

2011

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**Art Speaks: Enhancing K-12 Curriculum through
Multicultural Community Public Art**

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LS 400: Capstone

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May 20, 2011

Abstract

Public art is more than outdoor art. It has the potential of being an educational tool. Multicultural community public art can be integrated into core subjects, enhancing students' learning through both critical thinking and multiculturalism. For this reason, it can be a great asset in the K-12 educational system. Furthermore, it is a way to elevate the status of art in K-12 education, granting it the importance it deserves. This research examines how multicultural community public art can be incorporated into the K-12 curriculum by analyzing literature and conducting interviews.

Introduction and Background

During the time of John Dewey's progressive education philosophy, art held an important role in education. According to Vasquez-Heilig et al. (2010), Dewey believed children need an education that allows them to grow mentally, physically, and socially by providing opportunities to be critical thinkers (p. 137). Art allows for just that. Unfortunately, its popularity declined as time went by. Presently, the status of art in the United States' educational system has diminished so much. It is simply neglected. The current era of accountability, as Vasquez-Heilig et al. (2010) refer to it, created by No Child Left Behind (NCLB) has placed an emphasis on reading and mathematics, leaving little to no room for other academic subjects, such as art. This is particularly true in low performing schools whose goal is simply to raise their Academic Performance Index (API) scores to keep their schools functioning.

Public art, art that is not in museums or galleries, in the United States, has existed since its early beginnings. As part of our communities, public art is accessible to everyone. We might pass by it and simply ignore it, without stopping to think of its potential. Public art has the potential of greatly contributing to the K-12 education if integrated into the curriculum. This paper analyzes how multicultural community public art can enhance K-12 education beyond traditional curriculum.

This research is of value to current K-12 teachers, in particular to those who see no value in the inclusion of art in education. Some teachers may be discouraged by art because they might consider themselves not artistically "talented." Yet, it is important to note that art is more than drawing or painting. Public art is one such art form which inclusively requires no specific talent. All teachers need, is a bit of research and planning. Thus, for those teachers who feel unworthy

of art, it is time to change their mentality. This paper will bring to light the intricate features of multicultural community public art and reveal suggestions for its incorporation in the K-12 educational system based on information gathered through literature and interviews.

The primary question that guides this research study is: How does multicultural community public art enhance K-12 student learning beyond traditional curriculum? The secondary questions that aid in answering the previous question are: What is multicultural community public art? What does it consist of? What does literature say about the way multicultural community public art benefits K-12 students? Do the interpretations of artists' messages correlate with State Standards? How does multicultural community public art enhance K-12 student learning beyond traditional curriculum? Do teachers incorporate multicultural community public art into their K-12 classrooms? If so, how do they go about implementing it? What can be done to incorporate multicultural community public art into the K-12 curriculum?

Literature Review

Public art has a rich history in the United States. It has been in existence since a long time ago, but at the same time it is also an innovative form of art. For the purposes of aesthetic appeal, it dates back to the early beginnings of the country through statues that idolized heroes (Russell, 2004). With the trajectory of time, public art has evolved, encompassing new modes of public art and new purposes as well.

The idea that public art is democratic has been an everlasting debate. Conrad (1995) believes murals may be the most democratic art in the United States because it relates to historic events or experiences which express visions for the future (p. 98). The democracy also stems from the controversy public art pieces can create and the power it can give to the artists

themselves. Conrad (1995) claims that “community murals commonly touch on universal themes and may lead people to individual or collective action” (p. 100). However, not everyone holds the same opinion as Conrad. Driscoll (2010) believes it is a false assumption to claim that public art is democratic; she attributes this to the fact that most public art pieces are built with money (p. 45). Nonetheless, she does think public art reflects to a certain degree the society in which it is situated.

