



ARTS MATTER

"The Official Newsletter of the Alliance for Arts Education in Manitoba"

Fall 2010

In This Issue

- Chair's Report
- Creative Stage Conference
- An Excerpt from Jean-Vianney Auclair
- 4th Annual Canadian Symposium on Arts and Learning
- Meet the Board of Directors

Contact Us

ALLIANCE FOR ARTS EDUCATION IN MANITOBA

Suite 501 - 62 Albert Street
WINNIPEG MB
R3B 1E9

www.allartsedmanitoba.org

Chair's Report *by Francine Morin, Ph. D.*

I am ever grateful to the Executive, Joe Halas, Jey Thibedeau-Silver and Liz Coffman, our wonderfully capable Coordinator, Sylvie Cottee, and our current, very active Board of Directors, Columpa Bobb, Odette Penner, Barbara Warrack, Velvet Cadre, and Brian O'Leary for their generous vision, unfailing dedication to the arts, and sharing of their time and talent. These are some of the busiest artists and professionals in the province and still carve a little time out of their schedules to come to meetings to inform the good work and enrich the effort of the AAEM. These are the people that bring light to our working and planning table and these are the people who made it possible for the organization to realize our strategic goals for the year.

Let me provide you with a glimpse into our year and highlight some of our accomplishments:

- We have completed successful grant applications, re-worked our project goals and descriptions for those applications. We are working on archiving our materials, and we are now publishing our second newsletter of the year.
- *Between Hearts and Minds: The Arts in Education* was an advocacy project of the AAEM. The 8 minute DVD features Manitoba students, teachers and artists who speak to the value and quality of effective arts programming. The words, still and moving images captured on the DVD reflect perspectives of those who experience the arts as a means of personal growth and community development. It illustrates the nature and value of the arts, provides a justification for arts advocacy, and offers strategies for stimulating conversations and action in educational institutions and community. The project was completed in spring and shown publically for the first time during the Culture Days Launch at the WAG on April 20, 2010.
- The development of a new brochure was also a key objective of the AAEM this year. Herein we attempt to make a convincing and compelling case for why the arts are essential to every child's education which is grounded in excerpts drawn from authorities in arts education theory and research. The brochure serves as recruitment tool by inviting stakeholders to join the AAEM. The brochure is also designed to transform into a poster that features fresh, rich works of art by Manitoba students, while also highlighting key learning that results from an arts education.
- The *Creative Stage* was a project implemented in May 2010 that emanated from a grant received from the Manitoba Centennial Centre Corporation, Manitoba Arts Council, Winnipeg Foundation, Manitoba Education and others. In keeping with its title, this event aimed to focus on nurturing and exploring creativity, an essential learning area in

21st century education and life. This highly successful conference included a balanced blend of artistic and educational sessions, featuring an outstanding gala concert, keynotes, a student forum, and a variety of workshops for high school students, teachers, artists, and leaders in the arts. Our conference chair, Joe Halas, led us in braving some new terrain with the high involvement of students in the event, and experimenting with a new kind of opening keynote presentation entitled "How Do you Grow an Artist?" that featured Al Simmons, Tracy Bone, Rhian Brynjolson, and Kal Barteski and new kind of closing plenary that gave voice to students who shared their vision for arts education. Here are a few excerpts from delegates exit slips: "Performers were stellar...an amazing opportunity...oh how it made my artistic brain bend...inspiring, powerful...hands-on, practical, exciting, useful, imaginative...a very wonderful day for listening, thinking, wondering, creating, dancing, sharing...a refill of inspiration...keynotes and workshop were creative, original and make us all want to be like that...fantastic conference and gala evening,"

