



HOUSTON ARTS PARTNERS 2016 CONFERENCE

Motivate – Engage – Transform Re-Designing the Future of Education

KEYNOTE SPEAKER AND CONFERENCE GUIDE



Eric Booth is known as the “father of the teaching artist profession” and “one of the 25 most influential people in American arts education.”

In arts learning, he has been on the faculty of Juilliard (13 years) and has taught at Stanford University, NYU, Tanglewood (5 years), The Kennedy Center (15 years), and Lincoln Center Institute (26 years). He has given classes for every level from kindergarten through graduate school; he has given workshops at over 30 universities and conservatories, and 60 cultural institutions.

Formerly the Founding Director of the Teacher Center of the Leonard Bernstein Center (now on the Board of Directors), he is a frequent keynote speaker on the arts to groups of all kinds. He is the Senior Advisor to the El Sistema movement in the U.S.. He gave the closing keynote address to UNESCO's first-ever worldwide arts education conference (Lisbon 2006) and the opening keynote to UNESCO's 2014 World Conference. In addition, he founded and led the First and Second International Teaching Artist Conferences (Oslo 2012, Brisbane 2014).

His books include *The Everyday Work of Art* (a Book of the Month Club selection) and *The Music Teaching Artist's Bible*. He has written dozens of magazine articles and was the Founding Editor of the quarterly *Teaching Artist Journal*.

Booth is the first recipient of an honorary doctorate for teaching artistry (2012), has won the 2015 Arts Education Leadership Award from Americans for the Arts (the nation's highest award), and was named as one of the fifty most powerful and influential people in the U.S. nonprofit arts in 2015.

PLENARY SPEAKERS

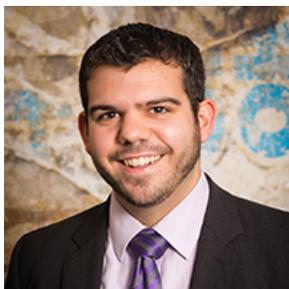


Adele Diamond was recently recognized as one of the 15 most influential neuroscientists alive today. She is the Canada Research Chair Professor of Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver and is a member of the Royal Society of Canada.

Prof. Diamond is at the forefront of research on 'executive functions' and on the brain's prefrontal cortex on which they depend. Executive functions include 'thinking outside the box' (cognitive flexibility), mentally relating ideas and facts (working memory), giving considered responses rather than impulsive ones, resisting temptations, and staying focused (inhibitory control, including selective attention).

She has made discoveries that have improved treatment for two different medical disorders. Her discoveries have impacted education, improving the lives of millions of children. Her work has shown that executive functions can be improved even in the very young.

Diamond was educated at Swarthmore (B.A., Phi Beta Kappa), Harvard (Ph.D.), and Yale Medical School (postdoc). Her many awards include an honorary doctorate (Honoris Causa) from Ben-Gurion University, the Bronfenbrenner Award for Lifetime Contributions to Developmental Psychology in the Service of Science and Society, she was named a "Woman of Distinction" by the YWCA, and named one of the "2000 Outstanding Women of the 20th Century."



Jeff M. Poulin, national arts education advocate and Arts Education Program Manager at Americans for the Arts, joined the arts education team at Americans for the Arts in 2013. He works to empower local, state and federal supporters of arts education to become effective advocates to advance policies supportive of equitable access to arts education for all students.

In his role at Americans for the Arts, Jeff has trained over 10,000 advocates in all 50 states. He was also instrumental in the publication of the 2014 National Core Arts Standards, a leader in the creative youth development movement, and is a founding board member of the Innovation Collaborative. Before arriving in D.C., Jeff worked for several nonprofit and commercial organizations in the U.S. and abroad, focused primarily in production and programming,

audience development, research and policy. Notably, he was an advisor on the implementation of the first national Arts in Education Charter under the directions of the Ministers of Arts and Education in the Republic of Ireland. Jeff frequently speaks at a number of nonprofit organizations and universities.

Jeff hails from Portland, Maine and holds a MA in Arts Management and Cultural Policy from University College Dublin and a BS in Entertainment Business from Oklahoma City University.

PANELISTS



Jeff Fuller is Director of Student Recruitment, University of Houston, and Director, National Association of College Admission Counseling Board of Directors. Fuller has served as Director of Student Recruitment at the University of Houston since February 2007. Jeff began his work at the University of Houston in 1995 as an Admission Counselor then moved into the positions of Coordinator for Freshman Admissions, Assistant Director and then Associate Director. Jeff is responsible for all aspects of undergraduate recruitment, territory management, admission counseling, and application review and institutional reporting. He leads a team of 25 dynamic individuals consisting of freshman, transfer and international admission counselors. Originally from

Corpus Christi, Texas, Jeff received two bachelor's degrees from the University of Houston along with a master's degree in Higher Education Administration.

Jeff has held numerous leadership positions in the National and Texas Associations for College Admission Counseling. Jeff currently serves on the National Association for College Admission Counseling Board of Directors. He is a past president of TACAC and past TACAC Treasurer.

Jeff also served as a NACAC Assembly Delegate representing Texas ACAC. Jeff served two years as Chair of NACAC's Fiscal Oversight Committee. Additionally, Jeff received the first ever Rising Star Award from both TACAC and NACAC. This award recognizes young promising individuals in the profession. He is a frequent contributor to the NACAC Imagine Fund. Jeff serves his community in various ways. He has previously served as Chair of the Houston Area Operation School Supplies Committee, a project aimed at raising money for school supplies for deserving students. For his commitment, Jeff was recognized as an Outstanding Volunteer by the University of Houston Alumni Organization. Jeff also serves as an allocations team volunteer with the United Way Texas Gulf Coast. Jeff is also a lifetime committeeman on two Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo committees.



