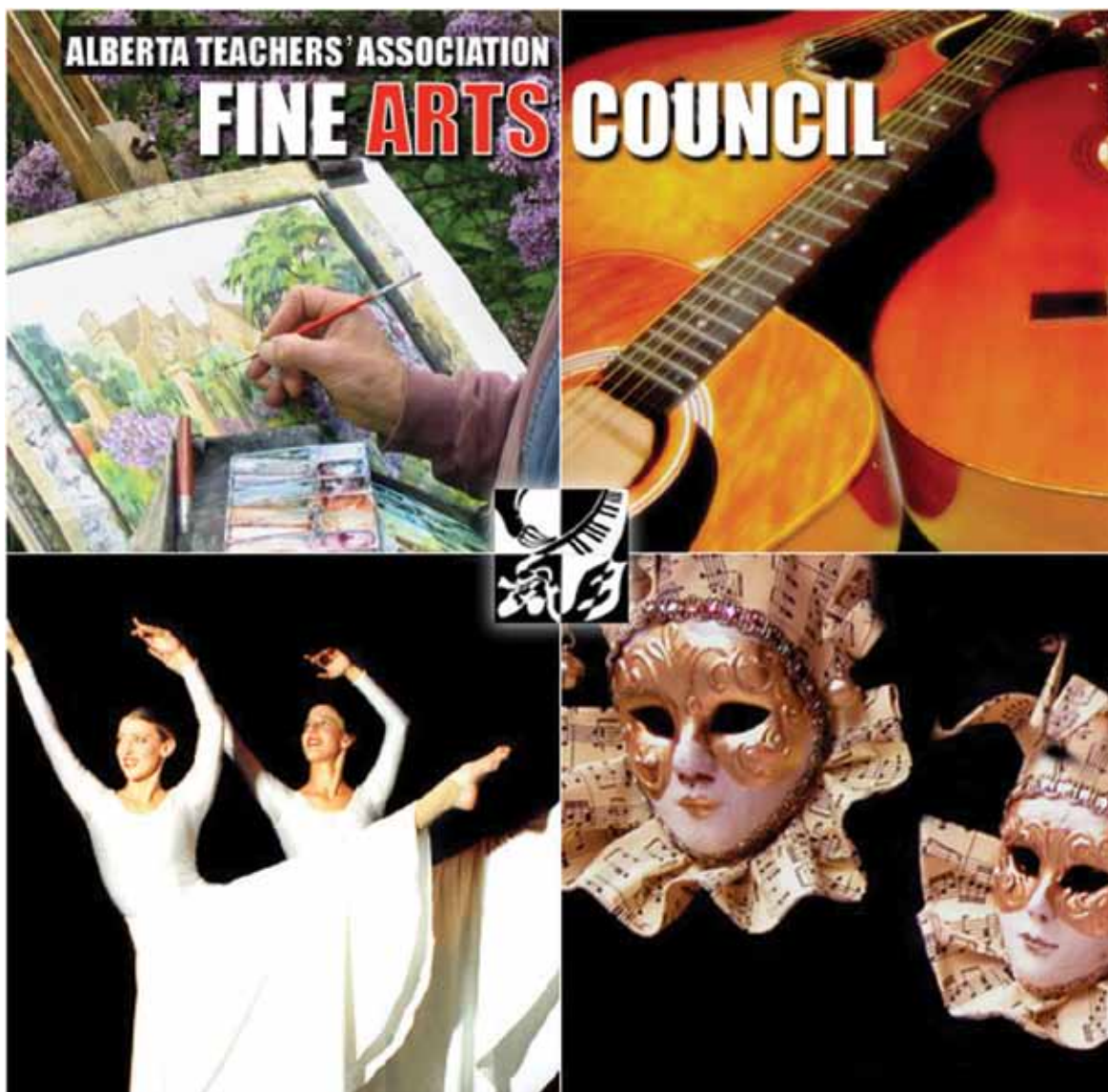


# a fine **FACTA**



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# MADD About Town

## *Fine Arts Tool Kits: An Editor's Musings*

Bonnie Cohoe

Some educators suggest that the garden, rather than the factory, serves as a better metaphor for schooling. This issue of *A Fine FACTA* provides many helpful additions to educators' garden supplies—from techniques and resources to views on the landscapes in which we live and teach. I hope that each of you finds seeds worth nurturing, tools worth adopting and dreams that encourage you to keep cultivating in spite of what the weather brings.

