

childArt



Editor's Letter

A casualty of Covid-19 is the postponement of the 6th World Children's Festival, which will now take place on July 30th–August 1st at The National Mall across from the U.S. Capitol.

Art can be a powerful catalyst for cultural and social change. Art can also provide immediate benefits that result in better mental and physical health, especially during this pandemic, hence this special issue on "Art for Health."

We are grateful to NEA Chairman Mary Anne Carter for writing for ChildArt and we thank all other contributors. We are also grateful to those who have worked behind the scenes to make this issue possible, in particular Frederick Marks, ICAF Board Member, and Sunil Iyengar, NEA Director of Research and Analysis.

While we rely on science to free us from Covid-19, art opens windows to new vistas and can serve as a mirror for self-improvement.

Sincerely,

Ashfaq Ishaq Ph. D.
Chairman

childArt



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Next issue: ChildArt (Oct-Dec 2020) will be on the ABCD Study in collaboration with the National Institutes of Health and the National Endowment for the Arts

COVER ART

"The Camping Site" by Alina Ponomarenko, Age 11, Texas

BACK COVER ART

"Gymnasts in Action" Aishling Kelly, Age 11, Arizona

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Why Art for Health

We never dreamed we'd wear masks every day, wash our hands thoroughly at each turn, or avoid meeting our friends instead of greeting them. These are surreal times, when the unimaginable becomes the daily reality. No hugs or handshakes. No playdates or outings. Zoom birthday parties. Will schools reopen this fall? What will I do if I test positive? These are heavy questions for anyone to carry. How can that weight be lessened in a world full of question but few answers?

One pathway is art! **Everyone has creativity inside of them and expressing that is often a cathartic experience.** Not only does partaking in the arts allow us to explore our own emotions and minds, but it also has been proven to have a positive impact on our mental and physical health. Sharing and exploring art with others is a great way to create community and understanding, and luckily during this time of limited social interaction, art is something we can all create and enjoy together, while maintaining our own health and safety. Whether it's in the stories you tell, the interactions you have with others, your nighttime doodle, or in your curiosity for the world around you, creativity flows freely. Your sense of optimism will bring that creativity out in everyone else. You have to use all available tools to keep yourself busy learning every day and staying hopeful and inspired.

This special issue of ChildArt opens with an essay by Mary Anne Carter, Chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, on the

importance of the arts for students' cognitive development and academic performance. A seminal neuroscientific study by the National Institutes of Health involving 12,000 students over ten years which is outlined in this issue also attests to the value of the arts for brain development.

This magazine's second section is about U.S. cultural diplomacy through the Arts Olympiad—a free-of-charge school art program of the International Child Art Foundation. You learn about the Arts Olympiad in a school in Long Island, New York, followed by the International Arts Olympiads in Nigeria, Argentina, Uganda, and Azerbaijan. You also get to meet the Arts Olympiad winner from Overland Park, Kansas, and see her Covid-19 artworks.

The third section provides you diverse perspectives on the power of the arts to heal, inspire, and connect with others. You learn from the International Arts + Mind Lab at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, the author of a book titled "Art for Health," two scientists at Randolph College in Virginia and the Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Tennessee, and finally, from an eminent cultural researcher in Toronto, Canada.

Happy reading and creating!



Michael Wong, Age 11, New York

STATE OF THE ART

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Let's begin with our country's two premier institutions, the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Institutes of Health. With its \$162 million budget for 2020, the NEA strengthens America's creative capacity by providing diverse opportunities for arts participation. The NIH will spend \$41.7 billion on medical research in 2020 to turn discoveries into improved health for the nation.

NEA Chairman Mary Anne Carter makes a compelling case for the arts and arts education for you. The NIH's Dr. Howlett and Dr. Dowling introduce you to a seminal ten-year study involving 12,000 schoolchildren, which will be groundbreaking in our understanding of human cognitive development.

NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT for the
ARTS

arts.gov



Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development®
Teen Brains. Today's Science. Brighter Future.

GROWING UP WITH THE ARTS: What Science Can Tell Us

The National Endowment for the Arts is a federal government agency. It awards grants to support the arts and creativity around the country, in communities large and small. The agency is also the proud collaborator on a large, groundbreaking study that we believe will produce valuable findings about the importance of the arts, creativity, and imagination to children's everyday lives.

Led by our partners at the National Institutes of Health, this study (called "ABCD" for short) is collecting and analyzing data from thousands of children as they grow into teenagers and, eventually, young adults. **The study will track the evolving brain structure of these children, their social and cognitive development, and their health and educational patterns.**

Because the study also will measure how kids participate in arts and cultural activities, it should be possible for researchers to understand whether and how arts participation—over several years—affects this critical phase of childhood development.

Through high-quality research that the Arts Endowment has supported elsewhere, we already have many promising indicators about the potential benefits of arts participation in

childhood and youth. Here are a few examples:

- In a study of "arts enrichment" programs in Head Start pre-schools in Philadelphia, West Chester University researchers found that economically disadvantaged children who learned in the arts showed lower levels of poverty-related stress, compared with similar groups of students who did not receive arts programming. In previous studies, the researchers have noted greater school readiness, vocabulary growth, and emotion regulation skills among arts-enriched preschool students.
- In a George Mason University study of more than 31,000 Miami children, children in 6th, 7th, and 8th grade who took an arts elective (music, dance, drama, or visual art) were shown to have higher GPAs and math and reading scores than students who did not take these electives—even after the researchers accounted for other factors. Another study by researchers at Texas A&M University and the University of Missouri featured more than 10,500 elementary school students in Houston.



The researchers found that students who took part in a local arts education initiative had fewer disciplinary problems than students who did not participate. They also reported better scores in writing and in "compassion for others," as measured by assessment tools.

- A National Endowment for the Arts study, using several large databases at the U.S. Department of Education, revealed arts participation in elementary and high school as positively linked with social and civic engagement behaviors, such as voting and volunteering.

Early data from the ABCD study showed that 60 percent of children (ages 9 and 10) have participated in at least one of the following art forms at some point in their lives: music, dance, visual arts, drama, and crafts. Fifty-one percent of all children had participated in one of these art forms as recently as the last year. The Arts Endowment remains interested in learning about and supporting the whole range of arts activities and art forms that occupy children and teenagers these days—from attending arts events and creating art or music, to taking arts classes or engaging with the arts through technology. More than three-fourths of the agency's arts education projects (pre-K through 12th grade) serve kids from underprivileged backgrounds.

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown many of us how in a time of protracted social isolation, anxiety, and uncertainty, people often can make the deepest connections with each other

through art, music, and storytelling. The NEA Research Lab at Vanderbilt University Medical Center recently developed a "Home Music Toolkit"—a research-based music curriculum that includes a video playlist of song activities and suggested strategies for parents and children to interact with music at home.

