[Intersections] 2009

Moira Fratantuono
Sarah Tooley
Stanford Watson
Emily Wheat
Laura Cohen
Iandry Randriamandroso
Elizabeth Brady
Amy Appleton
Rikiesha Hawkins
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The MA in Community Arts (MACA), administered by Maryland Institute College of Arts’ (MICA) nationally recognized Center for Art Education, provides a unique credential for visual artists who wish to pursue a career in art-based youth and community development. The program, spanning two summers and one academic year, is grounded in the principles of social justice. The curriculum balances course and studio work with intensive, real-world experience with youth and adults in community settings, developing proposals for and implementing community arts projects. Graduates emerge with insights, skills, and experiences that enable them to be effective community arts professionals.

The Community Art Corps (CAC) is a national service program funded by AmeriCorps that operates in conjunction with the MACA program at MICA. The program pairs artists and community organizations in intensive 11-month residencies and allows eligible students to complete both the MA degree and a year of AmeriCorps concurrently. The Class of 2009 includes nine students, seven of whom were AmeriCorps residents in CAC.

This year’s residency sites included:
- The Refugee Youth Project
- The Walters Art Museum
- Kids on the Hill
- Baltimore City Community College
- Students Sharing Coalition
- Baltimore Clayworks
- The Parks & People Foundation
- Art on Purpose
- Creative Alliance
- Jubilee Arts Center
- The Child First Authority, Inc.

Preface by Moira Fratantuono

On behalf of the MACA class, 2009, I would like to thank the countless organizations and individuals from Baltimore who have so generously contributed to our education this year. I have learned an immense amount over the course of my graduate program at MICA. My professors, AmeriCorps site supervisors, and students have had a tremendous impact on how I view the world and my niche in it.

I am grateful to everyone I have met while working with community, and I am equally grateful to my classmates, who helped me sift through the various components of my year. Talking with my classmates, reflecting on our individual challenges, frustrations, worldviews, and successes fueled me and helped to clarify my personal approach to community art. Our journey together has strengthened me and allowed me to confront the challenges that I have faced and will continue to face as I work with diverse groups of people.

The pages that follow offer a small window into the life of each of my classmates this year. Each has a unique perspective to share about making art in community and the invaluable experiences and lessons they’ve come away with. Although our journeys this year varied greatly, within the intersection of our stories is a common dedication to uplifting voices, empowering the underserved, and promoting equality. I am thankful to have shared my year with such a diverse, compassionate, determined, and open-minded group of people.
As a community artist working with refugee youth, I have the unique opportunity to promote a positive acculturation process for my students by using art to create a safe and neutral space for them. I used my visual thesis as a meditative space to reflect on the growth and relationships that have developed between myself and my students over the course of this year. In this series of cyanotype fabric panels, I use organic shapes and ambiguous forms as metaphors to explore the unique set of circumstances that have brought my students to this country, and the role that I can play in their lives here.

Moira grew up in the small town of Carlisle, Pennsylvania, where she graduated from Dickinson College in 2005. Art has always played an important role in her life. When she was a child, one of her favorite pastimes was drawing with a set of crayons. This love affair has never ceased. However, as she became more familiar with the art world, she felt that art is often segregated from the rest of society, and primarily viewed by an elite few. After an internship with the Mural Arts Program in Philadelphia, Moira recognized her interest in the field of community arts. She knew that she wanted to work in a field where the power of art was accessible to all people as a way to uplift their voices and enable them to speak out about issues that are important to them.

After graduation from Dickinson College in 2005, Moira taught English in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, for a year. This experience reinforced her interest to work with underserved populations when she returned to the US. Upon her return from Southeast Asia, she lived and worked on an organic vegetable farm in Lewisberry, Pennsylvania, and worked with senior citizens through a non-profit organization in Harrisburg, PA. In June, 2009, she will complete her Masters Degree in Community Arts at the Maryland Institute College of Art. After graduating, Moira will begin her second year of Community Art Corps with Baltimore City Community College’s Refugee Youth Project.
The Refugee Youth Project (RYP) is an after-school program run by Baltimore City Community College. For the past 3 years, the RYP has partnered with the Walters Art Museum (WAM). This partnership provides art materials for the after-school program, allows RYP participants to visit the museum throughout the school year, and dedicates an International celebration for refugee families and the general public at the end of the school year.