In particular, please take note of the metacognitive ideas in the articles that focus on attending to how students learn and helping students take ownership of their learning. Shelley Robinson's article on process and postprocess learning reminds us of the importance of using tools that fit our learning needs instead of fitting our learning needs to the tools we believe we are supposed to use. In "Orff the Wall: Developing Musical Understanding the Orff Way," Cherlynn Sauter shares how educators are doing this in music education in

Calgary. In the report on the MADD Dash, you will read about Grant Reddick's workshop demonstrating how to get students to become "reactors" instead of actors.

Other articles in this issue emphasize the joy, connections and personal growth that flow from fine arts activities—from band to "getting plastered." Along with the joy, they offer practical techniques, resources and applications.

Finally, some of the articles share the stories of people whose lives have been shaped and directed by the fine arts and who have touched the lives of many others.

A special thanks goes to those who have contributed articles and guidance to *A Fine FACTA* this year, especially to contributing editor Jaclyn Silbernagel.

I hope to see most of you (and your friends and colleagues) at our 2009 conference "Arts Education on the Move: Worlds United" in Kananaskis in October.

# Conference 2009: "Arts Education on the Move: Worlds United"

Naomi McQuaid



October 29–31  
Delta Lodge at  
Kananaskis

The Fine Arts Council proudly presents Conference 2009: "Arts Education on the Move: Worlds United." The conference will take place October 29–31 at the Delta Lodge at Kananaskis.

Whether you are a new teacher, a generalist, a specialist, a veteran or a fine arts enthusiast, there is something for everyone. High-calibre, award-winning presenters; a wide range of workshops that promise to inspire you and enrich your program; new resources and new ideas; networking opportunities; an invitation to dialogue with Alberta Education on the upcoming changes to the fine arts curriculum—all make this conference a quality PD opportunity you surely do not want to miss!

## Keynotes

- "Mom, Dad, I'm Working in the Theatre," by award-winning playwright Marty Chan

- "What We Heard and How Curriculum Responds—The New Fine Arts Curriculum," by Maureen Melnyk and Katherine Deren, of Alberta Education
- "Be Inspired! Be Moved!" by fine arts specialists Lauren Gannon and Linda Dudar
- "Whose Art? A Look at What We Teach and Why," by University of Calgary professor of art Jennifer Eiserman

## Selected Sessions

- "Creative Encounters Through Art, Music and Movement," with Lorraine Kneier, Irene Naested and Judith Waldron
- "Drum, Dance, Chant," with Sherryl Sewepagaham
- "Fun with Composers," with Heather Provencher
- "Innovative Drawing/Painting," with Christa Volk
- "Exploring Shadows and Multicultural Puppetry," with Wendy Passmore, of the W P Puppet Theatre
- "Handbells and Chimes," with Lori Teneycke
- "Theatre Games," with Melissa Mayville
- "West African Drumming," with Roger Duncan, of One World Drum
- "Expanding the Theatre Artist's Palette: Laban Effort Principles," with Lynda Adams, of Red Deer College

## MADD About Town

- “Tell Me a Story (for Div I Orff)” and “Celebrating the Magic of Orff (for Div II),” with Debra Giebelhaus-Maloney
- “Arts and Ed Grant Program Info Seminar,” with Paul Reich, of the Alberta Foundation for the Arts
- “Let’s Play: Producing and Directing a Play,” with Peter Taylor

We are still lining up more sessions in all of the strands. Check the Fine Arts Council website (<http://fac.teachers.ab.ca>) for more details and updates on sessions. If you have any questions or comments, please e-mail me at [naomi.mcquaid@cssd.ab.ca](mailto:naomi.mcquaid@cssd.ab.ca).

Come on out and join us as we immerse ourselves in the arts, share a few laughs, get creative and innovative, and help shape the future of arts education in Alberta!

# MADD Dash

Gaye McVean and Bonnie Cohoe

The MADD Dash was held April 25 at Willow Park School, in Calgary.

Although attendance was low, everyone seemed very happy with the Dash. Because only two or three people registered for the music sessions, we had to cancel those sessions. One stream of the visual arts workshops also had to be cancelled because not enough people signed up to allow us to run two sessions in each block of time. However, we were able to accommodate most teachers in their second choice.

A common criticism of the Dash was that we ran out of food. For that, Gaye takes full responsibility, as she had not anticipated drop-in registrations—and she also forgot just how hungry teachers would be after a full morning of vigorous workshops.

All participants said they really enjoyed the hands-on format and the opportunity to be with like-minded teachers. Some would have preferred the sessions to be longer, although they also liked the opportunity to take in three workshops in one day.

