

# reflections

## 2014-2015



McCallum Theatre Institute

ARTS

Intro to the practice of Aesthetic Education

INQUIRY  
IMAGINATION



# Introduction

by Kajsa Thuresson-Frary, Director of Education

Every summer since 1998, McCallum Theatre Institute has engaged local teachers and international guests in professional development workshops as part of its Aesthetic Education Program. Teachers have first-hand experiences with the creative process as they explore works of art in dance, music, theatre and visual arts selected to serve as texts for study in their classrooms in the upcoming year. Designed and facilitated by McCallum teaching artists, these workshops nurture capacities for imaginative learning, facilitate an understanding of how the arts powerfully support and influence the cognitive development of a human being, and equip teachers to effectively partner with the Institute.

At Summer Session 2014 the week-long series of workshops began by focusing on *Incandescent*, a modern-contemporary dance work choreographed by Jennifer Backhaus and performed by Backhausdance in which physical beauty and breath taking execution of movement illuminates the journey of the human spirit. Investigations of *Proprium: An Exhibit of Portraits* followed, highlighting the work of artists such as Frida Kahlo, Gustave Courbet, Paula Modersohn-Becker and Francis Bacon. In-depth considerations of what is involved in the making of a "selfie" resulted and produced daring work. Midweek, *Walking the Tightrope*, based on a script by Mike Kenney and performed by 24th Street Theatre, transported participants to a quaint English seaside town and revealed a grandfather and child reconciling with the loss of a wife and grandmother. The following day, videos of The Royal Ballet of Cambodia were screened in the theatre, featuring the reconstruction of ancient Khmer dance choreographed by Her Royal Highness Princess Norodom Buppha Devi. The week concluded with a concert by The Dana Leong Trio featuring emcee Core Rhythm. Teachers dove into workshop explorations centered on theme-based compositions, sequencing, and fusion of acoustic and digital instrumentation.

As Summer Session came to a close, introductory course teachers were charged with writing essays in three parts: summarizing their journal's most significant ideas; analyzing and discussing one of the focus works; and commenting on the aesthetic education philosophy. Always a privileged read, these essays are filled with many discoveries about dance, music, theatre, and visual arts; but also about teaching and learning, about students and schools, and about the world and our place in it. Through these essays much of our partnering



teachers' experience is revealed to us, and we believe that through the process of writing they more deeply reflected and came to better understand their discoveries.

In the following pages we share a selection of excerpts from these essays, which are not only a reflection of the teachers' personal experiences but of the Institute itself. And through these words, we may come to further understand the potential of the partnerships in this dynamic program.



*Is not learning, authentic learning, a matter of going beyond? Is it not an exploration generated by wonder, curiosity, open questions? Is there not always a drive to reach beyond what is deliberately taught? Is it not the case that learning really begins when people begin teaching themselves? And is there not a special pleasure, a delight found in the discovery, in the sometimes startling realization that what is being learned affects the manner in which we make sense of our world?*

—MAXINE GREENE, 1917-2014

Philosopher, Author, Social Activist, and Teacher

*"It is only upon reflection that we comprehend experience."*

—JOHN DEWEY, 1859-1952

Philosopher, Psychologist, Educational Reformer

# The Practice of Aesthetic Education

*"Aesthetic education allows students to become aware of perceptions, sensations, imagination, and how they can relate it to and understand the real world. I realized one thing was very predominant throughout the week, reflection. Students need to be able to spend time with ideas, process them, and then have time to reflect on what they are doing. Often times in education we get short on time and rush through things without allowing the students to have time to reflect on their learning."*

*-AMY TUFT, Della Lindley Elementary*

*"Aesthetic education does not just make an effort to bring arts into classrooms, it allows students to explore and experience art on a deeper more meaningful level. The investigative nature of aesthetic education allows students the opportunity to do more than just view art. It encourages them to view, analyze, question, interpret, reanalyze, and synthesize any form of art they come across. It's almost not even about the art itself, but rather more about the aesthetic education process. Professionally, I appreciated how the aesthetic education process naturally reflected the way a lesson would look in our classroom. Each aesthetic education lesson slowly built up to the main objective, with appropriate guidance and scaffold along the way. If we would have just 'jumped' into any of these art study assignments without doing focus activities ahead of time, we would not have made as many connections, and therefore not as much learning would have taken place."*

*-NICOLE RAMIREZ, Reagan Elementary*

*"Aesthetic education is an inquiry process. It is a process of making or creating art, but also then using open-ended questions to 'elicit description, analysis, and interpretation'. It is also reflection, and thinking deeply. Students use multiple modalities and intelligences, collaborate, reflect, and, hopefully, appreciate multiple perspectives and ideas. The process also involves contextual information and research about the artist involved in order to understand their perspective culturally, historically, or socially."*

*-AMY BIGGERT, Cielo Vista Elementary*

The Aesthetic Education Program can most simply be defined as an approach to teaching and learning in the arts. Students, educators and teaching artists work side by side to deepen their understanding of themselves and the world through active engagement with specific works of art – focus works.

The approach to this work is based on the belief that the arts should be studied in an active, experiential way. This process includes activities designed to explore the formal elements of each art form, active reflection, inquiry and contextual research. The aesthetic education practice is concerned with discovery, action, problem solving and questioning. Skills of perception are developed as well as understandings of the relationship of aesthetic experiences to other educational and human experiences.

*"Aesthetic education reaches beyond the arts and uses the arts to teach authentic learning that reaches into all aspects of our life."*

*-RUEBEN SALDIVAR, Washington Charter Elementary*

*"In looking through the many handouts from our week of training, I am struck by how much content was covered in five days. No wonder there was no time to sit and 'journal'. My journaling consists of thoughts and phrases scribbled all over handouts. We hit the ground running every day and were spit back out at five o'clock, into the summer heat, reeling with impressions and deep thoughts. Evenings were spent recovering and thinking, questioning, just as the presenters intended us to do. The program is awesome! Everything is so well crafted and honed so that we received the most benefit out of every moment."*

*-KAREN BRISCOE MITCHELL, Reagan Elementary*

*"Aesthetic education is not about teaching the arts... it is about teaching through the arts. It is about using the arts as a strategy of engagement for students and it provokes inquiry, wonder, imagination, discussion, interpretation, and the ability to give and receive criticism. Teaching content through the arts will help students experience the concepts rather than simply reading about them in a book. The practice of teaching through the arts will also encourage students to think abstractly and to bring emotion and critical thinking to the content, while allowing them to experience the freedom of choice, the freedom to take risks in a safe setting, and the freedom to think outside the box."*

*-COURTNEY CARRERA, Cielo Vista Elementary*

# Works of Art as Objects of Study

Basic to the Aesthetic Education Program is the belief that works of art are inexhaustible – repeated encounters with the same work yield new insights. Encounters with works of art can change people, causing them to view the artwork and the world in a new way. Art works do not immediately reveal all there is to be seen. Perception can be compared to peeling the layers of an onion – art works can be seen on many levels and from many perspectives.



