



wisconsin *art education* association

Winter 2011, WAEA e-ArtTimes Archive

On October 27 & 28, the **Wisconsin Art Education Association** hosted its 61st Annual Fall Conference in beautiful Eau Claire. The conference focused on “*Tools for Creativity*”, which created a platform for sharing, networking and collaborating between presenters, vendors and special guests. Hosting the conference at the Eau Claire Regional Art Center gave it a nostalgic feeling, which provided a sense of tranquility and comfort.

New features to the conference were the *Vendor Meet and Greet*, which provided conference participants the opportunity to spend time with the vendors and learn about new materials. This was a great addition that allowed us to make a personal connection to vendors who are consistently improving and introducing new art materials to push our creativity inside the art classroom. Another was inviting an art student to present a presentation on *Recycling T-shirt Fashion*. As an art teacher, witnessing a student present to a group of art teachers is heartwarming, personal and nerve-racking. A ball of emotion grew watching every move and following every word hoping to ensure no errors in the delivery. After this presentation I was able to talk to some of the art teachers at the presentation. They stated that they loved the idea of recycling those old t-shirts, giving them a new life, and being on the receiving end of a student-directed lesson was quite the experience.

Lastly, hearing our 2011 Keynote Speakers; **Kristen Dexter, Barb Reinke, Ben Schumaker** and **George Tzougros** speak about the power of creativity, networking and creating opportunities for our art students to share their artistic talents with the world provide me with that extra boost to keep pushing and pushing to advocate for Art Education.

This is just a small sampling of what happened at the WAEA conference. Throughout the month of November and December we will be sharing more conference highlights so stay tuned.

Sincerely,

□ Frank Juarez
WAEA President

Tracy Hunter-Doninger– Southwest Regional Vice President

WAEA Conference... What a BLAST!!!

Wow! What an amazing conference! The 2011 program was jam packed with new and innovative ideas for art educators from technology, to games in the art room, to hands-on learning. In every session I saw art teachers collaborating, exchanging ideas, and celebrating art education.

The pre-service teachers from the University of Wisconsin-Madison attended their first Wisconsin Art Education Association Conference and felt inspired. They cannot wait to have their own classes and use the fantastic ideas and lessons they learned at Eau Claire. WAEA has left a lasting impression on all of us as we look towards the future of art education in Wisconsin.



Funny Lessons, Fun Time

Grafton High School Art Department invited cartoonist/illustrator, Sam Sharpe, to work with drawing students for two days in November. Sam, a Madison native, currently lives and works in Chicago. Sam wrote, directed and illustrated 2 videos, *The Fantastic Magnifico*, and *Geek Squad, Saving the World One Computer at a Time*. He has also recently published, along with David Goodrich, the full length graphic novel, *Viewotron*.

Grafton art students prepared for Sam's visit by studying several styles of graphic novels as well as a variety of cartoonists. Students then created a unique character and put that character into a situation that led to the story line. They also learned about several drawing tips to keep in mind while developing strong graphic images. Students then prepared and penciled-in a multi-page graphic booklet.

Upon Sam's arrival, students watched a presentation about his journey to become a cartoonist. Then each student presented his or her individual sketch. Sam helped make suggestions for improvement. Then he demonstrated a variety of character development sketches, as well as, some framing and inking techniques. At the end of the first session, students were assigned to take their cartoons home to improve any compositions and to begin inking.

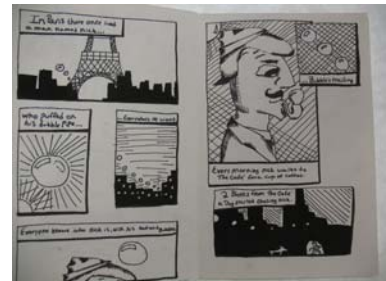


Throughout session two Sam Sharpe continued a variety of drawing, character, and inking demonstrations. He also taught students the importance of composing each page with black space. Students continued to ink in their own mini graphic novels. By the end of session two, Sam and the students discussed the importance of practice, accepting the fact that much of,

(especially the first new creations), what anyone invents may not work the first, fifth or fiftieth time. Sam showed his sketch books, filled with ideas that may inform some of his work, but mostly taught him about the virtues of practice, risk-taking, and accepting the fact that to get something good, it is still a lot of hard work.

Students continued work on their own comics for three additional class periods. Many were excited and quite pleased with their results. Some admitted that, while comics were not exactly "Their Thing", they had fun taking a risk and practicing something new. It seems that all had an additional bonus of fun when students passed around their finished products for each other to read. Laughter and guffaws rang through the halls.