We used the Dash as an opportunity to survey teachers on what kinds of support they would like to see offered, and we have been given some specific suggestions. We will take these suggestions into consideration and do what we can to meet the requests.

Only 22 of about 40 participants completed the survey, but they represented teachers of all levels and with teaching experience ranging from 0 to 25 years (including one with “lots” of experience). All 22 participants indicated that they would like to see skills-building workshops, and 17 would like to see integration sessions. So you can see that meeting such varied requests will not be a trivial task. We had people

who want arts sessions throughout the year, as well as many who want them as part of system PD days. We will continue to explore all options.

## Sessions

We asked a participant in each session of the Dash to provide a brief write-up.

### Acting (Grant Reddick)

Grant Reddick, a well-known and highly respected drama educator and actor, offered a workshop focused on examining a scene from the play *1837: The Farmers' Revolt*. He spoke about the rehearsal process being “an exploration of the objectives and actions you have chosen.” There were several demonstrations of how improvisation exercises can help student actors understand the idea of the “inner monologue” and characters' intentions. Grant believes that “you are a reactor, as an actor, not an actor.” In addition to helping students discover character and meaning in scripts, improvisation exercises like this would be useful tools for teachers as directors in helping draw out more authentic performances.

### Jazz Dance (Chelsea Mason)

Chelsea Mason started this workshop with a brief warm-up that could be used in Grades 5–9. We then went through a short hip-hop and a short jazz combo that could be used with Grade 5 or altered as required for less or more experienced dancers.

## Mixed Media (Ross Snashall)

Ross Snashall shared his mixed media assignment approach. He encourages students to use all manner of images—pictures from the Internet and magazines, their own drawings and so on. He asks students to divide a masonite panel into several smaller geometric shapes, with each shape having its own composition. They must complete each section before moving on. Ross stressed the need to use a colour scheme. This project could be successfully navigated by students as early as Grade 5, although it might be best to give younger students a theme to focus their efforts. Older students could work with the more open-ended approach used in this workshop.

## Fun and Effective Ways to Choreograph (Margot McDermott)

Margot McDermott's workshop was very helpful and informative. She provided many useful dance and movement practices for teachers who don't have a dance background to use in rehearsals with students. She framed her active demos to show how to make dance elements for musicals more manageable. A handout with references and tips for musical theatre choreography was also provided.

## African Dance (Heather MacLeod)

Heather MacLeod presented an energetic workshop on African dance. Participants learned the moves in isolation, and then put them together at the end to perform a harvest dance. We enjoyed an energy-filled afternoon.

## Lighting Up Puppets (Wendy Passmore)

Wendy Passmore's engaging, dynamic and practical workshop provided abundant applications for incorporating puppets into the drama classroom. Wendy presented her breadth of knowledge in a nonthreatening and mesmerizing way. The session covered the history of puppets, and then focused on shadow puppets and glow-in-the-dark puppets. Participants had the opportunity to create their own shadow puppets based on the poem "Iguanasaurus." I believe that we all left the session feeling like professional puppeteers and

with a sense of confidence in leading our own shadow puppet units. This medium could also easily be integrated into the core subjects.

## Printmaking (Brenda Valerio)

The printmaking session, with Brenda Valerio, focused on multiple-colour intaglio Styrofoam prints. Participants were taught the proper way to create a printing plate and use printing ink and brayers, as well as how to register the print image so that a second colour can be imposed. Participants were amazed at the colourful results.

## Drama Games (Michael Kevis)

*A number of participants provided their impressions of Michael Kevis's session.*

- This session focused on group games for the drama classroom. We played a variety of games working physical and verbal skills for performance. We gathered a valuable collection of resources for teaching.
- A broad range of games for all levels and experience were covered and explained.
- We were told how different games could be changed or adapted, and what time of year to use the games.
- The purpose of the games was always provided. These are very fun, interesting and *useful* activities for the drama classroom.
- Lots of fun! Very practical!
- The instructor provided many practical ideas that could be adapted right away for the classroom. The instructor involved the participants and demonstrated how to play off and work with students' reactions. Drama teachers always make this kind of learning fun!
- I teach music, but I do a bit of drama. Many of these games can be integrated at the elementary level.

