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ArtsBridge America:
Bringing the Arts Back to School

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The arts possess enormous educational potential, offering endless opportunities for teaching and learning (Fowler, 1996; Efland, 2002; McCarthy et al., 2005). Yet, in an era characterized by calls for higher academic standards, tougher curriculum, and rigorous high-stakes testing, the arts have too often been treated as a frivolous distraction from the serious work facing American teachers and students (Eisner, 2002). As a result, fewer teachers are being hired to teach music, drama, dance and visual art. At the elementary school level, where arts instruction is often provided by classroom teachers, teacher preparation programs have de-emphasized arts instruction.

There is a painful irony in the present beleaguered status of arts education. For decades, evidence has been steadily accumulating that learning in the arts involves principles shared with other academic disciplines (Scripp, 2002; Deasy, 2002; Fiske, 1999; Bransford et al., 2004). This makes the arts a potentially formidable ally in increasing student achievement (Darby & Catterall, 1994). Of course, teaching the arts requires no such rationale. The "powerful emotional jolt" that art lends to life needs no justification (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997, p. 34). Arguably, it is the intrinsic benefits provided by the arts that make all other benefits possible (McCarthy et al., 2005).

What is missing at the present time is a catalyst that will bring the multiple benefits associated with learning in the arts to the attention of the general public. Otherwise, the arts are likely to remain at the periphery of our education system, surviving largely as an option for children of the middle and upper classes (Scripp, 2002). Continuing to marginalize the arts in this

manner threatens to shut the door on possible success for many students, including English language learners and those whose strengths are not well matched to the standard curriculum. If this situation is to be turned around, there is an urgent need for innovative programs that can serve as a bridge between the current public school curriculum and the arts instruction that all children should ideally have. Only in this way can a clientele be built up who will provide for the arts the strong public support that school athletic programs have long enjoyed.

The ArtsBridge America network provides an example of how community resources might be mobilized to provide arts instruction to children who would otherwise have no access to instruction in drama, music, dance or visual arts. ArtsBridge America is a school/university partnership that, over the last ten years, has grown from its original site at the University of California, Irvine (UCI) to include a network of 22 universities in 13 states (ArtsBridge America, 2005). Through ArtsBridge programs, graduate and undergraduate university arts students are given scholarships in return for providing standards-based arts instruction to K-12 students in close collaboration with K-12 classroom teachers. This article examines the origin of ArtsBridge, the strengths and limitations of the program, along with the effect that participation has had on university arts students.

ArtsBridge: A New Kind of Partnership

In 1996, using funding provided by private donations, the first ArtsBridge project was initiated at UCI. The program was created as a strategic response to the shortage of qualified art teachers in California, especially at the elementary level. A special emphasis was placed on serving those K-12 contexts where arts instruction had suffered most from budget shortfalls. Fewer than three years after the original ArtsBridge program was begun, nearly 60 university arts students were partnering with teachers in K-12 classrooms, their efforts supported by private and corporate grants.

In 1998, the California legislature appropriated $1.5 million to replicate the ArtsBridge model throughout the University of California (UC) system. The

California Budget Act of 1998 stipulated that:

> Of the amount appropriated, $1.5M is for ArtsBridge programs that give university students scholarships to work as "artists in residence" in public schools. UC shall ensure that 75% of these efforts are targeted at low-performing schools. UC shall provide a report of the expenditures of this program to the California Arts Council by Sept. 30, 1999 [SB 1391, items 6440-001-0001-(j)].

The UC-wide ArtsBridge program was coordinated through a Faculty Advisory Council consisting of a faculty member from each campus along with representatives of the UC Office of the President. This group communicated regularly via an electronic listserv and met semi-annually to make award decisions, formulate policy, and plan for the future.

The philosophy behind the decentralized UC ArtsBridge governance structure was explained by program founder, Dr. Jill Beck: "Something that's going to work has to be a partnership, it has to be co-created. So, you are able to set the philosophy, kind of the framework, what indispensably has to be there, but then you need to see what shape it takes as people get their hands on it and participate in it." By the end of the 1999-2000 academic year, the eight UC campuses with ArtsBridge programs had sent over 900 University of California arts students to work in 267 California schools, where they served almost 24,000 K-12 students. Loss of state funding due to California budget crises has slowed the momentum of ArtsBridge, which currently has seven programs continuing on the 10 UC campuses. Nevertheless, in 2001 the U.S. Department of Education provided ArtsBridge with a $846,500 grant from the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education to disseminate the ArtsBridge model across the country.

Presently, there are 22 universities in 13 states participating in the ArtsBridge America network. Statistics from the 2004-2005 academic year indicate that over 400 scholarships were awarded to university students who worked in

approximately 200 schools, where 15,000 K-12 students were served. Although the ArtsBridge model varies considerably from campus to campus, and now university to university, most programs perform two primary functions: 1) partnering talented university arts students with teachers in K-12 classrooms where children would otherwise have limited exposure to the arts; 2) providing scholarships to university students in return for their work in K-12 schools. In the following sections, we will take a closer look at the origins of this program and what might be learned from it about the nature of teaching and learning in the arts.

The Origins of ArtsBridge

The original ArtsBridge program was officially launched in spring 1996 with just seven university arts students. Jill Beck, then dean of the UCI School of the Arts, recalled the experiences that led her to create the initial ArtsBridge project:

> In my years at Juilliard, I worked with students who were involved in an outreach program. I felt that it was important to deepen the scholarship pool for arts students, but that they could be doing something other than just running in and performing and running out again. I admired the [Juilliard] model, but it didn't seem as developed as it could be.