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Lee Amborn – Middle School Representative Article

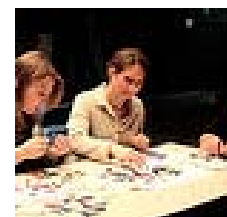
WAEA Conference 2011, Eau Claire, WI

This years' conference was a huge success based not only on conversations I had with attendees but exhibitors as well. The conference was well attended and there were lots of opportunities. Participant had the opportunity to go to workshops to learn new techniques and gather information on various topics from art websites to portfolio reviews. My particular favorite was the self-guided tour of the Eau Claire's sculptures down Barstow Street.



The sculptures ran the full spectrum of subject matter from whimsical to serious, from Non-objective to very specific subjects, and from full color to polished bronze. I thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to take my time and wander the street spending as much or as little time soaking up inspiration from each individual piece. If you are interested in seeing sculptures, it is definitely worth the trip to Eau Claire to take it in. But if you cannot fit the trip into your holiday schedule you can still see the show by going to Google.com and searching "Eau Claire Sculpture tour". You will find a few good examples of the work. Of course it isn't the same as being there, physically walking around each of the sculptures, seeing the detail, and "take it all in", but you will have a chance to see most of the work. Either way, you won't be disappointed.

Lee Amborn
Middle Level Representative
WAEA



Gary J. Boisvert - West Central Vice President Article

Public Relations and Promoting Your Art Department

Recently, I received an electronic mail string asking me to generate a questionnaire to members within our district. The purpose is to generate both feedback and ideas on how to create a positive “public relations” for your school’s art program. This questionnaire looks at efforts to connect with parents to administrators, from the public to the school board, from the athletes to the science department, within the walls of the school to the community, and within the state. Please look for that e-mail from me within the next few weeks and share your thoughts. If you have any questions to include in that questionnaire, please contact me at garyboisvert@rocketmail.com.

In my high school department I have gone to great efforts to get my student’s artworks visible within the community. I am constantly signing up interested individuals, as well as, all the art students to participate in a variety of art shows. When the community recognizes the students’ talents, the interest in art grows and our art department advances. We currently have had students design their own t-shirts at our school with the simple slogan “Art Matters” on the front. To make such a statement is bold, as well as, implies various mediums. The logo is surrounded with a camera, paints, designs, etc. Being a parochial school, we did a “play on words” on the back of the t-shirt with the statement: “How Great Thou Art.” “Art” is emphasized by a design including a different color surrounded by a pattern. When we have spirit days at school for various sports (which I support) our art students and art club members can wear their “art spirit shirts.” It is a small step, but a positive step.

Finally, please keep in mind that the February 1, 2012 deadline for our West Central Art Show at the La Crosse Public Library is fast approaching. More details will be e-mailed to you shortly. Please e-mail me with any questions. I hope that each of you continue to be invigorated from our great Fall Conference that was held this past October. If you are like me, you are busy helping with decorations for the Winter/Christmas concerts for your music departments. Remember that the fine arts people are in this together with the other disciplines! Art Rocks!

Jodi Brzeinski – Private School Representative

Kicking my kids into gear

Recently I had to light a fire under my AP studio students and tell them they needed to kick it up a notch. I felt like they were holding back and not really producing high quality, highly engaging art. Now most times when I tell them something, it is usually in one ear and out the other, but I decided to enhance my lecture with a good old fashion book. Of course if I leave it up to them, they would not buy it and read it, so I broke this book up into chapters and am having them read a chapter a week and answer a few questions. The book that I am having them read is called Art and Fear, Observations on the perils (and rewards) of artmaking by David Bayles and Ted Orland. The students can either email me their answers, or most are choosing to answer

them right in their sketchbooks. I already saw a difference after week 2 and see them continuing to explore and be more creative now on week 5. The book is helpful for all artists and is a pretty quick read. I recommend it for all artists and teachers. Here are the questions I had the kids answer for each chapter.

Art and Fear Chapter One Reflections

Art is not a magical gift bestowed by the gods: you have the skills to create and do so well. You have to believe it, and you have to learn how to make your work distinctive – to you!

1. Our flaws are not our weaknesses in our art – explain. Why are even the failed pieces essential even to you?
2. Who do you want to be as an artist? How will you define yourself and in turn what mark are you willing to make on the world?
3. What path do you want to take this year as an artist? What do you want to get out of this class?
4. How do you want to nourish yourself with your art? What do you want to get out of making art?

Chapter 2 Art and Fear Questions

1. Making art is revealing and dangerous. How do you get past the self-doubt, not quit, forge ahead?
2. Do not let your current goal be your only goal. What unresolved issues or loose threads do you want to carry out in your next pieces, how will you do this?
3. Quitting is different than stopping. Art is a process of stopping and starting. What is your active participation with your pieces so they are no longer just potential? How are you going to manipulate the media to get it to do what you want?

