

A National Convening for Teens in the Arts

Real Life Remixed

2011 Education Report



THE INSTITUTE OF
CONTEMPORARY ART/BOSTON
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The museum is a safe space to explore real life and big ideas.

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Introduction



For the third consecutive year, the National Convening for Teens in the Arts brought together teens and educators from across the country to engage in extended dialogue about the role of young people in the arts.

Over the course of three days, nine institutions gathered at the ICA to collaboratively explore how best to engage teens around a collective passion for contemporary art. While opportunities exist for arts and youth development professionals to engage in conversations about teen arts education, the ICA's Teen Convening is one of the only opportunities for the teens themselves to lead these conversations, and it was inspiring to watch the lively interaction and rich dialogue that occurred among peers.

The in-person meeting of participants at the ICA was preceded by months of online interaction, during which teens and educators met in a series of virtual forums. It was through these online dialogues that the topics for discussion at the Convening were finalized. They included advocacy for teen programs, skill development, experimentation, and teens' attitudes toward controversial subject matter.

Building on the previous two years, the ICA implemented three key changes to this year's Teen Convening to improve the experience for participants, as well as increase the impact for those in the larger field. The first change was to expand the number of participants to include nine institutions from eight states. This increase—nearly double from the first Teen Convening—allowed for a greater diversity of approach to teen arts programs, a broader geographic reach, and a steady expansion of individuals and institutions that can share, learn, and utilize knowledge and experience in a national learning community. The second major change, made in response to conversations with and requests from educators at the previous Convening, was to bring youth development expertise to the group. This change recognized the need for arts educators with specific experience and training in meeting the needs and challenges of adolescent development. Finally, to continue the conversation beyond the fixed timeframe and participants in Boston, the ICA launched a national listserv dedicated to the issue of teens and museums at teensandmuseums.org.

The 2011 National Convening for Teens in the Arts would not have been possible without the generosity of many individuals and institutions. We offer sincere thanks to John Hancock Financial Services for their financial support and commitment. Participating Artist-in-Residence Dario Robleto was an important voice during the program, and we are indebted to him for his thoughtful and meaningful contributions. ICA Teen Arts Council alumnus Donovan Birch Jr., and Teen Arts Council member Shaquille Alberts dedicated their summer to this event, and we thank them for their critical assistance. Director of Programs David Henry, Director of Education Monica Garza, Associate Director of Education Gabrielle Wyrick, and Education Assistant Leah Kandel contributed

their time, talent, and leadership, and we are extremely appreciative of their efforts. The Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh; Arthouse at the Jones Center, Austin; Marwen, Chicago; the Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles; the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego; the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; the Wexner Center for the Arts, Ohio; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, each demonstrate extraordinary commitment to teen arts education, and we thank them for their partnership. As in previous years, our deepest thanks are to the teens and educators who came together here in Boston to openly, honestly, and enthusiastically participate in the ongoing dialogue around youth arts education.

The ICA is committed to supporting the development of teens as leaders, artists, and audiences. Contemporary art has the power to resonate with teens in a way that is both timely and relevant as they formulate their identities as active and engaged citizens in a broader world. The ICA's many in- and out-of-school programs, websites, and resources for educators provide the necessary pathways for education and opportunity. With this in mind, it has been tremendously gratifying to all of us here at the ICA to see the impact the Convening has had on the nascent field of teen arts education in museums over the past three years. It is clear from the nationwide feedback we received from participants and educators that the conversations at the annual Teen Convening provide a much-needed forum. This report outlines the many ideas addressed at the 2011 Teen Convening; it is my hope that it also captures the sense of spirit and community experienced each year, and serves as a platform for the future.


Jill Medvedow



Ellen Matilda Poss Director

I. Overview





One of the oldest contemporary art museums in the country, the Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston has long been dedicated to youth education through contemporary art. The occasion of its 75th anniversary this year provides a valuable opportunity to not only reflect on the history of the institution's past, present, and future in terms of museum education, but also to chart its future. At the ICA, we are witness to the resonance of contemporary art with teens. Adolescents grapple with the challenge of forming their own definitions of identity, gender roles, political consciousness, and social responsibility. Many of the artworks in our galleries and theater echo and explore similar themes and provide a rich opportunity for teens to utilize contemporary art in the process of forming their own identities as citizens in a broader world.

Over the years, the ICA's teen programs have experienced significant transformation and growth. Since moving to its current waterfront location in December 2006, the ICA has seen an exponential increase in teen-focused programs and the number of teens they serve. In the past year alone, the ICA has worked with approximately 6,000 teens through its broad spectrum of teen offerings. Ranging from introductory opportunities for youth to experience the museum—such as Teen Nights and short workshops; multi-session programs for high school students including WallTalk; extended after-school opportunities such as the Teen Arts Council and Fast Forward—the ICA's diverse offerings for teen audiences are at the heart of the museum's mission. At the heart of the ICA's teen programs is Teen Convening, bringing together teens and educators from across the country for an intergenerational dialogue about teen education in art museums.

Now in its third year, the ICA initiated the annual National Convening for Teens in the Arts in August 2009 in response to the lack of opportunity for students and educators to collaboratively discuss the issues, challenges, and possibilities facing the field of contemporary arts education for urban teens. Inspired by the empowering feeling of optimism, activism, and change surrounding the 2008 presidential election, the participating youth titled the first Convening, *Generation O: A National Convening for Teens in the Arts*. In its first year, five institutions each sent two teens and one educator to come

together for an unprecedented gathering. The 2009 participants were selected on the basis of their outstanding programming for teen audiences, including the ICA/Boston; Marwen, Chicago; the Museum of Contemporary Art, North Miami; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; and Slanguage, a Los Angeles-based art collective. This Teen Convening centered on a teen-driven format to empower the youth voice and to have a youth-centered impact on the broader field of museum education.

The influence of this event was evident as participants took their experiences back to their own institutions. After the first year, the ICA's planning team continued to work with participants from across the country to improve the Convening format. The second annual National Convening for Teens in the Arts, *Art and Identity: Making Art to Belong, Making Art to Distinguish Oneself*, was held in August 2010 with seven participating institutions: the Bronx Museum of the Arts, New York; the Contemporary Art Center, New Orleans; the ICA/Boston; Marwen, Chicago; the Seattle Art Museum; the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

The third annual conference, *Real Life Remixed: A National Convening for Teens in the Arts*, took place at the ICA, August 10–12, 2011. This Convening considered the primary role that the art museum environment can play in youth development. The title refers to

how the museum can be both a safe space to explore real life and big ideas, while simultaneously serving as an experimental space where new and different ideas can "remix" existing notions, contributing to more open and creative points of view.

Nine institutions representing diverse organizations, geographic regions, and distinctive youth programs were invited to participate: the Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh; Arthouse at the Jones Center, Austin; the ICA/Boston; Marwen, Chicago; the Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles; the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego; the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; the Wexner Center for the Arts, Ohio; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

During the months leading up to the event, as with the past two Convenings, the ICA teens hosted online discussions with participating teens and educators. These online forums provided a valuable opportunity for geographically dispersed participants to become acquainted before the event, and to spark a dialogue about key topics that would lay the foundation for more extended face-to-face conversations in Boston. For the first time, the ICA invited past attendees to participate, expanding the community. Based on these online conversations, the four main topics for discussion were decided: teen programs advocacy, skill development, experimentation/expansive thinking, and attitudes toward controversial subject matter.