Drama Professor Keith Fowler became director of the UCI program. He supervised selection of ArtsBridge scholars (i.e., the university students who work in K-12 schools) and matched them with host schools, monitored the ArtsBridge scholars' teaching, and worked directly with faculty mentors, staff and community volunteers. Working out much of ArtsBridge's organizational structure, policy, and procedure on the local level, he laid the administrative groundwork for future expansion. The program's founding principles stipulated that ArtsBridge:

- Support undergraduate and graduate students in the arts, through scholarships and fellowships, in return for offering instruction in K-12 classrooms.

- Emphasize hands-on instruction. While occasional performances are presented to K-12 schools as a part of larger projects, the primary goal is to involve pupils directly in the acquisition of arts knowledge and skills, and in the creation of art.

- Respond to local needs. Schoolteachers are actively involved in the definition of their ArtsBridge projects.

- Integrate projects into school day and, ideally, a "bridge" to other subjects in the curriculum.

- Offer professional development to teachers. ArtsBridge scholars involve their collaborating teachers and document their lesson plans, so that teachers can continue art projects linked to their curriculum after the initial project has ended.

- Document the work of ArtsBridge scholars through observation reports, teacher and scholar evaluations, pre- and post-tests, and other means of assessment.

- Limit administrative and support costs to no more than 33% of the project total.

ArtsBridge within the University of California

Most UC campuses developed similar procedures for organizing the program. Applications from UC arts students and from potential hosting teachers were received and reviewed by a local ArtsBridge committee consisting of faculty mentors from each arts discipline. Potential ArtsBridge scholars had to have a GPA of 3.0 or higher as well as two letters of recommendation from faculty. The director and the faculty mentor in the appropriate discipline interviewed applicants; final acceptance depended on a successful match between the applying drama, music, dance or visual art student and a host project.

Teachers who wished to host an ArtsBridge scholar wrote short proposals describing the type of arts activities they hoped to initiate in their classrooms. Host schools committed to the active participation of the teacher in the project. UC ArtsBridge required assessment in the form of on-site observations, scholar evaluations, supervisor (teacher) evaluations, pre- and post- testing, portfolios, and audio/video documentation. In addition, ArtsBridge scholars submitted final lesson plans that included detailed descriptions of the scholars' experiences. Assessment data was maintained in individual files for each scholar. The ArtsBridge director relied on designated university faculty and veteran ArtsBridge scholars to observe projects on-site and provide discipline-specific mentoring. The ArtsBridge director on each campus was responsible for arranging this observation and mentoring.

Bringing Back the Arts in California

When ArtsBridge was founded, arts education in California had been in a state of continuing crisis for decades. These problems could be traced in part to funding shortages brought on by passage of Proposition 13 in 1978 (Burns, 2002, pp. 75-92). As California Superintendent of Public Instruction Delaine Eastin pointed out in a 1997 speech, "The lack of attention to arts education has been the silent crisis in California schools for too long. It is time to turn that crisis into a renaissance." (Bruton, Ed., 1997, p. 1) The Report of the Superintendent's Task Force on the Visual and Performing Arts pointed out that arts programs in California were underfunded, understaffed, and undervalued. For example, California ranked 50th among the states in the ratio of music teachers to students.

ArtsBridge was set up to help address the shortage of available arts teachers, especially at the elementary level. Teachers in the public schools wrote short proposals describing the kind of assistance they desired. Projects have ranged from directing school plays to organizing a school chorus, from helping students design and paint murals to teaching the folk dances of Mexico, from making pottery to creating digital art. What all these activities have in common is a focus on the experience of making art. Jill Beck noted:

There is a growing awareness that just bringing children to museums once a year doesn't teach them a love of art. They need to have the arts as part of their regular school experience, like reading and math. We started ArtsBridge because we believed so strongly in the importance of the arts content that would be presented in the classroom. This is not just a fun activity for children.

Defining the Benefits of Arts Education

The ArtsBridge network also provides forums for scholarly interchange. Neuroscientists on the UC Irvine campus have received considerable media attention as a result of research that linked musical education to cognitive development, specifically to spatial-temporal performance (Rauscher, 1997; Rauscher & Zupan, 2000). Scholarly journals in the fields of education, art and music had published an increasing number of studies that described links between the arts and academics. Among researchers and scholars at UC Irvine, there was a widespread interest in deepening this dialogue.

In April 2000, UC ArtsBridge hosted a two-day conference, entitled "The Sciences for the Arts," which explored what science and the arts had to tell each other about the workings of the human mind. The goal of the conference was to utilize the resources of the university to help improve pedagogy and assessment in arts education. This conference laid the groundwork for a productive relationship among University of California research scientists, artists, and educators. One outgrowth of the Sciences for the Arts Conference was the creation of a new research center at UCI, the Center for Learning through the Arts, which uses an interdisciplinary approach to investigate the nature of arts-based learning (Center for Learning through the Arts, 2005). In this journal issue, Peterson (2006) provides an overview of what has been gleaned from scientific research regarding the potential contribution of the arts toward enhancing cognitive development.

What Has Been Learned from ArtsBridge?

No one would argue that having a mathematician come to school for one day and demonstrate how to do math problems could substitute for a viable mathematics curriculum. Yet this approach to arts education has, in recent years, become the de facto norm in many school districts. To make possible a deeper engagement with the arts, ArtsBridge has brought energized young artists into the public schools to work with students over the course of an entire semester or school year. This on-going interaction allows ArtsBridge scholars to present their disciplines as powerful tools for making sense of the world. As Jill Beck observed, "We have this incredible talent pool, and I think that's what is so interesting about ArtsBridge. If we use this talent we can make an immediate impact on K-12 instruction in the arts."

