



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute  
2008 Volume III: Pride of Place: New Haven Material and Visual Culture

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## **Discovering New Haven's History of Public Art**

Curriculum Unit 08.03.05  
by Melissa Sands

### **Introduction**

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I teach visual arts at Christopher Columbus Family Academy in New Haven, CT, a preschool through eighth grade dual language school. Students enter our school with dominance in either the English or Spanish language. The school's mission is to have every student bi-literate by the end of eighth grade. Being that New Haven has a very diverse population and that Columbus is a school of choice, unlike a magnet school, all of our students live in New Haven but not necessarily in the school neighborhood. The result is an extremely diverse student population. Our students come from a multitude of Hispanic countries as well as many regions of the U.S. Many of these students are second language learners. Using visual techniques is very important in teaching second language learners. My focus is to use these techniques to help students develop a visual literacy that will help break through the language barrier and give them a greater understanding of culture.

### **Rationale**

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The old saying 'a picture is worth a thousand words' suggests that visual communication can be as or more effective than a verbal language for the expression of ideas. When I am at a loss for words, or cannot seem to find the words to express a certain idea, I use visual references and drawing to communicate more easily and effectively. This has become important, as I do not speak Spanish like many of my students. Many public works of art are created for much the same reason. They strive to educate or inform the public on a given topic without words. My personal mission, as a visual arts teacher, is to provide my students with a third language, a visual language. Having this visual literacy, my students gain the ability to understand the world they see around them and think critically about the art that can guide them through history and beyond.

My unit is intended for students in the seventh grade. These students are at an age where they are beginning to question their role in society and how they can impact it. Students at this level enthusiastically accept the challenge of analyzing artists, artworks and the history behind them. Our school is in a unique position to stimulate this analysis as it is currently under reconstruction and an element of the process includes a public sculpture commissioned by New Haven's Percent for Art Program. This sculpture depicts a specific moment in

history, the fleet of Christopher Columbus seeing the shoreline of America. The artist's intent is to spark the viewer's curiosity concerning this historically significant moment. I believe that the sculpture offers a great opportunity for our students to develop these critical skills to read visual evidence with a deep historical perspective. By creating this study of public art and the significance surrounding its conception I wish to give my students the ability to use visual literacy to analyze and interpret this artwork. These tools will compel them not to take what they see for granted and to begin questioning their visual world.

Using public art in this unit offers a unique learning experience for our students given the multifaceted influences involved in public art's conception and execution. Public art is accessible to everyone in the community but often over looked and this will give the students an opportunity to view their environment with a new perspective. Many people pass elements of the built environment without any awareness of them or their intended purpose or meaning. Oblivious to the object's purpose, many do not realize the political nature behind the public work or the process that happens before the artist is asked to create an idea for the space. The general population does not reflect upon the intent of the patron or commissioning entity. What message did the patron have in mind when soliciting the work of art? Was the message what the artist had in mind truly the same as the patron's? Visual artists often struggle with the fact that viewers bring different background knowledge that influence the interpretation of their work. For example, if a person observes a statue of a man holding a paint pallet and paintbrush, but has never seen these before, how are they to interpret the statue as that of an artist? A vocabulary of visual icons, such as a paintbrush and pallet will give the viewer the tools they need to read an artwork. My intent in this unit is to bring public artworks to the attention of my students and give them the tools they need to interpret the artworks intention, execution, and reception. I do not want my students to take for granted what they see, rather I would like them to question and interpret the artist and patron's choices, intended purposes and messages when creating a public artwork. This unit aims to empower these students to ask critical questions that will give them a deeper understanding and appreciation of their environment and the people who created it.

In this unit we will focus on artwork created for public spaces that the students have access to in New Haven. I have limited my selections to artwork from the current Percent for Art Project and the 1930 Public Works Art Project due to their commonality in nature. We will begin with The Percent for Art sculpture *Rodrigo de Triana* by artist Jose Buscaglia. This is the most accessible artwork for my students, being that it's placed in their school and should intrigue them because it was chosen to represent them and their community. Other artworks were chosen for their location within the school district, and topics such as founding fathers and immigration. Immigration is of particular interest since many of my students have immigrated recently to the United States. We will end with the production of a public artwork created by the students for our school building.

## Public Art in America

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Art produced for public places can be found throughout history and around the globe. The purpose for these artworks range from historical narrative, to educational intent, and in some cases to boastfulness. These works of art can be found in public buildings, on the streets or within the landscapes we travel, and in our cultural centers and political powerhouses. One can argue the purpose of *Stonehenge* was created with the landscape and natural elements in mind much like the public artist of today use their surroundings as a guide. Public art is produced for public spaces that enhances the environment and informs or interacts with the

public.