The third annual National Convening for Teens in the Arts kicked off with presentations from each participating institution. One educator and two teens from each organization were invited to share the specifics of their programs, as well as to make connections between the larger theme of the conference and their work. The day also included several gallery tours led by hosting members of the ICA Teen Arts Council.

In the evening, the ICA Teen Arts Council hosted an open Teen Night. Local youth program partners Zumix and Artists for Humanity came out to join the celebration and to showcase other Boston-area youth programs. With more than 300 teen participants, the program featured art-making activities, teen-led gallery tours, and teen performers from across Boston.

On the second day of the Convening, attendees first met with Jill Medvedow, the ICA's Ellen Matilda Poss Director, then participated in an art-making activity led

by Artist-in-Residence Dario Robleto. After a morning of concentrated art making and discussion, participants came together for an in-depth series of roundtable discussions. Using the online conversations from the summer months as a starting point, each session provided an opportunity to delve deeper and address how each topic directly related to each participant and their work at their respective institutions.

During the third and final day, educators and teens met separately. The ICA teens led a roundtable discussion with fellow participating teens about next steps and takeaways from their conference experience, while educators gathered for a professional development roundtable, building on the topics and dialogue from the previous day's teen-driven conversations. Based on feedback from the previous years, the ICA panel included a youth development expert, a museum educator, and an educator for at-risk youth. Many past participants expressed concern that their training was limited to the visual arts and that they did not feel well equipped to deal with many of the complicated and multifaceted issues faced by today's youth. To address this concern, the ICA included panelists with extensive training and experience with youth beyond the museum environment. This year's panel included Laurie Jo Wallace, Director of Training and Capacity at Health Resources in Action (HRIA); Sarah Schultz, Director of Education and Community Partnerships at the Walker Art Center; David Henry, Director of Programs at the ICA; and Bert Crenca, Founder and Artistic Director of Providence's AS220.

After hosting three national Teen Convenings, we are humbled by the strength, commitment, and creativity of teens and their educators, and are inspired to broaden and deepen our work in this field. We are gratified to learn that this experience has proven to be a rare and insightful resource for the museum educators whose work is dedicated to teen audiences, especially as other opportunities for professional development—specifically relating to teens—is extremely limited. Perhaps most importantly, it is clear from the dialogue that has occurred over the past three years that arts program participation for teens can be a central component to their development and growth as individuals moving into adulthood.

—**Gabrielle Wyrick** Associate Director of Education

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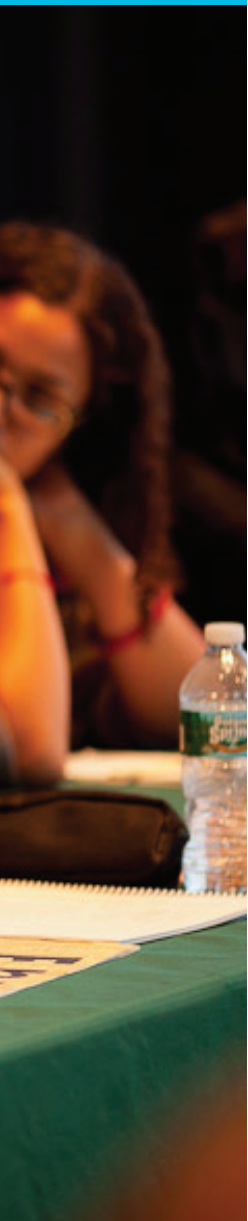
Before I became part of the Teen Arts Council, I felt like my life was all the same: the same people, same places, same ideas. Being part of the ICA has helped me expand who I am, and explore big ideas...new and different things that weren't part of my life before. When I hear people talk about art and museums as unimportant or insignificant, I want to tell them that they have it so wrong. It's one of the most important things that I know.

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II. Convening Participants





The Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh

Youth Programs at the Warhol focus on working with small groups of young people to foster leadership with creative skills, and to offer relevant programming to teen audiences. Andy Warhol's work provides a unique and engaging model for youth that maintains a relevant link to the emerging present. Young people continue to be interested in and influenced by Warhol's experimentation with diverse media and disciplines, his manipulations of pop culture, and the unique scene he created—all vital models of creativity.

Arthouse at the Jones Center, Austin

In 2000, after surveying available arts education outreach programs in Central Texas, Arthouse identified a need in the community for quality, non-school-based arts education programs for teenagers. Since then, Arthouse has steadily expanded the number and types of programs offered to area youth. These include three different, intensive, semester-long annual programs: Club Arthouse, Young Artists @ Arthouse, Advanced Young Artists @ Arthouse, the annual Ahead of Their Time Austin-Area Advanced Student Art Exhibition, and several teen workshops and events.

Club Arthouse is a student-directed teen art collective that brings together students from Austin and surrounding areas. Past activities include a semester-long exploration of public art actions, designing a city bus, and planning ARTBASH, the annual teen event. Young Artists @ Arthouse is a skill- and portfolio-development program that provides free art supplies, workshops with Austin-area artists, portfolio advice, critiquing skills, and support in fostering a creative voice. Once a Young Artist has passed through the initial program, they may apply for Advanced Young Artists @ Arthouse, where students

request a specific art focus to work one-on-one with an artist-mentor for six months. Participants in Advanced Young Artists receive a generous budget and meet weekly with their artist-mentors to develop new work that is included in the Arthouse student/mentor exhibition.

All of the teen programs at Arthouse are designed to empower young people to express their unique creative voice and to foster an understanding that they are the contemporary artists and thinkers of the next generation.

The Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston

The ICA has an unwavering institutional commitment to teens, recognizing adolescents are our future artists, audiences, and leaders. Key issues facing teens, such as personal identity, are often those explored by many contemporary artists, as are interests in social change, innovation, and digital media. The ICA's Teen Programs utilize the museum's physical and artistic resources to improve equity and opportunity for Boston youth, and range from introductory to immersive programs and encounters with contemporary art and artists. After- and out-of-school programs include Teen New Media, Teen Arts Council and Teen Nights, in addition to Wall Talk, the ICA's in-school program connecting visual and verbal literacy. All programs offer opportunities for arts education, leadership, artistic advancement, and relationships with artists and mentors, as well as marketable 21st-century skills. The ICA serves 2,000 middle and high school students each year through dedicated teen programs, and another 3,500–4,000 through school tours. The Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston is proud to be a local and national resource in the field of museum arts education for teens.

Marwen, Chicago

Marwen is a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting the development of Chicago's young people in grades 6–12 through free visual arts workshops and college and career planning courses. Marwen was founded in 1987 with just a handful of teens in a single studio. It was Steven Berkowitz's vision to provide every young person in Chicago with access to high-quality visual arts programming, regardless of economic means. Marwen has grown over the past 24 years into a nationally recognized visual arts education organization, offering a wide range of more than 175 visual art courses, college and career exploration classes, workshops, intensive programs, exhibitions, special events, and individualized college and career counseling.

Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles

Founded in 1979, the Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles (MOCA), is the only collecting museum in greater Los Angeles dedicated exclusively to presenting contemporary art. From a unique community outreach program providing free, bilingual arts education designed to introduce new audiences to contemporary art and culture, the museum developed the MOCA Apprenticeship Program (MAP) in 1992. Each year MAP creates a supportive artistic community for a small, diverse group of high school juniors and seniors from throughout Los Angeles. Through this nine-month, paid learning and work internship program, 16 students gain an in-depth, practical understanding of contemporary art, the museum, and related careers in the arts, from both artistic and professional perspectives. Mentored by MOCA educators, apprentices meet weekly with museum staff and guest artists, undertaking individual and self-directed projects throughout the museum. MAP serves teens at a critical time in their development and decision making, broadening their future possibilities and helping them to gain experiential knowledge of a post-high school world. MAP also supports participating teens' personal development and community engagement: our youth-organized Teen Night art celebration welcomes more than 2,300 teens and their families to MOCA for student art exhibitions, live music, and art-making activities designed and facilitated by MAP participants.

Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego

The Teen Art Council (TAC) forms and creates the core of teen programming at the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego (MCASD). Museum educators and approximately 15 teens—representing the geographic and cultural diversity of San Diego—meet weekly to explore works of art and learn about the inner workings of the museum in order to plan, develop, and market a spectrum of programs that reach a broad teen audience.

Teens work closely with MCASD staff to design and promote programming, ranging from public artist workshops, teen activities at public museum events, and teen evenings at MCASD featuring activities, tours, and entertainment by local teen performing artists. Additionally, TAC helps to develop new media resources, such as interviews with artists, which appear on the museum's website. Through the production of teen events and new media resources, Teen Art Council members develop life skills necessary to succeed in college and dynamic work environments including teamwork, leadership, creative thinking, time and resource management, and confidence. Most importantly, the TAC seeks to create life-long advocates for the arts and cultural institutions.

Walker Art Center, Minneapolis

Teen Programming began at the Walker Art Center in 1994. The Walker Art Center Teen Arts Council (WACTAC) launched two years later, with the purpose of connecting teens to contemporary art and artists. WACTAC attracts teen audiences to the museum through comfortable, welcoming spaces and programs. Walker Teen Programs engage teens on a variety of levels, from "gateway" programs that bring young people into the museum for the first time, to public programs aimed at teens, to an active workshop and exhibition program that offers opportunities for intensive learning from professional artists and staff curators. The Walker's model has been instrumental in supporting teens' creative development, but as the museum approaches the end of its second decade of working with teens, the staff is keeping an open mind about possibilities for new approaches in the future.

Wexner Center for the Arts, Ohio

Teens and contemporary artists share an interest in challenging boundaries and exploring new perspectives. Programs at the Wexner not only offer opportunities to learn and grow while experiencing the arts, but also provide a platform for youth to find their voice, gain valuable career insight, and meet role models with career experience in the arts. Programs include the annual Other Prom, presented in partnership with Kaleidoscope Youth Center, a free alternative LGBTQ prom for youth and their allies; Art This Week, a free Thursday teen night that includes films, live performances, dining with visiting artists, exhibition-focused tours, and teen-driven art projects; Wex Lab, a free, daylong, super-intensive artist-led workshop for teens on topics such as single-shot music and short comedy videos, comics, and graphic novels; as well as Ohio Shorts: Youth Division, an annual free teen video showcase featuring ten-minute shorts from emerging artists throughout Ohio, ages 18 and younger.

Whitney Museum of American Art, New York

Since 1997, the Whitney Museum of American Art has offered Youth Insights (YI), a variety of after-school programs, tours, events, and internship opportunities for diverse New York City high school students. By presenting unprecedented access to art, artists, and the museum itself, YI programs provide a framework for teens to exchange ideas, learn, collaborate, and develop a sustained engagement with American art and culture.

The Whitney currently offers YI Artists and YI Writers, two semester-long after-school programs held each spring and fall for students in grades 10–12. The YI Artists program brings teens together with contemporary artists, providing opportunities to work collaboratively, discuss art critically, think creatively, and make art inspired by these exchanges. In the YI Writers program, teens work closely with contemporary artists to explore the connections between art and text through critical and creative writing and art making. Teens that complete either of these programs are eligible to apply for the YI Summer Intensive program, an introduction to careers in the arts and museum fields; and the YI Leaders program, a year-long paid internship in the Whitney education department. Teens in YI Leaders learn to develop and lead tours of the museum, plan programs and

events, create interpretive materials, and manage the Whitney's teen blog. In addition, YI graduates are eligible for Contemporary Community internships, in which they serve as teaching assistants in our partnership with the Regent Family Residence, a transitional housing facility for families in need.

The Whitney is dedicated to supporting a well-integrated teen program within the museum. This program structure offers teens opportunities for extended engagement and challenging new experiences, while encouraging them to find and share their artistic voices and unique perspectives on American art.

Dario Robleto, Artist-in-Residence

Texas-based artist Dario Robleto received his BFA from the University of Texas at San Antonio in 1997. Robleto exhibits his work extensively at museums such as the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego; the Denver Museum of Contemporary Art; and the Aldrich Contemporary Arts Museum, Ridgefield, Connecticut. In 2008 his ten-year survey exhibition, *Alloy of Love*, was organized by the Frances Young Tang Teaching Museum and Art Gallery at Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, New York. Notable group shows include the *Whitney Biennial* 2004, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; and *Human/Nature: Artists Respond to a Changing Planet*, Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego. Robleto is a frequent visiting artist and lecturer at many colleges and universities including Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York; Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Massachusetts; and the Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, Rhode Island. He received the International Association of Art Critics Award in 2004 for best exhibition in a national commercial gallery at the national level. He is also a recipient of both the 2007 Joan Mitchell Foundation Grant and the 2009 USA Rasmuson Fellowship. Recent exhibitions include *Survival Does Not Lie in the Heavens*, at the Des Moines Art Center, and the group show, *The Spectacular of Vernacular*, at the Walker Art Center.

III. Topic Based Discussions



On the second day of Teen Convening, participants discussed four significant issues for teens in museums. Teens and museum educators alike shared their unique perspectives, but the conversation was primarily teen driven and moderated by ICA Teen Arts Council member Chabelyz Mejia:

1 Teen Programs Advocacy

2 Skill Development

3 Experimentation and Expansive Thinking

4 Teens and Controversial Subject Matter

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TOPIC 1 Teen Programs Advocacy

How do teens and educators promote the importance of their teen programs to those who see what they do at their museum as “extra” or something to do with their “free time”?

Walker Art Center: Will

I struggle a lot to justify that [art is necessary]. My school is focused on math and science, quantifiable measures of achievement, and subjects that feature that sort of discipline of learning. Many of my friends are engaged in independent research projects this summer in university labs, and I think it is sort of hard for them to understand how art could potentially be socially important when the stuff they're doing is very pre-med, very “saves lives.”

