

INSIDE

People News	4
Regional News	5
2008 Co-Sponsored Academies	8
Division News	9
2008 Fellows Institute	12
2008 Award Winners	13
Issues Groups News	14
Book Reviews	21
Professional Opportunities	23
Books for Review	24



NEWS

Advancing Art Education

A Publication of the NATIONAL ART EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

1916 Association Drive, Reston, Virginia 20191-1590
703-860-8000 ■ www.naea-reston.org

Vol. 50, No. 2
April 2008
\$4.00



NAEA Announces Newly Elected Vice Presidents

NAEA members-at-large elected four individuals to serve as National Vice Presidents. Each Vice President represents their NAEA region: Eastern, Southeastern, Western, and Pacific. NAEA Vice Presidents serve 2 years as Vice Presidents-Elect, and as members of the Board of Directors for 2 years as Vice Presidents. The following members began their terms as Vice Presidents-Elect at the close of the 2008 NAEA National Convention:



Kim L. Defibaugh
Eastern Region



Patricia B. Franklin
Southeastern Region



Kathryn Hillyer
Western Region



Deborah Barten
Pacific Region

Congratulations!

INSIDE

Call for Nominations for President and Division Directors.

See p. 4.

COMMENTARY

Why Do We Teach Arts in the Schools? The dialogue continues. A response to Winner/Hetland

By Peggy Burchenal, Abigail Housen, Kate Rawlinson, and Philip Yenawine

What's wrong with saying that experience in the arts teaches abilities useful in other areas of schooling?

Strongly advocating teaching art for its own sake, Ellen Winner and Lois Hetland (*NAEA News*, Dec 2007) make the statement, "As schools cut time for the arts, they may be losing their ability to produce not just the artistic creators of the future, but innovative leaders who improve the world they inherit. By continuing to focus on the arts' dubious links to improved test scores, arts advocates are losing their most powerful weapon: a real grasp of what arts bring to education."

Citing a short study of art classes in two arts-based schools, Winner and Hetland argue that studio experience teaches essential "thinking dispositions" that should be taught for their own merit. Such dispositions include "visual-spatial abilities, reflection, self-criticism, and the willingness to experiment and learn from mistakes." Many of us agree that these abilities can be learned through high quality art experience over time, but all are inferred behaviors unproven in the Winner/Hetland study.

Winner and Hetland know better than that; a 2001 literature review by them rejected virtually all research up to that time attempting to document the phenomenon that students' experience in art affects academic achievement generally. Only a few years later, however, their own research has none of the characteristics they demand of others. In order to prove their thesis—that the arts should be taught for themselves—they conducted a very short study in a specialized environment with a small sample analyzed by highly subjective criteria. Their claims are hard to take seriously, especially if you are

indifferent to the arts already, as those who willingly "cut time for the arts" obviously are.

Meanwhile, Winner and Hetland have overlooked accumulating evidence that documents more specific thinking skills that have, in some cases, had an impact on writing and test scores. It seems irresponsible to ignore these studies just because standardized math and language tests are of limited scope and value. If, indeed, art experience can impact test performance, shouldn't we call attention to that fact? All students deserve the variety of skills that art can foster; they are being judged harshly by the tests so easy for Winner and Hetland to dismiss.

We know that the process of viewing—of extracting information from a work of art—builds our skills of perception and comprehension, and that the harder and longer we look, the more we deepen our understanding. Why then should it be a losing proposition to assert that art can help young people learn skills they need to be successful in school? Whether talking about studio activity or looking and thinking about art (preferably together), it's not limiting to say that as people learn wonderful things from authentic experience with art, they develop skills that can even help with tests.

That said, it is intellectually specious to argue that authentic experience leads to learning unless one can provide evidence. The various authors of this commentary have all been involved in such data collection, documenting lessons in looking using Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS). The data show that VTS produces specific thinking skills that students use when operating independently. More data on each study exists at websites listed in this commentary.

Abigail Housen and her colleagues developed VTS originally based on Housen's lengthy research into the thinking of viewers as they look at art. Finding that most viewers, even regular museum visitors, are in the two early viewing stages, VTS combined a student-centered teaching strategy with selected images, building on what data showed to be developmentally appropriate. VTS was then tested in several different sites in the US and abroad for over 10 years during which pre- and post-experimental treatment data were collected.