Public art has a rich history in the lives of Americans. There was a time in US history after the war for independence in 1781, that congress voted to erect a decorative column to commemorate the war and one year later a monument of General Washington to honor the Definitive Treaty of Peace. These monuments of public art were never built. This is thought to be because congress believed such things to be a luxury. This belief was swayed when President John Quincy Adams made a formal statement on government sponsorship of art, viewing it as an index of our progress as a new country and to mark our place in the history of a civilized nation. <sup>1</sup>

In 1833, a group of Washington D.C. residents founded the Washington National Monument Society. They wished to fund a monument that would promote the city's status. The original monument was to cost no less than one million dollars. The Washington Monument took some fifty years from its inception to its completion. During this time congress agreed to contribute funds, adding to the disagreements concerning the style of art that would best represent America and George Washington. Other factors holding back the construction of this monument were conflict among political parties, critics and artists. The *Washington Monument* was completed by Lt. Col Thomas Casey who resolved the conflict with a marvel of modern engineering. <sup>2</sup>

America's great depression during the 1930's was an era that supported many public artworks. When the US entered the great depression many feared that culture would be lost. It was believed that the arts would help the people pull through this hard time. A federally funded program was created to support the livelihood of artists and in doing so inspire the American people. Multiple public works were created with American ideals.

Many people believe that a well placed artwork created by an accomplished artist can lift public spirits and change public attitudes surrounding a given area. Public art can instill civic pride. When Alexander Calder's *La Grande Vitesse* was originally installed in Grand Rapids, Michigan, through funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, it was met with opposition from the public. The notoriety of the artist gave the city cultural prestige which changed the public attitude. *La Grande Vitesse* now stands as a landmark in funding for the arts in the United States. Currently *La Grande Vitesse* is marked as a tourist spot in Grand Rapids it has become the city's logo. <sup>3</sup>

Public art has fought its way into our century. It has shown many faces and fought many battles. Public art has progressed from being considered an unnecessary luxury to a cornerstone in American ideals. Privately or federally funded, public art tells a story that both the artist and patron hope will last for many centuries to come.

## **Public Works Art Projects (PWAP) of the 1930's, Federal Art Project of the Works Progress Administration (FAP/WPA)**

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PWAP was part of the Civil Works Administration (CWA), a federal work relief program that provided the unemployed with public service jobs during 1933 and 1934. PWAP employed artists to create works to embellish public buildings such as schools and libraries. The subject matter for these works was most often chosen to instill pride in American culture and to illuminate American history. This short lived program led to the Federal Art Project of the Works Progress Administration (FAP/WPA) beginning on May 6, 1935.

When the CWA first began it was Edward Bruce who went to then President Franklin Roosevelt and suggested the idea that some of the funds be allocated to the arts. Mr. Bruce himself was an artist and in turn served as secretary on a committee for fine arts. After this first committee met on the matter it was decided that federal buildings and any federally funded buildings would be enhanced by CWA artists. When the program began the artwork was to consist of easel paintings, statues, friezes, memorials, tablets, prints, drinking fountains, and even designs for linoleum. <sup>4</sup> Many art historians believed the bureaucracy that artists contended with during the production of a given artwork limited their artistic style and media. The artworks commissioned were predominantly painting and relief in a representational style. New Haven was also found to have been limited to such styles during this time period as well. Not all the politicians involved were themselves trained in the arts. The hierarchy of patrons and governing agencies dictated the artwork theme and style. <sup>5</sup> In contrast other historians believe without the PWAP a generation of American artists would have been lost in the depression.

New Haven had a unique advantage during the PWAP and FAP programs, due to its relationship with Yale University. While the program was run jointly by federal and state legislation, the directors of these programs in New Haven were Theodore Sizer of the Yale University Art Gallery until 1934 and then by Wayland W. Williams. There were 57 registered artists in the New Haven program, most of whom were New Haven area residents, and Yale Art School graduates. Artists' salaries were paid by PWAP grants, and typically the money for supplies was solicited by the sponsor. When works were proposed, they went before a review board comprised of city officials, the sponsor and art committee members who chose the artists based on submitted sketches. <sup>6</sup> This format and legislation opened the door for the current Percent for Art legislation.

## Percent for Art

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New Haven's Percent for Art in Public Spaces Program was created as a result of legislation passed by the Connecticut General Assembly allowing any municipality to enact Percent for Art legislation (Public Act No 81-164). It requires one-percent of new construction costs to be spent on the artworks for the new space. New Haven was the first city in Connecticut to pass Percent for Art legislation as an ordinance entitled 'Municipal Funds For Works of Art,' on December 20, 1982 <sup>7</sup>. These artworks are intended to enhance the buildings, as well as bring to light the city's artistic and cultural history. This program pays tribute and gives recognition to living artists. The Percent for Art idea stems from the New Deal and Treasury Department's Section of Painting and Sculpture. When the Public Works Art Projects ended in 1934, the Treasury Department's Section of Painting and Sculpture was created. The Treasury Department program set aside approximately one percent of the cost of a federal building to adorn the building with art. <sup>8</sup>

The mechanism of this process involves multiple steps all of which can influence the final piece. When a new building or location is slotted for a Percent for Art project a committee is formed consisting of representatives from the construction committee, architectural and, community members, representatives from the cultural affairs office, professional artists, and persons who will occupy the new space. At the first meeting, this committee lists requirements they believe would be best for this location. Artists submit their names and slides of their artwork to the Percent for Art program. Thirty artists are chosen for their ability to work within the requirements. The group then revises this selection of artist's profiles and slides narrowing the choices to three artists. These artists are given building specifications. They then meet with the architects and learn

about the people involved in the new building. These three artists create models of their proposals, estimate costs, and then present their proposal to the committee. These presentations are put on display in a public space where people from the community are invited to view the proposals and write their opinions. At the final meeting the community's comments are read and the voting members vote on the artwork to be created for the new space.

