Design Through Reflective Drawing

In this workshop, participants will create bookmarks and/or small artworks that encourage a free-flowing and reflective drawing practice. This lesson uses SEL (Social Emotional Learning) as a way for students to explore their emotions through pattern design, color choice, and line practice. This lesson can be scaffolded for elementary, middle, high school, and special education learners.

Cassandra Bond E, M, HS

Collaborative Art as a Catalyst for Resilience and Change

This dynamic workshop explores how art can be harnessed as a tool for healing, navigating adversity, and driving meaningful change. Participants will engage in collaborative art-making and exploration of school-wide art initiatives to reimagine the role of art in their school communities. Art education and "art as therapy" themes will be explored.

Janis Boremski E, M, HS

Cardboard Collagraphs

This workshop is on how to make collagraphs using cardboard cereal boxes and printing the collagraph using the back of a plastic spoon. This process is accessible to all students.

Clare Levine E, M, HS, C

Creative Resilience in the Art Room: Integrating Mindfulness and Creativity for Teacher and Student Well-being

You will explore a dynamic and reflective approach to teaching that integrates mindfulness & trauma-informed practices. Tools and insights will be given to support both educator well-being and inclusive student engagement in the art room. Hands-on strategies such as mindful warm-ups, co-regulation techniques, and creative self-reflection will be shared.

Barbara Imperiale E, M, HS

Catch the Wave: How to Land Your Dream Job as an Art Teacher

Graduation is just the beginning! This session will guide you through the steps to securing your dream job as an art teacher. We'll cover: application essentials, where to look, interview process (What to expect and how to prepare) and Mock Interviews including Sample Questions. Practice makes perfect! Join us for an interactive, hands-on experience designed to help you ride the wave to success.

Cynthia DiDonna-Nethaway C

Picturing History

Using the exhibition "Free as They Want to Be: Artists Committed to Memory," Johnson Museum of Art educators will highlight works such as Bisa Butler's quilted portrait of Frederick Douglass and Lava Thomas' drawing of Harriet Tubman. Contemporary artists' takes on historical figures and multiple perspectives will be the focus of the session including hands-on materials and studio ideas.

Carol Hockett, Wendy Kenigsberg E, M, HS

Teaching with Generative AI: Strategies for K-12 Art Educators

This workshop introduces the AI Toolkit for K-12 Art Educators—a resource that equips teachers with strategies to engage ethically and critically with Generative AI in the classroom, while amplifying students' artistic expression.

Minne Atairu M

Story Disk Group Sculpture: Sharing our Stories through Symbolic Color

This is a versatile, dynamic group sculpture project with the purpose of bringing together different communities of people to make new or deeper connections (such as two different classes of students; teachers and students; students and community members, etc.) through the creation of a group sculpture, made up of individual symbolic tissue paper collage discs.

Jodi Burger M, HS

Intuitive Watercolor: Expressing Grief

Using watercolor techniques and colored pencils, connect with your intuition and creatively express your grief. A technique I discovered while my father was battling brain cancer, I used art as therapy to cope, express and begin to heal. Learn the steps, gain helpful resources and create your own intuitive watercolor. All materials provided.

Kelly Jackson E, M, HS, C, A

Superpowered Symbols: Digital Design in Youth Art

This session shares a teen art lesson from the Saturday Arts Lab at SUNY New Paltz, where students designed "logos of empowerment" inspired by superhero culture. Using digital tools and laser cutting, they explored identity and agency. Presenters will offer classroom strategies to foster critical conversations on representation.

Cheri Ehrlich, Gillian Henderson, Alexandra Maher HS, C, A

Embracing Assessment as Advocacy

Has a dismissive parent ever asked "Why did my child get a C—it's just art...?" When deployed as advocacy, standards based assessment elevates value for art programs. Learn how assessment is a strong advocacy tool, evaluate current assessments and

consider ways to make learning visible to stakeholders.

Samantha Nolte-Yupari, Valerie Savage E, M, HS, A

Courageous Conversations: Supporting Teachers with ED&I

Join the ED&I committee in a conversation about real-life scenarios that explore ED&I issues like pronoun respect, student harassment, and racial slurs, while also building strategies for inclusive classrooms and confident self-advocacy in unsupportive environments.

Callie Bryant, Jennifer Grasso E, M, HS, C, A

Arts for Healing: Prompts and Projects for Marginalized Populations

In 2012, Sharon began facilitating Arts For Healing programs for marginalized populations. Participants included, LGBTQIA teens, unaccompanied migrant children, incarcerated youths, young adults with traumatic brain injuries, trafficked and homeless youths, and more. Sharon will be offering a slide presentation of prompts and projects, with time for Q&A and brief sample activity.

Sharon Alexander E, M, HS, C, A

The Calendar Project: Pages of Progress

Integrating skills through bootcamp style lessons to create original calendar page designs monthly that students will then draw in each day in response to specific monthly prompts. All pages will then become a book at the end of the year, beautifully presenting growth through the progress they made in class.

Stefanie Abbey M, HS, C

There's an Acrylic for That!

Explore a range of acrylic paint grades and viscosities in this hands-on workshop presented by Blick Art Materials. Learn techniques to make transparent paints opaquer and thicker paints thinner. After the session, you'll feel confident choosing the right acrylic for any creative task!

BLICK E, M, HS, C

A Cardboard Challenge: Art-related Community Engagement

Join us to explore hosting a community cardboard art event! Learn how we engaged families in joyful collaboration, creating imaginative and non-fictional artworks. Experience the magic of students and families working together, fully immersed in the creative process. The outcome was amazing; the atmosphere was beyond belief! Discover the lasting impact of community-driven art making.

