

Performing Arts Workshop
Fort Mason Center, C-265
San Francisco, CA 94123



Performing Arts Workshop: Programs at a Glance



Photo by Teresa Kennetta

- > **Artists-in-Schools** places artists in Bay Area public school classrooms, where they teach residencies in Creative Movement, Theater Arts, World Dance, Music, and Creative Writing for students from preschool through middle school. Children of all abilities enjoy an exhilarating and affirming introduction to artistic expression while building skills such as critical thinking, communication, cooperation, and aesthetic and kinetic awareness.
- > **Artists-in-Community** serves young people with tailored arts instruction in settings such as after-school programs, transitional housing facilities, and county community or court schools. The goal is to utilize the arts to develop academic, critical thinking, and social skills as well as build knowledge and strengthen self-esteem.
- > **Professional Development Program** workshops give educators ways to strengthen concentration, enhance verbal and non-verbal communication skills, and encourage their students' participation and imagination through the arts. The program also offers artist internships that train artists to teach the creative process to young people using the Workshop's methodology. Internships provide mentorship and observation opportunities in conjunction with our Artists-in-Schools program.

For more information about our programs, please contact us at (415) 673-2634 or info@pawfs.org

WORKSHOP *Notes*

Newsletter of the Performing Arts Workshop • Spring 2004



Photo by Teresa Kennetta

WHAT IS ASSESSMENT IN THE ARTS? by Dr. Richard Siegesmund, University of Georgia

An assessment is a tool that provides evidence of what a child has learned. Assessment is also the process through which such tools are developed, applied, and the data generated evaluated. Our most common form of assessment is the multiple-choice tests administered to all children throughout California each spring. These tests provide a portrait of what every child knows in language arts and math. Increasingly, these tests are not simply evaluative but judgmental: a child must reach a pre-determined minimal score to advance to a higher grade. Our use of assessment data to make judgments does not end there. Additionally, individual assessment scores provide a portrait of every classroom, every school, and every school district. Teachers from poor performing classrooms can be fired, as can principals from poor performing schools. Property values within entire school districts can rise and fall. These tests truly are high-stakes in every sense of the term.

Because these tests are so daunting for everyone involved, it is easy to believe

that this is the only way that we can assess student performance. Because we are so skillful at assessing language and math skills, it is easy to believe that these are the only skills worth assessing. The tests are also attractive because in some ways they promise an American vision of education: a level playing field where each student can succeed solely on his or her own individual intellectual merits.

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Supposedly, the tests are objective: there is no subjectivity or playing favorites. The best person ought to win.

Without assessment, schools have no way to determine how far a child has come, articulate in clear terms the thinking skills the child has mastered, or communicate to both students and parents the new skills that the child should obtain. For teachers in language arts and math, existing assessments provide a clear view of the course to be covered (i.e. the curriculum) each year. However, for areas outside of these standard assessments—most notably science and the arts—there are no ready-made

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The Electronic Newsletter is Here!

This month we are excited to bring you the inaugural issue of *Workshop Notes Online*, the electronic version of our newsletter. Our hope is that those of you who use e-mail regularly will help us save costs by switching over to the electronic version. If we have your e-mail address, you should have received both the paper and electronic newsletter. If you did not receive *Workshop Notes Online* and would like to, please send your name and current e-mail address to info@pawfs.org. Thank you for helping us save money and the environment!



Workshop Takes On New Role in Arts Providers Alliance

This past December, Workshop Program Director Ai Tamanaha was elected co-chair of the Arts Providers Alliance of San Francisco (APASF). She shares her leadership role with co-chair Deborah Gibbon of SPARK at KQED and leads the Alliance towards achieving its 2004 goals, including: membership development, provision of professional development opportunities for artists and teachers, arts advocacy, and the overall strengthening of the Bay Area arts community. The Workshop is pleased to return to a leadership role after many years of membership and having been one of the founding members of the Alliance. ■

Workshop Notes is a publication of Performing Arts Workshop
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ASSESSMENT - Continued

assessments and thus no clear ready-made visions of curriculum.

In the past, many people saw the absence of curriculum and assessment as an advantage. Teachers were free to construct their teaching to the interests of the children in the classroom. Teachers could take their cues from the local environment and local resources. Science and the arts were free from one-size-fits-all conceptions of instruction.

However as the high stakes of education have increased, parents and politicians have increasingly called for schools to be accountable for learning. Accountability demands that schools provide evidence of valid student assessment. There is too much at risk. The time of instruction in schools is too limited. Every subject, every instructional period, has to show how it contributes to core learning.

This creates a new challenge in the arts. If arts educators claim that learning in the arts cannot be measured and should be exempt from assessment, time for the arts is likely to be cut from the school day. If arts educators make facile claims that the arts will raise language arts and math assessment scores, then deep learning in the arts can be quickly sacrificed for short-term utilitarian goals.

