

## Georgia Teaching Artist Registry 2016

In my teaching, I instruct mapping workshops. Each workshop is unique in that the area of geographical focus differs accordingly to the recommendation of the social studies teacher made in advance. I give a PowerPoint presentation followed by a series of drawing exercises that address basic mapping skills: perspective, symbol-making, color use, and scale. Residencies go on from there through a series of process-based, hands-on, and collaborative map-making sessions usually resulting in a permanent or semi-permanent sculptural map.

### Geographic Understandings

SS5G1 The student will locate important places in the United States.

Map Skills -All 12 skills listed- especially comparative skills

Informational Processing Skills- Many are also integrated into lessons.

Visual Arts:

VA5MC.1 Engages in the creative process to generate and visualize ideas.

VA5MC.2 Formulates personal responses to visual imagery.

VA5MC.3 Selects and uses subject matter, symbols, and/or ideas to communicate meaning.

VA5PR.2 Understands and applies media, techniques, and processes of 2-D art

For Residencies add the following:

SS5G2 The student will explain the reasons for the spatial patterns of economic activities.

VA5PR.1 Creates artworks based on personal experience and selected themes.

VA5PR.3 Understands and applies media, techniques, and processes of 3D art

VA5AR.3 Explains how selected principles of design are

VA5C.1 Applies information and processes from other disciplines to enhance the understanding and production of artworks.

VA5C.2 Develops life skills through the study and production of art.

### **Lesson 1: Artist's Introduction and Aerial Perspective**

Introductions of students and artist. General introduction to the program. Slide presentation of artist's work.

Have participants:

- 1) Draw the following using aerial perspective: a person standing, a car, and a bicyclist
- 2) Look at the aerial photograph of the immediate neighborhood and identify the school building and other landmarks: major roads, parks, etc. (some are able to locate their house)
- 3) Process those landmarks into effective symbols

Program serve to develop mapping skills through artistic techniques. Students learn how to draw effective maps through identifying and symbolizing landmarks, use aerial perspective, and develop techniques that utilize proper scale and proportion. Students are given opportunities to further develop their three-dimensional skills through working with

clay (or other materials). The primary project (often but not always made of clay) may be a collective or individual map constructed as a permanent or temporary installation. The area of focus may be of the immediate community, historical landmarks of the state, a continent, or other relevant theme.

Social Studies and Arts Education are the two primary curriculum connections. Sessions focus on developing students' recognition, interpretation, and evaluation of various maps by investigating their uses, themes, perspectives, symbols, and colors. Depending on the specific project, various historical and community elements are incorporated in the sessions. Students take part in art making exercises and projects that address elements of art and principles of design. Programs are designed to improve mapping, critical thinking, and three-dimensional art skills.

Like the focus of my own artistic work, the focal point of my teaching practice is also mapping. The recognition and development of students' innate and learned skills regarding mapping is of critical interest. I encourage a passion in students in the knowledge, curiosity and understanding of their surroundings and the world at large.

The workshops and residencies are inquiry-oriented projects that relate to social studies curriculum. My intent is to engage students in a defined geographical area of focus (determined by the school prior to engagement) through a creative process that results in better recognition, identification and understanding of the given geographic area.

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SS5G2 The student will explain the reasons for the spatial patterns of economic activities.

Map Skills -All 12 skills listed- especially comparative skills

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#### Regarding Visual Arts:

VA5MC.1 Engages in the creative process to generate and visualize ideas.

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VA5MC.3 Selects and uses subject matter, symbols, and/or ideas to communicate meaning.

VA5PR.1 Creates artworks based on personal experience and selected themes.

VA5PR.2 Understands and applies media, techniques, and processes of 2-D art

VA5PR.3 Understands and applies media, techniques, and processes of 30-D art

VA5AR.3 Explains how selected principles of design are

VA5C.1 Applies information and processes from other disciplines to enhance the understanding and production of artworks.