In our own era, the research detailing what skills students learn by responding thoughtfully to art objects, and the ideas they contain, speaks strongly for broadening our view of the role art can play in schools.

In two multiyear studies in the US, Housen was able to track positive stage change, the presence of the skills nurtured by VTS, and the transfer of these skills—supported observations (inference based on evidence), speculative thinking, elaboration, and revision—to objects of another nature. In one instance, the test scores of students in 8th grade leapt 23%, an increase credited to VTS, though Housen herself did not try to prove causation; the correlation was obvious to all involved, however, and widely acknowledged.

Writing samples collected in various sites over periods as short as one school year and as long as 5 years were analyzed for the presence of the thinking skills listed here. Even classroom teachers, undertaking their own action research, have been able to isolate and count such things as increased numbers and complexity of observations, evidential reasoning, and consideration of several possible meanings held simultaneously—speculative thinking. For more on Housen, see: www.vue.org (click on downloads).

Kate Rawlinson's team at The Wolfsonian-Florida International University, an art and design museum in Miami Beach, undertook a 3-year research project, funded by

(continued on p. 3)

Editor's Note

In the December 2007 issue of *NAEA News*, we featured a front-page story, reprinted with permission from *The Boston Globe*, by Harvard Project Zero educators/researchers Ellen Winner and Lois Hetland. The article highlights the position that arts education should be for its own sake, not for the possibility or purpose of raising children's scores on tests in other subject areas.

This commentary by another group of museum educators/researchers offers a different viewpoint on the issue.

Although NAEA does not officially endorse a position on this issue, we encourage the continuing dialogue/debate. NAEA members' views are always welcome.

Also note that on page 21 of this issue, Winner and Hetland's new book, *Studio Thinking: The Real Benefits of Visual Arts Education*, is reviewed by Kristin Congdon.

naea

SERVING THE
ART EDUCATION
COMMUNITY
SINCE 1947

NEWS



National Art Education Association

President

Bonnie B. Rushlow

Past-President

Susan J. Gabbard

President-Elect

Barry Shauck

Executive Director

Deborah B. Reeve

Board of Directors:

Ralph Caouette

John Fitzpatrick

Anne Henderson

Shirley Howard

Margaret Johnson

Betsy Logan

Diana McDougal

Melody Milbrandt

Rosie Riordan

Robert Sabol

Tel: 800-299-8321
703-860-8000

Fax: 703-860-2960

<http://www.naea-reston.org>

The *NAEA News* (ISSN 0160-6395) is published 6 times a year: February, April, June, August, October, and December by the National Art Education Association, 1916 Association Drive, Reston, Virginia 20191-1590.

Annual membership dues in the association: \$50 (Active Membership); \$40 (Association Membership); \$20 (Student Membership). Of these amounts, one-tenth is for a subscription to the *NAEA News*. Periodicals postage paid at Herndon, Virginia, and additional mailing offices.

Postmaster: Send address changes to: NAEA NEWS, NATIONAL ART EDUCATION ASSOCIATION, 1916 Association Drive, Reston, VA 20191-1590.

Deadlines for submitting material for the *NAEA News*—For the February issue, December 12; April issue, February 12; June issue, April 12; August issue, June 12; October issue, August 12; and December issue, October 12.

To submit items for *NAEA News*, send to lezell@naea-reston.org

Please allow up to 8 weeks to process new memberships and subscribers' publications.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

The Future According to Us

How do you begin to thank the many individuals who contributed to the success of this year's convention in New Orleans? First and foremost, I want to thank Dean Johns and the local convention committee. What a superb job they did in planning and organizing the many sessions, workshops, tours, and more ... Executive Director Deborah Reeve and the NAEA Staff spent untold hours over the past year working to ensure that your convention experience would be a positive one. And, where would we be without our wonderful exhibitors? Special thanks to our friends at Crayola® for the spectacular Mardi Gras event on opening night! To those who made presentations, facilitated sessions, led tours, and donated your time in so many other ways ... My hat goes off to you!