## Get Plastered (Kimberley Lewis)

During my final session of the MADD Dash, I had the opportunity to get plastered. No, it's not what you might think; rather, I participated in an enjoyable art workshop presented by Kim Lewis, art teacher at



## MADD About Town

West Island College, in Calgary. We sculpted fruit out of Plasticine and covered it with plaster strips. While the strips dried, we put Vaseline on three of our fingers and then covered them in plaster strips. When the strips were almost dry, we pulled our fingers out. We then cut apart our plastered fruit, removed the

Plasticine and joined the plaster together with more plaster strips. Finally, we painted our plastered fruit and fingers, and then assembled all the pieces into a surrealistic sculpture. I can only imagine how much fun students would have doing this, and I look forward to teaching it.

# Arts-ful Features

## *Fine Arts Research: Process and Postprocess Theory and the Arts*

Shelley Robinson



*Shelley Robinson is the assistant principal of the Calgary Science School, and from 1998 to 2005 was an English coordinator, a fine arts coordinator and a curriculum facilitator with Rocky View Schools. She has taught music at Mount Royal College, in Calgary, since 1983, and K–12 fine arts (music, drama and art)*

*and humanities (English and social studies) since 1988. In 2007, she earned a PhD in curriculum, teaching and learning from the University of Calgary.*

Two dominant approaches in the educational literature attempt to explain the importance of both process and postprocess as educational methodologies, and these are also distinct in their application to the arts. Until recently, process has been accepted wholeheartedly as a good way to work with students so that we can assist them along the learning journey (Conrad 1990; Silberman 1989). Murray (1972), one of the initial process theorists, proposed that learning occurs in stages, and that “the amount of time the [learner]

spends in each stage depends on his personality, his work habits, his maturity as a craftsman, and the challenge of what he is trying to say.”

However, it is this type of early process language that brought about some misconceptions about the ideas of process. For example, the word *stages* suggests a linear thinking strategy, but Murray (1972) was in fact embarking on a new road of flexible recursiveness. He emphasized that “we have to respect the student, not for his product . . . but for the search for truth in which he is engaged.” An implication of this approach is that “there are no rules, no absolutes, just alternatives. What works one time may not another.”

Other researchers (Atwell 1991; Calkins 1986; D’Arcy 1989; Faigley 1986; Flower and Hayes 1981; Flowers 1981) took up the process cause in various ways—by embellishing on it, extending it, breaking it down into different components or reframing it—but the notion of process was still clearly present. Wallas (1926) developed a process language with terminology that can translate readily to the arts: (1) preparation (investigation), (2) incubation (not consciously thinking about the problem), (3) illumination (ideas emerge) and (4) verification (validity of idea is tested and put into form). It initially appeared that “the contemporary process movement [was] the most successful in the history of pedagogical reform in the teaching of writing” (Matsuda 2003, 69).

However, some of these researchers took Murray's (1972) ideas and articulated a clear structure that had, and continues to have, the potential of being interpreted in a formulaic fashion. As I wrote in my PhD dissertation (Robinson 2007, 37),

The writing process is explained by the grandfather of process theory, as “the process of discovery through language. It is the process of exploration of what we know and what we feel about what we know through language. . . . It is not a rigid lock-step process. . . .” (Murray 1972/2003, p. 4). Yet, it is often taught (as it is sometimes presented in our textbooks or how textbooks are interpreted by teachers) in a linear and formulaic manner (Atwell, 1991; Calkins, 1986; Conrad, 1990; Silberman, 1989). So what type of process is it then? Whose process is it?

The postprocess theorists have responded to these extreme versions of the cognitive process theory. Matsuda (2003, 72) discusses Bizzell's (1992) warning to academics about the “wholesale adoption of a version of the ‘process approach’ to the detriment of public and social aspects of [learning] processes.” In other words, the language of process theory can sometimes frame the thoughts of young artists, musicians, actors and writers to the degree that they feel unable to think beyond it and the prescribed process frameworks (Robinson 2007).

The postprocess theorists believe that creation is a free experience and, in some ways, indescribable. They purport that learning anything *as a system* is impossible (Kastman Breuch 2002). Kastman Breuch suggests that “we use a new vocabulary” to discuss learning interactions. Postprocess methodology has great merit because teachers need to mentor each student in his or her unique learning experiences through ongoing dialogue. These teachers or “connoisseurs,” who see “what others may miss seeing” (Eisner 2005, 187), help students develop their ideas as they evolve, and explore opportunities within each learning experience.

Both the codifiable process theories and the less-codifiable postprocess theories have their place in the fine arts classroom. It is important to provide some recommended process structures for how students can learn. However, freedom to explore learning beyond these boundaries should also be allowed. There are advantages to merging process and postprocess, as teachers can consider how the indeterminate experience of learning might occur within determinate parameters, or how some learning parameters might encourage indeterminate fine arts experiences (Robinson 2007, 2008).