The Lab is currently studying the social and emotional benefits of a music therapy program for children with and without autism spectrum disorder. (See pages 31 and 32)

Music therapy and other "creative arts therapies" have been widely adopted in a host of care settings, often involving children and youth. New research into music programs and therapies—including treatments for children and youth—is being funded by the National Institutes of Health and the Arts Endowment. This research builds on an initiative called "Sound Health," a partnership with the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts to promote the science of music for health and well-being. An Arts Endowment Research Lab at Drexel University, meanwhile, is studying the effects of art therapy in pediatric cancer care settings. Throughout times of crisis, or in circumstances are more favorable, the arts offer relief, joy, and purpose to children everywhere. Science is just beginning to reveal how, why, and to what extent this is so.



Mary Anne Carter
Chairman of the
National Endowment for the Arts

Teen Brains, Today's Science, Brighter Future

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) is a government research agency whose goals are to support studies to understand the body and behavior and to use that knowledge to improve health. One of the studies that the NIH supports is called the Adolescent Brain Cognitive DevelopmentSM (ABCD) Study.

The ABCD Study will increase our understanding of how things like the environment, social interactions, genetics and biology, and other factors affect brain and childhood development. It is information that pediatricians, teachers, counselors, and parents will be able to use to help you grow up as strong as possible and become a healthy adult.



A study participant preparing for MRI.

ABCD Study®, Teen Brains. Today's Science. Brighter Future.®, and the ABCD Study Logo are registered marks of the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (HHS). Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development SM Study, is a service mark of HHS.

and shape a person's future.

The ABCD Study is big—almost 12,000 kids. It started when they were 9 to 10 years old, and it will run for 10 years until they are young adults. Participants in this \$400 million study will meet with a local research team every year in-person to answer some questions about their experiences and to play games and puzzles that can tell the researchers about things like memory, attention, reasoning, and planning. Participants also provide specimens (such as saliva) for genetic and other testing, and every participant has a safe non-invasive brain scan (MRI) session to obtain a clear picture of their brain every other year.

During the interviews, researchers are asking kids like you and caregivers about their family lives, friends, school, and extracurricular activities, how much they use different types of screens, their sleep and exercise patterns, among other experiences. They are also looking at the effects of participating in artistic activities like dance classes, learning how to



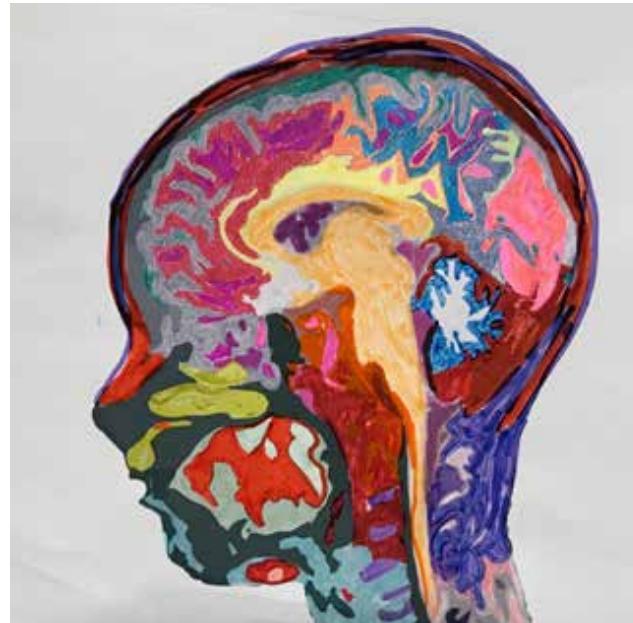
play a musical instrument, and other forms of self-expression.

Science and Art

If you think about it, science and research have similar goals to art. They all are ways to explain and understand our surroundings and how they impact us. Artists like painters, sculptors, musicians, dancers, actors, or writers use skills and imagination to explore their world and their lives. Scientists in the ABCD Study are using technology like brain scans, genetic testing, and puzzles to understand how life and learning experiences during teen years affect healthy development.

For instance, the **MRI scans will help the researchers tell whether the brains of kids taking art classes, participating in school plays or theater, or learning a musical instrument develop any differently from those students who don't participate in such activities.** There is already evidence that arts participation has positive effects on children's stress levels, reading ability, and brain development (see "Growing Up With the Arts: What Science Can Tell Us" in this issue). The scientists will also look at whether these and other activities have effects on other aspects of your health, school performance, and well-being.

The ABCD Study and the data it is collecting are a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to help find answers to important questions about health and development during the second decade of life. Researchers around the world will be able to use the data collected by the ABCD Study for many years to come, benefiting your generation and future generations



ABCD Study® Participant-Katelynn M.

and improving the lives not only in America but all over the world.

Together, with our government partners and the ABCD Study researchers and participants, NIDA is excited to use today's science to study how involvement in the arts and other experiences can help shape brighter futures. Fittingly, the National Endowment for the Arts is one of our partners in the study.

More information about the ABCD Study, our partners and collaborators, and the data being collected can be found at [ABCDStudy.org](https://abcdstudy.org).



Katia Delrahim Howlett, PhD, MPP, MBA

Deputy Director
Division of Extramural Research
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Emily Levine, Age 11, California

ARTS OLYMPIAD

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The flagship program of the International Child Art Foundation, the Arts Olympiad, has grown since 1997 into the world's largest school art program. Through structured lesson plans that make connections between mind and body, the Arts Olympiad inspires you to become an "artist-athlete" with a creative mind and healthy body. This revised self-image solidifies when you depict yourself as an artist-athlete playing your favorite sport.

You will see how the Arts Olympiad is organized in a Long Island-New York school and internationally in Nigeria, Argentina, Uganda, and Azerbaijan. You will also meet an Arts Olympiad winner and view the "My Favorite Sport" artwork that serves both as mirrors and windows.



"Designer" Sports Figures

Not many art classes happen in one of the last three room schoolhouses in the county. Teaching art, in the hamlet of New Suffolk, Long Island, to 13 multi-grade elementary students took on the characteristics of a "family." Meeting weekly with my 3rd-6th graders, I strived to create challenging learning opportunities that could encourage not only artistic expression but active discussion and empathetic outcomes. The 6th Arts Olympiad created by ICAF offered the platform to accomplish these goals by embracing the "artist-athlete" concept, which connected societal reflection and healthy