## Strategies

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Due to the diverse backgrounds of our student body, I find that I must adapt every lesson to fit the various learning styles since no two students learn in the same way. These styles include auditory, visual, and kinesthetic. Each lesson will consist of drawings or paintings from the student's observations, completion of questions concerning the artwork being analyzed, and a comparison of personal thoughts as well as group discussions. Lessons will begin in the classroom with both verbal and visual examples of possible drawing or painting techniques to be used. I do not wish the students to have any preconceived ideas about the artworks. I want their answers to be as honest as possible. Students will not be made aware of the artist or the artwork's intended meaning until we begin our research section. Students will visit the artwork to observe and record the image as well as completing questions in their journals. Following the visit students will begin research using their list of questions and assistance from the library media specialist. I will work with each student independently, monitoring personal progress and giving feedback and guidance when needed.

Giving the students the opportunity to communicate their ideas and discuss the project allows for more than one point of view and a better comprehension of the project. As the students progress, verbal and written responses will be given. Upon completion of a project, students must fill out a personal evaluation, as well as take part in classroom critiques and discussions. Grades are not final until the semester's end, so an artist can always use new ideas to enhance a piece of artwork and ideas can come at any moment. Each section of the unit will be graded individually. These sections include observational drawings, journal questions, online research and group discussions giving students many ways to succeed and improve.

## Lessons

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I intend to connect students with works of art they have access to on any given day, yet may never have known existed. These artworks tell the history of the place they live and later will help them tell their own visual story. Through their investigation of these pieces, students will become familiar with the visual questions that will allow them to interpret the history behind the artwork.

To complete this project, students will need to visit on site locations of historic artworks from both the current Percent for Art projects and from many Public Works Art Projects of the 1930's. Each student will create a journal where they will answer questions and create a personal representation of the artwork. We will explore such techniques as watercolor, pen and ink drawing, and pencil drawing as methods with which an artist can quickly capture the artworks. Students will be encouraged to place emphasis on what they find most interesting. Students will then be able to ask a variety of questions that will help them further understand the

pieces and their meaning. Once the student evaluations and background knowledge have been established they are presented with questions such as: What is the title of the artwork? What time period or moment in history is the work intended to represent? Who created the artwork? Who commissioned the work and how did it influence the artist's design? Why was this time, person or topic in history chosen for the site where it is located? Students will reformulate their interpretation as they complete their research and begin to understand the time period it was intended to represent, as well as the artist's choices for its representation.

In collaboration with the Library Media Specialist, students will create lists of questions they have concerning the history of each artwork. Using online and library resources students will research these questions. At the conclusion of our research into New Haven's history in public art, students will be asked to choose a moment in history they wish to represent in an artwork of their own. They will be asked to designate a site to display their work where it could be most effective and list persons and groups they would solicit for funding to install. Students will be asked to explain their choices for patrons and why.

## **Suggested Lesson One**

### *Objectives*

Students will develop critical thinking and observation skills

Students will be introduced to the genre of public art and engage in the analysis of art and artist intent.

To instill curiosity surrounding the discovery of the Americas

Students will experiment with pencil drawing techniques

### *Artwork:*



Photo of artwork in progress

### Rodrigo de Triana

Artist: Jose Buscaglia

Date: incomplete

Material: Cast Bronze

Location: Christopher Columbus Family Academy

Sponsor: Percent for Art project

Description: This sculpture's purpose is to represent a period of diverse change in the Americas and beyond. The artist hopes to inspire curiosity of events surrounding this specific encounter. <sup>9</sup>



Juan Rodriguez Bermejo (Rodrigo de Triana) was a sailor on Columbus's first voyage in 1492. There is question as to who on this voyage truly saw land first. It is disputed whether it was Columbus on the Santa Maria who lays claim to seeing a light in the distance or, Rodrigo on the crow's-nest of the Pinta? Columbus received the fame and glory.

*Materials:*

Student journals  
Drawing pencils

*Background Information:*

This sculpture will be unveiled after the opening of Columbus School's new building. Great pomp and circumstance, newspaper articles and artist talks will accompany this occasion. I feel it will be a great way to seize the student's attention.

*Observations/Description:*

Students will be asked to first observe the sculpture and visually record a description of what they see through a pencil drawing. Next they will be asked to answer the following questions as a form of analysis:

What emotions does this artwork evoke and why?  
Who has the artist portrayed?  
What time period is this person from?  
What about the person makes you believe this?  
Why do you believe this person is significant to our school and or community?  
What are some other questions you may have about the artwork?  
Read the plaque hung under the sculpture and add any changes to your thoughts.  
Who do you believe may have commissioned this artwork and why?  
What influenced the artist more the patron or environment?