VA5C.2 Develops life skills through the study and production of art.

Upon receiving my MFA in 1989 I began conducting workshops, artist residencies, and other educational programs as a teaching artist through a host of organizations, institutions, and agencies. I have also taught college level classes, administered Fulton

County's public art program, and served as a curator— all while maintaining my professional endeavors as a visual artist and sculptor.

Two primary groups (other than college level) have emerged as my specialty: 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> grades, when students' capacity is ripe to grasp basic yet critical abstract elements of mapping (e.g. aerial perspective); and teens, when students' conceptual capacity and critical thinking skills expands.

Social studies, geography, and specifically mapping skills, have been my primary academic area of focus — all achieved through the visual arts. Students have made sculptural maps of their community after completing a walking tour of the area. Older students have worked in groups to create detailed, properly scaled, three-dimensional maps of each African country (the permanent installation is still used as a teaching tool for other students).

My medium of choice is clay, which has been utilized in many of my projects, but not all. Large temporary projects have included found objects, wood, stone, and even acoustic ceiling tile. Through a typical residency, students learn and create through drawing, folding paper, properly placing their own body in a grid made of string or masking tape, sculpting, and painting.

I am accustomed to facilitating and documenting various types of meetings including board, sub-committee, panel, review, community-based, and education-based meetings. Having served as an arts administrator, I was responsible for keeping detailed minutes of the numerous meetings I attended. I have often taken and submitted board of directors meeting minutes. I have also written summaries for teacher training programs I have conducted. Regarding residencies, I typically file a final report (even when not required) to the host institution summarizing the success and shortcomings of a given educational program.

## **Application Narrative**

Broadly speaking, my teaching philosophy is one of providing students with the knowledge and skills to understand a given subject matter and challenging them to apply their knowledge through critical thinking. Specifically regarding how this applies to instructing social studies, I focus on developing students' recognition, interpretation, and evaluation of various maps by investigating their uses, themes, perspectives, agendas, symbols, and colors. Depending on the specific residency project, various historical and community elements are incorporated into the study sessions. Regarding arts education, students take part in art making exercises and projects that specifically address design elements and design principles.

I utilize a variety of communication styles to effectively teach students in an attempt to reach sensing, visual, inductive, sequential, and active learners. I often have students use diverse methods of expression (draw, move their bodies, point, etc.) to

demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of a given subject. With staff and administrators, I typically employ a positive and articulate approach in regards to mutual needs and expectations.

As a teaching artist my general goals are to:

- 1) improve mapping and critical thinking skills
- 2) increase geographic and cultural understanding of students' community, region and the world
- 3) improve two and three-dimensional art skills
- 4) find effective means of interacting with students of diverse backgrounds and students with special needs

## **Bio**

Known for his public art installations, sculpture, photography, and mixed-media constructions, Gregor Turk often incorporates mapping imagery and cultural markings into his artwork. He has permanent public art installations in the Atlanta and Jacksonville airports. In 2016 he completed an outdoor sculpture for the Metropolitan Branch of the Atlanta - Fulton Library System. His work is included in the collection of JPMorgan Chase, MOCA - GA (Museum of Contemporary Art – Georgia), and numerous other public and private institutions.

In addition to his studio practice, Turk has been involved in the visual arts in Atlanta in a variety of capacities: educator, administrator, advocate, panelist, and policy advisor. Since 1989 he has conducted numerous teaching workshops and residencies locally, regionally and internationally. Currently he is an adjunct faculty member in the sculpture department at Savannah College of Art and Design Atlanta Campus. (SCAD/Atlanta). Turk received his B.A. from Rhodes College and his M.F.A. from Boston University. Between degrees he served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Liberia, West Africa. For more information visit: [www.gregorturk.com](http://www.gregorturk.com)

As a teaching artist he has conducted numerous workshops and residencies. During these residencies he typically leads students in an investigation of maps and mapping through drawings and sculptural projects.