- The AAEM has also been a part of team working towards how to promote and involve school children and their caregivers in a collaborative, pan-Canadian movement called *Culture Days* to be held September 24-26, 2010. The aim of Cultural Days is to engage the community at large with the arts and cultural activities. Cultural institutions and artists have been invited to participate by providing open houses, demonstrations, workshops, small performances, guided tours, observations of rehearsals, and a variety of other opportunities to the public FREE of charge. The AAEM is celebrating Culture Days by distributing our new DVD and Study Guide into all schools in September and by preparing a poster to raise awareness about Culture Days within school communities and something that can be used in school newsletters. Ideas for how schools can celebrate Culture Days will also be generated and shared with schools. The AAEM was an active participant in the Culture Days Launch on April 20, 2010 at the WAG with our booth and banner set up and our DVD available for viewing.
- National *Symposium on Arts and Learning*. The AAEM has also begun work with a variety of key partners, namely, the Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba and the Manitoba Arts Council on hosting for the first time in western Canada, the 4th Annual National Symposium on Arts and Learning here in Winnipeg on December 2, 3 and 4, 2010. I am serving as Co-Chair of the symposium working with Doug Riske from MAC. Members of our organization and board are supporting this event by serving on the local steering committee and/or supporting that committee in a variety of ways, and participating by sponsoring a session for the conference program. The theme of the conference is "Shaping our Future Together" and will offer a variety of conference session formats including keynotes, panels, multiple paper presentations, workshops, and posters interspersed with artistic performances. We are excited to be hosting for the first time in Winnipeg – Sir Ken Robinson renowned expert on creativity education and culture. Four major strands of the conference will offer something for all stakeholders in arts and learning including: research, theory and policy on arts and learning; promoting and advocating, exemplary practices and partnerships, and professional development for artists, teachers, and leaders.

Collectively, members of our organization and board are making invaluable contributions to the field of arts education through the leadership positions they hold in educational and artistic institutions, through their stewardship and high levels of involvement with a number of other projects and worthy initiatives such as: ongoing contributions to curriculum writing and the development of exemplars to support implementation, advancing new arts partnerships, service on Manitoba Education's Steering Committee for K-12 Arts Education, leading workshops, presenting at conferences and professional development forums, serving on arts and education associations and boards, and so on. There are so many of us who are working in substantive ways to create an enduring, safe and healthy haven for the arts in Manitoba schools.

THE CREATIVE STAGE CONFERENCE A GREAT HIT

"This was a fantastic conference – Gala evening – wonderful and inspiring. WOW! Keynotes and workshops were creative, original and make us all want to be "LIKE THAT!" The Alliance continues to do a fantastic job – keep up the great work – How do we get more people to hear the message? Great venue! MERCI!"

"It was awesomely exciting and inspiring!"

"It was a wonderful day from beginning to end and, oh how it made my artistic brain bend! Thanks so much! I was truly inspired. 100/100."

"I have been a blank canvas lately. Thank you for splattering some colour!"

And the accolades continue; surely evidence for the Alliance for Arts Education Board that the Creative Stage Conference on the evening of May 17th and throughout the day of the 18th. at the Centennial Concert Hall resonated in the hearts and minds of participants.

The Gala Concert with an audience of over 300 was a wonderful intermingling of young professionals and high school students; their passion was palpable throughout the evening. And what a thrill for young talent to perform on the prestigious stage of the Concert Hall. We really should have captured the awe and thrill on the faces of the students as they stepped onto a "real stage, with real curtains and a real back stage" as one of the students remarked. Stage fright, concentration, focus, practice, practice, practice was the measure of the afternoon as the performers took to the stage to rehearse. And what an evening of art, music, dance and theatre – an inspiration to us all.



The conference itself was as the comments above suggest, a great time to remember, refill, renew, revitalize and refocus why the arts are so important to the health and well being of students, teachers and our school communities. The key note panel was an excellent foray into the power of the arts as a way for us to recover our humanity as Rhian Brynjolson so eloquently reminded us. Who could resist Kal Barteski's delightful journey as an artist and blogger who never did have a "back up plan." Tracy Bone's personal story and song inspired us and we laughed, sang and were completely captivated by Al Simmons bizarrely wonderful sense of the ordinary world turned inside out and upside down.