Lydia Larrabee E, M, HS

Creating Compassion: Disability, Art, and Emotional Healing in the Classroom

As an artist with a physical disability, I use my work to share my story of resilience. In the classroom, I foster empathy and help students process experiences through art. This presentation will highlight my disability-related art and student projects focused on emotional recovery and mental health expression.

Jessica Stratton M, HS, C, A

Jump in, the Water's Warm at OVA

Join a session to learn about participating in NYSATA's Olympics of the Visual Arts. From volunteering, to bringing a student team to compete, to brainstorming design problems, OVA depends on our membership for its success. Year 44 of the OVA event is coming April 2026. All are welcome.

Anne Manzella E, M, HS, C, A

Art Therapy Inclusions in the K-12 Art Room

This workshop will explore K-12 art lessons integrating art therapy techniques to promote emotional well-being. This workshop will guide educators in using creative expression to support students' mental health, enhance self-awareness, and foster resilience, all while delivering engaging, curriculum-aligned art activities for diverse classroom settings.

Jennifer Seymour E, M, HS

Landscape 3-D Journeys with Mixed Media

This hands-on workshop gives students the tools to slow down, identify, and reflect on processing changes through the big idea of a "life journey," by creating a 3D pop landscape in a simple accordion style. Join me to navigate and create your own personal journey using landforms and mixed media.

Kristin Miller M, HS

Empowering Through Art

This workshop leverages art's transformative power to navigate challenges, celebrate resilience, and foster hope. It promotes personal growth and community connection, encouraging creative, empathetic, and reflective thinking. Key aims include improving self-awareness, offering choice-based art processes, and enhancing learning outcomes through guided art experiences and critical reflection.

Kimberly Popolizio E, M, HS

Exploring Mental Health Conditions through Art

With inspiration from the DSM-V mental health disorders manual, artists explore mental health conditions through imagery. Focusing on color theory, personification, calligraphy, and research skills; the understanding and awareness of specific mental health conditions are brought to life in this personification project geared towards Middle/High School aged students.

\$5 fee at time of workshop

Kylee McGillicuddy E, M, HS

Scaffolding Scissor Skills in the Studio

Do you lack confidence in adapting to diverse needs and skill levels in your studio? We'll consider modifications to demonstrations and safety routines and try out differentiated scissor and cardboard tool options for inclusive scaffolding of K-12 cutting skills. Leave with a variety of adaptive ideas and effective modifications.

Samantha Nolte-Yupari E, M, HS

Wanderlust: Starting an Educational Travel Program in Your School

Do you love to travel? Share this passion with your school/community by starting an educational travel program in your District. Learn about how our art department started the process in 2023, which resulted in us bringing our first group of students to France & Spain on an art focused tour. Learn about how you, as a tour leader, can qualify to travel for free on the trip of a lifetime!

Brandy Noody, Mackenzie Sheldon M, HS, C

Rethinking the Portrait: Centering Disability in the Art Classroom

This session introduces a curriculum resource packet designed to help K-12 art teachers incorporate disabled artists' diverse portraiture works into inclusive art lessons. By sharing anti-ableist pedagogical strategies with the resources, this session aims to foster more inclusive and critical approaches to identity and representation in art education.

Eunkyung Hwang, Madeline Hood, Elizabeth Baldwin E, M, HS, C

Feats of Clay: Collaboration of Partnerships

In its 37th year, Feats of Clay is Central New York's premier student ceramic event. Held at the Everson Museum—the nation's ceramics museum—it features live challenges, exhibitions, and community partnerships that celebrate student creativity and connect classrooms with Syracuse's vibrant arts scene. Discover its lasting impact and evolving partnerships.

Christian Oliver, William Jones E, M, HS, C, A

LGBTQ+ Group Support Session

This workshop serves as an opportunity for LGBTQ+ art educators and allies to empathize

and converse over critical issues relating to queer and trans youth and educators alike. Here we'll share resources from NYSATA ED&I Board members in order to provide our community with materials to help navigate classroom conversations, support the community better, and provide a safe space for discussion!

Miranda Kent, Callie Bryant, Cai Chan E, M, HS, C, A

Serving Face: The Self-Portrait Across Secondary Curricula

Self-portraits, a cornerstone of art education, offer a unique space for students to see themselves and explore how others see them. How can these projects better anchor students' artistic, social-emotional development? This presentation explores grounding the self-portrait pedagogically through project plans and examples, focusing on tailoring lessons towards student needs.

Stephanie Oniffrey, Jason Watson M, HS

Collaboration, Pride and Community

This collaborative session will explore the power of art in driving social change through successful class projects. Participants will have the opportunity to learn about successful creative endeavors, how students take pride in their achievements, and showcase how artistic initiatives can positively impact their school and community. Come create with us.

Heather McCutcheon, Lauren Nels M, HS

The Science of Art

Peak your students' natural curiosity for the world around them with a combination of art and science investigations for all ages. Multiple art techniques and media will be utilized while being paired with a number of different science topics. Come join us for a fun-filled artistic adventure in the world of science!

Kimberly Gideon, Carol Matthews E, M

Building a Curriculum Resource about Contemporary Women Artists

NYC Public Schools collaborated with the Shah Garg Foundation who mounted an exhibition in Chelsea showcasing artwork of over 80 contemporary women artists. This partnership brought over 500 students to the show, increased interest in women artists and led to plans for an online resource. Participants preview chapters on among others, Joan Mitchell, Sarah Sze, and Simone Leigh.

Karen Rosner E, M, HS

Organizing the Individual Arts Assessment

Pathway (IAAP) Portfolio with Google Sites As a pilot school for the IAAP, we've spent the last three years working with our art students to guide them through the portfolio requirements. In this session we will share how we use Google Sites to organize the required components, which students submit

for scoring. We will also share how we organize working with three simultaneous cohorts, each in a different year of the pathway.
Brandy Noody, Connie Lavelle HS

Social Emotional Learning and the Visual Arts

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) has always been a cornerstone of the visual arts (VA). Let's come together to share our SEL/VA stories and experiences. We will compare SEL & VA Standards, gather evidence for advocacy and refine teaching strategies to strengthen the connection between your students and their artwork.