A Sampling of ArtsBridge Projects

In 2000-2002 a research study was carried out at the University of California, Irvine in an effort to better understand the effect that ArtsBridge participation had on the university arts students who became ArtsBridge scholars (Burns, 2002). The resulting interview survey looked at the experiences of 18 university students. Studio art and drama were chosen (with two musicians closely aligned with theatrical performance) in order to be inclusive of both the performing and visual arts. Also, these disciplines were strong components of the original ArtsBridge program. Interviewees were allowed to choose their own pseudonyms, which are used throughout the descriptions that follow. This sample of ArtsBridge scholars had worked in a variety of contexts, reflecting the range of the original ArtsBridge program. As Figure 1 shows, the majority of the projects were carried out in K-12 schools, followed by special education, community, and medical settings.
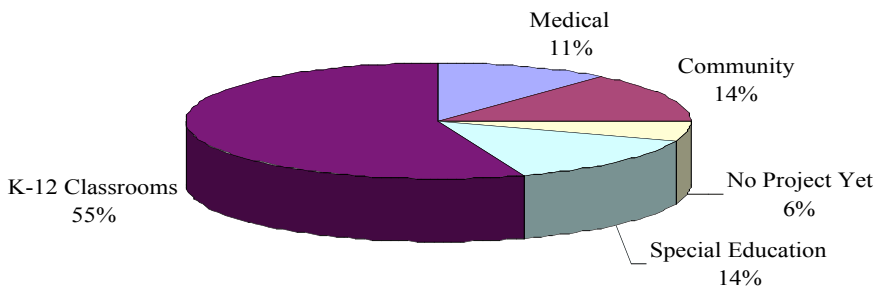
Figure 1 **ArtsBridge Project Context**

In choosing respondents for the study, preference was given to experienced ArtsBridge scholars who would not only be able to speak knowledgeably about the ArtsBridge program, but would also be able to contribute a sense of perspective concerning the effect that participation in ArtsBridge had on them as university arts students. Many interviewees had participated in multiple projects. One exception was a drama student who had not yet carried out an ArtsBridge project but was added to the interview sample because she was the first student to participate in ArtsBridge activities in a local high school and then, upon graduation, come to UCI to study in the Claire Trevor School of the Arts. Overall, the one respect in which the sample was not entirely representative is that those interviewed were, as a group, more experienced working as teaching artists than were ArtsBridge scholars as a whole. (Please see Table 1).

Pseudonym	City in Orange County	School Type & Level/Age	Frequency of ArtsBridge Experiences	Summary of Program Content
DRAMA				
Elizabeth	Garden Grove	special ed/ 5-21 years	Multiple	"story-acting" or dramatizing stories
Maura	Santa Ana, Laguna Beach	elementary & middle/ 10-14 years	Multiple	Acting and improvisation, Shakespeare
Jackie	Anaheim	elementary/ 10-11 years	Single	Acting, origins of drama in Greece, culminating festival
Susan	Fullerton	middle & secondary/ 14-18 years	Multiple	acting and tools of the trade
Jimmy	Garden Grove	special ed/ 5-21 years	Multiple	"story-acting" or dramatizing stories
Mark	Santa Ana	community center/ 13-18 years	Multiple	acting and improvisation
Diane	Santa Ana	elementary/ 10-11 years	Multiple	acting and improvisation
Catherine	none yet	none yet	none yet	none yet
STUDIO ART				
Jason	Santa Ana	elementary/ 10-11 years	Single	drawing & color theory with exhibition
James	Newport Beach	elementary/ 10-11 years	Single	ceramics, drawing, painting and art history
Natalie	Santa Ana, Laguna Beach, Laguna Niguel	community center, elementary & middle/ 11-13 years	Multiple	Photography, culminating with school exchange and exhibit
Joy	Orange	medical/ 3-15 years	Multiple	drawing, painting, dramatic play, storytelling, music, dance
Leslie	Orange	medical/ 3-15 years	Multiple	drawing, painting
Porcelana	Irvine	middle/ 12-15	Multiple	digital art, drawing
Samantha	Santa Ana	elementary/ 6-8 years	Single	drawing, painting, & art history
Jose	Santa Ana	community center 13-30 years	Multiple	drawing, painting, & poetry with goal of HIV prevention
MUSIC				
Music Man	Santa Ana	middle, secondary & special ed/ 14-18 & 3-5 years	Multiple	symphony, troubadours & music with blind children
Green Daisy	Dana Point	elementary/ 6-7 years	Multiple	singing and music concepts

Table 1 **ArtsBridge Project Summary**

Interdisciplinary Connections

Many of the ArtsBridge scholars were able to incorporate additional academic content areas (a second arts discipline, history, language arts or science) into their arts lessons. Over all, 72% of the university students felt that they had provided interdisciplinary instruction. Figure 2 shows the distribution of this integration.
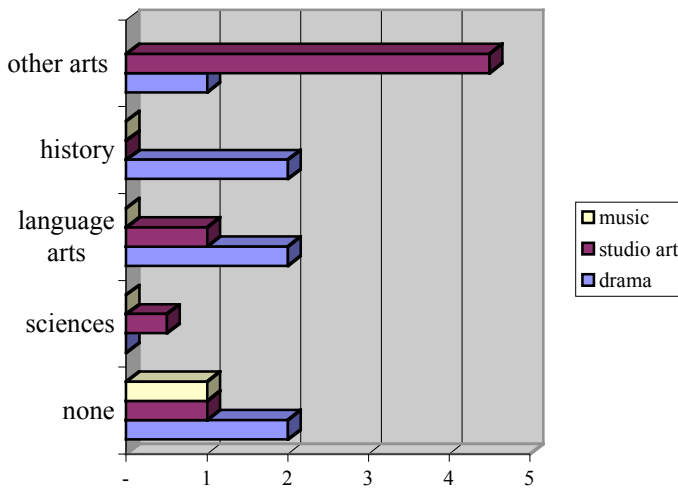

Figure 2 **ArtsBridge Interdisciplinary Instruction**

Among those ArtsBridge scholars who had studied multiple arts disciplines, there was a natural inclination to include more than one arts domain. For example, Diane had her students use the visual arts as a starting point for creating scripts and dramatic scenes. Jason, a studio artist, brought his guitar to class; he described the lesson as follows:

> We had already been working with color for a while. We had done a color wheel, talked about relationships with color and how two colors next to each other can be a seductive experience. I brought my guitar and showed them how one note sounds and how when you put two notes together, it's a new sound.