*Analysis:*



Once students have all had a chance to share their thoughts concerning the sculpture we will learn about the artist and his intent by visiting Jose Buscaglia website.

Students will also engage in historical research concerning Columbus and Triana with the Library Media Specialist.

*Interpretation:*

Students will compare and contrast their pre and post interpretations of the sculptor. This will be done by answering their initial questions a second time. Students will be asked to first write and discuss their misgivings or correct assumptions and discuss what changed their opinions or solidified them.

*Resources:*

<http://www.josebuscaglia.com/> visited July, 27 2008 this is a website about Jose Buscaglia and his art

[http://www.ucalgary.ca/applied\\_history/tutor/eurvoya/columbus.html](http://www.ucalgary.ca/applied_history/tutor/eurvoya/columbus.html) visited July,27 2008 a website explaining the European voyages of exploration

**Suggested Lesson Two**

*Objectives:*

Students will develop critical thinking and observation skills

Students will become aware of stereotypes and difference of historical opinion

Students will become aware of the original nine square layout of New Haven

Students will experiment with pencil and pen and ink drawing techniques

*Artwork:*



# PWAP Project No. 6- Mural

Artist: Vincent Mondo, Stanly Novicki, Lois North, Aldis Brown, Henry Skzeczko Date: February 14, 1934 Material: Aluminum  
 Dimensions: 5'4' x 28'6' Location: Fair Haven K-8  
 Sponsor: Board of Education  
 Description: John Brockett, surveyor, laying out the nine squares of the New Haven Green in 1638

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## *Materials:*

Pencil or Pens  
 Student Journals

### *Background Information:*

PWAP Project No. 6- Mural is located at Fair Haven Middle school, a few blocks from Columbus School. Many of my students have been inside this school or have family that attends the school itself. The placement within the community, as well as its significance to New Haven's history will provide an interesting topic for my students. This mural will offer insight into the way people of the 1930's viewed Native Americans and bring to their attention the planning that went into the city's layout.

### *Observations/Descriptions:*

Students will be asked to visually observe and record this installation using a pen and ink or pencil drawing demonstrated in class. Once students have completed their drawings they will answer the following questions:

What emotions does this artwork evoke and why?

Who has the artist portrayed?

What time period do you believe the people in this mural are from? And why?

(Look at clothing and artifacts in the mural to answer this question)

Why might this moment in time be important to New Havens History?

What are some other questions you may have about the artwork?

Who do you believe may have commissioned this artwork and why?

What influenced the artist more the patron or environment?

### *Analysis:*

Student will learn about this mural by completing research concerning the original nine squares of New Haven as well as its original inhabitants, the Quinnipiac Indians. More then one artist was responsible for this project so we will discuss possible group dynamics as well as the artists themselves and the patrons involved.

### *Interpretation:*

Students will compare and contrast their pre and post interpretations of the mural. This will be done by answering their initial questions a second time. Students will be asked to first write and discuss their misgivings or correct assumptions and discuss what changed their opinions or solidified them.

### *Resources:*

<http://www.quinnipiac.edu/other/abl/etext/oldnew/oldnew.html> visited July 27, 2008 a website containing STORIES OF OLD NEW HAVEN [ILLUSTRATED] By Ernest H. Baldwin, Ph. D. Formerly Instructor in History, Hill

House High School, New Haven, Conn., and Lecturer in History, Yale University, C. A. HACK AND SON, PUBLISHERS TAUNTON, MASS, U.S.A.

