



# CENTER for LEARNING through the ARTS

## Quarterly Report

December 15, 2006

University of California, Irvine

### A Word from the Director...

Liane Brouillette

This fall has been a time of many beginnings. Guest editor Johanna Shapiro has put together an exciting issue of the *Journal for Learning through the Arts* that looks at the groundbreaking work being done at the intersection of medicine and the humanities.

The *Mapping the Beat* project, funded by the National Geographic Education Foundation, initiated its work in public schools this fall. Each of our university partners—UC San Diego, Cal State Long Beach, Oklahoma State, Michigan State, and Lawrence University—has sent advanced university arts students to work in local schools alongside classroom teachers, integrating the arts and geography into the fifth grade United States history curriculum.

Visiting scholar Song Jiayang, from Xiamen University in China, arrived in August to spend 2006-07 at CLTA. Through studying with Dr. Keith Fowler of the UCI Drama Department, she is exploring how directing is taught in the United States. Upon her return to China next fall, she plans to share American drama education techniques with her colleagues and students.

We extend our best wishes for a joyous holiday season. Very special warm regards go to CLTA Assistant Director Wendy Lee and her husband David, who are expecting the arrival of a new family member very early in the New Year.

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### Journal for Learning through the Arts: Focus on Medical Humanities

Johanna Shapiro

The next issue of JLTA will venture into an unusual but exciting academic area, a discipline known as medical humanities. Many educators interested in the integration of humanities and arts into various learning venues nevertheless remain unaware that this process also has found expression in medical education (even many physicians are ignorant of this development!).

Yet for four decades, the medical humanities have been a flourishing interdisciplinary field for scholarship and pedagogy. Medical humanities are a broad umbrella under which can be sheltered a range of academic studies ranging from literature (including prose and poetry) and history to the visual and performing arts (including theater, cinema, music, and dance). The common unifying thread is the relationship of these various branches of learning to patients, doctors, medicine, and medical practice. The

result has been serious and exciting scholarship in journals such as *Literature and Medicine* and *Journal of Medical Humanities*, as well as major medical journals such as *JAMA*, *Lancet*, and *Academic Medicine*.

The use of the humanities and arts in medical education has also grown in the last 40 years, to the extent that three-quarters of all U.S. and Canadian medical schools have some sort of curricular offering in the medical humanities. The purposes and goals of such endeavors are various, but include a desire to educate medical students more broadly about the human condition; help them to understand different points of view and thus to develop clinical empathy; stimulate reflection and critical thinking; better tolerate ambiguity and uncertainty; and reconnect with aspects of

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## Chinese Drama Project at Turtle Rock Elementary and the UCI Farm School

Liane Brouillette

The curriculum development project funded by the National Geographic Education Foundation expanded into a new area this fall. At the same time UCI's partner universities began their work in integrating music into the United States history curriculum for fifth grade, a new offshoot of this program—entitled *Mapping the Arts*—was initiated at the UCI Farm School and Turtle Rock Elementary School in Irvine. This project focused on integrating drama into the world history curriculum for sixth grade, with a focus on China.

With the assistance of Dr. Christine Lofgren of the UCI Dept. of Cognitive Sciences, innovative lessons were set up at the UCI Farm School. Visiting drama scholar Song Jiayang taught lessons in Chinese drama. Children corresponded with pupils at Baiyunlu Elementary School in Beijing, China. The pen pal program was set up by UCI graduate student Xiaoqing Chen, a former lecturer in English at the Xian Foreign Language University in Xian, China.

During her first visit to the Farm School, Song Jiayang introduced the older children to Chinese dramatic traditions, coaching them as they

rehearsed stylized gestures, expressions, and poses. Then the children created their own dramatization of an ancient story in which a warrior confronts a fierce and dangerous tiger. In a later lesson, the children were surprised to learn that the roots of the Chinese martial arts lay in the use of dance to train soldiers to move in unison. Teacher Sarah Miller worked with the children on the first set of letters that were sent to their Chinese pen pals at Baiyunlu Elementary.

At the invitation of Principal ChrissAnn Shane, the same lessons were presented to sixth graders at Turtle Rock Elementary School. Sixth grade teachers Dr. Self, Mr. Ivey, and Ms. Camastro hosted these lessons in their classrooms. In addition, the teachers encouraged their students to participate in the China-California pen pal project.

Over winter break, Xiaoqing Chen will travel to Beijing to visit with the teachers at Baiyunlu Elementary and to deliver letters and other materials sent by students in California to their pen pals. During winter term, Song Jiayang will return to the UCI Farm School and Turtle Rock Elementary School to present new lessons centering on Chinese art and culture.

## CLtA's Visiting Scholar: Song Jiayang

Song Jiayang is a visiting scholar from the Xiamen University of China. She has explored drama education within the university since 1997. She comes to the U.S. to pursue her dream of drama education through continued learning and research with the Center for Learning through the Arts at UCI. She will study at the CLtA for one year, before returning to China in August 2007.

