RejuvenArt
A Socially Engaged Art Project
By Allison Clark

Developed by art education graduate students in Dr. Adejumo’s course, Art and the Creation of Meaning, RejuvenArt was a socially engaged art project designed to function as a study break for UT Austin students from across campus. There were coloring postcards, collaborative weavings, advice jars, a photo booth, and a plethora of snacks!

Collaborative Coordinators:
Elise Chevalier, Allison Clark, Rebecca Dearlove, Maggie Exner, Kathryn Farkas, Amelia Fleming, Morgan Keefer, Madeleine LePere, Stephanie Nordlund, Stephanie Sandoval, Hillary Vincent, & Elizabeth Williams
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**Spring 2016 Scope Editors**

Elise Chevalier  
Allison Clark  
Ellen Murray Coonrod  
Elizabeth Williams
Thesis Advice from the Spring 2016 Graduates

Maggie Bridges
“Live your life and do your thesis. You can do both separately and happily. Do not make your thesis your life; there is time in every day to work on a chapter and get a drink with friends (where you do not talk about your thesis).”

Elise Chevalier
“Pencil in specific times on your calendar to write each week. Faculty members are a great resource, so do not hesitate to reach out to them.”

Allison Clark
“To quote Jay Mathews: ‘Work hard. Be nice.’ Begin working on your thesis as soon as possible, and remember that your thesis committee is generously giving their time to help make your project the best it can be! Remain open to their input, and value their expertise. While certain things will be out of your control, be proactive with what you do have the power to change.”

Rebecca Dearlove
“Despite any doubts you may have while in graduate school, remember you are always in control and can make this experience what you want it to be. Do not be afraid of self-doubt. You are here for a reason.”

Madeleine LePere
“Do not lose sight of yourself: find something non-thesis related and make time for it. Yoga worked well for me. Your thesis is only the beginning! Do not get caught up in solving an issue; that is impossible. Ideally, you will finish your research with more questions than you started with and a burning desire to learn more.”

Ellen Murray Coonrod
“Commit to show up and write regularly without worrying about the quality. Quality will improve through your editing process. Be kind to yourself, and remember you can only do your best.”

Stephanie Nordlund
“My advice to first-year students is to take advantage of every opportunity that arises while you are conducting research. I was able to meet so many interesting people while collecting data, and I think they really informed my study.”

Stephanie Sandoval
“Make a to-do list of things that you would like to accomplish for the day; the more items you have checked off your list, the better you will feel about your productivity for the day. If you plan on writing for extended periods of time, take breaks in between. Try not to compare your work/research to others.”

Looking Ahead
Post-Graduate School Plans

Maggie Bridges
I will be moving to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to work at First Stage Children's Theatre. I will be a lead teacher, working on curriculum development and programming for their theatre education department.

Elise Chevalier
This summer, I will be teaching digital animation at the Dougherty Arts Center. I will also show my work in the West Austin Studio Tour in May and will continue to work on various creative ventures throughout the summer.

Allison Clark
This summer, I will be relocating to Southern California in order to join my partner. Together, we will be searching for our “dream” apartment in Los Angeles, as I will be working as a Graduate Intern in School Programs at the Getty Center for the 2016-2017 academic year.

Beth Link
This summer, I will be interning at the Girls Arts and Leadership Program at the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum in Santa Fe, New Mexico. I will be teaching and writing curriculum for the program, which aims to empower girls through the arts. I will also continue organizing HIVE, the women's art collective that I have started here in Austin.

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Ellen Murray Coonrod
After graduation, I will be pursuing opportunities to design and facilitate community art classes for senior adults living in retirement homes and care facilities in Austin.

Hillary Vincent
This summer, I will be working as a summer camp teaching artist at the Acadiana Center for the Arts (AcA) in Lafayette, Louisiana. AcA is a community arts program that provides week-long themed art camps for 6-12 year olds. Focusing on computer-based art, I will be teaching graphic design, photography, animation, and more things that integrate traditional art making skills with computer-based design. In the fall, I will be a full-time art educator at Ascension Episcopal High School in Lafayette. I will teach Art 1 and Media Arts to high school students.