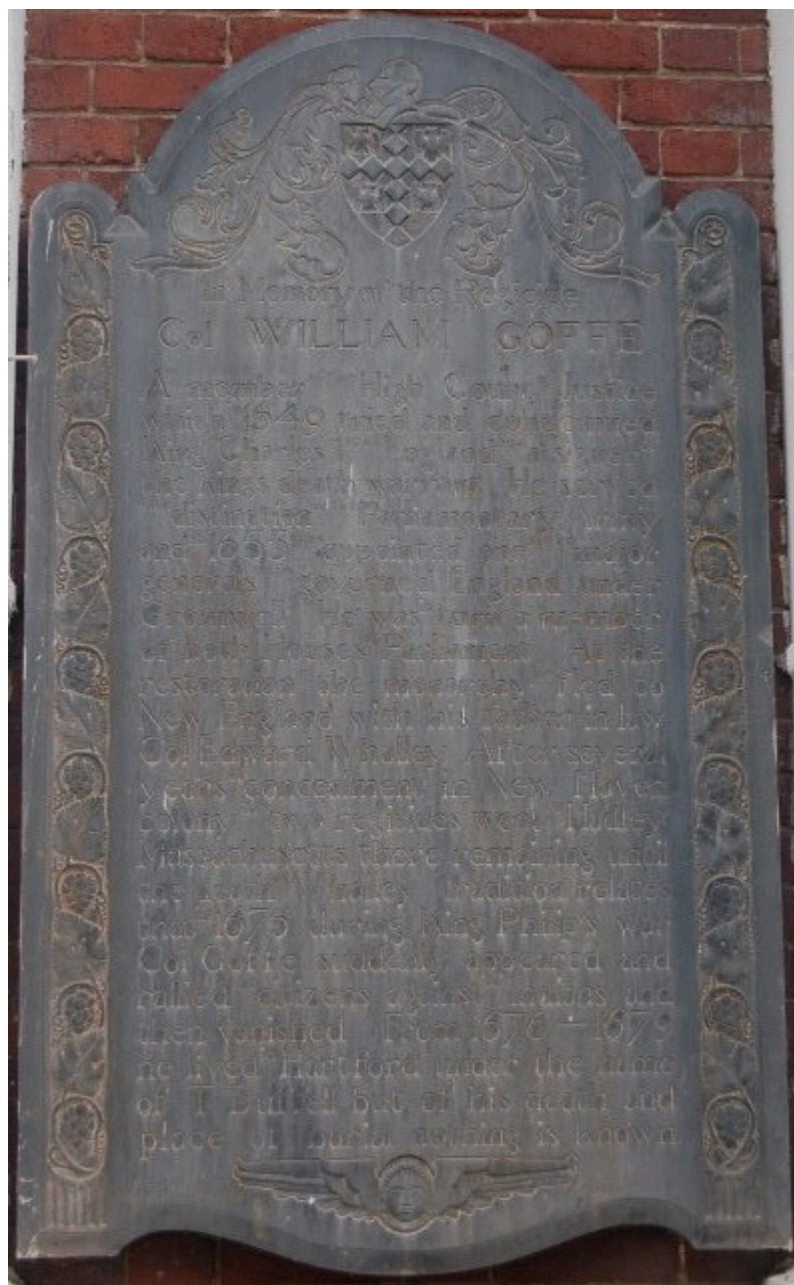
[http://www.cityofnewhaven.com/Mayor/History\\_New\\_Haven.asp](http://www.cityofnewhaven.com/Mayor/History_New_Haven.asp) visited July 29, 2008 City of New Haven, Government Office of the Mayor brief history of New Haven, Native Americans and The Puritan Settlement

### **Suggested Lesson Three**

#### *Objectives:*

- Students will develop critical thinking and observation skills
- Students will be exposed to a variety of mediums and locations of public art.
- Students will be introduced to the Regicides
- Students will experiment with pencil drawing techniques

#### *Artwork:*







CWA, FERA project Nos, 34.35.36 - Regicide Plaques

Artist: Salvador Milki and Peter Saldibar

Date: begun September 1934

Material: Slate and white marble

Dimensions: 50' x 30' Location: New Haven Center Church, north side

Sponsor: Center Church

Description: The regicides Edward Whalley, William Goffe, and John Dixwell with inscriptions and their coats of arms <sup>11</sup>

### *Materials:*

Journals  
Pencils

### *Background Information:*

Whalley, Goffe, and Dixwell are three names that are well known to my students since they travel streets named after these figures on a regular basis. My hope is that this will spark their interest in the stories behind these three men. This installation resides on the New Haven Green, another place my students visit often. It will be interesting to see how many have passed them by. We will also find interesting the topic of stone carvings and where the stone quarries exist. My personal archival research led me to the realization that the intent was three plaques to honor the three regicides. However, when I arrived on the scene of the plaques I found only Whalley and Goffe. Dixwell's monument had been commissioned at an earlier date. When the students witness this idea of one man being honored before another it will create a means for further inquiry into the politics of the time.

### *Observations/Descriptions:*

Students will be asked to visually observe and record this installation using a pen and ink or pencil drawing demonstrated in class. Once students have completed their drawings, they will answer the following questions as a form of analysis:

What emotions does this artwork evoke and why?  
Who do you believe is represented in this installation?  
Why do you believe this site was chosen for such an installation?  
Who may have commissioned this installation and why?

### *Analysis:*

The students will research this installation by discovering information on the regicides, Edward Whalley, William Goffe, and John Dixwell. We will investigate the art of stone carving, and discuss the patrons for this installation.

### *Interpretation:*

Students will compare and contrast their pre and post interpretations of the sculpture. This will be done by answering their initial questions a second time. Students will be asked to first write and discuss their misgivings or correct assumptions and discuss what changed their opinions or solidified them.



*Resources:*

<http://www.colonialwarsct.org/1660.htm> visited July 27, 2008 a website from The Society of Colonial Wars in the State of Connecticut

**Suggested Lesson Four**

*Objectives:*

Students will develop critical thinking and observation skills

Students will become aware of the changes public art may encounter from removal or change due to the public in the form of petition or vandalism.

Students will become aware of the tradition of oystering in Fair Haven

Students will experiment with pen and ink drawing techniques

*Artwork:*



*Seaman Sculpture*

Artist: Karen Rossi Date: 1993 Material: Bronze and Stony Creek granite Location: Quinnipiac Park near the center of the Park (stolen: only granite block remains)

Sponsor: Percent for Art project

Description: This humorous sculpture was intended to remind the viewer of Fair Haven's rich background in oystering, claming, and shipbuilding. Unfortunately, this artwork was stolen. <sup>12</sup>

*Materials:*

*Background Information:*

The *Seaman Sculpture* once resided a mile or so down the street from Columbus School. The sculpture was to tell the story what Fair Haven once was. The history of oystering is rich in this community and important as such. The tragedy of the sculpture having been stolen will show my students that, although these public works are intended to be timeless, things happen; whether it be through mistakes or politics, not all are permanent.

