



An Evaluation Report

**ART PROGRAMS WITH
THE COMMUNITY:
LACMA ON-SITE**

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Program Partners:
Los Angeles Unified School District, Local District 4
Los Angeles Public Library

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FOREWORD

Five years ago LACMA received the largest endowment in the history of the institution (\$23.9 million), from former trustee Anna Bing, expressly intended to bring art education to children and the community. The museum allocates a million dollars a year to support arts programming in the Los Angeles Unified School District and to build strong relationships with children and families throughout Los Angeles. LACMA reaches out to schools and the greater community through a variety of programs that make meaningful connections with works of art in the museum's collection.

Since 2006, we have worked closely with the schools and community of Los Angeles Unified School District's Local District 4. This is the area of the city from downtown Los Angeles to the eastern border of Beverly Hills, north to the borders of Burbank and Glendale, and south to Crenshaw. Local District 4 has a student population the size of the entire Boston public-school system. No other museum in Los Angeles or the country has a partnership of this magnitude.

District 4 was selected because it was the location for LAUSD's new high school for the arts, and we believed that by working with elementary and middle schools we could make a significant contribution to the district's efforts to put art back into the schools and help build an art-focused student body for the new high school. The school is now open and attended by many students who came in contact with LACMA's programs during their middle-school years.

Another part of the LACMA On-Site program includes a partnership with the Los Angeles Public Library. Art workshops are offered in the public libraries within District 4. Children, their parents, relatives, or caregivers participate in after-school and weekend workshops. Complementary art-focused programs are also created for community organizations.

LACMA On-Site builds on the best that the museum has to offer: 1) a curriculum specifically designed by our education staff to bring LACMA's collection into the community as a resource; 2) trained LACMA teaching artists who routinely commit to and work in their communities; and 3) the advantage of community partners that advise the

museum on the needs of their constituencies and promote LACMA art workshops at their sites. These workshops include talking about and looking at images of art in addition to making art.

This rich and multilayered approach to engaging with a community also includes a video conferencing program that brings lessons focused on LACMA's collection to District 4 schools, while also serving schools nationally and internationally. The museum's collaboration with Charles White Elementary School, near MacArthur Park, close to downtown Los Angeles, involves programs at the school and the installation of exhibitions in the school's art gallery. These community exhibitions are reported on in other publications.

—Jane Burrell, Vice President of Education and Public Programs

PROGRAM HISTORY

Art Programs with the Community: LACMA On-Site was designed to make meaningful connections between the museum's permanent collection and student learning, while also building strong relationships within the community.

Since 2006, 25,732 students and 1,719 teachers have been served through partnerships with fifteen elementary schools and four middle schools. At seventeen branches of the Los Angeles Public Library, 38,749 teens and their family members have participated in library programs. Printed matter, including curriculum materials, Family Guides of LACMA artworks, and Arts for NexGen enrollment forms, has been widely distributed, reaching 60,000 students and 3,000 teachers annually throughout Local District 4.