Jason suggested to the students that a similar interaction can happen when you combine colors and allowed children to experiment.

Older Student to Younger Student: Relating to Children

A powerful theme that emerged was the university students' comfort level in working with school children. The ArtsBridge scholars interviewed gave the impression that they found it easy to relate to the children, in part because of the relative closeness in age between the ArtsBridge scholars and the K-12 students. Jackie, a drama scholar, explained that even though she was older, she felt that she understood where the children were coming from:

> I have a little sister, who is ten, and so she's their age…They're just like, "Oh, you're so cool," because I watch the cartoons, I know all the songs they listen to."

A studio artist also mentioned this pseudo-sibling type of relationship. Natalie stated:

> It was really fun, because my sister is sixteen. So, it was like I had younger brothers and sisters. They kind have looked up to me, I looked to them, and it was really nice . . .

Susan suggested that the comfort level was not just related to age, but also to the fact that she was a fellow-student. She felt that having older students teaching younger students was important:

> I was . . . someone closer to their peer range, because we are

> also students and they feel that they communicate better with us. They were freer…

When asked about the most valuable thing he brought to the classroom, Jason replied, "I think maybe my youth relative to the typical teacher's age." Natalie observed, "Not only do you have the teacher, but you have also the scholar who's there to really go and find out about the kids and can have more of a personal relationship as opposed to the teacher who has to be a little more distant." Porcelana noticed, "Even though they know I'm the leader, I'm their teacher, I'm also their friend. They can come to me." This dynamic allowed for a qualitatively different relationship encouraging the sense of play and of openness to new possibilities that is fundamental to artistic exploration.

The importance of closeness in age, physical agility, and arts expertise was expanded upon by one of the drama students working in a special education context. Elizabeth recalled: "These teachers are absolutely wonderful at the school; however, there's a limitation to what they are able to do. Sometimes that's because it's physical, because they're older, and they're not performers. . . . We are able to communicate with the children physically, vocally, visually, in ways that the faculty cannot."

Another ArtsBridge scholar explained that developing a sense of play was a crucial aspect of her art domain. Maura reported that her drama project allowed her to, "Just to get to play and be a kid myself and you can run around and do the improvs with them. It really reminded me of why I was doing [drama]." Others emphasized that the fun and play were what drew the children into the learning experience. Diane explained:

> Well, it has to be fun. I mean, I'm working with ten-year-olds. Even if they're being dramatic and talking about heavy issues, it's always pretend, imagine, and fun . . . if you want to get anything from them, if you want to get them to say anything, you just have to present it in a very fun manner.

In talking about his ceramics project, James recalled:

> The students in our case really enjoyed it. They had smiles on
> their faces when we would get there and it was a fun time for
> them during class . . .

Several ArtsBridge scholars commented on how uninhibited and imaginative
school children were by nature. Natalie noticed that in her photography
project, "They were ready to get on the ground and take a picture from a
different angle, whereas adults are more inhibited." A music scholar, who
appeared to have been a prodigy as a child and had played the cello
professionally from an early age, talked about what he had learned from the
students he taught through ArtsBridge: "They taught me how to play. I
didn't play 'let's pretend' when I was kid and now I've gotten very good at
that." Of course, the arts have long been recognized as one area of the school
curriculum where playful, whimsical, creative thinking is not only allowed but
encouraged. Since creativity emerged as the area that interviewees returned
to again and again, creativity became a special focus of this study.

Can Creativity Be Taught?

Universities, businesses, the arts, entertainment, politics—all major
institutions of modern society—are driven by a need to solve problems
adaptively and with originality, that is, creatively (Feist, 1999). Yet, creativity
is an aspect of life that is difficult to address in school. In fact, the
standardized examinations that have become such an influential component
of modern schooling tend to penalize students for creative answers that were
not anticipated by the authors of the tests. Sternberg and Lubart (1991) have
suggested: "Schools are probably as likely to work against the development of
creativity as in its favor. . . . Schools probably do at least as much to
undermine creativity as to support it" (p. 614).

If this pivotal human capacity is to be nurtured in the schools, educators must
be concerned with creative processes and must learn how to generate
appropriate conditions for encouraging creativity. Only then may children be

socialized into culturally valued styles of creativity (Sawyer et al., 2003). Many scholars have urged educators to enlist the arts to nurture creativity, arguing that early education in the arts can contribute unique developmental benefits—higher level thinking, analytic ability, problem solving, reflexive thinking, and self-regulation (Eisner, 1998). As Howard Gardner noted, "Remaining highly creative is easier in the arts than in the sciences" (Gardner, 1993, p. 362). Seymour Sarason (1990) has suggested that creativity may be within everyone's reach: "That the potential for artistic creativity is universal is an assertion by no means new, but its implications and consequences have hardly been pursued" (p. 2). The question is, how is that pursuit to be carried out?

