



Arianna Alamo, *High School in the Community* > Being able to communicate with ex-prisoners and hear how their lives have changed was very impactful, and I'll always remember that.



Mya Baldwin, *Metropolitan Business Academy* > The best part of the program is meeting new people, and the most memorable part was learning about our jails.



Katie Browe, *Educational Center for the Arts* > I'd recommend this to my friends because they can meet new artist with different experiences in a different environment, but centered on a theme. I expected a strict structure and liked the go-with-the flow attitudes.



Myles Davis, *Common Ground High School* > I learned to expand my vocabulary while rapping.



Dymin Ellis, *Career Regional High School* > The best part of the program is getting to know local teenage artists from all types of backgrounds and getting my work showcased.



Ruby Gonzalez, *New Haven Academy* > Learning about the criminal justice system, being so consumed by the information, and making art out of it—that was the best part. Going to the prison... it felt like we united and really were able to learn about ourselves in the process.



Emanuel Luck, *Metropolitan Business Academy* > The best part of the program is being surrounded by amazing artists.



Lisa Mwinja, *Wilbur Cross High School* > My favorite field trip was when we went to the prison. I learned that the men are also human, even if they are in jail, they are human like us.



Tyler Reid, *Co-op Arts & Humanites* > For me, art is a way to express myself. The best part of this program was working with fun positive teachers and peers.



Gaylord Salters, *Metropolitan Business Academy* > I would recommend the program for others because the friendly staff is like a family



Kayla Salters, *Co-op Arts & Humanites* > I was cool with the trip to the jail, eventually. It was bigger than I expected. I learned that I never want to end up in jail, but I also learned not to judge. One inmate commented on how we looked at them like zoo animals. I felt bad.



Anthony Simpson, *Engineering and Science University Magnet School* > The student who inspired me the most was Jasmine. I just think her art is amazing. And I'm kinda nervous to perform with her.



Ivory Smith, *Co-op Arts & Humanities* > For me, art is one of the only ways to express myself.



Jasmine Smith, *Hillhouse High School* > For me, art is the only thing even relatively close to the freedom I wish I could have...



Mama Soumahoro, *Engineering and Science University Magnet School* > The best part of the program is meeting new people, and the most memorable part was learning about our jails.

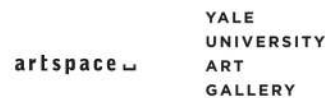


Mekaylah Stricklin, *Common Ground High School* > The most memorable moment for me was when I was asked to make a comic.



ARRESTING PATTERNS

perspectives on race,
criminal justice,
artistic expression,
and community.



Sept 12 & 13, 2015

Artspace New Haven presents a free two-day interdisciplinary conference designed to promote discussion on the interplay between race, artistic expression, mass incarceration, and varying perspectives on justice.

Guest artists, policy makers, scholars, and activists will explore the direct and collateral consequences of mass incarceration on the community and the individual, the criminal stereotype, color-blindness as a cultural principle, and the role that artistic expression can play in addressing these issues.

Learn More & Register Now
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The Conference is co-sponsored by Yale University Art Gallery and will take place in the museum's auditorium located at:
1111 Chapel St, New Haven, CT.



SURDNA FOUNDATION

Artspace is grateful to receive exhibition and project support from The Andy Warhol Foundation, City of New Haven Office Arts, Culture, Tourism, Community Foundation of Greater New Haven, Connecticut Humanities Council, Connecticut Office of the Arts, JANA Foundation, Seymour Lustman Memorial Fund, the Surdna Foundation's Artists Engaging in Social Change program, The Tow Foundation and Yale's President Public Service Fellowship.



50 Orange Street/New Haven, CT 06510/www.artspacenah.org/203.772.2709
Gallery Hours: Wednesday & Thursday 12-6pm, Friday & Saturday 12-8pm



Artspace's 15th Annual
Summer Apprenticeship Program

with Titus Kaphar, Aaron Jafferis, and Dexter Singleton

July 17 - September 13, 2015



The Jerome Project

Each year for the past 15 years, Artspace has offered a hands-on opportunity for a small team of New Haven Public School teens to work closely with an accomplished professional artist on the conceptualization and creation of a major exhibition at Artspace. No other program in our area exposes teens in such an intensive way to some of the foremost artists of our region.

Camille Hoffman, Artspace’s Summer Apprenticeship facilitator (and one of the inaugural participants in the Yale Post-Masters program), sat down with lead artist Titus Kaphar to reflect on the experience.

CH: Have our students surprised you in any way? What have we learned from the work we’ve been making over the past three weeks?