Tamara L. Siler is Senior Associate Director of Admission and Coordinator of Minority Recruitment at Rice University. This is Tamara's 24th year in the Office of Admission at Rice. In addition to coordinating Rice's minority recruitment efforts, she administers several scholarships and programs, including the Barbara Jordan Scholars program and QuestBridge. She graduated from Rice University with a B.A. in History. A native Houstonian, she grew up in the Fifth Ward and graduated from the High School for the Performing and Visual Arts.

Tamara is a past president of the Texas Association for College Admission Counseling (TACAC), an affiliate of the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC), and currently co-chairs the GLBTQ and Allies Special Interest Group of NACAC. She serves as an adviser to EMERGE Fellowship, and has served as an adviser to the Linda Lorelle Scholars Program, as member of the Program Planning Committee for the College Board National Forum in Houston and on the selection committee for the Coca Cola Scholars and the Point Foundation. She has appeared in over 70 productions with professional and community theatre companies throughout the Houston area, and is a board member for Queensbury Theatre and Thunderclap Productions.

PRESENTERS

Annie Arnoult is a Young Audiences of Houston teaching artist through the Open Dance Project.

Sarah Bassinger (Staging STEM Manager and Resident Teaching Artist) has worked as an educator since 2008, when her love for arts-integration was sparked. She earned her BA in Theatre Arts from the University of North Texas and began working at Pasadena High School as a Theatre and English teacher. After four years in the classroom, she left to pursue a Master's degree at the University of Edinburgh in Theatre and Performance Studies. Upon returning to the States, she was lucky enough to intern and consequently work in the Alley Theatre Education Department. She now manages the arts-integration program, Staging STEM.

Dr. Carolyn Black has been the Principal/Superintendent of the University of Houston Charter School from 1997 to 2015. As the founding principal, she was charged with establishing a model constructivist elementary school. To develop constructivist knowledge and practices, the faculty has a strong professional development program. Teachers and Dr. Black have presented at the Texas Charter School Conference and Association for Constructivist Teaching Conferences. The school has served as a site for pre-conferences. The school collaborates with arts programs in the UH School of Dance and Theatre and the UH Moore's School of Music.

Dr. Black currently serves as President of the Association for Constructivist Teaching (ACT) and has been on the Board since 2003. The international organization promotes

the implementation of constructivist teaching strategies, the development of constructivist resources and conference opportunities to share research. Local constructivists will host the Annual ACT Conference, October 6-8.

Dr. Black has been a faculty member at the University of Arkansas, University of Houston Clear Lake (UHCL) and San Jacinto College. She was Child Development Chair and Director of the Children's Center at San Jacinto College. She has been a demonstration teacher at the Texas Woman's University Laboratory School and the El Paso Public Schools. At UHCL, she introduced constructivist theory and practice into mathematics, creative activities, and early childhood programs in the graduate and undergraduate curriculum.

Dr. Black received her doctorate in child development and early childhood education from Texas Woman's University. Her master's and bachelor's degree work was completed at New Mexico State University in Family Studies and Education. She pursued postdoctoral constructivist studies under Rheta DeVries, a student of Jean Piaget.

Lesa Boutin is a children's author who loves every aspect of a book's life, from concept to completion. Consequently, Lesa started her own publishing company, Boot in the Door Publications, in 2006. Then, in 2007 and 2008, the first two novels in her *AMANDA NOBLE* series were released. Book 2 of the series, *AMANDA NOBLE, SPECIAL AGENT*, was nominated for the Texas Lone Star Reading List. In the spring of 2014, Lesa, writing under the pen name Lesa Howard, brought Boot in the Door Publications into the twenty-first-century with the release of her new novel *PHANTOM'S DANCE* in both print and ebook formats. As a writer for Writers in the Schools, Lesa enjoys sharing her imagination and passion for storytelling with her students. It's her desire to help her students connect their imaginations to the tools they receive in the classroom.

Stephanie Bradow got her B.A. from Texas Lutheran University in Vocal Performance and master's from Rice University in Vocal Performance and began vocally performing at various theaters around Houston. She taught Musical Theater at the prestigious Tribble School of Musical Theater, where her students have gone on to perform on Broadway, national tour, national television and films. A certified music teacher EC-12, she taught music at Harmony School of Science - West Houston (HSAWH) in Katy, Texas. She is now the Federal Programs and Testing Coordinator for HSAWH. She continues to be involved in curriculum development and arts integration in the core classroom. As a music/theater teacher she has worked with core subject teachers to create cross curricular activities designed to enhance and expand on classroom projects and assignments. She has aided in the incorporation of the arts to her STEM campus, moving from STEM to STEAM.

Rick Brennan is a longtime teacher turned game designer and entrepreneur who founded Histrionix Learning Company in 2012 - and serves as CEO of his game-based curriculum design company. Recently, Rick formed a partnership with Writers in the Schools to use game play to teach creative writing.

Sara Brunow is a theatre artist and educator, originally from the Washington, DC, area. After completing her BFA in Music Theatre from Shenandoah Conservatory, she performed as a professional actor and singer for several years before adjusting her career path towards arts education. Sara has worked as a teaching artist, director, performer, choreographer, playwright, artistic adaptor, and sensory storyteller. She recently received her MFA in Theatre for Young Audiences from the University of Central Florida. Sara is very excited to find a new home in Texas, learning and growing with the amazing TUTS Education Program as they continue to create with the next generation of Houston artists and educators.

Jeannette Byrd is Principal of Cummings Elementary in Alief ISD.

David Connor was born in Chelmsford, MA, and began playing the double bass when he was nine years old. He joined the Houston Symphony as a Community-Embedded Musician in the fall of 2015 after two seasons with the New World Symphony in Miami Beach, FL. Connor earned his BFA at Carnegie Mellon University and his Masters of Music at Rice University's Shepherd School of Music. While at Rice, he was a fellow of the Da Camera of Houston Young Artist Program for two seasons, which led to many community outreach opportunities and chamber music collaborations in the greater Houston area. Connor has participated in summer festivals including Music Academy of the West, Aspen, Sarasota, Domaine Forget, and the Britten Pears Young Artist Program. He has been a recipient of the Aspen Academy Orchestra Fellowship and was chosen in 2011 to be a member of the New York String Orchestra Seminar at Carnegie Hall under the direction of Jaime Laredo. As a member of the New World Symphony, he has had the opportunity to teach double bass both at home and abroad, traveling to Medellín, Colombia, and Geneva, Switzerland, in 2014.