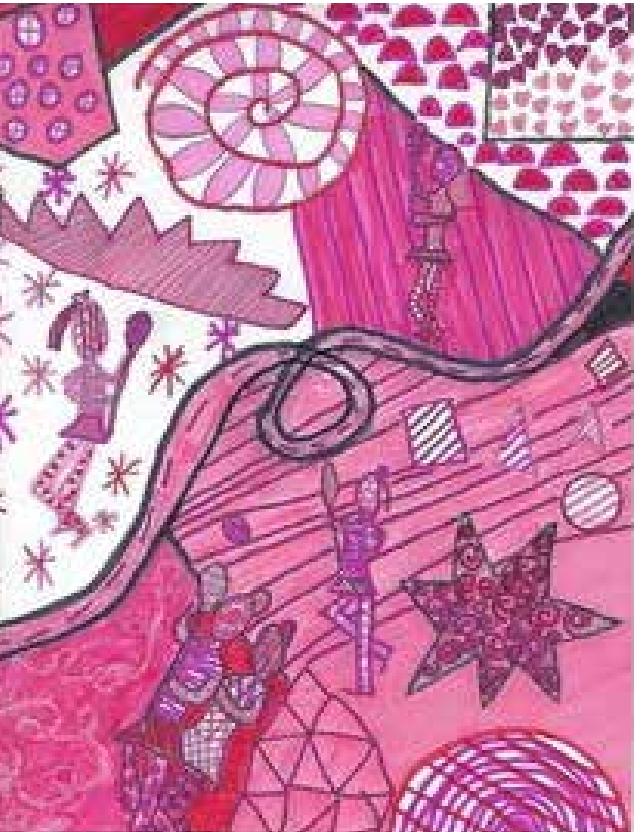
Caroline Fannon

attitudes by addressing the rising obesity crisis in the country. **My students' ideas and creativity became part of a global exchange where they could see themselves sharing beyond their local community.**

The artist-athlete ideal of the creative mind and healthy body permitted a constructive entry into self-image, lifestyle habits, and understanding that being healthy is not only a physical activity, but integral to mental health, too. It was important for students to see the interconnect-

edness between social wellness, art, and sport, and confront the prominent societal depiction of the artist and athlete as separate entities. Society has always had a penchant for categories, but in reality we need unity and freedom to express and be our best self.

As a class, we talked about the characteristics of the artist and that of the



Lila Dailey

athlete, and how passion and effort provided the drive to push ourselves to reach goals that could impact society as well. We discussed the shared aspirations of art and sports and how this opportunity could deconstruct arbitrary categories that impede on a child's psyche and self-esteem. The students spoke about times they too felt pressured to be or look a certain way by society at large. The topics continued into the students' own conversations. The students shared and exchanged ideas, viewpoints, stories, and memories.

The art table buzzed with lively conversation and collaborative effort. Community was building and overflowing into the artwork.

Each student created a composition based on their favorite sport, or the one they admired, because not all of them took part in sports. The

lesson framework incorporated color theory, the science and art of using color, along with the principles of art and the elements of design. The lesson framework incorporated color theory, the science and art of using color, along with the principles of art and the elements of design. This provided a visual vocabulary from which they could communicate their ideas.

To begin, students were asked to explore photos and videos of athletes on their laptop or computer to help develop their own sports figures in action. To further understand the anatomy of body and how it moves when in motion, they posed artist mannequins to replicate movements during sports activities. Several students physically recreated the poses around the art table, sharing the fun with their classmates. **Acting out the movements of the athlete also created a deeper connection to the act of drawing the sports figures.** The challenge of making the figures come to life became easier as students visualized the correlation.

The entire composition addressed certain aspects of art and design. Focusing mainly on pattern, repetition, rhythm and movement,



Anna Szymzak

with line, color and space, students envisioned their sports figures connecting the concepts and ideas that surfaced in previous art class discussions.

Each of them chose a color scheme, multiple patterns, while demonstrating depth with foreground, mid-ground, and background. Putting the lacrosse players in the foreground, mid-ground, and background led one student to remark how their artwork looked more realistic. They were starting to really grasp the visual vocabulary of an artist.

Students then challenged themselves to create patterns and designs for the sports figures and their respective environment. Using their imagination and creativity

they came up with several patterns and designs that best emulated the action in their artwork. One student created a pattern of a heartbeat to signify the racing heart of a soccer player.

Students were excited to apply color theory to create an energetic environment for their artistic composition based on color families that we explored in an earlier lesson. Some of the choices were complementary colors for stronger contrast or “pop” to enliven their sports figures and cool or warm colors to evoke emotions. One student chose a black-and-white color scheme to make his tennis players “pop” while another felt her cool colors depicted the concentration needed to play softball. After a

final outline with black sharpie to accentuate the design, **the students’ artwork not only radiated with the vivacity of the sport, but captured their passion as well.**

However, only one artwork from each school can be chosen for the Arts Olympiad. It was difficult to choose from the exciting array of work. This was a teachable moment. Students had the opportunity to be the art jurors in the

selection process. The Art Olympiad became our juried exhibition where the student artists would present their art to their classmates as jurors.

They learned how to critique each other’s artwork based on composition, originality, theme, effort, and clarity. We also talked about the larger con-

cepts of subjectivity and objectivity and that jurors preference of what they like or dislike can come into play when selecting a work. The students learned that it was important to value their own work and make a constructive argument on what makes their artwork special when developing the presentation. I asked the students to offer a positive comment about each other’s work and they replied twofold. Students who already demonstrated confidence turned to encourage their classmates by highlighting their color choices, amazing designs, and intricate patterns!

To break down the juror process, students needed to think of an analogy to everyday

events they previously experience.

Student examples, like trying out for a role in play or a position on team, receiving a gold medal in gymnastics at the Olympics, or getting a solo in choir, helped them gain a better understanding of the juror selection process. Students gave a five-minute presentation to the jurors about creating their artwork. All student artwork was exhibited, and students carefully examined the work. Afterwards, anonymous ballots were handed out to write the name of a fellow student. It wasn’t easy to choose only one artwork from this vibrant and dynamic group of artists.

However, once the ballots were counted with much enthusiasm, one student received the most votes from our student jurors for his bold black-and-white composition of two tennis players on the court. It was sixth-grader, Henry Langmack! Well done!

Participating in the Arts Olympiad was the catalyst for my students to understand art as a holistic learning process where they were

able to experiment, create, and refine their ideas.

Sharing and listening to each other’s perspectives allowed them to grow and appreciate that

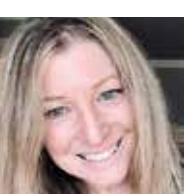


Henry Langmack

their artistic voice was connected to a community beyond their own. Our “Designer” Sports Figures opened a pathway towards engagement in social practice with the students realizing that their art and creativity can address issues and encourage change through collaborating with a bigger arena, the world.



Langmack at work developing his black-and-white design. His sports figures artwork was ultimately chosen by the class to participate in the 6th Worlds Children’s Festival, hosted by ICAF.



Che Sabalja, MA, MS

Art Educator

Art in Abuja

The Nigeria Art Olympiad is organized by the Female Artists Association of Nigeria.

In partnership with the Universal Basic Education Board (UBEB), public and private schools were invited to participate in the Arts Olympiad. The school entries were judged by a panel that included professional artists, art teachers, and UBEB staff members. After much deliberation, a total of ten finalists were selected. These ten finalists were invited to the Children Creativity Fair organized at the Nigerian Tulip College in Abuja on June 18–20, 2019. The ten students were asked to produce new artworks on the Arts Olympiad theme “My Favorite Sport” so we could select the winner. This selection was unbiased by any mentors or teachers that the student may have had.