*Observations/Descriptions:*

Students will be asked to visually observe and record this installation using a pen and ink method demonstrated in class. Once students have completed their drawings they will answer the following questions:

- What emotions does the artwork evoke and why?
- Why do you believe the artist chose this medium?
- What message do you believe the artist is trying to project and why?
- Who do you believe may have commissioned this artwork and why?
- What influenced the artist more the patron or environment?
- Is this a complete artwork?

*Analysis:*

Students will research the history of oystering in Fair Haven and the artist before revisiting the questions.

*Interpretation:*

Students will compare and contrast their pre and post interpretations of the sculpture. This will be done by answering their initial questions a second time. Students will be asked to first write and discuss their misgivings or correct assumptions and discuss what changed their opinions or solidified them.

*Resources:*

<http://www.karenrossi.com/> visited July 27, 2008 a website about Karen Rossi and her art

[http://www.nhpt.org/History%20Pages/1825\\_1865.htm](http://www.nhpt.org/History%20Pages/1825_1865.htm) visited July 27, 2008 a website by the New Haven Preservation trust

concerning the growth of oystering

<http://www.cityofnewhaven.com/EconomicDevelopment/Percentforart/seaman.asp> visited July, 27 2008 this web address will lead you to New Havens Percent for Art description of the Seamen Sculpture

## **Suggested Lesson Five**

### *Objectives:*

Students will develop critical thinking and observation skills

Students will recognize the varied styles of art used in today's public art

Students will experiment with watercolor paints

### *Artwork:*







The Tree Of Life

Artist: Douglas Kornfeld

Date: 2004-2005

Material: steel

Location: Courtyard, Clinton Avenue School. 293 Clinton Avenue.

Sponsor: Percent for Art project

Description: This artwork is intended to represent people of various backgrounds coming together in one community

*Materials:*

Student Journals  
Watercolor paints  
Pencils

*Background Information:*

Students will be asked to visually observe and record this installation using watercolor techniques demonstrated in class. Once students have completed their observations they will answer the following questions:

What emotions does the artwork evoke and why?  
Why do you believe the artist chose this medium?  
What message do you believe the artist is trying to project and why?  
Who do you believe may have commissioned this artwork and why?  
What influenced the artist more the patron or environment?

*Analysis:*

Students will research the similarities and differences that make up their community

*Interpretation:*

Students will compare and contrast their pre and post interpretations of the sculpture. This will be done by answering their initial questions a second time. Students will be asked to first write and discuss their misgivings or correct assumptions and discuss what changed their opinions or solidified them.

*Resources:*

<http://www.awaka-inc.com/> visited July 29, 2008 Biography of Douglas Kornfeld and his artwork

**Suggested Lesson Six**

*Objectives:*



Students will develop critical thinking and observation skills

Students will become aware of obstacles that occur during the production of public works of art

Students will experiment with watercolor paints

*Artwork:*



First Lunette project No- 12



Second Lunette Project No- 57

*PWAP project No- 12 and No- 57*

Artist: Bancel LaFarge until his death in 1938 completed by Dean Keller

Assistants: Thomas Guidone, Christopher McLoughlin, and Louis Agustino

Date: June, 1942

Material: Beeswax and color on canvas

Dimensions: 22' x18' Location: New Haven Public Library - Main Room

Sponsor: Library Board

Description: Personification of New Haven receiving new immigrants and learners <sup>13</sup>

### *Materials:*

Student Journals

Watercolor paint

Pencils

### *Background Information:*

The theme of the first of three architectural lunettes portrays immigration, higher education and everyday life in New Haven. Many of my students are recent immigrants to New Haven and the US. This being said I believe observing this interpretation of New Haven in the 1930's and being aware of it today will lead to interesting observations and analysis. The second lunette's theme is of the slaves of the Amistad on the New Haven Green. This is a true David and Goliath story that many an author and artist have portrayed. Students will discover that the third lunette was never begun. We can create many ideas for what should or could have been placed within the empty space.

### *Observations/Description:*

Students will be asked to visually observe and record this installation using a pen and ink or pencil drawing demonstrated in class. Once students have completed their drawings they will answer the following questions:

What emotions does this artwork evoke and why?

What message do you believe the artist intended to portray and why?

Who do you believe is represented in this painting?

For each lunette give a reason for possible artist intent?

Why might the patrons have requested such paintings?

### *Analysis:*

Students will research this artwork by discussing immigration in New Haven today and learning how it differed in the 1930. Students will research a brief history of the Amistad and how it pertains to New Haven. Students will also discuss the political ramifications of this installation.

### *Interpretation:*

Students will compare and contrast their pre and post interpretations of the murals. This will be done by answering their initial questions a second time. Students will be asked to first write and discuss their misgivings or correct assumptions and discuss what changed their opinions or solidified them.