Following the many workshops the program was handed back to the student participants who gave testimony in multiple ways to their own experiences as artists. Their insights and recommendations will be compiled in a letter for the minister of education, superintendents and principals of participating schools. These are some of the comments they made about their own passionate involvement in the arts:

- You learn life skills: persist, take a risk (in a good way), work together for one complete goal, and be the greater good.
- Breaks free of right and wrong and shows you the beauty of your abilities.
- Touches your soul. A perfect test score has never taken my breath away, or brought me to tears.

- Mandatory art for students as young as possible and for as long as possible, teach them to value and hold on to the excitement, inspiration, willingness, and faith in their creative abilities.
- Encouraged to think creatively rather than technically.
- It's important to work together with your peers towards a common goal.

AN EXCERPT FROM JEAN-VIANNEY AUCLAIR'S OPENING ADDRESS for *The Creative Stage Conference* (representing Nancy Allan, Minister of Manitoba Education)

"I am sure that there is no doubt in this room about the importance of the arts in society. We all know that the arts are powerful forms of personal, social, and cultural expression. The arts do much: they touch our spirit and enrich our lives in profound ways. They allow us to explore unique ways of knowing the world, and challenge us to communicate, reflect, imagine and understand. The arts allow us to question the world around us, and to speak out. Les arts ont le pouvoir d'élargir et d'illuminer notre existence humaine. The arts are an essential element of healthy living and of lifelong learning.

When we think about educating students for their role as citizens in the 21st century, we know that it is our responsibility to prepare students for a complex future; one where they will need skills to adapt, think critically, problem-solve and become agents of change.

As we set this stage, a local and a global stage in which students will be called to action, creativity must therefore take a central role in education. The arts are uniquely suited to foster creativity and lead the way for other disciplines to follow."

WELL SAID Jean-Vianney Auclair.

PLAN TO ATTEND THIS NATIONAL EVENT

Sir Ken Robinson is coming to town

for the

4th Annual Canadian Symposium on Arts and Learning

ARTS AND LEARNING: SHAPING OUR FUTURE TOGETHER

December 2 to 4, 2010

Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba

Winnipeg, Manitoba

The AAEM is pleased to partner with The Canadian Network for Arts and Learning and the Manitoba Arts Council in the 4th Annual Symposium for Arts and Learning.

"THE ARTS AND LEARNING: SHAPING OUR FUTURE TOGETHER" Symposium will include a balanced blend of artistic and educational sessions featuring renowned keynotes and respondents, multiple presentations, plenary and poster presentations, performances and exhibits, round tables and workshops. This is an important event for educators, artists, researchers, and leaders interested in arts and education in school and community settings. Session topics will address the following themes:

Strand 1: Research, Theory and Policy on Arts and Learning

Strand 2: Promoting and Advocating Arts and Learning

Strand 3: Exemplary Arts and Learning Practices and Partnerships

Strand 4: Professional Development for Teachers, Artists, and Leaders

Plenary sessions will be interpreted in both official languages.

For more information visit the Canadian Network for Arts and Learning website: www.eduarts.ca

MEET THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chair

Dr. Francine Morin is Professor (Music and Arts Education) and Head of the Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning at the University of Manitoba. She is active teaching, conducting research, publishing, presenting at conferences, and serving the professional community in a variety of ways. She recently completed a study of arts education in Manitoba schools funded by Manitoba Education. Some of her current work involves serving on the K-12 Arts Education Steering Committee for the province and continuing a research project designed to support teachers in their use of multiple languages in a variety of teaching and learning contexts.

Vice Chair

Joe Halas is the Art Consultant of the Winnipeg School Division and a member of the Manitoba Association for Art Education. He recently served as the Arts Education Consultant for the School Programs Division of Manitoba Education.

Secretary

Liz Coffman is an Instructor of the Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba and a member of the Manitoba Arts Council. She enjoys working with young children and has been involved with arts education for most of her working life. Prior to joining the University, she was the art educator at the Winnipeg Art Gallery.

Treasurer

Jey Thibedeau-Silver is one of the founding board members of the AAEM. She has held the position of co-chair, vice-chair, chair, member, and is now serving as Treasurer of the board. Jey is a Drama Teacher at St. Mary's Academy. Jey has been attending the University of Winnipeg and recently completed the requirements for her Bachelor of Education Degree.