Most agree that public art should be part of K-12 education (Krug & Cohen-Evron, 2000; Russell, 2004; Song, 2008; and Conrad, 1995). Krug & Cohen-Evron (2000) state “life-centered approaches to curriculum organization infuse the arts with other subject areas to conduct inquiry about personal and socially relevant ideas, issues, or problems” (p. 268). They even advocate a partnership between teachers and students to plan curriculum (Krug & Cohen-Evron, 2000). Russell (2004) thinks students should be challenged by public art and be motivated to view and investigate it (p. 24). Song (2008) argues that when children are exposed to ecological public art they become more receptive to the connection between people and nature, and are encouraged to take action in favor of the environment (p. 16). Conrad (1995) makes reference to the work of artist Frank Gonzales who partakes in creating murals alongside K-12 students (p. 101). In this scenario, the process of creating murals is an educational experience by itself.

In addition, public art can be considered a form of place-based education. Place-based education is “the process of using the local community and environment as a starting point to teach concepts...across the curriculum” (Gruenewald & Smith, 2008, p. 7). The key is the usage of hands-on, real-world learning experiences. This method of teaching is a practical way of connecting students to their communities. This goal is present in the integration of public art in

the K-12 curriculum. If teachers use public art in education the community becomes a catalyst for learning. It is a way for “the artist in the classroom [to] create possibilities for a form of learning that cultivates awareness and care for place” (Gruenewald & Smith, 2008, p. 33). Public artists also acknowledge the importance of place and make it evident in their artwork. Judith Baca’s *Great Wall of Los Angeles* pays tribute not only to California history, but also to the indigenous people who inhabited the place where the mural is situated. The river was a source of life for the Tongva, but this life was destroyed when it was concreted to prevent seasonal flooding. Baca recognized this and highlighted its importance in her mural. She states, “I saw the concrete as a scar where the river once ran and our narrative mural in the channel as a tattoo on the scar” (Baca, 2005, p. 158). These types of public art allow students to see the value of their communities and develop a sense of belonging within it.

Due to the fact that public art is a language of its own, it is a very efficient component in the classroom. Baca presents a very detailed definition of a mural, explaining the expressive power of this form of public art. Baca (2005) claims murals in their highest moments “can reveal to us what is hidden, challenge the prevailing dialogues, [and] transform people’s lives. Murals exercise our most important rights of free speech and can indeed be the catalysts for change in difficult times” (p. 156). Forms of public art that are mindful as Baca describes have great teaching potential. For this reason, Cahan & Kocur (1996) claim “art education offers a visually stimulating, sometimes nonverbal opportunity for learning” (p. 33). The visual aspect of public art expresses the messages of an artist and a community. Furthermore, it is a visual language that addresses multiculturalism. This is particularly true with the usage of art pieces from artists of color. According to Amalia Mesa-Bains, “artists of color bring living cultural aesthetic to the classroom” (cited by Cahan & Kocur, 1996, p. 37). This is of particular importance because the

demographics in K-12 classrooms are changing, reflecting a greater diversity. “[Public art] reflects our values and dreams, and as our society is changing around us, it is changing, growing, and evolving” (Senie & Webster, 1992, p. 286).

After extensive research, the literature found has not projected any opposing views. The literature pertaining to public art is limited. Thus, authors who are interested in the topic tend to be artists themselves or other individuals who favor art. Consequently, the available literature supports public art and its integration in education. Perhaps as the research in this area grows, opposing views will be exposed. For the time being, however, this is not the case.

The literature that has been collected gives an extensive outlook as to the prospects of public art. Public art is the voice of the people. It is an art form that speaks of a culture and community, either from the past, present, or future. The messages conveyed by public art can then become the foundations of an education that is in line with place-based education.

Methods

The data for this research study was gathered through textual information and interviews. I began my research at the CSUMB library, where two books proved to be of value. The research then led me to the CSUMB databases. The online databases provided most of the references for this paper. The most popular databases utilized for this research were JSTOR and Academic Search Elite. Nonetheless, other databases were browsed as well, such as ERIC and PsycINFO. Some of the keywords used during the online research were mural, public art, education, and curriculum. Additional articles and books were provided by a VPA professor who participated in the interview portion of this study.

