ADVOCACY

This is a huge word which all art teachers need to be aware of and learn. It is defined as “public support for or recommendation of a particular cause or policy.”

That cause is your job.

Did you know that TAEA has programs to help you? Tim Lowke, our Advocacy Chair, has a lot of information to help you advocate for yourself, your students, and most importantly, your art program. We are working on improving our website to help you connect with others art educators who share your struggles.

Do you connect to the other art teachers in your region? Your area representative is there to assist you. These Regional Representatives have many exciting workshops you can attend over the summer or the beginning of school. Please take advantage of these opportunities. Many of them are free.

Are you a private school or community based art educator? You both have a representative who is eager to assist you with your program and represent your field on TAEA Council at Large.

Are you higher education or retired? You too have representatives on the council who are willing to give you advice, present workshops, and do what they can to make your program stronger.

Are you aware that we have a very strong Museum Division that is always willing to reach out to school districts to help educate students in the appreciation of art. They offer so many programs many teachers do not know about. Google your local museum and see what they offer. Many have after school programs or evenings for educators. Go to one.

I recommend you engage in dialog with one of these representatives in your field. Reach out to your executive board, we are always there for any and all art educators. This will make you a stronger teacher in whatever field you are teaching.

We all are a band of teachers from the pre-k through college and adult education with common goals – to insure the success of art education for everyone throughout the state. Texas Art Education Association – TAEA—is for all art educators.

Suzanne Greene taught middle school art in Spring Branch ISD for 40 years and helped the school board realize the need for art teachers in all of the elementary schools. She holds a BFA Art Education from Southern Methodist University, and worked in the SMU Experimental Art School from 1967-1971. She helped establish the Shoal Creek Art School in 2002, and in 1972. She has held many positions in the TAEA leadership including Vice-President YAM, Vice-President of Membership, Middle School Division Chair, and TAEA Region IV Representative. She currently holds the office of President and State Director of Jr. VASE. She was recognized as Middle School Art Educator of the Year in 2012, and Art Educator of the Year in 2010. She co-authored the Art and Digital Communication Curriculum and Flower Teachers' One Generation Speaks to Another NAEA publication. Though retired from teaching, she is still very active in art education in Texas.

Trends, The Journal of the Texas Art Education Association 2018 Call for Submissions

“Disrupting the Everyday: Encountering Awareness and New Curiosities”

The Editors of Trends invite essays, articles and artworks that provoke and explore creative disruption. As Maxine Greene wrote, “We are interested in breakthroughs and new beginnings, in the kind of wide-awakeness that allows for wonder and unease and questioning and the pursuit of what is not yet.” That is to say, creative disruption amplifies curiosity for the new because it interrupts the daily humdrum with wonder and awareness—in classrooms, museums, and community spaces, as well as in everyday public and domestic encounters.

Trends 2018 will explore the aesthetic wonder that fuels our work. Whether we’re teaching in classrooms, engaging in research, pursuing cultural change, or helping to develop art and education policy, curiosity and a desire for inquiry are essential. In many cases, social practice and acts of “serious play” activate the ordinary and unnoticed beauty of our daily lives.

We welcome arts-based and text-based submissions that explore image-making, collage, mixed media, photography, creative writing, performance, walking, listening, collecting, cartography, graphic interventions, and other unanticipated explorations. We also welcome research manuscripts that analyze the potential of these practices.

Questions to consider: How do we awakeness feed your teaching practice, whether inside or outside the classroom? Where do such moments surface in your TAEA? How do you create policies that encourage creative disruptions? What disruptions drive your research? How might your submission to Trends provoke readers to think and act anew?

Guidelines depend on the type of submission: for example, arts-based submissions with minimal text should be accompanied by a 200-500 word contextual description (which might not be published but will be used to review the submission). We also welcome creative written submissions of between 1000-2000 words, as well as traditional research manuscripts (which should follow the Trends Author Guidelines). Trends, The Journal of the Texas Art Education Association, is a refereed professional journal, published annually by the Texas Art Education Association. The journal accepts articles written by authors residing both inside and outside of the state of Texas.

Deadline: Original manuscripts must be received by January 15, 2018 as MS Word document attachments. Please submit electronically via e-mail to: Taeatrends@gmail.com

For more information, please contact Cala Coats and Sean Justice at taeatrends@gmail.com

2017 TRENDS
In addition to traditional research articles, in this issue, we also wanted to include examples of ways that arts advocacy takes visual form on a local, national, and global level as a way of unifying our voices, sharing our experiences, and recognizing our collective effort to advocate for art education. To explore this idea, we added an addendum to the call for papers that asked educators, administrators, students, and artists to send images of their efforts toward arts advocacy. Recognizing the ubiquity of visual culture in our society and where social media has become a primary communications source, we were curious how arts advocacy looks in the world. To elicit images for the issue, we asked: Have you promoted your art program through flyers, posters, or social media? Have you written a letter to your principal, district art coordinator, or state representative, or anyone else in support of your art program or the significance of art education in general?

Do you have images or artifacts from an event, art show, performance, or intervention that advocated for the arts in your community? Throughout the issue, submissions from the call for “Artifacts of Advocacy” appear with a logo and a short blurb describing the images pictured. Readers send in photographs, screen shots of webpages, letters to the legislature, and first-hand written reflections. We hope these artifacts act as inspiration, letting us see the work of arts advocates in a variety of settings.
invited to help with recovery efforts in New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina, artist Mel Chin said, “I remember standing in the ruins of the Ninth Ward and realizing as a creative individual that I felt helpless and inadequate.” In remarks he gave to members of the National Art Education Association at the annual conference in New Orleans in 2008, he furthermore said, “And I was flooded by this terrible insecurity that being an artist was not enough to deal with the tragedy that was before me.” (Shindler, 2008, para. 2)

Many of us, I am sure, feel similarly overwhelmed by the disaster wreaked by Hurricane Harvey all along the gulf coast of Texas. As an artist, Chin persevered though, and after gathering himself, found meaningful ways to contribute to the recovery of that city through art-making—the thing he knows best!

In light of the above reasons, this issue, we see similar responses from teachers in the Houston region, teachers who found ways to overcome the hopelessness and use their knowledge of art and teaching to help—to make things better.

Understanding Advocacy

The focus of this year’s issue, Advocacy, can sometimes seem nearly as daunting as facing a natural disaster. What can we as individual artists, teachers, or administrators do to change the course of national policies that threaten to sweep away the National Endowment for the Arts and otherwise undercut the viability of arts on a national scale?

Jeff Poulin, a member of the arts education team at Americans for the Arts notes in his interview with Joana Hyatt that as individuals, we are not alone in this. Americans for the Arts includes educationists who are advocating for the arts. Our individual agency is complemented by the resources of the arts education team at Americans for the Arts. TARA has resources to help as our organization’s president, Suzy Greene strongly believes that advocacy is a responsibility each and every one of us share, and she discusses numerous resources our organization is invested in to help teachers. All of our organization’s members find ways to get started or extend their advocacy efforts.

If teaching may be seen as a grassroots form of advocacy as Carter suggests, might we also see artmaking as advocacy? For the Alaskan Tlingit artist, Ramírez Jonas who recently published a twenty-five-year survey of his work at The Contemporary Arts Museum Houston is interviewed by Zachary Gresham in this issue. Advocacy is intricately tied to imagining a different world for Ramírez Jonas. The possibility of transformation is tied not only to imagining change, but also to interacting with the world differently. Artists, he asserts, are not necessarily bound to advocate for change, but as citizens of the world we have a responsibility “to be advocates for the kind of society we want to live in.”

Ramírez Jonas discusses the importance of context—his place of origin—as very influential in his life and artmaking. International renowned photographer Keith Carter, interviewed by Dr. Cala Coats in this issue, also finds the context of place very influential in his art. For Carter though, the idea of belonging to a place came to him during a trip to Japan for a famous Texas playwright! Though Carter grew up in Beaumont, and has spent most of his life there, seeing it as a creative wellspring was a transformative experience. Carter seeks his work of every art teacher as foundational. The work art teachers do on a daily basis is the first line of defense.

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An internet search for #BigArtDay17 reveals hundreds of images of teachers raising the visibility of their art programs on Big Art Day.

The following are accounts and images of a few of the exciting events our Texas art educators put together this year:

**C.D. Fulkes Middle School—Round Rock**
Sixth grade art students at C.D. Fulkes Middle School celebrated big art in the park on March 2, 2017 at Round Rock Memorial Park. Students went to art stations that featured fine arts integration in every project. They connected the visual arts with what they are currently learning in science, math, social studies, and language arts.

**Carroll Elementary School—Houston**
At Carroll Elementary, Aldine ISD in Houston, the students entering the art room on Big Art Day were given a needle and thread and contributed to our Carroll Community Loom! Grades k-4 participated, the kids had a blast! What was a huge blank burlap in the morning turned into a colorful and creative piece of art by the end of the day. The artwork was placed on display for all members of the school to see and enjoy. Fiberarts for the win!

**Lakeside Elementary—Coppell**
At Lakeside Elementary we celebrated Big Art Day by creating sidewalk chalk letters, spelling out “Big Art Day.” Each grade level made their own creations and we then photographed the letters individually to stitch together using collage apps. Our learners had such a blast making such beautiful messes.
Chapel Hill High School-Tyler

Our Big Art Day event started with the installation of a Little Neighborhood Food Pantry. The students painted their version of Andy Warhol’s soup cans on the sides. They also brought donations of food to put in it. Further donations will be collected at a later date. We also had an 8-hour drawing activity going on outside the Art rooms throughout the school day. Several students were overheard saying things like “This is the best school day ever!” Non-Art students were also able to participate and draw.

Over all, this was a great day and a great event!!

Gatesville Elementary-Gatesville

All students and staff at Gatesville Elementary were given a quarter of a circle to create anything they wanted for Big Art Day. These were then assembled into circles and displayed in our school foyer for everyone to enjoy. The students especially liked pointing out their designs to their parents when they joined them for lunch. Mona Lisa and other famous paintings were hidden in the display for students to find.

Francone Elementary School-Houston

I explained to my class what Big Art Day is about, and said it is a great way to celebrate art around the whole state. Then, I simply asked the kids what they liked about art, and let them choose what to paint on the mural we created. We have recently studied Romero Britto and I saw some strong lines and repeated patterns that reminded me of his work. We also just did some shoe zentangle designs so that may have influenced them also. They loved the opportunity to create something so big in just one day! Third and fourth grade classes worked on both murals so the third graders came in after fourth grade and worked on what had already been started.

Mural created by Francone Elementary third and fourth graders
For me, I did not realize the value of art advocacy until I reflected on the year. I used to think advocacy was too big for me, and that it took a lot of planning and effort, and being in the spotlight. Through my personal experience, I now know that the art is not so scary. It happened naturally.

It began with change in the district. My school is a Montessori school, so the district has offered art programs to encourage parents and students. My initial thoughts were, what are the expectations going to be for my classroom? My teachers and students were interested in art. I researched and found that art could be the best for this style of teaching. I quickly discovered there was no one way to teach the art that I observed an art teacher at a "Montessori" way for art. I observed an art teacher at another Montessori school, and a nearby district, reached out to another Montessori teacher friend in another state teaching art at a Montessori school, and both exchanges left me with more questions.