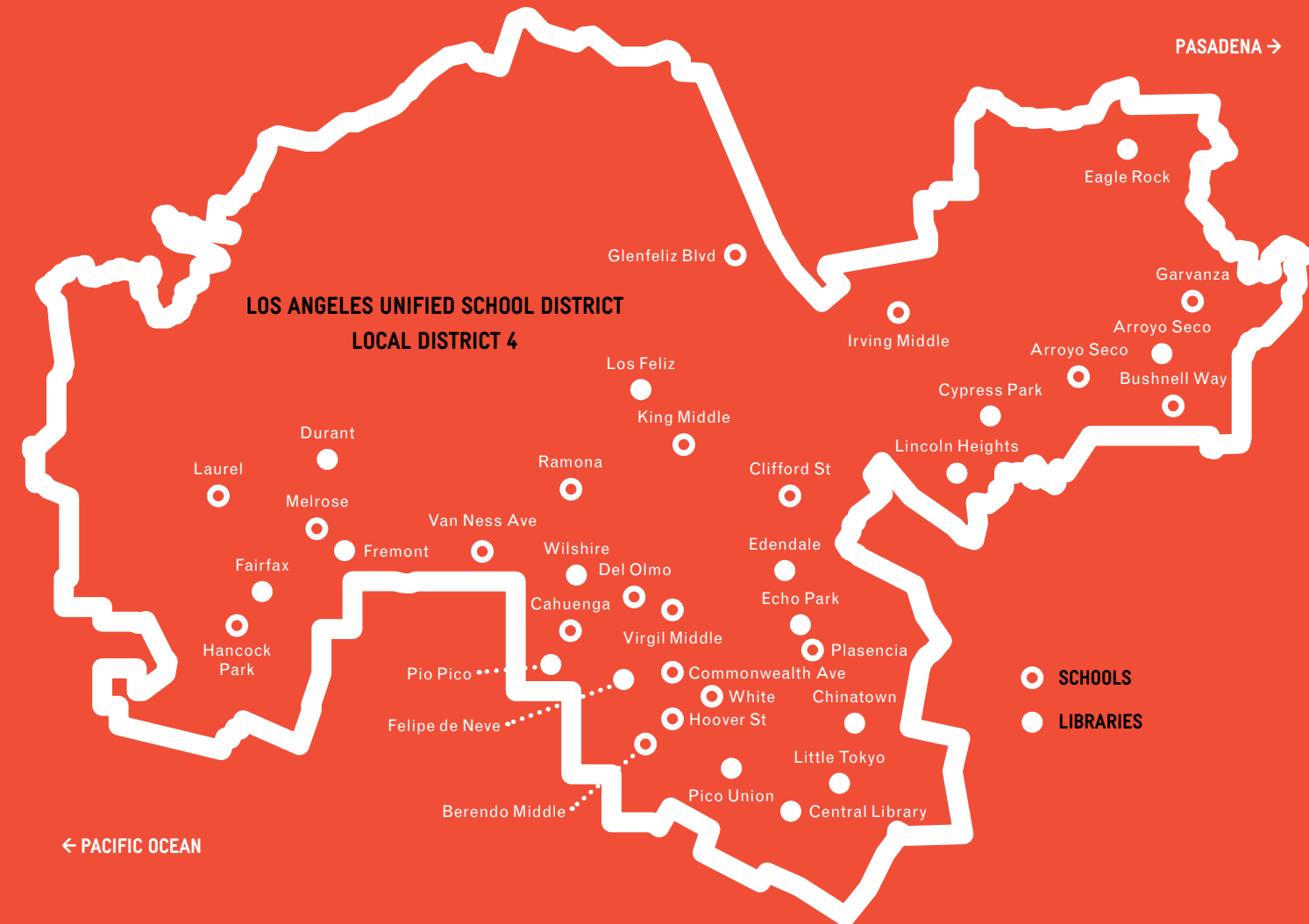
LACMA On-Site in the schools was designed to support current arts programming in LAUSD schools by making specific and meaningful connections between LACMA's permanent collection and student learning, in particular, the school district's focus on descriptive language. When students talk about artworks, they are guided to find simi-