The RYP is funded by the Maryland Office for Refugees and Asylees. RYP serves over seventy refugees between the ages of six and twenty-one. Refugee youth receive academic tutoring from trained volunteer tutors and participate in arts programming two hours a day, twice a week. Volunteers are recruited from many walks of life, but mainly include undergraduate and graduate students studying at local colleges and universities.

For more information:
REFUGEE YOUTH PROJECT
Kursten Pickup at rypcoordinator@gmail.com
www.refugeeyouthproject.org/index.html

Over the course of the year, I have watched my students grow and change. Art has served as the platform for me to build relationships with them, understand their struggles, help them on their journey, and see them empowered. I’ve watched youth who started the year fighting forge friendships as we painted a mural; I’ve seen youth who lacked focus take on leadership positions in our community garden; I’ve shared in the smiles of children who were suddenly delighted by their creations. These are the moments and memories that will stay with me; they are the motivation for my work. I am dedicated to community-based arts because this field allows me to share the transformative power of art with others.

“...this field allows me to share the transformative power of art with others.”
-MOIRA FRATANTUONO, Community Art Corps, Refugee Youth Project and the Walters Art Museum

First day of harvest, Milbrook Apartments Community Garden Spring 2009
Sidewalk mural in front of Follow Your Dreams art center, Summer 2008
My vision as a community artist is to collaborate with individuals and communities on projects and programs in the pursuit of justice and liberation. I strive to achieve this through listening, dialogue, partnership building and art making with respect and reciprocity; where collaboration, praise, growth, reflection and leadership development are possible and occur regularly.

My first notable experience participating in a community art project was through an after-school arts program in high school. We collaboratively created large-scale mixed media triptychs depicting various sectors of our region’s history for public display. I returned to community arts as an adult through my time spent in volunteer, service, and community work at non-profits and in grassroots organizing. The continued prompting of a passionate, justice-oriented peer group pushed me in the examination of my relationship to privilege, power, and the work needed to be done to challenge these things within myself and society. Community art came to serve as a place of rejuvenation, inspiration and hope. The communal and relational aspects of the work counteract the isolation and hopelessness that are rooted in our individualistic and domination based society.

Sarah Tooley is an artist, activist, and educator. She works to strengthen community, build leadership, challenge injustices, and amplify marginalized voices and histories through a variety of mediums including murals, site-specific public art installations, and performance. She is a recipient of grants from the Washington, D.C. Commission on Art & Humanities and a published author on the Community Arts Network. In 2003, she received her BA in Visual Media from American University. While completing her MA in Community Arts from Maryland Institute College of Art, she fulfilled her graduate site residency as a Community Art Corps member at Kids On the Hill (KOH). While there, she designed and implemented her own urban environmental education curriculum applying the Art Action for Social Change pedagogy. Through this curriculum she facilitated a group of high school students in producing their own video and painting two large signs; now on display in the neighborhood. At Koh, she worked to build youth leadership, critical thinking skills and a supportive community. Her visual thesis engaged youth and young adults from the Baltimore area’s gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender community to create giant puppets and wearable sculptures for the city’s annual Pride parade. Upon graduation she will assume the position of Director at the Better-Waverly Community Art Center.

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Kids on the Hill offers young people support, quality programs and an opportunity to make change in their community through experiential education about social issues, art action projects and civic engagement. Our out-of-school time programs provide critical workforce development and civic engagement opportunities to Baltimore City teens, enabling them to discover and make progress towards meaningful, attainable and sustaining career paths in the media, arts, education or public service sectors. Our programs engage youth in the arts and media, research, outreach, activism, and teaching around issues of real consequence to them and their peers. Youth produce art action projects, like animations, claymation and documentaries that they share with their peers and the greater community. Our goal is for youth to recognize the power of their voice, to realize the need for their input and ideas, and to develop the skills and confidence they need to participate in their communities as youth leaders, artists, media makers and peer mentors.

We also strive to engage diverse audiences in viewing and listening to the perspectives of young people and in honoring their innovative solutions.