Research eventually led me to a professional development course on student-centered learning in the art room. The course on student-centered learning in the art room was a few hundred dollars and I wondered if others would think it was applicable to our Montessori classroom. I was surprised when I sat down to discuss the possibilities, I was surprised at how well students encouraged and supported their peers. I also received support from the course, and even suggested that I make a wish list of tools and furniture I might need to implement what I would learn from the program.

I was not intentionally seeking popularity from my peers, but just expressing my passion to provide the best opportunities to learn for my students. Looking back on the year, I realize the impact of my actions, and how I promoted art on my school campus. I am so grateful for my administration's encouragement, which has motivated me to set new professional goals for myself. I am proud of the steps I took and the journey I am on to see the impact it has made on my students.

Advocacy, for me, has been about standing up for what I believe in, and what I desire for my students through my courses. If I can share my goals with my colleagues, then my students will be encouraged and support their peers. If I can't share my goals with my colleagues, then my students can't be an example of managing change, then how can I expect students to deal with change appropriately? I have used advocacy as a reflection of the citizen I want to be what I want my students to grow up to be.
An Interview with artist and educator
Keith Carter

Recipient of the 2009 Texas Medal of Arts, Keith Carter holds the Endowed Walles Chair of Performing Arts at Lamar University in Beaumont, Texas where he has been awarded the university’s three highest teaching honors. He has exhibited his photographs in over 100 solo exhibitions in 13 countries. In addition, 13 books of his work have been published, and his photographs are in numerous public and private collections. I had the opportunity this summer to sit down with Keith in his home and studio and talk about his work and his views on art making.

Bill Nieberding (BN): You’ve been making photographs for quite some time, your first book Uncertain to Blue was published about thirty years ago. Are there things about photography that you still find exciting after all these years?

Keith Carter (KC): Oh yes! I probably find it more exciting now than I did in the beginning, and I was completely on fire in the beginning. It’s just with all the changes and the decades that have passed, and as you grow older and hopefully a little wiser, and a little more sure about the kinds of things you want to spend your time doing with respect to the art world. It’s just invigorating! I mean it’s always invigorating. It’s an exciting way to live a life. It’s relatively few and far between when you have bouts of boredom.

BN: What do you do when they come, what if there is a bout of boredom, is there a trick you have to break out of that?

KC: Do you mean like when you get to a stopping point and you are not sure where to go?

BN: Yeah, right.

KC: Well I think that happens to all artists at some point. Sometimes multiple times in their career, and in my experience, what you do is you get back to work right away. And it’s in the working and the making of the pictures that things start to happen. In my experience if you sit here at your desk like Saint Paul on the road to Damascus waiting for light to strike you, you are going to wait forever.

BN: Right.

KC: But if you are out there working or sketching or drawing or making photographs, or reading, which is a lot of the time where my ideas come from, I think my goodness! What a paragraph, you know, then you get to work.

BN: Anything in particular that’s caught your interest right now in the field of photography?

KC: Well, I’m working on a number of projects, and all of them are interesting to me. One of them is a retrospective book with the University of Texas of forty years of work, which has necessitated going back and looking at sort of how my creative arc evolved. That’s one. I’ve been working on a couple of projects in the last couple years that have involved the digital world, which was relatively new to me, since I historically am a film person and still prefer it given the choice. At the same time, I went the other way and learned some other historical antiquarian processes, and working in all of them at the same time was just wonderful.

BN: Do you see connections between the processes, the very old and the very new?

KC: I do, you know the beautiful thing about the medium of photography, is if you look at the history of photography, you learn that you stand on the shoulders of giants. Men and women who have made photographs or art when they didn’t even know it was art, under the world’s worst conditions: bad chemistry, dangerous everything, capricious weather, terrible water.

BN: What lead you to become an art photographer? What made you choose this path in your life, does anything stand out in your mind?

KC: Well partially it was my mom. We were a single parent household, and she was very encouraging and she loved art, but she was geared by necessity to making a living and doing commercial kinds of work. But one of our best friends was a sculptor here in town at the time, and he was Beaux Arts trained and I loved being around him and I loved his library, and so between the two of them I had a lot of encouragement. But from the very beginning when I first saw Henri Cartier-Bresson’s famous book The Decisive Moment with
the cover by Matisse, a woodcut by Matisse, that was probably in the late sixties. I was just electrified! I’d never seen photographs, let alone black and white photographs that looked anything like that. David Cargill had given me the book out of his library, and said “you need to look at this.”

BN: Huh!

KC: Well that just completely undid me and I didn’t want to do anything else. Also, I was like 20 years old. I didn’t care anything about money. I just wanted to make pictures that mattered. That’s how it began anyway. I just was on fire! It’s hard to explain. It’s like you’re slightly directionless, you are getting ready to graduate from university with your degree, mine was business at the time, and then all of a sudden, my path was so clear! And I just couldn’t wait to get on it. The irony is, I’ve lived most of my life in a town where art is not the first thing on peoples’ minds. And that’s justifiable. The other side of the coin is, in my career, the search for those motifs in the photographs and so on and so forth, have taken me pretty much around the world, so it’s a kind of a yin-yang existence.

BN: Right… how much do you think being from here influenced the way you make your art?

KC: Well, a lot! And I’ve been thinking a lot about it lately with respect to this retrospective book. What happened in my case was, you know in the very beginnings of learning your craft, you stumble around and you try to be everybody who’s work you admire.

BN: Right!

KC: That’s a useful thing, and then if you’re lucky you sort of stumble out of that and you stumble into starting to become yourself. But what happened to me was, I went to a film festival in Galveston where the playwright Horton Foote was talking. It was a panel discussion. He said that when he was a boy growing up in Wharton, Texas, smaller than Beaumont, that he told one of his teachers he wanted to be an artist, an actor, and she said if you want to be an artist, you have to learn a couple of things. You have to learn the history of your medium. And I sat up in the Galveston Opera House, and I thought, “Yeah, I know that!” And then he said, she told me I needed to be a product of my own times. I need to know the history of acting, of theater, but I needed to act in my own generational way, and I sat up a little straighter, and it thought, “I sorta know that too,” and then he said “I went to New York, and I did that.” Then he said, “after a while I found out that wasn’t enough. For me,” Foote said, “I found that I needed to belong to a place.” And then he said “I sat bolt upright in the opera house, and I was electrified. I thought, oh my God, belong to a place! Whereas most of my friends and my thoughts often were running from this place. But what if….

what the world needs is you, telling your stories, singing your songs, and writing your poems and making your photographs.

Maricella, 1998 © Keith Carter, courtesy of the artist
Fireflies, 1992 © Keith Carter, courtesy of the artist.
Anyway, that’s when I started to become—this is in answer to your question—when I started to begin the aesthetics that I pretty much continue today. I thought well, I’m going to play like I don’t know anything about this place. That I’ve never been here. I’m kind of scared of the world, I don’t know the music, I don’t know the religion, I don’t know foods, I don’t know the animals, I don’t know anything. And I’ll photograph them.

BN: To learn about them?

KC: To learn about them. So that led me to doing the project ‘Uncertain to Blue’ in all those communities. So, these are personal things, but that’s what happened in my world. And now at this stage of my life that I’m in, I pretty much just take this places, and those superstitions.

BN: And they go with you?

KC: And they go with me. The locales change. Instead of trying to view the world as something at once crystal clear, and at the same time completely mysterious and wondrous, stays the same.

BN: That describes the way your photographs sort of ‘resolve’ at the same time. There are parts that are crystal clear, and there are parts that are quite unknowable, when you look at the images. I know that "Nis is it?" Is there that moment in your work, when the work’s resisting something in you, when you’re in front of you that you know is really worth spending time with? Because there are all of these moments and spaces around us. How do you know when this scene or whatever it is that’s worth pushing in?

KC: Sure. Well sometimes you don’t. But there are moments, and I call them perfect moments, when you know something important is here, and you need to do this. But they are not as common as when you just have to have some faith, you know.

BN: That you are pushing the button and something’s going to happen?

KC: No, that what you are seeing is worth doing. That’s let’s just see what looks like photographs. That really means trying to talk yourself out of it... well no, no, it’s been done before, blah blah blah... There are things like the photograph of the little boy, it’s probably my signature image. It’s called fireflies, and they are holding a pot of fireflies standing in the bayou not far from here. That wasn’t at all what I intended to make, that kind of thing. But I knew there was something there! But I wasn’t going to get what I wanted. And I didn’t! It turned out that through mysterious circumstances I got something better than I even knew how to get.

BN: Did that image change the way you think about your work?

KC: Oh, completely. And I’d have thrown it away had it not been for Pat. Because when I made that picture, and I developed the negative, I was really excited, and a little worried, and when I saw the film, which is always exciting, I was so depressed it was all out of focus. Everything! You know they just didn’t hold still. So, I made a contact sheet and I was really depressed, and a few days later I showed it to Pat, and she said, “You should go print one.” Which one? I said, “This one, this one!” She printed it, and I went, and I want and made a small print and she came over and she looked at it, and she said, “Print that bigger!” So, I made a big print, and she came back out and looked, and I will never forget her words, and she thought it was perfect, looking at it askance, and she said ‘Oh my God’ and I thought ‘oh my God’ you know.

BN: Then you saw what she saw?

KC: Yeah! That wasn’t all at all what I intended, but it was pure photography. Time, light, and it was just a little bit of motion. Optics, and an implied narrative of some sort that you didn’t even consider. But in the doing, it just changed the way I work. It made me think the way.

BN: What, that’s fabulous.

KC: It just changed everything. And it’s probably why I make pictures like I do today.

BN: So, the theme for this issue of Trends is advocacy. What do you think we can do or should do, as arts educators to advocate for our field?

KC: That probably one that I’m not the best equipped for answers... to advocate for our field... are you talking about legislatively?

BN: Well I guess in broad terms advocacy is anything that is specifically aimed to promote our interests, and it’s a question that you can pass on if you want.

KC: Oh, one of the things is to introduce people at a younger age to the beauty, joy and fulfillment of thinking about, making, and living with art. Summer camps, scholarships, anything that brings students that could not have that opportunity. I think that’s my idea of advocacy.

BN: Along those lines, is there any advice you would give to a person studying art?

KC: Oh sure! Essentially, it’s what you don’t want to hear nowadays. Learn your craft. Learn the fundamentals. Learn to draw, learn how the backbone of your art works, and then look at everybody’s work and think of how to do you want to say? That’s the hardest part! What do you want to say?

BN: That is always the hardest question... What do you want to say?

KC: Uh huh, and who do you want to say it to, and why do you want to say it? You pick a project. One project. Some projects I’ve done, this work on several projects overlapping. Writers do that, painters do that. And there have been times when I do that, but a lot of times I just give myself a couple years and I’m going to work on one thing. I write it down. I try to define it. And then I get to work. Knowing full well that it’s going to change.

BN: That’s a very good thought. I think a lot of us are scared that we won’t achieve the result, without being free to allow it to be what it will be, and discover if along the way you would change your mind.

KC: But if you think like that it paralyzes you. You can count on it not being what it started out to be. I guarantee it’s not going to turn out like you think it’s going to turn out! So be it. I mean, big deal.

BN: That’s so true.

KC: It’s kind of exciting.

BN: Yeah, it is. Then my final question is I asked what advice you might give to a student, what advice would you give to an art teacher?

