



# capital region center for arts in education

## Capital Region Center Institute for the Arts in Education Newsletter

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Q & A: The Novice Intern talks  
with Artist Consultant Meg Agnew

### Contact Us

Phone: 518.525.2650

Email: [Casda@uamail.  
albany.edu](mailto:Casda@uamail.albany.edu)

Hi and welcome to our spring newsletter!

Created in 1982 we are founded on the work of *Lincoln Center Institute*. The Center partners with area schools to support teachers in the use of strategies for imaginative learning through the study of live works of art in theater, dance, music and visual arts. This newsletter is 100% intern created.

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## Intern Corner

Follow my experience at  
CRCAIE through my blog  
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State of the Arts



NYSCA

The Capital Region's  
Center for Arts in  
Education programming is  
made possible with public  
funds from the New York  
State Council on the Arts,  
celebrating 50 years of  
building strong, creative  
communities in New York  
State's 62 counties

## The Capital Region Center for Arts in Education Partners With New Lebanon Jr. High: Learning Though the Arts



Classical Jam

New Lebanon Junior High students hosted Classical Jam and enjoyed a live performance of *From the Streets to the Concert Hall* as part of an exploration of imagery they are applying to their writing.

Classical Jam is a composite of flute, percussion, violin and cello; classically trained musicians who like to jam! Classical Jam known for its engaging and energetic presentations for today's current audiences. Thought provoking concert themes and wide-ranging repertoire from renaissance dance music to original compositions by members of Classical Jam. Teachers of New Lebanon Jr. High and artists from the Center for Arts in Education faculty worked with materials and recordings of *From the Streets* to create an eight week-course geared toward creative learning to accompany the performance. They created activities designed to improve the students' problem-solving and reflective writing skills through artistic process.

In these exercises students were asked to listen to short sound bytes and develop stories to describe what they thought or felt using musical vocabulary. They were introduced to rhythms and learned how to express music through movement. Students divided into groups and asked to used skills they had acquired to create skits with the use of rhythmic beats to replace verbal cues. These lesson plans layered to help students develop confidence through their work.

At the school's Installation Night, the students were given the opportunity to demonstrate what they studied in the Classical Jam program. As an observer, I noticed the excitement beaming from the students. From the greeter to the server at the refreshment table, the students were in control of every aspect of the event. They guided parents and members of the community through a tour of what they had worked on in each week. They displayed their peers' work as examples. Their skits demonstrated skill sets they acquired from the unit.

Teachers remarked that the comprehensive project called upon students to sharpen higher order skills the can capitalize on in all areas of learning every day.



Top: Meg/Bottom:  
Bethanne

### **Q & A: The Novice Intern talks with Artist Consultant Meg Agnew**

I was nervous in the early stages of the planning of the interview. First of all, I had done only a few mini-interviews about subjects that did not matter and the interviewees were people I had already known. I felt like all the preparation in the world could not make me less nervous. I had been corresponding back and forth via email with Meg Agnew to set up an interview time. We agreed upon the 'installation' night at New Lebanon Jr. High. Installation night finally arrived. The idea that I had constructed in my head of how Meg looked and acted was far from reality. The first glimpse of Meg was of her running to a car. My boss turned to me and said "I am so envious of her. She always has fun jackets..." Meg wore a white knitted jacket that her long brown hair almost covered. Inside, I was introduced to Meg Agnew as this busy-body woman who lit up when

she began talking about the students- how much they have enjoyed these units and how excited they were about their performances. We did not have much time after the installation night to sit down and have a formal interview, so we finished things by email.

**Novice Intern:** "What does it mean to be an Artist Consultant?"

**Meg:** "There is something so deeply satisfying about watching a community and a group of teachers grow in so many levels over time."

**Novice Intern:** "What does an Artist Consultant do?"

**Meg:** "What do not I do? I have developed a rapport with all the teachers and administrators in the school. I have gotten to know the students over time and watched them grow tremendously. I have also enjoyed partnering with each one of the experienced Teaching Artists that have taken on units in the school over a three year-period..."

**Novice Intern:** "What was your role in planning with New Lebanon teachers and teaching artists?"

**Meg:** "Either I supported or led the planning sessions. I was behind the

*scenes. I consulted with TAs on their lesson plans, led several planning sessions, sat in on teacher-led lessons, encouraged and participated in unit documentation, led teacher training and coordinated mid-unit reviews. I also oversaw the final presentation of each unit, which always culminated in a community event."*

***Novice Intern:*** "How do you negotiate the administrative necessities and still retain the artistic vision?"

***Meg:*** "By networking with all the participants over a three year-period, I was able to help them communicate with each other in order to create this cohesive, yet flexible program, responding to the creative and learning needs exhibited by the students themselves. It was important that I maintained an overview of the arts in the education process..."

These responses have tremendously helped me deepen my views on what CRCAIE actually does within these schools; how the artist consultant serves as a conduit for the artistic image while retaining the administrative duties.

Thank your for your support and have a great spring!

Sincerely,

Capital Region Institute Center for Arts in Education