**Overview of Responses (2016 ATA Survey):**

**The Ideas And Beliefs At The Core Of Your Teaching Artist Practice?**

**What Inhibits, Challenges, Or Enables Your Core Ideas And Beliefs To Be Realized?**

31.71% of Teaching Artists who responded practiced for under 5 years

24.39% of Teaching Artists who responded practiced for 5 to 10 years

24.39% of Teaching Artists who responded practiced for 10 to 20 years

19.51% of Teaching Artists who responded practiced for over 20 years

Responses received from Teaching Artists practicing in New York, California, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, New Jersey, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Washington

**The Ideas And Beliefs At The Core Of Your Teaching Artist Practice?**

Listening, observing, creating a safe space to give students a voice; being in the moment and

following the spark, the lead of children; putting relationships with students first, always; being

a student myself, always!

Culturally responsive teaching; student-centered classrooms; knowledge of youth culture; students in the forefront of learning; building community.

Regularly practicing creative thinking and collaboration is important for children. I also believe

in inquiry, student-centered education, and hands-on learning. I want a future filled with adults

who are willing to think outside the box, question authority, and help others. I believe that

fostering artistic thinking will make my community a better place to live

I believe that everyone should have an opportunity to engage in the arts and be able to create

art. For my specific art form, which is dance, I believe that our society has stinted the condition

in which dance is accessible to all people. It is my goal to make dance something anyone and

everyone can participate in and enjoy.

To be aware of the beliefs and values of the people around us. Our core beliefs and

values are reflected in our stories, and it is those stories I collect and share.

I like to help build awareness of the variables at play in a given art project, and the tools

available to address those variables. Students can make meaningful expressive work with this

knowledge. I also believe that by undergoing the process of creating and making, students have

the opportunity to transfer that understanding to other forms, and become more curious about

the world at large. With this curiosity, they become more able to un-make and deconstruct

things around them, whether they be objects, a film, the news, or even how a law is made.

Motivate and inspire young people, by building their self-confidence and encouraging creativity

That all people are capable of learning. That it is my job to assist students in figuring out how

they learn so they can be better students and lifelong learners. Building the qualities of

persistence and passion will assist students more than talent. Learning through dance and

movement stays with a person longer than a traditional lecture format.

I believe every person has the need to connect and communicate with others and that theatre

gives multiple communication pathways. I believe every person has a story to tell and the right

to tell it in a safe space.

I want all children to have an equal opportunity to feel that they can succeed in their lives and

Have the 'tools' to do so. I believe I can teach the ability to focus, concentrate, feel compassion and think creatively.

There is a place for the arts in learning, whether about art, or through art as a

method to deeper learning about other things.

I always believed that teaching is not making someone wiser, but rather more curious. And

myself as well.

Community based art education is what gave me a strong foundation as an artist. Art,

frequently at its highest form, is some form of a portrait of human experience. The core of my

Teaching Artist practice is the love of my community - everything I see and don't see there.

Allowing students to express themselves creatively can give them a new way to relate to

themselves and the world. Art is a system outside of the other systems that so often oppress

and limit our youth.

Using the arts as a form of social activism to create change in one's individual life as well as in

their community.

Bringing my professional passion and craft to young students who otherwise would

not be exposed to the concepts of architecture and building models with their hands instead of

computer modeling.

I believe that humans are creative beings. Unfortunately, the educational model being used

today quells creativity and rarely celebrates individuality. My work is focused on reawakening

students’ creativity and celebrating who they are. This work is done by journeying through many

avenues: play, exploration, collaboration, building of trust, taking risks, self-reflection. I

know I'm doing a great job when I witness students break out from (self-induced, societal,

circumstantial) confines. With art the possibilities are endless. Leaders become followers,

followers become leaders, the unengaged become engaged. Ultimately, I hope that my Teaching

Artist practice cultivates a community of empathetic, respectful citizens who celebrate

individuality and value creative expression.

Connecting the world around us through art.

**What Inhibits, Challenges, Or Enables Your Core Ideas And Beliefs To Be Realized?**

My teaching artist philosophy is to question and break out of confines. Mindfulness and respect are qualities that many (not all) classroom teachers do not posses. They tend to be rigid and set in their ways, work habits have stagnated. The organizations we work for exhibit similar patterns.

It's an endless uphill battle and it's exhausting. I feel undervalued and constantly have to

advocate for myself. The Teaching Artists who I respect are leaving the field, there's transitory

behavior. The "gig mentality" is alive and well, some say that we must rid ourselves of this "gig

mentality," this is a profession. But is it really? This will be a profession when I see Teaching

Artists are paid the same amount that classroom teachers are paid, when they have benefits

and are allowed sick leave. I'll see myself as a professional Teaching Artist when I sign in as

something other than "visitor" and school staff will not rudely state "you're not staff!" An

administrator recently announced, "You guys are cheap, compared to classroom teachers!" It

was honest but it was very sad. We needn't disguise the fact that, for a grand majority of us,

this is a way to supplement our income as we pursue our dreams of becoming artists.