For more information:

**KIDS ON THE HILL**
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rebeccayenawine@kidsonthehill.org

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For my visual thesis I sought out youth and young adults that identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, and/or transgender that do not have access to studio space. My intention in hosting the series of free workshops was to make a space where GLBT people could come together to socialize, support one another, and create something to celebrate our lives and opinions and show the world about a part of our selves that we are sometimes asked or required to hide or suppress. I was looking to work within a community of which I am a part, and for ways to address social justice issues from a celebratory place.

In the creation of our costumes, sculptures and puppets, I choose to work with primarily salvaged, donated and recycled materials that are easy to come by for economic and environmental reasons. I am excited by the transformation of such everyday materials into new configurations. Another motivation for utilizing accessible materials is to highlight that I am not providing participants with something that can only be created when they have access to an elite institution, where my studio is located, but that their creative explorations can continue on in my absence.

This body of work grew out my love for the many traditions of people coming together to show the power of their collective voice in large numbers, ranging from parades for cultural celebration to marches for political protest purposes. Having attended Carnival celebrations, Spiral Q’s Peoplehood, various anti-war and political demonstrations, Nana Projects’ Great Halloween Lantern Parade, the Pennsylvania Avenue Cadillac Parade in West Baltimore and countless other community celebrations in the streets, I have been moved by the ways in which people express their communal spirit. I wanted to insert large-scale visual imagery into Baltimore’s Pride Parade to create a presence that would acknowledge and pay homage to the creativity and expressive voices within our community.

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“I choose to make and facilitate the creation of artwork in and with communities to nurture my need for connection and my commitment to social justice. I learn much about myself when I go out and build relationships in the world…”

-SARAH TOOLEY, Community Art Corps, Kids on the Hill

Prop from the 2008 suitcase theater performance of "A Spoonful of Sugar Helps The Medicine Go Down"
My paintings speak to the paradox that Baltimore presents in its wounded nature and its somewhat inspiring optimism. These observations are not unique to Baltimore but they represent some of my current experiences. The media I use are varied and include some familiar materials like burlap, used electrical boards, colored wire and other objects. The materials have different functions in the completed paintings.

Stanford Watson was born in the year 1959, in a small village in Jamaica where he spent his formative years before entering the Jamaica School of Art in 1979. Art school was a pivotal experience for him in a number of ways, particularly in terms of engagement with issues of nationhood, race and self. He graduated from the School of Art in 1983 when his foray into art making and exhibiting began. His first exhibition out of school was in 1984 and he continues to exhibit extensively both locally (in Jamaica) and internationally.

Stanford Watson has had three major solo exhibitions since graduating from the Art School. The major theme permeating all of these exhibitions was a consideration of the human condition through his own thoughts, observations and experiences. Despite many distractions, Stanford has persevered in his participation in the Jamaican art scene. He has traveled to many countries as a result of his dedication to his art. He has been featured in books on Jamaican art and has represented Jamaica at biennials and other important exhibitions and art events. As an artist, art educator and a representative of his country, he has participated in, contributed to and learned from residencies, workshops and fellowships in Europe, the Americas and in Africa. He has guest lectured at the Plymouth State University and has given talks and lectures elsewhere.

For a number of years, Stanford has been using clay and earth in his work; this plays a variety of roles in the work, metaphorizing medium, color, texture and/or symbols. In some cases this becomes the painting itself so that there is no demarcation between format and medium. The use of earth, Stanford feels, is about his strength and honesty—a humbling symbol which helps him to cleanse his consciousness of impurities.

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“I exert all efforts to bring out the best in all who I work with, which is the best for me.”

- Stanford Watson, Community Artist, BCCC

Baltimore City Community College (BCCC) provides outstanding educational, cultural, and social experiences to the residents of Baltimore City, the state of Maryland, and surrounding areas. The College’s accessible, affordable, comprehensive programs include college transfer and career preparation, technical training, and life skills training. The College provides a variety of student services that meet and support the learning needs of an increasingly diverse student population. BCCC is a dynamic higher education institution that is responsive to the changing needs of its stakeholders: individuals, businesses, government, and educational institutions of the community at large.

