



MIXED MEDIA

March/April 2020

A publication of the Maine ART Education Association



Welcome
SPRING

Hummingbird nest hidden in a wisteria vine. Photo by Deb Bickford



MESSAGE from the President

Lisa Ingraham

MADISON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Normalcy

I've been procrastinating about putting this edition of our newsletter together, which is why it is a March/April issue. I am sorry to have to share most MAEA events and get-togethers have been cancelled because of the necessity of social distancing.

However, I am thankful some of our Youth Art Month celebrations did take place and we were able to recognize our fabulous Art Educator of the Year, Amy Cousins.

*I celebrate each and every one of
you who are responding to
the needs of your students in new
and creative ways in real time!*

See page 8 for her keynote address from the Portland Museum of Art. We will revisit honoring our art educators of the year when the way forward is clearer!

Like you, I have been working in new and unfamiliar ways to provide my students with

some normalcy over the past few weeks. This is a great time for me to thank those who have made that job easier and helped create a bit of continuity for me as an art educator as well.

See MESSAGE, page 3

MAEA Board

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Haystack Unstacked

MAEA Fall Conference at Haystack Cancelled for 2020

by LYNDA LEONAS

MAEA President-Elect

Deer Isle, Maine – On March 31st, 2020, Paul Sacaridiz, Executive Director of Haystack Mountain School of Crafts, posted his announcement of the reasons for putting the entire 2020 season on hold. Please visit haystack-mtn.org for his heartfelt announcement in its entirety. Paul Sacaridiz notes that: “While this has been a very hard choice for us to make, we believe it is the most socially responsible step we can take with the information available to us at this time.”

2020 Would have marked 52 consecutive years of the Maine Art Education Association 2020 Fall Conference at Haystack. Event co-chairs, Brooke Holland and Anthony Lufkin, continue to communicate with the scheduled Haystack workshop presenters to plan ahead for 2021. As soon as details become available, MAEA members will be apprised and updated.

When describing participation in the workshops of the MAEA Fall Conference, Tim Christensen,



Photo by Heidi O'Donnell

co-chair of the 2019 51st year for MAEA educators attending Haystack Mountain School of Crafts, described the intensity as “...learned from masters... creating new works and connections while renewing inspirational energies... MAEA members grew in confidence, ability, and voice...”.

May we all continue to work together as we each re-stack our art educator goals, school programs, and personal artistic growth for the 2021 year. Be certain to leave room for Haystack in that stack!

MESSAGE continued from page 2

I applaud the NAEA and outgoing Eastern Region VP, Diane Wilkin in their response to the cancellation of the national convention. The virtual Delegates Assembly was different, but ultimately successful.

Thank you to the MDOE and Visual and Performing Arts Specialist, Jason Anderson for keeping the art education community connected! It has been grounding to be able to visit with other art teachers to regularly reflect on what is happening in our schools and virtual classrooms.

Zoom “Office Hours” can be found here:

<https://www.maine.gov/doe/covid-19/contentmeetings>.

Finally, I celebrate each and every one of you who are responding to the needs of your students in new and creative ways in real time! Please remember to stop every once in a while to recharge and regroup.

Be well!

2020 Recognitions

Our 2020 Maine Art Education Association Art Educator Honorees



Jodi Thomas

MAEA Art Educator of the Year

Thornton Academy

"Jodi's outstanding work and service for art education has positively impacted the young artists of Thornton Academy and the students of Maine, their art educators and schools. Her good work is far reaching in distance and time. Jodi is a educator and colleague of quality working to establish a culture of standards and collegiality that we can, and do, learn and grow from."

–Suzanne Goulet, MAEA Past-President



Raegan Russell,

MAEA Secondary Art Educator of the Year

Berwick Academy

"Raegan has been an invaluable member of the MAEA for many years. She has served as Chair of the Haystack Conference, facilitated workshops and extended her professionalism in a variety of ways. Her tenure at Berwick Academy indicates the highest level of dedication and professionalism."

–Cameron Davis, Acton Elementary Art Teacher



Libbie Winslow

MAEA Middle Level Art Educator of the Year

Medomak Middle School

My first year teaching (16 years ago), I learned how thorough Libbie was with each lesson. She had organized folders for each grade level project. They contained a variety of project exemplars, a detailed lesson plan steeped in Maine Learning Results and step-by-step instruction that correlated with age of each grade level.

