

Dialogues: **Artist Mentors and their Students**

February 11 – March 25, 2023



Jeanette Au (Commodore Sloat Elementary)

Tiger, 2023

ceramic vessel with basket lid, stoneware, glaze, metallic polyester, linen
Not for sale



Student Work:

Coil baskets, 2023, Jute, wool, cotton, acrylic

5th Grade students from Commodore Sloat Elementary

Teacher Kathleen Krust and Shanice Thomas



Bio

Jeanette Au is a Bay Area artist, designer and educator. As an artist in residence in public schools, she mentors her students in the global traditions of textiles from embroidery, bookbinding to fabric construction, drawing the connections between modern and analog technology. She has worked with BFA students exploring knit design and construction as a viable method for minimal textile waste design in Bay Area fashion programs. She runs a sewing entrepreneurship program for youth and young women from marginalized, impacted and immigrant communities, where she mentors and leads workshops in textile arts that focus on sustainability and social justice. Ms. Au's own art and textile practice investigates the material culture and visual language of fashion and craft traditions informed by her ancestral heritage, cross-cultural dialogues and balancing in liminal spaces.

Statement

I collaborated with 5th teachers to intersect curriculum with an art practice that supported their project based instruction. Student artists had learned about native indigenous people of North America and about how their basket making traditions used plant materials found among local habitats to create beautiful, meaningful and functional tools and objects. Students sketched out a design and practiced making their own mini coil baskets out of recycled materials, wrapping and stitching yarn around a jute core while keeping tight tension and rhythm. They were building upon last year's learned skills of sewing, embroidery and book binding when I had worked with them in 4th grade. When they finished their baskets of varied shapes and sizes, some with lids or handles, my students were asked to respond to the prompt "What is contained in your basket?" Some students responded by felting wool miniature food or animals or a written message or leaving them empty for possibility.

I had started created a series of tiger vessels last year for the lunar year of the tiger when a feral pregnant young tabby kitten came through my window and gave birth to a litter of kittens. In addition to coyotes and foxes amongst urban wildlife during the pandemic, there seemed to be a lot of abandoned pets and feral colonies in my neighborhood. I was thinking of windows as portals of possibilities and vessels as cornucopias pouring forth nurture and abundance.

My student artists were inspiring, showing much joy, calm, growth and fortitude in practicing a resilient craft that resulted in basket vessels holding space for dreams, magic, hope, peace, comfort and imagination.

Wanda Chan (Hillcrest and Junipero Serra Elementary)

***Chu Nui Lee*, 2023**

Oil on Canvas

Not for sale



Student Work: Portraits

Perla Rivera, Albert, Roman, Rabee, Terrence,
Melody, Luna, Veronica, Gisella, Naevea, Javen,
Nathan, Nova, Niko, Lydia, Alexandra, Lourdes, Elisa, Leah, Nathaly



Bio

Wanda Chan is a Bay Area artist. She received her undergraduate degree in Art History from Barnard College in 1997, and earned a master of fine arts in sculpture, from the California College of Arts and Crafts, 2002. Her early interest in cultural motifs led her to investigate the nature of identity and perspective, and she shifted her focus to “style” as a motivation. Chan freelanced in Los Angeles with fashion directors and wardrobe stylists until 2006. She returned to the Bay Area to share her production skills with the then emerging Oakland School for the Arts, a public charter school for the performing arts. Teaching art history, design, and stagecraft unlocked for her a five-year conceptual preoccupation with an alter ego persona, and she stopped identifying as the Japanese character she had developed. “Ukiyo Morisake” is a short film that she wrote and directed in 2008 to conclude the performance project. In the years since, she has had a successful career as a visual merchandiser for luxury brands. The production of meaning in a consumer culture continues to be central to her work.

Artist Statement

Visual communication relies on readable storylines and shared symbols. We all have a certain stockroom of images to draw from. They come from our surroundings, media, decorative motifs imprinted on clothes and everyday items. Quite easily, we drop into patterns. Learning how to create images that can communicate meaning often leads to illusions. We forget the bliss of movement, tactility, and mark making as we strive to control the outcome of our doodles. We mimic what we see and forget to hear our own voice. It doesn't have to be that way. We don't have to choose between technical mastery, and emotional connection to the feeling of our artwork; we can hold onto the pleasure of creation even as we struggle and learn to hone our craft and ideas.