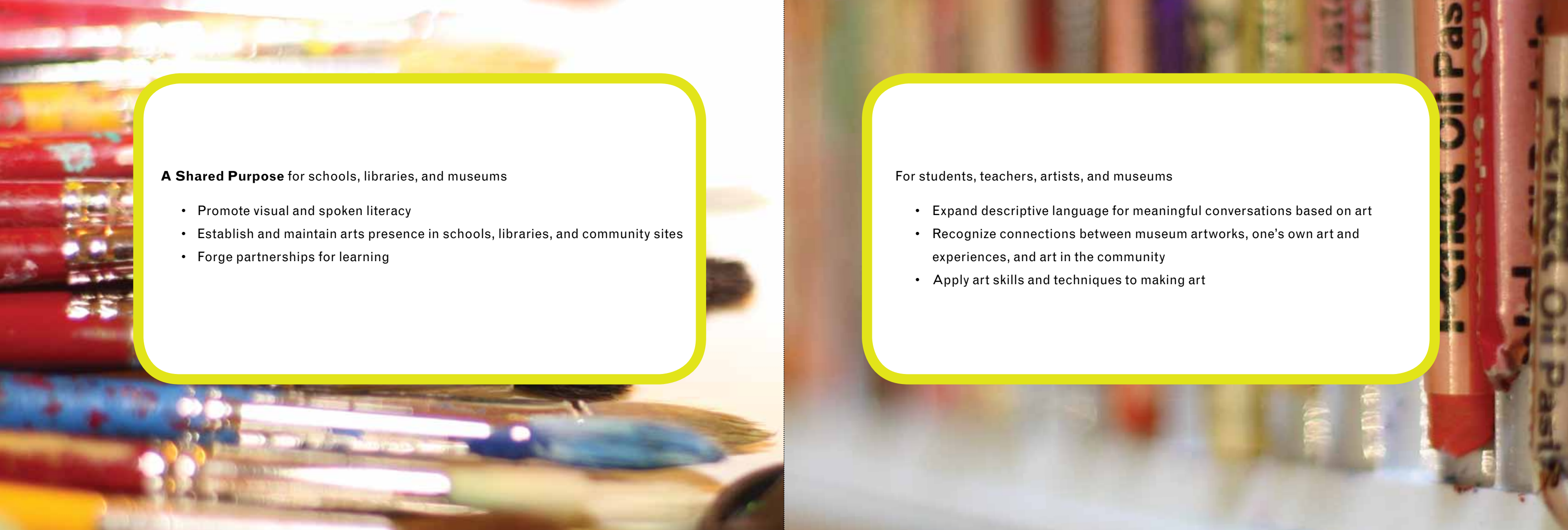


larities between works of art, to support their ideas, and to relate art to their own experiences, knowledge, and background. By reinforcing their conversations about art with art making, students learn to make a personal connection to the art.

LACMA On-Site in the libraries complements the school programming with learning experiences designed for families. This multilayered reach into the community assures that the students who receive arts instruction from the museum in their classrooms are also given the opportunity to experience and learn about art along with family members and caregivers.

Opposite: LACMA On-Site is part of an ongoing program to bring significant arts learning into Los Angeles Unified School District's Local District 4 schools and neighborhood libraries.





A Shared Purpose for schools, libraries, and museums

- Promote visual and spoken literacy
- Establish and maintain arts presence in schools, libraries, and community sites
- Forge partnerships for learning

For students, teachers, artists, and museums

- Expand descriptive language for meaningful conversations based on art
- Recognize connections between museum artworks, one's own art and experiences, and art in the community
- Apply art skills and techniques to making art



EVALUATION: MEASURING IMPACT

This report shares insights into how LACMA measures the impact of Art Programs with the Community: LACMA On-Site. The evaluation process speaks to the depth of the museum's commitment to the communities it serves.

In 2008 and 2009, a team of LACMA educators and independent consultant Susy Watts developed a methodology and conducted an eleven-month evaluation to measure the program's effectiveness, in particular to determine what impact it had on participants' academic and social processes as well as on their habits of mind. We chose an evaluation method called "Theory of Change" to help us refine our understanding of our purpose and articulate specific outcomes and indicators. Our educational goals for the program were that participants would talk about art using detailed and descriptive language, make art using a range of materials and apply specific skills and techniques for each material, recognize personal connections between their own art, their own life, and LACMA artworks, and integrate arts programming with language-arts development.



The evaluation comprised a wide array of qualitative and quantitative tools, including student, parent, principal, and librarian interviews, teacher surveys, teacher focus groups, teaching-artist observations and learning assessments, teaching-artist self-reflections, and revised data-collection systems. A unique feature of the process was the high level of involvement by museum staff throughout. Formally called “participatory,” this method of evaluation requires staff to advise on the design and implementation of the study and incorporate the resulting procedures into their ongoing work. LACMA staff trained teaching artists to plan, assess, and refine their teaching strategies to meet program goals in response to specific trends.

SCHOOL EVALUATION

LACMA On-Site in the schools reaches all K–8 classes at each grade level in fifteen elementary and four middle schools in LAUSD Local District 4. The museum sought a better understanding of learning and social outcomes by these LAUSD students. Specific attention was given to building descriptive language for varying developmental ages and language experience. Early in the evaluation the museum identified the need for all students to find ways to voice their ideas. Teaching artists were trained in additional teaching strategies for paired and small group work where students could participate using their own native language or current language levels. Each art lesson emphasized its relevance to the students' own lives.