The Children Creativity Fair was the first of its kind and many schools were invited. This event began with registration and art workshops, and was followed by the “Unity for Peace” essay writing contest on the second day. The third day consisted of cultural performances, poetry reading, and the award ceremony. The UFUK Dialogue Foundation, one of the sponsors, provided refreshments during the three-



John Joseph
Age 12, Nigeria

day event and arranged transport for the participating schools. **Students also received gifts, such as school bags, and books to encourage reading.** In addition to the award certificate given to each student, the winner, John Joseph, received a cash award as well from the UFUK Dialogue Foundation.

As a 12-year-old, John Joseph had moved to Abuja when his hometown in the North East was attacked by the insurgents. He lives with his brother at the IDP refugee camp and attends the Local Education Authority (LEA) school. He

does not plan to attend secondary school because he cannot afford it.

We are impressed by his creative abilities and potential. We arranged an art event on December 26, 2019 to raise support for him.

Joseph impressed everyone and secured funds for both his secondary education and university education.

We thank Joseph's supporters because through education any child can break the cycle of poverty and become a productive citizen.

We plan to organize the Children Creativity Fair in partnership with UFUK Dialogue Foundation every June based on the methodology of the World Children's Festival.

Our objective is to provide every Nigerian student an opportunity to showcase his or her talents in the visual and performing arts and to employ the power of the arts for peace and prosperity.



Finalists of the the Nigerian Arts Olympiad were invited to attend the first Children's Creativity Fair in Abuja, where they showcased various talents in the visual and performing arts.

The Nigerian delegation to the 6th World Children's Festival in Washington, D.C. will include John Joseph, Judith Yahaya (the winner of the previous Arts Olympiad), the Unity Dance Troupe, Joseph's parent and/or headmistress, ten members of the Female Artists Association of Nigeria, one UBEB official, and a representative of the UFUK Dialogue Foundation.

The current COVID-19 pandemic has made it difficult to continue our sponsorship drive, we pray that the lockdown will soon be over so we can all come together at the World Children's Festival.



Ngozi Akande

A prominent artist, president of the Female Artists Association of Nigeria, and assistant director at the National Council for Arts & Culture.

Is Art a Waste of Time?

Not so in Buenos Aires

In the closing years of the nineteenth century, Argentina was one of the world's richest countries with the highest per capita income. Today, Argentina faces an economic catastrophe, with more than 40 percent of its population falling under poverty. The government slashed funding for education, the Ministry of Culture was turned into an agency, but fortunately many scientists who had left for better opportunities overseas are coming back these days. What lingers are questions about the importance of the arts. Sadly but unsurprisingly, the National Arts Fund (Fondo Nacional de las Artes) did not support the Argentina Arts Olympiad.

The lack of official interest in artistic and creative



Paula Doncel Cruz
Age 11, Argentina

development mattered little to the students and faculty at Escuela Argentina Modelo in Buenos Aires.

The school developed an interdisciplinary bilingual project (May–October 2019) for the following areas of study: Literature (in English), Leadership Skills lessons (in Spanish), Art, Physical Education, and Information and Com-

munication Technologies. On the first day, we borrowed the theme from the 2016 Paralympics Games “We’re the Super-humans!” to inspire the students. They were astonished to

“An artist is also an actor, musician, dancer, or performer. So athletes are also artists.”



Students at Escuela Argentina Modelo in Buenos Aires painted a flag to be displayed at the World Children’s Festival.

see the videos from the event. “These people are awesome. Some of them did not have arms or legs. Some could not see, but they performed their best! I feel ashamed. Because I have everything in life. I am healthy, and I don’t do my best at school. I should change my attitude. I think that those people are real artists.”

Classroom discussions about disability became a segue to a conversation about art and empathy.

Does empathy make one “simpático”, or is it something more? It is to put yourself in another person’s shoes. “But what does this have to do with art?” a student asked.

The lesson plan’s most important aspect was to instill values: empathy, solidarity, hum-

ility. The three Olympic values—friendship, respect, and excellence—along with the four Paralympic values—determination, inspiration, courage, and equality—underpin the Games as a set of universal principles, but the teachers helped the students realize that they can also be applied to education and their daily lives.

The class also discussed the concepts of what makes a positive or a negative leader. The students later depicted these values in their artwork.

Through this dialogic process, the students incorporated their ideas into larger, multi-voiced classroom narratives. They began creating meaning out of their own culture and life experiences. They become active in their learning.

The students painted the flag (on the left) to be displayed at the World Children’s Festival. They were glad to participate in the Arts Olympiad, which raised awareness of other people’s realities and conditions, led to collaborative artmaking, the sharing of experiences, and a better understanding of each other and their world.



**Maria
Claudia
Albini**

ICAF board member and representative in Argentina

Fostering Children's Creativity in Uganda



Ahimbisibwe Mark Junior

Age 12, Uganda

As the founder of Africa Peace Murals, a nonprofit for arts educators in Uganda, I have had the opportunity to organize the Uganda Arts Olympiad since 2010. **Over the past decade, more than 10,000 students have participated in the Uganda Arts Olympiad which rewards their creativity and gives them hope.** At the 2011 World Children's Festival, the troupe from Uganda won the music award. The kids wore traditional Gomesi dresses made of barkcloth, and their cowrie shells and feathers to represent Uganda's indigenous cultures. When they performed at the festival's "World Stage," the gap between cultures dissipated.

To organize the prestigious 6th Arts Olympiad, I requested a meeting with Dr. Turyagenda Kedrace at the Directorate Education Standards,

Ministry of Education and Sports. She told me, "This is a very good project. It is in line with the government initiative. **It enriches our children with creative skills for work.**" She pledged the Ministry's support. The Ministry helped distribute the lesson plans to schools and communities in all districts of Uganda. More than 200 schools participated this year in the free-of-charge school art program. Each school selected the two best art pieces on the theme,

"My Favorite Sport." The works were mailed to the regional offices of the Ministry and then to the head office in Kampala. Everyone was amazed to see how wondrously the young artists portrayed their favorite sports.

Well-known artist-educators such as Kвесига



Ayesigye Ianlee Jacob
Age 12, Uganda



Students in schools and communities across Uganda participate in the Arts Olympiad.

David and Dembe Mary joined the panel of judges. Thorough deliberations were necessary in order to select two winners from the large pool of unique art pieces that had been submitted. The winning works depicted originality, creativity, and good composition.

Every participating school received online printable certificates from the International Child Art Foundation and the African Peace Murals. The winning artists will be invited to the 6th World Children's Festival in Washington, D.C.

ICAF has become popular in Uganda for fostering students' imagination and creativity. I have seen the impact of the Arts Olympiad on my students at the Kasangula Talent School, which I founded to promote the talents of rural kids through art, music, and sport. About 250 students participated in the global Arts Olympiad which inspired them and improved their academic performance.