Kirstin Cutts
I will be interning at the San Antonio Museum of Art (SAMA) this summer, working with the Coordinator of Teacher and School Programs. I will be assisting with the Summer Teacher Institute from June 14-17, an experience I will draw on for my thesis research. For the remainder of my time at SAMA, I hope to learn how to foster relationships between museums and schools; how best to serve as a resource for educators; and explore the myriad of other services to education an art museum can offer. If I manage to find any spare time, I look forward to exploring San Antonio and reacquainting myself with leisure reading.

Maggie Exner
This summer, I will be interning at the Umlauf Sculpture Garden and Museum, where I will teach summer art camp classes for elementary students. During each week of the 6-week program, I will lead lessons based on curriculum I have developed around drawing, painting, printmaking, animation, and storytelling. I am excited about creating and implementing my own lessons while working with children in the beautiful setting of the Umlauf! I also plan on nailing down a case study for my thesis and beginning the process of research in between trips to the many local creeks, rivers, and pools that Austin has to offer.

Morgan Keefer
This summer I will be interning at Art Plus Academy here in Austin. I will be teaching week-long summer camps to elementary students. With a fun theme each week, we will focus on learning more about art materials and techniques through the art projects we make. This summer I hope to have fun, but to stay busy as I work and plan for my research in the fall.

Nohemi Rodriguez
This summer I will be interning at the International Peace Initiative in Nairobi, Kenya. I will join several volunteers in a quest to learn, teach, and simply be present in the midst of incredible adolescent human beings. I will then embark on a journey to Havana, Cuba, to partake in a similar position. However, I will be working with elementary students and youth. Throughout this summer, I also plan on conducting research in both locations.

Kelcie Tisher
This summer I will be working as an education intern at the Contemporary Austin and Laguna Gloria. During my time at the Contemporary, I will give tours to school-aged children and various groups from the community wanting to learn more about contemporary sculpture. When I am not giving tours, I will be researching art education philosophies and integrating those philosophies into a docent handbook. This summer I am also planning to start my thesis research by analyzing my sources and hopefully starting and finishing at least one chapter. I am so excited to learn more about contemporary art!
Ellen Murray Coonrod (EMC): Could you give me a brief overview of your TA position?

Allison Clark (AC): For my final year in graduate school at UT Austin, I was employed as a 20-hour TA for Dr. Powell and Dr. Bain, working with both undergraduate and graduate students. I helped compile course materials; co-create, introduce, and grade assignments; and lead select topics (e.g., incorporating museum objects into the classroom, aligning gallery lessons with content standards, etc.).

EMC: Do you have any favorite memories as a TA from the past year that you would like to share?

AC: Last November, I was invited to lead an entire class period while Dr. Powell was in New York City for the Brushes with History: Imagination and Innovation in Art Education History conference. I am not trained as a classroom educator, so it was a wonderful opportunity to have a group of students to myself for three hours! Taking a page from Dr. Bolin's book, I facilitated a participatory activity in which we each took turns exploring our "teacher voice." It was exhilarating and a bit terrifying for everyone!

EMC: How has this experience as a TA altered your own theory and practice as an educator?

AC: When I teach in museums, I usually work with a different group of visitors each day. As a teaching assistant, though, I was able to be involved with the same group of students for an entire academic year. I have seen them grow, both intellectually and personally. That alone has been so rewarding. I also have a much better idea about the challenges undergraduate students face here at UT, as well as the administrative components of higher education. I like to think that I am now a more empathetic educator, and can see the fuller picture of how students, instructors, and behind-the-scenes administrators work toward a common goal.

EMC: Could you list three adjectives that describe an effective and successful TA?

AC: I would describe a great TA as energetic, compassionate, and organized.

EMC: If you could share one piece of advice for future TAs, what would it be?

AC: My advice for future teaching assistants is to get to know your students and build individual relationships with them as soon as possible. From my experience, you will be the more approachable liaison between students and professors. Learn what they are passionate about, why they are in the class, and what they hope to gain. Knowing these three things is not easy, but it will help you unpack class dynamics and provide helpful feedback for your professor. You are their extra set of eyes, and can point out patterns they may not notice while they are teaching. Also, show up to class, complete the readings, and (at the very least) do a dry run of any assignments! Set a good example, and take notes (they will come in handy when a student asks you an oddly specific question). Plus, you are getting paid to learn! Take advantage of it.