KC: I would tell an art teacher that I think that you are hugely, hugely important. Probably more so at this juncture of our culture than ever before. When the arts are politized under fire. And sometimes closer to home, even by parents, you know. What you teach, and how you teach it is our very first line of defense against what we are seeing working right now. And I don’t know of anything more important. It all starts with one good student paying attention to one good teacher.

BN: Well, thank you so very much for your time.

KC: You are very welcome!
Paul Ramírez Jonas’ select solo exhibitions include a 25-year survey of his work at The Contemporary Arts Museum Houston; Pinacoteca do Estado, Sao Paulo, Brazil; The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, Connecticut; The Jack S. Blanton Museum of Art, Austin, Texas; a survey at Ikon Gallery (UK) and Cornerhouse (UK).

He has been included in group exhibitions at P.S.1 (NYC); the Brooklyn Museum; The Whitechapel (UK); Irish Museum of Modern Art (Ireland); The New Museum (NYC); and Kunsthalle Zürich (Switzerland). He participated in the 1st Johannesburg Biennale; the 1st Seoul Biennale; the 6th Shanghai Biennale; the 28th Sao Paulo Biennale; the 53rd Venice Biennale; and the 7th Bienal do Mercosul, Porto Alegre, Brazil. In 2010, his Key to the City project was presented by Creative Time in cooperation with the City of New York. In 2016, his Public Trust project was presented by Now Is Then in Boston. He is currently an Associate Professor at Hunter College, City University of New York CUNY.
Zachary Gresham (ZG): Your survey exhibition at the Contemporary Arts Museum Houston is really spectacular. Congratulations on such an awesome show and thank you for making the time to talk. The theme of this issue of Trends relates to the idea of advocacy. Let’s start with that. Would you say that you are advocating something with your work? If so, what would that be?

Paul Ramírez Jonas (PRJ): I am advocating for very specific things. Bertolt Brecht wrote in Brecht on Theater: The Development of an Aesthetic that, “the present-day world can only be described to present day people if it is described as capable of transformation.” I want to advocate for the possibility of both imagining the world differently; but furthermore, with that imagining then interacting with the world differently. The change does not have to be big. Part of my goal is to break down the world into small parts that we can play with in our imaginations and then act upon, within our own individual capabilities.

ZG: Do you feel that it is important for the responsibility of an artist to also be an advocate?

PRJ: I don’t want to be prescriptive, and artists should have the freedom to do whatever they want. Absolutely. And yet, we are also citizens. We are responsible as citizens to advocate for the kind of society we want to live in. Artists are not exempt; but they have a choice to manifest it in their work or somewhere else in their lives. Paulo Freire, an educator and philosopher from Brazil has been a great influence and I often go back to something he wrote: “To affirm that men and women are persons and as persons should be free and yet to do nothing tangible to make this affirmation a reality, is a farce.” So, do something.

ZG: Your work is extremely varied, especially in the materials that you use to execute the work. When I was visiting your exhibition at the Contemporary Art Museum Houston, I started wondering what your studio space must be like. I sort of envisioned a fairly large warehouse that would be spacious enough to work on multiple projects as well as a rather large library of science and history books. Would you mind describing where you make your work?

PRJ: There is something funny and sad about this question! I live in New York City where rent is astronomical. My studio is 800 square feet; about half of it is storage of older work, a well-organized set of tools, and miscellaneous materials. Everything is on wheels, the work tables, the storage shelves, the desks, so I can reconfigure the space depending on what I need. Most of the books I read for research are at home in a tiny office that is about 200 square feet. I love small and cozy spaces; but then again –I have no choice but to. Often, I make work that is larger than my work space. For example, Ghazi Stadium on view at CAMH was made in panels but I could only see about a third of it at time. I kept having to hang the parts over and over, “What does the bottom third look like? Okay, back to the top left!” etc. Likewise, The Commons was made in parts so it could come in and out of my studio. The horse’s head and neck come off so the body can make it through my small door!

ZG: In addition to your art practice, you are an Associate Professor at Hunter College, City University of New York. I am curious how you balance your art-making and teaching practices. Do you see these as separate or do you feel that pedagogy is part of your studio practice?

PRJ: Balancing a family, friends, teaching and making art is a challenge. I am not sure how, or anyone else does it, but somehow it has worked for years. My friend and colleague Nari Ward at Hunter once told me, “Sometimes you are a bad teacher, sometimes you are a bad parent, sometimes you are a bad artist, no one can do all three well at the same time.” I see both activities as separate but they inform each other. In both instances, I see my job as creating opportunities for others to increase or exercise their imagination.

ZG: Are there any examples of your work that you feel specially address the blurred line between your art and education practices?

PRJ: Art works exist under a different social contract than art assignment, or good in-class workshops; art creates true public situations. Around artwork, people congregate out of their own free will –thus creating a public. Class rooms are different. Students congregate under different power dynamics. The students might...
We are responsible as citizens to advocate for the kind of society we want to live in.
be there because they have to, or they are paying tuition so their expectations are different. They have a completely different set of expectations regarding the outcome of the experience, likewise, they are subject to the authority of the teacher—ultimately, they will be graded. Students in a classroom do not form a public.

Still, they share some structural or formal features. In both situations, I prefer not to deliver content, but rather to create very clear parameters that frame and facilitate an experience that the participant creates and contributes to.

But there is often a migration back and forth. Sometimes an idea migrates to the classroom, and sometimes the other way around. And perhaps the blurriest line is me. I can’t remember if I learned to be a performer in the classroom, or in the artworks—but I am sometimes the other way around. And an idea migrates to the classroom, and back and forth. Sometimes

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I think of creativity and imagination as a force of change. Art is also a form of speech. Because one of the main subjects where we nurture and augment our students’ imaginations. I think of creativity and imagination as a force of change. Art is also a form of speech. Because of this, I see art on par with other human rights, and as such it should not be denied based on how much money you have.

ZG: Since many of the readers of the publication are K-12 educators, can you talk about the experiences in school that you had with art prior to university?

PRJ: I was raised in Honduras and while I went to good schools, we could not escape our context. It was the second poorest country in the hemisphere at the time, and there was no art museum in the entire country when I grew up. It was a fairly conservative milieu and I frankly cannot even remember if we had art classes as a separate subject. What I do recall was an awareness of things we could not have, but knew existed. Thus, I remember my brother and I trying to make toys we had seen in pictures only; not because we could not afford them, but because they simply were not available in the entire country. This process of making do, in fact, of making all the time, was very influential.

ZG: Is there an assignment that you give students in your class that is your favorite?

PRJ: For undergrads, I am fond of an assignment where I ask them to make a proposal for an imaginary grant worth several million dollars. The grant also includes help securing any site in the world for their work. The students themselves will be the jurors that listen and evaluate the proposals, so they must go all out with their presentations. At the end of all the presentation, I give every student a lottery scratch card. I then tell them the assignment for next week is to execute the way to re-introduce a pre-modern way of learning: copying the masters.

ZG: As a student yourself, were there any educators that you think influenced your journey to becoming an artist?

PRJ: What is amazing about learning and teaching art is how much of it remains something that can only be transmitted verbally. I learned to how to mix paint and clean brushes from the painter Wendy Edwards. I was shown how much ink to wipe off an etching plate (with the palm of my hand) from printmaker Jane Kent, I was trained on how to turn my ideas upside down and made out, so I may consider their opposition, from artist Tom Lawson, and I was inducted into what is the right amount of formal exactitude from sculptor Roni Horn. But what was really transmitted while they were doing that is hard to put into words.

Finally, I learned a tremendous amount of creativity and imagination as a force of change. Art is also a form of speech. Because of this, I see art on par with other human rights, and as such it should not be denied based on how much money you have.
Interview with Tommy Joseph

Tommy Joseph is a Tlingit artist and carver from Southeast Alaska. He has been actively engaged in Northwest Coast carving since the 1980s as an instructor, interpreter, demonstrator, and as a commissioned artist.

Since the early 1990s, he has been in charge of the carving shop of the Southeast Alaska Indian Cultural Center in Sitka, demonstrating and interpreting art of the Northwest Coast. Additionally, he has been employed by the National Park Service to restore and replicate some pieces from their extensive collection of totem poles at Sitka National Historical Park. Over his career, Tommy has produced a wide range of artwork including totem poles, house posts, beautifully detailed masks, and bentwood boxes. He has made replicas of Tlingit ceremonial at oow (treasured objects) and armor. He continues to create, teach, mentor, and share his artistry in his home studio in Sitka, Alaska.

In 2010, I met Tommy in Sitka, Alaska, when I was serving as a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellow. I observed him creating art in his workshop and also had the opportunity to share some of his art making experiences.

Heidi Powell (HP): Hi Tommy, tell me a little bit about yourself and what brought you to doing community arts as a carver and totem pole artist. Where did your interest as a carver start? How has this helped you become the community artist you are today, advocating for Northwest Coast culture and arts?

Tommy Joseph (TJ): I am originally from Ketchikan, Alaska, another island 200 miles down the coast from where I live now. I live in Sitka and have been here for 31 years. My very first opportunity to do carving was with a knife on a piece of wood in 1972 when I was in the third grade. We had a carver come into our school in Ketchikan and work with a small group of us and he showed us how to make in fishhook. A halibut hook. The school doesn’t exist anymore—the building is still there—but it was called Valley Park Elementary School. It was a new elementary school, and I was one of the first students in the school, which was built in my neighborhood. It was a different way of educating, a lot of hands-on stuff, different than what you see today. The halibut hook was the beginning of my artistry.

HP: The halibut hook was the beginning of your carving experience. Where did it go from there?

TJ: From there, my next opportunity to carve was when I was enrolled in a summer camp to learn about design and basic carving, sawing, language, and songs. It was a Native-based program, and it was my second opportunity to explore carving. I got to carve a plaque with a salmon on it. After that, I was on my own. I didn’t have any carving knives of my own, so I would sneak knives out of the kitchen, a serrated steak knife or whatever I could get my hands on, and go try on my own. I would get caught and my mom would tell me to stop playing with knives. So, I don’t say I play with knives, but I still work with knives for a living. I didn’t listen to Mom, I guess [laughter].

HP: Tell me about what you do now because you “didn’t listen to Mom,” and how does your artistry lend itself to advocacy for not only Native-based programs, but Native education, and the general public?

TJ: In 1991 I started working at the Southeast Alaska Indian Cultural Center, which was at the Sitka National Historical Park and were in partnership with each other for 42 years. It doesn’t exist formally anymore, but I worked there as a demonstrating artist and educator for 21 years before it shut down and then I began working at my house and a gallery studio, and it’s where I have been working ever since. It’s in the central business district in Sitka. It’s a commercial zone, so in my front yard I have a 20-foot beam that is a canoe I’m currently working on, and the past few years I have created totem poles there and I have the opportunity to educate as I create. I have been a teacher at the University of Alaska Southeast, where I pick a topic for the semester, a box, a mask, or something else as a beginning project for the course. I also go out to different cities in Alaska. I work with high school students, the most recent in Craig and Petersburg, teaching carving.

HP: When I met you, you were creating masks in the Sitka National Historical Park. How did your artistry there function as advocacy? Is it not a traditional space you would find an artist in?

I then would educate them about who we really are and what the totem poles mean.