Song Jiayang's studies will focus on research in drama education for those who are not professionally pursuing acting. She hopes to contribute to the development of education and theatre in China and internationally, following the work of eminent British, American, Canadian, and Australian researchers including Dorothy Heathcote, David Hornbrook, and Richard Courtney. Much of this research has focused on practical applications of drama education, for example, improving self-confidence, communication skills, social skills, and cognitive abilities.

Song Jiayang hopes that her work in drama education will create a lasting impact on children and adults around the world, helping them to develop a more well-rounded and balanced lifestyle.

## ArtsCore: High School – Research Findings

Liane Brouillette

The ArtsCore project, funded in 2001-04 by an Eisenhower grant, was created in response to requests for assistance from visual and performing arts teachers at the high school level. The teachers were responding to a new University of California admission requirement in the visual and performing arts. Beginning in fall, 2003, all freshmen admitted to the UC system would have to take one year of standards-based art instruction.

These new arts courses had to address state content standards and were expected to include written assignments. However, many arts teachers were not accustomed to assigning written work. The ArtsCore professional development Institutes were created to address this need.

During 2005-06, the year after the last workshops, a quasi-experimental study tested for continuing programmatic effects. Both in September, and again in May, students of teachers who had participated in the program were asked to write an essay to a prompt taken from the California High School Exit Exam. A matched control group did the same.

Afterward, the essays were scored by UCI writing composition instructors, using the 4-point rubric developed for the essay on the exit exam. A total of 712 student cases were eventually collected from 10 (52.6%) control teachers and 9 (47.4%) treatment teachers. A stratified random sample of 92 (12.9%) of the essays was drawn from this dataset to make sure that interrater reliability was acceptable.

For the treatment group, comparison of the distributions for pre- and post-essay scores suggested a general upward trend from pre-essays scores to post-essay scores. On their pre-essays, well over half (56.6%) of all students of treatment teachers scored a '1' (lowest score). The percentage of students of treatment teachers scoring a '1' on their post-essays dropped markedly to 30.1%. In contrast, the number of students scoring a '3' or a '4' on their post-essays more than doubled, from 27 (12%) students to 60 students (26.6%). A sign test ( $p < 0.001$ ) confirmed that, where there was a change in score from pre- to post-essay, it was far more likely to have increased than to have decreased. For the control group, there was a slight downward trend in scores.

## Mapping the Beat: Campus Updates

With a three-year grant from the National Geographic Education Foundation, CLtA and five university campuses are carrying out ArtsBridge projects that bridge music and geography education for fifth-grade students. The following updates provide an overview of how the project is developing at each of three different campuses.

### UC San Diego

Amy Zygmanski

Our *Mapping the Beat* program started in October at Freese Elementary with four 5th grade classrooms and 113 excited students! Scholars Chris Tonelli and Kalin Hove each taught two classes back to back and were able to accomplish three different lessons over the course of the last three months. Using their experience from the initial project phases of *Mapping the Beat*, Freese teachers decided to structure the existing lessons to coincide along with the social science instruction in the classroom. Chris and Kalin also designed a new lesson to introduce the program, focusing on music from different regions of the country covered in the fifth grade history textbook. With maps of each region, the scholars played accompanying music, asking students which instruments they recognized and how the music made them feel. Both the teachers and the scholars felt this was a successful way to start the program and get the students excited about their year of music and geography.

In an effort to explore the history of Mexico, San Diego's very close neighbor to the south, ArtsBridge and Freese worked with guest artist and drummer Felix Diaz, who created new lessons on Aztec and Mayan music influences, taught the students Aztec drumming rhythms, and helped the students make their own instruments. During the course of his residency, Felix traveled to Mexico and brought back various pictures, artifacts, instruments and stories to share. These were very exciting days in the classroom!

We are looking forward to introducing the Ngoni/Banjo lesson in January when the students return from holiday break. We are also fortunate to have two film/video students creating a short film about the first few months of this project.

Not only will we have documentation of the project's beginning, but more importantly, we will be able to share the brilliant faces of the Freese Elementary students who are so excited about *Mapping the Beat*.

### Cal State Long Beach

Robin Podlaski

ArtsBridge Scholars Katherine Cox and Destiny Ankers, along with Director Robin Podlaski, introduced *Mapping the Beat* to four eager classes of fifth grade students in Long Beach. The first sessions began with Woody Guthrie's *This Land is Your Land*, identifying the states and geographic features mentioned in the song and leading into the introductory vocabulary. All four classes consist of diverse groups of students, thus students and teachers were interested in learning more about their classroom population as compared to the United States population. At Webster Elementary, one teacher elaborated on the lesson and used this comparison as an essay topic for her students. Since every session begins and ends with music, we gave the students the choice of which patriotic song to sing. We were delighted when one class at Bret Harte Elementary volunteered and enthusiastically sang *Fifty Nifty United States* by Ray Charles. They all really know their states!