*"It was such a privilege to be able to view the remarkable Walking the Tightrope performance put on during our summer session. From the very first scene my eyes were filled with tears. I know it was a combination of the breath taking acting, nostalgic setting, and beautifully written storyline. The storyline was simple enough for a child to comprehend, yet symbolic and metaphoric enough for adults to be completely stimulated and engaged throughout the entire performance. I attempted to keep my teacher goggles on throughout the performance, but it was challenging because I was enjoying it and appreciating it on such a personal level."*

*-NICOLE RAMIREZ, Reagan Elementary*

*"My favorite part of this day was going to see the 24th Street Theatre production of Walking the Tightrope. It was amazing to watch the play come to life with little use of props and settings. The first thing I noticed was the clown. I knew he was there for a reason, but it took me awhile to figure it out. The actors did an amazing job, especially the lady playing a young girl. She definitely captured the carefree nature of a little girl. You could see how the grandpa was trying to protect his granddaughter, but in the end it was okay. Change was okay."*

*-AMY TUFT, Della Lindley Elementary*

*"Studying about Cambodian history and symbolism gave me a better appreciation for the ballet. I think that the layering of information and discovery made every day a wonderful experience. This helped me to make better sense of our daily culminating experiences and appreciate the diversity of different cultures."*

*-MARGARET SITTERSON, Reagan Elementary*

*"The Cambodian women tell stories through their dances. Third world countries continue to struggle for independence and equality for women. It moved me deeply that through their individual art form, they've been able explore new freedoms. I feel that the Royal Ballet of Cambodia brought to the forefront the lack of freedom of artistic expression and exploration in Cambodian culture. It allowed me to appreciate my freedom and to express myself orally or artistically. It motivated me to share this message with my students as well."*

*-GABRIELA MITCHELL, Reagan Elementary*

*"I gained a new respect for modern dance and art teaching as a whole. All of the previous activities leading up to the performance of Incandescent definitely enriched the experience for me and I am sure for many others. There were moments when I found myself thinking 'hey, those were such and such group's moves,' or 'that's a little of what my group did.' I am nowhere near being or becoming a modern dance aficionado but I do have a new found appreciation for the art form."*

*-CRISTINA TOSTADO  
Bubbling Wells Elementary*

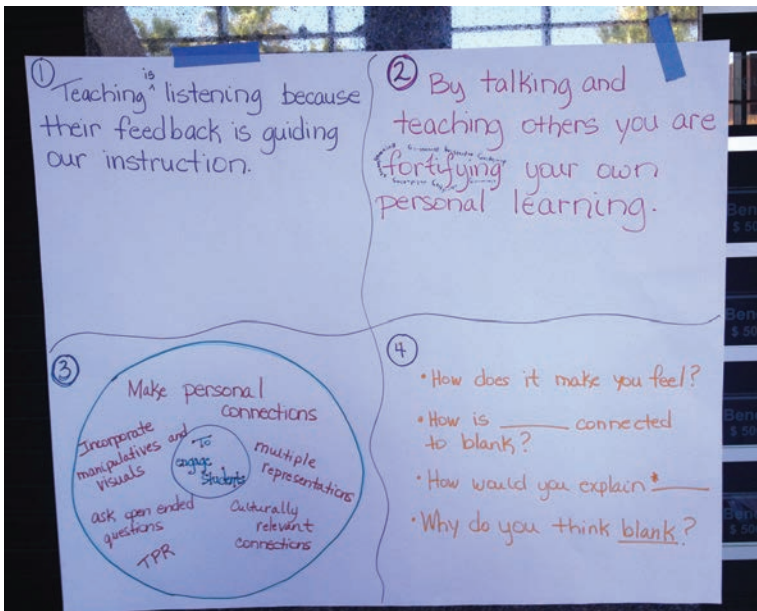


"At first I wasn't sure how studying paintings would fit into the classroom. I had never noticed all the different elements (proximity, pose, light, colors, shading, angles, view) in various pieces before. I am a visual learner, so I have always gravitated to drawings, maps, graphs, and organizing pictures or data on a page, but only realized during this study how much I have been missing. The study of *Proprium* made me realize how much we each bring to our canvas. Each artist has a story, a history lesson, and a unique place in this world."

-LISA SOBRERO, Washington Charter



# Exploring contextual information through the use of resources



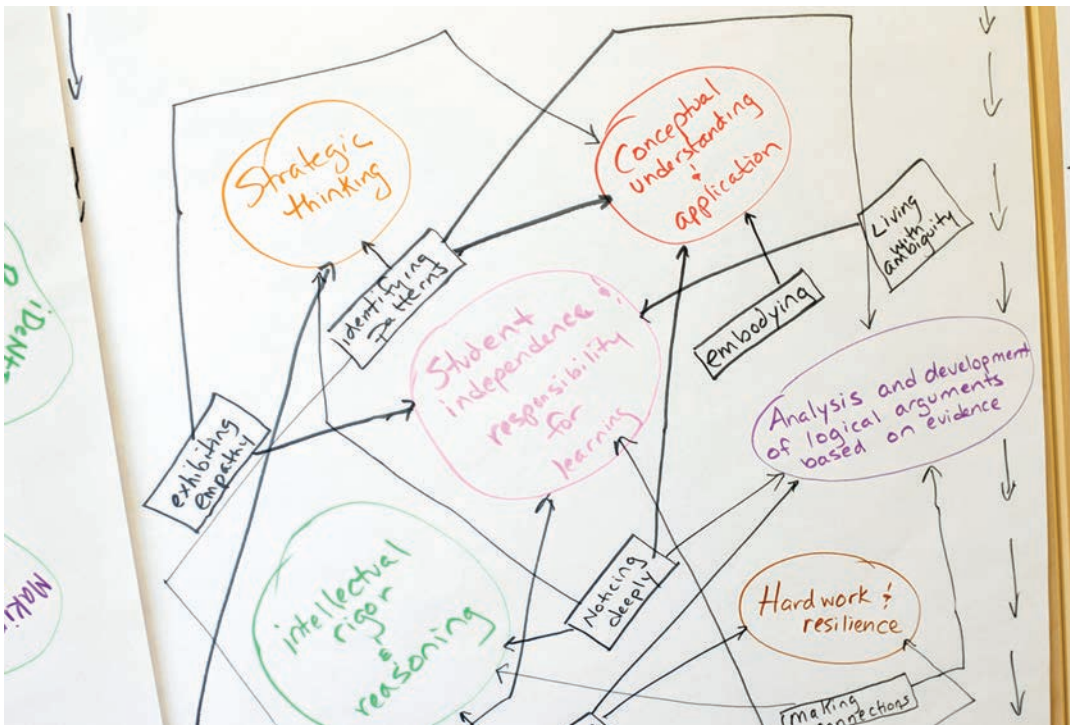
Works of art are not created in isolation. The work of art is an expression of the artist who exists in a time and place and who lives within a cultural context. Therefore, insight can be heightened by further study of the contextual information that surrounds a work of art.

"After the play we were able to interview the director and cast. We discussed character development, intent, truth and lies, omitting truth to protect, and how playing it safe can be a tightrope walk. I saw the director as a bold, 'New York' type who was thrilled that the clown conundrum made the audience think. She commented, 'watching the play shouldn't be easy, we want to make you work!'"

-KAREN BRISCOE MITCHELL, Reagan Elementary

"In the interview after the performance with Debbie Devine, the director, she never really confirmed or denied any of the interpretations regarding the clown. Some people alluded to the clown representing the grandmother, while others thought it was the grandfather's conscience guiding him regarding letting his granddaughter know the grandmother had died. I think letting the audience interpret what the clown meant for them is extremely important to letting them internalize the performance. That is, in many ways, what made this piece so special."

-JENNIFER ANDREWS, Earhart Elementary



"We then went over quotes. I really like the one that said, 'Theatre is an agreement between the actors and the audience that we all use our imaginations to experience this story.' This made me think how uniquely we can all experience the same thing. I found this to be very apparent in the play when people were discussing what the clown represented to them."