### *Resources:*

<http://www.ctheritage.org/encyclopedia/topicalsurveys/immigration.htm> visited July 27, 2008 this is a site about immigration in Connecticut

## **Suggested lesson Seven**

### *Objectives:*

- Students will develop critical thinking and observation skills
- Students will engage in artistic discourse with people outside their peer groups
- Students will experiment with the artist media of their choice

### *Artwork:*



*CWA, FERA project No. 49 Mural*

Artist: A. Reid Winsey

Date: Unlisted

Material: Tempera on wall board

Dimensions: 29' 3' x 7'

Location: Atwater Training School (now Atwater Senior Center), Back of Stage

Sponsor: Parent Teacher Association

Description: Characters from Juvenile Fiction <sup>14</sup>

### *Materials:*

Student Journals

Artist media of choice

### *Background Information:*

Our school has an ongoing partnership with the Atwater Senior Center. Students visit the center on a volunteer basis throughout the school year to play bingo, help the seniors plant their garden, and pass out food baskets. This relationship already being in place creates the perfect opportunity for the students to engage in a dialogue with people of a different era and to form their own analysis from oral history and stories behind the PWAP. The students may also become aware of the changes that have occurred in public education and children's literature.

### *Observations/Description:*

Students will be asked to visually observe and record this installation using a pen and ink or pencil drawing demonstrated in class. Once students have completed their drawings they will answer the following questions:

What emotions does the artwork evoke and why?

Why do you believe the artist chose this medium?

What message do you believe the artist is trying to project and why?

Do you recognize any of the images portrayed in this installation? Name them.

Who do you believe may have commissioned this artwork and why?

### *Analysis:*

Students will research this installation by collecting the oral history of the seniors who currently occupy the center

### *Interpretation:*

Students will compare and contrast their pre and post interpretations of the artwork. This will be done by answering their initial questions a second time. Students will be asked to first write and discuss their misgivings or correct assumptions and discuss what changed their opinions or solidified them.

## **Final Project**

### *Objectives:*

Students will develop critical thinking and observation skills.

Students will partake in a real life experience of working as an artist for a community of patrons.

Students will apply their art making skills.

Students will engage in a group project and work as a team.

### *Tasks:*

Students will be asked to create their own proposal for a Percent for Art Project following the guidelines and rules of the program.

Students will choose a location within the school to display the work.

Students will listen to the requests of a committee made up of representatives from the faculty, and student body of our school.

The committee will limit proposals to three artists.

These artists will display their proposals for the school community to write comments.

The committee will make a final vote and the artist chosen will be given a chance to create an artwork for our building.

### *Additional Activity*

## Tour of the PWA installation at The New Haven Historic Society

### Objectives:

To broaden the students base of knowledge surrounding the New Deal Era

To become aware of the vast number of PWA artworks in New Haven and the many styles of art created during this time.

## Bibliography

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An excerpt from: THEY SAILED WITH COLUMBUS, [www.eductrak.com/pdf/triana.pdf](http://www.eductrak.com/pdf/triana.pdf) , accessed July 19, 2008

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Wetenball, John 'A Brief History of Percent-for-Art in America' City of New Haven Cultural Affairs Office

## Web Resources

### Artist Websites

<http://www.josebuscaglia.com/visited> July 27 2008 a website about Jose Buscaglia and his art

<http://www.karenrossi.com/> visited July 27, 2008 a website about Karen Rossi and her art

<http://www.awaka-inc.com/> visited July 29, 2008 Biography of Douglas Kornfeld and his artwork

Websites for background information on the artwork and the History it reflects



<http://www.cityofnewhaven.com/EconomicDevelopment/Percentforart/percentintro.asp>  
Visited July 27, 2008 City of /new Haven description of their Percent for Art program

<http://www.nhps.net/press/SchoolConstruction.asp?NewsID={E2C2720D-A9EA-4E12-881B-81B882D8611F}> visited July 27, 2008 New Haven Public School website page concerning the construction of Christopher Columbus Family Academy

<http://www.hogriver.org/issues/v05n01/art.htm> visited July 27, 2008 Hog River Journal article on the Federal Art Project in New Haven

<http://www.ctheritage.org/encyclopedia/topicalsurveys/immigration.htm> visited July 27, 2008 this is a site about immigration in Connecticut

[http://www.nhpt.org/History%20Pages/1825\\_1865.htm](http://www.nhpt.org/History%20Pages/1825_1865.htm) visited July 27, 2008 a website by the New Haven Preservation trust concerning the growth of oystering

[http://www.ucalgary.ca/applied\\_history/tutor/eurvoya/columbus.html](http://www.ucalgary.ca/applied_history/tutor/eurvoya/columbus.html) visited July, 27 2008 a website explaining the European voyages of exploration

<http://www.quinnipiac.edu/other/abl/etext/oldnew/oldnew.html> visited July 27, 2008 a website containing STORIES OF OLD NEW HAVEN [ILLUSTRATED] By Ernest H. Baldwin, Ph. D. Formerly Instructor in History, Hill House High School, New Haven, Conn., and Lecturer in History, Yale University, C. A. HACK AND SON, PUBLISHERS TAUNTON, MASS, U.S.A.

