

NEWS RELEASE

GUGGENHEIM STUDY REVEALS IMPORTANCE OF ARTS EDUCATION IN DEVELOPMENT OF PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS AND CREATIVITY

Findings from *The Art of Problem Solving* Presented at June 3–4 Conference

(NEW YORK, NY—June 2, 2010) – On June 3 and 4, *Thinking Like an Artist: Creativity and Problem Solving in the Classroom*, a conference for art and museum educators, administrators, and policy makers from across the nation, will convene in the Sackler Center for Arts Education at the Guggenheim Museum. During this conference, the Guggenheim will present key findings from *The Art of Problem Solving*, a four-year research initiative that evaluated the impact of its pioneering arts education program Learning Through Art (LTA) on students' problem-solving abilities and creativity. The study and conference are funded by an Arts in Education Model Development and Dissemination grant from the U.S. Department of Education that totaled over \$1 million.

For the first phase of the study, the Guggenheim's Learning Through Art staff assembled an advisory team of artists, educators, and cognitive scientists to identify the problem-solving skills that visual arts can most powerfully teach, followed by two years of research conducted by the evaluation consultant team of Randi Korn & Associates. The final year focused on analysis and dissemination of the findings.

The two years of the study's data collection efforts involved measures that were both quantitative and qualitative in nature, including observations of teaching artists in 18 classrooms, observations of 25 student case studies, questionnaires administered as pre- and post-test measures, interviews with 18 participating classroom teachers, and a one-on-one interview in which 447 test and control students were given an art-based problem-solving task and were asked to describe their process in completing it. The results of this research reveal that students receiving LTA instruction scored higher in three out of the

six skills of problem solving as defined by the study: *flexibility* (the ability to revise or rethink one’s plans when faced with challenges), *connection of ends and aims* (the ability to reflect on whether one’s final work of art met the intended goals), and *resource recognition* (the ability to identify additional materials that could be applied to the completion of the project). The three other skill areas identified are imagining, experimentation, and self-reflection.

“With this study of the Learning Through Art program, we are pleased to demonstrate that arts education helps develop the skills necessary to persistently and adaptively work through problems,” said Kim Kanatani, Deputy Director and Gail Engelberg Director of Education, Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation. “By asking students to think like artists, we are imparting 21st-century skills in encouraging them to approach problems with creativity and analytic thought rather than just recitation of facts.”

The Art of Problem Solving represents the Guggenheim’s second major U.S. Department of Education–funded study of Learning Through Art. In 2003, the Guggenheim received its first Arts in Education Model Development and Dissemination grant from the U.S. Department of Education for completion of a groundbreaking three-year research initiative that realized that LTA improved students’ literacy and critical thinking. The full research reports and executive summaries of *The Art of Problem Solving* and *Teaching Literacy Through Art* studies are available at learningthroughart.org.

Related Programs for Educators

Through the Sackler Center for Arts Education at the Guggenheim Museum, two public programs will focus on the findings of *The Art of Problem Solving* and will discuss how art educators can encourage the development of these skills in their students.

Thinking Like An Artist: Creativity And Problem Solving in the Classroom: Thursday, June 3, 9 am–5:30 pm, and Friday, June 4, 9 am–1 pm

What does it mean to think like an artist? What can educators learn from the work of artists? Join art and museum educators, administrators, and policy makers from across the country for a two-day forum to discuss the role of creativity in the art classroom and in the field of education as a whole. *Thinking Like an Artist* features artists Janine Antoni and Michael Joo; Lois Hetland and Ellen Winner, research associates at Project Zero, Harvard Graduate School of Education; Ellen Lupton, curator of

contemporary design at Cooper Hewitt National Design Museum; and Jerry Saltz, senior art critic for *New York Magazine*. The conference also will discuss the research design, findings, and new questions raised by the Guggenheim's four-year research initiative, *The Art of Problem Solving*. To view the full conference schedule, visit learningthroughart.org/conference.

This conference and the research presented have been developed under a grant from the U.S. Department of Education. However, the research and presentations do not necessarily represent the policies of the U.S. Department of Education and should not be taken as an endorsement from the federal government.

Teaching for Creativity
Thursday, June 10, 9 am–3pm

Through hands-on art making and group discussion, participants will learn strategies for planning and teaching art-based projects that promote the development of students' problem-solving skills. Teachers of grades two through twelve in all subject areas are welcome to register. Registration is \$20. For more information, or to learn about year-round opportunities for educators in all curriculum areas to learn creative strategies for incorporating visual arts in the classroom, call 212 423 3637.

About Learning Through Art

Learning Through Art was founded in 1970 by Natalie K. Lieberman in response to the elimination of art and music programs in New York City public schools. Since its inception, LTA has served more than 145,000 children and has placed hundreds of professional teaching artists in New York City public elementary schools where they collaborate with classroom teachers to lead curriculum-based art projects. The program encourages curiosity, critical thinking, and ongoing collaborative investigation. Additionally, LTA immerses students in the artistic process, includes visits to the Guggenheim Museum, and culminates in an annual *A Year with Children* exhibition displaying selections of art created by LTA students. *A Year with Children 2010* is on view through June 20, and showcases over 120 works by students in grades two through six from ten public schools representing New York City's five boroughs. For more information, please visit learningthroughart.org

About the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation

Founded in 1937, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation is dedicated to promoting the understanding and appreciation of art, primarily of the modern

and contemporary periods, through exhibitions, education programs, research initiatives, and publications. Currently the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation owns and operates the Guggenheim Museum on Fifth Avenue in New York and the Peggy Guggenheim Collection on the Grand Canal in Venice, and also provides programming and management for two other museums in Europe that bear its name: the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao and the Deutsche Guggenheim in Berlin. The Guggenheim Abu Dhabi, a museum of modern and contemporary art designed by architect Frank Gehry, is scheduled to open in 2013.

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