Gardner's Creativity Framework

Current researchers recommend a multidimensional approach to the study of creativity (Feldman, 1999). Such "multidimensional" or "confluence" approaches are based on the idea that creativity requires the convergence of multiple components (Sternberg and Lubart, 1999). In his book Creating Minds (1993), Gardner used a multidimensional approach to conceptualize the factors that may have led to varied forms of creativity in a sample of highly creative individuals who had been active in widely differing disciplines. After taking a close look at the characteristics of specific individuals, Gardner focused on the domain in which each individual had worked, then on the individual's interactions with members of the field.

A similar developmental perspective was used in looking at the interview data in this study. Questions included: What was the effect of joining a new kind of artistic community, where new kinds of artistic exploration were encouraged? How might taking on the role of teaching artist, in addition to that of university student, affect creativity? To better understand how ArtsBridge participation might affect creativity, not only the ArtsBridge scholars' interactions with school children were considered but also their consultations with university faculty and with the veteran ArtsBridge scholars who served as mentors.

Gardner was strongly influenced by Csikszentmihalyi's (1988), advocacy of a

systems perspective that considers the psychology of the creative individual, the role of the cultural domain, and the influence of the social community, or field. Csikszentmihalyi argued that communities that nurture creativity are needed:

Creativity cannot be recognized except as it operates within a system of cultural rules, and it cannot bring forth anything new unless it can enlist the support of peers. If these conclusions are accepted, then it follows that the occurrence of creativity is not simply a function of how many gifted individuals there are, but also how accessible the various symbolic systems are and how responsive the social system is to novel ideas. Instead of focusing exclusively on individuals, it will make more sense to focus on communities that may or may not nurture genius. In the last analysis, it is the community and not the individual who makes creativity manifest (Csikszentmihalyi, 1999, p. 333).

Feldman's Creativity Framework

David Feldman (1999) conceptualized creativity as involving seven dimensions: 1) cognitive processes; 2) social/emotional processes; 3) family aspects, including growing up and current; 4) education and preparation, both formal and informal; 5) characteristics of the domain and field; 6) social/cultural contextual aspects; and, 7) historical forces, events, and trends. Although Feldman (1999) mentioned that his developmental theory "has not been used to analyze individual cases of creativity, so its viability for this purpose is not known" (p. 182), two elements of his multidimensional framework—education/preparation and social/cultural contextual aspects—appeared to have promise in helping to understand creativity development in university students' participation in ArtsBridge.

In discussing the social/cultural contextual dimension of creativity, Feldman used the term "cultural organism" to describe a "cooperative structure that is formed and reformed in order to enhance the possibilities for discovery, development, and (occasionally) optimal expression of human talents in various domains" (Feldman, 1994, p. 169). The ArtsBridge program appeared to fit Feldman's description of a cultural organism. Feldman (1994)

indicated that, in order to better understand creative potential, developmental science should try to understand better how cultural organisms are formed, how they function, and how they organize themselves around shared purposes. He indicated that cultural organisms are essential to the development of creativity at the highest levels, but that relatively little systematic knowledge of the nature of such entities is yet available (Feldman, 1999).

Education and Preparation

Feldman (1999) suggested that mentorship and apprenticeship, so prominent in the history of arts pedagogy, are enduring traditions that continue to be crucial to the development of creativity. Gardner (1993) also observed the fundamental importance of mentors. As Feldman pointed out, it is routinely taken for granted that teachers, mentors, schools, and other sources of preparation are critical to the success of an individual's later creative work. "There are interpersonal, social, and educational relationships that are almost always critical to the story" (Feldman, 1999, p. 176). Among the university students in the ArtsBridge sample, education clearly had strong effects on the development of artistic creativity, especially when schools and private sources of instruction were taken into account. Teachers and mentors—as well as family members, peers, and societal factors—all were reported to have influenced the development of artistic creativity in the ArtsBridge scholars interviewed.

Yet, having been a stellar student is not a prerequisite to the production of great creative work. As Feldman (1999) observes, "For artistic fields and those where personal, social, and/or spiritual qualities are central, a person's performance in school tends to be of less importance than in the sciences" (p. 176). Unfortunately, as a result of the state of arts education in the United States, serious arts students are often compelled to find the domain-specific support and the training they need outside of the public schools. This sample of ArtsBridge scholars was illustrative; over 50% of the sample mentioned that arts activities outside of schools were crucial to their artistic development (100% for the musicians). The ArtsBridge scholars also referred to the level of study at which they felt they began participating in their domain actively and

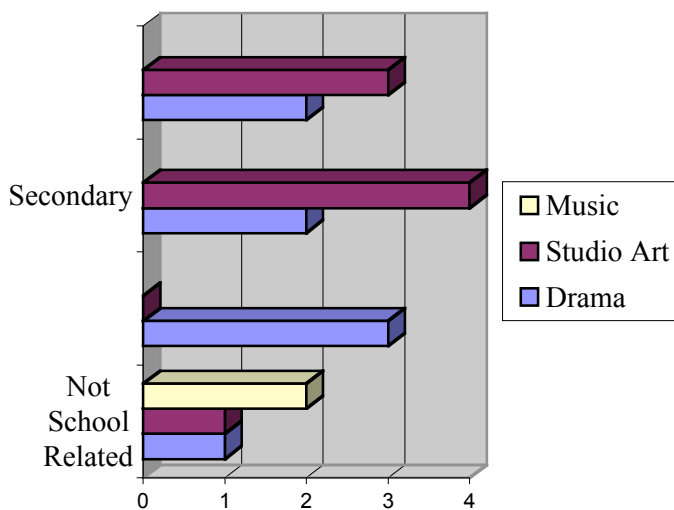meaningfully. This information is summarized in Figure 3.

