

Consortium for the Liberal Education of Artists Conference

In April 2018 the Peabody Institute hosted the 11th national conference of the Consortium for the Liberal Education of Artists (CLEA), entitled:

Challenging Artists in Challenging Times: What's Necessary and Sufficient?

Educators from arts schools across the country gathered from April 5th – 7th to address ongoing work augmenting the learning experience of the young artists we teach. Themes discussed included innovation in first year courses, project-based learning, writing instruction and writing support, advocacy and institutional buy-in for the liberal arts, ELL and the challenge of integrating international populations.

The Conference Schedule with an overview of panels and details of some presentations [can be found here](#).

Attendance

Colleagues in attendance are posted [here](#). A mix of faculty (classroom and studio) and administrators enables balanced perspectives in our conversations.

Accommodations in Baltimore

Conference sessions were held on campus, but some events, as well as accommodations were at the [Hotel Indigo](#), one block from the Peabody Campus.

Participants

Colleagues from these schools were on campus for our conference:

Berklee College of Music

Boston Conservatory (newly merged with Berklee)

Columbia College Chicago (CCC)

The Eastman School of Music

The Juilliard School

Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA)

The New England Conservatory (NEC)

Otis College of Art and Design

The Peabody Conservatory

Pennsylvania College of Art and Design (PCAD)

University of North Carolina School of the Arts (UNCSA)

Those in attendance included:

Suhnne Ahn (Musicology and Liberal Arts at Peabody)

Eric Booth (Teaching Arts and Creativity Educator — our Facilitator)

Robert Day (Writing and Literature at Peabody)

Matthew Duveneck (Science at NEC)

Hans Gabriel (German at UNCSA)

Michele Glenn (ESL and Writing at MICA)

Jeff Gredlein (Psychology at UNCSA)

Carol Haddaway (ESL at Peabody)

Suzanne Hegland (Writing Center Director and Dean of Students at NEC)

Patrick Keppel (Liberal Arts Chair at NEC)

Bob King (Liberal Arts and New Media at UNCSA)

Rob Lagueux (Dean of Faculty Development at Berklee; ex-Director of CCC's First Year Seminar)

Ron Levy (Liberal Arts at Peabody)

William Mammarella (Chair of Fine Arts at PCAD)

Mike Mason (Co-chair of Liberal Arts at Berklee)
Jessica Ngo (Writing at Otis)
Simone Pilon (Co-chair of Liberal Arts at Berklee)
Douglas Reichert Powell (English and Writing at CCC)
Shantay Robinson (doctoral candidate in Writing and Rhetoric, George Mason University)
Jelena Runic (ESL at Peabody)
Yael Samuel (ESL at Otis)
Virginia Spivey (Art History and Writing at MICA)
Jessica Sponsler (Art History / Liberal Arts at PCAD)
Kerri Steinberg (Asst. Chair of Liberal Arts at Otis)
Daphne Strassman (First Year Writing at NEC)
Oliver Thorndike (Philosophy at Peabody)
Sue Uselmann (ESL at NEC)
Dean Wilcox (Dean of Liberal Arts at UNCSEA)
Bert Wilson (ESL at Juilliard)

Conference Schedule

Thursday, April 5th

(5 East Centre St.)

8:30 AM Buffet Breakfast

9:00 AM Our Schools, Our Colleagues, Our Concerns

[The Gig Mentality, The Arts Club, and Five Ideas About Engagement](#)

[\("Stuff that works"\)](#)

Conversation facilitated by **Eric Booth**, Teaching Artist, Arts Educator, and provocateur

NOTED: You can view Eric directly in [these videos posted to his website](#).

10:15 AM Advocacy and Support

Placing the Liberal Arts at the Core of School Mission and Culture

Presentation by **Patrick Keppel**, New England Conservatory [ALSO HERE](#)

with **Jessica Sponsler**, Pennsylvania College of Art and Design and **Eric Booth**

11:45 AM Tour of the Peabody Library

12:30 PM Lunch (at our Centre St. site)

1:00 PM Curricular and Pedagogical Innovations

(panel and discussion)

Dean Wilcox and Bob King, University of North Carolina School of the Arts

UNCSA's newly conceived First Year Seminar

A collaborative, interdisciplinary, project-based seminar designed for students to engage in an exploration of art, life, and contemporary culture through experiencing, thinking, talking, making, reflecting, and writing. This course is designed to introduce students to a range of intellectual creative practices and processes.

Reflections on its planning and implementation.

Kerri Steinberg, Otis College of Art and Design

Images and Culture: Of, On, and Off the Wall

Otis's "**Exhibition Wall Project**" leads fourteen different teams of art students to curate the same selection of 65 pre-modern, modern, and postmodern learning object, doing so in succession, and with

imaginative differences in approach. Reflections on last semester's experience.