My school also receives support from ICAF board member, Wook Choi, who is based in New York City and runs Oogie Art. She led a team of volunteers to bring water and electricity

to the school by digging a well and using solar panels. She has organized art workshops and provided learning materials that make students more passionate about their talents and more hopeful for the future.

Uganda's delegation to the 6th World

Children's Festival will be comprised of the Uganda Arts Olympiad winners and their teachers, the organizing committee members, and a performance troupe. The world festival is not only arts-based but also an opportunity for a science tour of the Smithsonian Museums, particularly the National Air and Space Museum.

The festival provides a platform for creative children to showcase their talents and to learn STEAM disciplines in workshops and through hands-on activities. Arranging funds for the travel of our large delegation is a major task that leaves me praying every night. Big global corporations should help the world's children come together at their World Children's Festival so they can build a better world that will benefit their business as well.



Mike Ssembiro
ICAF representative Uganda

Colorful Emotions in Baku

Beauty, kindness, and love can save our world. This has been the motto of my personal and creative life and what guides me every day. During these dark times that have surrounded our world, humanity needs more love and kindness than ever before. I believe that my young artists can bring new color and light back to life.

It is already ten years since I became the head of the art studio, Colorful Emotions, in Baku, Azerbaijan.



Leyli Musayeva

Age 7, Azerbaijan

I do not teach my students the secrets of art but the values of love, humanity, and compassion. Because one's art is a mirror of the mind, a beautiful mind creates beautiful art. I answer their question, "Who am I?" so they discover their true identity and can express themselves on paper with confidence. One can start painting at 3, 30, or 90. What unites artists is their passion.

My students have won dozens of international art competitions and their works have been exhibited in many famous museums and art salons in France and Italy.

My students also participate in social projects. We have participated in the Arts Olympiad and the World Children's Festival held in Washington, D.C.

It is a big celebration for the nations of the world because it brings our future, our children, together. The World Children's Festival is a place where many kids from different countries gather together and exchange their creative works. My students participate with great anticipation and excitement.

Every artist's point of view is important

because each uniquely expresses ideas through paints and brushes. We prepare variations of sketches on the Arts Olympiad theme, "My Favorite Sport", and choose the most influential compositions. Each Arts Olympiad captures its moment in time and the concerns that children face.

This year **children were thinking that staying healthy is not just "me" or "you"** because we should always try to protect our health and keep our forever home healthy as well. We are part of a bigger picture, what "me" and "you" do will eventually affect everyone. Being healthy is not only important regarding physical health, but we should also have a healthy mind and a healthy soul. Just like we clean our bodies every day, we should also clean away any dirty or useless thoughts because what is inside will eventually make its way outside.

Children have different personalities, dreams, goals, and backgrounds this is why their paintings vary a lot from each other. Some love to be strong and their art captures their strength and complements it in some way. Some are empathic and their works portray more loving scenarios. Take the case of 7-year-old Leyli Musayeva, who says,

**I believe in miracles
and I wish that we will
save the world one day.**

The 13-year-old student Zahra Mammadova sees herself as the "Little Prince" who thinks an



Sofiya Rasulova

Age 13, Azerbaijan

orange fox is waiting for her somewhere. Children never run out of ideas, and the next could be more vivid and real.

Adults can learn from them. My students' ideas inspire me in my work as an artist. I feel like a child again, living in a fairytale where every moment is magical.

Fifty Azeri kids are planning to participate in the 6th World Children's Festival at America's National Mall. I plan to organize a mural making project at the festival: "Let's believe in fairytales to save the world." During these chaotic times, I wish that our world will recover as soon as possible. When the world heals, every community will also heal. **"Dear world we love you a lot, please forgive us!"**



Narmina Valiyeva

Head of "Colorful Emotions" art studio, member of the Azerbaijan Artists Union and the Europe Women Artists Association, and ICAF board member.

Overland Park Arts Olympiad Winner

It's not every day that you get to have your artwork published in an international magazine or get selected as a delegate from Kansas to the 2021 World Children's Festival. I feel excited thinking about the festival, meeting all the different people from around the world, and seeing what talents they have.

My passion for art has existed for as long as I can remember. When I was two, I started to draw on cups and walls because I thought that they

needed a dash of creativity. I used to draw piggy noses onto the bottom of the cups and put them over my mouth. In kindergarten, I made a caterpillar out of paper circles and other items. In first grade, I drew a cat standing on buildings, and to add color, I took colored tissue and layered it wherever the buildings were.

In third grade, I drew lizard eyes and it was displayed at the Blue Valley District Office. In fourth grade, I drew Vincent Van Gogh, pumpkins, and birch trees. This year (fifth grade), I painted my favorite sport—chess—for the Arts Olympiad school art program. Chess is my new hobby and I play with my family.



Sloka Ganee
Age 10, Kansas, USA



This is a tough year for everyone because of the pandemic. So, I also painted a piece to represent this time. For the future, I don't have any plans, but I dream of having a house with a big yard and a big garden, open to all animals. I could be the "neighborhood vet," taking care of animals. I could become a radiologist who draws in her free time and is also the neighborhood vet.



SLOKA'S COVID-19 ARTWORK



Nicola Roos, Age 11, South Africa

FRESH PERSPECTIVES 3

You have learned about the importance of the arts from the NEA, the NIH, and the ICAF. How about perspectives of others? Susan Magsamen and Karen Alexander inform you about their findings at the International Arts + Mind Lab at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine in Baltimore. Dr. Worley, based in Edgewood, Maryland, suggests some activities for you from her recent book, *Art for Health*.

Professor Beck of Randolph College in Lynchburg, Virginia and Dr. Lense of the Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville, Tennessee explain their research on the impact of music.

Finally, D. Paul Schaefer, founder of the World Culture Project and an ICAF Board Member based in Toronto, Canada, explains why we must move from the economic age to a cultural age for sustainable prosperity and harmony.

international
arts+
mind LAB
THE CENTER FOR APPLIED
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SCIENCE
INSTITUTE

Healthy, Happy with Art

Have you ever noticed how looking at or making art can affect how you feel? For example, you might feel happy when you sing your favorite song or calm when viewing a painting of a peaceful scene.

We are constantly interacting with the world around us. Our five main senses—hearing, sight, touch, smell and taste—are working all the time. Science is now revealing that there are at least 21 additional senses, such as our senses of balance and movement, that help bring in the world around us.



Art and Your Brain

Scientists have learned that our brains respond differently to different types of sensory experiences. They have developed new tools to look inside and map the brain.

You may have heard that art only uses either the right or left side of your brain. This is not true!

The two sides of the brain are connected through the corpus callosum. Brain researchers are beginning to better understand that



exposure to the arts creates connections between different areas of the brain.