Thomas Finn E, M, HS, A

The Role of Culture in Student Health and Well-Being

Students' cultural identities are deeply connected to their sense of well-being. How can we create learning spaces and activities that invite students' whole cultural selves into the classroom? Teachers will leave with ideas for inquiry-based assignments/activities engaging students' cultural identities, encouraging acceptance and belonging, and identifying potential curricular connections.

Mira Johnson E, M, HS

Four-igami: Models & SEL Activities

Looking for a creative way to get to know your students? For them to get to know one another? To build class unity? We will share four origami models that will add a layer of personal growth and community connection while giving students the opportunity to celebrate their unique selves.

Jacqueline Korsen, Missy Longo-Lewis E, M, HS

What if Music and Visual Arts Had a Baby?! Creativity Through Adversity

During this workshop we will be focusing on interactive musical strategies for the Art classroom specifically for teachers with no musical background. We will be utilizing the relationship between Visual Art and Music to access a playful, productive and expressive way to experience and synthesize adversity. Come play Art and Music with us!

Leslie Kubica, Sue Kubica E, M

The Sketchbook as Sanctuary: A Dual Approach to Creativity and Wellness

Create a two-sided sketchbook through an accessible bookbinding process. One side supports art planning; the other fosters mindfulness and reflection. Explore how consistent sketchbook practice promotes creativity, resilience, and emotional well-being by providing students with a powerful tool for artistic growth and personal expression. Adaptable for all grade levels.

\$2 fee at time of workshop.
Melissa Cooper E, M, HS

Artsonia in the TAB Art Room: Building Student Agency

Wonder what using artsonia looks like in a TAB (Teaching for Artistic Behavior) art room? Here is a glimpse of how artists as young as kindergarten utilize Artsonia's classroom mode to photograph, upload and reflect on their own art practice independently. Gain practical tools and strategies to foster student agency, assessment and much more!

Lauren Behar E, M

Empowering Art Administrators and Supervisors: A Palette of Ideas for Innovating Arts Education Leadership

Administrators and Supervisors, join together for a dynamic round table where arts education leaders unite! Discover strategies, share insights, and tackle challenges in supervision, budget cuts, graduation requirements, and DEI[BA] shifts. Let's collaborate, innovate, and create a masterpiece for the future of arts education in New York State!

Tracie Glazer A

Creative Access: Differentiated Pathways to Emotional Expression in the Art Room

Empowering Student Voice, Choice, and Connection Through Trauma-Informed, Inclusive Art Practices in today's diverse and emotionally complex classrooms, art teachers play a critical role in supporting student well-being through creative expression. This session will guide art educators in implementing accessible and trauma-informed practices that prioritize student voice, agency, and connection.

Barbara Imperiale E, M, HS

Sound Waves Inspired Art

Participants will connect to their inner selves through sound healing, intuition, and art creation while also learning how the chakras connect to colors and inspire artistic expression. The session includes crystal singing bowl sound bath and intuitive art making activity. All art making materials provided.

Cynthia DiDonna-Nethaway, Deb Anderson E, M, HS, C

Artists' Celebration Cupcakes

Cake is synonymous with celebration, and cake creation is an art form itself. In this Blink Art Materials workshop, we'll design non-edible cupcakes for artists throughout the ages. More than an interpretation or mirroring of their style, these assemblages serve as a tribute—a way to say "thank you!"

BLICK E, M, HS, C

Funky Figures

Create with us as we make 3-D printed "Funky Figures" inspired by Funko Pop Collectibles. You will create your own sample and will also leave with files, handouts and lots of resources. Extensions include a box template or a paper diorama room. Lots of fun for all grade levels!

Krystal Zagloul-Rivera, Patricia Stork E, M, HS

Contemporary Practice Slam 25! Emerging Practices from Emerging Art Educators

Join SUNY New Paltz pre-service students as they present contemporary NYS Learning Standards-based lessons incorporating technologies as they apply to AI, Visual and Media Arts, Art History, and creative practices.

Robert Wood E, M, HS

Reimagining Art Lessons for the Digital Age

This session will share ideas and resources to transition traditional art lessons into engaging digital experiences. Learn innovative techniques, tools, and platforms to create captivating digital art lessons that inspire creativity and empower students in the digital age.

Michele Dick E, M

Art for All

This workshop equips art teachers with inclusive strategies to support students with diverse needs—fine motor, communication, sensory, and behavioral. Learn to adapt curriculum, center students with IEPs and 504s, and create accessible, engaging art experiences that foster expression, independence, and success for every learner in your classroom.

Callie Bryant, Heather Murphy E, M, HS

Wild About Art

Do your students love animals as much as mine do? Come with me on an animal art adventure! Learn how to peak your students' curiosity in a year long unit focusing on habitats and animals with multiple art approaches.

Kimberly Gideon E

Deep Dives into AKG Contemporary Artists

Let's focus on three contemporary artists from the Buffalo AKG Art Museum's Collection to learn how their work can inspire classroom learning and gain some insight to the artist's practice. We'll discover some curriculum connections and a few quick activities while making sure to have some fun!

Lindsay Kranz E, M, HS

Neuro-Doodles

Doodling has been proven to help with focus, productivity and creativity. Neurographic art is an exercise that helps promote mindfulness and stress reduction. It is a combination of art making and psychology. Participants will be led through the steps necessary to create their neurographic art and then build upon that with some light doodling.