Interviews were also a key component for this research. These interviews were conducted in partnership with Cecilia Moreno, a fellow peer with a similar capstone focus as me. Six people from different backgrounds participated in our interviews. Our first interviewee was a CSUMB VPA professor who has a vast knowledge of art. Inclusively, she teaches a course solely on public art. I will refer to her as Mrs. N. The second interviewee was a fifth grade teacher from a Salinas elementary school. She was chosen to be a part of this study because she has been teaching for seven years, and since then has included art in her classroom. I will refer to her as Ms. J. Last but not least, a group interview was conducted at a local Salinas art center. Four local artists, with very different artistic visions, participated in this particular interview. I will refer to them as Mr. O., Mr. L., Mr. D., and Mr. R. The questions used in the three interviews are provided in Appendix A, B, and C.

I chose these two procedures for gathering data because I believe in the end it would lead to a less biased paper. The books and articles gave me insights to the viewpoints of various artists and art educators. However, there was little room for questioning. Since the interview process was more hands-on, this procedure was very valuable because these six subject participants presented real-world situations they have experienced in the local community. As such, I was able to analyze the role of public art in my community. By analyzing multiple perspectives, I was able to look at public art through a different light. Furthermore, I was able to answer my research questions by combining their insights with those found in literature.

Results

Secondary questions that build the primary question have been used as a driving force towards the gathering of information. The information that has been collected comes from an

extensive literature review and select interviews. The following section compiles the data from these sources and categorizes it into the secondary questions in an effort to answer the primary question in the most detail as possible.

What is multicultural community public art? What does it consist of?

Many terms have been compiled to define public art for the purposes of this research because simply by using the term “public art” it is too vague and general for the extensive ideas it represents. Public art in its simplest form refers to a piece of art found outside, not in a museum or gallery, consequently making it available to the public. “If there’s no access, it’s not public,” Mrs. N. states (Mrs. N., personal communication, March 2, 2011). It also consists of various forms, some of which include murals, three-dimensional works, and performance pieces. According to Russell (2004), public art in the United States can be classified into three orientations: 1) Hero-on-a-Horse (pre-modernist), 2) Form-and-Freedom (modernist), and 3) Collaborate-and-Create (postmodernist) (p. 20). The pieces from these three orientations range from heroic sculptures to more contemporary pieces, such as the AIDS “NAMES Project Quilt.” Another innovative form of public art is ecological public art which takes use of elements in nature to create an aesthetic concept (Song, 2008). However, public art is not only defined by its visual aspects.

Public art is much more complex; as such, it requires more adjectives in its description. The first adjective used during this research study is multicultural. The element of multiculturalism plays a role in public art in various ways. One way multiculturalism is embedded in public art is when it comes to analyzing the piece itself. Mrs. N. believes public art becomes multicultural when you ask, “Who’s this about?” and “Who’s left out?” (Mrs. N.,

personal communication, March 2, 2011). While creating public art, multiculturalism is also present. Mr. O. states that when he creates a mural it deals with the culture of the people; hence an artist must be willing to listen to their opinions and combine it with their own (Mr. O., personal communication, March 11, 2011). Mr. R. agrees with this idea because he believes the individualism of art is washed away in public art due to the integration of the views of others in the art piece (Mr. R., personal communication, March 11, 2011). Finally, multiculturalism is present in the art itself. Stephanie Johnson believes “public art can make visible the members of society who are “invisible” and to bridge unexamined cultural, racial, and social divisions” (cited by Cartiere & Willis, 2008, p. 92). For Johnson, many of the public art pieces from colored artists serve to artistically represent minorities, and to bring to surface issues that impede multiculturalism. This is reinforced by Seitu Jones’ belief that public art serves three functions: 1) challenges and supports values and traditions, 2) public art inspires, and 3) public art informs (Senie & Webster, 1992). Thus, the trait of multiculturalism comes from the way viewers interpret the piece since they bring in their own culture and ethics to it, from the blending of the artist/s and community’s visions, and from the dialogue the piece can stimulate.