Dr. Jose Contreras-Vidal directs the Noninvasive Brain–Machine Interface Systems Lab at the University of Houston. His research interests include neuroprosthetics and powered exoskeletons, neuroaesthetics studies conducted in public settings, mobile neuroimaging, reverse-translational studies of brain plasticity, computational neuroscience and regulatory aspects of human-machine systems. He received his Engineer's Degree in Electronics & Communications from the Monterrey Institute of Technology (ITESM), Monterrey, Mexico; his MS in Electrical Engineering from the University of Colorado at Boulder; and his PhD in Cognitive and Neural Systems at Boston University.

Sara Cooper received her MFA in poetry at New Mexico State University. Her writing has appeared or is forthcoming in *Mid-American Review*, *BorderSenses*, *Puerto del Sol*, *HYSTERIA: A Feminist Anthology of Poetry and Microfiction*, and Mutabilis Press's *Houston Nature Anthology*. A chapbook of poems, *Mis—*, was published in 2014 by Grandma Moses Press. She teaches writing at the University of Houston, where she is pursuing a PhD in Rhetoric, Composition, and Pedagogy. Since becoming a Writer in Residence with WITS five years ago, she has introduced alternative media to the writing classroom, including digital storytelling and multi-genre writing. She frequently works

with Houston ISD teachers on professional development projects, most recently through WITS Collaborative and the UH Honors College Common Ground Teachers Institute.

Rachel Dickson, MFA, LMSW, is currently teaching in the theater area at University of Houston - Downtown. She has taught all ages from Pre-K to adult, in English and Spanish, in setting from private to public, formal to informal and around various subjects from mathematics to theater. She is the Artistic/Founding Director of Driven Theater Company. She has numerous stage, on-camera, and voice-over credits. Her theater training coupled with her social work experiences in the areas case management, program coordination and group facilitation, has informed the development of her work. Efforts to combining her BS in Engineering with her MFA in Theater and her Master of Social Work is an ongoing goal. Driven Theater Company (DTC) is a 501(c)3 company dedicated to empowering, connecting and entertaining diverse audiences during quality issue-driven theater, and education designed to encourage the healthy development of the individual, the family and society. The company has as a core value to challenge all the parts—creators and audiences alike.

Danny Dyer has been an active member of the Houston theatre scene for the past six years. As an actor, singer, and dancer, he has appeared with Main Street Theater, Stages Repertory Theatre, Theatre Under The Stars, The Landing Theatre Company, Texas Repertory Theatre, Island ETC, PMT Productions and Standing Room Only. As a teaching artist, he has worked with students of all ages, teaching acting and theatre performance as well as stagecraft, design and puppetry for Main Street Theater, Young Audiences of Houston and Brave Little Company. He holds a BFA in Musical Theatre from Sam Houston State University.

Michelle Edwards (In-School Programs Manager and Resident Teaching Artist, Alley Theatre) has over twenty years experience in theatre as an actor and educator. She has worked internationally in Sydney, Australia, London, England, and Moscow, Russia. She has performed professionally with theatre companies such as the Alley Theatre, The Montana Repertory Theatre and Theatre June Lune as well as a variety of independent theatre companies. She holds an MFA in Acting from the University of Montana and a BA in Theatre from the University of Houston.

Maria Elizalde is a science educator at Houston ISD's Jean Hines-Caldwell Elementary.

Valentina Emeric is a fourth-grade teacher at J.R. Harris Elementary in Houston ISD. She is a Teach for America corps member completing her second year of teaching.

Amy C. Evans grew up in Houston, Texas, where she attended the High School for the Performing and Visual Arts. She continued her art training in Baltimore and received a BFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art. After a short stint in Savannah, Georgia, she returned to her hometown of Houston. It didn't take too long for her wanderlust to kick back in, so she set her sights on graduate school. In 2001, she packed up her pick-up truck and headed to Oxford, Mississippi, where she immersed herself in the culture

of the south—storytelling in all its fabulous forms—obtaining an MA in Southern Studies from the University of Mississippi in 2003. She liked the place so much that she called Mississippi home for 13 years, working as the lead oral historian for the Southern Foodways Alliance, documenting the south’s culinary culture from Texas to North Carolina, and continuing to make paintings, many of which have been inspired by my fieldwork.

Today, she’s back in Houston, still in search of vintage objects, stories and pie.

Carolyn Finley is a lifetime learner and professional educator. After graduating from the University of Houston, she started her teaching career in Humble ISD in 2006. In 2008, Carolyn earned her Master of Education, also from the University of Houston. In 2012, Carolyn left the school environment to become an educational consultant for a large corporate international STEM education outreach program. During this time Carolyn traveled to Nigeria, Tanzania, Mozambique, Russia, and Argentina to connect underserved communities with STEM education. This past year Carolyn has reentered the classroom in Crosby ISD just outside of Houston. In her free time she likes to express herself through her personal art of photography, quilting, and digital design work.

Tamara Fish has taught middle, secondary, and university English in Michigan, Utah, and Texas. For sixteen years she was an English professor at the University of Houston, where she taught courses in writing, pedagogy, and middle and secondary school English Language Arts. She has supervised graduate Teaching Assistants and coordinated TA training programs for the Department of English and the College of Liberal Arts and Social Science and served as Coordinator of TA Resources for the University of Houston Center for Teaching Excellence. She received an MA from Michigan State University and a PhD from the University of Texas at Austin, both in English with emphasis in rhetoric and composition.