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# *Orff the Wall: Developing Musical Understanding the Orff Way*

Cherlynn Sauter

Music . . . gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination, and life to everything.

—Plato

This year's Orff the Wall music extravaganza took place on Tuesday, April 14, at the Jack Singer Concert Hall, Calgary's premier concert hall. Attended by two Calgary Board of Education (CBE) trustees (Gordon Dirks and Pamela King), the CBE's chief superintendent (Bev Hubert) and the CBE's fine arts consultant (Leslie Yeates), along with several FAC members, the evening was a dynamic combination of speech, song, instruments and dance.

With more than 1,000 tickets sold, the event showcased students from eight Orff-based school music programs in Calgary, including Citadel Park School (directed by Cherlynn Sauter), Catherine Nichols Gunn School (directed by Lori Follis), Dalhousie School (directed by Sue Harvie), Douglasdale School (directed by Bruce Anderson), Marion Carson School (directed by Melanie Draper), Silver Springs School (directed by Feckla Spaulding), Ranchlands School (directed by Lisa Armstrong) and Sunalta School (directed by Heather Nail). Organizational assistance was provided by Elaina Smith, Kate Ceri, Marguerite Boychuk and Elizabeth DiMarino, and the evening also featured special guests Tremolo, a professional percussion group.

Each performance showcased the high-calibre music education that can be found in our public schools, as well as the importance of music education as part of a balanced curriculum for all children. Words are inadequate to describe the experience of seeing young children of all ability levels expertly and confidently perform an Orff ensemble piece. Their musicianship was undeniable; their joy, unmistakable; their ability to communicate in the language of music, irrefutable.

As educators in the 21st century, our educational aspirations have been influenced by the awareness that our students will inhabit a world requiring far more complex and subtle forms of thinking than in the past. The students we teach will need to be capable of both critical and creative thinking; they will need to frame problems for themselves, consider relationships, and deal with the ambiguity of an increasingly complex and diverse global society. "No longer will most jobs, particularly those that are the most desirable, require the use of routine skills and rote memory" (Eisner 1999, 658). These changing expectations for the outcomes of education keenly illustrate that "practice makes perfect" is no longer a feasible guiding principle in any curricular area, in particular music education. To achieve these goals, our students must deeply understand the curriculum we teach. This leads to the questions, What is understanding, and how is genuine understanding developed?

As music specialist teachers, a group of us realized that we need to be intentional in our PD work around these questions. One important aspect of this work was having the rare opportunity to discuss and reflect on best practices with other music specialist teachers. As Wheatley (2002) so eloquently points out, “Conversation is the natural way we humans think together.” Thus began the Orff the Wall Music Professional Learning Community (PLC), a group of 12 music teachers ranging from first-year teachers to 25-year veteran teachers, each bringing a unique perspective to our professional conversation about learning and understanding.

As our PLC reflected on the big questions, we looked to the book *Understanding by Design*, by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe (2005). The authors point out that *teaching for understanding* is an ambiguous and slippery phrase. Simply put, quality classrooms evolve around powerful knowledge that works for every student. This powerful knowledge is what ensures deep and enduring understanding. This could also describe the Orff process, which is powerful musical knowledge that works for every student. As music educators, we came together to discuss how we can more successfully engineer understanding for every student and then authentically assess whether we are achieving this goal.

One of our core beliefs is that the focus of music education should be on the *process* of learning. If this process is educationally sound, then the results will be profound. Our own result was the Orff the Wall concert, as a way of both demonstrating and assessing the results of this powerful way of musical learning.

Orff Schulwerk, founded by German composer Carl Orff, entered the North American educational landscape in 1924 with a new blend of rhythms, percussion instruments and movement, combined with a return to the child-centred and constructivist educational philosophy of John Dewey. Both Dewey and Orff insisted that skills and knowledge should be integrated into the lives of students so that students would develop critical-thinking skills, as opposed to merely memorizing facts. This is the key to the success of the Orff process—that it is elemental, distilling musical concepts down to their roots, enabling all children to become musically independent thinkers and problem solvers. In a speech given at the opening of the Orff Institute in Salzburg in 1963, Orff (1977) said, “Elemental music is never music

alone but forms a unity with movement, dance and speech.” As students develop their vocabularies in each of these media of music, they become increasingly proficient at performing, creating and listening—all of the behaviours that make up fluency in the language of music.