EMC: Do you have anything else that you would like to share about your experience?

AC: Working as a teaching assistant has been a phenomenal experience, and enabled me to get to know Dr. Powell and Dr. Bain so much better! Without this position, I would likely have graduated without having formed deep relationships with faculty members who were not directly involved in my thesis. Take note, future teaching assistants: your assigned professors can become some of your strongest allies!
Kirstin Cutts
For my thesis, I will be exploring summer teacher institutes and their relationships to interdisciplinary art education. I will observe the Summer Teacher Institute at the San Antonio Museum of Art (SAMA) and document the experiences of two participating teachers, following up with them in the fall to see how these experiences influence their classroom practice.

Central Research Questions
How do museum teacher institutes provide teachers with experience-based education? How does this affect their ability to implement what they learn during the institute back in their classrooms?

Sub-questions
How does SAMA encourage cross-disciplinary collaboration? How can the experience-based learning provided within an art museum be replicated in the classroom?

Maggie Exner
For my thesis, I will be conducting a case study on a collaborative art project taking place in a secondary art classroom in Texas. My goal is to understand the impact collaboration has on the students participating in the project. I will use observations, field notes, and interviews with a teacher and several students to collect my data. Democratic pedagogy and social learning theory will guide my research.

Central Research Questions
What are the effects of collaboration on students’ engagement in learning and art making in a secondary art classroom? How does participating in a collaborative art project impact students’ identities and their perceptions of classroom community?

Morgan Keefer
In my research, I hope to explore the opinions of pre-service educators in regards to the value of storytelling in art education. Specifically, my research will combine surveys and observations to explore an assignment taught by the pre-service educators, where they will lead a lesson of storytelling and art making for a class of Pre-K students at the Early Childhood Development Center on The University of Texas at Austin’s campus.

Central Research Question
What are pre-service art educators’ perceptions regarding the value of storytelling in early childhood learning after completing an assignment that combines storytelling and art making with a Pre-K class?

Sub-Questions
What is the role of storytelling in Pre-K children’s learning? What is the value of storytelling, as understood by preservice art educators?

Kelcie Tisher
I want to study the change in museum language about non-Western art. I am curious about how powerful language is and what values can be read from the language museums use. I think language can form our opinions. Opinions and values can be read through language and the museum is a powerful institution with respected views. Unfortunately, the primary view in museums comes from white, affluent people. I believe white privilege/supremacy and Eurocentrism is still present in museums, but I want to see if there are obvious changes in the language used when discussing non-Western art. I will analyze the language from three African art exhibition catalogs from the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) during different time eras in order to see the change in language and values associated with African art and culture. I am hoping to show progress in the art education field, but also stress the need for more change in the language we still use today in the museum.

Central Research Question
What does a critical analysis of the catalogs from the Museum of Modern Art’s (MOMA) exhibits, African Negro Art (1935), Primitivism in 20th Century Art (1984), and Impressions from South Africa, 1965 to Now (2011) reveal about the MOMA’s values regarding African culture?

Sub-question
What changes, if any, are seen in the language used by the MOMA as time progresses from 1935 to 2011?

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Second-Year Students

Maggie Bridges
This study considers the impacts of First Stage Children’s Theatre’s 2004 production of Holes on the community in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The goal of this research is to investigate the relationship between political engagement and youth theatre impact in the Milwaukee community over the past 12 years. It also considers how the First Stage production of Holes in 2004 leveraged its positionality to advance discourse around controversial, social justice topics.

This study was conducted in collaboration with First Stage Children’s Theatre, located in Milwaukee, WI. It was designed to understand impact between the theatre’s 2004 production and its youth audiences. Consequently, it integrated various perspectives from both the theatre company and the broader Milwaukee community. Utilizing qualitative research and a case-study, this study was conducted through interviews and a group workshop with First Stage staff as well as audience members who attended the 2004 production. I also looked forward to the 2016 production in order to gauge a comparative, longitudinal approach to understanding perceptions of change in political and social justice issues.