TK: I’ve been surprised by how nuanced their artistic response to the information that we’ve given them -- they are not producing literal, didactic illustrations -- they are producing conceptually rich and visually nuanced and interesting work that seems pretty advanced. For example, the Martin Luther King piece that Arianna [Alamo] is working on, I think that could be a very good piece if she keeps going with it, there’s a whole series in that, and I think there’s a way she could play with it that would push it further. And with what the students did with the collages, I think we’ve done a good job of not making them feel like every move that they make in a piece has to equate to a literal vocabulary...I think we’ve done a good job of giving them the information and introducing them to different ways of telling a story in terms of material that has opened them up to creating these nuanced things. Often times working with high school students that’s what happens -- this very literalist kind of thing.

CH: Their sophistication in terms of approaching the subject has also impressed me -- it’s been really inspiring to watch. And also how even materially, you introduced them to the tar paper, but they’ve also been bringing in their own personal source material -- I feel like that marriage between those two things has made for some really interesting work.

TK: I think what it did is it told them that materials matter -- as a matter of fact, we’ve had that conversation with them the first day -- they imply something about the end product itself -- it seems to me that they’ve fully understood that idea and have brought in other materials that they think would be thoughtful in terms of using color a way that’s more symbolic. I’m thinking now of Tyler [Reid]’s piece for example--I think the red, white, and blue obviously represents the American flag, and that could be pretty direct, except for he’s using those colors to represent the least likely part of our society to symbolize America, which is those folks who are active in the criminal justice system...to me that becomes a powerful use of the colors of the American flag...and then Mikayla [Stricklin] taking over this anime style, which has been a primarily Japanese style of drawing, and sort of infusing it with content from our writing group, and creating these black characters to play out this story in the context of anime is also really sophisticated and interesting -- it speaks to number one, a desire to see reflections of yourself in the literature that you’re reading, and number two, the lack of those images that they see in the kinds of things that they are reading.



2015 Summer Apprentices with with artists Titus Kaphar, Aaron Jafferis, Dexter Singleton, teaching staff, and special guest Peter Cox, from CT Mental Health Center.



Apprentices trace a map of New Haven onto asphalt for *The Jerome Project*.

CH: Yeah, and as a sort of expansion on that idea of meaning and materials, I’m also interested in your ideas around experience as materials--how can those be translated into a work of art, and specifically related to our program and the few very powerful experiences we had here, both at the Historical Society in New Haven when we visited the Amistad exhibit, and at the prison--do you want to speak to that?

TK: I think it was really helpful for us to be able to have that experience first. It’s not like we planned it, but it was so perfect...the students left that situation [Amistad exhibit] feeling unsettled, they left that situation feeling like the way the information was delivered to them, didn’t help them in fact embrace it, understand it, and want to know more about it. There was something about the way the information was delivered, that in fact, shut them down and turned them off. After the experience, we sat down with them on the Green and discussed that situation in detail, and after the discussion I would say that the synopsis of the discussion was that that was a challenging situation, but it’s these kinds of situations from which art can be produced--so let’s get back to the studio and let’s see what this manifests, what this experience brings out. And so, we started very simply with an image of Cinque from the Amistad, and we did a very simple thing, but a very interesting metaphoric gesture--we actually removed his presence from that [painting], and just left the silhouette, just left the absence...so what we have is this context without that individual, and then we asked the students to fill that emptiness with these contemporary images from these magazines that you have, fill that emptiness. And they each chose to fill that emptiness in these different kinds of ways, and they each produced an aesthetically interesting, but conceptually interesting piece of work that spoke directly to the experience that they just had...I think we didn’t just guide them into making a piece, but we actually introduced them to a process of making art, and I think that has been the really exciting thing to see...we’ve been able to transfer this way of working that will empower them beyond us, so that when they find themselves in situations like this in the future, and they want to engage that situation, they have a toolbox to do so.

CH: It seems like that’s a larger issue, in terms of the cultural accessibility of museums, especially to young people. What’s most ironic about this situation is that these are exhibits that talk to us about our own history, but maybe only present one side or another, or actually remove a certain side. And so, as you’re talking about the empowerment of that process of making, I think that that is a very important and valuable skill for all of us to have when we encounter this ongoing challenge. I know we also talk a lot about the role of the artist--beyond that being our own cathartic process and our own way to reflect on these kinds of experiences, how have the students been learning about their own voice as a communicator?