Jonathan Godfrey is a founding member of Mercury, and has served as Concertmaster since inception and appeared as violin soloist many times. In addition, he is the Concertmaster of The Houston Bach Society and Assistant Concertmaster of the orchestras of the Houston Grand Opera and the Houston Ballet. Jonathan has performed with the Houston Symphony, the IRIS Chamber Orchestra and the River Oaks Chamber Orchestra; and has served as Concertmaster of the Sinfonietta Cracovia, the Houston Grand Opera Orchestra, The American Radio Chamber Orchestra, Orchestra X and the Pacific Music Festival Orchestra – and this list is not exhaustive. Jonathan concertizes in the U.S. and abroad and has performed solo and chamber music recitals in Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Houston, Interlochen, and Kansas City, in addition to Guanajuato, Leon, Monterrey, and Santiago, Mexico; Yokohama, Kyoto, Matsumoto, Sapporo, Date, and Tokyo, Japan; and Quito and Ambato, Ecuador.

Andrés González has performed as a solo violinist, chamber musician and orchestral player throughout the United States, Latin America and Europe. Andrés holds a

Bachelor of Music from the University of Miami and a Master in Music from Rice University. He now lives in Houston, where he is a member of Mercury, ROCO, and the Houston Grand Opera. In addition, he is a violin teacher at Bridges Academy and the Education Manager at Mercury, where he leads the partnership between the orchestra and Yes Prep West.

Jonathan Gonzalez, Director of Education at Main Street Theater, is a New Mexico native who lived for 15 years in the San Francisco Bay Area, where he served as Education Director, actor, and teacher for the Marin Shakespeare Company. He was a Teaching-Artist-in-Residence at The San Francisco Shakespeare Festival, Marin Theatre Company, Peninsula Youth Theatre in Palo Alto, and Youth-In-Arts in San Rafael. Jonathan has taught theatre in over two dozen schools, and directed and acted in more than 200 productions.

In Houston, he has worked at The Texas Repertory Theatre Company, Wordsmyth, Landing Theatre Company, Katy Visual and Performing Arts Center, The Alley (H.Y.P.E), Country Playhouse, The Tulane Shakespeare Festival in New Orleans, Prague Shakespeare Festival, Houston Revels, Puppet Pizzazz, The Curt Miller Magic and Comedy Show at Moody Gardens, Pearland Theatre Guild, Rice University, Texas A&M, and The University of Houston, where he received his MFA in directing.

Jonathan came to MST in 2009 and has directed and performed in MST's MainStage and Theater for Youth productions. Jonathan is the co-creator of MST's Peer-To-Peer Shakespeare program, which includes a two-person touring show, classes in public schools, a Summer Shakespeare show for teens and work with incarcerated youth. Jonathan is the Founding Director of Shakespeare in The Shade and a proud member of The Shakespeare Theatre Association and TCG.

Zachary Gresham is an arts administrator and educator who currently serves as a lecturer at the University of Houston where he teaches an upper-level undergraduate course that provides pre-service elementary classroom teachers with the basic concepts of current art education theory and practice. Simultaneously, he is the Education Programs Director at Art League Houston where he oversees all studio-based art programs, such as the Art League School, Healing Art Program, and youth programming for teens, as well as ArtBound!, an integrative, in-school artist residency program for elementary schools with no visual art instruction. He holds a MEd in Curriculum and Instruction – Art Education and a MA in Arts Leadership from the University of Houston. Additionally, Zachary has played cello with the Symphony of Southeast Texas since 2009, is a freelance musician and a long-distance runner.

Craig Hauschildt is the Director of Education and Community Partnerships for DA CAMERA chamber music & jazz.

Carlos Hernandez was born and raised in Houston, and is a local church musician, WITS writer-in-residence, and Nonfiction MFA candidate in the University of Houston

Creative Writing Program, where he also serves as Digital Editor for Gulf Coast. Carlos is an Inprint and Cynthia Woods Mitchell fellow.

Rebecca J. Hopp is a Minnesota native with over ten years of experience as an arts educator. She joined the FotoFest International staff in 2015 as the Literacy Through Photography (LTP) program coordinator. Prior to this appointment, Hopp had served in the LTP program as a teaching artist since 2012.

Hopp is a nationally exhibiting fine art photographer with an undergraduate degree in advertising photography from the University of Memphis and a MFA in photography from Texas Tech University. Her commitment to arts education spans her career: while completing her graduate work, she served as a TEACH (Teaching Effectiveness and Career Advancement) Fellow at Texas Tech University and engaged in a community enrichment project through the non-profit organization Ogallala Commons, using photography to increase community awareness across the rural Great Plains. In 2014, Hopp was named a Houston Holocaust Museum Warren Fellow for Future Teachers.

Hopp's prior professional experiences include serving as the gallery director of the SRO Gallery of Photography in 2011 and as the instructor of record for several fine art photography courses, both at Texas Tech University; working in community education and outreach at Houston Center for Photography; and serving as the in-house graphic designer at the Baker Donelson law firm.

Hopp is a passionate supporter of arts-based education and integration, having witnessed firsthand the power of the arts to engage students in understanding themselves and the world around them.

Braden Hunt received his acting training from the High School for the Performing and Visual Arts and The University of Houston, in addition to more than 13 years of experience as a professional actor. He trained in dance at The Houston Ballet Academy, Uptown Dance Theater and the Houston Metropolitan Dance Company. His voice training includes the Houston Music Institute with teachers Ann Ostrow, wife of Broadway producer Stuart Ostrow, Jim Johnson, voice for the actor, and Stephanie Bradow, voice for the singer.

His education experience began when he was hired to teach health classes as part of a touring company of actors. He discovered that education is another passion. He then taught in the renowned Tribble School of Musical Theater, a conservatory for young artists aged 5 to 18 years old. In 2009 he began formally training in education and received his certification in theatre education EC in 2010. He did his internship at McNeil High School in Round Rock, Texas, teaching drama. He now is part of the A.D. Players Theater Arts Academy, where he has taught for four years. The A.D. Players is a Christian theater company in Houston that produces six shows a year reaching an audience of 25,000 people annually.