Artist-in Residence: Dario

Each of you knows now that it is not easy to be an artist at all. Part of what I've chosen to do is just to continue to make my work and understand there is an educational part that comes with the territory. An artist can choose to be confrontational, annoyed by the lack of understanding by the general public. Or, you can choose to engage, and build a bridge across communities.

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Teens agreed that misperceptions about arts-based teen programs are widespread, particularly outside of the museum community. Several teens said that parents, peers, teachers, career counselors, and others closely involved in their lives have criticized teen programs as being “frivolous” and lacking applicable skill-building or money-making outcomes. Molly, a teen representative from MOCA LA, expressed the group's frustration with how the “stress on making money” influences attitudes: “As a child, you are raised to think you need to pursue something academic so you can get a job. I think a lot of people eliminate the arts with the thinking that you can't make money.”

Participants were quick to refute this “negative outlook” asserting that museum programs offer immense personal and professional benefits. Many cited the concrete skills they've gained, such as working with budgets, planning and marketing events, and meeting deadlines. Others mentioned that through the opportunity to think independently and creatively, they have developed new perspectives on their place in the world. Lily from Marwen, for instance, said that working on her photography had fostered a desire to “change the world” by bringing “attention to certain issues people might not want to talk about.”

There was lively debate around the issue of how to tackle criticism. Should teens try to advocate for their program and convince others that their work is important? Or should they ignore naysayers, move on, and simply focus on their work? Elvis, from MCASD, said it was important to him to try to change his friends' minds: “If you change even one person's opinion, you are making an impact.” Some stood strong in their belief that an artist or creative thinker should focus inward and just concentrate on their work. Others however, are finding their way in how to “counter people's opinions.” As Will, from the Walker said, “I'm still growing and learning, and still trying to figure out an answer.”

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TOPIC 2

Skill Development

While many museums cite skill development as central to their teen programs, the types of skills and applications vary. What are the different skills you have developed from your teen programs, and how can you apply those skills across different life experiences?

Arthouse at the Jones Center: Hector

One big thing that it helped me with was accepting mistakes. You're painting, and a big blob falls down, and you learn to work with it. That actually helps in real life as well. Something happens, and I have learned to accept it, to go with it.

Whitney Museum of American Art: Rebecca

I got self-validation from my program. I always had a loosely constructed idea that I'd end up in a job that I somewhat like, even though I don't know a name for it....Our program went to different places to talk with different professionals. I learned that there are more things to do than [what's presented by] people who come on Career Day. There are things that people don't say, that you are not going to find looking at a school.

ICA/Boston: Chabelyz

I know many of us learned how to talk to adults and how to get our thoughts out better. Schools and museums are just so different from each other. When you go to school, they don't teach you how to e-mail people or interview people or talk to people who are older than you. Coming to a museum, they definitely teach you how to do that respectfully.

The majority of teens agreed that their museum programs have given them tremendous opportunities for personal and professional growth. According to many participants, teen programs have encouraged independence and flexible thinking, giving them a sense of greater control over their learning experience. Many remarked on the discrepancy between the learning gained in teen programs versus learning in their schools, where rigid academic protocol and curricula can hamper self-sufficiency and growth.

Some teens lauded the practical skills they've gained from their programs. In finding transportation to his teen program, Dariel, from Wexner, learned to use Google, Wi-Fi, and to take the bus. Chabelyz, from the ICA, learned "how to e-mail people" and "talk to people who are older than me." Other participants said that engaging in the creative process—making and revising art through structured critiques—has led to greater focus and flexibility in their lives. Queion, from Marwen, found that having his work critiqued helped him listen to others more carefully. Hector, from ArtHouse, discovered that the process of creating art, replete with mistakes and triumphs, mirrored his growing acceptance of the challenges that come with life. And Rebecca, from the Whitney, said that meeting arts professionals has given her a sense of "self-validation" in realizing that her career goals can be far broader than those emphasized in school.

Participants also talked about museum programs as a welcome respite from the media barrage that teens encounter each day. Though teens described themselves as "techsavvy," they admitted to the dangers inherent in digesting only "uncomplicated, unchallenging" information that yields instant gratification. Dario, participating Artist-in-Residence, expressed his fear that, as a result of technology, teens will shut down to the "mystery, ambiguity, and wonder" inherent in art. Will, from the Walker, however, confirmed that teens are actively struggling against this impulse. He affirmed that engaging with contemporary art is an important skill, because it forces you to "sit down a moment" and "really contemplate how it might be relevant to you."

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TOPIC 3

Experimentation and Expansive Thinking

When asked to describe their museum experience, many teens see the museum as a place where experimentation and expansive thinking are both possible and encouraged. Has participation in your program allowed for experimentation in your own life? If so, how?

Whitney Museum of American Art: Rebecca

I feel like getting out of the grading system really allows for experimentation. I've been at my public school for seven years and there are already pre-established expectations for everyone. Mostly everyone knows you and expects you to produce work in the same vein. And when you go outside of that, you're allowed to experiment in a non-limiting way.

Marwen: Queion

The difference is that at school we are working toward a particular goal and everyone is expected to take the same route to get there and get the same result. With my [museum] program, there might be eight steps, but if I go one, three, five, and then hop back and skip over, that's OK.

ICA/Boston: Jeremy

I look forward to the critiques because it makes my films ten times better.

In a show of resounding union, teens agreed that museums are dynamic places, where experimentation and expansive thinking are both possible and encouraged. Participants said that museum programs provided a safe space not only to take risks, but also to be rewarded for those risks. As a result, teens said they felt more capable of reaching beyond the comfort zones of their lives outside the museum environment.

How do museums provide the environment for those risks? Some students attributed the absence of grades and a focus on critiques—a refreshing contrast to the norms of school—as helping to free experimentation. Others stated that successful programs allow them to “self-direct” and engage in debate, building confidence. Lily from Marwen, explained that her teen program helped her gain the confidence to push herself academically. After proving to herself that she could take successful risks in her museum program, she decided to take her first-ever advanced placement class.

Teens agreed that an environment of mutual respect is crucial in allowing experimentation to flourish. As Queion, from Marwen, articulated: “It is very important to me that an adult is treating me like a person, and not less than myself because of my age.” Conversely, teens said that leaders need to earn the respect of their students by setting limits and, as Will from the Walker said, “strike a balance between being a friend and a figure of authority who holds you responsible for your actions.”

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TOPIC 4

Teens and Controversial Subject Matter

In the world of contemporary art, we are often faced with subject matter that is challenging and controversial. What is the best way of addressing this content with teens in our programs?

Walker Art Center: Will

I think it's important to have those feelings sometimes, to be made uncomfortable... because without them you would never grow.

Arthouse at the Jones Center: Ashley

If you want someone else to decide what is good and what's not, go watch a movie, but if you want to go to a museum, don't expect to be coddled and treated like a child.

A heated discussion ensued around how to present challenging or controversial subject matter to teens. All participating institutions deal with contemporary art, and most educators have had firsthand experience with the quandary of how to exhibit work that pushes the boundaries of comfort.

