

Maine Arts Educators Receive Recognition

During the annual Arts Education Advocacy Day celebration on March 9 at the State House in Augusta, two Maine arts educators were recognized by MAAE and First Lady Karen Baldacci for their outstanding work. Dr. Trudy Wilson, University of Southern Maine Professor of Art Education, was honored as the recipient of the 2009 Bill Bonyun Award, and Camden theater educator Rick Ash was the Honored Nominee.

Mrs. Baldacci's remarks included these: "The Bill Bonyun Award is given each year in honor of Bill Bonyun of Westport Island, Maine, whose career as a folklorist, storyteller, singer, writer, and educator spanned over half a century. It is awarded to an arts educator, artist/educator or community member who has

- made significant contributions to the arts in our schools
- shown outstanding commitment and dedicated service in arts education
- exemplified talent and professionalism as an artist or arts advocate
- been an inspiration to students, teachers, and the community.

"This year we honor Dr. Trudy Wilson. Trudy's exemplary work includes developing a strong undergraduate art education program at USM, being a founding member of the Arts are Basic Coalition, serving as President of the Maine Art Education Association, and serving on the panel for Maine Learning Results revisions.

"Kal Elmore, Bangor High School Art Department Chair, said of Trudy, "Trudy is a kind and gentle leader and role model for others who advocate for the arts. Her comments are always intelligent, thoughtful, and are evidence of her knowledge of arts education issues. Her wise counsel is sought

by all who have worked with her.'

"Sandy Brennan, President of Maine Arts Education Association, said, "Trudy teaches, advises, nurtures and directs new art teachers to be the best they can be for the sake of art education in Maine.'

"We are all delighted to have this opportunity to honor the extraordinary work of Dr. Trudy Wilson. The impact of her deep thinking and tireless advocacy for arts education will be seen in Maine for years to come. She's a real Maine arts education treasure!"

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Top right, Dr. Trudy Wilson, First Lady Karen Baldacci presents the 2009 Bill Bonyun Award.

Right: Rick Ash, Honored Nominee



The Arts at the Core of My Education and My World

By Gwennyth Fraser

When I think about my education, I know that the arts are at the core of its existence. Next year, I will be going to high school, and I am becoming increasingly concerned about the high-school curriculum. I've realized that the things I love

and am most excited about may not be included as an essential part of my high-school schedule. Next year I will have to choose between art class and jazz band. Even though these have been my passions since elementary school, lately they

are considered "unnecessary" in the high-school curriculum. The truth is, to me they are the most necessary classes of all.

In most classes students have to be committed to the facts. When a student walks into the math room, answers are either right or wrong. Certainly this educates a large part of our brains very nicely, just like the facts we learn in science, history and chemistry. But in art class, music or drama, we exercise a different part of the brain. When a student walks into the music room with a question, it often leads to new explorations, like, "As the listener, what do you think?" In the art room, we may be asked, "Was Van Gogh really just completely crazy?" Or "Is abstractness a virtue, or is it just scribbles excused as artwork?"

Questions without answers often prove to be the most thought-inducing lessons. They open up interesting debates,

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Taylor James Crawford and Gwennyth Fraser

How the Arts are Important to Me

By Taylor James Crawford

I'm a seventh grade student at Messalonskee Middle School, and I live in Belgrade. I'm honored to be able to speak to you today about how the arts are important to me.

Schools and communities offer lots of different activities for young people. Many kids are

into sports and playing on teams. I tried playing soccer when I was in elementary school, but it felt confusing to me, and I didn't enjoy it. I just didn't have much confidence in that kind of competition.

Lots of kids are interested in the arts, and I am one of them.

When I was five years old, I used to tell my mom, "I want to be on TV," and when I was nine, I told my mom that I wanted to be in a play. We found an audition, and that is how I started my acting career in community theater. I've been in productions with the Open Book Players in

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The Arts at the Core of My Education and My World

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allowing kids to take a stand and learn how to “agree to disagree” with their peers. This stimulates our imagination and allows us to have a personality. It works the part of our brain that finds the flaws in conformity and makes us strive to be individual.