-AMY TUFT  
Della Lindley Elementary

"During Proprium, and the exploration of portraits, we were given time to journal our ideas when creating our own portrait. This was an example of journaling that the famous artist Gwen John would use in her process for creating art. She would take notes on her subjects, and then change and change again, the details of the portraits, such as hand position or a tilt of the head. We would journal our thoughts about the works of art we were shown at the exhibit. After creating our own self-portraits, we were then to journal about them. With the definition of proprium being 'the self...expressive things about yourself that you believe to be most important', we were then to notice deeply our own portraits. We were asked to notice what it reveals about our self-image, and how we might change it next time."

-AMY BIGGERT, Cielo Vista Elementary

"Furthermore, in reading through my personal journal from day two, I found another quote I had written when we were viewing the 'artist heads.' It said, 'A face is a roadmap of someone's life.' The activities we engaged in on day two allowed me to appreciate this quote and rethink the self- portraits and analyze them a little bit differently. For example, I learned that Francis Bacon painted from photos, found meaning and was inspired by war, and that he loathed his self- portrait. Prior to knowing this, I analyzed his self- portrait and thought he was in a dark place; he may have been unhappy and had low self-esteem. Later in the day, I was able to make different connections with his self- portrait. It exuded the sadness he must have felt from war and since he loathed his own self- portrait, the composition of his face was distorted. Viewing the exhibition a second time at the end of the day, was fascinating as I was able to view them in a different light."

-STEPHANIE YANEZ, Franklin Elementary

"It was in reading Francis Bacon's 'artist head' that the light bulb started to glow. The sheer fact that he could express his deepest and darkest feelings through his artwork, regardless if it was visually appealing or not, unlocked something deep inside of me that gave me a new sense of freedom with regards to my attitude and perspective. When we were asked to continue drawing our portrait, I was able to stop and reflect on what I wanted to communicate with regards to who I was and what I felt at the moment. Instead of trying to make a perfect sketch of what I looked like I incorporated some of the things I learned about color, shape, lines, shading, and the use of different media...the opportunity to freely create was the best part of the experience."

-CYNTHIA ESSER, Franklin Elementary





# The role of the teacher

MTI believes that a teacher's role is to facilitate learning while continuing to learn. The teacher is the central figure in the student's school experience and can be a key agent for change in the way the arts are presented within a school. In the classroom, the teacher and teaching artist collaborate to create the conditions for learning about a specific work of art. Central to this process is planning through a brainstorming session about the work of art – out of which a focus for curriculum is developed. The teaching artist and the classroom teachers (special subject area or grade level teacher, or arts specialist) design activities that will be carried out by the teaching artist and the teachers, together and independently.

*"This program uses lots of open ended questioning that elicit more description, analysis and interpretation that the students are not used to using. However, the common core standards are all about open ended questioning to help produce problem solvers instead of kids that are just memorizing for the test. I am excited about bringing the arts back into my school and enhancing the students learning process."*

*-KELSEY KANG, Madison Elementary*

*"The programs specific design allows us to incorporate the multiple intelligences. We as teachers were able to create and problem solve as individuals and with peers. We were able to discuss and justify our resolutions with our evidence found from each piece being studied. The very important role of authentic questioning was practiced to aide us in guiding our students to look deeper and think outside the box. I found myself very engaged in all lessons being presented due to the strategies used. Students will be able to work at their own independent level and this will naturally keep them engaged and nurture their independent learning."*

*-SHELLI LACKEY, Bubbling Wells Elementary*

*"Overall, I truly feel as though I have transformed, like a caterpillar turns into a butterfly. I feel as though I have reconnected with my love and my passion for the arts through this process. My imagination was reawakened, and I am looking forward to guiding my own students to awaken their own imaginations."*

*-KAYLA KHANBEGIAN, Della Lindley Elementary*

*"The last day we had the opportunity to explore the art of music with The Dana Leong Trio. We started the day exploring concepts of rhythm, beat, pitch, etc. The core vocabulary for each work of art is foundational to the preparation and aligns well with the common core standards. Then we worked in groups to create a music piece. I liked how throughout the week the teaching artists would have us working in different grouping as well as alone. It really provided a great variety of opportunities to interact or not based on one's learning style. The amazing culmination of the day was the live performance of The Dana Leong Trio. WOW! They were amazing. The music was so dynamic and captivating, I got lost in listening, all three artists were so brilliantly different and yet they blended their music together seamlessly."*

*-KATHERINE QUINTANA, Coral Mountain Academy*

*"I also caught myself jotting down 'ask more, tell less'...a new mantra perhaps? The reflection on slowing down and the topics of deeper noticing helped me realize that I am innately that person that notices details and takes the time to contemplate what I am taking in be it visually or audibly. Yet, in my teaching I hadn't been doing enough questioning or reflecting and it could be why at times I find teaching to be so challenging or even tedious, and it is because I have been teaching contrary to the type of learner or explorer that I am naturally."*

*-CRISTINA TOSTADO  
Bubbling Wells Elementary*



"The journal piece of the training inspired me to challenge myself throughout the next school year and implement open-ended questioning into my classroom curriculum and journal writing on a consistent basis. I believe this will help my students as much as it has helped me during the development and appreciation of art and new non-fictional information. There are a lot of different learning modalities in every child. Each student brings different background knowledge to the classroom and it is our job as teachers to get the best out of them. Creating differentiated yet rigorous lesson plans to help them achieve a sense of belonging and accountability is what I see myself doing this school year with the implementation of open-ended questioning."

-PATRICIA ANAYA, Bubbling Wells Elementary

"After participating in the introductory course, I have gained a deeper understanding of aesthetic education and have learned how valuable and imperative it is to integrate the arts into education. Integrating the arts into a student's education enables them to dig deeper, become problem solvers, teaches students to ask questions, and provides opportunity for exploration and reflection. Also, since each individual learns differently, it has become more apparent that combining the various components of the arts into daily lessons helps foster a constructive learning environment and helps to meet the needs of all students."

-STEPHANIE YANEZ, Franklin Elementary

# The role of the teaching artist

Professional artists are central to the Aesthetic Education Program concept. The teaching artist helps to bridge the gap between the artwork and the perceiver – he or she designs activities that enable people to more fully understand key features of the work. Insight, commitment, knowledge, experience and love for their art form make the teaching artists invaluable to the Program.



"The opportunity that we were given to explore the play and find out what happens behind the curtains was such an enriching experience. Our teaching artist did a magnificent job at scaffolding the activities. The introduction to pantomime, and the personal journal was a clever and easy form to help us make personal connections to Walking the Tightrope and to other works of art themes."

-MARIA GARIBAY  
Della Lindley Elementary

"I have been a dancer most of my life and enjoy it so much I was excited to see how we would be implementing dance education in our classrooms. Wow! The day was so much more than what I expected. Our teaching artist did a wonderful job throughout the day incorporating discussions, journaling, creating peer and group collaborative dance pieces. There was a lot of time spent on building our background knowledge, exposure and understanding of vocabulary and allowing time for us to make our own connections with each task that was asked of us."

-SHELLI LACKEY, Bubbling Wells Elementary



"After each group went our teaching artist would use questions to help us elaborate and think deeper about what we saw and experienced and what it meant to us. She used open-ended questions, so there was no one right answer. She encouraged us to think about the use of the props, the setting, the placement of things, and the pantomiming."

-AMY TUFT, Della Lindley Elementary

"The workshop and performance that stood out the most in my personal preference was Incandescent. The lesson plan was well thought out and gradually increased in rigor according to the group's zone of proximal development and confidence. Open-ended questions were continuously developed and reiterated throughout the day to assure complete understanding of the material and allowed participants to develop their own open-ended questions by the end of the training. Incandescent taught me to freely allow my body to express itself with the gist of my current mood. The teaching artist was amazingly prepared and eager to teach the lesson. Her energy transferred to all of the participants and completely changed the learning scenario."