Figure 3 **When Active Arts Participation Began**

Both the drama and studio art scholars talked about influential early school experiences. Twenty-five percent of the drama scholars and 38% of the studio artists focused primarily on what they remembered from the elementary school stage. High school experiences were discussed at length by 25% of drama and 50% of studio art students. However, a noticeable difference was evident in regard to the time that drama and studio art students spent relating information about college-level study; 38% of the drama scholars focused on their college experiences while none of the music

or studio art scholars referred to college experiences when asked how they had become involved in the arts. According to this scholar sample, the most influential school experiences related to their artistic development occurred before college.

These results may, however, be misleading. Drama is not taught in many elementary and secondary schools. Almost 70% of the drama scholars remembered language arts as their favorite school subject. They specifically mentioned English, literature, creative writing, and reading. These studies may have been crucial to developing that love of language that would eventually develop into an interest in drama. As Elizabeth said, "Reading, I definitely always loved and. . . English and literature." Other ArtsBridge scholars stressed the importance of group interaction. Susan elaborated upon the attraction inherent in the sense of community fostered by the arts:

> I found a family within the theater group. Suddenly, I was hanging out with the cool seniors who were arts people too. That was very, very important. It was always a place to go and a place to hang out. We'd all go to the drama room. We'd all eat lunch together. That's still something that's very important to me in the arts, is having that family.

Similarly, Natalie's high school art experience helped her through a difficult time of life:

> My parents were getting divorced, and I was kind of upset about that, and what happened was photography came at the perfect time, when I could just really throw myself into that. So, during lunch, I would go see my photography teacher and he would show me different lighting techniques that I could use. That was just how I spent all of my free time, was in the lab or taking photos of my friends.

She felt her involvement in the arts was not only a constructive use of her time, but that these activities provided her with a therapeutic outlet for her

emotions, helping her to deal with a family crisis.

Social/Cultural Context

In his discussion of how environmental influences release, shape, and refine talent development, Feldman (1994) was influenced by both Piaget and Vygotsky. Cultural organisms are "constructed with humanly crafted tools, techniques, technologies, symbol systems, traditions, rules, customs, and beliefs, organized around a particular human collective enterprise" (Feldman, 1994, p. 169). Construction of a cultural organism involves organizing resources in order to sustain conditions that allow for human development. Feldman used the Aspen Music Festival as an example of a cultural organism that provided conditions under which, through the collective talents of all the participants, great musical potential could be identified and enhanced. Each year, the festival gives large numbers of people a worthy, overarching goal to pursue; virtually everyone who wishes to participate is able to do so at some level (Feldman, 1999). This flexible structure allows the Aspen Music Festival to organize and channel talent from the most modest to the most exalted.

Although ours is a democratic society in which equal opportunity is a necessary goal, there is still a need for "humanly constructed systems for detecting, developing, protecting, promoting, and rejoicing when great potential within certain selected domains is fulfilled" (Feldman, 1994, p. 183). Like the Aspen Music Festival, ArtsBridge serves both collective and individual purposes. Of course, ArtsBridge serves young people at a much earlier stage in their artistic development than the Aspen Music Festival. Still, large numbers of students and teachers are provided with arts experiences to which they would not otherwise have had access, even as individuals are invited to explore their own artistic potential. As Susan observed:

> You hope that it sparks an interest that will continue . . . Just getting students exposed, getting children exposed to the arts.

Elizabeth focused on the larger vision behind the ArtsBridge program:

> Inviting the next generation of artists, I think, to begin their

work. And putting the paint brush in their hand or putting the spotlight on them or making way for a dance floor or teaching them to bang a pot and make it into an instrument… I think that it's paving the way for the next millennium of artists.

Jose also noted: "It gives a new generation of young artists the opportunity to be mentored." A drama student argued that the mere presence of ArtsBridge scholars in the classroom sent an important message. Maura asserted:

I think it really helps them to see a young person come in to their classroom who is going to college for the arts. I think it was inspiring for them to see intelligent people coming into the classroom and saying, "This is my life dream. I'm studying it. This is what I'm going to do and you can too. It is within you."

Jackie emphasized another function of ArtsBridge as a cultural organism: "The ones that already had an interest and maybe it just wasn't being explored, I think really benefited. Because they said, 'Wow, this is actually an option. This is actually something that people do. Something that I can do.'" She noted the importance of reaching the schools that do not currently offer arts instruction:

I think it's just awesome that we're going to schools that don't get that kind of attention. These lower-income schools aren't allowed the funding for programs that other schools get, and people don't realize that.

Jimmy said, "It brings arts to communities that might not otherwise get a chance." Leslie made a similar point: "It's such a great program to use the talents that you have in one area and disperse them so that other people who might not ever be exposed to this opportunity have it." Natalie also noticed the importance of reaching schools that normally did not have arts instruction:

Because most of the schools we went to had kids who have

never been exposed to the arts… it opened up a whole new world for them. It really did. Not only the arts, but also working with a college student… It just seemed so far away to them.

Other university students focused on the need to increase teachers' awareness of the importance of arts education. Samantha described what she saw as most important about the ArtsBridge program: "I'd say keeping the arts alive in the school system, because arts programs have been cut so badly. [Teachers] do not have the time to plan art activities in addition to all of their other curriculum." Jason added, "I applaud them for finding a way, any way, to get people who really know things about art into the classrooms." He went on to explain:

I think that's something that an artist brings to the classroom that a teacher of art does not, a passion and a dedication to art. And I think that gives them [teachers and students] permission to be passionate about things.