Program Components

- Six hours of talking about art and art making in elementary and middle-school classrooms
- Professional art materials/media
- Curriculum resources highlighting artworks across LACMA's collections
- NexGen free memberships for all students age seventeen and under, which allows children to visit the museum for free and bring an accompanying adult for free
- Professional development for teachers in the museum galleries and at school sites
- Bus transportation provided to LACMA's Andell Family Sundays program

Key Features of LACMA On-Site in Schools

Program Design

- Alignment in program planning, instruction, and assessment
- Concept-focused lessons
- Developmentally appropriate and standards-based Language of the Visual Arts*
- Documented key instructional prompts
- Lessons that are shared with participants
- Learning that is documented and shared with students, teachers, and museum

Teaching Artists trained in:

- Object-based teaching
- Inquiry-based teaching
- Working with English Language Learners
- Inclusive community-based teaching strategies



*The Language of the Visual Arts is a specific arts vocabulary for each grade level that is developmentally appropriate and aligns with state content standards for the visual arts and the program's curriculum materials. This vocabulary encompasses multiple and broad ways to talk and think about the visual arts, including art elements, principles of composition, media, skills and techniques, style, content, and subject matter.

Instruction

- A balance between talking about and making art
- Multiple visual-analysis processes
- Voicing opportunities for every student
- Sequenced instruction
- Assessments based on shared expectations of student learning

Resources

- Handheld reproductions of key art objects from LACMA collections
- Range of art materials
- Grade-level curricula materials
- Professional development for classroom teachers at museum and at school site

“I imagine they will use the language whenever they are in the writing process, to discuss another piece of art, and in their journals.”

—Luis Ochoa, Assistant Principal, Hoover Street Elementary School



Research Informs Museum's Approach to Learning

LACMA educators were informed by what Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe address in their "Six Facets of Understanding." Using developmentally appropriate techniques, the museum's teaching artists ask students to explain, interpret, apply, have perspective, empathize, or use self-knowledge when they look at or make art. By discussing works of art in pairs or small groups and by making art, students are able to share what they know and learn in multiple ways.

"A closer look at everyday speech and usage also suggests that understanding is a matter of degree, symbolizes not one achievement but several, and is revealed through diverse performances and products."

—Wiggins and McTighe, *Understanding by Design*, 1998



*"Students who usually wouldn't excel do...
Self-esteem went up."*

—Luis Ochoa, Assistant Principal, Hoover Street Elementary School



Findings for Schools

Learning outcomes for K–8 students

Expanded their vocabulary

From naming at the kindergarten level and for students recently enrolled in English Language Learner programs to the use of specific Language of the Visual Arts, students showed evidence of expanded vocabulary at all K–8 grade levels.

Increased levels of descriptive language

Using detailed and explicit words, students communicated their ideas about the art and made personal connections within the context of the art lessons. Teachers reported transfer of language-description abilities to other core classroom disciplines.



Linked specific and personal connections between art and their own life

Second-grade students related personal experiences about daily life; fourth-grade students associated functional works of art with objects in their own homes; fifth-grade students broadened their personal connections from a family-directed focus to a community-level focus; eighth-grade students made connections to their own emotions.

Applied arts skills and techniques in making art

Students used specific sequential descriptions to describe art-making steps and used specific tools and technical strategies to make art.

Used a range of art materials not available in classrooms

Students were initially unfamiliar with common art materials. They began to compare the new media to what they had used before. Students discussed the different materials and imagined new uses for them.

Learning outcome for middle-school students

Compared works of art to other art, their own art, and their community/environment

Students' conclusions were supported by finding similarities—they compared works of art with their own art and everyday personal experiences.