-PATRICIA ANAYA, Bubbling Wells Elementary

"I also spent some time reflecting in my notes about open-ended questions and the art of asking them. I remember our first day of class with our teaching artist. I realized that most of what I had learned had come from her asking us questions instead of presenting us with information. It kept me engaged and wondering. I quickly began to realize that for me, even though performing/dancing is an area of the arts I was most unfamiliar with and most uncomfortable with, I wasn't discouraged. When you are asking these types of questions you have to listen intently, because even though you have an agenda behind your question, you use the response of others as a platform for your next question. For this reason I learned that our answers felt important. I would like my students' answers to always feel important. This promotes self-esteem and confidence. Asking open-ended questions also created an arena of tolerance and acceptance. We became collaborators instead of feeling like we were competing. Everyone had something to contribute. There were no wrong answers. This is a powerful way to run a classroom. I am most grateful for this lesson."

-LISA SOBRERO, Washington Elementary

# Learning to look and hear

The Aesthetic Education Program is based on the belief that knowledge changes and enriches perception and that knowledge is gained through direct experience. Perceivers do not immediately see all there is to be seen in a work. One must learn to look – learn by participating, viewing, reflecting, inquiring and discussing.



"Even through Proprium and our studies of self-portraits I was drawn to the more concrete pieces rather than the abstract ones such as Juan Gris or Francis Bacon. By the end of our exploration I had a better understanding and appreciation for them even if they still weren't my favorites. I learned to appreciate the pulling away of layers as we explored portraits to better understand them or what the artist was wanting to convey or share with the world, even if the style was not preferable to my tastes."

-CRISTINA TOSTADO  
Bubbling Wells Elementary

"It seems that throughout the institute questioning was the focus of all areas. The questioning kept us engaged and ignited us into a deeper understanding. The teaching artists did not only do questioning, but we were encouraged to question our thinking and understanding. We also received a lot of practice on different questions; describe, analyze, and interpret. The idea behind the questioning was that they were open-ended and allowed for multiple answers. I like that the questioning styles do not pigeon-hole students into one type of answering."

-AMY TUFT, Della Lindley Elementary

"When I was glancing through my journal from the Aesthetic Education Program I was amazed at how many times I wrote the word 'question' in my journal. To be honest, I had never considered how important the art of questioning was. My form of questioning definitely followed the thought of 'right' or 'wrong'. This program has truly opened my eyes to the manner in which I will use questions in my future teaching practices."

-STACEY LACAYO, Reagan Elementary

"One of the overriding themes that I felt was most relevant was the use of open-ended questions and their significance to the learning process. Students are required to look deeper within themselves when asked thoughtful questions that have a purpose. In turn, they develop a deeper understanding of their own perspectives and learn to value the perspectives of others. Open ended questions encourage students to become critical thinkers and to learn to ask questions as well. It is essential that teachers allow enough time for these types of questions so that our students will learn to be independent thinkers and know that their opinions are valued."

-ANGELA ESPEJO, Ronald Reagan Elementary



"Inside we were  
Looking, seeing naught of the world.  
Light descended from the heavens  
Unto a child's waiting arms.  
Marveling in the light's energy,  
Initiating light in us,  
Night leaves us behind  
And flows  
Through  
Everyone"

-COURTNEY CARRERA, Cielo Vista Elementary

"The practice of open-ended questioning was a beneficial experience. It gave me an idea of which questions to use that will solicit details and other questions that will seek a deeper personal meaning. In my opinion, it extracts information and compels people to gently look within themselves for meaning and understanding. Also, this is a good practice, not only in education but also in all aspects of life. It helps them become true, life-long learners."

-RUEBEN SALDIVAR,  
Washington Charter Elementary

"Open-ended questions have more than one answer, they do not end with a yes or no answer, they allow an individual to pull from experiences, culture, things they've learned in order for application, they enable discussion, dialogue, deeper thinking and understanding, and should have focus. On the other hand, close-ended questions simply end with a yes or no response. Using knowledge on open-ended questioning and different levels of questions, was helpful in participating in the activity where, in groups, we were asked to take turns facilitating asking open-ended questions about the group's selfies. I found this activity to be beneficial as I was able to practice facilitating meaningful discussion and encourage focused dialogue and guide my group in describing, analyzing, and interpreting the selfies. The challenge I found was coming up with 'thoughtful' open-ended questions that weren't leading or prompting."

-STEPHANIE YANEZ, Franklin Elementary

*"In listening to the music of Cambodia, analyzing the dance movements I observed the following: unison, ensemble, slow and continuous, gesture, levels, and traveling. After watching and analyzing we had the opportunity to engulf ourselves in the moment, practice dance movements, and compose a routine in groups. This made me recognize the beautiful cultural traditions; messages, phrases, and stories that are passed down from generation to generation and are told through dance and dress. In addition, the Cambodian dance, headdress, and costumes allowed Cambodian people to keep their traditions alive after enduring an unthinkable genocide."*

*-STEPHANIE YANEZ, Franklin Elementary*

*"Open-ended questions not only elicit three categories of response-description, analysis, interpretation – but also invite and encourage students to question throughout their explorations to further learning; as to question 'What if?'. As an educator, I want my students to become questioners, and not only think of the questions they are getting for a day, but to question everything they are learning because those 'what if?' questions are the ones that lead into further explorations. It is then that students are capable of understanding that there is more than one solution to a problem and there is no correct or wrong answer."*

*-MARIA GARIBAY, Della Lindley Elementary*

## Insights – the process of creating art

In working daily with professional artists during Summer Session and by solving artistic problems posed during workshops, teachers gain a heightened understanding of the choices artists make through the process of creating works of art. A work of art does not spring complete into the artist's mind, but is created as the result of a deliberate, time-consuming and at times frustrating process of choice-making. An initial vision is worked out in the medium: clay, words, movement... Just as the artist's vision transforms the medium, so too, the medium transforms the artist's vision. It is our belief that the perceivers will be better prepared to see the record of the artist's work and the artist's process if they themselves have worked within a medium to execute their own vision.



*"The work that really struck me was the Proprium exhibit. We had great scaffolding throughout the morning exploring the art concepts involved in the making of a self-portrait, emotion, angles, lighting, proportions, color and then were able to start on our own self portrait. It was illuminating to contrast the modern day concept of 'selfies' with very old techniques used to create self-portraits. The day ended with a very interesting exhibit, Proprium, a collection of self-portraits of great artists."*

*-KATHERINE QUINTANA  
Coral Mountain Academy*



"The Dana Leong Trio blew me away! The work we did prior was so crucial to understanding, engaging and experimenting. We were able to create a layered piece of music which at first sounded crazy and abstract then the final product was futuristic and cool. Being open minded and exploring the different genres of music allowed me to embrace and fully be aware of what was going on."

-MARKIE CASHION, Franklin Elementary

"The use of different mediums and the incorporation of artistic styles from several artists was a great tool for self-discovery during the Proprium focus workshop. The use of shadowing as well as color within our portraits to reflect our truest self was illuminating. Noticing details of myself, the fact that I have aged, made me reflect on the path that I have taken up to this moment. It has been a struggle with wonderful experiences. Thus, I attempted to show a younger side of myself in profile by using bright colors, instead of grays or blacks."