Finally, the term community applies to public art in the way that the piece becomes part of the community in which it is situated. This sense of belonging is fostered in a physical and psychological way. Physically, the public art piece holds a space in the community. Psychologically, public art can become a source of pride and a reflection of the history of a group of people. As Seitu Jones claims, public art “documents our place in time” (cited by Senie & Webster, 1992, p. 282). This documentation then serves to inform the current community as well as future generations.

What does literature say about the way multicultural community public art benefits K-12 students? Do the interpretations of artists' messages correlate with State Standards?

Multicultural community public art benefits K-12 students through meaningful educational inquiry. It gives students the opportunity to pose and solve difficult tasks and to obtain learning skills to examine information in detail (Krug & Cohen-Evron, 2000). Stephanie Johnson states public art facilitates cross-cultural communication, critical thinking, visual literacy, empathy, and self-reflection (cited by Cartiere & Willis, 2008). Critical thinking and cross-cultural communication are two of the most common benefits K-12 students gain from studying public art. Mrs. N. believes the same benefits her university students obtain in her VPA 308 course can transfer to K-12 students as well. For her, immersion in public art changes consciousness, making one aware of other people's perspectives other than one's own (Mrs. N., personal communication, March 2, 2011). It leads to a lot of questioning and the blend of personal ethics and cultures with that of the piece itself. Mr. L. believes this fostering of critical thinking leads to more learning (Mr. L., personal communication, March 11, 2011).

The interpretations of artists' messages can correlate with state standards. The most obvious way it correlates with state standards is with those stipulated in the California Visual and Performing Arts Standards themselves. Nonetheless, it can also apply to the standards of traditional subjects. Judith Baca's *Great Wall of Los Angeles* can become part of the fourth grade social studies standards because the mural is about California history and during that grade level students learn a lot about the state's early history, including themes like the establishment of missions. Social Studies standard 4.2.3 would apply to a lesson involving this mural because it involves the ability to "describe the Spanish exploration and colonization of California, including

the relationships among soldiers, missionaries, and Indians” (CA Dept. of Ed., 2000). This standard would be paired up with two Visual and Performing Arts (VPA) standards. Standard 3.1 is “describe how art plays a role in reflecting life,” and Standard 3.2 is “identify and discuss the content of works of art in the past and present, focusing on the different cultures that have contributed to California’s history and art heritage” (CA Dept. of Ed., 2001). Mrs. N. declares building a mission is not enough (Mrs. N., personal communication, March 2, 2011). A more rewarding educational experience would be one such as the described above.

The mural Mr. O. is working on for the Natividad Medical Center in Salinas can also serve as an educational tool. The central image of this piece is that of a pregnant woman through which we can see the fetus growing inside her. This mural can be used at the high school level in the realm of science, specifically targeting health and biology. The piece can function as an introduction to a sexual education unit or to a cell division unit involving mitosis. Science standards that can address a lesson around this local public art piece are standard 2a in Life Sciences/Biology, dealing with Genetics. Under this standard “students know meiosis is an early step in sexual reproduction in which the pairs of chromosomes separate and segregate randomly during all division to produce gametes containing one chromosome of each type” (CA Dept. of Ed., 2003). Health standard 1.2.G also applies because it explains how conception occurs, the stages of pregnancy, and the responsibilities of parenting (CA Dept. of Ed., 2009). Either standard can then be connected to VPA Nine through Twelve-Proficient standard 3.4 which discusses the purposes of art in selected contemporary cultures (CA Dept. of Ed., 2001). Evidently, it is not so difficult to connect the messages of public art with State Standards in any academic subject.

How does multicultural community public art enhance K-12 student learning beyond traditional curriculum? (For the purposes of this research, traditional curriculum refers to core academic subjects like language arts and mathematics.)

