11-2015

CBA Presentation

Jessica Agustin

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/cba-pres

Recommended Citation
https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/cba-pres/6

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the CBA/PAC Media at CSUSB ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in CBA/PAC Presentations by an authorized administrator of CSUSB ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@csusb.edu.
Community-based Art: A University and Prison Collaboration

Professor Annie Buckley
Jessica Agustín
Matthew McMillon

California State University, San Bernardino
Community-based Art Overview
CSUSB Community-based Art

CSUSB Community-based Art is an initiative in which students, alumni, and volunteers facilitate art throughout our underserved community. We teach at sites that don’t otherwise have access to art including a public housing project, shelters for teens, low-income senior housing, County Probation, the CSUSB Reentry Center, and three CA state prisons.
Prison University Partnership: Vital Components for Success

- Flexibility – we say it is our number one rule.
- Strong communication network across varied spaces
- Curriculum synchrony between university and prison site
- Basic training for Teaching Artists from different disciplines
- Support for change including opportunities for inmate teachers
- Assessment and reorientation of program based on feedback
- Proceed in stages, starting with pilot and making small changes from there based on feedback from all involved in partnership
Organic Growth

- We began with seven students teaching four classes at one prison. Approximately 40 men completed the session and received certificates.

- Currently, 15 Teaching Artists facilitate a total of 10 classes at three prisons across Southern California. A fourth prison has requested our program. We plan to start as we build capacity and funding.

- Our program grows in response to the needs and interests of our community, participants, and teaching artists (students, alumni, volunteers).
Ongoing Community Sites and Classes:

- Boys and Girls Club, Waterman Gardens
- Our House, Redlands
- Job Corps
  - Ceramics Workshop
- CSUSB Re-entry Initiative
  - Mural Renovation
- engAGE: Low Income Senior Housing
  - History of Painting Workshop
Art Making as Transformative Social Practice
CBA Disassembles Hierarchies

- How do we move past preconceived expectations and biases in working with: Students? Inmates? Administrators?

- What is the benefit of allowing individuals and communities to conceive of themselves in new roles and with new opportunities to share, receive, communicate, and make a difference?
Skills gained through art practice:

**Soft Skills**
- Growing self-confidence
- Improvement in communication skills
- Patience
- Accountability
- Creative development
- Collaboration
- Perceptiveness
- Stress management
- Interpersonal relationship skills
- Dedication & motivation

**Hard Skills**
- Punctuality
- Art Historical knowledge
- Writing skills
- Visual skills
- Fine motor skills
- Reading & analytic competency
- Problem solving skills
“When I become angry, painting calms me down. When I become lonely, painting comforts me. When I become confused, painting brings me clarity. When I experience painful emotions, painting helps me reconnect to positive emotions and I never want to use drugs or alcohol again.”

—S. Hunter, Class participant/Co-teacher, CBA at CIM
Co-crafting Curriculum Programs
Mutual Learning

On campus and at the prison site, communication, mentorship, and personal development are as important as the creative process in our classes.
On Site: Ongoing Curriculum Development

All CBA classes include: **Art History, Art Making, and Reflection**.

CBA classes and workshops are based on the needs and interests of participants, facility, and teaching artists. Projects include:

- Family workshop
- Collaborative murals
- Creative Writing Workshop
- Portfolio development and Critique
- Classes in: Printmaking, Collage, Painting, Drawing, and Crafts
- Future Goals: Multidisciplinary (music, theater, dance)
The Prison Arts Collective emerged out of the CSUSB Community-based Art initiative.
The United States has the world’s largest prison population.

- Today, roughly 2.2 million people are behind bars in the United States, an increase of 1.9 million since 1972.
- Today, the US is 5% of the World population and has 25% of world prisoners.
- African Americans now constitute nearly 1 million of the total 2.3 million incarcerated population.
- African Americans are incarcerated at nearly six times the rate of whites.
- Together, African American and Hispanics comprised 58% of all prisoners in 2008, even though African Americans and Hispanics make up approximately one quarter of the US population.

Sources:
The Southern Poverty Law Center
The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
CBA Prison Arts Collective Partner Sites & Curricula:
These classes run simultaneously in eight- to ten-week sessions. All sessions culminate with a certificate ceremony and exhibition.

- **California Institution for Men, Chino (CIM)**
  - Portrait Workshop
  - Drawing Workshop
  - Creative Writing Workshop
  - 3-D Workshop
  - Art History
  - Printmaking and Design
  - Art History and Critique
  - Portfolio Development

- **California State Prison, Los Angeles County (LAC)**
  - Foundations in Art
  - Printmaking

- **California Institution for Women, (CIW)**
  - Watercolor & Creative Writing
  - Collage & Mixed Media
  - Sculptural Crafts
  - Art History
Collaboration and Mutual Learning in Practice: Example: Collaborative Mural at CIM

- This collaborative mural project began in spring 2014 and was completed over nine months. It was conceived, designed, and painted in collaboration. Four Teaching Artists (three students and one alumna) and approximately 30 inmates created it together.

- One development was that the two lead artists were an inmate and an alumna. They brought different approaches to mural painting and melded them into an innovative combination.

- One Teaching Artist worked with each of three groups of men of the three distinct panels of this 45’ mural.

Photographs of the mural process: Andrew K. Thompson
CIM Mural Workshop

“I plan to stay in the art program for as long as I can. It has been invaluable in helping me cope with prison & exploring my creative potential.”

—Class Participant, CIM
From working as a group to come up with the idea to finding reference material and sketching the design, inmates were artists and CSUSB students were teachers.
Lines blurred between facilitators and learners. Everyone learned from one another.
Many men didn’t know how to paint when they started. They learned during the process of creating together.
The mural became something to return to each week, providing a physical space for growth and at the same time an opportunity for connection and reflection and conversation.
“I think that I’ve learned more than I’ve taught! There are just some things that no classroom can teach. The only way to learn is by doing.” —Nancy Stevens, Teaching Artist, CIM
All classes culminate in a certificate ceremony.
“That as long as there are programs such as these while incarcerated it gives us a constructive outlet to finish out time in a positive environment.”
–Class Participant, CIM
CIM Paper Crafts: Co-taught by student and inmate

This paper flower tree was co-created by 7 men. In this class, participants can teach for one day to share their skills.
Program Participation Statistics: CIM
“CBA breaks down elitist notions of who can study or make art and makes it equal for everyone. The fact that I can make art accessible and relatable to everyone regardless of who they are makes teaching feel like an activist effort.”

—Jessica Agustin, Teaching Artist and Site Lead, California Institution for Women (CIW)
Thank You!

Visit us online: www.cbacsusb.wix.com/cbacsusb

You can reach Annie at: abuckley@csusb.edu

Sign up for our newsletter: http://us11.campaign-archive2.com/?u=3a8428e23ebd4fbe82751d89c&id=91ac583e88