For more information:

BALTIMORE CITY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
www.bccc.edu
IANDRY RANDRIAMANDROSO
studio art: printmaking, graphic design and painting

Originally from Madagascar, I am a socially and environmentally-minded artist and educator. I use printmaking, graphic design, large-scale mural building, painting, and graphite drawing as medium to help express and share my artistic voice, skills and concept to others. I am most passionate about my ongoing flat can project, in which waste turns into art. In this project, imprints of discarded, crushed aluminum cans found on the streets of Baltimore are used to inspire environmental activism through the production of a number of remarkable images.

Iandry Randriamandroso is an artist from Madagascar. Since he was a young boy, he wanted to become a skilled artist. He insisted on working hard in order to develop his skills as an artist. From the beginning, Iandry’s work has attempted to depict everyday people in a very simple style that will challenge people to examine their own beliefs and assumptions. In Madagascar, he exhibited in galleries in the French Cultural Center and the German Cultural Center. Since there was no art school in Madagascar, Iandry set a goal for himself to study in New York. In 2004, he graduated magna cum laude, with a Bachelors in Fine Arts. During his time in America, Iandry has been active in bringing art into the community. He has been teaching art in public settings such as schools, recreation centers, and parks, in churches, community art centers, libraries, museums, and homes. He has conducted art workshops, painted murals, and exhibited his work in several states, including New York, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania.

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Visual Thesis, Flat Can Story, acrylic on canvas, spring 2009
I began working with fabrics as a way to process the overwhelming amount of information that I was taking in during the first few months of MACA. I decided to continue to work with fabrics and the idea of quilting as a way to reconnect with my heritage and the roots of my being. While I find sewing to be a new found therapeutic tool I also find journaling to be a great way to process my experiences. I have used books as a way to document both the significant and the mundane moments that have become a map of my life. I wanted to be able to document my time in Baltimore in a way that will always remind me of my experiences as well as inform others about my process.

“Individual effort is important in achieving a common goal. I found that in light of the problems that we face in our environment today, an individual decision to bring about change is most important.”

- IANDRY RANDRIAMANDROSO, Community Artist, Parks & People Foundation

Maryland Institute College of Art Unity week 2009:

On Dr. Martin Luther King Day 2009, I collaborated with the Parks & People Foundation, the Barclay Recreation Center, and 18 volunteers from the Maryland Institute College of Art, to install a mural that beautifies and creates a peaceful atmosphere in the youth activities room at the Barclay Recreation Center.

(Mural can be viewed at 300 W. 29th St., Baltimore, MD 21211)
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In 2008, Emily Wheat graduated from Virginia Intermont College with a Bachelor of Art in Photography and Digital Imaging. While in Bristol, studying at Virginia Intermont, she worked with the Bristol Social Services, photographing the youth in the Southwest Virginia foster care system. During her final year at Virginia Intermont she worked on writing an honors thesis about the work she had done in the foster care system entitled, “Through the eyes of the children: Understanding the use of photography as a visual representation for change in the foster care system”. This work propelled her into further investigation of the use of art as a means to connect with whole communities of people, leading her down the path of community arts. Upon completing her masters in community arts degree, she will be working as the arts program director at the X-Zone, an after-school program geared towards middle school students in Chesterfield County, VA.
I find working with youth to be a very reciprocal relationship, as I am not only there to teach them about art but am also there to learn about their lives. It is important for community artists to go into community with the understanding that they will be learning just as much, if not more, from the people that they are working with.

During the past eight months I have been working in the field as an educator of youth, primarily at the middle school age level. These youth have brought a multitude of life experiences to the classrooms in which I have worked. Throughout my time here, I have spent most classes focusing on the communities that the youth live in, talking with them about the things that they like and dislike about their communities. While I have learned a great deal about the lives of the children through these simple questions, the questions have enabled youth to look at the things that they dislike in light of the things that they love and begin to examine how things could change for the better. For some youth, the question of what they dislike about the community was one that left them stumped. Many responded by saying that they didn’t like that their neighborhoods were dirty and that there was a lot of violence in their neighborhood. Once we, myself and a co-teacher, began to dig deeper, the youth began to pinpoint why they didn’t like those things. Trash brings rats which are dirty and unhealthy. Gang violence and drug dealers take over the park where they play. Both of these issues make people look at Baltimore like it is a bad place to live, when the youth know that it is a wonderful place to live— it is their home.

“We are important for community artists to go into community with the understanding that they will be learning just as much, if not more, from the people that they are working with.”