Teens are at a stage in life where they are gaining independence and the ability to formulate their own ideas about who they are, and how they relate to the world. Several students in this discussion felt that giving teens the opportunity to engage with challenging artwork may encourage them to further develop their own viewpoints, and to stand up for their beliefs. In fact, participants said universally that teens should have full access to controversial or challenging artworks. There was a broad consensus that having a strong reaction to a work of art—while it might provoke discomfort—can be a catalyst for growth, and an opportunity for students to “voice their opinions.”

The group disagreed, however, on how best to provide an interpretive framework for encountering this kind of work. Some teens thought they should first be presented with information about specific works, and then given a choice about whether to actually see it. Others felt the work must be seen first, but then followed up with a conversation that addressed individual concerns and perspectives. All agreed that teen programs should continue to harbor an environment that promotes respectful dialogue and tolerance for divergent opinions.

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IV. Discussions with Museum Educators



On the third day of the Teen Convening, the museum educators participated in a professional development roundtable to talk about next steps and lessons learned. Led by Bert Crenca, Laurie Jo Wallace, and Sarah Schultz, and moderated by David Henry, the group discussed key issues that emerged during the second day's teen-driven discussions, and the benefits and challenges of working with teen audiences.

"Working with teens is institutionally beneficial precisely for the many ways that they honestly challenge the institution. Teen audiences demand engagement, participation, and dialogue, never allowing the programs they're a part of to become static."

"What we are trying to do on the most basic level is to help students understand that they can make a choice, they can come in and say this is how I want something to be. That might be one of the most important lessons learned in our programs. While these skills may not transform a student into a leader in the traditional sense, they might encourage teens to make better personal decisions about important issues."

"There is this point where you feel that you don't have the support from within your own institution and you begin to question yourself. How do you keep these programs dynamic and fresh in the face of those challenges? Then the pressure is all on you to make it successful—no one outside of the Education Department really cares or even knows about what we do."

—Convening Educators

The roundtable discussion made clear that teen programs in contemporary art museums offer compelling educational, cultural, professional, and personal opportunities. A lively discussion took place, ranging from the institutional value of teen programs, to the challenges for educators in executing these programs, and the experience and skills of the educators.

Many agreed that effective teen educators should possess backgrounds that span a variety of disciplines including social work, youth development, studio or performing arts, education, art history, new media production, and event planning. Participants noted that in order to complement these dynamic qualities and skills, successful programs must cultivate a culture of education, inquiry, and learning where "spaces of possibility" challenge teens to consider the role of art in their lives.

Several educators emphasized that teen programs are equally beneficial to the institutions that house them. Working with teens, who are at a unique moment developmentally and unafraid to ask questions or push boundaries, can help ensure that an institution's perspective stays fresh, flexible, and authentic. As Bert from AS220 articulated, "These kids are the ones who keep us solid."

The challenges of running teen programs, however, can be overwhelming. While participating educators ardently believe in the value of these programs, carrying out best practices within their organizations can prove daunting. Many work with limited resources and voiced concerns about meeting institutional expectations, such as capturing increased attendance and larger grants. Educators often bump up against internal resistance to the worth of their programs, due in part to the rigorous demands of working with teen audiences and the potential high cost of programming.

Educators discussed the recent challenge of measuring the long-term impact of teen programs. Staying in contact with teen alumni can be difficult, especially as the field is relatively new and lacks established protocol for sustaining these relationships. Communicating the lasting effects of these programs, however, is crucial to garnering future support. Educators are, in fact, now realizing the significant long-term benefits. During the discussion, it was exciting to discover that two of the participating educators had once participated in teen programs themselves.

Educators raised key questions that must be answered in order to sustain funding for these programs: "What have graduates of teen programs gone on to do?" "Which positive outcomes correlate to participation?" "What significant contributions can experienced alumni make to an institution?", and finally, "How can educators continue to grow professionally and implement an evolving understanding of best practices in cultural and institutional environments that are not fully supportive?"

V. Lessons Learned



The Andy Warhol Museum

Paul O'Brien Artist and Educator

The Andy Warhol Museum was incredibly honored to be invited to the Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston's National Convening for Teens in the Arts. As a small museum devoted to a single artist, the national recognition of this invitation was gratifying. The students and museum educators were able to see a direct benefit from all their hard work. As a recent transplant to Pittsburgh from Boston, I was all the more thrilled to return to my home as the representative of the Warhol, and to an institution that I visited so often.

I was fortunate to have two bright young women with me and to observe how this trip empowered them in a number of ways. Carrie and M'antayla were selected to represent our youth programs based on the merit of their work with the Warhol over the past three years. This trip afforded them new experiences: it was their first time traveling on an airplane, the first time they were separated from their parents for an extended period of time, and most significantly, their first opportunity to serve in an advisory capacity in a professional environment. From the beginning of the online seminars, Carrie, M'antayla, and I developed an accelerated exchange about the value of their work and the rich conversations they bring to our museum. When they were hired for our program, neither of the girls considered themselves regular museum-goers. Upon meeting their counterparts from museums all over the country, they began to see their role in our museum with a newfound credibility. M'antayla observed, "The other teens go just because they love to." The role of art in people's lives, the effect of the art produced by teens, and the role of the museum within a community were topics of great discussion. The dialogues were honest and vital, creating new connections among the three of us, as well as among the participants from other museums.

As we begin a new school year, we are working to more fully implement the impressive ideas from the conference—establishing one-on-one mentorships between local artists and youth, and the benefit of a teen advisory board that provides and helps shape unique and inclusive programming—to revitalize our programs such as our annual Youth Invasion.

Arthouse at the Jones Center

Erin Gentry Manager of Education Programs

Arthouse at the Jones Center was so thrilled to participate in the Teen Convening. The most rewarding part was connecting with others who are passionate about teens and the arts. It was so inspiring to be surrounded by educators and teens who are excited about contemporary art, and who find it valuable to dedicate their free time to its exploration.

The Teen Convening was a chance to gain perspective on museum programs for teens and to personally reconnect with the spirit of these programs—the excitement, openness, endless possibilities, and the depth of personal interactions that working with teens offers. For Hector, the best part of the Convening was "the opportunity to meet so many diverse people with such different lifestyles and perspectives, and the feedback they gave toward our style." Ashley said, "The most important thing I learned was that there are tons of different museums that have many different and inspirational ways to teach teens and the communities they're a part of."

Being in Boston was an adventure as well, and both Hector and Ashley were excited about their many "firsts": first trip to the East Coast, first plane ride, first subway ride, first vegetarian meal, first non-Austin museum visit, etc. While it was an eye-opening experience for them, it was also empowering to represent Arthouse's programs, speak their minds, and have open exchanges with teens and educators from around the country.

The Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston

Gabrielle Wyrick Associate Director of Education

Now in its third year hosting the National Convening for Teens in the Arts, the ICA participants' experience begins months before the others. For us, the Convening represents long hours spent planning and ensuring every last detail is in place. This year's participating ICA teens dedicated their summer wholeheartedly to ensuring that the Convening was the best possible experience for all. As hosts, they took great pride in sharing their institution, city, and unique perspectives with other youth from across the country. Beyond the dedicated teen presenters for the ICA, Chabelyz Mejia and Jeremy Maher, the Convening provided the opportunity for many other ICA teens and

teen program alumni to gain valuable leadership skills within the institution. Teen Arts Council alumnus Donovan Birch, Jr., and Teen Arts Council member Shaquille Alberts worked behind the scenes to make the Convening a reality, and Fast Forward alumni Connie Yip and Rene Dongo utilized their skills to document the program. In the end, all participating ICA teens feel they gained valuable experience as central contributors to an event they believe made a significant impact on all participants.