There is another group that worked extremely hard during the convention—a group that often goes unrecognized. The role of the NAEA **Delegates Assembly** is to study issues and recommend legislative and policy matters to the Board. The Delegates Assembly, which is made up of representatives from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, British Columbia, and the Overseas Art Education Association—as well as non-voting representatives from a variety of issue groups—convenes annually at the National Convention. There are currently 16 officially recognized issue groups—organizations made up of NAEA members with special interests. The issue groups provide individual members yet another vehicle for influencing the activities and policies of NAEA. I would like to express my personal thanks and appreciation to all the individuals who took a day and a half from convention activities to serve in this year's Delegates Assembly.

The 2008 Delegates Assembly concentrated its efforts on identifying issues that are pertinent to the field of art education and our profession, leading to the creation of an *NAEA Position Platform*. Delegates came to the convention ready to discuss their thoughts and ideas about timely issues in art education. From the identified topics, a position platform that speaks to 21st-century issues and concerns will be developed.

So what do we mean by a *position platform*? According to *dictionary.com*, a platform is “a body of principles on which a person or group takes a stand in appealing to the public; a set of principles.” Most national organizations—Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development (ASCD), National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP), and Music Educators National Conference (MENC), to name a few—have platforms based on their beliefs and ideals. It is important that NAEA represent the voice of art educators and take a stance on issues that define who we are and what we stand for.

For example, has your principal or a colleague ever asked you to take part in an activity that you did not feel was in the best interest of your students? One topic that comes to mind is the participation of elementary students in art contests. Did you know that NAEA already has a position statement on this topic? It is one of a handful of position papers that has been written by Delegates Assembly in the past (adopted March 2001). As I was looking for this particular policy on the “old” website, it took me about six clicks of the mouse before I found it. Unless you knew exactly what you were looking for, it would be extremely difficult to locate. Fortunately, when our new website is phased in over the next few months, it will be much easier to locate

What are the topics about which you need more information or clarification? Are there questions or controversial issues about which parents have asked you that you weren't quite sure how to answer? Where do we—National Art Education Association—stand on current trends in education?

research on timely issues and find answers to your questions. The delegates have begun to identify many of these topics that are relevant to our membership and need to be addressed. These platforms will be further developed by our delegates, issue groups, divisions, and other thought leaders. It will take the synergy of all of us working together to create this new paradigm for our Association.

What are the topics about which you need more information or clarification? Are there questions or controversial issues about which parents have asked you that you weren't quite sure how to answer? Where do we—National Art Education Association—stand on current trends in education? Delegates Assembly members will be studying these and other important questions throughout the year. If you have specific topics that you would like for the Delegates Assembly to consider, talk with your state association president and/or president-elect. They can help you identify the Delegates Assembly representative(s) from your state.

I would like to say a special thanks to our four outgoing Vice Presidents who completed their terms at the close of the 2008 convention: Margaret Johnson, Betsy Logan, Diana McDougal, and Bob Sabol. They each worked diligently to implement the new agenda format used in this year's Delegates Assembly. They have also made numerous contributions to the NAEA board and have been a pleasure to work with over the past several years. We welcome our incoming Vice Presidents: Larry Barnfield (Southeastern), Myrna Clark (Pacific), Debbie Greh (Eastern), and Dennis Inhulsen (Western), and look forward to working with you in the coming years.

This is an exciting time in the life of the National Art Education Association! I encourage you to re-engage in new and different ways in your professional community. We look forward to working with you as together we continue our journey. ■



Bonnie B. Rushlow, President

Middle Tennessee State University, Department of Art—Box 25, Murfreesboro, TN 37132. 615-904-8085, fax: 615-898-2254, brushlow@mtsu.edu

Elect: **Barry Shauck**, College of Fine Arts, School of Visual Arts, Boston University. 617-353-3373; fax 617-353-7217; bshauck@bu.edu

See the June issue of *NAEA News* for more 2008 NAEA National Convention coverage!

2008
A Feast for the Eyes!

naea

Now Join! Renew! Change Your Address!

All online at www.naea-reston.org/membership.html

To check membership dues changes for your state...

Go to www.naea-reston.org/membershipdues.html

Cleansing the Palette

There's a journalist named Bill Simmons—a sports-writer, actually, who does most of his writing for ESPN.com under his *nom de plume*: “The Sports Guy.” He’s young, brash, passionate ... and great fun to read if you have even the slightest interest in sports—or pop culture.