[http://www.cityofnewhaven.com/Mayor/History\\_New\\_Haven.asp](http://www.cityofnewhaven.com/Mayor/History_New_Haven.asp) visited July 29, 2008 City of New Haven, Government Office of the Mayor brief history of New Haven, Native Americans and The Puritan Settlement

<http://www.colonialwarsct.org/1660.htm> visited July 27, 2008 a website from The Society of Colonial Wars in the State of Connecticut

[http://www.nhpt.org/History%20Pages/1825\\_1865.htm](http://www.nhpt.org/History%20Pages/1825_1865.htm) visited July 27, 2008 a website by the New Haven Preservation trust concerning the growth of oystering

<http://www.cityofnewhaven.com/EconomicDevelopment/Percentforart/seaman.asp> visited July, 27 2008 this web address will lead you to New Havens Percent for Art disruption of the Seamen Sculpture

## Appendix

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### Visual Arts Standards from Connecticut's Curriculum Framework

#### *K-12 Content Standard 1, Visual Arts: Media*

Students will understand, select, and apply media, techniques and processes.

#### *K-12 Content Standard 2, Visual Arts: Elements and Principles*

Students will understand and apply elements and organizational principles of art.

#### *K-12 Content Standard 3, Visual Arts: Content*

Students will consider, select, and apply a range of subject matter, symbols and ideas.



*K-12 Content Standard 4, Visual Arts: History and Cultures*

Students will understand the visual arts in relation to history and cultures.

*K-12 Content Standard 5: Visual Arts: Analysis, Interpretations, and Evaluation*

Students will reflect upon, describe, analyze, interpret and evaluate their own and others' work.

*K-12 Content Standard 6, Visual Arts: Connections*

Students will make connections between the visual arts, other disciplines and daily life.

**Language Arts Standards from Connecticut's Curriculum Framework**

April 2008 ed.

*Oral Language Standard 3. Communicating with Others*

Students produce written, oral and visual texts to express develop and substantiate ideas and experiences.

GLEs

1. Deliver an oral presentation from notes, using appropriate intonation, enunciation and phrasing that is fluent and well-modulated.
2. Provide helpful feedback to speakers concerning the quality of a speech and the speaker's delivery.
3. Engage in oral telling of stories from a variety of cultures that use a range of strategies to make the story engaging to the audience, e.g., using dialogue and suspense; showing narrative action with movement, gestures, and expressions.

*Writing Standard 4. Applying English Language Conventions*

GLEs

26. Include technical and content specific terms in writing.
27. Write from more than one point of view , e.g., cultural perspective for a character's viewpoint in history or literature.

## Notes

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2. Kirk Savage, The Self-made Monument George Washington and The Fight to Erect a National Memorial edited by Herriet F. Senie and Sally Webster in Critical Issues in Public Art Content, Context, and Controversy (HarperCollins Publishers Inc.1992)
3. Miwon Kwon, For Hamburg: Public Art and Urban Identities, copyright © 2001-02, [www.art-omma.org](http://www.art-omma.org) and the authors, visit July 21 08
4. Untitled article dated Dec. 25 1933 box 1folder A New Haven Historical Society archives
5. Jonathan Harris, Federal Art and National Culture The Politics of Identity in New Deal America Ch.1 The Depression and The New Deal Artistic Production in the early 1930 (Cambridge University Press 1995)
6. Annabelle Simon Cahn "The Quality of Life in Connecticut an Introduction to Connecticut Cultural Programs under Federal Patronage, 1933-1942. The Arts with Emphasis on New Haven" Journal of the New Haven Historical Society Vol. 32 / No 2 Spring 1985
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8. John Wetenball "A Brief History of Percent for Art in America" Hard copy filled City of New Haven Cultural Affairs Office
9. <http://www.cityofnewhaven.com/EconomicDevelopment/Percentforart/percentintro.asp> Visited July 27, 2008
10. Annabelle Simon Cahn "The Quality of Life in Connecticut an Introduction to Connecticut Cultural Programs under Federal Patronage, 1933-1942. The Arts with Emphasis on New Haven" Journal of the New Haven Historical Society Vol. 32 / No 2 Spring 1985 pg. 12
11. Annabelle Simon Cahn "The Quality of Life in Connecticut an Introduction to Connecticut Cultural Programs under Federal Patronage, 1933-1942. The Arts with Emphasis on New Haven" Journal of the New Haven Historical Society Vol. 32 / No 2 Spring 1985 pg. 19
12. <http://www.cityofnewhaven.com/EconomicDevelopment/Percentforart/percentintro.asp> Visited July 27, 2008
13. Annabelle Simon Cahn "The Quality of Life in Connecticut an Introduction to Connecticut Cultural Programs under Federal Patronage, 1933-1942. The Arts with Emphasis on New Haven" Journal of the New Haven Historical Society Vol. 32 / No 2 Spring 1985 pg. 13 and 22
14. Annabelle Simon Cahn "The Quality of Life in Connecticut an Introduction to Connecticut Cultural Programs under Federal Patronage, 1933-1942. The Arts with Emphasis on New Haven" Journal of the New Haven Historical Society Vol. 32 / No 2 Spring 1985 pg. 21

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