How can deep personal learning be maintained while meeting the new expectations for assessment? As one response to this challenge, over the past ten years the State of California developed the Visual and Performing Arts Content Standards and the Visual and Performing Arts Framework in an effort to codify curriculum and assessment in the arts. During this same time, the Performing Arts Workshop, on its own, has taken the initiative to develop assessment tools that are authentic to its curriculum developed over nearly forty years of classroom practice.

Briefly, the Workshop's assessment articulates a progression of thinking while a student engages in and reflects on performance. This model incorporates the Workshop's

curriculum as articulated in *On Stage in the Classroom*, written by the Workshop's founder Gloria Unti, and filtered through the cognitive theories of Elliot Eisner, Professor of Art and Education at Stanford University. During any Workshop lesson, students respond to a given problem, brainstorm multiple solutions, justify a selection, and then revise and expand on their first response. Through this process, students demonstrate their ability to think critically outside of language with their bodies and convert their pre-linguistic knowledge into words. The translation of somatic knowing into language improves a student's ability to reflect on cause and effect, narrative flow, and coherent expression. While this experience is particularly powerful for students who struggle with language skills, the Workshop's curriculum can benefit all students from pre-kindergarten to high school.

The Workshop's model for assessment does not mirror the California Visual and Performing Arts Standards or Frameworks. However, as both assessment models are deeply authentic to the experience of learning in the arts, they share many similarities. The Workshop's alternative assessment model has attracted state and national attention. Between 2001 and 2003, an Arts Demonstration Grant from the California Arts Council permitted valuable pilot testing of the assessment. Currently, the assessment model is an important component in the Workshop's United States Department of Education, Arts in Education Model Development and Dissemination Grant.

Assessment promises the possibility of objectively measuring a child's best thinking. Performing Arts Workshop's efforts in assessment show that thinking is not limited to linguistic and mathematical manipulation. All children think—and some children think best—through the expressive use of their bodies. The Workshop's assessment model quantitatively demonstrates how this occurs. ■

Dr. Richard Siegesmund is an Assistant Professor of Art Education at the University of Georgia. While completing his doctorate at Stanford University in the early 90's, Dr. Siegesmund began to study the Workshop's programs. For ten years he has served as the Workshop's evaluator and content specialist.

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**Reservations accepted with payment.
Please send check by June 18th to:**

Performing Arts Workshop, Attn. Katie Heindel
Fort Mason Center, C-265
San Francisco, CA 94123

For more information, call 415-673-2634

In lieu of gifts, Gloria has requested that donations be made to Performing Arts Workshop.

**GLORIA UNTI WANTS YOU AS HER DANCE PARTNER...
AT HER 80TH BIRTHDAY PARTY!**

Performing Arts Workshop invites you to celebrate Gloria's life of art and activism.

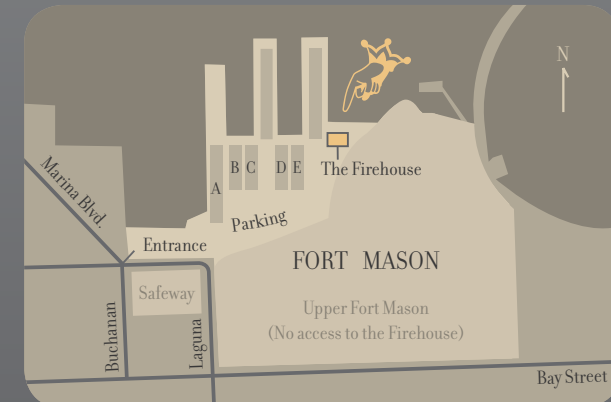
Dinner, hosted bar, dancing, toasts, and roasts

Wednesday, June 30th
6:30-10:00 PM
The Firehouse at Fort Mason Center

Buffet dinner served 7:00-8:30 PM

\$75/Person

Proceeds to benefit Performing Arts Workshop



Muni lines to or near Fort Mason: 10 Townsend, 22 Fillmore, 28 19th Avenue, 30 Stockton, 47 Van Ness, 29 Van Ness/Mission, 82x Presidio/Wharves Express

Gloria Unti's 80th Birthday, Celebrating a Life of Art and Activism

Please join the Workshop in celebrating the 80th birthday of our founder, Gloria Unti. Since the 1950s, Gloria Unti has dedicated herself to advancing the arts as a force for education, individual empowerment, and social change through her work in schools and community centers. Ms. Unti founded the Workshop in 1965 and continues to serve as a consultant and member of the Board of Directors. The June 30th birthday event will offer music, dancing, a Mediterranean buffet, and a hosted bar to toast the guest of honor. So put on your dancing shoes and join us in celebrating 80 years of art and activism! ■

Another Creative, Fun Way to Donate to the Workshop



eBay, the online auction company, has launched a new service to allow individual and corporate customers to assign all or part of their online sales proceeds to eligible "participating charities." Performing Arts Workshop is one of those charities! You can donate the proceeds (10-100%) of anything you sell on eBay to the Workshop. For more information, please visit www.missionfish.org. ■