

ART IN SOCIETY SYMPOSIUM:
Art and Healing



COVER ARTWORK: GENEVA DAGNALL

PROGRAM NOTES
Friday, March 12th, 2021
9:00am-12:30pm PST

FREE & OPEN TO THE PUBLIC!
Register to receive ZOOM link

Art in Society presents a day of exploration about the ways human beings connect and share healing practices through creative engagement.

There will be intermissions between each hour presentation.

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PROGRAM of EVENTS

Welcome

Marianne Kent-Stoll, Head of School
Erica Nashan, Art in Society Coordinator

SESSION 1: 9:00-10:00am

Healing Through Dance

Violet and Tony Duncan guide us into the spiritual, physical, mental and emotional intersections that help us create balance and health in our lives through the Indigenous Art of Hoop Dancing.

SESSION 2: 10:15-11:15am

Arts Therapists

Sabina Barton, Music Therapist and Christine Little, Movement Therapist, talk about how they employ their art in therapeutic settings. They will describe their backgrounds as professional artists, and how specific training in the therapeutic use of their respective artistic disciplines has led them to use their creative talents as agents for healing.

SESSION 3: 11:30am-12:30pm

Artist Activists

Rachel Gartside from The Royal Shakespeare Company shares her touring play, *Tapestry*, as it opened up an important dialogue with young people about how to understand politics and watch for extremism. The conversations inspired empathy and understanding, building stronger relationships in a diverse community.

Dennis Caasi, Scottie Jeanette Madden, and Andrew Arnold from DTLA PROUD bring their new documentary, *Proud in a Pandemic*, a time capsule of stories about the innovation, survival and resilience of the LGBTQ+ community during the challenges of the past year. Their non-profit organization offers opportunities to local artists whose work empowers others, affirming the voices of their community.

Closing Comments

Pamela Jordan, President

Be prepared to participate at home using suggested materials provided by AIS.

There will be Q & A through chat during each webinar session.

SESSION 1: 9:00-10:00am

Facilitator: Shalyah Ben

HEALING THROUGH DANCE

Violet and Tony Duncan guide us into the spiritual, physical, mental and emotional intersections that help us create balance and health in our lives through the Indigenous Art of Hoop Dancing.

"The hoop is a very important teaching tool in sharing the traditional knowledge that has been handed down to me from my grandfather and father. I am inspired by the hoop dance and everything it has to teach us about having a balanced lifestyle. Sharing the teachings of the hoop dance and the importance of balance motivates me to continue my work in the arts."