Social outcome for all grade levels

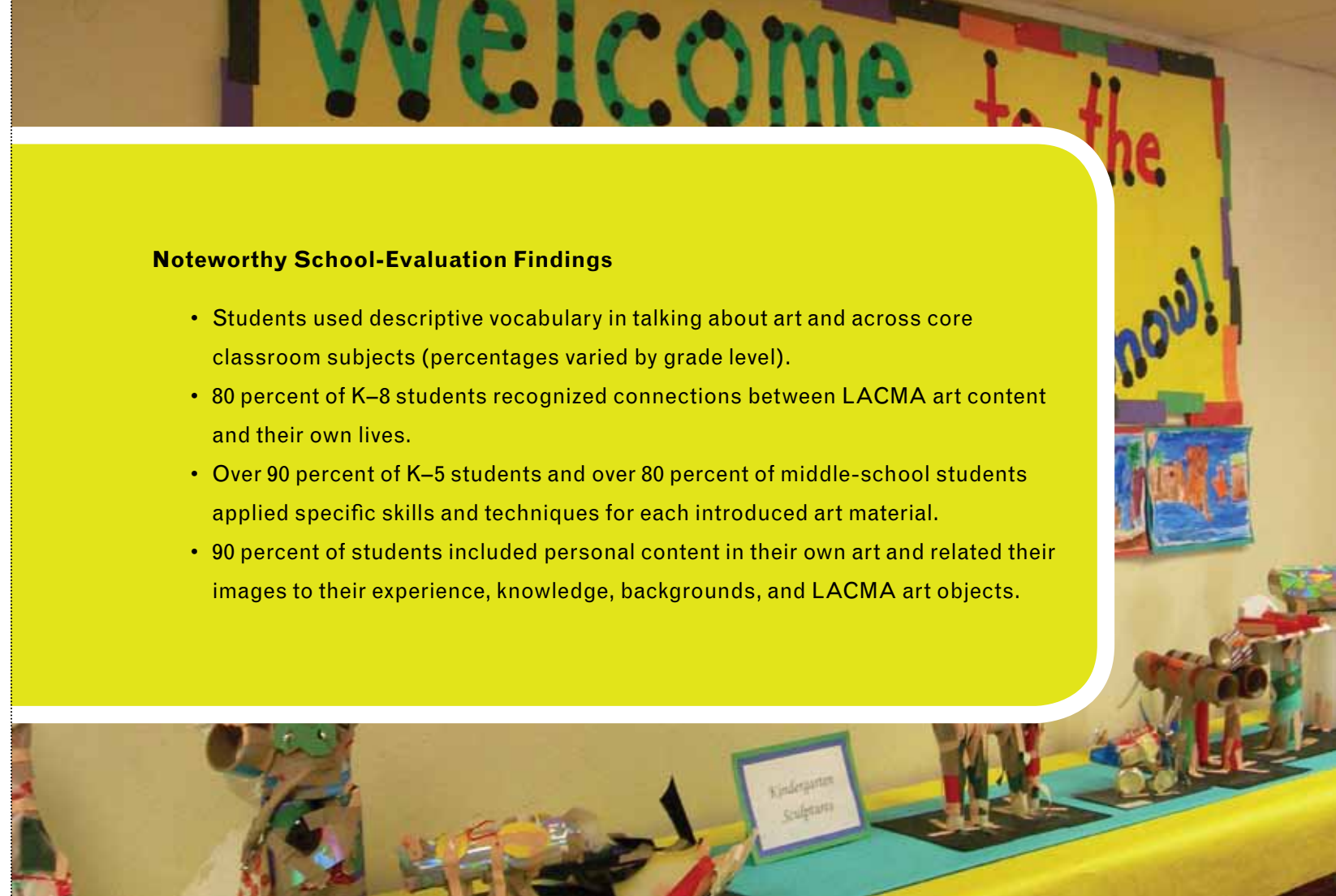
Actively engaged in workshops

Teaching artists reported few instances when every student was not engaged. Initial reticence was quickly followed by full participation. Students with little prior arts knowledge or classwork eagerly began building skills in the arts.

The evaluation studied 400 classroom workshops; 8,649 students participating in classroom workshops; 51,894 contact hours; and 111 program-specific lesson plans written by 13 LACMA teaching artists.

Noteworthy School-Evaluation Findings

- Students used descriptive vocabulary in talking about art and across core classroom subjects (percentages varied by grade level).
- 80 percent of K–8 students recognized connections between LACMA art content and their own lives.
- Over 90 percent of K–5 students and over 80 percent of middle-school students applied specific skills and techniques for each introduced art material.
- 90 percent of students included personal content in their own art and related their images to their experience, knowledge, backgrounds, and LACMA art objects.





“All of them are ‘art confident.’ The art language that comes with the program is valuable.”

—Nery Paiz, Principal, Bushnell Way Elementary School

Action Steps

To advance arts knowledge and skills in schools, museums can...