“Art is magical, but it’s not magic. It’s a neurological product, and we can study this neurological product the same way we study other complex processes such as language.”

—Dr. Charles Limb, euroscientist

The brain is made up of many chemical substances including neurotransmitters, which pass information from one cell to another. These chemical messengers help the brain regulate our emotions. For example, the neurotransmitter dopamine helps control the brain’s systems that make us feel pleasure and a sense of accomplishment. Researchers have found that dopamine levels increase when we view or create art.

When you draw a picture, hear a song, or write a poem, your brain is receiving and processing information and creating new pathways. This is called neuroplasticity, which keeps your brain growing and healthy.



How Making Art Can Help You

Dance helps build and strengthen your brain connections and can make you feel happier. Playing an instrument improves memory. Drawing, painting, or crafting helps build the fine motor skills needed to do things like writing and grasping small objects.

Scientists discovered that drawing forces your brain and body to process information in multiple ways. Creating art helps us learn to take risks and solve problems. Being able to think creatively and handle difficult problems are important skills that can help you feel less stressed by school assignments.

Scientists have found that some types of arts experiences can help lower levels of the “stress hormone,” cortisol, in the body. These processes can also serve as a type of meditation, which involves training your mind to increase awareness, emphasizes accepting feelings and thoughts without judgment, and helps your body and mind relax.

Have you ever found it difficult to share your feelings or thoughts with another person? Art can help us express our thoughts and emotions without using words. Being able to more fully express yourself can also reduce stress and anxiety.

“I found I could say things with color and shapes that I couldn’t say any other way—things I had no words for.”

—Georgia O’Keeffe, painter

For all of these reasons, arts are as essential to our health as exercise, good nutrition, and sleep.

You Can Help Others Through Art, Too

By making art for others, you can provide them with many of the benefits described above.

When a family member or friend feels overwhelmed, they can look at a drawing or painting that you created to help reduce their stress.

When you make art, you can personalize it: for example, you could write a poem or a song dedicated to a family member or friend. This can help the recipient feel honored.

Creating art with another person can help strengthen your bond with them. For example, dancing and listening to music with others can help us feel closer to our friends. Friends or family members who make or experience art together will likely feel closer than those who do not.

Your art can also help people in your community—for example, you could use chalk to draw pictures on the sidewalk to make people in your neighborhood feel happy. Another way is to make a drawing or painting for your teachers to show that you appreciate their hard work. Can you think of other ways that your art could help the people in your community?



Susan Magsamen

Executive Director
International Arts + Mind Lab
Brain Science Institute
Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine



Karen Alexander

Director Education and Outreach
International Arts + Mind Lab
Brain Science Institute
Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine

Now is the Time

In this time of crisis, when students and their families are locked down all over the world, many things are uncertain. Is it safe to see friends? Can you go to the ball game? Will schools re-open this fall? Understandably, you are anxious and don't quite know what to do. It almost seems as if the world is in a stage of transition—from how it used to be, to how it will be in the future. Now, more than ever, an opportunity exists for you to change for the better. Some people may be wondering how young people can take advantage of this time outside the classroom, stuck at home without much to do.

Here's the challenge: How can you work your talent and open new doors to learning to help yourself and others?



ONE

Quiet time. Take some time to think about the talents you have and document them—in your Android or Apple memo app or on a sheet of paper. Once you've nailed down your list, number the item twice. The first numbering is to prioritize them by skill-level, from your best talent (#1) to the talent you feel is maybe your least practiced or strong. Once you've prioritized the list according to skill level, number the list again according to how much you enjoy each, with #1 being what you enjoy most.

When you've done both lists, compare them. What are your number one talents for skill and enjoyment? Are they the same for each? If so, this may be the talent you focus most of your energies on. But here's a caveat: all your talents are valuable, regardless of how good you are or how much you enjoy them. You want to spend some quiet time to determine how you want to do your art.

TWO

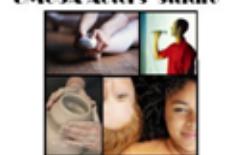
You've selected the talent or talents you want to explore. **Now it's time to hone your craft.** Work at it. Practice makes perfect, right? Absolutely! If you are a vocalist or musician, explore different types of music and try copying the styles. Sing alone or with your siblings. Write a song and perform it for your parents. Singing exercises your vocal cords and writing lyrics or music exercises your mind

If you are a visual artist, explore styles of sketch, chalk, and paint. Express your feelings about being confined and out of school during the pandemic on paper and canvas. Expressing yourself through your artform can relieve stress, reduce anxiety, and give you an outlet for sharing your feelings about this crisis.

Do you love to dance? Turn on the music and have at it! Feel the beat and just let go. Dancing can provide release by exercising the physical body. Explore movement and create a dance that expresses your feelings. Choreograph your story!

Share your talent by performing it for your family. **Art for Health**

UMCJA ACTORS' STUDIO



An arts curriculum promoting mental and physical health through arts appreciation

Dr. Tracy L.F. Worley, MFA, PMP

Learn more about how the arts can benefit one's mental and physical health in Dr. Worley's book, *Art for Health*.

build expertise. Exercise your mind and your body by using your talents, creating new artwork, and honing your skills.

THREE

You've selected the talents you want to explore, and you've begun to create within that artistic discipline. The most important next step is to **remain engaged** in your art. Seek opportunities to share your talent—online showcases, writing competitions, other contests.



Now is your time to stretch yourselves mentally and physically by pursuing artistic endeavors that will stimulate your creativity and could lead to better results in school and your life. The arts give you a voice, a creative declaration that will allow you to express yourself and better yourself. Learn to express yourself in writing. Begin to think critically about ideas and meaning. Learn to articulate meaning in your artistic discipline.

**Now is the time! Are you ready?
Let's do it!**



Tracy L.F. Worley,
DM, PMP

Creating a space for your talent gives you an outlet for your emotions and allows you to

How do Scientists Study Music?

Have you ever gotten just a few words of a song or musical phrase stuck in your head? Music psychologists call this “involuntary musical imagery” or sometimes “ear-worms.” Some studies find that more than 90% of us experience ear-worms at least once a week!

Did you know that choral singing can increase life-satisfaction and feelings of well-being? Scientists are exploring the mechanisms that might be at play; it could be that feeling like you belong to a group is part of the magic. Moving together to the same musical beat certainly plays a role.

The term music encompasses more than you might think, extending all the way to spoken language. Researcher Diana Deutsch was the first music psychologist to show that the line between speech and song is thin and that it depends on repetition. Our speech is intrinsically rhythmic and melodic, and if we place a sequence of several words on a “loop” we find that our brain now processes the input as a song instead of speech.

Diana Deutsch calls this “the speech-to-song-illusion.” It may seem like nothing more than a party trick, but it tells us something important about sound. **All sounds can be musical, and repetition and rhythm are key to transforming sound into music.**

These are just a few things that are being studied at the intersection of music, psychology, neuroscience, education, and health. This broad, interdisciplinary field of study is often called Music Cognition, and it encompasses research scientists

from many disciplines interested in how music is processed in the brain as well as how our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are affected by music.