-MEDARDO GOMEZ, Madison Elementary

"We examined how we relate emotions to different colors. I related red, orange and bright colors as anger or fear. I related blue, purple and dark colors as sad, confused or worried. Then I related the greenish hues as excited or elated. I used these different interpretations of color when I made my self-portrait. I wanted people to see me as a fun, happy person. So I used a lot of greens and yellows in my self-portrait. We learned how artists effectively use lighting, proximity/points of view, color, pose, expression, and background choices to portray a different self-expression in their self-portraits. We put ourselves in a photo booth with a lighting source and moved the light to change what is being illuminated. I was the lucky model to sit down and use the light source to illuminate different areas of my face."

-KELSEY KANG, Madison Elementary

"One of the quotes that stood out the most was taken from Bill T. Jones and said the following: 'Dance is action and shape, designed in space and time, to express feelings and ideas.' This is exactly what happened during the workshop for Incandescent. I felt like a buffoon at first during the exploration part of this lesson, and didn't quite move out of my stiffness. As the instrumental music continued to play and bodies around me continued to move freely, I began to feel an increased sensation to join the wave of movement. Although everyone moved in different directions and used different parts of their bodies to dominate their movements, we were all moving to the beats of our hearts and created this amazing collection of unique identities. It was an amazing experience! I had never released myself in such a way in front of professional adults. I am an extreme introvert and rarely do any extroverted things in front of so many people. This experience was like no other professional development."

-PATRICIA ANAYA, Bubbling Wells Elementary



"Music choices, scenery choices, how the actors portray a character and the director's vision all set the tone for how an audience will perceive and view the same script. Though our groups all had different parts of the same script, all of the 'productions' had a different feel because of the choices made. These choices showed up throughout the actual production of Walking the Tightrope and really had a huge effect on how the audience perceived the performance."

-JENNIFER ANDREWS  
Earhart Elementary

*"My favorite self-portrait from Proprium was Chuck Close's. I love how he used a solid background to make his face stand out the most. He created his face then placed a grid over it to create almost a special effect to his self-portrait. I tried to recreate this idea when we created our self-portraits using pencil. This focus work was so much fun for me. I have always wanted to learn how to draw pictures but never felt that I was a great artist. I never used acrylic paints before so it definitely got me out of my comfort zone."*

*-KELSEY KANG, Madison Elementary*

# Connection between doing and learning

One of the fundamental concepts propelling the Aesthetic Education Program is the belief that the only way one truly learns is through purposeful activity – solving real problems felt to be important. By solving artistic problems posed by teaching artists and creating simple works of art, teachers learn about the arts in a real, tangible way.

*"For the longest time, I lived with the misguided notion that art is for those who can draw nicely, neatly and realistically. The light bulb moment for me was when I came to the understanding that Bacon and Khlo used color to convey the emotion that they wanted to portray. Art was not about how nice and neat it was but about the meaning the artist was trying to convey and for the art to be abstract enough for the observer to interpret. I gained much knowledge during this activity to use color to create a self-portrait of myself. The artist's use of color, lighting, tone, or proximity can sometimes be a powerful medium to communicate emotion in a more powerful or impactful way than words can ever do."*

*-RUEBEN SALDIVAR, Washington Charter Elementary*

*"Besides the actual viewing of this amazing play, I actually found the related hands-on part of this lesson to have the greatest impact on me personally and professionally. From the pre-write in our personal journals to the close reading we did in groups of a small part of the actual script, the entire exploratory aspect of this lesson built up the play in a way that made it more meaningful for me when I finally was a part of the audience watching this play. The culminating hands-on activity of putting together a small scene from the play and acting it out was such a learning experience for me. I was able to temporarily think like the actors do on the stage and I believe that helped me better understand and appreciate everything that went into the creation and production of Walking the Tightrope"*

*-NICOLE RAMIREZ, Reagan Elementary*



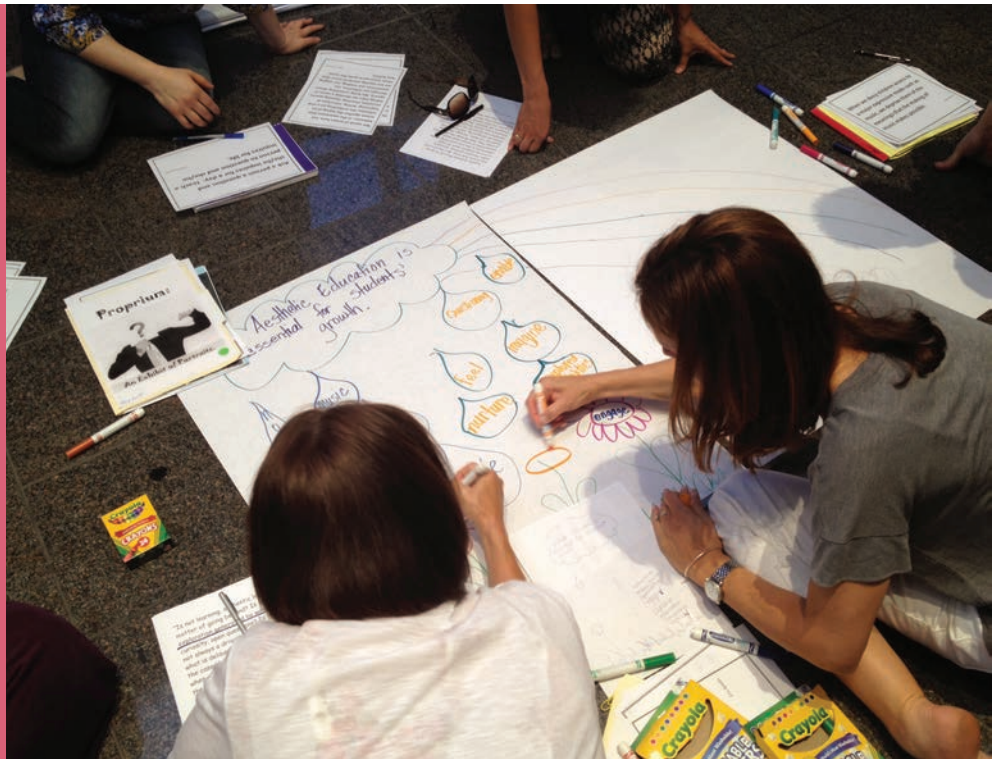
*"Through the study of Proprium I gained insight on how students can also use sketchpads and markers or paints to create a portrait of the character on paper. Details about their knowledge of characters can be displayed through their use of color, light, and the size of the elements they choose to use. They can make use of background details to convey specific interests of a character. Affects such as these enable students to give importance to certain features of a character or display prominent characteristics."*

*-LISA SOBRERO  
Washington Elementary*



"My thoughts that teachers are performers went out the window as I saw all of us shrink back from being put on the spot! It was perfect, because this is how our students often feel when we think we're asking for something simple from them, and it's not. The beauty of this process was how we were led to overcome our fears and given the strategies that were used to help us feel safe to express ourselves. Now, we can turn around and initiate the same in our students, and we even have support from the TAs as we navigate!"

—KAREN BRISCOE MITCHELL  
Reagan Elementary



"I experienced a slew of 'Aha' moments throughout the workshop. We were able to enhance our artistic experiences from previous generations of artists. This experience became so clear to me when we used our cell phones to take 'selfies'. I personally have shied away from selfies because my selfies were nothing to be proud of and maybe bordered on vanity. However, after applying the techniques of slanting my head and paying attention to lighting, my selfie became something I was proud of. All of a sudden I was able to purposefully capture a moment in time to cherish on many levels."

—GABRIELA MITCHELL, Reagan Elementary

"The close reading of script, pantomime practice, the picking of production crew members, rehearsal and construction, the guided questions, all led to a much deeper understanding of everything that must be done in order for a production to take place. We learned of all the elements involved in a production; we also learned about the theme. All these elements created a deeper understanding about the symbolism around Walking the Tightrope."