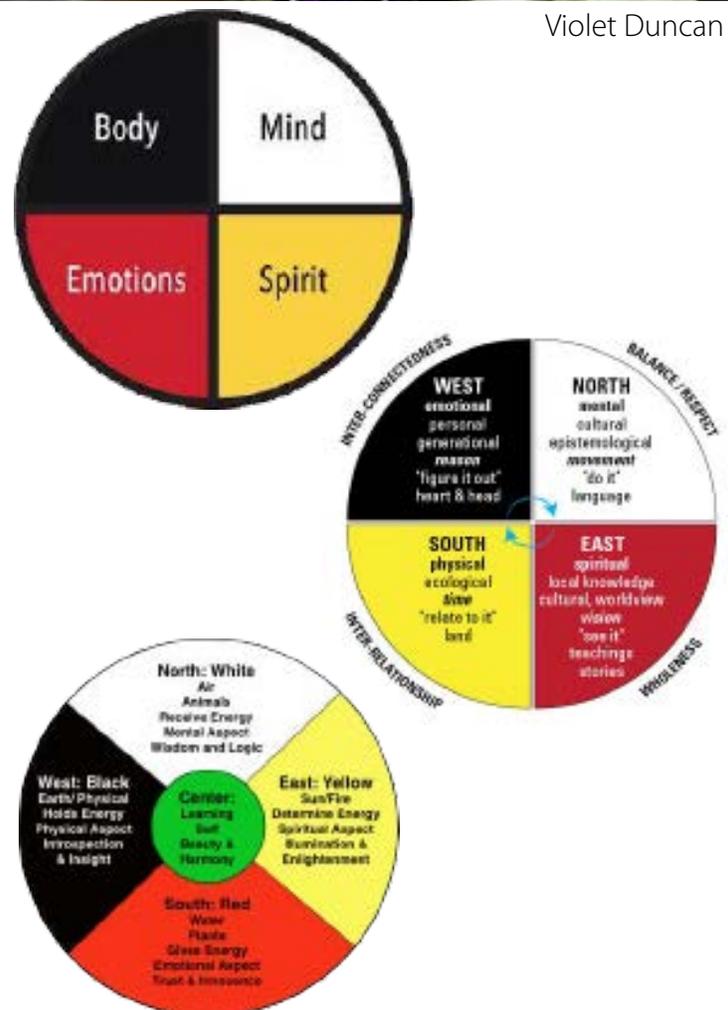
- Tony Duncan



Violet Duncan



Tony Duncan



Presenter Bios: HEALING THROUGH DANCE



Tony Duncan (*Apache, Arikara and Hidatsa*) has performed for audiences worldwide, including performances at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, The Smithsonian Museum, The Billboard Music Awards, The Tonight Show, and The White House. Duncan has great achievements in both music and dance. As a hoop dancer Tony Duncan is among the best in the world, winning the title of “World Champion Hoop Dancer,” an amazing 5 times. Duncan received the award for Artist of the Year at the Native American Music Awards. As a flute player, he is currently signed to the largest Native American music label, Canyon Records.

Duncan has toured with acclaimed Native American artists such as R. Carlos Nakai and Joanne Shenandoah, as well as across Europe and Asia with international pop star, Nelly Furtado. He’s enchanted over 100,000 people in Paris, London, Tokyo, Manila, Switzerland and the Island of Malta with his hoop dancing and flute playing. He is the featured dancer on Nelly Furtado’s music video, “Big Hoops”. In 2019, he was the recipient of the Dance/USA Fellowship, selected during an extremely rigorous process as one of 31 fellows by a ten-person panel. Tony was also the Lead Artist with the Mesa Arts Center on the Public Art installation: *Water = Life*. This project was created to discover, explore and celebrate the history and future of water in the Valley.

Violet Duncan is Plains Cree and Taino from Kehewin Cree Nation. She has toured nationally and internationally as a dancer and storyteller. Violet is a former “Miss Indian World”, representing all Indigenous people of North America. Violet is currently the Indigenous curator at the Tempe Center for the Arts where she aims to create space for a permanent program of Indigenous performance and practice. After becoming a mother of 4 and seeing the need for Native representation in literature, she took it upon herself to author three award winning children’s books, *I am Native*, *When We Dance*, and *Lets Hoop Dance!*



Her newest book, *I am Native*, released in 2020, shares a glimpse into the wonderful world of a multigenerational Native family. This book showcases beautiful imagery of family members passing down traditions in both traditional and modern ways. She has recently joined the family of Random House with two new children’s books coming out 2022. You can find her sharing her curriculum *I am Native: Lesson Plans*, to help educators gain more insight into a culturally literate classroom. Find out more about Violet at <https://www.violetduncan.com>.

SESSION 2: 10:15-11:15am

Facilitators: Erica Nashan & Ginger Dagnall

ARTS THERAPISTS

Sabina Barton, Music Therapist, and **Christine Little**, Movement Therapist, talk about how they employ their art in therapeutic settings. They will describe their backgrounds as professional artists, and how specific training in the therapeutic use of their respective artistic disciplines has led them to use their creative talents as agents for healing.

Session Notes

Dance Movement Therapy (DMT) is the psycho-therapeutic use of movement and dance to support intellectual, emotional, and motor functions of the body. As a modality of the creative arts therapies, DMT looks at the correlation between movement and emotion. *(from ADTA)*

TOOLS/WAYS to HEAL:

Mindful Walking

Walk slowly around the space, breathing naturally. Notice how many steps match your inhale; notice how many steps match your exhale. This activity offers the insight of mindfulness and gratitude.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QYmXszsDuog>

Walk Like an Emotion

Walk around the space as if you were experiencing the emotion suggested by the facilitator, such as proud, grieving, anxious, content. Notice your body's posture and gestures. This activity offers the insight of how our bodies express emotion and how emotions can be influenced by our bodies.