In our music cognition research, we study how music supports social activities in parents and children. Music activities provide opportunities for parents and children to share attention, imitate each other, and regulate their emotions, all of which are important for child development. Our research uses many different methods such as looking at brain activity when people listen to music and how people move when they make music together. We apply findings of our experimental studies to music therapy programs through our National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Research Lab program. If you like to make music with a younger sibling or



when babysitting, you can use our Music Home Toolkit for ideas of ways to play musical games together.

How can you experiment with music like a music scientist?

- Music moves us. Most of us—about 95%—find music rewarding just like other pleasurable stimuli such as food, intimacy, and social interaction. The reward circuitry in our brains responds even more strongly to music that is familiar to us, whether we like it or not. Have you ever noticed that sometimes a song will grow on you after hearing it a certain number of times? Pick a song you’ve never heard before, and try listening to it once every day at the same time of day and recording how much you like it on a scale of 1 to 7. How does your preference change over time?
- Some sport psychologists have shown that listening to very up-tempo or fast songs improves exercise performance and reduces perceived exertion, making you feel like you didn’t work as hard as you did, but other researchers suggest the effect only holds at low to medium intensity workouts. Find a few songs with tempos of about 130 beats per minute (some examples include: Run-DMC, “It’s Tricky”; Maroon 5, “Moves Like Jagger,” and Destiny’s Child, “Survivor”) and try listening to them when you exercise.
- Does the music make your workout feel easier? Does the music make more or less of a difference if you are pushing yourself or just going through the motions?

Music is a powerful trigger for reminding people of events from their own life (called autobiographical memories). Most frequently, people have increased memory for events that occurred in their teens and early adulthood. In a study with college students, researcher Carol Krumhansl found that the students not only had increased memories associated with songs from their teenage years but also from when their parents were that age! This might be because these are the songs their parents played to them when they were growing up. Try listening to songs from the Billboard charts from different years. Do you most recognize songs you listen to now as a teenager and also songs from when your parents were teenagers? Do you have memories associated with these songs? Play the songs for your parents. Do your parents most frequently recognize and have memories of songs from when they were teenagers?



Sara Beck, PhD

Assistant Professor of Psychology
Randolph College



Miriam Lense, PhD

Assistant Professor of Otolaryngology
Co-Director, Music Cognition Lab
Vanderbilt University Medical Center

Why the Arts are Good for You!

Let's start with a bit of history. A British novelist and physical chemist, C. P. Snow published a book in 1959 titled, "The Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution". Snow made the case that intellectual life in the western world was divided into two cultures—the artistic-humanistic culture and the scientific culture.

Snow felt this was a real hindrance in coming to grips with the world's most difficult problems at that time because the artistic-humanistic culture was given too much attention and the scientific culture too little attention in western countries. Snow made such a powerful case for giving much more attention to the science education that a shift began to occur away from the arts, humanities, and an artistic-humanistic education.

It wasn't long after this that the sciences were treated as "hard subjects" and the arts and humanities as "soft subjects." This was accompanied by an increase in funding for the sciences and a decrease in funding for the arts. Since science was linked to economics, politics, industry, and technology, policy-makers thought that this was the key to solving the world's most pressing and urgent problems.

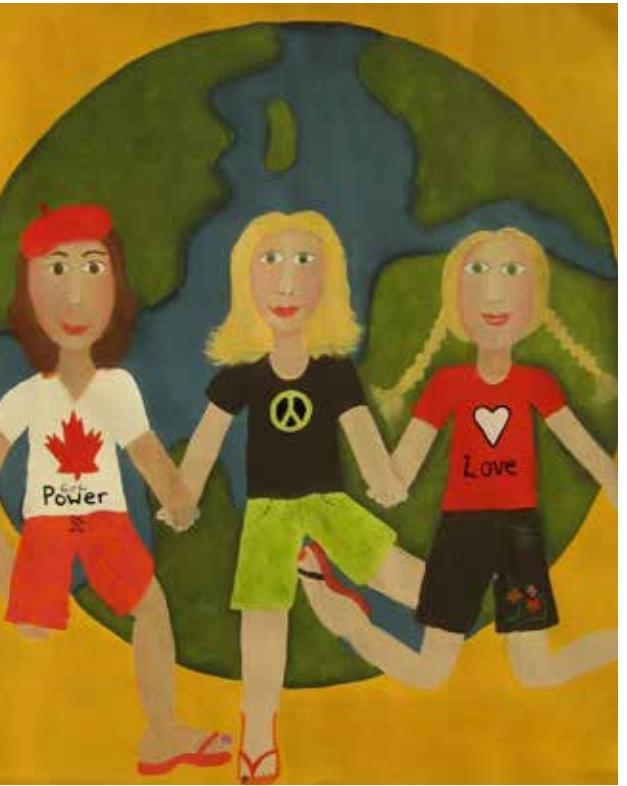
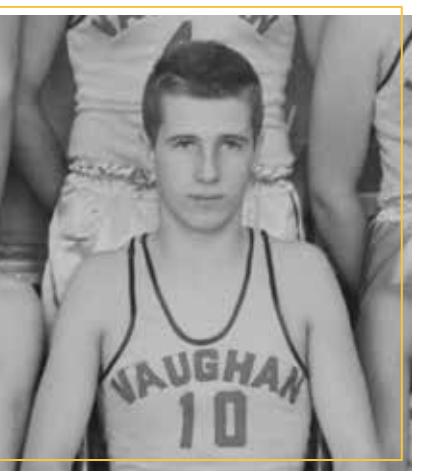
The "Snow thesis" eventually became a societal phenomenon and not just an educational phenomenon. Hard activities such as economics, industry, and science were

concerned with "the basics of life", while soft activities like the arts and humanities were about "the frills in life."

In the years to follow, art educators had to justify programs not only for their ability to teach students to play musical instruments, paint pictures, act in plays, dance, write, and prepare people generally for enjoying the arts later in life, but also for their ability to address important social and cultural concerns and to stimulate people's creativity.

The image of the educated person that is promoted and entrenched in today's economic age is based on the concept of "economic man" or "economic personality" concerned largely with the production and consumption of goods and services and creation of material and monetary wealth in order to keep economies functioning effectively and growing at a rapid rate. The problem with this image is that it is not compatible with the "global citizens" needed if we are to be successful in coming to grips with the life-threatening challenges that exist throughout the world today.

The economic age is not only having a



Jamie Barill

Age 10, Canada

devastating effect on the natural environment and producing colossal inequalities in income and wealth, but also it is not capable of coming to grips with the world pandemics and conflicts that arise as a result of the interaction and intermingling of people, groups, races, cultures, and religions with very different worldviews, values, traditions, customs, beliefs, and ways of life.