—MARIA GARIBAY, Della Lindley Elementary

## Collaborative learning

One of the instructional methods often used by the teaching artists is problem solving in small groups. As a result of participating in this process, teachers and students gain an understanding of the collaborative process that is part of artistic creation. Many teachers come to see collaborative planning and learning as a method that would work in other areas of the curriculum as well.

"We then brainstormed how we could present the scene in a personal journal, and then worked cooperatively in a group to bring the scene to life. Everyone had a different role: set design, director, actor, sound effects, etc. Watching the other scenes performed as well made me realize that, in drama, as in fine art, there can be many different interpretations and each person will take something different from a scene, based on their own personal experience and schema."

—COURTNEY CARRERA, Cielo Vista Elementary

"Something that really, really helped us was working with a group collaboratively. Collaborating with even one other person helped with the thinking process and being braver in our execution. Cooperative learning has been around for ages, but using collaboration in a performance/artistic setting opened us a whole new world of possibilities for me."

—KAREN BRISCOE MITCHELL  
Reagan Elementary





"One thing a group of us did, was to write down one or two words to describe each portrait. Then at a later time we shared these to see the different perspectives. There were some that were similar and others that were completely different. It was a great way to see through the eyes of others."

-MARKIE CASHION, Franklin Elementary

"I also thought that the group work was very beneficial to me. I was able to immerse myself deeper into each element that was introduced. I was able to learn from each of my individual group members. I also thought that their feedback on each topic propelled me to deeper levels as well. And of course the hands on activities were the icing on the cake. We were able to bring the art element literally to our finger tips. I was able to explore my artistic ambitions at new levels. I was so motivated and inspired. My drawing of my self-portrait was a perfect example of using a combination of tools that I learned from both teachers and peers."

-GABRIELA MITCHELL, Reagan Elementary

"Aesthetic education is the means whereby students and teachers can recreate a classroom culture that allows constructive and reflective collaboration amongst peers, active participation from all, be they introverts or extroverts, and limitless imagination and creativity. Learning occurs in these opportunities provided to students and teachers because they become involved in cooperative groups, where they are able to articulate their understanding, answer open-ended questions, multiple intelligences are engaged, ideas are reinforced without destructive consequences, having those 'What if..?' moments and the other members of the group buying it, and the development of problem solving skills."

-MEDARDO GOMEZ, Madison Elementary

"Prior to the play, we also did a close read of only part of the play. We had to carefully notice vocabulary and setting. We were asked to notice different elements of the script, such as could we tell nationality, setting, characters, ages, objects (stated or implied), or sounds in the scenes. We were asked to find the theme of this part of the play. Within these groups we each had a different part of the play. It wasn't until we then acted our scenes out, using props, and sound effects, that we realized they were different, and then we were able to see the whole picture, or at least what we thought was the whole picture. When we got to see the actual play, there was the addition of a clown. This added a new dimension. I loved the idea of doing this. What a great way to engage students. We did all the work, we read, we thought, we collaborated, and we acted! We then thought some more as the rest of the story unfolded before us with the other scenes. Part of our curriculum is to teach story elements. I cannot think of a better way to do that than this."

-AMY BIGGERT, Cielo Vista Elementary

# Encouraging Reflection Through Keeping a Journal

Journal writing is an integral part of the Summer Session experience. It is an ongoing record of what one does, notices and thinks. Journals track the evolution of thoughts and experiences over time. Through this recorded journey, one has the ability to go back, to reflect on where one has been and where one is going. Writing down thoughts, reactions, perceptions, new information and questions intensifies and makes each individual's life experiences. We encourage both teachers and students to keep ongoing journals to reflect on their units of study.

*"The journals that we had to complete were presented to us as a tool to help us connect to the works of art that we would experience throughout the week. The questions presented in the all the journals were thought provoking and asked us to think about the art forms in our own way. The journals helped with the experiences that we had by connecting them to something in our lives."*

*-LEE CASTELLO, Bubbling Wells Elementary*

*"Being able to take time to reflect on ideas and concepts throughout a learning process makes the learning that much more significant and authentic. By journaling our thoughts and ideas throughout this aesthetic education workshop, we were able to see the evolution of our thoughts over the course of the week. Personally, my ideas and thoughts evolved greatly in the short time I participated in this workshop. I realized that being vulnerable actually opens you up to new experiences that you can learn from. Being pulled out of your comfort zone is what allows you to move forward and grow personally. I became a more confident reflector throughout this personal journaling process."*

*-NICOLE RAMIREZ, Reagan Elementary*

*"The private journaling helped me to start noticing things more deeply before making a snap judgment about a work of art. This helped me to deepen my understanding about the artists and caused me to reflect on each workshop before and after it was presented. I was able to make connections that I could not possibly have seen beforehand."*

*-DEBBIE APPLE, Reagan Elementary*

*"The personal journal from Maxine Greene's quotes helped me a lot in my journey throughout this course. It asked questions about myself. How am I an authentic learner? I was exploring and experiencing, making personal connections and reflecting. Questions followed about how to take this back to the classroom. What I came up with was layering art in all mediums, building of skills, contextual information and of course the central theme, open ended questions."*

*-MARKIE CASHION, Franklin Elementary*

*"Students must be given the types of questions that cause them to wonder, which keeps them searching. Journaling with open ended questions gave us the opportunity to write down our wonderings. We even had the opportunity to journal about the idea of 'questioning'. We were asked to come up with a symbol that could serve as a metaphor for the power of questioning, and then to elaborate on these. One such symbol I came up with was a gear. Questions move us toward understanding, just as a gear moves. We were asked to write about our own ideas on questions in our own life."*

*-AMY BIGGERT, Cielo Vista Elementary*

*"While participating in The McCallum Theatre's Summer Session, my private journal was a wonderful, refreshing, and perfect outlet for me to express my thoughts. By writing in my journal, I had several eye-opening, therapeutic, enlightening, and heartwarming experiences. Just like slow, delicate movements of the dancers from The Royal Ballet of Cambodia, when we slow down, we have to stop, think, reflect, focus, appreciate, notice details, analyze, dig deeper, and go inward in many ways."*

*-KAYLA KHANBEGIAN, Della Lindley Elementary*

# Desire to Share Insights with Students

In addition to growing and learning, participating teachers become more aware of how they can begin to open up the world of the arts to their students. The essays reveal a genuine desire and concrete plans to help students experience what they themselves experienced.

*"The first question that pops into my mind is, 'How will I incorporate this type of learning into my classroom that pulls me out of my comfort zone?' I wrestle with this question deeply because of a strong sense of responsibility to teach and to lead students into their own type of learning, which makes it authentic and personal to them."*

—RUEBEN SALDIVAR  
Washington Charter Elementary



*"I will be posting these quotes and phrases next to my desk. I'll also post key words that I'm happy to have explored, and hope to do justice to this next year. These include: authentic learner, perception, open-ended questioning, perspective, imagination, reflection, inquiry, intentional, active, pure noticing, experiential, discovery, problem solving. I'm thrilled for the kids to be participating in this gift of the arts next year!"*

—KAREN BRISCOE MITCHELL, Reagan Elementary

*"The workshop format was one that I did not think that I would enjoy participating in, but as the workshop experiences rolled out and we discovered how what we learned in the workshops directly connected to the pieces of art that we experienced, I found myself enjoying them. I was challenged but also reminded that sometimes it is hard to learn out of your 'comfort zone'. This lesson is one that I will take into the classroom this year and really focus on teaching in a way that makes my students feel more comfortable in their learning. Even though it is hard sometimes to learn something about yourself; I learned that I need to get out of that 'comfort zone' so I can learn more about the world around me and myself."*