Matthew Duveneck, New England Conservatory

Artists are Engaged by Science

*Matthew is now a full-time faculty member **teaching math and science** electives at NEC--adding an oft-neglected complement to the liberal arts curriculum. Reflections on leveraging the natural link between art and science.*

Mike Mason and Simone Pilon, Berklee College of Music

Curricular Innovation in Light of a Merger

Serving the merger of Boston Conservatory with Berklee College of Music, the "LENS First-Year Experience" targets students' declared interests to coordinate advising, mentoring, and Living-Learning Communities with a first-semester course. The "Engaging Seminars" concept has been rolled out with 70 sections--a bold initiative that's well underway. Reflections on this ambitious program.

2:45 PM Break

3:00 PM Writing Pedagogies, Programs, and Centers

(panel and discussion)

Jessica Ngo, Otis College of Art and Design

Multimodal Composition and First-Year Writing Curricula: "Writing in the Digital Age"

Michele Glenn, Maryland Institute College of Art

Writing Studio and Embedded Writing Instruction in the Art History Classroom

Virginia Spivey, independent art historian

What does learning look like? Rethinking assessment in the writing curriculum

[also here](#)

Robert Day, Peabody Institute

Moderator and Roundtable discussion

5:00 PM free

7:00 PM Dinner at Hotel Indigo -- Zelda's Parlor (all out-of-towners and RSVP guests)

Friday, April 6th

(5 East Centre St.)

8:30 AM Buffet Breakfast

9:00 AM ESL Best Practices & Resources

(panel and discussion)

Michele Glenn, MICA

"Like Being on Trial:" Preparing ELL Students for the Art Crit

Carol Haddaway, Peabody

Seeking Rejection to Foster Engagement and Cultural Interactions

Robert Wilson, Juilliard

Using Authentic Texts to Address Salient Error Types

Jelena Runić, Peabody

Cultural Diversity, Student Mobility, and the Self: Implications for the Teaching of Writing

10:15 AM Break

10:30 AM ESL Students in Mainstream (Non-ESL) Courses: Challenges and Strategies

(panel and discussion)

Sue Uselmann, Eastman

Suzanne Hegland and Daphne Strassmann, New England Conservatory

From Reactive to Intentional: Creating a More Responsive Curriculum

Yael Samuel, Otis College of Arts and Design

Supporting ESL Students in Introductory Art History Courses

Robert Wilson, Juilliard

Differentiated rubrics

11:45 AM Lunch

12:00 PM Arts Education in the 21st Century

Conversation over lunch with Peabody's Dean Fred Bronstein

1:00 PM Interlude/Amalgam

(panel and discussion)

Sue Uselmann, Eastman

Sue has a new seminar, "Creativity," a project-based course which leads students to convert their assumptions about creative processes into explicit practices. This project demonstrates creative endeavor on a range of levels, including the NEH grant application that led to its funding.

Doug Richert Powell and Rob Lagueux, Columbia College Chicago and Berklee College of Music

The rise and fall of CCC's "New Millennium Studies: First Year Seminar." Rob was instrumental in launching this

new program almost fifteen years ago, and Doug has seen its dissolution along with subsequent efforts to meet the needs of incoming students. An opportunity to reflect on the fate of our best ideas and efforts in our ever-shifting institutions.

1:45 PM Reflections in Perspective

Reflections on CCC's New Millennium Studies

(some comments in retrospect)

Ron Levy, Peabody

A bit as an afterthought, Ron had something on his hard disk that seemed worthy of discussion (note, these are two different classes: FYS = First Year Seminar; FYW = First Year Writing).

2:15 PM Conversation consequent upon what has happened thus far!

4:30 PM free

5:45 PM Walking tour of Baltimore's Mt. Vernon (meet in lobby of Hotel Indigo)

7:15 PM free

Saturday April 7th

(Hotel Indigo's Edgar Allen Poe Room)

9:15 AM Buffet Breakfast and Closing Session: Next Steps--Where from Here?

Ideas for ways that we might sustain the conversation, led especially by Rob Lagueux with ideas about ways that Berklee can contribute to the effort.

11:30 AM adjourn



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Jon Esser, Assistant Dean, School of Art+Design
Purchase College/SUNY

"CLEA is a very bright spot on the national radar suggesting positive change, deep rethinking of old assumptions, and fresh vitality."

Eric Booth, faculty of Juilliard, Tanglewood,
Lincoln Center Institute
The Kennedy Center

"We submitted the entire draft of our curricular reforms to CLEA. The critical response as well as the support we subsequently received allowed the Humanities and Sciences to keep pace with the schoolwide evolution at Cornish. We continue to return to this invaluable network for specific advice and encouragement."