The time has come to pass out of the economic age and into a cultural age. Not only would a cultural age provide a more effective means for dealing with today's local and global problems, but it would also provide a much better context for developing, both in arts education, and in a general context.

The image of the educated person needs to be "the whole person" or "cultural person-

ality"—people who are holistic, centered, creative, altruistic, and humane. This is necessary to achieve more happiness, fulfillment, and spirituality in life, as well as live in harmony with the natural environment and other people.

It is also required to develop new worldviews, value systems, mindsets, and modes of behavior from the ones that exist today, as well as different skills, abilities, and assets if people are to function effectively in a cultural age, **and this age is to provide an effective context for arts education and other disciplines in the future.**

Ironically, science today shows the importance of the arts. Scientific research confirms that music provides "a total workout for the brain" because music stimulates blood flow, and all other organs and faculties. It also reduces blood pressure and relieves pain, improves sleep, increases motivation and mental awareness, and enhances memory. Scientific research has also confirmed that paintings enhance many brain functions by having an impact on brain wave patterns and emotions, the nervous system, and increased serotonin levels, as well as neural systems that yield a broad range of additional benefits such as motor skills, creativity, and improved emotional harmony.



D. Paul Schaefer

Founder and director of the World Culture Project www3.sympatico.ca/dpaulschaefer and an ICAF board member

Art and Health Resources

For you

Grow your interest in music with this! <http://serenademusicclass.org/home-toolkit>

Don't know how to draw? No worries! <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/doodletv/id1505985805>

Share your art and express yourself? Register for the National PTA Reflections Program. <https://www.pta.org/home/programs/reflections>

Get invited as "Official Delegate" to the 2021 World Children's Festival by participating in this free Arts Olympiad. <https://ICAF.org/ArtsOlympiad>

For your parents and teachers too!

The medical healing power of the arts during Covid-19. <https://arts.ufl.edu/in-the-loop/news/can-the-arts-help-stop-covid-19/>

Learn about neuroaesthetics and how the arts impact your brain. <https://www.artandsmindlab.org/>



See the Arts Education Partnership list of resources. <https://www.aep-arts.org/covid-19-resources/>

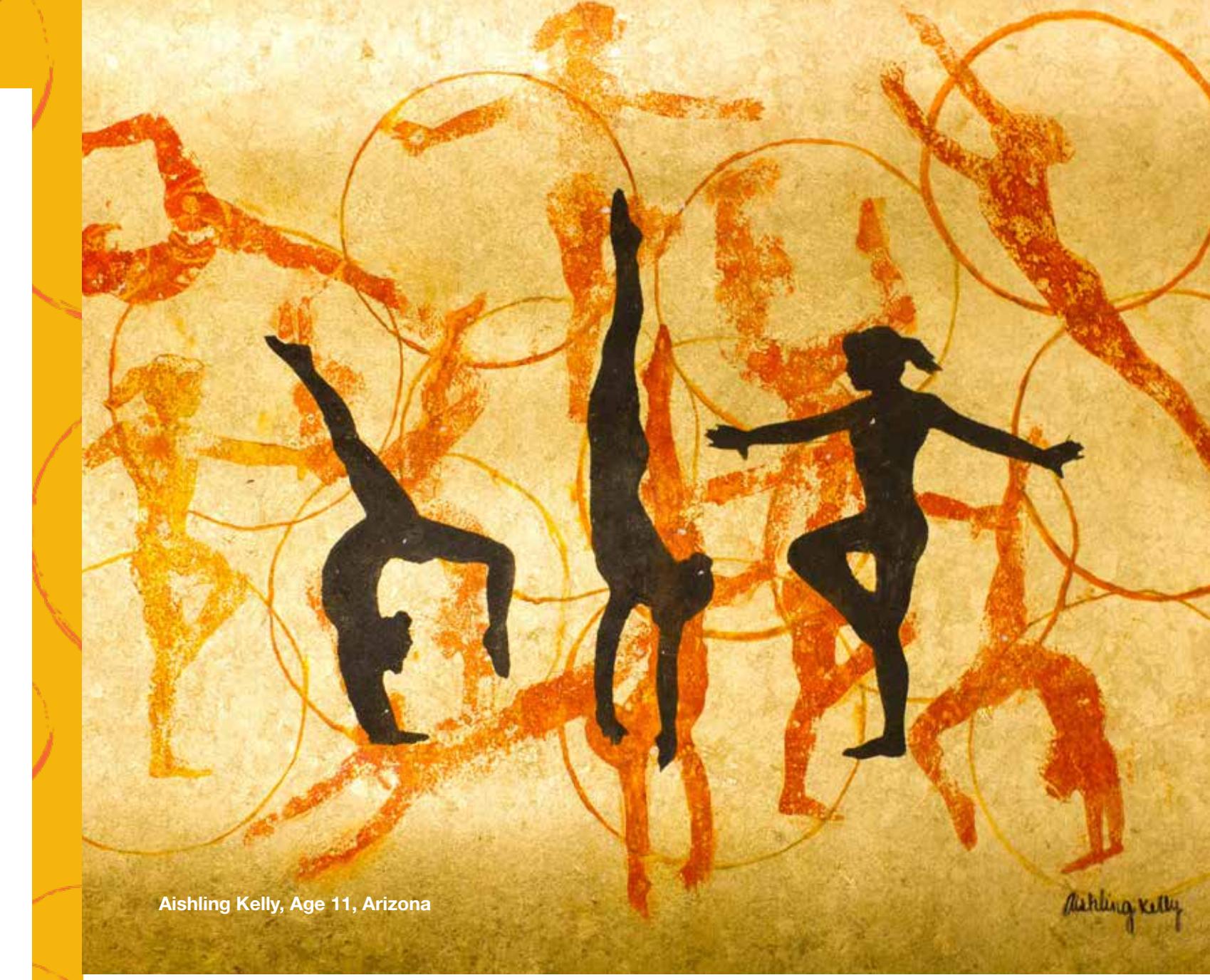
Arts Ed Collab has curated art resources for educators. <https://artsedcollab.org/covid-19-resources/>

The Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs' list for art instruction and experiences during social distancing. <https://culturela.org/programs-and-initiatives/arts-resources-during-covid-19-2/>

Learn how to be an effective leader during Covid-19. [https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/toc/10.1002/\(ISSN\)1531-5355.crisis-leadership](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/toc/10.1002/(ISSN)1531-5355.crisis-leadership)

Learn about transferring art education for shelter in place audiences. <https://nationalguild.org/covid-19-response/transferring-arts-programming>

Meet the author of "The Healing Power of Human Connection in a Sometimes Lonely World". https://aspeninst.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_8YjuVfYeTuC0n4L5QE6A7w



Aishling Kelly, Age 11, Arizona



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Incorporated in 1997 in the District of Columbia as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, the International Child Art Foundation serves American children as their national arts organization to foster their creativity and develop mutual empathy between them and with their peers worldwide through the universal language of art.