It left quite an impression as to what to aspire to as an art educator.

– Brooke Holland, Medomak Valley HS Art Teacher

Welcome Martha Piscuskas!

The Maine Arts Commission's New Director of Art Education

The Maine Arts Commission is delighted to welcome Martha Piscuskas as our new Director of Arts Education. Martha brings 30 years of nonprofit organizational leadership. Most recently she was Executive Director at Waterfall Arts, the community arts center in Belfast that she co-founded in 2000. She has extensive experience in community arts education, developing programming for all ages and in collaboration with local schools. One of five siblings, all artists, with parents in secondary education, Martha grew up immersed in active creative inquiry.

In addition to serving on her local school board, she has led and founded numerous Maine organizations including MaineShare, Maine Center on Economic Policy, and Maine Initiatives. Martha has presented nationally and served on multiple boards, including as the Chair of the Waldo County Fund of the Maine Community Foundation, and the Chair of the New England Board of Haymarket People's Fund. A member of the Zeta class of Leadership Maine, she holds a BA in Cultural Anthropology from Wesleyan University, and a BFA from the Maine College of Art.



Hello to all MAEA members!

Lately, I've been reminded of my early arts educators – making puppets with Mr. Mello, Mrs. Burnham's annual holiday choir, theater in the round with Mr. Wood – and how lucky I was to have these opportunities. Their belief in me as a young artist paved my way for a lifelong creative path. The Visual and Performing Arts teachers in Maine that I am meeting so far are no different - some of the

most dedicated and energetic folks I've come across. You all know how to make work fun, too! I look forward to meeting many more of you, listening to what you face and are working on, so the Maine Arts Commission and MAEA can continue complementary advocacy and support work on your behalf. Please do not hesitate to contact me – and invite me to visit you and your classroom. If I can, I most certainly will.

- Martha Piscuskas

Youth Art Month

MAEA Celebration at the Portland Museum of Art 3.7.20



Amelia Lavoie, Walton Elementary 6th Grader. Lynda Leonas, Art Teacher.



Maggie Morrill, Maranacook Community Middle School 8th Grader with "The New America." Hope Lord, Art Teacher.



Gia Kaldrovich, Great Falls Elementary 4th Grader with "Golden Trees." Alli Rimkunas, Art Teacher.

"Each and every one of you has embarked on an incredible voyage. This is only the beginning of your creative adventure!"

-Amy Cousins



MECA MAT Candidates and Youth Art Month Volunteers. Top row (left to right): Kristen Kaiser, Arianna Dilios, Miguel Benitez. Bottom row (left to right): Adrienne Munger, Karol Carlsen, Melissa Weglein. Photo by Lynda Leonas



Madysin Silvia, Washburn Elementary 6th grader. Lynda Leonas, Art Teacher.



Jacqueline Heanssler, Brewer HS senior with "David." Lori Spruce, Art Teacher.



Sophie Cote, Fairview Elementary 6th Grader with "Flower Bulbs." Stephen Amoroso, Art Teacher.



Madison Lapierre, Congin School 4th Grader with "Stitched in Another Language." Melissa Perkins, Art Teacher.



Samantha Jones, Songo Locks Elementary 5th Grader with "A Stormy Maine Light House." Evelyn Abrams, Art Teacher.



MAEA Art Educator of the Year, Amy Cousins

Keynote Speech from the Portland Museum of Art 3.3.2020

by AMY COUSINS

Art Teacher, Gorham Middle School

Good afternoon/evening. I am so excited and honored to be here! It is wonderful to be surrounded by so many artists! Congratulations and well done! Your work has made it to the Portland Museum of Art! Thank you for coming today and sharing your creative expressions! A special thank you to all those who made this event possible!

Art has served a transformative and vital role in my life; it “saved” me during my high school years when I felt like an outsider in school AND it led me to my teaching career. I would like to share with you my path as a young artist.



MAEA Maine Art Educator of the Year, Amy Cousins.

For me the road to art was one that came from years of struggle, trying to find my way through the school setting that always seemed to work against me. At an early age I was diagnosed with dyslexia and an audiological disability. This meant that I often missed syllables from words and I struggled to learn how to read and write. I had a difficult time keeping up with traditional school expectations, and I had to work extremely hard in comparison to my classmates who seem to glide through effortlessly.