TJ: I work in the summertime, a time of tourists. Thousands and thousands of people from cruise ships and boats would come in through the studio, and usually come here with the idea that we are all Eskimos here in Alaska, and I then would educate them about who we really are and what the totem poles mean. Many think that totem poles are religious or they are worshipped because that’s what missionaries were teaching a hundred years ago, so I was educating them about what they really are about. Year-round students have the opportunity to come to the park and watch me carve a reproduction totem pole, one group of fourth graders got to come back again later and help me paint...
I am creating brand new stories of today, about people, events, or our nation.

HP: The work you create obviously reflects back to the Northwest Coast traditions and rituals. What are some that are your favorites? What do you enjoy communicating most through your artwork?

TJ: Totem poles are what I have out there in the world the most, teaching people about them and what they are all about. Totems are visual tools for my culture and the Northwest Coast Indians. To tell a story, you have to have the visual of the totem and the storyteller. You look at the pole and its characters as they come into the story. Today, I'm not telling the same story over and over through my work, there are new stories to tell. So I am creating brand new stories of today, about people, events, or our nation.

HP: Do you have a favorite story, one you like the most?

TJ: A couple years ago I created a sixteen-foot totem pole for the Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh. They wanted a raven themed totem pole, but left it up to me to tell any kind of story I wanted. So I sat down and wrote the story. It was a story told to me by an elder 20-some years past, and it was a story about my dad. My dad was lost at sea when I was six, so I grew up not knowing him, and occasionally I would meet people that would tell me about my dad. This particular elder was one of those people, and he told me a story about how he and my dad, when they were young men, were out on a seal hunt. The story I wrote is called “The Hunt” and it’s about my dad and this man called Bennie. I changed the names of the characters and didn’t tell the Carnegie what the story was really about until I had it all done. I presented it publically with the totem there. The story was about AJ (Arnold Joseph) and Bennie (Bennie James), and they were the main characters of the story. So I started with the Raven [moiety] at the base, and above the Raven were two guys in a canoe with hunting harpoons and a seal hanging, and above that was a dog salmon [which is a clan symbol]. The reason I chose Raven Dog Salmon to be a part of the totem is because that was my dad’s clan crest. He was from Klawok, Prince of Wales Island.

HP: That’s a wonderful story, ripe with both cultural and personal history. In the wide range of work that you create—totem poles, masks, carvings—do you have a philosophy or approach to how you think about art-making as it relates to your heritage?

TJ: Northwest Coast art is a huge part of my indigenous identity, our identity. Our people are most recognized by the type of art we do, Northwest Coast Formline art. All the tribes, Haida, Tsimshian, Tlingit, and others, we all have our own variations of Formline, because we are all neighbors to each other. It can be seen as similar, but there are distinct differences and all of what we do is based on stories. We tell stories about our culture. We have the two moieties [governing deities]: we are born into the Raven or the Eagle, and you follow the moiety of your mother, it’s a matrilineal society. We also have different clans that fall under Eagle or Raven moieties. Like I said, my father was Raven [moiety] Dog Salmon [clan]. I am Eagle [moiety] Wolf [clan].

HP: What or who were your artistic influences growing up, and how did they influence your decision to follow art as a profession?

TJ: I have always been an artist, if I can think of it, draw it or make it using whatever, doing something with my hands and being creative. Carving was what you did, there wasn’t a lot of public demonstration as a kid, but when there was, I would hang out, learn, and try to see what I could. I didn’t have a specific mentor. I had teachers along the way that helped with this and that and my interests. It was always me putting myself in it or around it, looking at books in museums or the library, going to see it where I could. Most of my education as a carver has been going and doing research at museum collections. I have been to Russia, St. Petersburg, and I saw their amazing collection at the Kunstkamera (Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography of Peoples of the World), the British Museum in London, and in Paris, at the Musée du quai Branly. I was able to look and see our old, old pieces there. Those are my ancestry, those are, and have been, my teachers.

HP: I love that the art of your ancestors is your teachers, and so, I have to ask if you consider yourself an art educator or teaching artist? What I mean by the first term is that you teach people about the arts, and what it means to be creative, the processes to create and make art with an understanding of how to teach; or the second, that you are a practicing artist that shares their work in order to help others understand the craft and process of what they do?

TJ: I do both, I sometimes go and do talks, public speaking, where I teach about different topics related to Northwest Coast art, that is sharing and educating about these things, and in classes I teach I show...
my processes and ways of doing that are specific to me, and allow students to ask questions.

HP: In many indigenous cultures, apprenticeship is foundational to art making. As you have followed your path, how has the carver/artist community which you are a part of changing as they move toward the future with new technologies and 21st-century ways of being?

TJ: There are a lot of us out there, but when you think in global terms there are just not that many. Social media keeps us connected to changes and transitions and what is emerging and being said about totem poles and Northwest Coast art.

HP: What do you think the future holds for Northwest Coast artists in relation to maintaining traditions as well as new technology?

TJ: There are definitely Northwest Coast artists who fully embrace the new technologies and the digital age, and I am amazed at what some artists are doing. I am not into tech and am more traditional, but I also do enjoy incorporating things of technology?

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burn approach to arts and humanities funding. Making it happen - talking to professors, classroom teachers, and community members - fulfills our desire to advocate for art but not knowing where to begin. I return sometimes to the statement of one of the presidents of Houston made way back in... what was that, 2009, when I rode with you in the art car parade?

DI: I think it was 2012.

LL: 2012, okay. The mayor spoke at the American Alliance of Museums. She said:

"If you want politicians to support the arts, vote for politicians who support the arts." It was a very funny yet direct and relevant statement. I think we've found ourselves in a place at the state and national level with some people trying to isolate arts and yet we voted them into office. The thing I find myself struggling with is: how should we make recommendations to others for consistent advocacy actions? The first step for me is thinking how we prepare ourselves for the next election cycle. What do we need to know about candidates? How can we shed light on candidates who support the arts? As I think about art advocacy today, one of the weaknesses we have got to work on nationally. We were focusing on other issues and arts humanities took a back seat.

DI: Well, there are certain things I know and understand. I know and understand education. I know and understand art. So I do pay attention to those things. I do base my votes on those candidates.

LL: But what about the social and cultural issues and arts humanities?

DI: So I do pay attention to the arts. I think a lot about what I think about that I think about. We have art as a core requirement in high school and we have the arts as core requirements in college, but if people are not being informed about why it's so important and how it has been through the ages become so important to society, not just the educators but artists, that's what the educating the boat. That dispenses with knowledge that society needs to know better so people are going to get out of our classes. Unless we're teaching people about those social and cultural issues, it's important what happens. Our district has shown me, I don't know if that's getting through to people other than "hey it's great

LI: I agree and I do think there are so many silos we can find ourselves in art education and yet I think our efforts for being able to focus on having conversations with like minds. It's really easy for me to pick up the phone and call you and we can talk about these kinds of things because we have so much common ground. What I find personally challenging is: how do I do advocacy passing the message that art is accessible to all people to people in my community that I don't know who may or may not have an interest in art education or a background in art? I find my conversations don't naturally drift that direction because I feel as if we notice it when we're teaching drawing. Or I think of the art advocacy for me it's about how we're passionate about tend to be with other people who share those passions. I think that's partly how we find ourselves in these polarized positions in society where there is no middle ground. I was having a conversation recently with a friend online and we were talking about differences in opinions in politics and how that, in some cases, ripped families apart. I'm not trying to imply that advocating for art has a negative consequence. But I do think there is a reluctance or a comfort with people in a direct or straightforward manner about things we know to be potentially polarizing. For various reasons visual art have the potential to be polarizing. So I think that's what I mean about approaching advocacy from a vernacular point of view, like Neil deGrasse-Tyson. Here's a man who can be as cerebral as he wants to be. He chooses to be accessible, to engage with people at every level, to be with people who have no interest in artistic media that are not exclusive to his field or generation, such as his podcasts and online education. He reaches people. He's accessible yet it does not diminish the impact of his content. That's the fiscal balance to strike: to be accessible but to be robust. Good advocacy is accessible and robust. That's what I know right now. Whether it's on a small level, talking with American camps or at a national level, it's staying aware of how you communicate things.

DI: Yeah. You know, I think one of the good things... thinking back to our graduate class with Dr. Davis, was that he encouraged us to think that we could be the trap of not advocating for art at all. On a personal note, I strive to advocate for art in a way that tries to avoid the traps of capitalism but it's still very often an argument I have to acknowledge because economic impact is what people value. Advocacy isn't necessarily about bending somebody's philosophy to your will. It's about recognizing that society is made up of a wide variety of people with varied needs and whose needs change over time. In the midst of all that we still have to find this intersection so that what we're doing is making a difference. One person may be really good at understanding the economic impact of the arts. Another person may be really good at understanding what art therapy does for our society. I think there are so many ways in and I think that all those voices need to be heard by students to parents to politicians. We need to have a seat, "we're right here". We also need to have our own voices and to each follow through with communicating why the arts are meaningful to us on a personal level.

LI: Absolutely. I agree. I think that goes back to the issue with the binaries we can find ourselves in. I don't think art advocacy has to be economics versus some other philosophical value. There's a space for all these conversations as we discuss visual art. I think that art has provided intense material for philosophers to contemplate for centuries but it also creates jobs and it does both of those things simultaneously. You're right that we're not all charismatic and we're not all drawn to speak to large audiences but I think that because the arts are so many things to so many people and the variety of arguments to support art are so vast that it's important to keep the trap of not advocating for art at all. On a personal note, I strive to advocate for art in a way that tries to avoid the traps of capitalism but it's still very often an argument I have to acknowledge because economic impact is what people value.

Advocacy isn't necessarily about bending somebody's philosophy to your will. It's about recognizing that society is made up of a wide variety of people with varied needs and whose needs change over time. In the midst of all that we still have to find this intersection so that what we're doing is making a difference. One person may be really good at understanding the economic impact of the arts. Another person may be really good at understanding what art therapy does for our society. I think there are so many ways in and I think that all those voices need to be heard by students to parents to politicians. We need to have a seat, "we're right here". We also need to have our own voices and to each follow through with communicating why the arts are meaningful to us on a personal level.
FACT CHECK:

**by Joana Hytli, Lamar University**

For the arts to be a meaningful part of the American public’s life, it is essential for these organizations to advocate for their needs. The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) was created in 1965 to support the arts and arts education in the United States. Since its inception, the NEA has worked to ensure that the arts are accessible to all Americans, regardless of their background or economic status.

**The NEA**

The NEA is a federal agency that supports the arts in the United States. It is supported by a 0.125-cent-per-gallon tax on gasoline, which is collected by the federal government and then matched by state and local governments. The NEA’s funding is used to support a wide range of arts activities, including grants to artists, arts organizations, and schools.

**Advocacy**

Advocacy is a crucial part of the NEA’s work. The NEA’s Advocacy Program works to ensure that the arts are a priority in federal, state, and local government budgets. The program provides resources and support to arts organizations and individuals who are working to secure funding for the arts.

**Joana Hytli**

Joana Hytli is a doctoral candidate in arts administration at the University of North Texas. She is also the Advocacy Director for Americans for the Arts, a national arts service organization that works to advance the arts in the United States. She is the author of numerous articles and reports on arts advocacy.

**Jeff Poulin**

Jeff Poulin is the Director of the NEA’s Advocacy Program. He has worked in the field of arts advocacy for over 20 years, and has been with the NEA since 2006. He is a recognized authority on arts advocacy and has written extensively on the topic.

**Joana Hytli’s quote:**

“If you believe in the arts, we will show our support for you in order to build that pro-arts majority.”