—LEE CASTELLO  
Bubbling Wells Elementary

*"Educators desire students to think more critically and this is a skill that is not easy to teach. Through aesthetic education we are able to guide students to really 'pay attention' and 'notice deeply' what is happening in the work of art. We offer students the opportunity to reflect and challenge them to become involved in the art. It is essential that students know that there is no 'wrong answer'. Aesthetic education creates an environment where students feel safe to explore their imagination."*

—DEBBIE APPLE, Reagan Elementary

*"The specific workshop strategies that we were exposed to and experienced work hand in hand with Common Core State Standards and classroom expectations. It allowed us to see the cross curricula advantages to the strategies used in aesthetic education. The use of the dance vocabulary may be used to discuss a specific story character's movement or to describe movement of an object or sound. We as well as our students will be able to make connections to future dance performances we may experience. It may also provide another outlet for a student that they may never have known. I am looking forward to seeing the possibilities, wondering, and creations of my students when we begin this program in my classroom."*

—SHELLI LACKEY, Bubbling Wells Elementary



"Giving the students a palette of colors and having them assign any emotion or feeling to any color would reduce any fears of a specific color being the right choice for a particular emotion or feeling. Via this process, students would be very imaginative and creative with their self-portrait. I would like for my students to create a self-portrait at the beginning and end of the school year. With both self-portraits in hand, it would be nice to have an individual reflection session with each student on their growth during the school year and discuss the possible direction their learning is taking them, and reinforce the idea that their life is very colorful with unlimited possibilities."

-MEDARDO GOMEZ  
Madison Elementary



"I loved the opportunity to reflect, have open discussions with others, and really listen to different perspectives. For so long, we have not allowed students to have a voice. We were so stuck on 'there is only one right answer' because the questions we were asking only allowed for the narrow one right answer. I know when I return to the classroom, I will be more cognizant of asking those open-ended, student centered questions to create that classroom of deep thinkers. Again, the teacher is no longer leading the class but facilitating and guiding the students to make their own discoveries and conclusions."

-BRENDA RAGLAND, Della Lindley Elementary

# Value of Art to Our Society

Expression through art is one of the fundamental human activities. Artists present us with their own questions and visions of the world. Our understanding of the human condition is deepened as a result of their work.

"As students become more deeply involved in aesthetic education, they learn to develop a deeper and more conscious form of thinking. Dialogue becomes more meaningful and powerful. As students listen to each other, not only do they learn to accept and respect their peers' perspective, but they also learn from one another. Dialogue leads into expanding one's thoughts and ideas. It provides a safe environment for learning, exploring, contributing, and expanding learning through all senses. Learning becomes meaningful and exciting because students are not only able to make connections with the piece of art, but they are able to place their background knowledge into their learning, they are able to collaborate with each other. Furthermore, students are able to develop social and emotional skills that allow them to build healthy minds, and become responsible citizens who have the capacity to build the abilities of self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship skills, and become responsible decision-making individuals."

-MARIA GARIBAY, Della Lindley Elementary

"If we can teach our students to allow for more than one interpretation of a piece of artwork, then they will be able to apply it in other situations as adults. They may be able to take constructive criticism from a boss or coworker and make adjustments without feeling slighted or ashamed. The freedom to express themselves while creating and discussing art will be translated into an open mindedness that will be a great asset to them as adults."

-COURTNEY CARRERA  
Cielo Vista Elementary

"Making connections and thinking deeply from different points of view is what the new common core standards are all about. The idea of sharing points of views and asking open-ended questions to probe deeper thought and understanding is what will lead mankind into the next century. We are at a point in society where multiple perspectives and validity are needed to survive our complex world. By using the aesthetic education core of art making, questioning, reflection, and contextual information and research, we can reach out to our students to provide them with a whole new perspective on their world without infringing a single minded narrow viewpoint. Students are allowed to freely explore for themselves and honor multiple perspectives in a safe environment to create a community of understanding and respect."

-BRENDA RAGLAND, Della Lindley Elementary

"The philosophy of aesthetic education is that a partnership is formed between student and teacher to share insights. It is intended to help students discover the way they look, listen, and respond to their everyday experiences. The arts are used to generate these insights, and generate open ended questions throughout the learning process. Ideas, thinking, listening, discussion, and questioning are all very important elements of the process. I believe the benefits of having a classroom saturated with these elements will encourage students to learn with feelings of wonder and excitement."

-STACEY LACAYO  
Reagan Elementary



"What better way to teach and foster empathy in the coming generation than by having them walk in the shoes of an artist in order to get the feeling of what it is like to create something original and contemplate the results? In this day and age where bullying is faceless and anonymous perhaps building a generation of truly empathetic individuals, we can begin to eliminate the cycles of hate and misunderstanding that lead to bigger problems once children come of age."

-CRISTINA TOSTADO, Bubbling Wells Elementary

"When a work of art, whether it be in the form of dance, visual art, music, media art, or theatre can leave a lasting impression filled with emotion, it truly does become a work of art for the individual. Through making connections with others and holding those deeper discussions, it can become something more than just a connection on the surface. It helps to define who we are as human beings. I guess, this piece of art, Walking the Tightrope, became that for me."

-BRENDA RAGLAND, Della Lindley Elementary

# Art Changes the Way We Look at Life

Teachers discover that through aesthetic education the experience of their world and approach to their everyday lives is changed. They become aware of the importance of creative problem solving in all aspects of their lives; of finding the extraordinary in the ordinary and in embracing new ideas. Making connections between the arts and their world through looking, reflecting on their experiences, asking questions and recognizing the possibilities of what could be, becomes part of their lived experience.



*"Acting out a play, or using movement to demonstrate theme, are just a few ways to incorporate embodying. In Social Studies, empathy is so important, and learning about cultural dance with these capacities of mind 'in mind' will help create greater meaning, and promote learning. One of my favorite quotes from the week is, 'Many of the most complex and subtle forms of thinking take place when students have an opportunity either to work meaningfully on the creating of images,..., or to scrutinize them appreciatively.' This idea can be applied in my classroom in many ways, and giving students time to question, ponder, discuss, reflect, appreciate, and create will benefit them not only in their school career, but in life as well."*

*-AMY BIGGERT, Cielo Vista Elementary*

*"The Common Core Standards are focused on creating students that are college and career ready. The questioning strategies and specific processes that the students are exposed to through this program will encourage and enhance their development toward that goal. The exposure to the arts is something they may experience in real life and we want to better prepare them for those real life experiences. Encouraging and nurturing the students' development through this program will give them an opportunity to build their skills. Aesthetic education follows a natural flow of inquiry and thinking that the student will be able to independently apply not only to the arts but real life as well."*

*-SHELLI LACKEY, Bubbling Wells Elementary*

*"As I grew older I had a vague sense of art being something for others and not me. I saw it as something belonging to the affluent or those lucky enough to have been born in an artistic household. Personally, I came from neither. Not until adulthood did I begin to feel art and music (beyond the popular radio fare) was accessible to me to be enjoyed at my level of interest and knowledge. I firmly believe that with this aesthetic education program we may ignite lifelong art and music lovers even if they don't become artists or musicians. What better way to have a more loving, peaceful society than to have all its participants aware of their own artistic uniqueness on the world's canvas as a whole? In our growing global existence where it can be easy to feel insignificant perhaps it is the arts that will return us to acknowledging our importance on the grander scale of things. Leading our individual lives as a work of art will enable us all to bring beauty to the world by our mere existence, because being alive and cognizant is in and of itself a beautiful thing."*

*-CRISTINA TOSTADO, Bubbling Wells Elementary*

*"One of the greatest things I took from this week of study was that with art everyone can have a different view, idea, or understanding. None of which is wrong. Everyone interprets the arts in their own way and many times my mind would change or shift in a way hearing another's perspective. Other times I stayed with my original thought. Throughout the course I became less 'shy' and more vocal about my thoughts as I learned that my ideas are mine, there is not a right answer and be true to my thoughts."*

*-MARKIE CASHION, Franklin Elementary*





*"I can definitely say that I am more attuned to the details and the 'layers' of what I see, hear, and feel. After the morning we spent listening to the music of Dana Leong, I really am able to hear those layers every time I listen to music on the radio, which is the form of art I am most familiar with but I must say, I listen to it very differently than before!"*

-BRENDA RAGLAND  
Della Lindley Elementary

After a unit of study in  
the classroom, teachers  
comment on  
how students make  
connections between art  
and their world...