Marissa Sondo E, M, HS

Recycle, Reuse, Upcycle: Watts Towers

Multicontent project studying Simon Rodia, using pool noodle pieces, cardboard, beads, recycled items, held together with modeling compounds as our cement, then we added the tower with chenille stems wire and beads.

Kelly Holmes E, M, HS

Scientific Illustration with the New York State Museum: A Cross-Curricular Opportunity

The New York State Museum's latest exhibit "Outcasts: Mary Banning's World of Mushrooms," offers an exciting opportunity for students to discover the intersections of art, science, and English language arts. Join Museum Instructors for a hands-on exploration of our in-progress educational resources related to this exhibit. Your feedback is encouraged!

India Futterman, James Jenkins M

Organization and Beyond for the Art Room (with choice centers)

This workshop will help you utilize your Art room space and organize your supplies. I will show you inexpensive items to use and will send you a file that includes all my labels and signs! The concept is to make it accessible to students, to encourage independence, and it includes choice-based centers.

Lori-Ann Pizzarelli E, M, HS

NYSSSA: Art as a Bridge

Discover how NYSSSA leverages art to inspire resilience and healing. Through engaging discussions and hands-on activities, educators explore art as a tool for emotional recovery and social change, gaining adaptable strategies, classroom-ready projects, and inclusive teaching approaches that emphasize art's power as a medium for both personal expression and collective transformation.

Molly Hennighausen, Greg Lendeck, Elizabeth DeSantis HS

Canva in the Art Room: Teaching Students to Create Custom Logos

Help students develop creative and practical design skills through digital art! In this workshop, discover how to guide students to create their own custom logos using Canva! See the process from start to finish: students explore existing logos, practice using Canva tools, and finally create their own original logo.

Melody York E, M

Reimagining Liberty and Oval Office Pop Ups

For these two successful projects, join me to see how students can critique existing power structures, inspire dialogue about social issues, and give students a platform to express their unique perspectives and experiences. I'll walk you through an engaging process of creating parodies of the Statue of Liberty, and student redesigns of the Oval Office in a 3-D room pop up. Sketchbook encouraged.

Kristin Miller M, HS

Empowering Students Through Art: The "Artists' Voice" Approach

This workshop delves into the intersection of art and social change, focusing on the lesson "Artists' Voice." Through Ted Talks, students dissect how artists use their voice in their art. Students then design a self-determined artwork focusing on the messages they want to share with the world.

Karissa LaLima, Drew O'Connor M, HS, C

Threaded Narratives: Stitching Stories of Resilience

Explore the power of simple stitches and mark-making on paper to process emotions, tell stories, and create visual affirmations. Using embroidery floss and heavyweight paper, craft small, symbolic artworks that weave resilience, healing, and personal growth into every thread—accessible, meditative, and perfect for all skill levels!

\$3 fee at time of workshop

Lisa Federici E, M, HS, C

Empowering Student Personal Voice with FLEX Curriculum & PRO Learning

The presentation highlights how art education fosters diversity, empathy, and student voice. Using examples from an AOE district, presenters will share flexible, ready-to-use strategies and resources that nurture personal identity, resilience, and inclusive creativity in K-12 classrooms.

Jackie Gilleran, Lizzie Campanella, Erica Wardell E, M, HS, A

IAAP for Visual Art Introduction and Q&A session

An introduction of what the state requires from a Visual Arts IAAP. We will be presenting NYSATA's support documents and processes to help your district implement their own IAAP for Visual Art students. Samples hardcopies will be shared out. We will also share how other districts have begun to implement the IAAP. We will finish out the session with a Q&A period for those who attend.

Cathryn Hunt HS, A

Pencils & Pixels: Combining Hand Processes with Digital Artmaking

Creating digital art doesn't have to mean losing touch with hands-on artmaking techniques.

In this workshop, we will explore ways to combine old and new, cultivating both tactile skills and digital innovation. Leave with ready-to-use lesson ideas that connect your students' digital world to the timeless joy of hands-on creativity.

Shayna Vecchione, MaryBeth Aldous E, M

Activist Art in the Classroom

Want to empower your students to voice social issues? This workshop offers three adaptable art projects: large DIY prints, message-bearing fabric banners, and impactful guerrilla-style posters. Discover exciting ways to help students make their voices heard and create meaningful change within your classroom and beyond!

Ellen Pennock HS

Trashion: Biker Attire Fashion Design Using Trash Bags

Introduce students to the world of fashion design by having them sketch and construct biker-inspired outfits using trash bags. Explore creativity, teamwork, and sustainable fashion by transforming a simple, everyday item into high-fashion motorcycle gear.

Teams will showcase their work in a fashion show, demonstrating how innovation and resourcefulness can redefine style.

\$2 fee at time of workshop

Jill Lewis Pepe, Jennifer Grasso-Moise HS

Papercraft Stained Glass

This lesson introduces students to the art of stained glass through a hands-on project using tissue paper and black construction paper. Students explore color theory, symmetry, and positive/negative space while creating vibrant window designs that mimic traditional stained glass, encouraging creativity, design planning, and fine motor skill development.

Jennifer Grasso-Moise M, HS

Art Beyond Sight: Unlocking Tactile Art Making and Accessible Virtual Worlds

This workshop explores how art education can foster inclusivity and disability representation. Using tactile methods and accessible technologies, participants will learn strategies to support blind and visually impaired (BVI) learners in art-making. Two hands-on activities highlight inclusive classroom practices and ways to make creative expression accessible for BVI learners.