The modern Orff Schulwerk approach involves the belief that the skills and concepts of music are best taught through allowing imitation, exploration, discovery, literacy and creative improvisation. This means that all students are given many opportunities to engage and experiment, at their own level of readiness, with a wide range of musical problems (Frazee 2006). When musical skills and concepts are framed within this process, the product becomes the result of deep and authentic learning. The order of presentation within these stages illustrates the increasingly complex musical responses and understandings required of students as they climb the scaffold of music education. The intention of Orff is not that these stages are hierarchical but, rather, that they occur continuously within each lesson as students creatively connect and engage with musical problems.

As musicians and music educators, we know intuitively (and scientific studies on the brain and work in intelligence and music are confirming) that we hold in our hands a powerful tool, a key that may unlock the door to developing the brain’s greatest potential (Gardner 1973)—perhaps even the answer that will help humanity thrive with the demands of the 21st century. In the words of big thinker Daniel Pink (2005, 74), “The MFA is becoming the new MBA.” As Orff educator Joe Berarducci told delegates at the 2006 national conference of Carl Orff Canada, in Toronto, “Explore, create, discover—everything that awakens and develops the imagination. . . . This is what inspires children to be fully alive through music.”

The true magic of Orff, which was so clearly evident at the Orff the Wall concert, is that long after our students have left the music room, everything they have learned in music continues to live in them.

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# *Trumpet Leads to a Life Filled with Music: Keith Griffioen*

Jaclyn Silbernagel

Keith Griffioen learned to play the trumpet at the age of three and has found his niche in teaching others about the stimulating possibilities that exist in music.

Keith had many accomplishments early in life, including winning his first solo competition when he was 12 and ranking third overall in the Canadian National Music Festival at 20. He received a bachelor's degree in music performance from Western Washington University, in Bellingham, Washington, and his BEd (music major) from the University of Lethbridge. He has performed with the Seattle Philharmonic Orchestra, was a soloist and trumpet section leader with the Collegium Musicum, worked with the Lethbridge Symphony Orchestra for nine years as the principal trumpet, conducts the Lethbridge Christian Men's Choir, plays part-time with the Lethbridge Big Band—and the list goes on.

Currently, Keith teaches band, choir, social studies and general music at Wilson Middle School, in Lethbridge. Prior to Wilson, he taught at the high school and postsecondary levels. He also offers trumpet lessons from his home studio.

Although Keith will not take any direct credit, his teaching had a great impact on one of Canada's own idols—2008 *Canadian Idol* winner Theo Tams.

“Theo acknowledged me on one of his CDs, and in many ways it honoured me when he said I contributed to his work,” said Keith. “Teaching isn't something where you see the results now. You rarely see the long-term effect, but when you do, it validates what you've done and what you do.”

In addition to his musical commitments, Keith keeps busy with his wife and their new baby.

Sports have been another key element throughout Keith's life. “Music and sports are similar,” he explained. “It's about a larger picture broken down in smaller parts that make a masterpiece. I think what I've discovered in sports is sheer physical capacity to win and achieve; when teaching the arts, you're teaching the soul and brain, and exercising those functions. Combining both disciplines has allowed me to be in shape physically, culturally and mentally.”

Upon reflecting on his life and his transition into the field of teaching, Keith noted, “It's always an education for me, too.”

# *Freedom to Express Yourself: Rosebud School of the Arts*

Jaclyn Silbernagel

Rosebud School of the Arts, in Rosebud, takes students on an educational and cultural journey in the fine arts and is centred on self-expression.

The school's registrar and education director, Maki Van Dyke, says, "This is a private and independent institution that bases its teaching on practical learning. Students leave Rosebud with strong theatre resumés because of the experiential learning they are immersed in."

In addition to an eight-month certificate program, the school offers professional training through a three-year mentorship program, which incorporates practical experience on the Rosebud Theatre stage and

study trips to New York and London. The school combines academics, arts and work experience, and is led by a group of artists whose main objective is to offer apprenticeship-style instruction using the theatre as a practical training centre.

"The certificate program is a one-year stand-alone program that gives you the essentials you need to pursue professional training in the performing arts, while the mentorship program focuses on intense studies in four specialized areas: acting, dramatic arts, music performance and technical theatre," says Maki.

The school's relationship with Rosebud Theatre gives students a good understanding of the demands of the theatre.

"Students build confidence through hands-on theatre opportunities directly related to their craft," says Maki. "We want to train them to the level where they can enter the professional industry."

The picturesque town of Rosebud is home to a thriving community where students live and work with their instructors. According to Maki, Rosebud is a place where you "live and breathe the theatre because it's all around you."