The results reveal how First Stage Children’s Theatre positioned themselves as a prominent, cultural organization and utilized that power to craft a meaningful narrative. This study includes a multi-layered analysis that looks at both the organization’s structural success as well as their approaches specifically for Holes. Through the story of Holes, First Stage was able to examine the politics of the juvenile justice system, a controversial social and political concern in Milwaukee. I argue that First Stage Children’s Theatre was a space that allowed audiences to critically consider their own perceptions around the politics of race in the juvenile justice system and encouraged these audiences to be more empathetic to all participants within this system.

Central Research Question
How did the social and political themes in First Stage Children's Theatre's 2004 production of Holes impact youth audiences in Milwaukee, Wisconsin?

Sub-Questions
What can these impacts reveal about how theatre as an education tool stimulates conversations about community issues? To what extent was First Stage's decision to re-produce Holes in 2016 reflective of the social and political climate in Milwaukee over the past 12 years?

Elise Chevalier
My thesis examined the work of Dorothy Dunn, the director of the “Studio” painting program at the Santa Fe Indian School, from 1932 to 1937. Under Dunn’s leadership, the Studio launched the careers of several prominent artists and influenced trends in Native American painting in United States throughout the mid-20th century. Through the Studio, Dunn codified and popularized a specific understanding of “Indian painting.” This study analyzed documents in the Dorothy Dunn Kramer Archives and Dunn’s published work to describe and contextualize Dunn’s pedagogy. Primary sources revealed Dunn’s pedagogical values, her notion of “Indian painting,” and her Studio teaching practices. Dunn, an Anglo woman trained at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, hoped that the Studio would connect students with aesthetic traditions of their diverse communities. However, Dunn’s static understanding of “Indian painting” seemed to contradict the Studio’s goals of social reform. Contradictions between Dunn’s goals and practices echoed many of the ideological tensions entrenched within concurrent social, economic, and educational movements. This study borrowed concepts from critical theory to interpret the complex implications of colonial legacies and resistance in the Studio.

Central Research Question
How did social and education reforms and art historical narratives influence Dorothy Dunn’s teaching practice at the Santa Fe Indian School from 1932-1937?

Allison Clark
Titled "Constructing Citizenship by Telling Tales: Anna Curtis Chandler’s Storytelling Practices During the United States’ Involvement in World War I (1917-1918)," my thesis investigates how an art educator employed as a storyteller at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Met) engaged with ethics and issues of national identity on the American home front. An examination is made into the Met’s founding, early development, and educational endeavors leading up to and during the United States’ active military involvement in World War I. Additionally, an overview of Chandler’s background and impetus for creating stories rooted in empathetic engagement is presented.

Central Research Question
How did the social and political themes in First Stage Children's Theatre's 2004 production of Holes impact youth audiences in Milwaukee, Wisconsin?

Sub-Questions
What can these impacts reveal about how theatre as an education tool stimulates conversations about community issues? To what extent was First Stage's decision to re-produce Holes in 2016 reflective of the social and political climate in Milwaukee over the past 12 years?
This study implements historical interpretation of archival data from the Metropolitan Museum of Art Archives and Wellesley College Archives, as well as a chapter from Chandler’s first storybook, *Magic Pictures of the Long Ago*, to unpack her educational agenda during this turbulent time period. Using substantiated and purposely grounded historical imagination, I argued that Chandler developed an alternative Americanization program that cemented audiences within the frame of democratic nationalism, supplied an imaginary escape from the War’s harsh realities, and invited audience members to (re)construct their identities as citizens.

**Figure 1:** Undated photograph of Chandler’s young volunteers performing a story at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Reproduced in an interview featuring Chandler’s storytelling practices by C. Willyoung in *Gas Logic* (1921).

Central Research Question

What ethical values did Anna Curtis Chandler engage with and seek to communicate throughout her career as a public storyteller at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Met) during the United States’ active military involvement in World War I (1917-1918)?

Sub-Question

How did these ethical values develop or shift, and what social and political factors influenced these developments?

Rebecca Dearlove

Titled “The Museum of Modern Art's Department of Film: How Two Public Film Programs Addressed Social and Cultural Conditions of African American Communities,” this study investigates the Museum of Modern Art’s Department of Film and its role during the mid-1960s into the 1970s as an educational institution that addressed the social and cultural conditions of African American communities. The study is framed around two public film programs known as *Cinéprobe* and *What’s Happening?*, concentrating on the years 1965-1974, during which the two programs were established.