5 Rhythms

Move freely, according to your own impulse, as you warm up each body part and hear each musical rhythm, i.e. Flowing, Staccato, Chaos, Lyrical, Stillness. This activity offers the experience of embodied states of being and the joy of shared community.

Body Scan/Deep Relaxation

Find a comfortable position, preferably sitting or lying down. Close eyes, or lower gaze and soften focus. Notice body parts and any sensation or experience of ease or tension that is present. Breathe into that body part. This activity offers the insight of self awareness and gratitude.

Kinesthetic Empathy/Empathic Reflection

Find a partner. Decide who will be the "leader" and who will be the "follower".

1. The leader moves in simple, small movements and the leader mirrors the movement.
2. Switch roles and repeat instructions.
3. Both participants follow and no one leads.

This activity offers the insight of understanding and empathy for another person as you communicate nonverbally.

Learn more at

American Dance Therapy Association

<https://www.adta.org/>

Presenter Bios: ARTS THERAPISTS

Christine Little, MA, has pursued her curiosity for the body's nonverbal expression since her first modern dance class! She received her BFA from the Boston Conservatory in Dance/Choreography and her MA from the Naropa University in Somatic Psychology/Dance Movement Therapy. She has taught creative movement, music and dance to children, teens and adults and has facilitated Recreation & Expressive Arts groups and individual experiences for preschool children to elders in hospitals, schools, residential treatment and community arts programs.



Christine currently teaches at the University of Maine at Augusta, as well as for the Snow Pond Center for the Arts. She is committed to a practice of mindfulness through the disciplines of meditation and Authentic Movement, and loves making and listening to music, as well as spending time in nature, reading poetry and historical fiction, and being together with her family. Contact Christine at calittledance@gmail.com.



Sabina Barton is a music therapist and educator currently living in Birmingham, Alabama. She works at a private music school teaching piano, music theory, and songwriting basics to all ages, and specializes in individuals with physical, developmental, and/or learning differences. She received her Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Music Therapy from Florida State University, where she was awarded Humanitarian of the Year. She received the Tallahassee Memorial Healthcare Music Therapy Grant and completed her thesis on the use of music to help decrease pain and anxiety in children receiving invasive and noninvasive procedures in the emergency room.

Additionally, she attended Berklee College of Music to pursue composition and songwriting. Two of her original compositions were selected for the soundtrack to *A Moment of Clarity* - a documentary that tells the story of an emerging painter and provides insight into the world of bipolar disorder and the creative mind.

Additional Music Therapy Resources:

American Music Therapy Association: <https://www.musictherapy.org>

World Federation of Music Therapy: <https://wfmt.info>

Becoming certified in Music Therapy: <https://www.cbmt.org>

"An Introduction to Music Therapy: Theory and Practice", by William B. Davis, Kate E. Gfeller, & Michael H. Thaut

SESSION 3: 11:30am - 12:30pm

Facilitators: Abbie Bosworth & Shelly Short

ARTIST ACTIVISTS

Rachel Gartside from The Royal Shakespeare Company shares her touring play, *Tapestry*, as it opened up an important dialogue with young people about how to understand politics and watch for extremism. The conversations inspired empathy and understanding, building stronger relationships in a diverse community.

Dennis Caasi, Scottie Jeanette Madden, and **Andrew Arnold** from DTLA PROUD bring their new documentary, *Proud in a Pandemic*, a time capsule of stories about the innovation, survival and resilience of the LGBTQ+ community during the challenges of the past year. Their non-profit organization offers opportunities to local artists whose work empowers others, affirming the voices of their community.

Session Notes: PROUD IN A PANDEMIC

What is Proud in a Pandemic?

The COVID-19 pandemic challenged the DTLA PROUD organizers to re-examine the true meaning of Pride without physical events. Coupled with the historic uprising against racial injustice and discrimination, this film captures a moment in time when despite these common struggles, the breadth and diversity of the LGBTQ+ community is becoming more connected and united than ever before. The PROUD in a Pandemic film is a time capsule of stories about the innovation, survival, and resilience of the LGBTQ+ community.

What is DTLA Proud?

