Getting Started with Community Arts - Roger Whiting - Gallery Talk Notes 5/16/2014 Talk sponsored by the Salt Lake City Arts Council ©2014 Roger Whiting May be copied and shared for educational purposes in its full form

# **General Art Class**

Description: Class during school dedicated to the learning of art elements, principles and history for the purpose of increasing students' appreciation of visual culture and ability to create their own art Time commitment of artist: 1 year with youth, absurd amount of preparation

**PROS:** Students learn about elements and principles of art and learn how artists have used art in response to historical events that have shaped our world. Students develop an appreciation and understanding of various cultures and subcultures. Students develop, express and display their discoveries among their peers and receive validation for creating objects of beauty that they have formed on their own using proven artistic principles and their own experimentation with those principles.

**CONS:** Class sizes tend to be large (with possible exception of private school), little one-on-one time with artist. Students do not have time to work in-depth on any specific style or tradition of art.

### **Guest Artist Visit:**

Description: Invite an artist to visit your classroom, share what they do, and have a brief art activity Time commitment of artist: 1 hour with youth, 1/2 hour preparation

**PROS:** Children think about art as a profession and not simply a fun activity. If done correctly, students could notice how the path and growth of the artist is similar to their own.

**CONS:** Students could be intimidated by the skill level of the artist and think of the artist as another type of person from themselves.

## Family Art Night

Description: Invite an artist to lead a family art event where parents and siblings work with the students to create a work of art.

Time commitment: 1-2 hours with youth, 2 hours preparation

**PROS:** parents creating with children, parents validating art to children, can be accomplished with limited budget

CONS: Not much time for original decision-making.

#### **Festival Art Activity**

Description: Invite an artist to lead an art activity at an existing festival.

Time commitment: 5-6 hours with youth, 1 hour preparation

**PROS:** Fun, helps to make art part of the culture of the community. Acquaints your organization with the artist. Doesn't even truly need to be a professional artist leading activity (can simply be a volunteer interested in adding art to the festivities)

**CONS:** Limited commitment of time spent by participants. Not much time for original decisionmaking.

## Festival Art Project - Collaborative Design

Description: Invite an artist to lead an art activity resulting in the creation of an art project that will be installed in the school or donated to a local organization.

*Time commitment: 5-6 hours with youth, 4 hours preparation* 

**PROS:** Participants tend to stay for a while, lots of time creating alongside artist. Participants become co-creators and benefactors in a cause.

**CONS:** Sometimes more difficult to get participants at festival (as they do not keep resulting artwork). Less preparation (than a full artist residency), plus less time to complete project results in a less-refined artistic result.

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## Art Project - Artist Designed

Description: Invite an artist to design a work of art that students will help to create Time commitment: 5-10 hours with youth, 4-40 hours preparation

**PROS:** Participants get to experience working with artistic materials and methods to which they might not have been exposed before. Able to be accomplished with far less student contact time. Result of project might be more refined (in a technical sense) and perhaps more universally acceptable.

**CONS:** Project is less meaningful to participants since their own creative voice is not fully included.

### **Artist-Led Teacher Seminar / Workshop**

Description: Invite an artist to teach a lecture and/or workshop about an art movement or medium for which they have special expertise

Time commitment: 1-1.5 hours with teachers, 4-6 hours preparation

**PROS:** Participants get a greater appreciation for the specific artform and for arts in general. Teachers get an experience that reminds them of the joy of creating art. Teachers are able to carry the knowledge into their own classrooms. Possible to reach multiple classrooms with advanced art instruction with minimal investment of resources.

**CONS:** Telephone effect - Unless the teacher does their own research beyond the initial discussion, then instruction will not be as rich as it could be having the artist work directly with students.

## Artist Residency - Exploration

Description: Invite an artist to lead in a public show of artworks based in an artistic medium that the artist is not particularly comfortable with.

Time commitment: 8-40 hours with youth, 4-5 hours preparation

**PROS:** Students get to learn how to learn, experience the joy of overcoming failures and discovering divergent solutions to make up for inadequacies in skill level. The hierarchy of artist-as-superior is adjusted as students make discoveries about the artistic process that the artist has perhaps not encountered, and they are able to teach each other as they learn.

**CONS:** Art resulting from the project will not have the same refined look and feel as art created in an artist's traditional medium and process (it may not look good at all, even).

### **Artist Residency - Project**

Description: Invite an artist to lead in a work of art that students will help to brainstorm, design and create. Time commitment: 8-40 hours with youth, 4-10 hours preparation

**PROS:** Students go in-depth into a specific artistic history and process. While not as comprehensive as a normal art class on the basic fundamentals of art, it brings them to an understanding that even in a small subset of a specific art style (and its accompanying culture) there is a rich history to be found. By going from knowing little-to-nothing about a specific art form to becoming proficient with its use, they learn that they are able to understand and approach complicated tasks with time, creativity and effort. If done correctly, their artistic endeavors leave a lasting mark on the culture of their community.

**CONS:** Some students will not enjoy the specific artistic process as much as others. Art will, to some degree look like it was designed by youth (this is a negative trait if the aesthetics of the organization's administration deem it to be so). Unless they have an outlet in which to further their art education, such as an in-school art class or a local after-school art class, it will be much more difficult for them to develop the skills to effectively develop their own compositions and develop their specific strengths in art.