\$5 fee at time of workshop
Bing Bai C

Emerging Tech & AI in the Media Arts Classroom

Discover how emerging technologies and AI are reshaping photography, animation, digital art, and 3D modeling. This session offers practical projects for beginners and more advanced challenges for experienced educators—giving you tools to engage students, spark creativity, and stay ahead in today's evolving media arts landscape.
Jessica Signorello, John DeRosa HS

Learning to Look, Looking to Learn

In this session, the Johnson Museum of Art will share their approaches to creating engaging and interactive experiences for Pre-K learners from buildable Han Dynasty Watchtowers to acting out the stories connected to a Northwest Coast Thunderbird Mask. From tactile models to storytelling we'll share teaching strategies for our youngest visitors.
Carol Hockett, Wendy Kenigsberg E

Standards, Stories, Explore

From Process to Intuitive Art! In this workshop we will experiment with some of the unique tools and techniques we use in Pre-K-2. My educator partner in art LeeAnne (classroom teacher (Pre-K, K, & 2) and I will present our inspirations from books, curriculum, and the art activities that coordinate.
Kelly Holmes, LeeAnne Lake E

Pre-K & K Lesson Swap & Round Table

Bring 35 copies of a lesson plan or 2 (or a QR code), and share with your peers! We will discuss ways to keep Pre-K and K students engaged throughout lessons, scaffolding to meet skill levels, and early finisher enrichment.
Kali Burke, Stacy Griffin E

Museum Educators' 4th Annual Roundtable!

Join NYSATA's ME Chair, Lindsay Kranz, to examine ways we can navigate the current climate of art museum education. What challenges are we experiencing and what can we learn from each other? Group discussion topics may include IDEA strategies, successes, and lessons learned, field trip challenges, and other areas crucial to museum educators.
Lindsay Kranz E, M, HS, C, A

CHOOSE

Many years ago I suffered a traumatic physical attack. My presentation will focus on using art as a tool of healing, resiliency, and social change. I'll share personal art and student work to inspire the educators and creators in all of us. CHOOSE who you will be?
Richard Tomasello E, M, HS, C, A



University Offerings

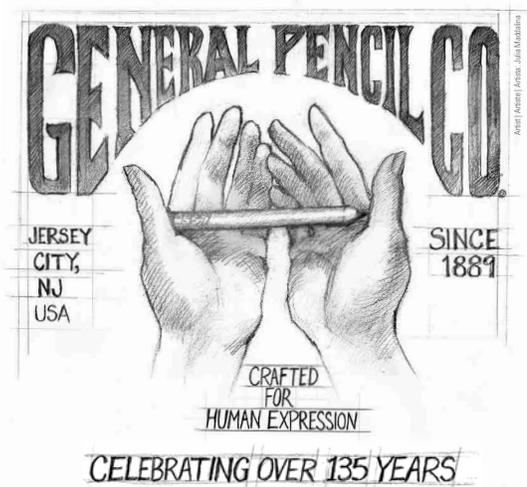
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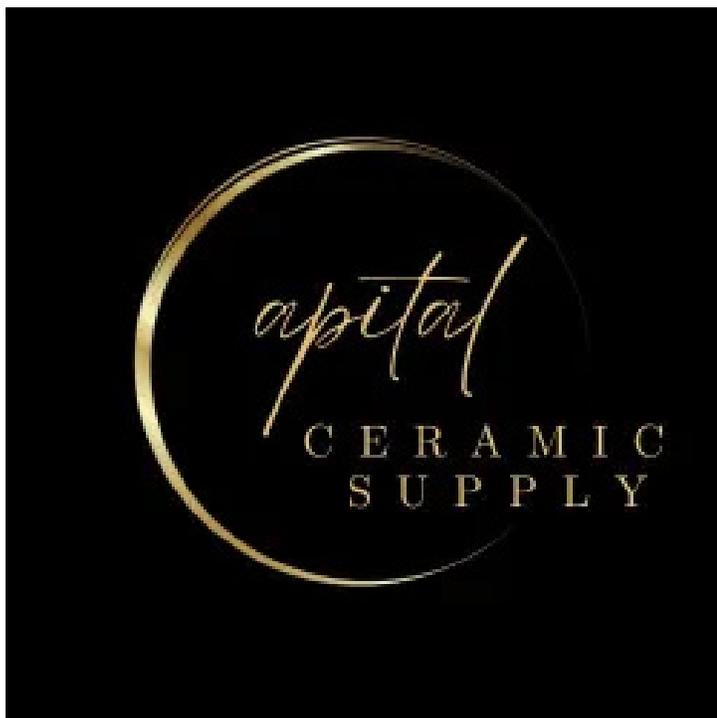
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SKUTT



Friday 10-12:50

Tetra Pak Printing *Gina Palmer*
Painting with Wool *Jenny Brown*

Friday 2-4:50

Cost Effective Drypoint Etching with Plexiglass *Michelle Schroeder*
From Disruption to Discovery: A Creative Practice
Workshop of Resilience *Sharon Ciccone*

Saturday 10-12:50

Silk Painted Pillows: A Fusion of Fine Art and Functional Design *Jennifer Matott*
Sew Much Love: Sewing Mexican Folk Hearts *Monica Czernecki Schor*

Saturday 2-4:50

Digital Illustration with Procreate *Veronica Kruger, Nick Napierala*
Mini Quilts, Kawandi Style *Stephanie Abbey*

**Extended studios are non-refundable ticketed events.*

Tetra Pak Printing

Explore contemporary intaglio and relief printing methods, using non-toxic, up cycled materials. Foil-lined cartons and simple tools emulate the processes and qualities of traditional intaglio without acids or the need for ventilation. Playful, accessible materials and confidence-building strategies encourage creativity, collaboration and facilitate social-emotional growth.

Gina Palmer M, HS, C
Friday 10-12:50
Location: Arlington A

Painting with Wool

This workshop will offer students an opportunity to use dyed wools on fabric to create images. They will learn how to blend and attach the wool using a dry felting technique with needles. The end result is a dimensional work that has a painterly effect.