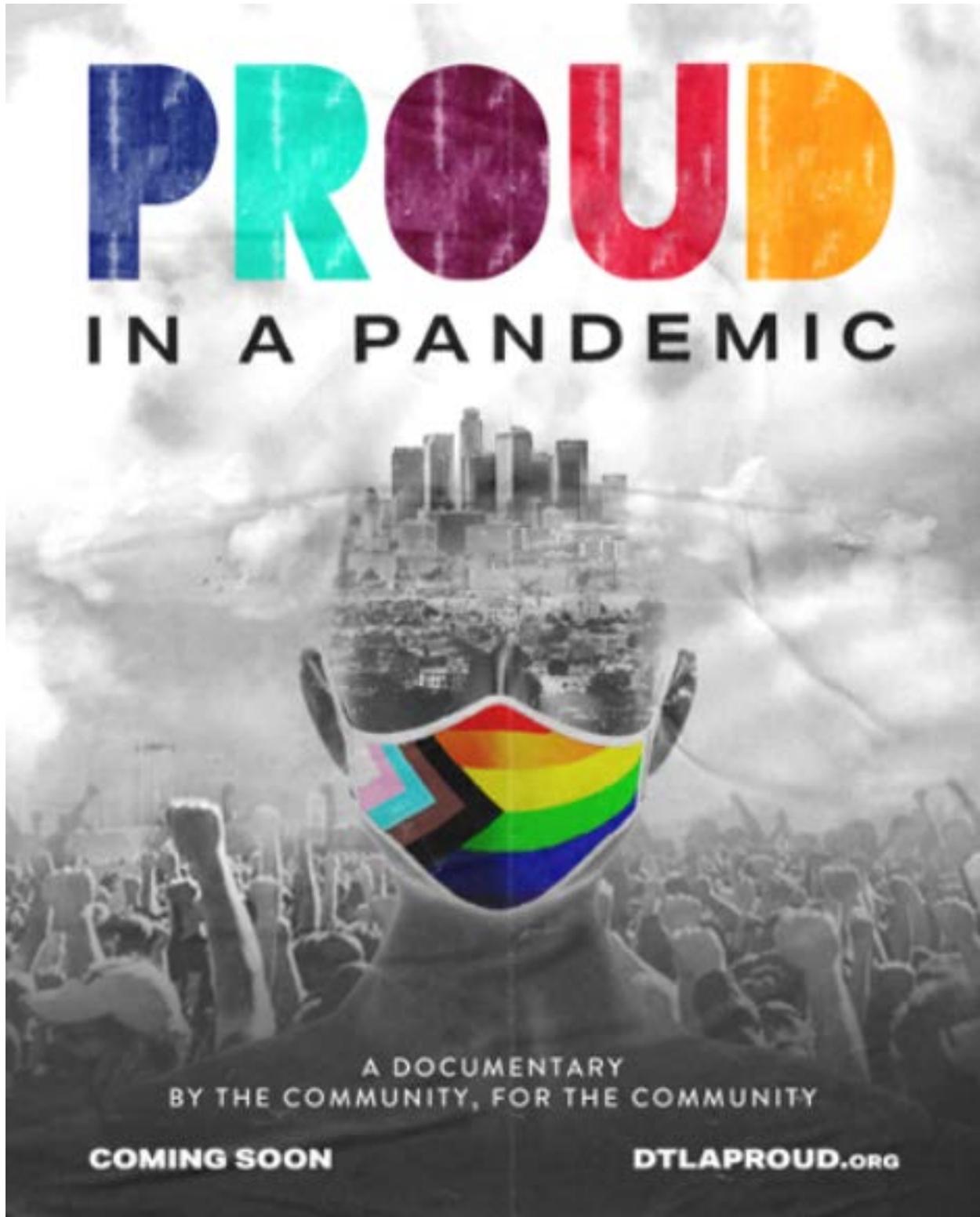
DTLA Proud is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that strengthens and empowers the local LGBTQ+ & ally community in Downtown Los Angeles through visibility, volunteerism, partnerships and events. Founded by a grassroots group of local residents, business owners, community leaders and nightlife promoters, we were born from the idea that together we could create an all-inclusive community that represents the diverse LGBTQ+ population that lives, works and plays in the thriving heart of the city of Los Angeles.