- Teach multiple visual-analysis processes for looking at art.
- Identify and reinforce specific ways to use arts-oriented vocabulary across the curriculum.
- Use lesson plans for expanding understandings in the classroom.
- Reinforce talking about art for English Language Learners by showing the written word.
- Use Big Ideas (Enduring Understandings).
- Develop questions that lead to deeper understandings.
- Evaluate and document specific student learning and social outcomes as an ongoing teaching practice.
- Recognize and meet the challenges of giving all students a chance to share their ideas about the artworks by broadening the ways students can respond.
- Pair students together for peer-to-peer discussions.
- Facilitate exploratory small-group activities.
- Offer opportunities to write responses.
- Encourage drawing as another way of responding.

From a Principal's Point of View

- Principals value the professional instruction of the teaching artists and the ways they communicate with students.
- Principals value the resources and support provided by LACMA's Education staff.
- Principals find flexible ways to integrate LACMA On-Site classroom instruction.
- Principals see students engaged in the instruction.
- Principals recognize that students who do not usually excel in the classroom express themselves through the arts.



"They learn while doing something academic and creative."

—Teacher, Virgil Middle School



LIBRARY EVALUATION

LACMA On-Site in the libraries reaches diverse families in seventeen branches of the Los Angeles Public Library located in neighborhoods surrounding the schools in LAUSD Local District 4. The structure of this library component was informed by the Harvard Family Learning Project. Their findings reinforce the value of parents and children learning side by side. This led the museum to design a library program where adults learned to talk about art and make art with their children.

Adults who had never discussed images seen in art or worked with art materials found new opportunities to express their ideas. Children saw parents, grandparents, and other adults they valued in their lives take a risk and learn through art. Children and adults found a new avenue to compare ideas and share thoughts with their families. When appropriate for the site, a teen workshop was offered as well as a family workshop.

Program Components

- Weekly workshops of sixty to ninety minutes included talking about art and art making
- Professional art materials/media
- Family Guides with eight artworks from LACMA's permanent collection
- Free membership in LACMA's Arts for NexGen youth membership program
- Bus transportation provided to LACMA's Family Sundays program

Key Features of LACMA On-Site in Libraries

Program Design

- Alignment in program planning, instruction, and assessment
- Concept-focused lessons
- Documented key instructional prompts
- Lessons that are shared with participants
- Learning that is documented and shared with families, librarians, and teaching staff

Teaching Artists trained in:

- Object-based teaching
- Inquiry-based teaching
- Working with English Language Learners
- Inclusive community-based teaching strategies

Instruction

- A balance between talking about and making art
- Multiple processes for looking at art
- Voicing opportunities for every family member
- Teaching strategies designed for adult and family learning

Resources

- Family Guides with key art objects from LACMA collections
- Range of art materials



Research Informs Museum's Approach to Learning

What is complementary learning? Educators, policymakers, and families increasingly agree: schools cannot do it alone. Children need multiple opportunities to learn and grow—at home, in school, and in the community. Complementary learning is a comprehensive strategy for addressing all of these needs and ensuring success for all children and youth. Complementary learning is the idea that a systemic approach—which intentionally integrates both school and nonschool supports—can better ensure that all children have the skills they need to succeed.

“What does complementary learning look like? A complementary learning approach provides and aligns beneficial opportunities. Examples include out-of-school activities (including sports, arts, and mentoring programs); community-based and cultural institutions; and supportive families and opportunities for family engagement.”

—Harvard Family Learning Project



Findings for Libraries

Learning outcomes for family members

Expanded on their ideas

Children and adults expanded their understandings of art by talking about what was seen and relating it to their family. In small classes, teenagers built conversations with the teaching artist on content that was important to their lives.

Increased levels of arts language

Children and adults used art vocabulary words (Language of the Visual Arts) from the arts lesson. Adults, on occasion, supported the meaning of their ideas by giving greater detail.

Made specific and personal connections between art and their own life

Children, most often, made connections related to their developmental focus on self, home, or, at higher chronological ages, their expanded community. Adults related art to prior experiences or identified a cultural connection. Adults, not unexpectedly, made more stereotypical images than the children, but the longer they worked on their art, the more likely they were to elaborate and include personal content. Ninety-three percent of children included personal content in their works of art. When talking about personal content in their own art, students used more detailed language and description based on interest in their art content.