### Lawrence University

Jasmine Yep

In spring 2006, the Lawrence University (LU) ArtsBridge program piloted our first *Mapping the Beat* project partnership with the Appleton Area School District. Scholar Sarah Tochiki worked with the 5<sup>th</sup> graders at Edison Elementary School. As a result of Ms. Tochiki's successful collaboration with Edison Elementary teachers, she has been named one of three ArtsBridge MTB

scholars who will serve over 100 fifth grade pupils in Wisconsin during the 2006-07 academic year.

LU ArtsBridge is delighted to have three scholars who each bring their individual strengths to the projects. Sarah Tochiki, Amanda Engle and Kyle Traska began their MTB projects in September 2006 with Edison Elementary, Lincoln Elementary, and Tullar Elementary. In addition to their weekly teaching sessions in the classroom, the scholars meet biweekly to share project plans, resources, worksheets and classroom experiences, helping them develop as teaching artists, future teachers, and music specialists.

During the first semester, each scholar selected and taught at least two units from the project curriculum. All three scholars introduced a Flute Museum designed around the MTB unit "Flutes, Natural Resources & Trade in the Great Plains" that introduced pupils to flutes from around the world. The students had the opportunity to learn about different flutes made from natural and manmade materials, and about how the different ways of playing flutes changes the pitch and tone of the instrument. From a Native American flute to a plastic bottle, the students were able to explore the sounds of history.

Additionally, scholar Sarah Tochiki is preparing lessons about the Underground Railroad, where students will compose songs that describe their own flight from their classroom to the playground in "The Escape to Recess." Scholar Kyle Traska introduced the Atlantic Slave Trade and percussion instruments from Africa, which included a day dedicated to making shakers out of gourds and beads. Scholar Amanda Engle's students made egg shakers and used them at the start of each unit in a music listening activity that allowed them to feel and play the different tempos, rhythms, and accents in pieces of music from each county and genre.

For more information on MTB, please visit [www.clta.uci.edu/programs.html](http://www.clta.uci.edu/programs.html).

## JLTA: Medical Humanities

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the humanities and the arts; often in collaboration with each other. The articles represent many regions of the U.S., as well as the United Kingdom and Brazil. Almost all of them are related directly to medical education. Most describe curricular experiments using poetry and prose; readers' theater; movies; music; or multimedia approaches to enrich and expand medical students' understanding of medicine. Several of the articles themselves include poetry as a form of data that illustrates or clarifies a teaching point.

Two of the articles address integration of the arts into palliative care training, one through the model of appreciative inquiry, the other through a developmental framework emphasizing emotional growth and transformation. One article considers the storytelling of medical students and residents within the context of the medical sociologist Arthur Frank's typologies of illness narratives. One article reports on a successful required course for the entire student body, which focuses on how literary pieces can stimulate reflective conversations among students, professor, and authors. Another physician shares her personal journey through poetry and the arts as a way of making sense of and revitalizing her career. Most touch upon the presence of awe and mystery in the

practice of medicine.

Courses in the medical humanities may be either required or elective, and may occur during the preclinical (when students take gross anatomy and basic science courses such as molecular genetics, immunology, histology, physiology, and pathology) and/or the clinical (when students have regular patient contact during a variety of clinical services such as internal medicine, obstetrics-gynecology, pediatrics, family medicine, surgery, and psychiatry) phase of training. The content of such coursework is variable, but can address historical topics such as gender and race in the profession of medicine; the doctor-patient relationship; the patient's experience of illness; and issues such as death and dying, difficult patient-physician interactions, breaking bad news, cross-cultural medicine, and similar topics that are difficult to fully apprehend from purely didactic instruction.

This special issue of JLTA attempts to introduce readers to the vast and thought-provoking field of medical humanities. The 19 articles included are written by physicians from many specialties (family medicine, cardiology, anesthesiology, psychiatry), psychologists, a medical anthropologist, and professors of

literature; authors talk about their successes, enthusiastic student responses and self-reported change, one focuses on the failures and frustrations that routinely arise in attempting to incorporate the humanities into medical training.

Several articles discuss the active creation of poetry and art by medical students and residents as part of the learning process, and one reports on a literary journal started in a family medicine residency program as an outlet for residents and faculty. A couple of research articles, one quantitative, one qualitative, are included as well, to suggest the richness (and challenge) of the research potential in this field. These report respectively a grounded theory analysis of the types of creative projects produced by medical students in a gross anatomy class and their relation to perceived stress reduction; and a basic science investigation of the immune responses triggered by solo singing.

The editors of this special issue are hopeful that these articles will expand awareness of the important work being done in medical humanities; and stimulate increased cross-disciplinary theoretical and practical efforts to bring together the arts and education.



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