Maureen Israel is currently the School Director at the YES Prep Public Schools, Northside campus, an open-enrollment public charter school system serving middle school and high school students in Houston's most disadvantaged communities, preparing all students to be college-ready and college-bound. Maureen joined YES Prep in 2005 after graduating from the University of Notre Dame with a BA in Psychology and English. During this time, Maureen taught in the classroom and helped develop and lead international summer service opportunities for high school students, spending two summers in the rural villages of Ghana. In 2009, Maureen received her EdM in International Education Policy from the Harvard Graduate School of Education and spent time in both Boston and Washington D.C., working with non-profit organizations to develop curriculum and programming in eastern African countries. Maureen returned to YES in 2010 and has served as the School Director for Northside since 2013, where she currently sits on the Northside Leadership and Advocacy Committee and the Capitol One Northside Education Coalition. With a focus on community partnerships, communication through public speaking, fine art integration and multi-language acquisition, YES Prep Northside is two years away from graduating its first class of seniors and the team at YES Prep Northside couldn't be more excited!

Kenneth Jones is an 8th-grade English Language Arts teacher at Spring Forest Middle School in Spring Branch ISD. He has held this position for the past seven years. Prior to this, Jones taught in Fort Bend ISD as a Special Education Teacher and Instructional Technology Specialist. Over the years, he has presented numerous staff development sessions in regard to innovative pedagogical practice. Prior to a career in education, Jones practiced law in Harris and surrounding counties for 12 years.

Jones has attended numerous educational programs at The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and arranges frequent student field trips to the MFAH and other area museums, honing his instructional practice using the art analysis he developed.

Clara Kang is the Education Programs Associate at Art League Houston. She is also working as a Writing Consultant at the University of Houston, where she assists students with their writing process. Her interests are the impact of literacy and art as well as the interdisciplinary of the disciplines. Clara graduated from the University of Houston with a degree in English, Literature Concentration, with a minor in Art History.

Rosalyn Kanu works at Cummings Elementary in Alief ISD.

Anastasia (Stacy) Kirages, when she is not wandering around a museum or traveling, works on an open-ended art zine project called *Modernizm* and helps organize Zine Fest Houston with her co-organizers María-Elisa Heg and Sarah Welch. Zines created under the *Modernizm* umbrella range far and wide, and have covered topics such as mail and street art, gourds, kawaii things, plants, and receipts from New York City, to name a few. Fun fact about Stacy: she can't decide if she likes cake or pie better.

Jean Kuecher, puppeteer and producer of the Marionette Playhouse, delights audiences with marionette, hand puppet and black light puppetry performances. Jean

performs for schools, libraries, birthday parties, churches and corporate events, and is a performing and teaching artist with Young Audiences of Houston. Jean has a master's in Education and is a Registered Trainer with the Texas Early Care and Education Career Development System. As a teacher she used puppetry to enhance her classroom curriculum. As a school counselor she developed weekly marionette shows on self-awareness themes. She is a charter member of the Greater Houston Puppetry Guild and a member of the National Puppeteers of America. Jean is the director of the annual Houston Puppetry Festival, providing quality performances and workshops for teachers, librarians, and puppetry enthusiasts. Jean's puppetry training workshops for educators are motivating and fun, while increasing literacy and science skills!

Mrs. **Jane McKinney** has been teaching piano and choir at Marshall M.S. Academy of Fine Arts for 12 years. Her enthusiasm and love of music is contagious to her students and those around her. She has been singing and performing since she was five years old. Mrs. McKinney received her BM degree in vocal performance and her M Ed. In K-12 Music from University of North Carolina at Greensboro. She sang opera, and musical theater professionally before moving to The Woodlands, Texas. Her students learn a wide variety of musical styles and her enjoyment of foreign languages and diverse cultures shows up in her programming for her students. AFA has collaborated with Marshall MS for seven years doing different programs with both the choir and piano students.

Alyssa Mittin is a Young Audiences of Houston teaching artist through the Open Dance Project.

Michelle Mower is an internationally acclaimed motion picture writer, director and producer. Her debut feature film "The Preacher's Daughter," starring Andrea Bowen ("Desperate Housewives"), has won numerous awards at film festivals around the world, including the European Independent Film Festival and Madrid International Film Festival. The movie premiered on Lifetime Movie Network (LMN) in August, 2012 and garnered the highest ratings on the network for the year. Since then, Michelle has written and directed two more movies for Lifetime, "The Preacher's Mistress" and the "The Preacher's Sin." Michelle also produced the critically acclaimed independent feature "Dreamer" that premiered on NuvoTV in July, 2014. Michelle is heavily involved in the film community in Texas. She has served on the boards of Texas Motion Picture Alliance (TXMPA) and Women In Film and Television (WiFT) and currently sits on the board of Southwest Alternate Media Project (SWAMP).

Emily Nelson, Education & Community Programming Manager at the Houston Symphony, manages the Houston Symphony's in-depth elementary residency program at Crespo Elementary and the Houston Symphony's music & wellness initiatives. She oversees the recruitment, audition process, onboarding, and professional development opportunities for the Community-Embedded Musicians and the assessment efforts for the department. Emily reports directly to Pam Blaine, Chief of Education and Community Programming.

Previously, Emily Nelson has been the Associate Director of Concert Operations at Distinguished Concerts International New York (DCINY), a concert production company that produces education-focused performances at Carnegie Hall and Lincoln Center in New York City, and has also assisted the education and operations department at the Oregon Bach Festival in Eugene, Oregon. Emily also has a strong background in music education and performance, having taught at the University of Arkansas and privately in the surrounding area. She holds degrees in flute performance from the University of Oregon and University of Arkansas.