Jenny Brown M, HS, C
Friday 10-12:50
Location: Arlington B

Cost Effective Drypoint Etching with Plexiglass

It doesn't matter if you're a beginner at printmaking or a pro, you'll learn all the basics to produce some fabulous etched prints. We will identify good images and a variety of mark making techniques for successful art work. We'll share cost effective ways to bring this project to your students and your own art practice. Bring your love of art and your curiosity of a new technique.

Michelle Schroeder M, HS, C
Friday 2-4:50
Location: Arlington A

From Disruption to Discovery: A Creative Practice Workshop on Resilience

In this hands-on, mixed-media workshop, participants will explore how memory, experience, and observation come together to create abstract representations of place while embracing resilience as a creative practice. Through layering, mark-making, and material exploration, we will navigate disruption, adaptation, and transformation-mirroring the resilience found in nature and personal experience.

Sharon Ciccone E, M, HS, C
Friday 2-4:50
Location: Arlington B

Silk Painted Pillows: A Fusion of Fine Art and Functional Design

Participants will explore surface design, textile arts, and cultural art connections while creating their own one-of-a-kind hand-painted silk pillow. Through guided instruction, teachers will learn foundational techniques such as resist application, color blending, and heat set dyes, along with tips for classroom adaptation and budget-friendly alternatives.

Jennifer Matott M, HS
Saturday 10-12:50
Location: Arlington A

Sew Much Love: Sewing Mexican Folk Hearts

Got a heart? Stitch one anyway! In this fun, hands-on workshop, we'll create colorful Mexican Folk hearts using felt, embroidery, beads, and flair. Whether your stitches are straight or more creative, you will leave with a handmade heart full of personality... just like you! Adapt this workshop into almost any grade level over 5th grade or make more for yourself!

Monica Czernecki Schor M, HS, C
Saturday 10-12:50
Location: Arlington B

Digital Illustration with Procreate

This workshop is for beginner to intermediate level users of Procreate. We will start with the basics and go over the tool interface. We will then move into a sticker design project where we will teach several digital illustration methods from line art to digital painting.

Veronica Kruger, Nick Napierala E, M, HS, C

Saturday 2-4:50

Location: Arlington A

Mini Quilts, Kawandi Style

Create a twelve-inch square mini quilt in the Kawandi style. All hand sewn using only one stitch. It's perfect for introducing students to sewing skills, and good for manual dexterity. Once I learned how to do it, I couldn't stop. It's very addicting for its meditative quality of work, as well as the endless fabric possibilities!

Stefanie Abbey E, M, HS, C

Saturday 2-4:50

Location: Arlington B

Artisans' Market: Call for Artisans!

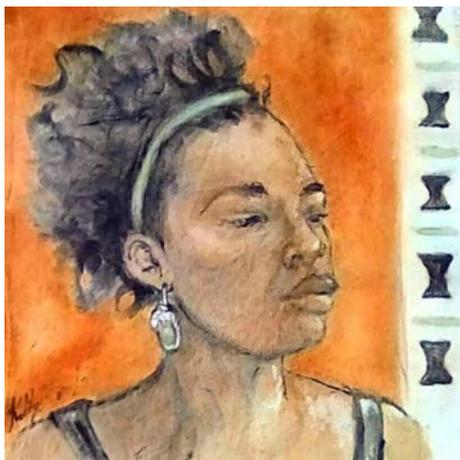


Friday, November 21 from 8:30 to 10:30 pm, artisan NYSATA members will show and sell their art and crafts at the NYSATA Artisans Market onsite at the Crowne Plaza—The Desmond Hotel in Albany, NY. Each artisan will be responsible for their own sales, shipping (if applicable) and any applicable sales tax.

Each artisan must be a NYSATA member and conference registrant. A table fee of \$25 per table will support our NYSATA Scholarship efforts. Artisans must register for a table by November 1, 2025 on the NYSATA website. Watch for details in your email in early September.

Questions? Please contact Artisan's Market event coordinators Stacy Griffin and Kali Burke at kaliconnor@icloud.com.

Special Studio Sessions



Kohorgo Mudcloth Painting

Mudcloth painting in the Kohorgo culture of the Ivory Coast and the Bamana culture of Mali is a method of making decorative cloth by painting onto the cloth with flat bamboo sticks.

Learn about the history of mudcloth through many examples and resources provided. Discover how to age the mud so that the various colors are produced and how to prepare the cloth to accept the mud material. Understand the chemistry of how the elements in the mud react with the prepared cloth to produce bright colors and permanent results. You will work from a full palette of gorgeous mud in an unexpected array of hues from all over the world to create your own original Mudcloth. All materials provided. Limit 15 per session.

Friday, 10-12:50 AM and 2-4:50 PM
Saturday 10-12:50 AM and 2-4:50 PM

\$50 per person

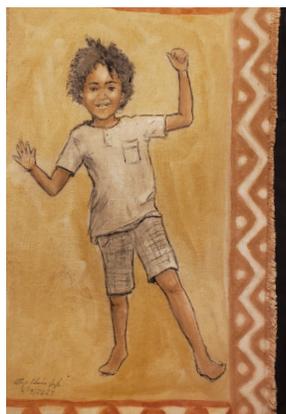


Kathye Edwina Arrington

maintains an active career in the fine and graphic arts. She has a great interest in multiculturalism and a sensitivity towards children. Kathye creates art and teaches privately; her workshops on African Mudcloth Painting, Banana Leaf Art, Foil Masks, Tribal Dolls, Eskimo Art and Japanese Paper Dipping, are enjoyed by children and adults in New York, Pennsylvania, and Maryland. Kathye has conducted Mudcloth workshops in the Pan-African Village at the New York State Fair; the 171 Cedar Art Center in Corning, NY; and in many Broome County Schools and the Ithaca City School District through Southern Tier Arts in Education. Kathye also taught her style of mudcloth at the Greenbelt Community Center in Greenbelt MD; the College Park Art Exchange at the University of Maryland, and the Montpelier Art Center in Laurel, MD. She was a teaching artist for Syracuse University's *Say Yes To Education* program.