In the words of ICA teen presenter Jeremy Maher, "The Convening helped me connect with art at a deeper level. Before the Convening, I always thought of art as a really important part of my life, but after thinking about it and talking about it at the Convening, I realized that it played a bigger role in my life than I initially thought. I thought it was really cool meeting teens from across the country that share similar interests. It was also interesting to see what teens in other states are doing and how they are contributing to the larger world of art." Like other participants, the Convening provided the opportunity for reflection on their own practice in museums, the chance to learn from others, and, perhaps most importantly, to see what they do in a context that extends far beyond their front door.

For the ICA teens, the Teen Convening represented the value of teen contributions to the field. Through this event they were able to see themselves as true partners and collaborators in program development, rather than passive recipients. Several ICA teens were particularly struck by how the event provided a multi-directional and reciprocal learning platform for both teens and educators alike. As an educator, it was an honor to have the opportunity to collaborate with and learn from so many thoughtful educators and teens from across the country; the teen-driven, cross-generational dialogue was truly inspiring.

Marwen

Shirley Alfaro Manager of Studio Programs

Marwen was honored to take part in the ICA's Teen Convening. The conference was extremely insightful and engaging to both students and administrators. The value seen in teens organizing and facilitating a conference, the art-making sessions, and multiple discussions speak volumes about what young people want to see in their learning institutions. The ICA's Teen Convening brought this notion to light as the

young representatives carried an enormous amount of passion for art and how that translates into teen programming. The art-making session with Dario Robleto brought the group together, forming what we consider to be a think tank for ideas and best practices. As Queion stated, "Meeting teens from different places and seeing how they expressed themselves artistically was invaluable....I met some of the most inspiring people who have helped me to change the way I think about my art making." The roundtable discussions about art, young people, and leadership were rich with ideas and diversity, which continues to generate reflection and discussion.

Throughout the conference there was a genuine dedication and openness to learning from every museum and art center. From Lily's perspective, "This was a real eye-opening experience and has made me think even more about teen engagement in the arts outside of school. I am very thankful to have been a part of this conference, due to the fact that there are very few opportunities for teenagers to have an active voice in the development of the youth arts education field." The theme of "teen voice" is a continued theme for us at Marwen. Seeing the impact it has for young people on a national level, Marwen will continue to build and incorporate teen perspectives in as many programs and discussions as possible.

Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles

Fabrizio Flores Education Program Coordinator

The Museum of Contemporary Los Angeles's Art's Apprenticeship Program (MAP) was honored to be invited to participate at this year's 2011 National Convening for Teens in the Arts. Leading up to the conference, the online forum discussions not only helped us connect with other teen experts and professionals around the country, but also set the tone for what was to come and to be expected. We learned about other distinct programs that offer unique opportunities for teens to volunteer or work to help develop critical-thinking skills and become creative and active members of society. Whether we found ourselves talking about advocacy, experimentation, or controversial subject matter, everyone was given the mutual respect, time, and space to speak and be heard. The theme of this year's convening, *Real Life Remixed*, demonstrated that the learning that takes place in art museums is very much connected to real life. For MAP alums Diego Espinosa and Molly Spater

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The most important thing I learned is that there are several different museums that have many different and inspirational ways to teach teens and the communities they're a part of.

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and for myself, the Teen Convening reminded us that the arts are alive and full of opportunities, with so many people and institutions leading interesting and creative programming for teens. For Molly, the Convening motivated her "to stay involved with the arts while going to college in New York," and to "make it a goal to become involved with museums." Diego hopes to one day work in an art museum managing youth and community programs: "Until the trip to Boston, I was quite unaware of the greater community surrounding the arts, particularly in education and teen programming. Meeting other museum professionals, alumni, and artists had a profound impact on my desire to continue to pursue working with and advocating for the arts/alternative education."

Overall, the participating teens and professionals demonstrated a positive attitude, identity, and sense of personal well-being, connection, and commitment to others. Teen-focused art programs in museums are the perfect tool for implementing a teen-centered, youth development approach to working with young people. Thanks to everyone for inspiring us all.

Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego

Anne Kindseth Education Associate

The 2011 National Convening for Teens in the Arts provided the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego (MCASD) with the tools to critically assess the Teen Art Council program (TAC) and imagine new ways to strengthen the quality of the program in the upcoming academic year.

Overall, the connections that MCASD teen participants made during the Convening proved the most powerful. The new connections to other teens and institutions across the country not only made them aware that they belong to something much bigger than TAC, but also inspired them to apply this spirit of community to the upcoming year. During our post-Convening conversations, new program ideas stressed community in ways not previously incorporated in our program. Inspired by the social justice threads in the Whitney Museum of American Art and Wexner Center for the Arts programming, the MCASD teens now plan to pursue more outreach opportunities to connect underserved and overlooked populations. Additionally, the teens now support the development of more frequent, yet smaller events for teens in order to give San Diego youth

more opportunities to participate, and therefore build a stronger teen community centered around the museum.

The Convening also led the teens to reevaluate the roles and workflow within our Teen Art Council. The teens gained several effective ideas from their peers about how to successfully market, plan, and implement programs and they look forward to utilizing these ideas this year. Most inspiring to me as a museum educator is how the Convening empowered the two MCASD teens to take more ownership of the direction of the Teen Art Council. These teens have displayed new levels of leadership within the group, acting as advocates for the ideas that emerged out of the Convening, and shared these new ideas with their peers.

The Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego appreciates the opportunity to participate in the 2011 National Convening for Teens in the Arts. It pushed our thinking about teen programs at museums and community organizations and will undoubtedly improve the quality of our Teen Art Council program.

Walker Art Center

Adriana Rimpel Teen Program Manager

What I appreciate about participating in the Convening over the past two years is the non-hierarchical format, and teen-led discussions that address their needs, desires, and experiences. The ICA Convening is a special and generous opportunity to meet face-to-face with individuals who share in the unique framework of youth-led contemporary arts programming. Will Freeman, who also attended the previous year, valued the connections he fostered among the other national teen representatives, and the opportunity to discuss controversial topics around contemporary arts. He shared, "The chance to hear a diverse array of perspectives on these issues was an inspiring and truly unique opportunity. My favorite part was meeting all the teens and educators." Henry Willette also drew inspiration from the similarities and differences in approach both among his peers and others: "It really made me realize that there are programs just like WACTAC all around the country that do the same things we do. Learning about all of them made me think about what we can improve on here at the Walker." Although our program models differ from site to site, similar outcomes were discussed among the teens in reference to acquired

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Meeting other museum professionals, alumni, and artists had a profound impact on my desire to continue to pursue working with and advocating for the arts/alternative education.