An examination is made of both programs as they progressed in the early years as educational programming for MoMA’s audience. In both programs, African American filmmakers were invited to share their films and to discuss the meaning and process of filmmaking to an audience unfamiliar of their work. Evidence that both programs were intended to be educational pursuits is examined, including museum memos, letters, press releases, and recorded audio. The study concludes by suggesting a historical reframing of film programs in the 1960s as pertinent to the field of art education.

Central Research Question

Considering the Department of Film at the Museum of Modern Art as an educational center, how did the Department’s educational mission seen in its public programming respond to and reflect the social and cultural conditions of African Americans between 1965 and 1974? Sub-Question: In what ways did the Department of Film represent the diverse stories of independent filmmaking by African Americans during this time period?

Madeleine LePere

This study investigates the impact of implementing play in the art museum to educate and engage young children, utilizing lessons learned from children’s museums. In order to establish themselves as welcoming and educative resources for early learners, art museums must support their unique needs, namely, learning through play. Within the museum field, children’s museums offer best examples of how play can be integrated into a museum environment to encourage early learning.

This study was conducted in three stages using the methodology of grounded theory. The first stage investigated the educational practice of the Boston Children’s Museum in Boston, Massachusetts by observing the play of children aged 2 to 5 at an exhibit in the Boston Children’s Museum. Based on this data, the second stage developed a play-based workshop for local kindergartners.
The third stage implemented this workshop at the Blanton Museum of Art, in Austin, Texas, collecting data through video recording and interview.

Findings from this workshop led to the formation of the following grounded theory: integrating play in the art museum affords children aged 2 to 5 a context for meaning making, providing opportunities for children agency and encouraging engagement with artworks.

Central Research Question
What can be learned from educational practice grounded in play within the Boston Children’s Museum (BCM) that can inform the development and implementation of a workshop in an art museum for preschool children, and what implications might be derived for the use of play in art museum education?

Beth Link
“Breaking the Silence: Empowering Adolescent Girls Through Art”

Central Research Question
How can community-based art educators design and implement an after-school art club for adolescent girls that promotes the growth of confidence that leads to social agency?

Ellen Murray Coonrod
Through the method of action research, this study reflects upon the individual practice of an art educator in facilitating visual art making experiences for a group of adults with dementia caused by Alzheimer’s disease. The study’s qualitative data consists of interviews with class facilitators, photos of the class environment and resulting artwork, and written observations, which were analyzed for emergent themes supporting the participants’ cognitive and social engagement. In adopting Kitwood and Bredin’s (1992) approach of person-centered care, the study connected their twelve indicators of relative well-being to observations of engagement in the class. The discovered themes include personal objects and stories, collaboration, mood, repetition, stimulating materials, multiple steps, individualized assistance, minimized distractions, and limited options. These described attributes could provide a resource for those designing and facilitating similar experiences for adults with Alzheimer’s disease.

Central Research Question
As a teacher in the Mobile Art Program (MAP), how can I facilitate art making to support the cognitive and social engagement of a group of individuals with Alzheimer’s disease, and what are the implications of the practices I developed and implemented for those working with people who have the disease?

Figure 2: Artwork completed by a participant in Ellen’s thesis research.

Stephanie Nordlund
This qualitative case study focuses on multisensory resources for walk-in museum visitors with visual impairments or blindness. Currently, most accessibility initiatives in art museums for people with low to no vision are in the form of infrequent special programs, instead of existing as consistent inclusion. The researcher sought to examine the value and kind of multisensory resources that enable social involvement, emotional and intellectual stimulation, and independent exploration within museum spaces for visitors with low to no vision (Reich, Lindgren-Streicher, Beyer, Levent, Pursley, & Mesiti, 2011).

In this three-part study, the researcher first observed people with visual impairments or blindness through an organization serving such needs. In addition, she interviewed five people about how museum professionals could be more inclusive to visitors with low to no vision and about how best to design multisensory resources. The researcher then created multisensory resources for two artworks at the Denver Art Museum. These resources engaged touch, smell, and hearing through the use of tactile graphics, scented handkerchiefs, verbal descriptions, art historical audio, music, and poetry. Finally, the researcher implemented the resources with five participants.