Chapter 3 art and fear questions

1. What are your fears about yourself and your reception by others? How is this preventing you from doing your own work or your best possible work?
2. You make good work by making lots of not so good work. What does this mean and how do you measure this to good work?
3. Whatever you have is whatever you need to produce your best work. How do you get to that, what is your best work?
4. Ask your work what it needs not what you need. Look at your work clearly – take a step back, without judgment, without need or fear, without wishes or hopes. Listen to your work. What does it say it needs?

Chapter 4 Art and Fear questions

1. How important is the acceptance of your art during critique? Why? Should it be about acceptance?
2. What truly is the purpose of critique? What should you be getting out of critique?
3. Acceptance means having your work counted as the real thing, approval means having people like it. Is either of these really important when exploring or risk taking in your art? What do you want the end results to look like, how are you going to execute it?

Chapter 5 art and fear questions

1. When is it right to stick with familiar tools and materials and when is it right to reach out and embrace those that offer new possibilities?
2. Working within the self-imposed discipline of a particular form eases the prospect of having to reinvent yourself with each new piece. How can you make new challenging pieces without having to reinvent yourself?
3. How are you going to use what you know to make something new and challenging to you?

Chapter 6 Art and Fear Questions

1. Think about the purpose in your work. What message do you want your viewer to get from it?
2. How can you say what you want to say, create the art you need to to be expressive, yet still have the freedom to display the work that you need to in our environment?
3. Competition can be self-destructive. Do you agree? Why or why not?
4. Do you need the rest of the world to tell you your work is ok? Are you ok with your own work enough to view everyone else's opinion as just that – opinion?

Chapter 7 Art and Fear Questions

1. Most people stop making art when they stop being a student. Figuratively or literally, can this be both? Why or why not?
2. Can nothing really useful be learned from viewing others' work? Why or why not?
3. Does it help you to know others' processes? Why or why not?

Chapter 8 Art and Fear Questions

1. Is your art worth doing? What about your art is worth doing?
2. Art that deals with ideas is more interesting than art that deals with technique. Agree / disagree? Should technique have a place in art? Why or why not?
3. Respond automatically to the familiar and you are free to respond selectively to the unfamiliar. What does this mean to you and your art?
4. Style is the natural consequence of a habit. Style is habit, is this good or bad? Do you know what your style is? How do you know what your style is?

Chapter 9 Art and Fear Questions

1. How can you make art that satisfies you?
2. The only work really worth doing – the only work you can do convincingly – is the work that focuses on the things you care about. What things do you care enough about to make them into a piece of art, why?

Danielle Penney, VAC State Chair

Visual Arts Classic

The long awaited prompts should be available by November 3, 2011. I would like to thank everyone for their patience while the VAC Committee created the outstanding prompts for Art as Commentary 2012. The new team registration form is available online at <http://www.wiarted.org/>.

The North Regional at Northland College in Ashland has been changed to Friday March 23, 2012. If you or someone you know is interested in participating in the Visual Arts Classic 2012 please have them contact me at vac@wiarted.org or my VAC Co-Chair/Registration Coordinator, Nancy Zabler at vac3@wiarted.org.

Sadly, we will not be offering a Regional at Cardinal Strich for VAC 2012. We were unable to find a coach that could take on the responsibilities of Milwaukee Area Regional Chair at this time. Teams from the Milwaukee area wishing to compete will be divided amongst the competitions in the lower portion of the state that have available space for additional teams. I am hopeful that we will find someone to facilitate this Regional for VAC 2013.

Just another reminder to mark your calendars for the State meet is Friday April 13!

Flags 2011 the VOTE!

and the winner is...

Maddi Wettstein, Aquinas High School, Gary Boisvert- Teacher



Youth Art Month....Wisconsin....."Art Shapes the World!"



Dear Art Teachers,

The Wisconsin Art Education Association will once again be sponsoring the flag design contest. This is a wonderful opportunity for student designers to get involved at both the state and national level. Flags will be due **December 3, 2011 to Jen Sweeney E7274 160th Ave Mondovi, WI 54755**. This year we will recognize the top designer and twelve honorable mention designers at the Capitol ceremony in March 2012.

Tips for designing your flag:

- A flag is more than colored cloth; it contains symbols that mean something to people...so make sure you include the Youth Art Month symbol in your design.
- Also you should have a theme to your design that is representative of Art and the state of Wisconsin. Use colors, animals, state symbolism, map shapes, etc. to do this.
- KEEP YOUR DESIGN SIMPLE.
- Stay away from the edge of the design blank with any important portions of your design.
- DO NOT change the proportions of the flag rectangle...when blown up your design must fit in the 3X5 foot flag blank
- Make sure you include your full name, school address and teachers name, membership number and email. Please print so the writing is easier to read.