Coordinator

Sylvie Cottee is currently working with the Alliance for Arts Education in Manitoba for her sixth year as the Coordinator. She has worked in various schools in Winnipeg. She strongly supports the Arts through literacy.

Members

Barbara Warrack is the Music Divisional Team Teacher Leader in Seven Oaks School Division and is Elementary Music Teacher at Forest Park School. Barb was the Co-chair of Arts In The Park (May 2009) a bi-annual celebration of the arts by students in Seven Oaks at Kildonan Park.

Odette Heyn-Penner has co-directed the Professional Program of The School of Contemporary Dancers for many years. In this capacity, she has been among the prime trainers of most of Winnipeg's modern dance community and of many artists now dancing with choreographers and companies across the country. Odette has performed and choreographed for Winnipeg's Contemporary Dancers and continues to perform as an independent. She has also choreographed work for various performances including the Festival of Canadian Modern Dance. She has served as a juror and panelist for the Manitoba Arts Council, the Canada Council for the Arts and the Winnipeg Arts Council, and has been an invited panelist/presenter for several national roundtables.

Brian O'Leary is the Superintendent of the Seven Oaks School Division.

Velvet Cadre is a middle years and dance educator at Meadows West School in the Winnipeg School Division. Over the last 21 years she has taught integrated creative movement and dance work shops to children, parents and educators. Velvet has always used the arts to facilitate learning and personal growth in all her students. She is proud to be part of the Alliance for Arts Education in Manitoba's collective voice.

Leanna Loewen is the current Arts Education Curriculum Consultant from the Bureau de l'éducation française at Manitoba Education. Over the past five years, Leanna has had the privilege of working with many fine arts educators in the development of Manitoba's new and exciting Arts Education curriculum frameworks in Dance, Drama, Music and Visual Arts. Leanna is a former Rusalka dancer, a music educator, an Orff advocate and she is passionate about infusing the arts into the lives of every student in Manitoba.

Barbara Grexton is a teacher at Grandview School in Mountain View School Division. She has taught drama, art and coordinated the MAC Artists in the School program. She served on the writing and implementation teams for the K-8 arts curriculum.

Erin Hammond is a graduate of the University of Winnipeg's Theatre and Drama Program and has been an actor, playwright, producer and Arts Educator for 10 years. Her most recent acting and writing credits include Love, Hate and Lemon Pie, The Interview and Ordinary May's Extraordinary Ways, Palais Oops! A Green Pantomime, Lake Maniwannagohome, and Honey & Jupiter. She teaches theatre and drama at Prairie Theatre Exchange School, Manitoba Theatre for Young People and at the Community School of Music and the Arts at CMU. She is also a Senior Artist with the Royal Conservatory of Music's Learning Through The Arts program and is the co-creator and co-owner of PushPlay Productions – a company who's mandate is to promote and sustain the dramatic arts in rural communities. She is also the Festival Coordinator for the Manitoba Drama Educators' Association's annual Manitoba Drama Youth Festival.

Kerri Twigg writes plays and works in the field of arts and humane education. Kerri has taught drama classes for over ten years. She has taught in a variety of settings, including Manitoba classrooms, community centres, hospitals, birthday parties and even a boat house. She also coordinates and teaches art appreciation courses at the Winnipeg Art Gallery. Kerri has a M. Ed in Humane Education from Cambridge College and a B.A in Drama in Education from the University of Winnipeg. Kerri continues to be a mom, teach, inspire, and create in Winnipeg.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Individual Membership \$15.00

Organizational Membership \$25.00

Student Membership \$5.00

(These are one-time membership fees.)

Charitable donations accepted.

Tax receipts issued.

Mail Cheque or Money Order to:

ALLIANCE FOR ARTS EDUCATION

C/O SYLVIE COTTEE, COORDINATOR

Suite 501 - 62 Albert Street

WINNIPEG MB R3B 1E9

scottee_AAEM@shaw.ca