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skills, leadership abilities, building self-esteem, and expanding knowledge of the arts. For me the Convening affirmed that our approach is designed to empower youth with human capital so that they realize their potential and capacity to create change across social, cultural, and political platforms. It has also inspired me to take risks and implement of new ideas in my own methodologies of working with youth. We are all so grateful to the ICA to have been included!

Wexner Center for the Arts

Jean Pitman Educator for Youth Programs

Lately I have been re-researching the text of the 1964 Freedom School curriculum and have found it to be extremely useful for me today—especially so as an artist and educator working in a multi-disciplinary contemporary art center in the Midwest. Freedom Schools were combined with voter registration and community center development to create a three-pronged force for change in Mississippi during the summer of 1964 (later called Freedom Summer). Who were the ones who demonstrated the most nonviolent courage and persistence, thoughtful leadership, and compassion at this pivotal time in our history? Young students, many of them teens with a passion for justice. The key to Freedom Schools was asking questions whose answers were sought within the lives of the students of all ages.

A teen with passion is something unmistakable. Raw, unfiltered, fresh, unafraid, idealistic, and hopeful. I met teens with these qualities at the ICA/Boston's Teen Convening and was inspired and hopeful. I met educators from contemporary art institutions who create programming that supports and launches passionate teens. This fragile national network is of supreme importance as our country plunges deeper and deeper into fear. There are very few places where teens can go and openly wonder, ask questions, get comfortable, get uncomfortable, and enter into a personal and/or public dialogue about the issues of our time. Contemporary artists are grappling with issues of equity all across the board, and when we see their work, we get to grapple, too. To invest in passionate teens and teen programming at this time is crucial, but it is also radical and I am grateful to the ICA for taking a (risky) leadership role. I also learned that I am not alone, that my teens are not alone, and that there is a network within this nation.

While we are unique to our locale and take great pride in that, we are also wonderfully similar; the Convening felt both like a family gathering and a professional meeting. I learned more about the history of teen programming in museums and art centers in the US and thought about its possible trajectories. It inspired me to begin thinking about this in terms of scholarship and research. We see what happens every day when teens and contemporary art/artists face each other: passion, dialogue, independent and critical thinking and questioning, wonder, laughter, frustration, and above all, engagement in others and in parts of ourselves that we rarely get to engage in—publicly, together, with unfiltered honesty.

The Whitney Museum of American Art

Carda Burke Youth Insights Coordinator

Attending the 2011 National Convening for Teens in the Arts was motivating and inspiring for our teen participants, as well as for me as an educator, somewhat new to this field. It was exciting to see so many young people come together from a variety of institutions and cities. It was heartening to see them discover so much in common with each other, whether through their experiences as teens working closely with museums, or through the shared language of being young adults. It was amazing and inspiring to see the breadth and diversity of programs, as well as the joys and challenges unique to teen educators.

As teens from the Whitney processed their experience at the Convening, currents of motivation and excitement seemed to be a recurrent theme. After meeting students from other institutions and learning more about the impact that teen art councils had on their museums and communities, attendees expressed both an eagerness to move forward with their roles at the Whitney with a continued, deepened appreciation for teen arts programming wherever it is available. For Sarah Wu, meeting new people, forging new relationships, and participating in the workshop with the ICA's Artist-in-Residence Dario Robleto were all highlights. Interacting with teens from the ICA and watching them in action as they led tours and discussions inspired her as she moves into a new year of participation at the Whitney.

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There are very few places left in this country where teens can go and openly wonder, ask questions, get comfortable, get uncomfortable, and enter into a personal and/or public dialogue about the issues of our time.

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Rebecca described her time at the Convening as illuminating. She shared, "I realized that controversy and censorship are a daily occurrence at some museums, other than just stories in the news. My idea that one of the core values of museum education is simply that it exists outside of school structures—which are sometimes limiting—was reinforced by students across the country. Most importantly, it helped me discover that the relationship between teens and museums isn't just one-sided; the museums benefit from our input, too."

As an educator, I found that I was continually learning a version of what Rebecca describes above. Hearing the accounts and insights of so many teens clarified what it means to be able to really listen to and honor the young people working with me. Additionally, it gave us all ideas and sparked new motivation regarding how we, as a team of educators and students, can utilize teen programs to strengthen a sense of community that reaches beyond the physical parameters of our museum. We were particularly inspired by aspects of the ICA's Teen Night and also by the Friend Request project from the Walker, which brought teens together through unexpected and decidedly non-digital means. We look forward to implementing our own spins on these ideas throughout the year.

Dario Robleto

Artist-in-Residence, ICA/Boston

After having the great pleasure of being this year's Artist-in-Residence, I left feeling more convinced than ever of the crucial importance of the roles of museums and museum educators in the health of arts education in this country. As the role of arts education slowly erodes in public schools, museums provide an invaluable service to our youth that others seem unable to fill. On the whole, I don't think the public, or even the broader art community, fully realizes this. While I assumed the focus would be on art education, it was clear that what the teens were learning extended well beyond artistic concerns. What excited me most was how they learned to integrate art and abstract thinking into the different aspects of their lives. Every teen I met displayed a maturity and open-mindedness that filled me with the kind of hope and excitement I'm sure their educators must experience with them every day. I felt lucky to be included.

Being around these remarkable teens and educators should make any artist reflect on their role in the education process, and their responsibilities to the public good. The programs that incorporate artists are as much a service to an artist as he or she is to a group; it is not a one-way street. This is important; I left the Convening convinced that I must do more to support these programs, making changes in my own artistic practice that incorporate lessons learned from the educators. I don't think our museum educators hear nearly enough from the artists they are in charge of educating the public about. Our arts educators need to know they are recognized and supported by artists and I will grapple with how to be better at that.

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I left feeling more convinced than ever of the crucial importance museums and museum educators in the health of arts education in this country. As the role of arts education slowly erodes in public schools, museums provide an invaluable service to our youth that others seem unable to fill.

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Acknowledgements

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Leah Kandel, Education Department Assistant

Donovan Birch Jr., Teen Arts Council Alumnus and Teen Programs Assistant

Shaquille Alberts, Teen Arts Council

Chabelyz Mejia, Teen Arts Council

2011 Conference Participants

The Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh

Paul O'Brien, Artist Educator

Carrie McGinnis and M'antayla Jackson, Power Up

Arthouse at the Jones Center, Austin

Erin Gentry, Manager of Education Programs

Ashley Love, Club Arthouse, Young Artists @ Arthouse, and Advanced Young Artists @ Arthouse

Hector Romero, Young Artists @ Arthouse and Advanced Young Artists @ Arthouse

The Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston

Gabrielle Wyrick, Associate Director of Education and Teen Convening Project Director

Jeremy Maher, Fast Forward

Chabelyz Mejia, Teen Arts Council

Marwen, Chicago

Shirley Alfaro, Manager of Studio Programs

Lily Alfaro and Queion Swift, Students

The Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles

Fabrizio Flores, Education Program Coordinator

Diego Espinoza and Molly Spater, Apprentices

Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego

Anne Kindseth, Education Associate

Alexandra Chenelle and Elvis Kim, Teen Art Council

Walker Art Center, Minneapolis

Adriana Rimpel, Teen Programs Manager

Will Freeman and Henry Willette, Teen Art Council

Real Life Remixed: A National Convening for Teens in the Arts

Wednesday, August 10–Friday, August 12, 2011

Professional titles reflect positions held by participants during the conference.