**Jeff Poulin’s quote:**

“Advocacy is about finding a pathway for the other! They believe in personal freedom, in the size of federal government the most, and in the Koch brothers, one theater is named for the largest pot of money, so instead of just using it for remidal math and English, why don’t we use the arts as a strategy to get to those students that would really benefit from it? The other person that might be non-arts friendly is someone who truly just believes that there should be less government, and that they don’t think that the government should be in the business of funding the arts and it should be through private philanthropy. Through I think many of us probably disagree with that and have a different view of government, especially because the data is there that for every one dollar invested, nine dollars goes back to the federal government. It’s a larger section of our GDP than construction or tourism. And, if you look at the creative industries, the amount of people who are employed in the creative nonprofit arts industry is gigantic. An average, people spend in their community 25% on top of the ticket price for the cultural event that they’re going to, for local businesses, and parking, and babysitters and gas, so the impact is there. But those people just truly believe in smaller government and so we can do what we do with them on things like the charitable tax deduction because we know that arts and cultural organizations and arts education organizations are looking for that funding, is something that appeals to the more conservative base. As advocates, we also need to understand there are two types of folks that we say that are non-arts friendly, and our task is to make them understand the value of the arts. We invite you to join the movement, we invite you to plug into our networks and also to participate, also able to learn in and through the arts. At Americans for the Arts we are now in a position of working with folks throughout the nation’s capitol, and we have a goal to work with more than 100 people in the next year, which likely means a lot of talk about economic development. Therefore, you will likely hear that the arts give to STEM to make STEAM, and STEM is innovation, and innovation is workforce development and 21st century economy. As arts leaders, we are in a position to tell our values that students should not be censured in their art, in fact there was a case in Washington, D.C., where a student went to an art contest and their art was displayed a picture of a man with a gun. From Ferguson, MO and depicted police officers as animals. Some folks that felt more conservatively about that, including the Fraternal Order of Police, disagreed with that. There was this whole hurrah when they put it back up and then they sued him or her and then the Congressional Black Caucus put it back up and then they sued them or filed a lawsuit. For me, my standpoint is that students should be able to express themselves in a juried panel of arts peers, and yes if it is a political standpoint about what they were doing, it was in a state where they did not have any government opinion. So we are in a position to talk about their speech and you’re welcome to do that.”
nobody cares about the arts, but you have overheard a group of art educators saying, “Speaking of public schools, I value the achievements around speech and creative expression and really the goals of equity of access, freedom of speech, and creative expression and really the values of achieving those goals around access and equity in public funding."

Joana: Speaking of public schools, I have heard a group of art educators saying, “Speaking of public schools, I value the achievements around speech and creative expression and really the goals of equity of access, freedom of speech, and creative expression and really the values of achieving those goals around access and equity in public funding."

Jeff: That is one of the biggest misconceptions I think there is. In fact, 85% of Americans believe that the arts should be part of a well-rounded education. Additionally, that has been consistent for the past 20 or so years, and over time we’ve seen it improve when we break it down and say, “When should that be important?” It’s used to be just for elementary school, and now public opinion shows that the same 8 out of 10 Americans believe that the arts are vital in elementary school, middle school, high school, and out of school, which is pretty cool. So I think as advocates we need to understand that the American public is behind us, so we’re talking to elected officials and saying, “Your constituents believe this, and here’s the study,” and then you can share your own story about how you’ve seen the transformative power of the arts in your classroom or in school or in a student’s life.

I think it’s a really big misconception and what I often say is that we can’t fall into our own victim spiral of “Oh it’s so hard, there’s no money.” We work in the arts and we’re creative problem-solvers, so we are the perfect people to be able to come up with these solutions. In ways, the arts community can actually lead the way in new and innovative models of assessment and teaching and learning, and in improving school climate and culture. In fact, the arts have been leading the way for solutions-oriented educational policy-making. I find it funny when I see a new newspaper article that says, “Oh there’s this new thing called project-based learning.” In the arts, we’ve been doing it for years! Another example is how to incorporate well-rounded education subjects in Title I schools to achieve the goals of Title I; the improvement of school climate and culture, student achievement, and engagement of parents and communities. If you could tell me about putting on a performance or exhibit where families came in and students feel empowered and there’s a festive spirit to the school for several days after, that’s what I consider definitively achieving that goal. I think we can really help to lead the way.

Joana: What hurdles are standing in our way to make this policy? What can we do as art educators to help make changes in the policies for the arts?

Jeff: In many ways decision makers struggle with creating policies around arts and culture, or arts education, because it’s not as quantifiable, it’s not as black and white as other things. To say that you’re improving school climate and culture, or that you’re improving confidence in students, is hard to measure. Some states have very cool innovative ways where they measure student growth in creativity, and that aggregates to a school grade and aggregates to a district level. But, that’s hard to wrap people’s brains around, so one of the things that we do is that we actually rely on some of the data that has been collected. The majority of states, because of No Child Left Behind and the waiver period following, had to collect longitudinal data on student participation, student access, as well as student achievement in all of the core academic subjects at the time, the arts being one. What some leaders in the field have been doing is helping states scrub that data and really make it visually appealing so that people can look at graphs and see the impact. Additionally, we also rely on the fact that—I give credence to the fact that when you’ve seen one community, you’ve really only seen one community—however, if you look at it in the aggregate and say, “In Dallas and Dallas is the same city as a lot as cities in the country, and they might have similar demographics, or your district may have similar challenges in other comparable districts. Why not work together as an entire field to share data and say, “Yeah, my school looks like this school, and in this school they did a study that said so-and-so, so we can use that to help inform our decisions.”

There is so much data available, in fact when people complain about not having enough data, I can get frustrated. Say you care about civic engagement, we know that students who participate in the arts are more likely to vote and serve on a board of directors of a nonprofit and volunteer in their community when they’re adults. When you look at the data about math and science, we know that students who participate in the arts are more likely to enter a science fair and win an award for math. If you care about standardized tests, we know that students who participate in the arts in high school score on average 100 points higher on the SAT. Regardless of what you’re looking for, there is data for it. What we know as artists is that you really have to combine that data with the story. Especially as an educator, you’re empowered to look at a student and see their growth over time or see how their family was impacted, or see how maybe they didn’t speak the first couple of weeks of school and now they’re a chatterbox at the end and it’s because they really discovered theater, as an example. Or students who might be tackling issues of depression and anxiety and really are dealing with it because of their art class. Or other students that are not finding a mentor or a safe space and they’re finding it in your classroom. Those are the stories combined with that data that really will make the difference.

As a goal, we would like to ensure that in every state there is a state arts organization, and in local communities, people feel empowered to take action at the grassroots level. Similarly, we work with partners like NAEA to ensure that the state chapters are all working together, and in every community people know the resources and tools that they have available to help drive forward that mission of equitable access to arts education for all of our children.

Joana Hyatt
Dr. Joana Hyatt is an Assistant Professor of Art Education at Lamar University and the Director of the Lamar University Summer STEAM Camp for high school students. She earned a PhD in Art Education from the University of North Texas, and her MFA and BFA from the University of Central Oklahoma, where she received the CMAD award for mural painting. Dr. Hyatt has been a K-16 art educator for over twenty years, teaching in Nevada, Oklahoma, and Texas.
Advocacy in art education can come in many forms. As an art teacher, in public schools, I have found it necessary to advocate for time with my students, appropriate class sizes, money for supplies and instructional materials, and the curricular flexibility to create engaging, relevant lessons. I know many colleagues across the nation who find themselves advocating for the very existence of the art programs in their schools. In fact, while a 2005 survey found that 93% of Americans believe an education in the arts is important (Americans for the Arts, 2005), in 2008 only 57.9% of white students, 28.1% of Hispanic students, and 26.2% of African American students had access to an arts education (Americans for the Arts, 2015). In light of statistics like these, our advocacy efforts in public kindergarten through twelfth grade art education are often targeted at meeting basic needs. According to Miksza (2013), “advocates for school arts instruction must be concerned with acquiring resources such as funding, enhanced staffing (in terms of numbers or specialization/credentials), and instructional time with children, because without such resources, comprehensive arts instruction is not likely to occur” (p. 25).

Several scholars have noted that successful advocacy takes collective effort (Bobick & Dicindo, 2012; Kania & Kramer, 2011; Hawkins, 2012; Miksza, 2013). In particular, they assert that effective advocacy requires both individuals and organizations working together towards a single common goal. As a group of art educators, we must advocate in our communities and beyond for all students to have access to quality arts education. However, for teachers, like myself, who are fortunate enough to currently work in a place where those basic needs are met, I would like to pose a question: Can we advocate for the growth of our own programs and students while simultaneously advocating for those who do not yet have access to the basic components necessary for a quality arts education? I am confident that the answer is yes!

I believe that by advocating for, and participating in, opportunities that engage students in authentic art experiences in the community we can make ourselves, our students, and our programs more visible. In doing so, we can demonstrate the true value of an education in the visual arts. Additionally, we extend the role of arts advocate from ourselves to our students. Hawkins (2012) asserted that over time, the means of advocacy has changed and we are now in a time “where individuals have an increasing ability to organize and leverage community networks to effect policy change” (p. 129). She encourages arts advocacy organizations to consider leveraging everyday arts champions in their advocacy efforts. I believe that art teachers, students, parents, and administrators can be act as everyday champions for the arts.

In the following sections I will describe how I was inspired to create an advocacy opportunity for my students which culminated with an art show at a major metropolitan zoo. In the following sections I will describe the lessons I designed, the artworks that my students created, and the resulting show experience that my students and I participated in as an example of what this type of arts advocacy might look like.

Designing Lessons and Advocacy Events

Like many art teachers, inspiration for my classroom lessons comes from a variety of sources, including my own experiences.
While on a family trip to the zoo, I came across an exhibit of artwork highlighting endangered animals which sparked an idea for student learning. My elementary age students love to draw and paint pictures of animals and I saw potential to connect their love of art and animals to help them realize a larger goal of raising awareness about endangered species. When I returned to school the following week, I began the process by making contact with the zoo and setting up an art show for my students that would highlight endangered animals. In the process, I discovered that the resulting lessons, artwork, and show gave a voice to my students and advocated for our program better than anything I had done before. Initially my focus was on developing high quality, engaging lessons for my students, and advocacy was not a priority. As I went through this experience however, I quickly discovered that high quality and engaging lessons are a great first step for teachers wanting to advocate for their programs. In fact, Hatteland, Winner, Kimema, and Sheridan (2013) argue that “before we can make the case for the importance of arts education, we need to find out what the arts actually teach and what art students actually learn” (p.1). It is with this mindset that I would recommend any teacher begin their advocacy efforts, because by designing lessons that encourage authentic engagement with art making, students will be equipped to advocate for the importance of art in their own life.

There are a variety of frameworks that teachers can use to help guide this context and delivery of their lessons. Regardless of the framework used, the first step is to determine what goals you have for the lesson. I decided that I wanted students to learn about a variety of endangered animals, to learn about the ways artists can affect social change, and to have an opportunity to express what they learned in the form of art. Then, based on our district-wide scope and sequence I selected media and skills that students use to create their work.