Kathye earned her BFA at Moore College of Art in Philadelphia and MS in Studio Art with a concentration in graphic design at the College of New Rochelle. She works in oil, watercolor, pastel, ink, acrylic, gouache, pencil, watercolor, crayon, and multi-ethnic media. Her artwork has been displayed in New York, Maryland, and Pennsylvania.

In 2016, Kathye published her first children's book called, *The Little Pirate Queen*. In 2023, she developed book illustrations for a children's author in St. Louis, Missouri and was part of an exhibit at the ArtRage Gallery in Syracuse, New York entitled, *The Struggle to Connect*. In November 2023 at the Tioga County Arts Council, Kathye with her sister Karen Arrington held an exhibit in the main gallery while their grandnephew, Benjamin Peterson, had his first exhibit in the Youth Gallery featuring Mudcloth, pottery, watercolor and acrylics. Kathye has curated several shows in Tioga county, including *Between Starlight and Clay*, featuring artist of color from the New York's Southern Tier and the state of Maryland; *African Diaspora: A Cultural Afternoon*; and *Cultural Tapestry: Weaving the Threads of the African Diaspora*. She is the coordinator of the *Cultural Tapestry of the African Diaspora Arts and Crafts Fair* held in September 2025 at Park Terrace Community UMC in Apalachin, NY.



Member's Exhibit



Create a piece (up to 3 pieces can be submitted) of 2- or 3-dimensional work that is no larger than 10"x10". Media, content, and style are your choice. Remember—no mats, no frames, no glass. The **image size** must be 10" x 10" or less. If the image size is less than 10" x 10" then the piece must be attached to a 10" x 10" substrate.

Register and submit a high-quality digital photograph of your work online at www.nysata.org/members-exhibit by November 20, 2025; then drop it off in person at the conference upon

arrival. Registration is FREE for art pieces that are donated to the Student Scholarship benefit auction. Donated work is tax deductible.

All submitted work will be displayed in person at our Annual Members Exhibit as well as our online gallery via ClickBid and will qualify for the jury process for awards—prizes will be awarded! Donated works will be auctioned for a minimum bid of \$25 and a reasonably priced "buy it now" option. Each art piece will be either given to the purchaser if they attend the conference or shipped to the winning bidder at the conclusion of the auction.

DEADLINE TO REGISTER YOUR ARTWORK IS NOVEMBER 20.

Want to participate but not donate your work?

There is a \$25 participation fee to enter work exhibited as not-for-sale. Non-donated work is eligible for awards and must be delivered and picked up in person. If you are not donating, simply check the appropriate box on the form and submit payment with the digital image. These works will be designated as SOLD or NFS at the beginning of the online auction.

Not attending the conference in person but still want to donate your work?

You can still participate! Please have a friend who is attending drop off the work for you OR you can mail your donated work(s) so that it ARRIVES BY November 15 to

Michelle Schroeder
311 Pleasant View Drive
Lancaster, NY 14086

Members' Exhibit Questions? Beth Atkinson bethatkinson12@hotmail.com



Student Art Exhibit



This year, the NYSATA Student Exhibit will be in-person-only at the conference! This exhibit is a great way to share and showcase your students' artwork with colleagues across the state. Let us help you celebrate your amazing student artists!

How to Participate:

- Participating teachers must be members of NYSATA who are attending the 2025 conference.
- Participating teachers must pre-register to reserve a board for display of their student work.
- Register for your display space on the NYSATA website by Friday, November 7, 2025.

Student Exhibit Set Up:

- At the conference, fill a board 4' x 8' coroplast panel with student work.
- Artworks need to be appropriately mounted and labeled with student name and grade
- Begin installing the artwork 9 am on Friday, ensuring that all pieces are in place by 10 am on Saturday at the latest

Student Exhibit take down:

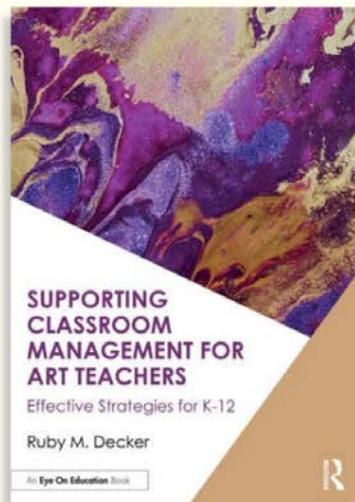
- Artwork may be removed after 8 pm on Saturday and by 10 am Sunday.
- Your students will be honored with a certificate for their participation.
- Participating teachers will also receive a certificate showcasing your students' artwork in the exhibit.

Questions? Please contact 2025 NYSATA Conference Student Art Exhibit Coordinator, Jill Cornell at jillcornell27@gmail.com.



SUPPORTING CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT FOR ART TEACHERS: EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR K-12

Ruby M. Decker
Published by [Routledge](https://www.routledge.com)
Taylor & Francis
ISBN: 1041050496



"The book's strength lies in its practicality. Whether you are a seasoned art teacher seeking fresh perspectives or a new educator confronting the daunting task of managing your first art classroom, this insightful guide is a treasure trove for novice and experienced teachers... Each chapter brims with actionable, research-backed strategies, reflective exercises, and real-life anecdotes that educators can readily apply."

-**Wanda B. Knight, Ph.D.**, Penn State University; *Past-President, NAEA*

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Montserrat College of Art's Art Educator Summer Institute has gone international! Not only do we offer a New England art residency experience on our campus in beautiful Beverly, but we've established an international offering in Japan, where art educators spend two weeks in Niigata, Japan and Tokyo for workshops and sightseeing.