Multicultural community public art can enhance K-12 student learning beyond traditional curriculum when it is used as a resource that connects various disciplines. Public art can clarify traditional curriculum and enhance skills (Krug & Cohen-Evron, 2000). For example, ecological public art can provide concrete examples of intangible ideas about the environment as well as other content areas (Song, 2008). Moreover, the multicultural aspect of public art enhances traditional curriculum. This is especially relevant in a subject such as history because the artwork will potentially bring to light the history of a community, which students can then decipher and compare to what they are learning in textbooks.

When asked this question, Mrs. N. was taken aback and stated the problem lay in considering art a separate subject from the traditional curriculum: “That’s the fallacy right there, to call it non-traditional...it should be part of the tradition” (Mrs. N., personal communication, March 2, 2011). This brought to mind the *Goals 2000 Act: Educate America Act* that passed in 1994. This was the first time art was identified as part of the core curriculum in federal policy (Vasquez-Heilig et al., 2010). Seventeen years later, this policy seems to have been forgotten. It is definitely time to revive this policy in order to enhance the current curriculum.

Do teachers incorporate multicultural community public art into their K-12 classrooms? If so, how do they go about implementing it?

Select teachers incorporate multicultural community public art into their K-12 classrooms. The way they approach this ultimately depends on them. For example, some opt to

achieve this by following pre-made lesson plans available electronically or on print. Authors such as Argiro (2004) publish units in art magazines which teachers can use as resources to teach public art. The specific unit Argiro presents is based on sculptures aimed for instruction in fifth through eighth grade. Inclusively, the lessons are accompanied by discussion questions and activities. Other established lesson plans can be found in books. Cahan & Kocur (1996) provide four lessons on controversial public art pieces such as the *Vietnam Veterans Memorial* by Maya Lin and *Welcome to America's Finest Tourist Plantation* by David Avalos, Elizabeth Sisco, and Louis Hock. These specific public art pieces form part of the curriculum of a course at CSUMB. Thus, incorporating them into a K-12 classroom would be of utmost value. Essentially these pre-established lessons can be a simpler way to incorporate public art into a K-12 classroom. The only requirement would be the teachers' motivation and willingness to do so.

Ms. J., a fifth grade teacher in Salinas, has taken the first step towards incorporating multicultural community public art into her classroom. When public art is mentioned in her *California Treasures* language arts textbook she compares it to local public art. For example, when the textbook mentioned a mural, she compared it to local murals in town so students could make real-life connections. (Ms. J., personal communication, March 9, 2011).

As an advocate for visual arts, Ms. J. expressed a desire to include multicultural public art from Salinas in her classroom. She thought a local mural based on the Aztec calendar could be incorporated into a social studies lesson because there is a unit on Native Americans through which the Aztecs are introduced (Ms. J., personal communication, March 9, 2011). In this way, she would not only make connections with the cultural backgrounds of her students, but she

would also be able to integrate public art into traditional academic subjects just like she does on a daily basis with visual arts.

What can be done to incorporate multicultural community public art into the K-12 curriculum?

The integral component needed to incorporate multicultural community public art into the K-12 curriculum is educating teachers, district personnel, and at a higher level, policymakers. New and current teachers have to be inspired by art (Vasquez-Heilig et al, 2010). This can be achieved at the university level as well as through trainings. Ms. J. believes art should be a requirement in higher education, not an option. As a CSUMB graduate, she was exposed to art because she chose to obtain a VPA emphasis. Otherwise, she would have just taken one general art course which wouldn't have been as productive as the twelve units she devoted to art through her emphasis. She thinks one art course is not enough for new teachers to find a connection between art and the rest of the curriculum (Ms. J., personal communication, March 9, 2011). The four Salinas community artists agree that if these professionals are not educated about art, this is not possible. Mr. D. claims they must lead by example (Mr. D., personal communication, March 11, 2011). Mrs. N. agrees and goes on to say, "If they don't see the value for themselves, they won't use it" (Mrs. N., personal communication, March 2, 2011).