With a teacher-student ratio of one to one, Rosebud School has cultivated a successful learning environment. Upon completion of their programs, students have gone on to do incredible things, including careers in acting, set design and stage management.

To learn more about the school, visit [www.rosebudschoolofthearts.com](http://www.rosebudschoolofthearts.com).



Student Gio Mocibob (right) shares the stage with actor Nathan Schmidt in Rosebud Theatre's production of *The Village of Idiots*.



# *Culture Inspires the Music of Life: Walter MacDonald White Bear*

Jaclyn Silbernagel

Spirituality wasn't always at the forefront of Walter MacDonald White Bear's life, but experience led him to a life of healing through music and a chance to pass on his experiences to a younger generation.

Music is an integral part of Walter's life. A performing musician and an educator, he draws inspiration from personal understanding, his elders, and his belief in the innate connections between human beings and Mother Earth. He accompanies his folk lyrics with the guitar, the Native American flute and the harmonica. His music is about "coming to terms with who [he is], embracing spirit and developing a sense of pride in [his] culture."

There is a synergy between people who share a common experience. Walter says, "It's rewarding being an educator, because when you give off a certain energy, people reach out and share what's going on in their lives. What really motivates me is my desire to see people grow and succeed, and embrace a universal spirit."

Walter began his career working with young offenders. He introduced his music to the youths and was surprised at how receptive they were to his music and his culture.

"My work is about connecting with people, and helping them find a direction while creating a good

sense of self," says Walter.

Currently, Walter works at SAIT, in Calgary, as a project coordinator for the Chinook Lodge Aboriginal Resource Centre. He is a Native counsellor who is often asked to be a keynote speaker and give cross-cultural presentations.

Leaving one last piece of advice, Walter says, "It's about teaching kids what they can contribute to the world. There are no instant results in life's challenges. You never know the impact of your words or your music. No matter where you're from, everyone has a gift, and it's up to everyone to choose whether or not to use [it]."

To contact Walter about his work, e-mail him at [walter.macdonald-whitebear@sait.ca](mailto:walter.macdonald-whitebear@sait.ca).



*Walter MacDonald White Bear*

# *Alberta Band Association Is About Making Connections*

Jaclyn Silbernagel

The Alberta Band Association (ABA) provides a voice for band in Alberta. The ABA takes its mission seriously and works to promote and develop the musical, educational and cultural value of bands and band music. ABA vice-president Jennifer Mann, a member for more than 20 years, says, “Band teaches self-discipline, teamwork, critical thinking, creativity and expression.”



*In 2008, Grades 10–12 students in the symphonic band of Lindsay Thurber Comprehensive High School, in Red Deer, performed in Halifax.*

## Arts-ful Features

The ABA provides several programs and services for teachers and students throughout Alberta. Schools have access to these resources through a teacher's membership. A great resource for any member is the music lending library. The library gives members access to more than 1,200 titles, which can be used in classroom instruction, band festivals and so on. The ABA's annual Festival of Bands brings together bands from around western Canada, attracting more than 9,000 students. Affiliation with the Canadian Band Association provides additional resources, such as the national journal *Canadian Winds* and an online music theory program. The ABA also has many discussion-based forums for members, including a Facebook page and a blog on its website (<http://albertabandassociation.com>).

When discussing the importance of band, Jennifer says, "Band helps build connections, and the ABA allows students to share common interests throughout the

province. Band students have a good work ethic, and this characteristic transfers to other classes in school."

Currently, the ABA is working with the Fine Arts Council on a collaborative partnership. Although the process has just begun, both groups feel that there is value in reaching out to a broader spectrum of teachers around the province through combined communications. Some elements being looked at are a joint annual conference and combining membership to provide a stronger voice with regulatory bodies.

Greg Jeffery, of the Fine Arts Council and the ATA's Provincial Executive Council, commented on the partnership, saying, "There is great value in this type of partnership, both economically and professionally. The economy of scale is very helpful, but alliances between teachers of all the fine arts disciplines should prove to be invaluable as we move towards a curriculum revision in 2012."

# Dance Creates Balance in the Fine Arts

Jaclyn Silbernagel

Dance, dance, dance! That seems to be a theme for the upcoming generation, and shifts in curriculum show that education is following suit.

The traditional arena for dance in schools has been third-period gym class, with a strong focus on partner dances such as the two-step and the foxtrot. Now there are new and exciting opportunities for students who are jazzed about dance.

Kelly Hannesson, the Fine Arts Council's dance representative and a teacher at Foothills Composite High School/Alberta High School of Fine Arts, in

Okotoks, says, "Dance as an arts curriculum is really enhancing the more traditional phys ed application."