Alex Odom has worked in arts education, instructing kindergarteners to college students, since 2010. He holds a BFA in Theatre Technology and an MA in English, with a concentration in Dramatic Writing, from Longwood University. He is the author of *Coyote* (Flutter Press), *Louisville Swinger* (One Act Play Depot), *A Stone Face Killer* (One Act Play Depot), and *The Death of Margaret Thatcher* (One Act Play Depot). His poems, fiction and nonfiction have appeared in: *Boston Literary Magazine*, *Wordriot*, *Hot Metal Bridge*, *The Prose-Poem Project*, *The Foundling Review*, and many others. His plays have been produced in England, Canada, and the U.S., and he also writes for the comic book industry. He is the founder and former administrator of 0 to 60: Ten Minute Play Festival, and a former member of the editorial teams for *Spaces Lit Mag*, Picture Postcard Press, and Briery Creek Press. Alex has also worked as a technician for The Santa Fe Opera, Illinois Shakespeare Festival, Peach State Summer Theater and the New Harmony Theater.

Anthony Parce has distinguished himself as a violist intent on confirming the vivacity of classical music in the 21st century. He joined the Houston Symphony as a Community-Embedded Musician in the fall of 2015. During his four-year fellowship at the New World Symphony, Parce organized and produced three interactive concert formats, lectured and performed on the early works and life of Arnold Schoenberg, produced a commemoration of Kristallnacht with narration by local Holocaust survivors, travelled many times to Medellín, Colombia, to teach through the SaludArte Foundation, helped develop the Symphony's virtual library (Musaic), and took an active civic role in refining the curriculum and activities of New World Fellows. Parce has attended the Verbier, Schleswig-Holstein, Tanglewood, Artosphere, and Britten-Piers summer festivals, as well as the National Orchestral Institute, Domaine Forget and the Music Academy of the West. He holds degrees from the New England Conservatory and Rice University's Shepherd School of Music, studying with James Dunham, Roger Tapping and Karen Ritscher.

Karine Parker is a French-American community developer, project manager, curator, educator and visual artist. She currently runs the Texan-French Alliance for the Arts as its Executive and Program Director. After a successful career as a top-level executive in corporate banking in Paris (performance management, financial and strategic planning), Karine Parker moved to Houston in 2007 and started producing international outreach art projects that develop bridges of understanding between communities. By adding music, writing, performance and other media to her projects, she has created a sensory 360-degree environment for appreciating art and intercultural dialogue. Her dedication

to a greater purpose of the community transcends traditional formats and breathes new life into artistic outreach and creative expressions. In 2011, she curated “Go West 1,” a project that was presented at the headquarters of UNESCO in Paris in the framework of “2010: International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures,” for which UNESCO was the leading agency.

One of her recent major projects was the 2012-2013 citywide “Open the Door” public art project, inviting the public to imagine life as a myriad of gateways, leading to meaningful encounters and possibilities. For this program, she created public and private partnerships with more than 50 organizations which allowed French and Texan artists, students, professors, and volunteers to create 60 cultural artistic pivoting doors that were installed in 19 different locations throughout the city, including locations in underserved areas. Open the Door became an opportunity for different communities and artists to come together and inspire each other, and to dare to use their creativity in a new format and new locales. By offering a form of expression that embodies communities’ spirit and making it accessible to the public, Open the Door took people’s consciousness outside of their house, of their office and their cars to see the world beyond walls and welcome our neighbor through open doors. The program also showed student artists — some of whom were as young as 11 — that their art and creativity could affect the world in a positive way.

Developing programs that use creativity and art as a tool to break down boundaries and build human and social connections gave her the opportunity to witness the ability of the youth to serve a greater purpose in the community and to bring innovative ideas that can transform the world around them.

This leads her now to work with children as well as high schools and university students in order to invite them to reimagine and improve our public spaces with the objective to strengthen the connection between people and the places they share. The program that she named “From A Space To A Place” is being implemented in diverse schools/community centers across Houston.

Rickey Polidore is the art teacher at Lovett Elementary in Houston ISD.

Michael Remson is an accomplished composer, author, educator and administrator, who has dedicated more than twenty-five years to a career as a working artist and arts administrator. Dr. Remson serves as Executive and Artistic Director of AFA, Houston’s leading independent provider of music education programs for young people. Under his leadership, AFA has quintupled its enrollment and has grown to serve more than two thousand K-12 instrumentalists, composers and vocalists. Serving students both in and out of school during the school year and as part of their flagship Summer Music Conservatory, AFA employs a faculty of more than eighty professional musicians, composers and conductors from throughout the nation. Dr. Remson is also an active composer/librettist with works performed or presented by such groups as Houston Grand Opera, Texas Tech University Opera, Houston Ballet, The Museum of Contemporary Craft, The Cameron Museum, The Portland Museum of Craft, The

Bulgarian Composers Collective, Abilene Collegiate Opera, Rhode Island College Choruses and New York City Opera. Dr. Remson also served as composer in residence with the Ulster Orchestra (Belfast, Northern Ireland) as part of a prestigious award from the Americans for the Arts Foundation. As an educator, Dr. Remson has served on the faculty of Houston Ballet Academy, University of Houston Moores School of Music, Mitchell Center for the Performing Arts, Houston Community College, and Carnegie Mellon University and has led master classes both in the United States and Europe. As part of his composition teaching, Dr. Remson's students have pursued college careers at the nation's finest conservatories. Dr. Remson has published two books on American music, is a contributor to the Groves' Dictionary of American Music and has written numerous encyclopedia entries and journal articles, most recently for the Journal of Film Music.

Amanda Rinehart graduated from Texas A&M University at Galveston with a BS in Marine Biology and a MS in Oceanography from Texas A&M University. Amanda followed her passion for science and discovery to The University of Alaska at Fairbanks to complete a PhD in Ecosystem Ecology. During Amanda's time in Alaska she obtained a National Science Foundation fellowship to teach science in first grade and learned the value of using science as a tool to improve numeracy and increase literacy. Amanda returned to Texas and obtained the position of Education Program Manager for Artist Boat with the goal of increasing environmental, science, and climate literacy of students throughout Galveston Bay.

Shalini Sarkar is a history educator at Alief ISD's Hastings High.