-EMILY WHEAT, Community Art Corps, Student Sharing Coalition

Students Sharing Coalition provides meaningful service and civic engagement experiences to students from diverse backgrounds with the goal of developing these students into mature and knowledgeable citizens, who take responsibility for their communities and are committed to social justice.

For more information:

STUDENTS SHARING COALITION
2315 Charles St. / Baltimore, MD 21218
410.662.8999 www.studentsharing.org
My paintings are a way of documenting the city and the people I interact with in the community. I make work from observations, stories, voices, and my memory and study of the urban landscape. This is how I remember, document, honor and understand the things that are most memorable and significant in my life and relationships with others.

Working with community has been a challenging and a rich experience. I learn an enormous amount from those I work with - teaching and making art. The relationships we form add a much greater meaning to my studio work, and give me a deeper understanding of the reality facing our youth, society and city. My work is an attempt to document, reinterpret, interact with and share the things I see, hear and experience.

ELIZABETH BRADY is a painter, graphic designer and teacher. After studying painting as an undergraduate at the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA) and the Center for Advanced Art and Culture in Aix-en-Provence, France, she spent 5 years as a designer and art director at Orange Element Design in Baltimore. She has received awards from the Advertising Association of Baltimore and How International for her design and branding work for clients such as Amnesty International, the Peace Corps and Mendelsohn Photography. She has simultaneously pursued a career in fine art, and has exhibited her painting work at a variety of galleries and venues in Baltimore, including Gallery Imperato, the Creative Alliance, Jordan Faye Contemporary and Load of Fun studios. While studying towards her Masters degree in Community Arts at MICA and fulfilling her residency in the Community Art Corps, she taught middle and upper school students through the Art on Purpose (AoP) Art Leadership/Mentoring program. She also taught arts workshops through an AoP partnership with the Walters Art Museum at area facilities for the homeless.

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Urban Reflection, “Can I Draw That?” Oil and pastel on panel, fall 2009
I began working with fabrics as a way to process the overwhelming amount of information that I was taking in during the first few months of MACA. I decided to continue to work with fabrics and the idea of quilting as a way to reconnect with my heritage and the roots of my being. While I find sewing to be a new found therapeutic tool I also find journaling to be a great way to process my experiences. I have used books as a way to document both the significant and the mundane moments that have become a map of my life. I wanted to be able to document my time in Baltimore in a way that will always remind me of my experiences as well as inform others about my process.

Creativity and community service go hand in hand. Art on Purpose is dedicated to the notion that art has an intrinsic value that is best revealed when it connects and engages with real life concerns and is, at the same time, presented professionally. We view artists’ expressions and community interests as equally important, and believe each can enhance the other through innovative and informative art workshops and exhibitions. Art on Purpose provides an educational, guided process, so that individuals and groups whose concerns really need to be seen, and should be heard, will be understood through a high level of artistic presentation.

Art on Purpose is staffed by artists whose artwork becomes part of projects when it supports the voices, expressions, and needs of the communities we serve. Unlike most non-profit arts organizations, barriers are not put up between staff as artists, and staff as staff.

For more information:
ART ON PURPOSE
2002 Clipper Park Road / Floor 4/ Baltimore, MD 21211
410.243.4750 www.artonpurpose.org
or ebrady@artonpurpose.org

During the past year, I have worked with a range of Baltimore city school students in arts and leadership programs. I also facilitated art workshops at two area homeless facilities, Healthcare for the Homeless and My Sister’s Place. The experiences and relationships that developed over 13 months have changed me in many ways. I have learned that working in new communities requires a delicate balance. You find yourself part teacher, part mentor, part artist, part facilitator, part collaborator. It’s less about the process of making art than just listening to what people have to say—and figuring out how to create a structure and a space where people feel safe and open enough to make something.

My venture into community art and teaching has been full of error, mishap, frustration, (occasional) disaster, and an enormous amount of joy. I have had moments of fear, but also moments of great certainty in the transformative nature of the work. I have seen a group of virtual strangers with enormous challenges in their daily lives, talking and connecting and supporting one other, as they are working together on something with their hands. This is a small thing, creating an environment where these moments happen, but it is a significant one.