TK: Learning about their voices as a communicator, to a certain degree, has been the direct result of our visual artist interaction with our spoken word poetry theatrical artists [students working with Collective Consciousness Theater]...to have the writers come in and experience the work that the visual artists have made, and then respond to that work, and then communicate that response verbally or through written word to our visual artists, I think is really powerful for them. I think also, in terms of learning how the power of visual art communicates, I would say that very few things would be as impacting as the conversation that we had with Kumar [Viswanathan]...would speak to this idea that art communicates...very few things would speak higher than those two situations. Kumar is a brilliantly articulate gentleman who came to visit us who had spent something like 25 years in prison, and had filled that 25 years with a lot of reading, and a lot of thinking about the impact of the written word and the ability of the visual image to help one to, in some kind of way, escape their current context...his current context happened to be behind bars. And so for him to come to our students and say, “To look at these paintings that my cell-mate made, inspired me, encouraged me...it was color in a space where there was no color”, was a powerful thing for our students to hear. For Pete [Cox] to talk about the way that books were an escape for him...he also was so articulate and so connected to the students...[he] spent something like 20 years in jail, and seven years in solitary confinement--for him to say that the written word was the most powerful thing that he had as a means of escape, and he said that in fact it was literally reading that saved him--for young artists to be able to hear that, not just from somebody walking around on the street, but in fact the very opposite; someone whose freedom was taken away from them--the one joy that they had was the written word and images, I think shows them that what we are pursuing here has a great deal of value and a great deal of merit, and furthermore, a great deal of power.



Left, Arianna Alamo in front of her work.



Right, Tyler Reid in front of his work.

CH: And what does it mean specifically, that young people here in New Haven, all students of color, are not only researching and discussing these issues, but also making art that responds to these issues? Do you want to speak to that?

TK: You know, I think when we first sat down with the students at the cafe on the first day when we’re having that conversation, most of them know someone who has been directly impacted by the criminal justice system. Now statistically speaking, that’s not strange when you think of the folks who have been targeted by that system, they tend to be black and brown. And so it’s no surprise that our student body, which happens to be primarily black or brown, has these connections. But, in fact, they are targeted -- I feel like the reality is that our students are targeted, and it’s a frightening thing to think about that, but it’s an empowering thing to think about us giving them some means to speak out against this -- to speak out and to fight back to a certain degree, if only through our art, to fight back against these attacks that are put on them. And it’s not just about New Haven specifically--I’ve had a lot of problems with police in my life, being accused of all kinds of things that there was no way I could have possibly done, and to be completely honest with you, not that I haven’t had my problems here, I’ve had my best experience with New Haven police officers, which shocked me...I’ve had a couple of bad incidents, but for the most part, New Haven has surprised me in that it’s been one of the most diverse police forces that I’ve ever experienced. Being in the Bay Area, I don’t know that I saw any black police officers, like in San Jose...I say all of that as a tangent, but ultimately, what I’m trying to say is that it’s so specific to New Haven as much as it is specific to young folks of color having to deal with these constant attacks. One of the first questions that we asked our students was, how do you think prison developers determine the size and scale of the prisons that they make? And we asked our students to look into that to find out what the answer was. Of course there are a lot of different factors that go into that determination, but one of the factors is young people’s reading scores from the third grade--even if it’s only one factor, the fact that it’s at all a factor in determining whether or not a prison will be built, determining the scope of a prison, is horrible, it’s disgusting-- we asked our students to find that information and so my point in that is just to say we can see that they are being targeted even as early as third grade. So we have to equip them to a certain degree, we have to give them something to be able to speak out, to fight back, and I think art is a really wonderful way to begin that conversation. I don’t think any individual piece of art is going to change the world -- that’s a very ambitious and idealistic perspective-- I wish it could. I don’t think it does, but what I do think is that a single piece of art has the ability to spark a conversation that can change the world--I definitely think that is possible.

CH: And has this experience working with the students influenced or changed your own personal practice as an artist?

TK: Absolutely. Part of the reason that you and I are work together is because of this vision for the Post Masters project that I want to create -- a tiered mentorship program with recently graduated students from local MFA programs, and connecting those graduates with high school artists, and allowing them to create a mentor-mentee relationship, and help them introduce these high school students to the practice of art and to what a life of artmaking looks like. So that’s what I’ve been working on doing -- finding ways to make that happen. Because we are in the process of getting our own space, it’s been awesome for me to run the Artspace project as a kind of incubator for what I think should be the crux of what we do for the Post Masters--not just artists simply making work that goes out into the artworld, where people sort of bid and barter for our products as if they were some sort of commodity, but creating situations that would allow those artists to build relationships with students to really impact their life through artmaking and through relationship and mentorship with artists who are sort of beyond where they are.

Special thanks go to Artspace Researcher-in-Residence Leland Moore; guest speakers Peter Cox, Linda Meyer, Kumar Viswanathan; YUAG Educator Elizabeth Williams, Poet Ifeyani Awachie, Rev. Kevin Ewing, for making time to meet and work with the students. Shout out to interns YPPS Fellow Julia Hamer-Light, SAP facilitator and designer Jerome Harris, and SAP facilitator Camille Hoffman for all the behind the scenes help to make SAP hum. Curator Sarah Fritchey, Gallery Associate Shelli Stevens and PR Coordinator Katie Jurkiewicz went above and beyond to provided incredible support for the program’s needs, and for the related exhibition, Arresting Patterns. THANK YOU ALL! Helen Kauder, Executive Director, July 2015.