The arts are a way of connecting teachers and students. I love that my science teacher performs in the school play with us. Teachers and students form a bond when they are working in the art room together after school or sharing the applause at a performance. Poetry, music, art, and dance also provide teachers and counselors with powerful views into their students’ thoughts and feelings.

Just as the person needs to develop different parts of their brain, communities need to have equilibrium as well. Living in a town can’t just be about where the taxes go. It needs to be about culture and community traditions. Neighbors come out when the school chorus performs a concert. Everyone enjoys artwork when the cafeteria or a local business becomes a makeshift art gallery. The veterans in my town really appreciate the fact that the school band marches in the Memorial Day parade. And by participating in this band event, I am more aware and appreciative of the veterans in my town.

Facts provide the outline that we need for success, but it takes more than that to truly accomplish something in our lives and to progress to new levels. The arts keep us from becoming mindless robots. It’s the things we create ourselves that truly shape our species: the music we listen to, the clothes we wear, the stories we develop; these are what allow us to be our own selves.

This is why we need to keep the arts as an important part of schools. Not because they add hours to our curriculum, but because they add to us as people. Without something to nourish the imaginative part of our brains, we’re doomed to a society of black and white. The arts are about working together and exposure to new ideas and customs. They are about exploration and invention, accepting differences, being your own person, and growing stronger as an individual, a community and a nation. ■

Gwenyth Fraser is an 8th grader at Carrie Ricker Middle School. She delivered this speech during Arts Education Advocacy Day on March 9, 2009.

How the Arts are Important to Me

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Gardiner, the Waterville Opera House, the Sandy River Players in Farmington, and have attended many theater camps.

Acting allows me to play characters other than myself and express what is inside of me. That is especially important for someone that has to deal with the challenges of Asperger Syndrome, and that is also part of who I am.

I have made many friends from working on plays, and that means a lot to me. My parents help me by driving me around to play rehearsals, and Lucy Rioux, the director of the Open Book Players, has helped me learn a lot in the past few years.

I enjoy writing stories and plays about characters that have interesting adventures. I write at least three times a week and feel it is a great way to express my thoughts. Reading books and watching movies lets me escape into a land of make-believe where anything seems possible. It is like stepping into another world.

When I am on stage, it allows me to express who I am to a lot of people. I get very focused and have a confidence and strength I didn’t even know was inside me. My parents are surprised at how carefully I follow directions and do exactly what we rehearse.

Theater and the arts make my life fun and interesting. My plans in the future are to act in plays, movies, and TV shows. I like to make home movies and might direct a film someday. Theater arts make me feel special and important and make me feel like I can help people have a good time and enjoy a good story.

Thank you for letting me share mine with you. ■

Taylor James Crawford is a seventh grade student at Messalonskee Middle School. He presented this speech during Arts Education Advocacy Day on March 9, 2009.

Nine Maine Arts Teachers Awarded Fellowships to Study Around the World

MAAE and the Maine Community Foundation (MaineCF) announce the 2009 Maine Arts Teachers Fellowship award winners. Nine teachers from across the state are receiving fellowships to pursue studies in theater, music and a variety of visual arts around the world.