Troy Scheid is an arts educator and theatre director. She has directed at Main Street Theater, (numerous MainStage productions, including two world premieres by Y York, *...and L.A. Is Burning* and *Woof*; the regional premieres of Liz Duffy Adams's *Or,*, and Paula Vogel's *A Civil War Christmas*, and many Theater for Youth productions); Classical Theatre Company (*The Speckled Band: An Adventure of Sherlock Holmes - World Premiere Adaptation*); Texas Repertory Theatre Company; The Landing Theatre Company; Black Lab Theatre (*Chinglish - Regional Premiere*); Opera Vista (*Houdini the Great - American Premiere*).

As a mentor-director of student writers and performers, she has worked for the High School for the Performing and Visual Arts and the Alley Theatre's Houston Young Playwrights Exchange. She is the founder of Brave Little Company - Theatre for Everyone, which creates and performs plays about, for, and with children and their grown-ups. She is a graduate of HSPVA and of Rice University. She also studied at the University of Houston School of Theatre and received a certificate with distinction from the Leadership Institute for Non-Profit Executives at Rice's Center for Philanthropy.

A theatre educator with over 14 years' experience, she was previously the Education Director at Main Street Theater, where she co-founded the Peer-to-Peer Shakespeare program, helping incarcerated youth find their voice through Shakespeare's works. Recently, she participated in London theatre company Oily Cart's "Creating with the

Cart,” an intensive program about creating interactive, transformative theatrical experiences for audiences with complex learning difficulties. Troy currently works with Young Audiences of Houston on the Houston Arts Partners conference, which combines arts education advocacy with strategies for arts integration.

Patricia Selin works at Wharton Dual Language Academy in Houston ISD.

Chelsea Shannon is a native Texan who holds a BA in art history from the University of Texas at Austin and an MA in art history from the University of Houston. She joined the FotoFest staff in July 2015 and now serves as the Literacy Through Photography Outreach and Special Projects Coordinator.

While in graduate school, Shannon served as a graduate curatorial intern at The Menil Collection, assisting with exhibition and publication research and a Writing Fellow at the University of Houston School of Art, developing and leading workshops in art historical writing and acting as a writing mentor for the department’s undergraduate students.

Empowering others through the arts has been a passion for Shannon since she began volunteering with the Los Angeles youth writing center 826LA in 2010. For the past two years, she has additionally been an active instructor at Houston Makerspace, a craft education center and workspace, where she teaches classes in metalsmithing.

Maggy Solis is the Healthy Living, Teen and Community Outreach Director for the M.D. Anderson Family YMCA. She is a Houston native and currently holds a bachelor’s degree in Kinesiology from the University of Texas at San Antonio. She is a member of Kappa Delta Chi Sorority, Inc., Alpha Phi Omega Service Fraternity, and Hispanic Women in Leadership. She plans to continue her service in the nonprofit community with the YMCA transforming and impacting lives. She has a great passion for working with community partners who strive to strengthen and provide opportunities for youth development.

Jennifer Clagett Sommers holds an MFA in Dance, Performance and Choreography from Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts. She has performed with Laura Dean Musicians and Dancers, Street Signs Center for Literature and Performance, and the Albany Berkshire Ballet, where she also served as Ballet Mistress. Her dance honors include a scholarship to Jacob’s Pillow Choreography Workshop, a Durham Arts Council Emerging Artist Grant, and a Lake Region Arts Council grant in support of new work. From 2000-2005, she served as the Associate Director of Raleigh Dance Theatre (a Southeastern Regional Ballet Association Honor Company) and on the faculty of Meredith College. From 2005-2008, she served on the faculty of the University of Minnesota Morris and taught both dance and interdisciplinary courses. She relocated to Houston in 2008 and launched a dance program at KIPP Sharpstown College Prep. She joined the Houston Ballet Education and Community Engagement department in 2010 and is currently serving as Associate Director. She has created several new programs for Houston Ballet, including Dance to Learn, a dance integration program for students of all ages.

Liz Conces Spencer, visual artist and Houston native, draws from abstracted human, natural and cityscape forms, speaking to the realization that all life is interconnected and mutually interdependent. She studied painting at the University of St. Thomas in the 1970's, but crosses media lines often in her pursuit to better understand the visual tangle of urban/suburban life. Her professional career has spanned across several respected institutions and business sectors, including Museum of Fine Arts Houston, St. Thomas University, St. Thomas High School and Incarnate Word Academy, as well as commissioned work for MD Anderson Cancer Center, the City of Houston, and Houston Arts Alliance. Conces has taught children's classes for City ArtWorks, Project Row Houses and The Houston Center For Contemporary Craft. She conducts residencies year-round for Young Audiences of Houston, and serves on the boards of City ArtWorks and Archway Gallery.

Kirk Suddreath, Percussionist

Mary Sutton, Director of Education at the Alley Theatre, has been in theatre education for 21 years with a specialty in cultural animation pieces for diverse communities, public/private schools and colleges. She has performed and taught throughout the United States and Europe since she began her career in NYC. She has created award-winning programs from the popular elementary “*Oskar*” tours dealing with relevant topics such as resiliency and bullying to the exemplary arts integration and core curriculum programs; Concepts at Play for TheatreWorks | Silicon Valley and Staging STEM for the Alley Theatre.

She created, designed and implemented the Arts Integration Network in California—a mentorship arts integration teacher training program highlighted by the Partners-in-Education program at the Kennedy Center. She has designed arts curriculum from pre-K through college all over the United States in viewpoints, acting, playwriting and conservatory training. Additionally she worked in the Rural Arts initiative in the Southeast sponsored by the NEA where she pioneered Applied Theatre Techniques from 1990-1998. Sutton is a graduate of NYU's Tisch School for the Arts in acting, working three years directly with Stella Adler and The American Repertory Theatre's Institute for Advanced Theatre Studies at Harvard in directing assisting Andre Serban and Robert Brustein.