## Bridging the Gap – taking Summer Session into the classroom



During the course of the 2014-15 school year, teachers and Institute teaching artists partner on designing and implementing aesthetic education lessons in classrooms across Palm Desert, Palm Springs and Coachella Valley Unified School Districts. The following comments taken from partnering teachers' post-unit evaluations allow us a glimpse of their experience with the Aesthetic Education Program in their work as educators. Partnering teachers were asked "How do MTI aesthetic education units of study contribute to your students' learning experience and why is it important for you and your students to partner with the McCallum?" This is how they responded.

# From the unit: *Walking the Tightrope*



"Students work cooperatively reading scripts. They practice using varying voice and intonation. They learn how to connect with an audience. They dissect and deeply notice symbolism and details. In addition, the field trip to the McCallum Theatre is something that most of them would not otherwise experience. All of these things contribute immensely to their learning experience and is something they will never forget."

—JILL SPIKE

Agua Caliente Elementary School

"I thought it was a great experience. The kids loved acting, and they learned a lot from the play. I think this partnership is important because the kids really enjoy seeing something they read come to life in the theater, and the whole experience reinforced the idea that literature can be enjoyable."

—SARAH BASS, Bubbling Wells Elementary School

"I think my ability to ask questions across the curriculum has been enhanced from this experience. I now find myself taking more time to notice things - and I'm encouraging my students to do the same."

—KATHLEEN HARTUNG, Ronald Reagan Elementary School

"Conversations of death, dying, loss, destruction, war; poverty or forgiveness is rarely discussed in school. This is the most unique quality of this presentation, a bold step in a delicate direction. *Walking the Tightrope* begins a discussion on loss and how people relate on an intimate level. I'm proud that McCallum can bring a production that shakes us out of our comfort zone and makes us human again."

— JORGE ROSALES

Benjamin Franklin Elementary School

"I think this opens the eyes of our students to things they would never experience without the work the McCallum Theatre is doing. I didn't especially care for this play. However, just the experience of seeing a play, even if they didn't like it, affords them the chance to see how a play performed live is so different from something they see on TV. They really got into the concept of what actors and actresses have to do to bring across how a character feels and thinks. It was very valuable!"

—SHANNON EALY, Cathedral City Elementary School



# From the unit: *Royal Ballet of Cambodia*



"It was a reminder to look at other cultures from a different perspective, and when I did this the experience slowed down and I saw more details."

—CHRISTINA MIRAMONTES  
Bella Vista Elementary School

"Partnering with the McCallum Theatre allows students to experience something new and unknown and they also have the opportunity to learn about a specific group of people, in this case the people from the Cambodian Royal Ballet."

—RUTH SANCHEZ  
Two Bunch Palms Elementary School

"The students are able to learn and experience a work of art they may never have the opportunity to experience again in their lifetime. This is something they will always remember doing in 5th grade. It also allows me to see an artistic side of students that I don't normally get to see."

—LISA PERKINS  
Rio Vista Elementary School

"This lesson took history to another level. It was engaging, because it included music, dance, art, and writing. Students were able to see how the content areas are all connected. They were also able to do hands-on activities. The McCallum helps support teachers by developing and creating units of study that challenge students to think deeply."

—KRISTI VANCE, Katherine Finchy Elementary School



# From the unit: *Dana Leong Trio*

"When you can give students connections they are able to learn anything better. Now they have a connection to use when studying the constellations. I have shared a song with them for learning the states and capitals, as well as rap/rhyming verse for learning important words that they have to memorize. After working with the TA, I have more ideas. Interacting with the teaching artist to prepare, and then seeing a performance live, makes the music that we use in the classroom more personal for the students."

—ANGIE ROSS, Benjamin Franklin Elementary School

"It is vital to partner with MTI, otherwise students would see a great performance without near as much depth and understanding and appreciation for the performing arts. A close study like this also shows students that they too can be artists. Many have never had such a unique opportunity and are blessed to be learning from the BEST."

—MICHELLE ALTENBERN  
Coral Mountain Academy



"Most significant would be how everything came together so beautifully. Every session brought something different to each student and each student really participated to the full extent of their ability in every session. In our class discussion, after the performance, students were amazed at how many instruments were used and came together to make such wonderful music. They really enjoyed it."

—MICHELLE RODRIGUEZ, Ronald Reagan Elementary School

"To see my students' eyes light up when they recognize a part of the work of art during the performance -- it really makes it obvious how much the units of study contribute to their overall experience."

—WENDY SIMS  
Abraham Lincoln Elementary School

"I was amazed at how much the students enjoyed the performance. I have been teaching for many years and have taken students on numerous field trips to watch different performances at the McCallum. Before the Aesthetic Education Program and the pre-performance inquiry sessions with a teaching artist, many students could not appreciate or enjoy music or dance performances that were not familiar to them. I love to listen to them talk about tempo and rhythm. Thank you for this opportunity to share quality performance art with my students."

—SYLVIA KATHAWA, Sunny Sands Elementary School

# From the unit *Proprium: An Exhibit of Portraits*

"There was not one significant portion of the aesthetic lessons that stood out. It was the total number of lessons presented by the teaching artist that impacted the students. Each lesson provided a variety of enlightened moments for the children. Their new acquired knowledge and experience from the presentations was depicted in their final project, which made it so worthwhile for everyone."

—TRACEY SCOGGIN, Benjamin Franklin Elementary School

"I think students moved away from the need for realism. It was very empowering for them to realize that they could choose a non-traditional style or color palette, and still create a self-portrait that was valid and meaningful."

—MARY BATOK  
Abraham Lincoln Elementary School



"We connected character traits to the moods the artist were trying to convey via color, shape, shadows. Also we compared and contrasted the different "texts" we analyze. For example, the compositions and written nonfiction text in class."

—MARTHA LABERGE, Benjamin Franklin Elementary



"A huge first grade CCSS is the ability to isolate the main idea and details of stories. *Proprium* develops this standard by deeply noticing the artist through a painting to determine meaning and 'what' were interests that shaped the artist's life."

—BEVERLY YERIAN, Rancho Mirage Elementary School

"Several students enjoyed learning about Francis Bacon and used his self-portrait as a guide for their own. Also, students integrated use of knowledge of space, moods, color, and lighting into their self-portraits. For example, one of my students mentioned she used the "colors of the rainbow to show peace and happiness" that feels. Another student had an 'exaggerated smile' because of how happy he was. :)"

—STEPHANIE YANEZ, Benjamin Franklin Elementary School



McCallum Theatre  
73000 Fred Waring Drive  
Palm Desert, CA 92260

phone: 760-346-6505 | fax: 760-776-6197

[www.mccallumtheatre.com](http://www.mccallumtheatre.com)