I never gave up, but questioned what I was going to do with my life. It wasn't until I was a sophomore in high school that I found the

“I received my first 35 mm camera as a gift from my parents when I was 15 years old. Almost instantaneously the world opened up; full of color, shapes, textures, patterns, incredible compositions...”

answer through the lens of a camera. I received my first 35 mm camera as a gift from my parents when I was 15 years old. Almost instantaneously the world opened up; full of color, shapes, textures, patterns, incredible compositions waiting to be captured. I started seeing everyday objects and my surroundings differently, everything

was a picture. Finally, I met with success, something I could do that didn't feel like a constant battle. I felt like I was given a gift, one that opened up possibilities and reduced the feeling of inadequacy.

I was lucky enough to go to a high school that offered a variety of different art courses.

See KEYNOTE, page 10

MAEA Art Advocate of the Year, Susan Potters

Acceptance Speech from the Portland Museum of Art 3.3.2020

by SUSAN POTTERS

Executive Director, Maine Alliance for Arts Education

Advocacy award... Thank you! Great to get an award for what you obsess about anyway! Advocacy is something I think about non-stop... and I'd like to let you know a couple of thoughts I've had about it.

1. The first is about our advocacy message itself. A common problem for arts education advocacy is those adults who say the arts are great, but "I'm not creative" about themselves. It's often the same adults who think the arts are most (ie: only!) important for some kids, another way of saying that being creative is not necessary.

They often picture creativity as a bolt from the blue, but we have to de-mystify what being creative is. To me, feeling like you're "not creative" is just about not being in touch with your voice - a voice which everyone has - it's THERE. Feeling "creative" is really being in touch with, trusting and valuing! that voice, which is what you think.

This can be a problem even for the most high-achieving students, who may be afraid not to give the "right answer" the answer they think the teacher wants. That's where good parenting and arts educators come in: Both are about observing and nurturing that voice. In art class this might be observing which material are you, the student,

drawn to. Why? What grabs you about whatever it is you're looking at? etc....

Younger students will benefit from this without being aware of it. With older students we're

encouraging them to be aware of and take on that encouraging voice within themselves.

This is really "student-centered education." Sometimes when we focus on standards we start identifying the list of what students need to know and be able to do with the goal of education. But that list is there to

help and serve what has to be the true core of education; the student, and the special meaning that each student brings to our common human process of discovery and going deeper.

And because that "creativity" - that respecting yourself and thinking for yourself - not just learning what the right answer is or what the teacher wants, but having the freedom and confidence to trust and value your own ideas and those of others is at the heart of art education. Our advocacy for arts education for all students, not just "the creative ones," can't just focus on the fact that we share standards like the other content areas.

See ADVOCATE page 12



MAEA Art Advocate of the Year, Susan Potters.

KEYNOTE continued from page 8

I dove into ceramics and took my first drawing class. I was hooked. It was only a matter of time before I was trying to decide what art path I wanted to take, and easily I decided to be a teacher. Art nourished my spirit, gave me a sense of worth and helped me negotiate my struggles in school. I felt that if creating art could do this for me, I had to share this same experience with others!

I teach art because I believe in the power it holds, to define who we are, educate us to our past, present and future. It reminds us that we are a part of a global culture. Art crosses borders and helps us to understand and relate to people of a variety of different backgrounds from religion to ethnicity. It humbles our souls and enriches our hearts. It helps to place context on what is happening around us, it makes us aware of our surroundings and helps us to comprehend the larger aspects of social change. Art encompasses every condition of life. You can't escape it. Art is a universal language.

I view myself not as a visual arts teacher but as a facilitator of creative thinking. Life is about

problem solving, whether it be in the workplace or at home. Our ability to take a problem or an abstract thought, to break it down, to come up with several creative options is an essential part of learning and development. Art is the perfect avenue for understanding this process- of thinking "out of the box." It is embedded in all academic subjects.

Look at the artist sitting next to you. They have their own journey, how they define it is up to them. The visual arts present a great set of tools: to solve, to expand horizons, to embellish, to refine, and to connect with everything around us. That is the ultimate beauty of art.