Developed family conversations

Adults elaborated on the discussion about art that their children began, building upon their children's ideas. On these occasions, the adult and child talked about similar ideas but at different levels and from their own experiences.

Applied arts skills and techniques in making art

Adult caregivers most often began the art-making time by commenting on the art children were making. When art materials were set in front of them, adults slowly began using the art materials, and eventually the art making became an independent process for them. As art-making lessons continued, adults separated their art-making experience from that of the child's process. On many occasions, young children took the lead to involve their family in making art.

Used a range of art materials not available in classrooms

Both children and adults adapted art materials to their own purposes to satisfy the conclusions they were looking for in their art making.

Social outcome for family members

Actively engaged in workshops

Engagement in side-by-side learning by adults and children showed significant improvement as instructors addressed specific questions to adults during “talk about art.” Adults most often engaged when the teaching artist provided a specific seating place for art making that was distinctly theirs. Repeated encouragement was the strategy that most often worked in getting the reticent adult to make art. By the end of this study, over half of the adults were actively engaged in making art. Teaching artists continue to work on encouraging deeper or expanded conversations when talking about art.

The evaluation studied 570 art workshops at 17 libraries; 6,367 adults and children who participated in family art workshops; 593 families who attended workshops as family units (many of these families attended multiple times); 12,734 contact hours; 114 workshop lesson plans written by 9 LACMA teaching artists.

Noteworthy Library-Evaluation Findings

- 92 percent of children participating in the library program applied an art skill or technique.
- 71 percent of library-program participants came to the library specifically to attend the program.
- Program participants found personal and meaningful connections among their own lives, LACMA’s permanent collection, and their own artwork.
- In particular, teens engaged in library workshops because the content was relevant to their lives.
- Families and librarians related to family-oriented concepts and artworks.
- Librarians valued the program’s emphasis on family learning.



“Children learn about different artists, their community, and LACMA.”

—Librarian, Chinatown Library



Action Steps

To advance family learning, museums can...

- Recognize and meet the challenges of balancing instruction between adults and children.
- Recognize that adults and children have different learning styles; develop strategies that allow adults to take risks as they talk about and make art with children.
- Develop questions that lead to deeper understandings, specifically, prompts that might address adults directly to help them make their own personal connections.
- Pair adults and children together for family discussions.
- Provide sufficient time for developing, reflecting on, and talking about artwork.
- Evaluate and document specific family-member learning and social outcomes as an ongoing teaching practice.

- Build a viable collaboration where librarians have specific roles in support of the program.
- Seek shared public-relations efforts for programming.
- Emphasize that this program is available for free.
- Continue to schedule multiple opportunities for family learning at the museum.
- Schedule programming as a consistent workshop series.
- Advertise the workshop as a class rather than a drop-in activity.
- Capitalize on connecting family reading programs with museum programs.

“I think it’s the sense of the parent and child working together. A lot of times children don’t get to see that side of their parents. Children are amazed at what their mom can do. Other kids say, ‘Look at what you did, Mom!’ It’s a bonding between child and parent.”

—Youth Librarian, Cypress Park Library



From a Librarian’s Point of View

- Librarians value workshops as a family event.
- Librarians value art workshops that reach bilingual students and improve language skills.
- Librarians value the artists and the ways they communicate with students.
- Librarians note that workshop participants connect LACMA On-Site in the libraries with other art in their community.
- Librarians value the resources and support provided by LACMA’s Education Department staff.
- Librarians value the range of art materials brought to the libraries and the expertise of the teaching artist.
- Librarians emphasize the importance of bilingual teaching artists.



CONCLUSION

Since LACMA On-Site launched in 2006, the Los Angeles Unified School District and Los Angeles Public Library have weathered significant budget cuts affecting programs and staffing. Despite these changes, the commitment by administrators, teachers, and librarians to student and family learning through art education has not wavered. Although teachers and administrators are reassigned to new schools and librarians move to different branches, contact with LACMA is maintained to ensure that these arts programs and the strong connections that have been made continue.

To contact the Education Department regarding **Art Programs with the Community:**
LACMA On-Site or other education programs at LACMA, e-mail educate@lacma.org
or call 323-857-6512.

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