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The findings of this research indicate that various multisensory resources are beneficial (tactile graphics and audio resources), but navigation through the museum galleries was still an obstacle.

Central Research Questions
In what ways do multisensory resources facilitate social involvement, intellectual and emotional stimulation, and independent exploration for adult walk-in visitors with visual impairments or blindness in an art museum? How might my experiences developing, creating, and implementing these resources inform the training of museum staff to be responsive to visitors with visual impairments or blindness?

Figure 3: Textured replica of Scott Fraser's *Three Fishermen*, 1992. Created by Stephanie Nordlund.

Hillary Vincent
The purpose of this study, titled “‘Feeling a Part of Something Bigger Than Myself’: Arts Integration in One University Level Course,” is to investigate students’ perceptions of arts-based learning strategies in one university arts integration course. This case study examined one Fine Arts course at The University of Texas at Austin titled "FA 308: Arts Integration for Multidisciplinary Connections" from Fall 2014. This study focused on students’ perceptions on arts-based learning strategies learned in FA 308 by collecting artifacts and interviews. The participants for this study were 37 undergraduate students enrolled in FA 308. Four of the 37 participants were interviewed in Fall 2015 to shed light on their perceptions regarding what arts-based learning strategies were most significant to each of them. The findings of this study suggest that 97% of participants found several arts-based learning strategies from FA 308 effective. Therefore, arts-based learning strategies contribute to 21st century learning skills that inevitably benefit students as they prepare to enter the workforce.

Central Research Question
In conducting a case study with one class of college students, how does their perception of integrating arts-based learning strategies into their future professional careers change after taking FA 308: Arts Integration for Multidisciplinary Connections at The University of Texas at Austin?

Sub-Question
From the immediate end of the course in December of 2014 to a year later in November of 2015, how does the undergraduates’ perception change on using the arts-based learning strategies taught in the class?

Congratulations to our department’s 2016 graduates, and best of luck to the continuing students!

The Spring 2016 Scope Editors
Alumni Spotlight with Kirstie Parkinson
By Ellen Murray Coonrod

Ellen Murray Coonrod (EMC): Where are you currently living?


EMC: Could you describe your current work?

KP: I am currently working three different positions at the Carnegie Museums. The first is with a program called “STEM Stars”; it’s with the Carnegie Science Center. I prepare and teach different STEM experiments to middle-school girls six times a week at three different schools. I also serve as their mentor and talk to them about potential careers, encouraging them to explore the possibility of going to college.

The second job I have is with the program “Science on the Road,” which is also with the Carnegie Science Center. It is my job to present different science topics out in the community, which includes schools, libraries, churches, etc. Some programs are large-scale school assemblies, and some are for groups of 20 at a local library. I teach ages 5 to 100! Lastly, I am an Education Program Specialist with the Carnegie Museum of Art, where I create curriculum and teach their K-12 programs at the museum.

EMC: How did your time at UT Austin prepare you for your current positions?

KP: The Carnegie Museum of Art favors Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS). At UT, I participated in many discussions about VTS and was even able to have a roundtable discussion with the founder. I believe I was employed at Carnegie because of my familiarity with VTS.

EMC: Could you share a favorite moment or story from your experience at UT?

KP: My favorite class discussion was centered on one question that everyone has an opinion on: “What is art?” My classmates were able to provide support for their opinions, and it was interesting to see what they considered to be art.
Ellen Murray Coonrod (EMC): Where are you currently living?

Becca Borrelli (BB): I live in South Austin.

EMC: Could you describe your current work?

BB: Oh wow, this question is the bane of my existence. I have yet to come up with a streamlined elevator speech for when people ask about my professional life. You should see people’s faces when I launch into a description. I don’t think people realize that they’ve committed to a story. It used to be simpler when I said, “art teacher.”

The short answer is I do a lot of things.

There’s a great quote from Bill Watterson: “The truth is, most of us discover where we’re headed when we arrive.”

Since graduation, I have used that as my guiding philosophy. I follow my intuition and pick work that resonates with me, even if I’m not sure where it’s headed. That has led to a bunch of different things, all of which fill my life with joy.