The teachers, their schools, and their projects:

Rebecca Bean, *Cape Elizabeth Middle School*, to study music, dance, and culture in Ghana, West Africa

Joanne Maloney, *Wentworth Intermediate School, Scarborough*, to study mosaic tile production at the Mosaic Art School in Ravenna, Italy

Kristin McKinlay, *Edmunds Consolidated School*, to study digital printing and hand embellishment at the Split Rock Arts Program in Minnesota

Linda Phillips, *Maranacook Community Middle School, Readfield*, to travel to Ardèche, France, to attend the TASIC Art Teacher Workshop

Caitlin Ramsey, *Massabesic Middle School, East Waterboro*, to participate in the Conductors Institute at the New England Conservatory of Music

Pam & Kevin Rhein, *Messalonskee Middle & High Schools, Oakland, James Bean School, Sidney, Belgrade Central School*, to participate in the Choral Arts International Festival of the Aegean in Syros, Greece

Shira Singer, *Islesford Elementary School, Swan's Island School*, to study fabric design and surface embellishment at Quilting by the Lake in Syracuse, New York

Debra Susi, *Warsaw Middle School, Maine Central Institute, Pittsfield*, to study theater production at the La MaMa International Symposium in Spoleto, Italy.

"The fellowships allow Maine arts teachers to reconnect with their disciplines in a meaningful manner," said Carol Trimble, MAAE executive director. "These teachers are committed to their arts—and to their teaching," Meredith Jones, MaineCF CEO, added.

The Maine Arts Teachers Fellowship program, administered by MAAE, is modeled on the New York City-based Surdna Foundation's Arts Teachers Fellowship Program. The Surdna Foundation and individual Maine Community Foundation donors provide the financial support for the Maine program. For more information on the fellowship program, visit the MAAE website at www.maineartseducation.org. ■

MATF panel of artists and educators meet in February to select 2009 Fellows.



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“We would also like to honor the work of educator Rick Ash from Camden Hills Regional High School in Rockport by naming him this year’s Honored Nominee. As the theater teacher at Camden Hills Regional High School, Ash is held in high esteem by students, parents and teachers. For the past 28 years Rick Ash has



Dance educator Carmel Collins, with her students the Lake Region High School Dancers from Naples

to engage all students in theater arts is remarkable and inspiring.” ■



A member of the Calliope Flute Ensemble



Argy Nestor, Maine Department of Education, at Arts Education Advocacy Day

shown outstanding commitment and enthusiasm for teaching the art and craft of theater to hundreds of students. His ability

September 26, 2009

Save the Date!

Worlds Afire

The Open Book Players will present *Worlds Afire*, written by Maine author and poet, Paul B. Janeczko, on September 26, 2009, as a fundraising event for the Maine Alliance for Arts Education. The performance will be held at the Lincoln Street Center for Arts & Education in Rockland.

This literary work is based on the tragic but true event of the July 6, 1944, Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus fire in Hartford, Connecticut. During the afternoon performance on that fateful day, a fire broke out in one corner of the big top and in a matter of minutes left 168 people dead, mostly women and children, and more than 500 injured.

Lucy Rioux, the artistic Director of Open Book Players, is directing this production, and the author, Paul Janeczko, will be on hand to answer questions after the play. ■

We Have Many Ways for You to Contact MAAE!	
Website	www.maineartseducation.org
General Information Arts Education Connections Learning in Community—Arts (LINC)	info@maineartseducation.org
Executive Director’s Office Advocacy Arts are Basic Coalition Arts Education Census	Carol Trimble, Executive Director ctrimble@maineartseducation.org 207 667-7707
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Maine Arts Teachers Fellowship	David Lamon, Project Coordinator fellowship@maineartseducation.org

News from the Maine Department of Education

By Argy Nestor

Visual Thinking Strategies

On a beautiful day in early April, 85 educators attended a Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) workshop at Point Lookout in Northport. The workshop was co-sponsored by the Maine Department of Education and the Center for Maine Contemporary Art. The majority of participants were visual art teachers, but also in attendance were world language, technology, gifted and talented, and leadership teachers. The teachers, kindergarten through higher education, had traveled from all parts of Maine.

Trainers Willamarie Moore from Boston's Museum of Fine Arts and Michelle Grohe from the Gardner Museum in Boston did an outstanding job of introducing VTS and consistently modeling the techniques. VTS uses art to develop critical thinking, communication, and visual literacy

skills. Short clips were shared, so the participants could view the VTS as used with young children.