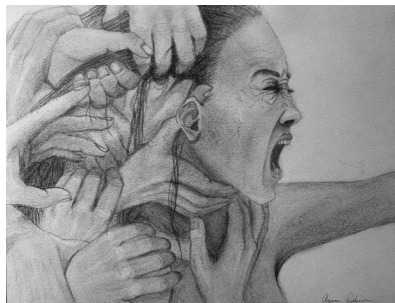
Each and every one of you has embarked on an incredible voyage. This is only the beginning of your creative adventure! You have your own story to tell, one that changes with you throughout your life. Please, continue to share your creativity with the world.

Thank you so much for being here today, and once again, congratulations.



NAHS Connections

From: Charlie Johnson, Mt. Desert Isle HS Art Teacher



Perdition by Ayano Ishimura, MDI NAHS student. See links to the right for more artwork from MDI.

"Through the request of my students, I would like to connect to other NAHS organizations here in Maine, not requesting anything at this point, but maybe just getting like minded students together to share their thoughts. We could just focus on Hancock County (Ellsworth HS, George Stevens HS, Bucksport HS, Sumner HS), but I thought it might be fun to "reach" a bit!"

<https://sites.google.com/mdirss.org/mdihsnahswords/home>
<https://sites.google.com/mdirss.org/mdihsnahsmusicshow/home>

If you would like to reach out to Charlie, send him an email: cjohnson@mdirss.org

Art Teachers Create

February Gathering at Scarborough High School

by ERIN LANDRY-FOWLER

Art Teacher, Scarborough High School

On Saturday, February 29th, I hosted MAEA Art Teachers for a MAEA Art Teachers Create session at Scarborough High School. The teachers in attendance included Deb Bickford, Vicki Bove, Cory Bucknam, Nancy Goan, Allie Rimkunas, Jean Shorey and myself. We had a blast and spent the morning making art, talking shop, and snacking (Fact: Art Teachers bring the best snacks)!

“I want to encourage all MAEA members to consider hosting one of these fun and beneficial meet-ups.”

I want to encourage all MAEA members to consider hosting one of these fun and beneficial meet-ups. They are a great way to get to know your fellow art teachers, get inspired, and carve



out time for art-making during the busy school year. If you are interested in hosting or attending a future MAEA Create session, reach out to Jodi Thomas

(jodi.thomas@thorntonacademy.org).

Editor's Note: MAEA Art Teachers Create meetings have been postponed. We look forward to scheduling these creative gatherings again as soon as we can!



ADVOCATE continued from page 9

It has to include de-mystifying the creative process itself, to help the non-artist relate to it and understand the value of arts education for all students.

So #1 was about the advocacy message itself: What we say to people when we're not preaching to the choir. The second thing I'd like to say about advocacy isn't about what we're preaching - the message - but about who's doing the preaching, because the nuts and bolts of arts education advocacy is also about connecting with and organizing our fellow preachers! our fellow arts education advocates.

First of all identifying them: Who's in our choir? Who are the stakeholders? It's not just arts teachers or even just arts teachers and their students, people who care about arts education include committed parents and community arts organizations and individual artists.

The problem is that most people in those other stakeholder categories don't know what their advocacy role is. We don't talk enough about that. To parents and parent support groups supporting arts education means raising money for special programs, for visiting artists. Some parent groups also ask classroom teachers for residency ideas they can fund. Community arts organizations see their role in support of arts education as offering special residencies/ programs to schools or working in schools as visiting artists.

Advocacy per se isn't really on the radar screen. It's partly because these groups don't know what exactly the need is, what to advocate FOR. Except in the obvious case of standing up for an art teaching position in reaction to a budget cut, they don't know what's needed.

Art teachers know what else is needed - more planning time, etc. - all the nuts and bolts to do

their jobs well. Those needs are often hard for teachers to advocate about themselves. That's where the other stakeholders are important, not just other arts teachers or even non-arts teachers, but the other stakeholders in arts education - parents and community members - need to know what those needs are. They need to be invited to meetings to learn about that and also to plan how to involve more members of their own stakeholder groups, to gather everyone to organize for this advocacy work including getting arts supporters on the school boards.

That's what our Maine Alliance for Arts Education (MAAE) is about. It's an alliance - not just arts teachers or even teachers and arts students - but the whole alliance!, including those other stakeholder groups as well. I myself am not an arts teacher. I am a former English teacher who integrated theater in my teaching. Mainly I'm a parent of a musician, who believes in arts education.