Zoe Farmer (Guadalupe & Miraloma Elementary, Shu Ren International School)

***Taking, making, returning*, 2023**

Grey clay (Redwood regional park) sandy clay (Lake Anza)
buff clay (Alameda shoreline) Not for sale



Student Work:

***Seeking Connection*, 2023**

Black and white ink prints made with seed pods .

Guadalupe Elementary 3rd grade

Miraloma Elementary 3rd grade

Shu Ren Elementary 4th and 5th grade



Bio: Before moving to the Bay Area in 2012, Zoe Farmer spent twelve years teaching at a diverse public school in London. A practicing artist since 2007, Ms. Farmer has shown her work in both London and San Francisco and earned an MFA in Fine Sculpture at California College of the Arts. Ms. Farmer's art practice is interdisciplinary, and she works with a range of materials in both conventional and unconventional ways. A scuba diver with a life-long interest and investment in marine biology and a strong belief in our connection to the ocean, Ms. Farmer's work seeks to explore the instability created when social constructs influence the fabrication of scientific truth. Ultimately, the social constructions of our society become conspicuous and limiting against the adaptable, fluid bodies of the animals and organisms that she observes

Samantha Graham (George Peabody Elementary)

Coastal and Botanical themes, 2023

Graphite pencil on pastel paper, Not for Sale

Student work:

Coastal and Botanical themes, 2023

Annelise Sohn and Camden Chang

Ms Murai 2nd grade and Mr. Smith / Ms. Cassie 3rd grade



Bio:

A Bay Area resident since 2015, Samantha Graham is a visual artist and ceramicist. She attended California State University East Bay and holds a Bachelor of Fine Art degree in Traditional Art. She produces functional ceramic work out of a community studio in Berkeley, drawing inspiration from the natural world. She is passionate about teaching art to youth through various media and helping to grow confidence in artistic abilities.

Rachel Major (McKinley Elementary, Yick Wo Elementary)

Yellow Birds, 2021, acrylic on canvas, 30"30"



Student Work:

Monochromatic Collage, 2023

Yick Wo: Ms. Swerdin grade 1, Ms. Harmon grade 2

Jamie Hua, Solomia Vakulenko, Jiya Michalewicz, Diya Michalewicz, Ken Yang, Oliver Amour Muhammad Khalad Evan Hom, Garson Wu Selena Doan



Bio:

Originally from Toronto, Canada, Rachel is a graduate of the Ontario College of Art and Design and the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. Rachel lived and worked in Paris for 2 years before moving to San Francisco in 1994 where she earned her MFA from Mills College in Oakland, CA. Currently Rachel is a member of Gearbox Gallery in Oakland, CA.

In her work, Rachel explores our complex and often fraught relationship with food using a variety of media including sculpture, painting, and photography. Currently she is making paintings solely by dripping paint onto canvas that explore covering up, exposing and control. Her work has been exhibited in Canada, France and the United States. For the past 16 years she has been making art with children, exploring everything from airplanes to zoetropes. When working with children, Rachel enjoys connecting art with the outside world and working collaboratively with open ended materials. Presently she is in her 6th year of working with San Francisco Art Education Project and her second year with LEAP teaching art to children in San Francisco public schools

Statement (Monochromatic Collage)

For this project I wanted the students to explore what would happen if they made a picture with just one color. To emphasize the differences that one color could have I brought in a wide variety of materials (paper, fabric, yarn, tape, paint etc...) for them to work with to create a collage. They could choose any color they wanted but could only work with that one color. Part of the challenge was filling in the whole paper. I had to remind them that the white of their paper was not the same as the color they chose. They were surprised at how many different reds, yellows, blues etc.. there were and how some blues for example, could almost be green or purple etc.. When does a yellow become an orange? And how do colors change when they're next to other colors? (Josef Albers explored this extensively in his Homages to the Square work and in his book Interaction of Color).