The program was developed in the late 1980s by Abigail Housen and Philip Yenawine. It is used throughout the world by museums and in schools at every grade level. Ongoing research is taking place to demonstrate the impact on student achievement.

You can learn more by visiting the website at [http://www.vtshome.org/](http://www.vtshome.org)

Meartsed Blog

The Maine Department of Education's arts education listserv has 900 members. Each week an email is sent to the members giving them an update on what is new at the meartsed blog. Approximately 400 visitors each week read about professional development opportunities, student opportunities,

upcoming events, and research along with the new posts. Visitors also post comments and participate in conversations. To be added to the listserv, email argy.nestor@maine.gov. Visit the blog and read about all the opportunities at <http://meartsed.wordpress.com>. ■

Argy Nestor is the Visual and Performing Arts Specialist at the Maine Department of Education.



October 9-10, 2009

Save the Date!

Statewide Arts Education Conference

The Arts Connect! Point Lookout, Northport, Maine

What's the Latest on Graduation Requirements?

To stay informed on advocacy issues

Join MAAE:

<http://www.maineartseducation.org/images/memberform.pdf>

Sign-up for Advocacy E-Alerts:

email ctrimble@maineartseducation.org and ask to be added to the list

Check MAAE's website for updates

www.maineartseducation.org, Current Advocacy column

Membership Renewal Special Offer

To say thank you to our loyal supporters, MAAE would like to offer a 2-for-1 membership deal. We appreciate all the members who have supported our work through their membership renewals year after year. Is that you? If so, we'd like to give you the chance to bring on a new member at no charge when you renew your own MAAE membership this spring. Maybe there's a new teacher in your district you'd like to give a welcome gift/ MAAE membership to. Or perhaps you'd like to say thank you to a parent or community member who is a strong supporter of arts education. When you renew your MAAE membership, just add the new member's name and contact information, and the phrase "2-for-1 renewal." You and your "guest" will both receive acknowledgement from us.

Please join or renew your MAAE membership today!

MAAE works to encourage and strengthen educational excellence in visual art, music, drama, dance, and creative writing. Join our chorus of voices working toward *arts every day* for all Maine students.

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- \$1,000+ Leader
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Basic Membership Categories

- \$30 Individual
- \$50 School/Nonprofit
- \$75 Business
- Premium Membership**
- \$150 Super School/Organization

Mail to:
Maine Alliance for Arts
Education
P.O. Box 872
Augusta, ME 04332

**All Super School or Organization Premium members receive 1/3 off MAAE's consulting fees for the year. Consulting can include workshops and workshop design, assistance with curriculum and/or assessment, connections with schools and/or artists, and much more.*

2 for 1 Guest Membership (for renewing members)

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How to Keep in Touch with Your State Legislators (clip and save!)

Personal visits, phone calls, letters, and emails are all effective ways of staying in touch with your legislators. Let them know what is important to you and why.

Visit http://www.maine.gov/portal/government/edemocracy/lookup_officials.php for names and contact information (including email addresses and home phone numbers and addresses) for all state senators and representatives.

Or to leave a phone message:

For your Senator: 800-423-6900. TTY number 287-1583.

For your Representative: 800-423-2900. TTY number 287-4469

Maine Alliance for Arts Education

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The Journal of the
Maine Alliance for Arts Education
Spring 2009

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Our Mission

To encourage and strengthen educational excellence in visual art, music, theater, dance, and writing in all Maine schools and communities.

The Maine Alliance for Arts Education is a member of the Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts Education Network, Washington, D.C. Funding for a portion of MAAE activities is provided by the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.



MAINE ARTS COMMISSION

MAAE is funded in part by a grant from the Maine Arts Commission, an independent state agency supported by the National Endowment for the Arts.

The contents of this journal were developed under a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. However, these contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.

Maine Alliance for Arts Education

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