Cay Taylor earned her Bachelor's Degree in Music Therapy from Loyola University in New Orleans. A board-certified music therapist, she completed advanced training in Neurologic Music Therapy at Colorado State University's Robert F. Unkefer Academy of Neurologic Music Therapy, and she is currently in the Advanced Training Level of the Bonny Method of Guided Imagery and Music at Appalachian State University's Hayes School of Music. Ms. Taylor serves students in each level of The Monarch School as music therapist and is a member of The Monarch Institute's Multidisciplinary Psychology team. She regularly speaks on such topics as Music Therapy for Children with Neurological Differences, Incorporating Music in the Classroom and Home Settings and Guided Imagery and Music.

Katey Tidwell, originally from Alabama, has been dancing since the age of five. After moving to Houston in 2002, she studied at The Humphreys School of Musical Theatre and with Penny Tschirrhart in the IB Dance program at Lamar High School. Katey received her BA in Dance from The University of Houston, where she was a member of the UH Dance Ensemble. While there, she trained under Karen Stokes, Teresa Chapman and Becky Valls. She has also worked with Jackie Nalett, Sophia Torres, Jhon R. Stronks, Leslie Scates, Sara Draper and Jennifer Sommers. Katey works with The River Performing and Visual Arts, where she teaches dance and musical theatre to special needs children. Her work with The River includes instruction and choreography with the Performance Troupe and onsite classes as well as outreach with multiple elementary schools in the Houston area.

Melody Torno is the Director of the Theater Arts Academy for AD Players Theater in Houston, Texas. She teaches classes and privately coaches all age groups for Page Parkes Talent Agency and works with ticketing for The Hobby Center of the Performing Arts. She holds a BFA degree from Sam Houston State University in Radio/Television: Mass Communication-Broadcast Journalism as well as a master's degree from The University of Houston in Theatre. Her degrees are complemented by study at prestigious theaters such as The Lincoln Center-New York, Theatre Under The Stars-Houston, Acting Studio Chicago, The Royal Shakespeare Company-Stratford Upon Avon & The Royal Academy of Dramatic Art-London.

Other credits include working as an Associate Producer for Twentieth Television on a nationally syndicated television program, production team for Fox26 Houston, and an internship with Paramount Studios/Entertainment Tonight-Los Angeles. Melody was a Theatre Arts Teacher/Director and Department Chair in public schools for 10 years and has taught every age group PK-12th. She is a certified judge for the Texas Theatre Adjudicators and Officials.

LuAnn Turley has worked as an educator, curriculum writer, and author for The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, since 1995. As part of the team that developed the award-winning Learning Through Art curriculum, she develops and leads instructional workshops for educators throughout Texas. She is co-author of two books: *A Wreath, A Tree, and Me* and *A View, A Clue, and You*. She is a former elementary classroom educator and has taught adult ESL courses at various universities

Becky Valls, Associate Professor of Dance at the University of Houston, teaches dance history, dance education, and modern technique at UH where she received the Ross Lence Teaching Award in 2013. From 2007-2013 she choreographed a series of evening-length works titled *Memoirs of the Sistahood*, with sculptor Babette Beaulieu of New Orleans and film maker Deborah Schildt of Anchorage.

In Texas, her choreography has been presented by Diverse Works, Barn Storm Dance Fest, Big Range Dance Festival, Chrysalis Dance, JCC Dance Month, Weekend of Texas Contemporary Dance (4x), Stephen F. Austin University, Rice University, and

San Jacinto College. She has also created choreography for Core Performance Company in Atlanta, Georgia, and Bucknell University in Pennsylvania.

Her solo Red Square has been performed in Tempe, Chicago, New York City and Houston. In 2015, Valls collaborated with UH engineer/neuroscientist Dr. Pepe Contreras-Vidal in research titled Your Brain on Dance. Red Square was performed in a brain cap embedded with electrodes to track brainwaves which were projected on stage as part of the Blaffer Innovation Series at UH and at the Smithsonian Museum in Washington D.C. The solo has been performed by Teresa Chapman, Anastasiya Kopteva, and Valls.

As a teaching artist for 25 years, Valls designs movement lessons with cross curricular links for elementary schools and conducts professional development workshops for teachers. She is the director and choreographer of Becky Valls and Company, a performing group with Young Audiences of Houston that tours two dance/science performances titled *Dance of the Insects* and *For the Birds*, performed by Toni Valle and Kate Rash.

She is presently researching embodied learning with UH Charter School through the Dance of Science Project. The project trains classroom teachers to develop science/dance curriculum for the constructivist school and documents how students construct knowledge of science concepts through dance.

Valls received her MFA degree in Choreography from Sarah Lawrence College, NY.

Patrick Waters received his BA from Virginia Tech in 2005 and his M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction (with several minor focuses) from Leslie University in Cambridge, Mass. At the Monarch School, he is a professional educator in the math/science department. As a makerEd teacher, he uses an educational philosophy that celebrates the learning process that occurs when a person makes something interesting. The job involves a little of everything: lesson planning, curriculum building, community outreach, technology literacy, arts, crafts, engineering, mathematics, outdoor environmental education, wearing a tool belt, generally being awesome and so on – but especially helping children find their potential as thinking, problem-solving, engaged adults.

When he's done teaching young adults, he also teaches normal-aged adults at local makerspaces, such as TX/RX Labs. He regularly posts updates on his work at www.woodshopcowboy.com, a blog at the crossroads of woodshop, education and technology.

Outside of the classroom, Mr. Waters enjoys watching his young children grow, escaping Houston on motorcycle trips with his wife, and pursuing his hobbies, from games to woodworking. He is a voracious reader and listener of music.

Rita Whiteman has worked as an educator, curriculum writer, and author for The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, since 1995. As part of the team that developed the

award-winning Learning Through Art curriculum, she develops and leads instructional workshops for educators throughout Texas. She is co-author of two books: *A Wreath, A Tree, and Me* and *A View, A Clue, and You*. She is a former elementary classroom educator.