Among the various theories and sports-philosophy commentary Simmons has developed is the concept of the “juvenation machine.” He uses it when he’s writing about an athlete, especially an older athlete, whose play had been slumping for some years, but then, out of nowhere, starts out a new season with a long run of breakout performances. When no conventional explanation seems to apply, Simmons will only say the athlete must have visited the “juvenation machine.”

Since I am writing this column several weeks before our annual convention in New Orleans, I can only imagine the impact it is going to have on our organization as a whole, as well as each of us as individuals. But when I do imagine it, it feels to me that it will be like a visit to the “juvenation machine.”

I think the promise of this year’s convention, in this year’s host city, knows no bounds for the momentum it can give us. You see, I know every inch of the more-than-160 pages in our convention program book—every agenda item, every speaker, and the details of every breakout session ... and let me tell you, dramatic rejuvenation is just waiting for us.

Looking forward—post-convention—I see us energized by the entrepreneurial insights of artist Thomas Mann and author/educator Lynell Burmark, and by the fascinating research of physicist/curator Charles Falco. I see us enthralled by the artistry and charisma of artist and author Faith Ringgold.

I see us wandering in and out of more than a thousand presentations ... and off-site tours ... and museum events ... and hands-on workshops ... and walking tours about this famously historic city—gaining fresh perspectives, new relationships, and a burst of revitalizing energy.

I see us leaving New Orleans refreshed ... inspired ... literally propelled into a future, which we will band together more cohesively as a community to create.

But the reason I’m writing this prolonged daydream, of course, is because it’s only how I imagine things will be

after New Orleans—not necessarily how they *will* be. We all know the excitement of looking forward to an event, away from the momentum-weights of everyday life ... and how challenging it can be to maintain that energy and enthusiasm once we return home.

So I want to be absolutely certain that my imaginings are not wishful thinking. To that end, I propose the following action items for those of you who joined us in New Orleans—and for those of you who missed such an extraordinary gathering.

If you weren’t there, the first thing you need to do is find someone who was. Take them to lunch. Have them tell you what it was like. But don’t just listen to the substance of what they’re saying. Listen to their voice—the spark, the heat in it. Look at how their eyes light up when they tell you about listening to Catharine Fukushima talk about the breakthroughs discovered at Harvard’s Project Zero or observing the multi-disciplinary awesomeness of New Orleans’ Center for Creative Arts/Riverfront. You want to feed on that energy, bask in its warmth ... and then go to lunch with someone else who wasn’t there and pass those “good vibrations” on.

If you *were* in New Orleans, don’t wait for your colleagues who weren’t to come to you and ask about it. Go find them and bring them into the “change-is-gonna-come” atmosphere. Team up with other friends and colleagues who were there and make presentations or give mini-workshops. You have got to share the buzz.

Then you have to build on the buzz. Continue to develop your new collegial networks that took seed in New Orleans—While it is true that we are creating an extraordinary vehicle for virtual community in the new NAEA website that will be fully unveiled this fall, there is still no connection as powerful as the one that is made face-to-face.

Then make something happen. Choose a local initiative—one that’s in its infancy ... or dormant ... or perhaps one that is just a sparkle and beginning to take shape. Create your team, both local and virtual. Find partners outside of art education, even outside the education community—there are businesses and local entrepreneurs and philanthropists who may be waiting for a local initiative to come along and capture their imagination.

Get the wheels turning on this venture; get it in motion—then launch another initiative. When you succeed in lighting a high-impact fire, the partners you recruit for

If you were in New Orleans, don’t wait for your colleagues who weren’t to come to you and ask about it. Go find them and bring them into the “change-is-gonna-come” atmosphere ... You have got to share the buzz.

your first effort will be waiting in line to join your next one—and they’ll bring in additional players. There’s no reason that the dynamics of viral growth need to be confined to the digital universe.

But as long as we are living more and more in the digital universe, be sure to share your successes and best practices with the people you met in New Orleans. There is a good reason that the concept of synergistic effect has become a cliché—because it is *real*. Feed it. Grow it. Make it more a more powerful force for achieving your goals—because it is, indeed, a powerful force that we are launching in New Orleans.