After graduation, I was surprised to fall into a full-time position as a sign artist for Trader Joe’s. I learned a lot about design during that time, and began a small illustration and sign making business. I made the decision in 2014 to return to serving tables as my primary job. I love serving. I’ve worked in the food and beverage industry my entire professional life, and it has played an important role in grounding my pursuits. I took a position with Vox Table, and the connections I made there really launched my illustration business to the next level.

The project I spend most of my time on right now is the publication of an Austin adult coloring book. I didn’t set out to publish a coloring book. I was working on a series of Austin drawings last summer, and people began pointing out the conduciveness of my style to the coloring book medium. The trend was catching on, and when I published the book at Christmas, it took on a life of its own. That’s been a wild ride!

If you told me that I would be neck deep in entrepreneurial learning curves four years ago, I wouldn’t have believed it. I never viewed myself as a business owner, so it has expanded my self-concept quite a bit. In spite of all the art making and serving, my true love will always be art teaching. I consistently teach classes at the Contemporary Art School at Laguna Gloria. No matter how busy I get, I make time for teaching. It reminds me what my professional endgame is: Serving people through the arts.

Becca Borrelli
M.A. in Art Education (Community Focus)
Class of 2013

EMC: How did your time at UT Austin prepare you for what you are doing now?

BB: I could write a novel about what I got from my time at UT, but, ultimately, it was confidence. I think a lot of artists feel pigeon-holed by cultural roles.

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I know I was defined more than I’d care to admit in my younger years by the “absent-minded, disorganized, eccentric, starving artist” ridiculousness we’re all so familiar with. Researching and writing a thesis was a redefining moment for me. I realized, “Oh hey! I am far more focused, disciplined, and logical than I give myself credit for.” I also found a tribe at UT. Prior to moving to Austin, I was a public school art teacher in Ohio. I felt pretty alone during that time. The program at UT put me into instant contact with this highly diverse group of people who “got one another.” That was extremely validating. Artists need community, and before UT, I hadn’t really had one.

EMC: Could you share a favorite moment or story from your experience at UT?

BB: Standing on the streets of Antigua, Guatemala on Good Friday in 2012. The entire Holy Week in Antigua is packed with over-the-top sensory experiences, however, the only word I can think of to describe the Good Friday procession is “profound.” A handful of classmates and I stood as the large andas [floats] were being carried through the town. It was nighttime. Thousands of people packed the sidewalks, but no one spoke. Incense and music pervaded the streets, and the air was buzzing with this deep reverence. I had never experienced anything like that before. Sometimes we find ourselves inside moments where we get to realize the magnitude as it is happening. That was one of those moments. The connection, community, and artistry was an once-in-a-lifetime experience. I intuitively knew to savor it. I put my phone away, and burned the sights, smells, and sounds into my memory.

EMC: Do you intend to pursue a doctoral degree in art education?

BB: Applying for doctoral work requires an openness to moving, and I have no desire to look outside of Austin. That said, doctoral work continues to be on my radar. Perhaps one day!
Allison Clark

(Re)Telling Stories in Art Museums as a Wartime Service

“Inspired by my master’s thesis, my presentation at NAEA examined the work of Anna Curtis Chandler, an art educator who worked as a storyteller at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City during the United States’ active military involvement in World War I. In order to connect my conclusions with NAEA’s Museum Education constituents, I emphasized Chandler’s storytelling techniques, volunteer trainings, and curriculum developments. I was pleasantly surprised by how many people attended my presentation, as historical research sessions tend to garner less attention than competing participatory panels. However, the audience was engaged, asking for additional information on my thesis and for its publication details. All in all, it was a wonderfully beneficial learning experience for me and a great introduction to presenting at NAEA!”

Elise Chevalier

Lessons from Dorothy Dunn: The Studio at the Santa Fe Indian School

“During my NAEA presentation, I discussed connections between Dorothy Dunn’s career as an art educator during the 1930s and the work of contemporary art educators. These connections included the issues of reform movements and cultural sensitivity. After my presentation, practitioners in the audience discussed the benefits of critical self-reflection in our teaching practices.”

Elise Chevalier, Class of 2016, presented Lessons from Dorothy Dunn: The Studio at the Santa Fe Indian School at NAEA.