Enabled: those same people that inhibit and frustrate me have enabled me. Teachers that give positive feedback, teachers that make an effort, administrators that answer my calls and care. Organizations that take interest in culture and diversity and offer support. My colleagues have enabled me too. Teaching Artists understand the challenges of the work, I appreciate their honesty.

Lack of a clear career progression; lack of professional development that leads to expanding

work possibilities; far too many non-profits lack the proper support for their Teaching Artists;

how to plan for career growth.

Challenging myself has enabled me to go deeper into my teaching practice and to tap into my

creativity. Being true to myself and willing to keep getting to know myself, I bring my

authentic self into all teaching. I've come to learn that I have inhibited myself, perhaps call it

self-paralysis, in past years when I thought students or the environment were inhibiting me.

This revelation has completely brought me to my knees and humbled me and enabled me to do

more collaborating, teaming up with peers, ask more questions, ask for help, collaborate with

my students, and go deeper into my core beliefs and creativity. Indeed, a constant challenge

that keeps me fresh and enables me to meet students where they are, and when I cannot,

enables me to pause and ask student's questions, embrace my fears and "just be" and trust

that I can slowly, slowly find, see a moment of magic in a student.

Inhibiting factors include reduction of available time for sessions and the kind of response time

many funders and institutions require as "proof" that art did something. There is learning that

happens in the more immediate sense, but also one that unfolds over time. It is difficult to

assess learning in a longitudinal way without ongoing partnerships and mutual interest.

Funders want long lasting effects, but it's difficult to get buy in unless results show in the short

term. On the other end of the spectrum, I've been inspired by schools and institutions that work

outside of the public system, and can assist in this. Experience helps. Our situation is highly

predicted by our culture and values, and the going value system continues to be education as

pre-workforce training rather than the cultivation of human experience, curiosity, and

development.

Our current education system is broken. Time and resources are scarce. Under-served

populations don't get the arts and progressive education that they deserve. I wish there was

more education activism lead by Teaching Artists.

There is never enough time or compensation to share what I've learned.

Districts/administrations, which hold arts education in high regard, enable programs to be

prioritized so all students can benefit. Service providers can push in and become a support.

Many districts, however, do not support this, leaving marginalized and special populations disconnected from what their peers are experiencing. Funding is always an issue. Reflecting and promoting how programs are aligned with Common Core has been beneficial.

Sometimes I've felt that a classroom teacher doesn't value the class, which immediately reflects

on the students and their willingness to participate. There is the pressure to have a performance and a residency in a short time. This does not create a nurturing, safe, creative environment but rather a pressure cooker. Sometimes I've felt that a classroom teacher doesn't value the class, which immediately reflects on the students and their willingness to participate.

Money, low pay, scarcity of well paying opportunities.

Being able to work with/in some of the same schools year after year with the same children

really allows me to see personal growth in each student. On the other side of that is when I work

in a school for one year, it's difficult to see what the long-term effects are. One challenge for a

Teaching Artist is teacher buy in. If the classroom teacher you are working with doesn't believe in or understand the benefits of arts infused education it definitely affects the students’ interest and

engagement.

The big challenge for me is to get some students who come from difficult personal

experiences in life to engage in classroom activities. However, I've had several

students who lived in the border of delinquency very engaged and creative. This is the

power of art: to use its strategies to change a person’s life.

Inhibited and challenged: funds; stakeholders disbelief from the get-go; administrators not

including folks like teacher's aides, school social workers, counselors, librarians, etc. or even a

child's one-on-one support staff in the development of the project. Positively enabled: teacher

joy and commitment to their children and their willingness to create something new together, to

try a new way or build on our success to expand stakeholder circle and positive impact on the

children.

Enabled - a thoughtful arts organization that I work for; Challenged - schools that overbook

teachers and class becomes cancelled for that particular week; inhibited - my feeling of being

on the periphery of school culture

Lack of respect and cooperation from public school teachers / faculty who we are supposed to

work in collaboration with.

Standardization, time, space, close-mindedness, inability to collaborate, lack of knowledge

about the benefit the arts can bring to education.

That most arts programming is youth, female, and middle class focused, and most Teaching Artists are white females. How do we change this?

Needing to search and find funding for most of the work I am hired to do. The misunderstanding of what art/art education is and what it contributes.