Our offerings are for all art educators (teaching K-12, college, graduate school, and beyond.) Summer Institute immerses participants from across the country by creating experiences for them to develop their art practice and build new skills they can bring back to their classrooms. We hope to see you in one of our programs!

- BEVERLY, MA**
- SANTA FE, NM**
- NIIGATA, JAPAN**

MONTSERRAT.EDU/ADMISSIONS/FOR-EDUCATORS/

NYSATA Awards

REGIONAL ART EDUCATORS OF THE YEAR

Region 1: Dan Lynch
Region 2: Amanda Measer
Region 3: Melissa Kirk
Region 4: Eric Adolf
Region 5: Kristen Larkin
Region 6: Debra Anderson
Region 7: Kelley Hedin
Region 8: Melissa Birnbaum
Region 9: Marissa Sondo
Region 10: Jennifer Grasso-Moise

SPECIAL CITATION MEMBER

Martin Merchant, Region 7

SPECIAL CITATION BUSINESS/INSTITUTION AWARD

Grace Meibohm, Meibohm Fine Arts, Region 1

SPECIAL CITATION, SCHOOL DISTRICT/UNIVERSITY

Villa Maria College, Region 1

RAY HENRY AWARD

Cheri Ehrlich, Region 7
Cristina Calvano, Region 10

OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD AT THE TIME OF RETIREMENT

Shannon Elliott, Region 6

PAST PRESIDENT

Carol Pinkans, Region 6

STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP AWARD RECIPIENTS

ZARA B. KIMMEY AWARD \$1000

Alyssa Huang
Syosset High School, Syosset, NY
Planning to attend University of Virginia
Nominating Teacher—Tiffany Holtje

Trinity Ramdin
Valley Stream Central High School
District, Valley Stream, NY
Planning to attend Pratt Institute
Nominating Teacher—Mario Bakalov

BILL MILLIKEN AWARD \$500

Katie Kun
Syosset High School, Syosset, NY
Planning to attend Boston University
Nominating Teacher—Michael Carolan

THE JESSICA BAYER SCHOLARSHIP (2 scholarships at \$500 each)

Athena Wang
Lindenhurst High School,
Lindenhurst, NY
Planning to attend University of Florida
Nominating Teacher—Carmela Bode

AIDA SNOW and ELAINE GOLDMAN AWARDS, \$500 EACH

Mary Kate Gomez
Orchard Park Central Schools,
Orchard Park, NY
Planning to attend State University of
New York at Buffalo
Nominating Teacher—Daniella Perla

Mark Heeralall
Western Suffolk BOCES: Wilson
Technological Center, Northport, NY
Planning to attend Savannah College of
Art and Design
Nominating Teacher—Cheryl Manzella

NYSATA STATE ART EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR



*Timothy
Needles*

Region 10

Art Educator and K-12 Technology
Integration Specialist
Smithtown High School East,
Smithtown School District,
Smithtown, NY

Former NYSATA Curriculum
Committee co-chair

NAEA AI Working group co-chair,
Connected Art Network PLC Teacher
Leader, and ArtMediaTech Past
President

Guests are invited to join us in
celebration of Timothy at the awards
banquet on Saturday evening,
November 22
at 6:30 PM.

Dinner tickets available at
<https://www.nysata.org/2025-conference>

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the NYSATA news

Winner of the 2012,
2013, 2015, 2016, 2017,
2018, 2019, 2021, 2022,
2025
NAEA State Newsletter
Award!

Call for Contributions

Calling for Contributors to the Winter 2026 NYSATA News

Refresh and Grow

This issue of the NYSATA News will go online mid-March 2026

Deadline for content submission is February 1.

People are inherently driven to seek out communities where they feel a sense of belonging, safety, and authenticity. Art educators are uniquely positioned, as we have access to vibrant and supportive communities. Many of us have found a sense of belonging within NYSATA, where we have forged bonds with like-minded individuals who share our passion for the arts. For the next issue of *NYSATA News*, we invite you to share your stories on how you have made similar connections with local art groups, galleries, and museums. Further, how have these relationships allowed you to *Refresh and Grow*—both as an artist and as an educator. The following questions may be helpful:

- How do you connect to the extended art community? Do these connections affect your personal well-being, artwork and/or teaching?
- Have you had a recent visit to a gallery or museum that inspired a new lesson or a revision to a lesson? How did this affect the presentation, implementation or outcome of the lesson?
- Has a connection with a gallery or museum been helpful in the search for artists to introduce to classes? Did you find benefits in identifying an artist in this manner?
- Have you faced challenges with taking students on field trips to galleries and museums? How have you overcome these challenges?
- What are the key elements for a successful field trip? Did you achieve your goals?
- Have you had experience with local art groups, galleries or museums in providing opportunities for students? What did this look like? How did students benefit? Are you paving the way for students to become part of art communities?

Articles (around 500 words) and features (around 2000 words) should address the theme, *Refresh and Grow*, in some manner. There is no specific length required or recommended—say what you need to say. Early submission is encouraged to allow us to assist and help you. Please submit articles as word.docs to allow for smooth and clear communication and proofreading.

You can use our prior issues for reference, <https://www.nysata.org/nysata-news>. Images are welcomed and encouraged. Signed permission slips for student artwork / classroom activities showing students' faces are required, (we have a form). Images should be .jpg format / a minimum of 5" x7" at 150 ppi.

We appreciate the time and effort you will put into your work for the newsletter—your article will enrich and inform readers.

[Valerie Savage](#) NYSATA News Editor and Alyssa Marchand Design & Layout Editor

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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, Schuylar, 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, Bronx, Kings, Queens, Richmond
9	LI Nassau	Nassau
10	LI Suffolk	Suffolk