Learning by University Students

Not only did school children gain an expanded understanding of the arts, but taking on the role of teaching artist also deepened the understanding of university arts students. After years of building their domain expertise, the university arts students were asked to share what they had learned. Activities used in ArtsBridge residencies had to be adjusted to fit the needs of young participants. As a result, ArtsBridge scholars were compelled to reflect on the nature of artistic experience. The transition from arts student to teacher required the transformation of each ArtsBridge scholars' expertise from abstract procedural knowledge to a more flexible and fully assimilated performance capacity that could be adapted to a wide variety of situations.

In responding to the challenge of creating lessons that powerfully communicated domain expertise, these young teaching artists became more confident in presenting their ideas to people who were unfamiliar with them, a talent that would be necessary to their later success in an arts career. The

university students also learned practical skills. Jose said of ArtsBridge, "When done well, [it] trains undergrads and some grads how to apply for grants, how to be an artist and an arts educator in a community context, and creates a discourse about education, about pedagogy, about creativity. I think it contributes to all that." Susan indicated that ArtsBridge provided a powerful learning experience on another level, explaining, "You teach best what you most need to learn, my dad always said." She went on to describe a process of synthesis that had accompanied her evolution from student to teacher:

> When you start to teach, you start to pull out just the very most important things that you gleaned…you try to pass it on.

The Music Man explained: "You learn so much about your discipline from teaching it." Diane felt that ArtsBridge had also helped her to better understand the value of her arts expertise:

> You forget that you actually know more than other people about this subject, because you're with all these people who are on the same level. So, if you go out into a classroom and you have to teach it, you realize that you have valuable information that not everybody has.

Catherine was one of the first university arts students who actually had an ArtsBridge scholar visit her high school classroom. When asked about the ArtsBridge program, she replied:

> It made a really great impression on me. I thought it was great that the college kids loved the arts so much that they would come into the schools … and share.

Conclusions

The findings of this study suggest that collaboration, not only between the K-12 teacher and the ArtsBridge scholar but also between university mentor

and ArtsBridge scholar, was required for optimal implementation of an ArtsBridge project. ArtsBridge provided a venue for the convergence of academic study, personal knowledge, work, and community service that Goodlad (1995) described in Students as Tutors and Mentors as invaluable. The ArtsBridge scholars were able to apply their arts expertise outside of the university, reinforce their skills through teaching, understand the relevance of what they were learning in university arts classes, and experience socialization within their chosen professions. Of the 16 elements of behavior Peterson (2006) describes as being associated with enhanced cognitive development, nearly all are routinely engaged in by ArtsBridge scholars as part of their in-school residencies.

Sternberg and Lubart (1999) define creativity as "the ability to produce work that is both novel (i.e., original, unexpected) and appropriate (i.e., useful, adaptive concerning task constraints)" (1999, p. 3). They see creativity as important for carrying out tasks at two levels: 1) the societal level, e.g., new findings, new movements, new inventions, etc., and 2) the individual level, e.g., on the job and in daily life. Nickerson (1999) recommends building curriculum around traits and factors that can enhance creative behavior. A number of the elements recommended by Nickerson were also mentioned as key components of successful residencies by the ArtsBridge scholars interviewed: building basic skills, encouraging acquisition of domain-specific knowledge, crossing disciplinary boundaries, stimulating exploration, encouraging confidence and taking risks, providing opportunities for discovery, teaching techniques for (and strategies for facilitating) creative performance, and teaching by example.

Gardner (1993) described the creative person as follows: "The creative individual is a person who regularly solves problems, fashions products, or defines new questions in a domain in a way that is initially considered novel but that ultimately becomes accepted in a particular cultural setting" (p. 35). In elementary schools where, as a result of budget cuts, children had experienced no arts instruction that went beyond the production of glitter-and-glue holiday cards, standards-based arts instruction would inevitably be seen as novel. The challenge taken on by university students who entered

these schools as teaching artists was to transform the initial perception that arts lessons were simply an interesting novelty into an acceptance of the value of making artistic experience a continuing component of the school curriculum.

After years of immersion in their particular area of arts expertise, ArtsBridge scholars faced the challenge of transforming their knowledge in such a way as to make it understandable to the novice and useful in a setting outside the university. The ArtsBridge scholars freely acknowledged the crucial assistance that teachers had provided, especially by lending their expertise in the areas of child development, classroom management, and discipline. Learning goals that required continued reinforcement by the classroom teacher included: rewarding curiosity, building motivation (especially internal motivation), and providing a balance between freedom and structure. Also, most successful ArtsBridge projects were those where the teacher continued to build on ArtsBridge lessons after the scholar was gone.

Repeatedly, ArtsBridge scholars explained how stepping into the role of teaching artist triggered reflections that enriched their own arts activities. The university students' descriptions of their iterative exploration of ideas and emotions, engaged in as their ArtsBridge residencies progressed, strongly resemble the "inner conversations" that Catterall (2006) describes as an integral part of the creative process. Through continually refining their ideas, ArtsBridge scholars found that they not only grew more skillful as teaching artists but also enriched the inner conversations embedded in their own art-making, thus strengthening their sense of themselves as artists. For many, their experience as a teaching artist provided the first public acknowledgement they had received, outside the educational institutions they had attended, of their arts expertise. In helping ArtsBridge scholars move from a focus on the individual (self) to the larger social/cultural sphere, the ArtsBridge program also helped with their transition to the working world.