“`It’s less about the process of making art than just listening to what people have to say…”`

-ELIZABETH BRADY, Community Art Corps, Art on Purpose
LAURA COHEN
studio art: sculpture, drawing, installation

I am interested in exploring how artistic experiences create opportunities for relationship building within and between communities. I work with stoneware clay, slips, glazes, custom decals and a 2 chamber noborigama style wood and salt kiln to create thrown and hand built containers that reflect upon artistic experiences that have created community. These wood-fired stoneware containers are reflections of the experiences, relationship building and skills learned during the coming together of different Baltimore communities for the community wood fire.

Laura Cohen received her undergraduate degree in Art Education from the University of Vermont and is a licensed art teacher. She found her passion for the community arts while studying in Mexico, where she created a mural and facilitated arts activities for youth. Laura completed an AmeriCorps year with The Child First Authority, where she facilitated a student-designed mural and collaboratively taught interactive performance. Laura carried out her graduate school residency and second year of AmeriCorps at Baltimore Clayworks, where she taught social justice based ceramic curriculum. Upon completion of her Master of Arts in Community Arts degree, she will be the Co-Director of the Community Arts program at Baltimore Clayworks.

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“My role in community is to successfully organize the many voices, stories and hands to ensure that ideas and creativity are uplifted and translated through the arts…”

-LAURA COHEN, Community Art Corps, Baltimore Clayworks

Baltimore Clayworks is the region’s only cultural institution dedicated solely to the ceramic arts. Founded by nine artists in 1980, Clayworks is a mid-sized cultural 501(c) 3 non-profit, attentive to its neighborhood, possessing a national and international reputation for artistic excellence, artists’ support, and community involvement. The mission of Baltimore Clayworks is to develop, sustain, and promote an artist-centered community that provides outstanding educational, artistic, and collaborative programs in the ceramic arts. Its core values are artist-centeredness, excellence, inclusivity, integrity, and joy.

Community arts is a signature program of Baltimore Clayworks and has been for more than eighteen years. Through this initiative, Clayworks conducts arts activities beyond its doors, developing collaborations with grassroots and cultural organizations, schools and public agencies, to connect Clayworks’ artists with individuals of marginalized communities of Baltimore and providing access to quality hands-on arts programming.

For more information:

BALTIMORE CLAYWORKS
5707 Smith Avenue / Baltimore, MD 21209
410.578.1919 www.baltimoreclayworks.org
AMY APPLETON  
studio art: painting, drawing and mosaic

I consider myself a community artist because I look for opportunities to collaborate with other people and I truly enjoy art more when I can share my talents, teach, and exchange ideas with people of all ages. For the youth I’ve worked with, most of the important lessons they’ve taken with them haven’t related to art whatsoever. They enter my classes and workshops with open minds and an eagerness to learn something they won’t learn in school. They’re provided with a safe space to be themselves, to make friends, and to recognize their potential in newly discovered ways. I’ve learned to use the art project as a conduit for change and place more emphasis on the process of thoughtfulness, teamwork, and respect. I always like to remind my students that when they think their creativity is done, they’ve only just begun!

Amy Appleton has been creating art ever since she was five years old, and realized she wanted to be an artist when her first major acrylic painting was selected to tour the state of NJ with the Teen Arts Festival. She received her BA in studio art and Spanish at Muhlenberg College in Allentown, PA and the Center for Cross-Cultural Studies in Sevilla, Spain. Upon her return to the US with improved Spanish language skills, she found new doors opened for her in the arts. A series of her paintings inspired by Moorish design were exhibited at Muhlenberg and she was offered a job as program coordinator for a free summer art camp for inner city Latino middle school students. This job fed Amy’s passion to make art accessible to everyone, especially youth. She went on to lead the creation of a collaborative mural on the playground of a school in Juarez, Mexico depicting how education, and art, open doors of opportunity.

The MACA program at MICA taught Amy the term “Community Arts” that fits her life so perfectly. In Baltimore, she worked as the education assistant at Creative Alliance at the Patterson and explored themes of identity and cultural diversity with youth. She spent the year working to connect families through community-based art projects such as the Kerplunk Out Front! Banner Project and the Amazing Grace Mosaic Project. Both initiatives showed her that art can be a positive, healing force in the lives of children and their families. She served on the mural committee during the rebuilding of the playground at Stadium Place after it was tragically burned down. Through this initiative she facilitated the creation of 300 wooden tiles, painted by area children and families to represent their idea of home in Baltimore. All of Amy’s artwork expresses her Baltimore experiences.