In addition to considering the big ideas and studio art content of our lessons, I added some interdisciplinary connections by asking my contacts at the zoo to share some information about the types of animals that my students might feature in their artwork. I was provided a list of endangered animals that the zoo focuses on when educating the public during their special wildlife weekends. They also shared with me some simple actions that people can take to help protect those animals. For example, one animal local to us is the Texas Horned Lizard. To protect this animal, the zoo asks visitors to pledge to leave Texas Horned Lizards in the wild alone (capturing them for pets is one of their largest threats). With these lists of specific animals and pledges I set out to create lessons where students could learn about a variety of wildlife in need of protection and some things we could do to help these creatures. I also added a geography component by organizing the animals we would study according to their location in the world. For example, my second and third grade students learned about the different geographic regions of Africa and 8 different animals there in need of protection and my first grade and kindergarten students learned about the wildlife in Texas and Mexico. After learning some interesting facts about the region and some simple ways we can help each animal, we discussed how artists can help the environment and animals by making artwork and looked at a variety of art examples. While I did this research for my students, if you are teaching older students or have an opportunity to partner with other teachers, encouraging students to do the research themselves would be a nice extension. Additionally, tying their art learning into other subjects would be an excellent way to advocate on your campus.

Putting Your Best Feet Forward: The Process vs. the Product

As art teachers, we often seek to value the artistic process of each of our students (Hettland et al., 2013) but, when we are going to increase the visibility of our program to the community in the form of an art show, we should not underestimate the value of the product. Each art teacher will need to navigate his or her own path between the process and the product, but I can offer a few suggestions that have worked for me. First, to honor the process, I often allow students to have time to plan, respond, and create something related to the topic or theme that is entirely their own, from the idea to the creation. As our second activity, I plan a more guided lesson where most students will be successful. Typically, in this lesson I have preplanned some components, but within the lesson framework I still allow for varied choices. Choice for my students might come in the form of the materials used, the subject selected for the work, or in the finishing details. For each lesson, I encourage students to express their ideas about the animals, their habitats, and conservation. For elementary students, I find that between the two projects each student is usually able to feel confident in choosing one work of art they will feel proud to see representing the school. During the critique portion of our learning we discuss what makes a work of art show-ready. For my students, that might be the quality of the art or it might be the learning that took place. For example, one student might choose a piece because they mastered the watercolor techniques we learned, while another may choose a less polished piece that demonstrates the color combinations she created along with her recorded observations about how the media made her. Regardless of how you decide to navigate this process/product tightrope, I believe the most important thing is that you stay true to your lesson goals and objectives. Then, when all is said and done, your students will walk away with the understanding of what they need to know as artists and art consumers and that is an extremely valuable form of advocacy.

Preparing to talk about our work was our final step in class before the exhibition. We talked about the techniques we used, what was expressed in our artwork, how our artwork may speak to others, and what we would like people to know about the animals we painted. Students were then encouraged to share this information with their parents and visitors on the day of the exhibition.

Planning the Event

Although initially I did not consider advocacy when designing the lessons, while working with my students and observing their personal connections to the lessons, I became excited about the potential this show could have to advocate for our program and for art education. Just as you begin lesson planning with objectives and the learning you want students to focus on, you can also begin planning for advocacy events in a similar way. First, decide who
1) The students will be able to effectively communicate the role art can play in helping raise awareness about important issues like endangered animals.

2) The students will be able to share their artwork with their family.

3) The students will be able to share their artwork with community members outside of our school.

After deciding on your audience and advocacy goals, you should consider logistics of the show, such as the location, times, display space, etc. Our show was displayed in a very popular portion of the zoo that allowed both parents and visitors of the zoo easy access to visit the art. It was a great location, and we were able to use the art from the elements and made the show a popular place for visitors to stop and rest out of the sun. Our show was spread out over the entire week, adding flexibility for parents and students to come see the work and increasing the number of zoo guests who would see it.

Also, the show was planned for a special weekend with many activities around the zoo, and discounted ticket prices, making it easier for families to attend. This special weekend was well advertised by the zoo that allowed both parents and visitors to see the art and the work of others with visitors. Being able to engage with art and see the show will mean even greater audience with our efforts as Hawkins (2012) encourages advocacy and the arts.

Facing Challenges and Evaluating the Results: Did We Advocate?

Teaching is reflexive and our advocacy efforts as well. After the completion of any event we should reflect on the successes and challenges in order to monitor and adjust future efforts. When assessing student learning we need to focus on the goals and objectives of your lesson. Similarly, when you assess advocacy effectiveness you need to focus on your advocacy goals and objectives. To assess this event, I asked:

1) Were students able to effectively communicate the role art can play in helping raise awareness about important issues like endangered animals?

2) Were students able to share their artwork with family?

3) Were community members outside of our school able to see the art and understand the importance of the art created by students?

In order to reach out to additional community members who were not able to attend the event, we contacted our district’s communications department and our local newspaper, and both were happy to cover the event. Finally, during the show and performances, we took many pictures. The pictures were turned into a slide show, then a movie highlighting the day, which can be used to share with students and members of the community who could not attend. It will also serve as helpful advertising for future art shows and can be shared on our school and district social media outlets.

Hopefully by utilizing these social tools we will reach an even larger audience with our efforts as Hawkins (2012) encourages advocacy groups to do.

References


Jennifer Hartman  - Jennifer has received her BFA in Painting and Digital Media from the University of Colorado and her MA in Art Education from the University of North Texas. She has taught seven years in public schools and has worked with students at both the elementary and secondary level. She is currently a PhD candidate in Art Education at the University of North Texas and an elementary art teacher.

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The show was a powerful advocacy tool for the arts in our community.

In August, alongside the work were posters created a pre-exhibition with every work of art created for the show. This pre-exhibition was displayed in a very popular portion of the zoo. After deciding on our audience, and we knew that any visitor attending the show would have the opportunity to share the art and see the work of others with visitors. It would have been more successful to have students explaining their own work and the future, but I hope to select student docents who feel comfortable sharing their work and the work of others with visitors.

Conclusion

Based on the feedback I received from our students, parents, administrators, and visitors, our district’s communications department, and our local newspaper, and both were happy to cover the event. Finally, during the show and performances, we took many pictures. All of these pictures were turned into a slide show, then a movie highlighting the day, which can be used to share with students and members of the community who could not attend. With these social tools we will reach an even larger audience with our efforts as Hawkins (2012) encourages advocacy groups to do.

Did We Advocate?

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In response to goal three, I believe that the students were able to see and understand the art, but there is still room for growth. Our students had the opportunity to share their work and learn with their parents at both our campus open houses and the zoo. We had a wonderful turnout at both events. We also had many visitors who were not part of our school, who were able to attend the zoo. Visitors seemed to be curious about the art and the student and learning and several even inquired about purchasing student art. I was also very interested to see how excited the zoo staff was about the art. Many of them work closely with the animals that were represented and they had very thoughtful comments for the students about their art. As well attended as the event was, however, most students only communicated about their artwork with their own family and friends, while visitors of the zoo were not greeted by myself. While this was nice, I would have thought more students would have students explaining their own work and their future, but it often did not do so without prompting. During our lessons, students learned not to
Advocating for Peace and Reconciliation: Lessons from Japan

The Social Qualities of Advocacy

Advocacy can take many forms. Take the 75th Anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor, Japan’s Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and the United States’ President Barack Obama stood side by side in Oahu, Hawaii. Together these world leaders stood as advocates of peace, offering heartfelt condolences to the fallen victims of the Pacific War (Schmidt, 2016).

While this event was punctuated with many thoughtful reflections of how our two countries have fostered mutually respectful relationships a century and a half after the war, the following excerpt from Prime Minister Abe’s (2016) speech captured my full attention. It has now been 75 years since that Pearl Harbor. Japan and the United States, which fought a fierce war that will go down in the annals of human history, have become allies, with deep and strong ties rarely found anywhere in history. We are allies that will tackle together to an even greater degree than ever before the many challenges covering the globe. Ours is an alliance of hope that will lead us to the future.

I look advantage of viewing these artifacts when participating in a study tour program with eleven other U.S. educators in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan. The goal of this study tour led by Dr. Anne Prattcott and John Frank, was to help US educators better understand how the Japanese people of different ages and backgrounds are currently promoting peace education and why it matters. Although I have traveled to Japan twice previously to explore life and culture as a participant in Fulbright professional programs socially interacting with various Japanese activists and survivors of war made this a truly unique and emotionally engaging learning experience for me. This article highlights some examples of advocacy utilized in Japan to promote peace and reconciliation and considers the educational implications and challenges of adopting these ideas for art explorations with high school art students.

Advocating for Peace in Japan

In preparation for our visit to Japan, each teacher was provided with ten books to read about the war in the Pacific from different points of view. Although I acknowledge that history will always remain contested, the information and insights presented in these books were intended to extend our prior knowledge of the war, and use it as a foundation for making connections with individuals and organizations working to promote peace education. When engaged in formal and informal exchanges, learning became transformative in that it facilitated access to the history of the war. We were engaged in an ongoing process of making art offers participants a way to construct knowledge, critically analyze an idea, and take action in the world, they are engaged in a practice of social justice art making (Dewhurst, 2010, p. 7). There are many ways to conceptualize what social justice art education means (Berard, 2014, p. 7). However, UNESCO’s definition of social justice art education is an underlying goal. I will now share the parallels I found between socially engaged learning theories with the actions taken by the people of Japan to promote peace.

In the museum settings in both Hiroshima and Nagasaki, student groups of all ages, including very young elementary students, viewed and took notes on the artifacts they encountered in the museum with their tour guides. Even graphic images of the burned bodies of hibakusha, atomic bomb survivors, were on full display and used as educational tools to inform visitors of the realities of nuclear warfare (see Figures 2 & 3). In Nagasaki, our teacher group was led by two dynamic volunteers who have dedicated many years to educating visitors about the efforts of the museum. They each shared both official and personal stories of the war with us and made clear their intentions to do everything possible to make sure nuclear warfare is never repeated. In fact, one of our guides, Tomoko Matsukawa, invited us to meet with her English language students at Nagasaki University, which we did. During our exchange of questions and answers with her English language class, I was paired with four young men. I was struck at the possibilities for learning. They each shared both official and personal stories of the war with us and made clear their intentions to do everything possible to make sure nuclear warfare is never repeated. In fact, one of our guides, Tomoko Matsukawa, invited us to meet with her English language students at Nagasaki University, which we did. During our exchange of questions and answers with her English language class, I was paired with four young men. I was struck at the possibilities for learning.

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engaging in dialogues about peace. These impromptu interactions were always positive exchanges, which usually led to taking photos and exchanging contact information.

More somber social engagements also took the form of listening to the stories of the atomic bomb survivors, referred to as hibakusha, and asking them questions both within and beyond museum settings. One hibakusha named Masahiro Sasaki shared his memories of watching his sister, a hibakusha, and asking them questions during the war.

Mr. Ishida was a young child at the time of the atomic bombing on April 4, 1945. Mr. Ishida reminded us that the bomb killed approximately 400 children at Honkawa Elementary School that day. Mr. Ishida told us that he enrolled at Honkawa shortly after the school re-opened. He took us around the grounds of the school to show us evidence of the bombing and described some of the artifacts that remained from the explosion. One artifact in particular that caught my attention were drawings he and his classmates made, using art supplies donated by church members from Washington, D.C. After the bombing, the members of the U.S. church hoped to give art supplies to the children at this Japanese school that experienced so much devastation, might facilitate the healing process. This relationship is fully explored in the documentary film called Pictures from a Hiroshima Schoolyard (Manale & Reischardt, 2014). What struck me most was when Mr. Ishida stopped during our tour to wave and smile at the young elementary students currently enrolled at Honkawa, as they walked to class. He looked on with pride as they danced, and played during their tour.