Nonetheless, Mrs. N. also notes other steps are necessary if public art is to become part of the curriculum. For one, teachers have to be really creative when designing curriculum. She suggests teachers think about what's current, and encourages them to invite students to share ideas of what they would like to learn (Mrs. N., personal communication, March 2, 2011). Once the ideas are established, the teachers must set out to gather materials to present each piece that is chosen. These steps allow public art to become part of the curriculum.

Currently, it seems multicultural community public art is gaining a place in the K-12 educational system, but not at the curricular level just yet. Mr. L. and Mr. R. are individually working with groups of K-12 students in after school programs. Mr. L.'s students are working on a mural for the Monterey Bay Aquarium. Unfortunately, Mr. L. believes this is not enough. "The setting is not conducive of teaching; it's a challenge to teach properly" (Mr. L., personal communication, March 11, 2011). Mr. L. encourages school districts to make art part of the classroom. In this manner, children will take it more seriously because they will see value in it since it's part of their regular curriculum, not simply an extracurricular activity.

Discussion

As a pre-service teacher, I believe the arts deserve a place in the traditional curriculum because that is where they truly belong. It is time to stop marginalizing the arts, and what better way than by advocating the integration of multicultural community public art into the K-12 educational system. Multicultural community public art can be an excellent resource in the classroom. It can easily be incorporated into subjects like language arts, science, and history. If teachers get into the habit of doing this education can only improve. I believe public art can be a way to expose students to art that is within their reach. At the same time, it presents a way to enrich the curriculum. By combining public art with other academic subjects, art can regain the position it once held in American education. The six subject-participants I interviewed all believe art should hold an equal position in education as the other traditional subjects and I agree. Public art not only benefits visual learners, but it will benefit all students because it stimulates their critical thinking and exposes them to multiple perspectives. Once students are exposed to

multicultural community public art they'll never look at it in the same way. It is time for us to recognize the value of public art. It is not enough to simply pass by it.

We must take advantage of what our community offers. By getting to know our community through public art, we also find another function for art. Place-based education uses the community as a resource. Public schools (K-12) should look to this educational model to see how the community can enhance learning. We have to look beyond our classroom walls and acknowledge that opportunities for learning also lie outside of the school environment, and we simply can't afford to ignore them.

Vasquez-Heilig et al. (2010) believe it is time to question why we only measure children's learning with quantitative data (p. 143). Annihilating the system of accountability created by NCLB is definitely a challenge, but it can at least be partially changed. Teachers can continue to address and meet state standards if they implement public art; nothing can be lost, but a lot can be gained and students shouldn't be denied this opportunity when it is within their reach.

Problems and Limitations

While conducting my research, I faced a few obstacles. One obstacle I faced in getting reliable answers to my research questions was that the sources I found online and in the library were not all relevant to my questions. I relied a lot on my interview information to answer most of my questions because the literature mainly applied to three of my research questions. Another obstacle was the lack of time and availability to find K-12 teachers in local schools who use public art in the classroom. The amount of teachers who use art in the classroom is limited; those select few who do use art opt to use general visual arts, not public art. Thus, this proved to be a

great challenge. In addition, since the teacher I interviewed is a fifth grade teacher, it would have been beneficial to interview high school and middle school teachers as well because my research targets the K-12 population, not only the elementary level. As such, I made certain conclusions solely on the experiences of one K-12 teacher, potentially reducing my reliability.

I believe the information I gathered through this study is not really sufficient to answer my research questions. It would have been beneficial to find articles that explored the outcomes of public art implementation in the K-12 curriculum. Many of the articles I could find only dealt with possible lessons that could stem from public art pieces. For the purposes of this research, it would have been ideal to explore how these lessons were implemented in a classroom and explore the benefits of its usage not only for the K-12 curriculum, but for the students as well.