In my own practice I either use a lot of different colors or a palette of black, white and grey. I wanted to challenge myself to create a monochromatic painting using one color. Though my work is not a collage I tried to explore a range of yellows from pale to orangey, placing the colors next to each other to see how far I could stretch what 'yellow' is and create a sense of depth by overlapping. When we limit ourselves in one area it forces us to be creative and find other solutions in another area. For example, when using one palette of colors we tend to focus more on the shape or form of the artwork. I think this is true in the students' work as well as mine.

Tiersa Nureyev (Sherman Elementary, Gordon Lau Elementary)

Floral Study from Toni Morrison's Tar Baby, 2023

Media: Paper, Pencil, Gouache (framed, diptych)

Price: \$1000 (for the diptych)



Student work:

Floral Study Collaborative Collage

Paper, Pencil, Acrylic Paint, Acrylic Gloss Medium

Kimberlee Orton's 2nd grade class at Sherman Elementary

Students: Alex Dobbins, Ayla Mammadova, Alexa Mendoza, David Sanchez Granillo, Lucas Chilvarguer, Logan Klein, Noelle Seitz, Charlotte Brown, Kylie Cook, Alice Ecke, Jackson Nance, Joanna Zhang, Amanuel Haile, Olivia Castro, Adrienne Garcia Rodas. Kolten Louie



Bio: Tiersa is a multidisciplinary artist and designer, who has costumed for film, theatre, dance and performance art. She has led art direction in the creation of fiber-based elements, murals, and garments for exhibitions and set design, and is a recipient of a National Endowment of the Arts-funded residency via SF Arts Education Project at the Minnesota Street Project. She is the co-founder of the design studio, Stella Fluorescent, whose focus is on making thoughtful, materials driven, objects that take the form of fashion accessories, jewelry, and textiles. Tiersa has been a teaching artist with SFArtsED since 2006. She believes strongly that art and making are an integral part of the human experience. This conviction touches all aspects of her work; as a teaching artist in the SF School District, to summer programs with youth that probe deeply into the nature of fashion as identity, to collaborating with artists currently and formerly residing in San Quentin Prison.

Statement:

The two gouache paintings are a part of a series I've embarked on called Lit Florals ®. The "Lit" stands for literature and the floral motifs are gleaned from books that I've read and that have happened to include descriptions of plantlife, both wild and domesticated. I love flowers, and particularly floral textile designs, so designing a series of florals is a way to pay homage to the stories and authors that are dear to me. Toni Morrison's Tar Baby takes place on a Caribbean island. Shortly into the novel a rich, white, American man of advanced age is introduced. He spends the bulk of his

time in a greenhouse that he has built alongside a sprawling estate complete with servants, maids and groundskeepers. In this greenhouse, he grows flowers that could only survive within the artificial conditions of the structure. The symbolism between the indigenous flora and the delicate hothouse flowers is unmistakable and clearly references colonialism, white entitlement, and appropriation. The flowers in the study are a mix of both native and non-native, but in my rendering the former are layered over the latter, and this portends the fate of the white family and their estate on the Caribbean Island.

I chose to explore floral motifs with my students by bringing to class a variety of small bouquets that they were asked to draw and observe from different perspectives. After they did some sketching they were given black mixed media paper and white colored pencils to draw their favorite flowers. They then used a (very) reduced palette of acrylic paint to fill in the color and then chose 1-3 flowers to cut out and contribute to the classes' collaboration. They are currently using their remaining flowers to create their own collage.

Mark Shoffner (Glen Park Afterschool Program)
Books by the artist (*Sneezums* and *My Cat Brain*)
My Cat Brain is available for sale for \$5



Student Work:
a selection of hand-made books and zines

Bio: Mark Shoffner is a visual artist and author/illustrator of children's books. His most recent book, *The Witches of Glen Park*, is a mysterious tale set in San Francisco written for middle-grade readers. It follows four other books created by the author using a range of illustration techniques including watercolor, pen and ink, and photomontage. Mr. Shoffner received his MFA from Queens College, City University of New York in 2000 and has been based in San Francisco since 2013, where he often works on visual arts projects with long-time collaborator Rebecca Herman. Their textile and installation work was exhibited at the Main Branch of the San Francisco Public Library, the San José Museum of Quilts and Textiles, and Tenjinyama Art Studio in Sapporo, Japan. He loves to foster creativity and an exploration of various art and writing techniques.