

Owens Art Gallery Artist in Schools Program

STUDIO CALL: LEAH GARNETT

Suggestions for using Studio Call in the classroom

Studio Call is a program organized by the Owens Art Gallery to introduce students to contemporary artists. The program takes place over one week in schools in Sackville and nearby communities. This online version is designed to bring the Studio Call experience to students and teachers both near and far.

Studio Call: Leah Garnett is a flexible resource for students and teachers. Containing 26 minutes of video and slide presentations that provide an overview of Leah Garnett's practice and examples of student work created in classroom sessions with the artist, this resource offers an opportunity to join Leah in a special artist-designed art project created for the classroom. Studio Call: Leah Garnett is best suited to students in grades four through twelve.

Leah Garnett

Leah Garnett is an artist who investigates themes of architecture, landscape and space. She works mainly in drawing and sculpture often creating installations that bring together diverse materials. She has worked with magnets, thread, adhesive vinyl, fabric, paper, black light, helium inflatables and radio. Leah is a

professor at Mount Allison University where she teaches drawing, open media and contemporary art issues.

Studio Call: Leah Garnett Content Overview

Screens 1-2 provide an introduction to Leah Garnett's practice. In these screens Leah talks about her studio, themes that she investigates and connections between her childhood and the art she makes today. Screen 1 contains links to a slideshow of Leah's work and to a follow-up video where Leah describes her studio. From the studio description there is a link to a short video of Leah demonstrating how she creates her needle, thread and magnet drawings.

Screens 3-4 focus on Leah's use of drawing in relation to radio. In Screen 3 Leah describes how she uses radio for a series of work called *Drawing on Air*. Screen 4 simulates the Drawing on Air experience, inviting students to close their eyes and draw their interpretation of what they are hearing. Leah then reflects on the resulting drawings. This section ends with a link to a selection of Drawing on Air drawings made by students who took part in Studio Call.

Screens 5-11 reflect on drawing as a language and mark making as a vocabulary. Leah also addresses the idea of a self-portrait and proposes a self-portrait based on the individuality of the marks that one makes. Leah then leads students through a series of drawing exercises that rely on the individual constraints of each person's body. Screen 11 contains a link to a slideshow showing Studio Call in action in classrooms in Sackville, Port Elgin and Amherst.

Screen 12 provides an opportunity to reflect on the experience of drawing with Leah Garnett.

Suggestions for Teachers

Studio Call: Leah Garnett can be used in the classroom in a number ways:

- projected for the class on a screen or assigned to students to watch individually.
- content can be divided between two or more class sessions; one introducing Leah Garnett and her work and completing the Drawing on Air exercise, the second focussing on the self-portrait activity. If doing both the Drawing on Air and self-portrait activity in a single session, a double



class period is recommended.

- The Drawing on Air exercise could be assigned as a take home assignment for students to complete on their own, accessing the Owens website from their home computers. The resulting drawings could then be displayed in the classroom and be used for discussion. For students who do not have access to the internet at home, an mp3 version of Drawing on Air is available for download from the Resources for Teachers section of the Studio Call website for use on a personal mp3 player, cell phone or for burning onto a CD-Rom.
- Reflection is an important aspect of the artmaking process and an element built in to Studio Call: Leah Garnett through the comments box on the final screen. As a conclusion to the project, students could be asked to reflect on the experience of drawing with Leah Garnett and share their thoughts through the comments box. If students would like a response to their comment submission, please ask them to include an email address with their message.

Assessment

Assessment can be tailored to fit your needs. Engagement in drawing assignments, personal reflection on the drawing experience and contributions to class discussion in relation to the drawing projects are elements that can be used for assessment and address

Visual Arts and English Language Arts outcomes.

Space and Materials

- Drawing on Air requires only a drawing tool (a pencil is perfect) and a piece of paper. 11 x 17" copy paper is best but smaller paper will do.
- The self-portrait activity requires a large piece of paper cut to the height of the person drawing on it. In Studio Call we used brown craft paper cut from a roll.
- For this activity you will also need two contrasting drawing materials, graphite sticks and white conté (hard-pressed crayon) work very well.
- Scotch tape is used to fasten the two sides the self-portrait, transforming it into a tube.
- Both activities require a surface such as a desk or table to draw on.

Suggestions for Families and Community Groups

Studio Call: Leah Garnett can be used at home or by community organizations.

- Try Drawing on Air as a family or make a family grouping of your self-portraits.
- Experiment with photography by taking pictures of your family portraits from different angles.
- Community groups can make use of the suggestions for teachers when adapting Studio Call for a group.

Studio Call: Leah Garnett took place from 20-23 May 2008 at schools in Sackville and Port Elgin, NB and Amherst, NS with the support of Lucy MacDonald, Owens Art Gallery Curator of Education and Community Outreach.

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The online version of Studio Call was designed and developed by Lucy MacDonald

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