Jen Sweeney

Wisconsin Art Education Association President Elect 2011-2013

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Gaylund K. Stone, PhD - WAEA Higher Education Representative

Creativity, Collegiality, Commerce and Competition

We are fundamentally conflicted. Our capitalist/consumerist culture languishes among the ruins of a decaying industrial veneer. Children enter school, are assigned a grade level and room, sit in rows or around tables arranged according to the grid, and carry out prescribed exercises that are often purchased or downloaded from anonymous sources. The managers of classrooms and schools decry the absence of creativity and engagement while children march lockstep toward a set of predetermined outcomes. Assessment and testing programs require and affirm the importance of those specific

measurable outcomes. New technologies provide the illusion of escape from our mechanized confines, but the virtual world is constructed according to its own set of pre-programmed possibilities. A keynote speaker at a recent art education conference urged teachers to advocate for the arts in their local communities. Creativity was described as an essential part of education and the attending educators were told that all the materials they needed were "downloadable" and that "everything was already done for them." I'm not certain how many in the audience caught the tragic irony.

Should someone, through their own initiative or through some accidental set of events, achieve extraordinary success in their classroom, it is either dismissed as a fluke, or it is immediately replicated - usually with very different results. Just the hope of success in the midst of the customary conformity, however, is enough to encourage a feeding frenzy, as educators try to share ideas and spread the news of their achievement. They do, after all, care for their students more than they do the linear standards or outcomes to which they are expected to comply.

The sharing of good ideas is to be applauded even with the recognition that teaching is more about human relationships and environment than it is about the concrete methods or classroom procedures that actually lend themselves to replication. Sharing confirms that we are not alone in our knowledge or instincts, that progress may be possible if only people would come around in their thinking and practice to those things we have found to work. Sharing, however, is not universal, particularly in those places where it has the potential to have the greatest effect. Colleges and universities seldom share ideas beyond their own campuses. While individual scholars may publish or otherwise disseminate information, the secrets of successful practice are rather carefully guarded. Universities, after all, are in competition for the same population of potential students. Unique pedagogies, facilities, and theoretical approaches determine the distinctive character of an institution, a character that translates into tuition dollars. The conflict that exists between our concern for the well-being of children/students/colleagues and the very real economic needs of individual institutions and the broader society prevent us from doing what we should. It is important that art educators in higher education at least maintain a professional dialogue and work for the benefit of students - regardless of the institution those students attend.

The sharing that occurs in education, at all levels, is usually carried out in conventionalized settings - professional conferences and conventions, a format that, replete with vendors and extensive advertising, clearly displays the uncomfortable alliance between education and commerce. The mark of the convention-goer is the imprinted bag filled with complimentary merchandise. Attendance at these events has gradually declined for reasons, I believe, that are related as much to their ineffectiveness as to their inconvenience and cost. The problem that presents itself is this: how do groups of professionals effectively communicate their ideas and experiences to colleagues in a manner that can both avoid commercial competition and maximize the effect upon students in the classroom? A new model is needed.

I would suggest that less is more and that personal, face-to-face communication is more effective than any format in which information is broadcast to an anonymous audience. To accomplish this, we need to move away from the large-scale conference to the more intimate and academically rigorous environment of the small seminar. In a world where people seem to favor the 'big box' megastore over the small family-operated business, we need to move in the opposite direction and abandon the superficially attractive in favor of the substantial. The measures of success in the marketplace are different from those in educational settings. People need to meet in person to closely discuss sets of ideas and practices and to do so in the small numbers that require attention and engagement. Large conferences addressing broad, often ambiguous, themes need to be replaced with small groups focused upon clearly defined interests. Fifty minute sessions devoted to answering the "how to..." questions need to be replaced, or at least be supplemented by, longer engagements considering questions like "why?" or "so what?" Just as classrooms should be places of constructing meaning, our conferences and professional development opportunities should lead participants to construct meaning within their own teaching practices. It would seem only reasonable that professional development mirror the best practices we advocate but, in our current state, demanding substantial academic growth as part of professional development in art education may appear as a radical proposal.

Just as we urge students to devote time and effort to their work, it is our professional responsibility to do the same. Professional growth must go beyond acquiring a couple of quick project ideas. We must model the kind of engaged learning that we desire from our students. Our present scheme of professional development encounters two primary and related conflicts: the conflict of education and commerce and the conflict between substantial scholarly growth and superficial engagement. Perhaps it is time to consider two formats for professional development, the large scale commercial marketplace for selling materials and technical information, and the small scale symposium for significant scholarly engagement. I do not believe that they can function properly in the same setting. The values, beliefs, and practices that define who we are individually as teachers and underlie all of what we do in the classroom should be cherished and handled with care and concern. They require time and attention. They demand hard work and the very best use of our skills. The children that ultimately leave our schools are the real 'outcomes' of our programs. How many of your family heirlooms came from Walmart?

As always, I invite your comments and dialogue.

Gaylund