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Detail, Amazing Grace, mosaic, Spring 2009
I began working with fabrics as a way to process the overwhelming amount of information that I was taking in during the first few months of MACA. I decided to continue to work with fabrics and the idea of quilting as a way to reconnect with my heritage and the roots of my being. While I find sewing to be a new found therapeutic tool I also find journaling to be a great way to process my experiences. I have used books as a way to document both the significant and the mundane moments that have become a map of my life. I wanted to be able to document my time in Baltimore in a way that will always remind me of my experiences as well as inform others about my process.

Based in a former 1930s movie palace in Highlandtown, Creative Alliance at the Patterson showcases the art, music, performance and film of Maryland and beyond. The 180-seat theatre brings in audiences from diverse backgrounds to experience spectacular music, dance, and locally made films. Two galleries present contemporary visual arts while eight artists live and work in studios upstairs. A media lab and equipment “cage” supports local filmmakers and workshops are available for any artist.

Creative Alliance also offers free art classes for youth at local schools, libraries, and in the building itself. Students can choose between a variety of classes: book-based general art classes that incorporate painting, drawing, printmaking, and sculpture around a given theme; photography; mural arts; cartooning; break dancing; and music production where they create their own CD of collaborative hip-hop music. Staff members are constantly looking for ways to incorporate different art forms into classes to further intrigue students, such as fashion design, poetry, and ceramics. All of the classes end with wonderful presentations and exhibits by the students and teachers for their families and friends.

For more information:

CREATIVE ALLIANCE AT THE PATTERSON
3134 Eastern Avenue / Baltimore, MD 21224
p 410.276.1651 / f 410.276.3206
www.creativealliance.org

“\textit{I’ve witnessed creativity accentuating the positive in family life and self esteem.}”

-AMY APPLETON, Community Art Corps, Creative Alliance

Community art is anything that brings people together in a way they weren’t engaging in before. I want to be able to connect people to a common goal through art. In order to achieve this, I planned two intergenerational community-based art initiatives. The first is a painting project with the Creative Alliance, where I worked in Highlandtown, one of the most culturally diverse neighborhoods in Baltimore. Families dropped in on several Saturdays to paint banners for the doors of the building to identify it as a happening community arts center. The second is a mosaic project at Amazing Grace Lutheran Church in East Baltimore, where members collaborated on a large cross to beautify the church space and celebrate Easter.

In both projects, parents and caregivers learned more about their children and turned the workshops into weekly, quality family time. The kids I worked with learned artistic skills along with experiencing patience and the pride that goes along with finishing a large project.
RIKIESHA HAWKINS
studio art: fine art, performance, video and sculpture

My art is a synthesis of my spirituality and my feelings. My inspiration comes from spiritual influences that are unseen but felt through my emotions. My characters give me the flexibility to be many things at one time, allowing me to be able to create my different personalities freely. Throughout my process of developing my characters, I am reminded that we are all spirits having a human experience, and this allows us to relate to each other because of our commonalities. Each character begins with an experience that is exemplified through my different personalities. The intent of each character is to give a positive emotional experience that uplifts one's spirit, relaying a sense of happiness and energy.

RIKIESHA HAWKINS was born in 1981 and is originally from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She was raised in a military environment, which has afforded her the opportunity to live in various places. Her travels have allowed her to experience life in different cultures. Her background includes a strong spiritual foundation. Rikiesha is currently exploring innovative approaches to expose people to black culture through the arts. Working in the community has led her to discover the influence art can have for positive change in community development. Upon receipt of her MA in Community Arts degree from the Maryland Institute College of Art, Rikiesha will begin a second year-long residency with Jubilee Arts.

rikeeh@yahoo.com
910.286.2262

RIKIESHA HAWKINS

AMERICORPS Community Art Corps 08-10
MICA / MA in Community Arts 2009

Rikiesha's Visual Thesis Mime Act
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For more information:

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Baltimore Clayworks
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Jubilee Arts Center
The Child First Authority, Inc.

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Produced for and by MICA/MACA Class of 2009

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