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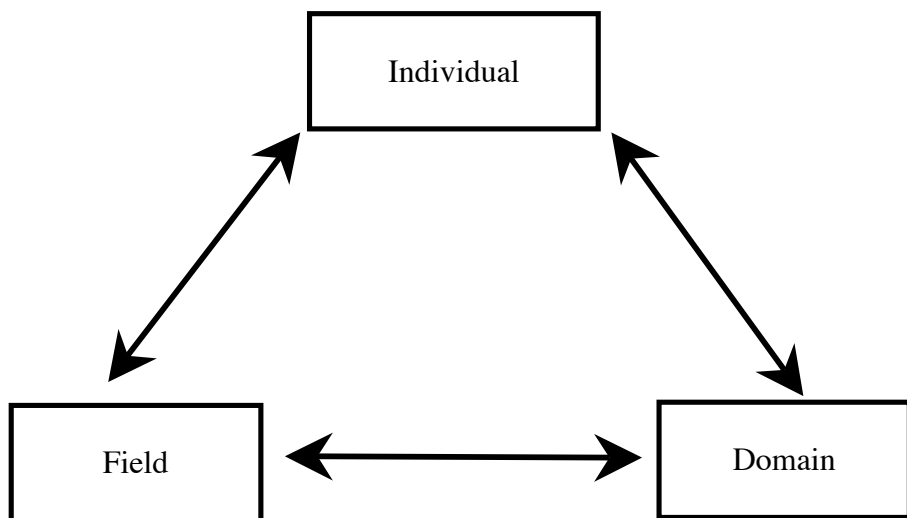
Figure 4 **Triangle of Creativity**

The developmental perspective taken by Gardner (1993) and Csikszentmihalyi (1988) emphasizes the need to consider the individual, domain, and field as a dynamic set of mutual influences (Figure 4). When a closer look is taken at the experiences of the ArtsBridge scholars interviewed, interactions among individual, domain, and field can easily be discerned. By providing both a cultural context that allowed ArtsBridge scholars to explore their new roles as teaching artists and mentoring relationships with university faculty, the ArtsBridge program appeared to stimulate a fruitful interaction between the three nodes of the triangle of creativity

University students involved in the ArtsBridge program reported experiencing more flexible access to the symbol systems characteristic of their artistic domain, along with an enhanced sense of belonging to a larger disciplinary community. However, the extent to which ArtsBridge scholars reported experiencing the latter appeared to be strongly related to the

amount of support they had sought and received from mentors in their discipline. Also, the university students reported experiencing a degree of tension as a result of interacting with two very different cultures: the university and the K-12 classroom. When all went well, differences between these educational cultures resulted in fruitful asynchrony, similar to that found in Gardner's sample of creative individuals (1993). ArtsBridge scholars immersed themselves in one world and then in the other, engaging in productive dialogues with university mentors and with participating classroom teachers. These social conversations, in turn, enlarged the ArtsBridge scholars' inner conversation on artistic creation. Yet, careful planning was needed to respond to the demands of both worlds; some ArtsBridge scholars who did not remain in close contact with their university mentors reported feeling overwhelmed.

Implications for Educational Practice

> In spite of an assumed "culture explosion," we continue in the schools to neglect art, music, drama, dance, sculpture, and, in fact, almost everything that smacks of being nonutilitarian. . . . Let us at least hedge our bets by assuring a reasonable balance among the several realms of human inquiry" (Goodlad, 1996, p. 497).

As a cultural organism, ArtsBridge has helped to develop, support, and celebrate the creativity not only of children in the K-12 schools but also of the young teaching artists who served as ArtsBridge scholars. These university students have been challenged to extend the creativity they had been funneling into their own artistic explorations into a wider world beyond the university. With the expansion of ArtsBridge to a national network of 22 universities, a new artistic community is growing, where artistic potential can be identified, enhanced, and nurtured. By awakening the spirit of artistic exploration, ArtsBridge may help to lay the groundwork for other programs that make creative use of community resources to keep the arts alive in public schools. For, although only a limited number of public schools are located close enough to universities for a school-university partnership on the

ArtsBridge model to be set up, community organizations capable of supplying teaching artists are far more widely available.

If partnerships inclusive of classroom teachers, arts specialists, and professional practicing artists are ongoing, then significant teaching and learning in the arts has at least a chance (Remer, 1996). As a recent Arts Education Partnership publication noted: "Partnerships between schools and community cultural organizations are one attempt to make those relationships [learning and experiences outside of school] effective, but a larger issue may be how to bridge the cultural life of the young person—saturated and shaped as it is by dance, drama, music, and visual forms—with the formal culture of the school and formal instruction in the arts." (Bransford et al., 2004) School-university partnerships like ArtsBridge demonstrate the potential for mediating cultural organisms to create such a bridge. Teachers interviewed as part of a study of ArtsBridge classrooms (Villon, 2003) pointed enthusiastically to the change that came over children when they experienced the joy and insight that artistic creativity can provide.

Healthy human development requires that public schools continue to be places where young people are able to explore their unique capacities as individuals. Through ArtsBridge, major research universities have been able to reach out to K-12 students who, if they go on to attend college, may be the first in their families to do so. School children have been encouraged to discover in themselves artistic talents of which they had been unaware, opening the possibility of further study in the arts. The public schools have benefited from an infusion of high-quality arts instruction; highly motivated and creative university students have been introduced to the satisfactions of a career in teaching (Brouillette, 2000).

Learning in and through the arts not only helps to "level the playing field" for children whose neighborhood schools have limited resources, but it also helps to level the field for arts programs at the university (Brouillette, 2001). The scholarships awarded to ArtsBridge scholars bring additional resources to university departments that hitherto had limited opportunity to attract external funding. That, in turn, helps correct the imbalance that exists on

many campuses between the amount of funding available for the arts and the amount of funding available for the sciences. ArtsBridge scholarships assist university art departments in recruiting students capable of making a strong contribution to their programs. Enhanced resources and recruitment help these arts programs to remain vibrant contributors, both to campus life and to our national culture.

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