Kimball MacKay, Humanities and Sciences faculty
Cornish College of the Arts

"Size does matter, and in this case, small is better. What truly distinguishes this consortium is the fact that all of this small group participate fully, and thereby develop an esprit de corps that builds trust.

"One of the great values of the CalArts Northeast project was deeply furthering an understanding of interdisciplinary work. It was only through this project that we (students and faculty) grew to recognize and then articulate the complexities not only of art cultures but also of what kinds of educational, political, and social biases inform each."

Mady Schutzman, Assistant Dean,
School of Critical Studies
California Institute of the Arts

"I have been going to conferences for thirty years, and nothing compares to the extraordinary richness of my experience with CLEA."

Nancy Wolcott, Associate Provost for Academic Affairs
New World School of the Arts

"Far different from other professional meetings I attend, these gatherings nurture a focused exchange which constantly pivots between our highest educational goals and the practical means to obtain them."

Ron Levy, Humanities Department
Peabody Conservatory of Music

"I don't know if I have ever seen so many people as deeply involved and caring about what they do."

Greta Berman, Liberal Arts faculty
Juilliard

That, in turn, encourages the participants to be honest among themselves, to probe and question deeply, and most important, to take risks."

Virginia Red, Provost
University of the Arts

The Consortium for the Liberal Education of Artists was created to meet two longstanding needs, both institutional and personal. Until our consortium was formed, there had never been a national network of liberal arts educators teaching in performing arts conservatories.

Only in the rarest of circumstances did we even know the names of those colleagues; we knew virtually nothing of their programs. Yet each of us was in a school which, though devoted overwhelmingly to the artistic training of young people, also included in its mission statement the importance of a liberal education to that young artist.

In 1993, in response to a proposal from the Division of General Studies at the North Carolina School of the Arts, the Thomas S. Kenan Institute for the Arts helped create a small, representative national group to plan an initial conference, held October 1994 at NCSA in Winston-Salem.

That 1994 session was the beginning of an invaluable, continuing conversation, dedicated to our primary mission:

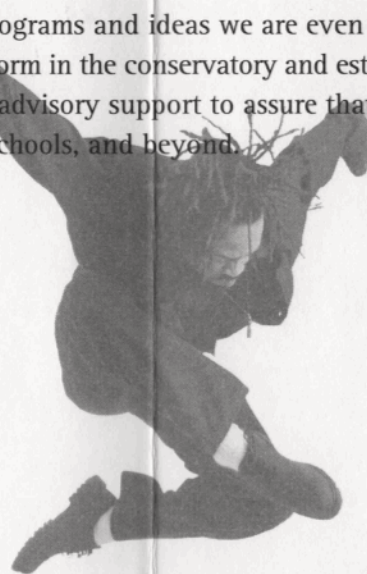
To strengthen the liberal education of college students enrolled in institutions dedicated to the training of performing artists.



Since 1994, we have held biennial gatherings addressing a variety of issues of critical importance to curricular development in the conservatory. The titles of our last three conferences – *The First-Year Experience*, *Making Connections/Maintaining Autonomy*, and *Expanding Opportunities for Artists* – evoke themes central to our discussions.

The Kenan Institute partnered with the Howard Gilman Foundation and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation to make the first conferences possible, and to award modest grants encouraging cooperative projects within and among our participating institutions.

After the first formative years of sharing programs and ideas we are even more deeply committed to our future—one which sustains its focus on curricular reform in the conservatory and establishes a broader national/international constituency. We are seeking financial and advisory support to assure that CLEA's "continuing conversation" becomes intrinsic to our schools, between schools, and beyond.



CLEA Objectives

- To sustain a representative national group of participating institutions
- To develop and implement strategies ensuring that each participating institution will:
 - Strengthen its curricular and programmatic initiatives in liberal arts through the collaboration of administrators, faculty across the disciplines, and students
 - Provide student artists with innovative opportunities to bridge art and its broader communities
 - Reflect critically on the changing canon and its role in educating artists
 - Embark on collaborative projects with other participating institutions
 - Contribute financially to CLEA's support

These objectives are served through:

- Periodic national conferences centered on group discussions and workshops
- CLEA-supported, curriculum-based projects designed and executed by participating schools
- Regional meetings between/among participating institutions and their affiliates

Current Participating Institutions:

California Institute of the Arts
 College of Santa Fe
 Columbia College Chicago
 Cornish College of the Arts
 Eastman School of Music
 The Juilliard School
 New England Conservatory
 New World School of the Arts
 North Carolina School of the Arts
 Peabody Conservatory/Johns Hopkins University
 Purchase College/SUNY
 Tisch School of the Arts/New York University
 The University of the Arts

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