We had the honor of meeting numerous hibakusha during our time in Japan, and each person had his or her own unique story to share. Fortunately, there are numerous filmed online testimonies documented by artist and director Shinya Takeda (2011), in conjunction with the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, which work to remind viewers of the human stories behind nuclear warfare. These video recorded stories are emotional, thus conveying a first-hand narrative that transcends what can normally be conveyed in traditional history books. Their stories contribute to the global conversations about war and how impacts lives. I was equally moved by the public and private art that addressed the topic of war and peace, and learning about the inspiration motivating their creation.

Small-scale works of art about war also captured our attention, particularly the work made by a Dutch prisoner of war named Rene Schäfer, because of the contextual information that was presented alongside his art. Schäfer shared that as a prisoner of war forced into hard labor, he hated the Japanese soldiers. Yet, as he experienced the force of an atomic bomb falling on him while digging an airstrip, he described how the hate left his body and he did not hesitate in helping injured Japanese soldiers along with his fellow prisoners

Adapting for Peace through Art

There were so many examples of arts within and beyond the museum settings that used art to promote awareness to various implications of nuclear warfare. Take for example, at the Mori Art Museum in Tokyo, video pieces by Japanese artist Fuji Hiroyuki, called The Educational System of Japan (2008), that I found to be relevant to the subject. This video piece helped to articulate for me, as the viewer, the awkwardness of viewing these images of war, realizing that these events took place before they were born and the historical context seems far removed from our daily lives now.

During our tour at the Nagasaki Peace Park, the public art located throughout the park is noteworthy because the pieces were made and donated by countries outside of Japan. Art representing Portugal, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Germany, Netherlands, USSR, China, Poland, Italy, Cuba, Brazil, Turkey, U.S., and Argentina (see Figure 6) all share in promoting a message of peace visually, as well as in the statements that contextualize the work.
In my classes asked for further clarification discussed by Freire (1970). The art students the oppressive educational practices The censored imagery reminded me of it was not approved for public display. These questions led to unscripted critical discussions which opened the door for further dialogues. Similarly, when my students created collaborative banners promoting messages of peace, one of our posters was approved for display by the principal, but a parent complained that it was inappropriate, and it was taken down (see Figure 14). In this poster, one student came up with the concept of a woman crying as she looked down on the nuclear devastation. Within this banner, another student added a quote from Gandhi which says, “There is no path to peace. Peace is the path.” Yet, once again, I shared this parent’s response to our art with my students, and we came to realize together how breaking down barriers to promote social awareness is not without obstacles, even with the best of intentions in mind. Rather than be discouraged, although these experiences were challenging, my students and I realized we were getting people talking about peace; an unlikely topic for high school students to have to defend to parents and administrators. I acknowledge that our efforts did not change the world, however, my high school art students and I took the first steps towards being advocates for change. Closing Thoughts As art educators contemplate how to move forward to advocate for a more peaceful future in collaboration with our students, we must be ever vigilant in ensuring that our voices are not silenced by the cancel-culture complex.

References
m y mother was a culinary artist, though she would have never claimed such an extravagant title. Daily, I watched this 6-foot tall lady saunter through our kitchen, pulling ingredients from the pantry and refrigerator until the countertops were full. Then she began to work her magic—cutting, chopping, blending—all with such ease that I hardly knew it was happening.

The synergy became apparent when ingredients, one by one, went into a large cast iron pot. As the food released its juices, a aroma wafted through the air. My stomach rumbled from the smells and the sights in that kitchen. I was awaiting something special: Dinner.

My mother identified her primary job as that of a homemaker, and more specifically, that of a “food artist.” As a child, I watched her space—everything in her kitchen had a place. My mother was always on top of things, always in control (Culzianthimaliy, 1930) when she cooked. One ingredient begged the use of another. The results were informed, serendipitous and delicious—all at once. I cook just like my mother. That’s one way I keep her near me after her passing eleven years ago. From watching her, I observed the creativity inherent in the process of cooking. I carry this same creative process into most areas of my life. I don’t just cook in my kitchen; I “cook” in my classroom. I was awaiting something…rumbled from the smells and the sights in my classroom as well. In this article, I aim to provide a thick description (Stake, 1995) of the creative process of cooking and sharing food with others and compare it to my process of designing and teaching classes that respond to and fulfill student interests. I believe this course is both satisfying and nourishing in the same way that a thoughtfully designed meal does. Many meals can be satisfying, meeting a craving or inciting pleasure, but for a meal to be satisfying and nourishing is a bonus. What began salmon paired with garlic sautéed kale and sweet potato purées and quinoa in a poached egg. I am aware of the Omega 3 fatty acids in the fish, the anti-inflammatory properties of the garlic, the beta carotene in the potatoes, the Vitamin D in the kale, the complete amino acids, the quinoa, the greens in your picture, and your lines are very strong and bold. Can you tell me more about why you made these choices?

creating a prompt for art making that lends itself to reflection, such as “Using the stencils as a base, trace the stencil as many times as you’d like and then illustrate what “keys” you need in your life to be content and successful.”

Choosing materials and processes that reach the intended goals, and supporting results for success by differentiating instruction (demonstrating the process in multiple ways, including experiential learning beforehand so that students have confidence)

I believe it is my duty to provide my students with a meaning and understanding of their work, and in so doing, I believe it is my duty to support a cause, idea, or action. In this article, I will describe the conditions and events that led me to advocate for this class and the larger cause of the therapeutic arts at TCU and in the community of Fort Worth, Texas. Advocacy for the therapeutic arts is needed for three main reasons: knowledge and understanding about therapeutic arts is just developing, the benefits of therapeutic art are substantive, and the needs in our communities are numerous.

To fully understand the content of this article, therapeutic art and art therapy should be defined. Therapeutic art is a process of making art with oftentimes marginalized populations, where the outcome is an enhanced quality of life. This goal is achieved by:

• Developing a relationship with the person with whom you are making art. This involves tracking the person’s actions (Kottman, 2014) by saying things like “I see you making that green in your picture, and your lines are very strong and bold. Can you tell me more about why you made these choices?”

• Creating a prompt for art making that lends itself to reflection, such as “Using the stencils as a base, trace the stencil as many times as you’d like and then illustrate what “keys” you need in your life to be content and successful.”

• Choosing materials and processes that reach the intended goals, and supporting results for success by differentiating instruction (demonstrating the process in multiple ways, including experiential learning beforehand so that students have confidence)

At TCU, we practice therapeutic art and train our students in the actions listed above. We learn about art therapy, and many of our students enter graduate school in art therapy, but we are not equipped to practice art therapy. Our primary goal is to enhance the quality of life of the persons with whom we work (Martin, 2017).

It is my hope that as the reader enters into this thick description of my process of advocacy for the therapeutic arts, they see it as a creative, nourishing venture, much like cooking and feasting with those you love; I also hope that the reader will be able to examine their own professional and personal trajectories and uncover the causes that are most germane for them to support.

My primary job is that of a professor. I attend to my students by knowing their tastes, their professional and personal palettes (what mix of experiences, preferences, and talents make each student unique?). I want my students to be both satisfied and nourished by my course offerings. My instructional strategies and curricula begin with their interests. My teaching philosophy beguils me to look at my students in a holistic manner, realizing that each student has social, emotional, physical, and cognitive needs that should be identified and addressed (Comer, 1993) and funds of knowledge (Moll, Amanti, Neff, and Gonzalez, 1992) from their families and lived experiences, as well as cultural capital (Freire, 1993) of interests from popular culture that can and should be utilized in constructing curriculum.

A few years ago, I noticed that art education majors in my art education class were designing K-12 art lessons with therapeutic goals. For example, they wanted elementary students to understand their strengths as they created a power shield in the style of the Plains Indians; they wanted middle school students to see that media ads influenced their body image; they also wanted these students to have control over the power of these images by asking them to deconstruct and reconstruct them. As I spoke to art education majors about their future classrooms, they expressed to me that wanted to help others use art making as a tool for responding to adversity. Many of them had personally experienced abuse, bullying or stigmatization because of learning differences as K-12 students. They wanted art making in their classroom to help their future students. By attending to these requests, I was honoring their funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992) and cultural capital (Freire, 1993). I moved forward by incorporating child abuse prevention training and field trips to a local art therapy studio and an art program in a children’s hospital into my freshman art education course.

Very often, my mom would find good deals at the grocery store. A few parts of overripe strawberries, for instance. The mass of these ingredients directed her cooking. Jellies, jams, shortcake and pies were just a few of the delicious results. I do the same thing at my university. When many non-art majors began to enroll in my course and wondered how to use art in their future professions, I paid attention to this collective evidence and began creating.

I had, like my mother, essentially amassed a 12” wheel of brie on sale and I needed to spread raspberry walnut chutney on it, wrap it in puff pastry and bake it. So, in response to these students, I incorporated therapeutic art prompts into my existing courses, and more non-art majors from across the university began to approach me about therapeutic art and art therapy. I explained the distinction among the two in my courses, and I brought art therapists to campus for guest lectures. Events like this whetted the appetite of students; they wanted second helplings of other community organizations that used the arts for personal growth and healing. They wanted to learn to use the arts in their future professions of speech therapy, education, child development and psychology. This led me back to my area of Fort Worth, where I located a number of art programs for various populations: senior citizens, adults with disabilities, and children in hospitals. The influx of these resources led me to design The Therapeutic Arts, a course which explores service-oriented professions that use the visual arts for therapeutic ends. The class is open to all majors, freshmen through seniors,
and there are no prerequisites. Students in their third week of attending the program use their therapeutic hands. They learn how art is therapeutic and they strive to create an environment. They are taught by marginalized populations such as persons with disabilities, those who are chronically ill, children with art therapy programs at hospitals, and the homeless, to name a few. They design and develop their art through these therapeutic workshops, such as art therapy, life education, public school art therapy, and community programming.

These activities meet real needs in the community and the artist/teacher, Dr. Amanda Allison, regularly writes articles such as “Overcoming the life skills classes in Everman ISD (Franklin, 2015).” The main outcomes of our work together is that both her students and my students understand that art is a way to engage real communication and connection among groups. We have worked with Alliance for Children for Three years. They are a child abuse advocacy center. Each year my students create art projects with children who are attending court hearings to sexual abuse by a family member. These art projects help the children cope with the devastating experience and draw them closer to the caregivers and professionals.

I have been developing and designing therapeutic art experiences for a variety of populations in Fort Worth. Her current projects include a research study with cancer patients, developing an art therapy workshop, teaching a book on solution-focused therapy and art making, and creating video art production about chronic pain. She lives in Fort Worth with her husband Justin and her 7 year old son, Arthur.

References
Activist Art Education: Creation of Hybrid Spaces for Learning and Living

by Teresa Torres de Eca University of Porto, Portugal

Grasping the new age of authoritarianism, arising from an excess of information and a lack of critical tools to select, analyze and transform it (Jenkins, 2006). This dramatic overdose is a tool of censorship more efficient than a pair of scissors.