And Here's the Thing! Our MAAE statewide alliance interprets its mission as not just joining together to advocate for arts education statewide, we're also working to help replicate those same alliances in every local school district! to make those local arts education stakeholder connections and conversations happen in every community!

This is part of what our Advocacy Day is about this year. I'd like to invite you all to Advocacy Day in Augusta, March 30 - 9 to 2. Students will be coming from all over the state. If you're an arts teacher, bring your students we'll match them to meet one-on-one with their state legislators. This will also be an opportunity for your students to connect with other arts students and to feel empowered as a group and this year to become part of a new initiative, an ongoing statewide student advocacy social media network.

See ADVOCATE page 13

ADVOCATE continued from page 12

Advocacy Day this year will also be the first step in a plan that MAAE and ABC are working on to develop those local grass root alliances, those local coalitions. Starting with the strong arts teacher/arts student links already developed in the teacher selection of students for the Student Leadership Group and the arts teachers who are bringing their most dedicated students to Advocacy Day, we're going to be training dedicated student/teacher teams to reach out and broaden their local advocacy stakeholder base, their alliance.

This is really good timing! We're right in the middle of working on this. And it's a great time for those of you who are arts teachers not only to join us and bring your students to Advocacy Day, but then also to get involved in our work of organizing advocacy at the local level as well.

Thank you again!
Susan

Editors Note: Arts Advocacy Day was cancelled for March 2020. The MAAE is moving ahead virtually. Please contact Susan Potters for more information, www.maineartsed.org.

MIXED MEDIA is the award winning (September-June) newsletter of the MAEA. It is sent to anyone interested in the MAEA, and shared on our website aeforme.org.

SHARE YOUR STORIES

Send photos and stories to Lisa Ingraham (Editor/Designer):
lisa.ingraham@msad59.org.

The opinions expressed in Mixed Media are those and only those of the authors and do not necessarily represent MAEA policies.

MDOE Request: Jason Anderson, VPA Specialist, is looking for teacher leaders and collaborators.

If you are interested in any of the opportunities below, email him at Jason.Anderson@maine.gov.

I'm looking for a few visual arts educators of varying levels of experience and grade spans to collaborate on an article for a quarterly publication dedicated to teaching art during the time of COVID-19. [If you would like to participate, please email me directly to indicate your interest.](#) I will be in contact with you regarding your participation in the near future.

From those of you with bravery seeping from your very pores, the Department would like you to consider the following... if you're video and/or audio recording lessons or instructed activities for your students, might you consider sharing those with us? We're hoping to build up a bank of recorded lessons/activities that we can make available to those students statewide who do not have access to personal electronic devices or reliable internet connection. Even if you just want to offer a song, a dance, a short segment on making art in some way, every little bit will help those who need the extra support and encouragement right now to keep making art for their own souls!

Lastly, many of you are having outstanding successes with new technology/low-technology/no-technology lessons and activities for your students to engage with... We want to help you celebrate them, and to help you be a teacher-leader among your peers statewide by supporting you as a Professional Development presenter. Please consider that I want to showcase your talents and abilities just like always! You have a lot to offer others... consider being a leader!

MAEA Mission _____

The Maine Art Education Association is a statewide professional organization whose members are committed to excellence in visual arts education.



MAEA Goals:

- To encourage best practices in standards-based and learner-centered visual arts classrooms in all Maine schools.
- To foster high quality teaching in the visual art and provide professional development opportunities in curriculum, instruction and assessment, as well as in current issues and artistic practice.
- To provide a forum for the exchange of ideas and support collaboration among educators and other arts agencies to ensure quality programs for all learners.

It is our purpose to promote the highest quality instruction in visual arts programs that provide depth and breadth of experience to meet the varied needs of students.

Join Us Today!

You can sign up online at aeforme.org/membership or complete this membership form and include a check for membership dues made out to: MAEA and mail to MAEA, c/o Hope Lord, P.O. Box 10463, Portland, ME 04104

Name: _____

[] New Member [] Renewal

Home Address: _____

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School/Institution Name: _____

and Address: _____

Grades taught (circle) K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 Higher Ed

_____ years

[] Active Membership \$30.00

[] Student \$5.00

[] Retired \$15.00

[] Retired LIFETIME \$120.00

[] Pay It Forward donation to new teacher scholarship to Haystack Fall Conference

Membership is renewed with each school year. New or renewal is required at time of Fall Conference

Registration. Membership expires August 31st.