Recommendation

Public art is such a complex art form because it encompasses many factors. When one looks past the visual appearance, the prospects of public art are infinite. Public art presents a story and culture that is then interpreted through other cultural lenses. It raises questions and one learns while finding the answers. For this reason, it is an ideal educational tool that should be part of every K-12 classroom. As such, I am an advocate for the use of public art and believe it should be part of the curriculum. Pieces can easily be morphed into traditional academic subjects resulting in benefits for the students and the subjects themselves.

This change in education can be achieved by inspiring teachers in informing themselves about public art. There are resources available which teachers can take advantage of, and a bit of research goes a long way. By educating those who have a say in K-12 education, public art can move from a temporary after school setting to a permanent place in curriculum.

Conclusion

Art popularity in education has declined with the current era of accountability created by NCLB. The use of public art, however, can enhance K-12 curriculum. Public art is artwork that is accessible to the community. It reflects multiculturalism in the way that the artists incorporate the visions of the community, not only their own, and through the analysis of the piece itself. This trait makes public art an ideal way to reach our diverse K-12 student population. Furthermore, public art in education represents multiple benefits such as the attainment of critical thinking and multiculturalism. It is also a source of hands-on learning and visual learning. These positive features can become part of the K-12 curriculum if multicultural community public art is incorporated into traditional academic subjects.

The integration of public art in K-12 education is definitely a possibility. State standards of Visual and Performing Arts can combine with the standards of traditional academic subjects. Teachers can achieve this by using prepared lessons available in books or online sources. Moreover, they can opt to be innovative and simply create new lessons based on public art pieces of their choice. The only requirement is motivation. Select teachers are already engaging in the preliminary steps needed towards integrating public art into the K-12 curriculum. Unfortunately, they are a minority. This can be changed if teachers, districts, and policymakers recognize the value of art, and the community, in education. Multicultural community public art offers an array of possibilities; we just have to be more receptive to its potential. Public art is more than what meets the eye.

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Appendix A

Questions for CSUMB VPA professor

How would you define public art?

What makes public art multicultural?

VPA 308, Ways of Seeing, is a course based on public art. How do you make curricular decisions for this course? That is, how do you choose which public art pieces will become part of the course?

What do you strive for students to gain from this course?

In your opinion, how are students benefited from the integration of public art in the curriculum?

Why do you think multicultural public art is important in the curriculum?

Do you believe multicultural public art can be taught in the K-12 level? If so, how?

What would you suggest teachers do to achieve this?

What can K-12 students gain from multicultural public art?

How does multicultural community public arts enhance K-12 student learning beyond traditional curriculum? By traditional curriculum I mean simply the core subjects such as language arts, math, science, and history.

What can be done to incorporate multicultural public art into the K-12 curriculum?

Appendix B

Questions for Salinas elementary teacher

Why do you integrate visual arts into your classroom?

How do you address state standards through your art activities?

Do other teachers in this school integrate visual arts into their classrooms? What about at the district level?

What forms of visual arts do you incorporate into your classroom?

Have you ever used public art in your classroom? If so, what types of public art have you used?

If not, why?

Do you think multicultural public art found in the community of Salinas can become part of your classroom? If so, in what way? If not, why? Can it become part of the other teachers' classrooms?

Appendix C

Questions for four local artists

You are currently the director for *Los Hijos del Sol* and the Alisal Center for the Fine Arts (ACFA) Visual Art Department. Is this correct? Can you tell me a little about this program?

We know that one of the missions of *Los Hijos del Sol* is to nurture and develop visual and intellectual expression as a means of expressive progress of internal capabilities. Why is this so important? How can this help the students' academically?

How would you define public art?

Have you experienced or witnessed how teachers incorporate art in K-12 schools? Is it the correct way to teach art to the students? Why or why not?

If visual arts (arts in general) are important, why do you think they are not a priority in the school curriculum?

How can visual arts be brought back to be a level of priority in the K-12 curriculum?

As an illustrator, what messages do your public art pieces convey? Would these messages correlate with state standards?

Do you think your public art pieces can be part of the Salinas schools' curriculum? If so, in what way?