In my work, I advocate for changes in educational practice through the value of experiencing the learning process. The field of art education has fostered re-constructionist practices advocating for educators as facilitators focusing on a curriculum that highlights social reform as the aim of education. Since the second half of the twentieth century, education has been used as a tool for immediate and continuous change (Freire, 1971; Morin, 1999) through critical pedagogy, society would be more equitable and sustainable. These seminal texts are still relevant for our debates about teaching today, but they face the competence-based focus seen in educational policies around the world during the last two decades. As Foucault (1991) claimed, schools are selection mechanisms and sites of power control. I believe governments are not really interested in humanistic visions for education or in thinkers such as Dewey (1934), Freire (1974), Ilich (1970), and Morin (1999) who believed that education could transform societies through peace and cultural understanding.

Society’s obsession with financial value and profit has maintained inequality, and far from bringing more sustainability, has created more injustices. The contemporary political climate is characterized by particularism and economic hegemony (Ellet, 2010, p. 86).

Rather than promoting solidarity and sharing, in education, the system promotes individual achievement, creativity, and entrepreneurship. The only discourse that matters is business. Considering this so-called economic development, education systems have barely preserved humanistic visions. Instead, assessment systems that only validate hard core measurable skills, which are not necessarily the skills human beings need to survive and to maintain equilibrium on our planet take precedence.

Western education systems are based on the laws of elimination of those less able to compete, based on standardized testing. These types of pedagogical approaches fit the new age of authoritarianism, arising from a kind of ignorance; ignorance resulting from an excess of information and a lack of critical tools to select, analyze and transform it (Jenkins, 2006). This dramatic overdose is a tool of censorship more efficient than a pair of scissors.

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chance to get involved in the community. Through exploring art production, learners acquire artistic inquiry and negotiating skills, learn how to form their own opinions, and begin to accept criticism from others. In this way, young people learn through experimentation how “a life with contrasts and ambivalences works [and they learn] to live with the risks that go with that” (Eckart, 2016, p. 11). Art education explores the development of subjectivity and inter-subjectivities, from the inner self to the community, by establishing aesthetic relationships.

A guide to creating activist spaces

Educators, students, and parents need to regain the sense of time that was taken away from us, to slow down the frenetic pace of school life, the stress of rankings, assessment results on standardized tests that do not evaluate the skills to survive in the real world long term. I think there is a need to challenge the collective hysteria of speed in the workplace, of indicators of achievement based on non-relevant evidence.

As believers in education through art we may use physical and socio-cultural tools as a way of interacting with diverse groups, to question notions of time, space and power, no matter how subversive it may appear. We can use all the tools of contemporary art to have a voice, to express our views and to enable others to express themselves.

Contemporary artists are showing us strategies for questioning and navigation tools that may be of good use in education.

In an InSEA European congress held in Portugal in March 2016, Spanish researchers and members of the activist art education group C3, María Jesús Agra Pardalías and Cristina Trigo listed the following recommendations for a survival kit in art education:

1. Assuming our ignorance is the first step; acknowledging our incapacity, we can stop and pay attention to the nearest people and surroundings.
2. Let us promote pauses and let us consider that work is the creation of spaces to think/feel, to slow down, to restrain, and to make.
3. Avoid Sintropia: Starting from reflection and research, break conventions that are anesthetizing us, that never generate energy.
4. We do not have to convince people; we must construct a story, involving us in an adventure directly connected with emotions.
5. We must be committed to experiences that have the capacity to change us, to make us think about other ways of considering our actions.
6. We need to make our actions visible.

Herbert Read (1965), one of the pioneers of education through art, stated, “We declare that our foremost aim is ‘the establishment of an education in art which will develop the imaginative and creative powers of children,’ and... to bring about a revolution in the whole structure of our Society” (Read, 1965). These tools and strategies may seem quite radical, but by looking to the stories of education through art, and particularly the founders of the International Society of Education through Art (InSEA), we will find in the beginnings of InSEA the same energy and hope for the future.

Conclusion

In 2017, art education has not yet reached the expectations of Herbert Read. But in micro terms, in many schools, and many places in the world, there are art education practices developing the imaginative and creative powers of children. Art education is now present in many contexts, enabling spaces of reflection, creation, and art production, aesthetic spaces of questioning color, humor, contemplation, appreciation, and respect for the others. Questions for art educators to explore further: How is art able to help us be more creative, sharp, and critical in the face of current reality? How can artists living in elitist contexts far away from the problems of the world contribute to promoting collective reflection, some sort of introspection that makes us change our actions? How can educators democratize the artistic process of the art market and remix it, using it in educational settings? Art educators bring art to schools and other educational settings, not only for art appreciation but to promote skills dealing with ambiguity and uncertainty. Learners and teachers can transform art spaces allowing these vestiges of inquiry that make art a necessity in our daily lives. Beyond the formulas and guidelines, the key to successful programming is people passionate about education for social change and artistic process as learning strategies.
References


Teresa Torres de Eca

Teresa Torres de Eca began her career as a painter, printmaker, and ceramic artist in the eighties in her native Portugal. Subsequently, she transitioned to working as an art teacher and completed her master’s and PhD in Art Education in the UK. During this time, she discovered the International Society for Education Through Art-InSEA, a worldwide community of researchers in art education, and art educators committed to education through art. Continuing her work as a visual artist and an art teacher, Teresa has been teaching drawing and studio art in a secondary public school in Portugal for many years.

As a researcher, she collaborates with researchers in Portugal and Spain, and as an advocate, Teresa has served on the Executive Board of the Portuguese Art Teachers’ Association, collaborating with both K-12 educators and community art programming. Teresa has also been heavily involved with InSEA since 2006, and currently serves as the President of the organization since 2014, giving her a vision of art education from the global level, and opening her up to the multifarious ways of practicing and developing art education in different social and cultural contexts and purposes, a diversity which she views as a major strength for art education.

Teresa Eca’s response concerning the Maltratadas/’Battered’ project

A young university student from Spain was doing volunteer work in my town at a cultural association, and she wanted to make a manifestation for the 26 November (celebration of the eradication of violence against women). They called me to help, maybe because they knew I make activist art projects. After having talked about the project, we decided to make a patchwork quilt in the main square of the city. I started to talk with colleagues, friends, and wrote a public letter, a call to join us in making the patchwork. Other communities became interested, and soon it took on great proportions. I learned a lot in doing the project, like you may change the lives of people with small things, like the patchwork. In Porto, one of my friends, the artist Emilia Lopes, made the squares with women who told stories about family abuse, and through telling their stories with needles, string and old fabrics, they become self-confident, and they found emotional support. Many people came and are still willing to participate. I think it is about political action, the empowerment of people when they collaborate and share a craft/art work to make change.

Access more information about the Maltratadas/’Battered’ project by cutting the original piece in parts and sending each part to another place in the world, to begin new projects, like a rhizome. Each square is a node that is capable of generating new networks, making stories visible through arts and crafts.
Hurricanes can be a traumatic experience for so many, especially for children. I live in Port Neches, Texas and on August 29, 2017 we experienced the wrath of mother nature as Hurricane Harvey landed in Southeast Texas.

Rain poured on our area and rose so quickly that families were forced out of their homes, many being rescued by boat, helicopter and high water rescue vehicles. As rain continued to pour, churches and schools quickly opened their doors and began to take in those who were being rescued with no where to go. When the water began to recede, I was finally able to leave my home and begin to volunteer in shelters that were giving families a dry place to stay and a hot meal. When I came across the first shelter I noticed there were many children that could use a distraction and I immediately went into “art teacher” mode and started searching for supplies to keep the kids occupied. As the days went on I decided this is what I was called to do to help with the recovery efforts. I knew several of my colleagues were also looking for ways to help so I enlisted the help of my fellow art teachers. Now that there were more of us, we were able to not only distract the kids, but actually interact with them on a more personal level; listening to their fears and concerns, learning more about them and their families, and just providing a listening ear. We were awestruck by the way the kids opened up and started sharing with us as we were able to form a bond with these children through a mutual love of creativity. From these first couple of days working in the local shelters, we were inspired to take this even further. After the recovery efforts began many parents were involved in gutting houses, helping first responders, and also working in the shelters. My local parish decided to open the doors and provide babysitting/childcare for parents who needed to be out and about helping with recovery efforts. Once again, we were able to take our idea and utilize it with these children as well. We began with following the same methods that we used in the shelters listening to the kids and just being there for them, but then we turned it into a service project as well. We encouraged the kids to create messages/artwork for the first responders, national guardsmen, etc. This helped the kids realize that the helicopters, rescue boats, and all of the people that they had been seeing on the news and in their community also had families of their own and were tired and needing some encouragement. The kids began to realize that even in a scary situation we have heroes that help us and that together we can help each other.

Hurricane Harvey was a life changing experience for sure not just our area, but for me personally. I saw my community come together like I’ve never seen before; neighbor helping neighbor, stranger helping stranger. Through it all there was a common bond and a need for a sense of normalcy. My love for children and art and my belief that we are bound by a universal love of creative expression was the driving force for my recovery effort. I hope to take this a step further in the coming weeks and months to help schools recover who have lost many of their art rooms/supplies. During times like these fine arts programs get overlooked when it comes time for donations and recovery. My goal is to help those teachers with their needs so that they can in turn help their students heal and move on through creative expression.

Kelsey Thibodeaux, Groves Middle School
Hurricane Harvey Relief (continued)

by Lee Carrier, Cypress-Fairbanks ISD

Artist and Art Coordinator of Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District, Lee Carrier collaborated with art therapist Ashley Jones and reached out to the executive director of the Community Artists’ Collective, Michelle Barnes and Co-founder Dr. Sarah Trotty to host an art therapy event for the children affected by Hurricane Harvey. The “Collective” is a nonprofit organization created to meet the needs of professional African American artists, and has served the community for over 30 years. The organization opened their doors during the aftermath of Harvey to take in art supplies donated by local Houstonians including art educators and art patrons who wanted to support the cause. Michelle, Ashley, Sarah and Lee worked together to plan art making sessions for the Salvation Army located at McGowen in Houston’s 3rd Ward to serve over 50 children housed during the storm. The art therapy event was held on September 7, 2017. Also included in the art therapy sessions were yoga activities through Republic Yoga who donated yoga mats and their time to conclude the art making sessions with healing through relaxation and meditation. The group of women banded together along with volunteers from the Houston community (consisting of friends and family of the 4 women) the day of the event which turned out to be a great success. Many children asked if the volunteers could come back as they ended the sessions. The art therapy group thought it necessary to be art advocates for the children affected by Harvey because they know that art is a significant means of communication for children, especially in troubled times. The group hoped to uplift the spirit of the community by giving children an outlet but also provided hope by leaving them with art care packages to continue to create art throughout their recovery and journey. For more information about The Community Artists’ Collective visit www.thecollective.org.
Jillian Richards, represented Coppell Independent School District when she visited Austin on the Legislative Day at the Capitol. Ms. Richards met with representatives and senators from our state.

She advocated for public schools and art programs. She discussed school vouchers, funding and finance, the A-F rating system, and districts of innovation in regards to possible standardized testing options.

Jillian specifically focused on recapturing funding that is intended to go to poorer districts but does not make its way there (as noted in the artifacts). Jillian explains, “This means that schools are not receiving the funds that people believe they are and that programs like ours, visual arts, can be cut from these poorer districts.”
About the cover:
Fireflies (1992) by Keith Carter 10”x10” gelatin-silver print. Image courtesy of the artist