As Buffalo Springfield once sang, “Something’s happening here ... and what it is ain’t exactly clear.” But NAEA is becoming more than an organization—we are becoming a movement. When we leave New Orleans, it will be with an ever deeper, ever stronger commitment to NAEA’s mission and vision.

So keep moving! Keep organizing! Keep leading! And together, we will keep the spirit of New Orleans and NAEA alive and thriving! ■

On a personal note, to the many friends and colleagues who comprise the NAEA community, please accept my deep and heartfelt gratitude for your condolences over the recent loss of my youngest sister Julie, her husband Michael, and their children, Jesse and Hannah. Your love and support continue to uplift!



Deborah B. Reeve,
NAEA Executive Director
NAEA, 1916 Association Drive,
Reston, VA 20191-1590
Dreeve@naea-reston.org

Why Do We Teach Arts continued from p. 1

the U.S. Department of Education’s Arts in Education Model Development and Dissemination Grant Program and evaluated by Curva and Associates. The Artful Citizenship curriculum integrated art into social studies content in grades three to five in three treatment schools and centered on VTS and related classroom/studio activities.

The executive summary of the project report concludes: “This evaluation study shows that integrating art in the curriculum is not just ‘Art for art’s sake,’ but clearly contributes to students’ critical thinking and measurable academic achievement as well. In fact, it would not be surprising to find that such curricular ‘enhancements’ may be the best test preparation the schools can provide.” The report’s authors also state, “Correlations between growth in visual literacy and achievement were between .35 and .40, extremely high figures for variables associated with student achievement. These relationships did not manifest themselves in the comparison school.” Correlation, again, does not prove causation but project data, carefully examined, make it clear that little else could

have been responsible for the impact noted. Students in Artful Citizenship showed 12% growth in their FCAT reading scores and 16% percent gains in FCAT math. For more, see: http://www.artfulcitizenship.org/main_content.html.

Peggy Burchenal and educators at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, aided by a research team from the Institute for Learning Innovation, also received a U.S. Department of Education grant for 3 years to study the impact of a multi-visit program on two schools with whom they have partnered for many years. Their intention was to document critical thinking skills, and also to watch the impact of their program on test scores. The fact that the researchers found no positive trend in scores did not diminish the clear evidence of the changes in thinking, not seen in control students.

Although another form of data, the Gardner Museum also taped students in both classrooms and in galleries, working in groups facilitated by teachers as well as independently without teacher intervention. The tapes allow us to see in action what researchers found in data. It is clear to

anyone watching that kids in third through fifth grades, in schools that struggle to make adequate yearly progress, are capable of astute observations, thoughtful interpretations, debating possible meanings, and providing evidence to back up ideas. They have learned what they have been taught, but beyond that they are engaged, interested, comfortable, and collaborative. You can read more and see the tape by visiting: <http://www.gardnermuseum.org/education/gardner.html>.

These separate but related studies reveal several constructs useful to all of us in art education. One is that all three identified specific skills observed in most of the experimental subjects: Each study showed a marked increase in observations, interpretations, and supplying evidence. Whether or not the projects produced higher test scores, a state-by-state analysis of standardized tests demonstrates that these particular skills are required for students to pass, and specifically for them to excel. Both Housen and Wolfsonian data indicate that given roughly 30 hours of direct instruction over 3 years, we can predict skills that reliably

transfer from the art experience to the distant world of language and math tests. In other words, substantial and sustained art experience can and does produce skills that are transformative to students generally.

It is important to herald this new data if we are ever to change the status of art in schools. Too few of those in charge of money and curriculum value the arts either for themselves or for what they teach. We need to remind ourselves—and inform others—that throughout history, objects were created to serve functional ends, not for their own sake. Art has been used to convey important ideas about culture and community. We see art made in service of virtually every religion. Art is a primary tool through which history is told and taught.

In our own era, the research detailing what skills students learn by responding thoughtfully to art objects, and the ideas they contain, speaks strongly for broadening our view of the role art can play in schools. Why limit it to the art room when so many studies have shown how powerful art can be embedded in the curriculum? ■