With popular TV shows like *So You Think You Can Dance* and *Dancing with the Stars*, dance is re-emerging as an essential part of life.

Kelly says that her students have come to define dance as cool. "I think dance is a confidence builder. I set goals with my students; they learn how to thrive in independent and group work; you can see self-esteem build through performance work, and it can be a form of expression without competition. Dance is also

becoming a regular part of individual fitness/lifestyle goals, and it's an interesting tool for lifelong learning."

Typically, the arts have included band (instrumental), art (visual) and drama (emotional). Kelly explained how integrating dance (physical movement or expression) has filled in a gap: "Overall, bringing dance under the arts creates a balanced fine arts curriculum."



*A Grade 11/12 dance class practises a jazz routine in the studio at Foothills Composite High School.*

# Much Ado About

## *New Arts Education Curriculum Development*

Maureen Melnyk

### Curriculum Update

Research and focused discussions with diverse stakeholders have informed the development of a draft K-12 arts education curriculum framework. Stakeholder groups included teachers, administrators, artists and community leaders in the arts, with representation from the francophone, French immersion and First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) communities.

The draft curriculum framework (English and French) will provide direction for arts education programs of study. A discussion draft and a discussion draft questionnaire will soon be available online.

Program updates and developments in arts education can be found online at <http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/program/finearts/program-updates.aspx>.

For more information, contact

- Maureen Melnyk, program manager, Arts Education, Curriculum Branch, at [maureen.melnyk@gov.ab.ca](mailto:maureen.melnyk@gov.ab.ca) or 780-644-2280 (dial 310-0000 for toll-free access), or
- Katherine Deren, program manager, Arts Education, French Language Services Branch, at [katherine.deren@gov.ab.ca](mailto:katherine.deren@gov.ab.ca) or 780-422-1988 (dial 310-0000 for toll-free access).

### Learning and Teaching Resources Update

The arts education resource survey has closed as of April 1. Survey data from more than 1,000 teacher responses is being analyzed and will be used to inform the review, acquisition, development and authorization of learning and teaching resources to support the implementation of the new programs of study.

For more information on learning and teaching resources, contact Natalie Prytuluk at [natalie.prytuluk@gov.ab.ca](mailto:natalie.prytuluk@gov.ab.ca) or 780-415-8192 (dial 310-0000 for toll-free access).

### Connection Newsletter

*Connection: Information for Teachers* provides information on a wide variety of topics to support teachers in the classroom. Teachers can subscribe to *Connection* online at <http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/resources/connection.aspx> (English) or <http://education.alberta.ca/francais/connection.aspx> (French).

# Submitting to *A Fine FACTA*

Add the goal of being published to your teacher professional growth plan and submit something to *A Fine FACTA*! Submissions may include the following:

- Practical classroom tips, lesson plans and rubrics
- Resource reviews
- Movie and book reviews
- Personal reflections on classroom experiences
- Stories and poems by teachers, students and student teachers
- Student artwork

Please include a short (three- to five-sentence) biography and your address so that a copy of the issue in which your work appears can be sent to you.

Submit signed permission forms for student work or photographs of students.

Send submissions to Bonnie Cohoe, 24 Signature Place SW, Calgary, AB T3H 3A1; e-mail [b.cohoe@calgarywaldorf.org](mailto:b.cohoe@calgarywaldorf.org).

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## *Permission to Print Photograph/Student Work*

Your child has submitted a piece of work or appears in a photograph that we would like to print in the next issue of *A Fine FACTA*. *A Fine FACTA* is a journal that goes to teachers across Alberta who are members of the Fine Arts Council of the Alberta Teachers' Association.

By signing below, I give permission for my child's work or photograph to be considered for publication in an upcoming issue of *A Fine FACTA*. This permission form will be forwarded to the journal editor.

Parent/guardian name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
Student name \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
School \_\_\_\_\_ School location \_\_\_\_\_

### Notes to teachers:

- When submitting student work, please include the Permission to Print form with all signatures completed. Send the student work/photograph and the permission form to the editor of *A Fine FACTA*, Bonnie Cohoe, 24 Signature Place SW, Calgary, AB T3H 3A1; e-mail [b.cohoe@calgarywaldorf.org](mailto:b.cohoe@calgarywaldorf.org).
- Work may be submitted electronically to [b.cohoe@calgarywaldorf.org](mailto:b.cohoe@calgarywaldorf.org). Please ensure that the permission form is mailed to the address above.

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