Wexner Center for the Arts, Ohio

Jean Pitman, Educator for Youth Programs

Dariel Bustos and Khari Saffo, Teen Program

Whitney Museum of American Art, New York

Carda Burke, Youth Insights Coordinator

Rebecca Galpern and Sarah Wu, Youth Insights

Dario Robleto, Artist-in-Residence, Houston

2011 Professional Development

Roundtable Panelists

Bert Crenca, Founder and Artistic Director, AS220, Providence

David Henry, Director of Programs, The Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston

Sarah Schultz, Director of Education and Community Partnerships, Walker Arts Center

Laurie Jo Wallace, Director of Training and Capacity, Health Resources in Action, and Director, National BEST Initiative in Boston

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Shirley Alfaro, Carda Burke, Margaret Fisher-Lees, Fabrizio Flores, Erin Gentry, Anne Kindseth, Jill Medvedow, Paul O'Brien, Jean Pitman, Adriana Rimpel, Dario Robleto, Melissa Hale Woodman, and Gabrielle Wyrick

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A heartfelt thanks to the ICA Teen Arts Council for organizing the summer Teen Night and opening reception for the Teen Convening, as well as event partners Zumix and Artists for Humanity. Special thanks to the professional development roundtable panelists Bert Crenca, Sarah Schultz, and Laurie Jo Wallace. We would like to extend our gratitude to Margaret Fisher-Lees and Melissa Hale Woodman for their time writing key portions of this publication, and to Danielle Palmstrom for her creativity and design savvy.

Conference Schedule

Day I Wednesday, August 10, 2011

9:15–9:45 am	Registration and Breakfast
10–10:10 am	Introduction Monica Garza, Director of Education, The Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston
10:10–10:30 am	Presentation # 1: The Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston Gabrielle Wyrick, Associate Director of Education and Teen Convening Project Director Chabelyz Mejia, Teen Arts Council; Jeremy Maher, Fast Forward Member
10:30–10:50 am	Presentation # 2: Wexner Center for the Arts Jean Pitman, Educator for Youth Programs Dariel Bustos and Khari Saffo, Teen Program
10:50–11:10 am	Presentation #3: Walker Art Center Adriana Rimpel, Teen Program Manager Will Freeman and Henry Willette, Walker Arts Center Teen Arts Council
11:10–11:30 am	Presentation #4: Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego Anne Kindseth, Education Associate Alexandra Chenelle and Elvis Kim, Teen Art Council
11:30–12:30 pm	Lunch Break
12:30–1 pm	Tour of <i>The Record: Contemporary Art and Vinyl</i> Led by members of the ICA/Boston Teen Arts Council
1–1:20 pm	Presentation #5: Whitney Museum of American Art Carda Burke, Youth Insights Coordinator Rebecca Galpern and Sarah Wu, Youth Insights
1:20–1:40 pm	Presentation #6: Arthouse at the Jones Center Erin Gentry, Manager of Education Programs Ashley Love and Hector Romero, Club Arthouse, Young Artists @ Arthouse, and Advanced Young Artists @ Arthouse Participants
1:40–2 pm	Presentation #7: The Museum of Contemporary Art Los Angeles Fabrizio Flores, Education Program Coordinator Diego Espinoza and Molly Spater, Apprentices

Real Life Remixed: A National Convening for Teens in the Arts

Wednesday, August 10–Friday, August 12, 2011

Professional titles reflect positions held by participants during the conference.

2–2:40 pm	Coffee Break and Tour of <i>Catherine Opie: Empty and Full</i> Led by members of the ICA Teen Arts Council
2:40–3 pm	Presentation #8: Marwen Shirley Alfaro, Manager of Studio Programs Lily Alfaro and Quieon Swift, Students
3–3:20 pm	Presentation #9: The Andy Warhol Museum Paul O'Brien, Artist Educator Carrie McGinnis and M'antayla Jackson, Power Up Program
3:20–3:30 pm	Wrap Up
6–9 pm	Teen Night/Opening Reception

Day 2 Thursday, August 11, 2011

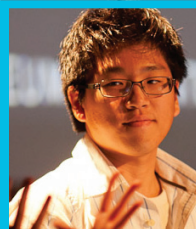
9:15–9:45 am	Breakfast
9:45–10 am	Welcome Remarks Jill Medvedow, Ellen Matilda Poss Director, ICA/Boston
10 am–Noon	Art-Making Activities Led by Artist-in-Residence Dario Robleto in the Bank of America Art Lab
Noon–1 pm	Lunch Break
1–2:30 pm	Work Session # 1 Open discussion on four topics, with teens from the ICA Teen Arts Council serving as moderators and timekeepers. Forty-five minute discussions on each topic, culled from the online forum, followed.
	Topic # 1: Teen Programs Advocacy How do teens and educators promote the importance of their teen programs to those who see what they do at their museum as "extra" or something to do during their "free time"?

	Topic #2: Skill Development While many museums cite skill development as central to their teen programs, the types of skills and applications vary. What are the different skills you have developed from your teen program, and how can you apply them across different life experiences?
2:30–3 pm	Coffee Break
3–4:30 pm	Work Session # 2 Topic # 3: Experimentation and Expansive Thinking When asked to describe their museum experience, many teens see the museum as a place where experimentation and expansive thinking are both possible and encouraged. Has participation in your museum program allowed for experimentation in your own life? If so, how?
	Topic # 4: Teens and Controversial Subject Matter In the world of contemporary art, we are often faced with subject matter that is challenging and controversial. What is the best way of addressing that content with teens in our programs?
4:30 pm	Summary and Next Steps
6 pm	Dinner

Day 3 Friday, August 12, 2011

9:15–9:45 am	Teen Discussion Roundtable and Next Steps Moderated by Donovan Birch, Jr., ICA Teen Arts Council Alumni Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center, Inc.
9:30–10 am	Educators' Breakfast
10 am–Noon	Professional Development Roundtable for Museum Educators Panelists Bert Crenca, Director, AS220 David Henry, Director of Programs, ICA/Boston Sarah Schultz, Director of Education and Community Partnerships, Walker Art Center Laurie Jo Wallace, Director of Training and Capacity Building, HRIA
10:30 am–12:30 pm	Teen Dim Sum and Walking Tour of Chinatown Led by Boston Teen Group A-VOYCE
Noon–1 pm	Educators' Lunch
1–2:30 pm	Historic Bus Tour All participants
2:30–4 pm	Wrap Up and Next Steps
4 pm	Teen Convening Ends

The Andy Warhol Museum



Arthouse at the Jones Center



Walker Art Center

The Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston



The Wexner Center for the Arts

Marwen



The Whitney Museum of American Art

Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles



Dario Robleto

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Before I became part of the Teen Arts Council, I felt like my life was all the same: the same people, same places, same ideas. Being part of the ICA has helped me expand who I am, and explore big ideas...new and different things that weren't part of my life before. When I hear people talk about art and museums as unimportant or insignificant, I want to tell them that they have it so wrong. It's one of the most important things that I know.

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