Our Mission:

We are committed to celebrating everyone's story, spreading optimism, growing our community and expanding our definition of diversity.

By the community. For the community.

Session Notes: PROUD IN A PANDEMIC (continued)



Presenter Bios: ARTIST ACTIVISTS

Scottie Jeanette Madden rose through the technical ranks as camera operator and editor to bring a front line experience to her work as writer, director and showrunner. As a former on-line editor and post-production art director, Scottie received awards for innovative programming, including two TELLYS: one for director/producer and one for best art direction, and a CINDY for best Educational Interactive Program. She also serves as a consultant and instructor of production technique to CBS News, NBC Sports, FOX news, and others. Scottie's credits in the feature documentary world, have produced two documentaries for the international market: "Ghosts of Belgrave Hall" and "Ghosts of England" which won a TELLY award in the feature documentary category. Her third documentary, "PROUD in a Pandemic" is currently in production.



Dennis Caasi, aka *Proper D*, is a Guam-born, Alaska-raised, London-educated, Morocco-cultured and LA-made music artist. He brings a sense of geographic and ancestral diversity to his music; a mix of electronic, hip hop and worldly sounds that are a true testament to his adventurous and multi-faceted life. Whether in music or community work, Caasi's goal is to produce elevated experiences, bring people together, and contribute to the betterment of society - all while having fun doing it. He leads development efforts for the non-profit DTLA PROUD and the documentary Proud in a Pandemic.

Andrew Arnold earned his MFA in Directing at UCLA School of Theater Film and Television, and spent 14 months in South Korea filming his first documentary, 21 Days With Buddha, through the Fulbright Research Program. From Buddhist monks to drag queens, Andrew works with everyone in between on projects that emphasize LGBTQ issues and understanding human nature. His last short film, The Cocoa Fondue Show, premiered at Outfest and the New York Television Festival, winning Best LGBTQ short at the Paris Short Film Festival.



Session Notes: TAPESTRY

Rachel Gartside will be sharing with us her experience of devising and directing a piece of theatre called 'Tapestry', which was produced by The Playhouse (<https://www.theplayhouse.org.uk/>) and toured high schools in her home city of Birmingham, UK, between 2009 and 2019.

The Playhouse believes that live theatre helps to promote dialogue and heal social division. Theatre is an art form that demands society examine itself in the mirror. We think coming together for the live shared experience of a play helps us all to experience, feel and understand different points of view. Through that artistic process, we hope that our community will be stronger and healthier. That's what makes us activists.

We work in state schools: the equivalent of US public schools. We do that because it is in those schools that we have the best chance of reaching the widest cross section of our community. We work with one class group of about 30 students and the plays we make are participatory: the students we work with don't just sit and watch. The characters ask them for advice and ultimately the participants decide how the play should end. So, every performance is a discussion of big human questions: what kind of people do we want to be? What kind of world do we want to create? How do I respond to others who have a different viewpoint than my own? What are the consequences of my actions? Participants teach us what is important to them: whose stories are not being told, whose histories are not being explored. The dialogue we are in, we hope, provides a forum for healing in our community.

"If you want peace, you have to show peace."

We work in Birmingham. Ours is a city of world cultures: over several decades, successive waves of new people have emigrated to Birmingham from across the globe, bringing with them new talents and skills. The mix of heritage and cultures of these people has formed the most culturally diverse city in the UK. The art that is made here evolves in that rich context, and it is particularly important to us that our work reflects that. So, we cast for diversity of representation. Some of our work is bilingual, often in Arabic. We work hard to make the non-verbal action on stage clear, so that participants with English as an additional language can enjoy equality of access. We have an advisory group of young people, two young people serve on our board of management and we consult annually with teachers in our schools to decide on our program of work for the coming year. We are known for creating work that fully respects the context in which we work, and every unique student participant in that context.

Tapestry was created in response to a real riot which broke out in Birmingham City Centre in 2009. The right wing extremist group, the English Defence League, held an anti-Islamist protest, which was countered by young Muslim and anti-fascist groups. Violence broke out between them.

Tapestry explores the reasons why that riot occurred. The names of the organizations involved were fictionalized, and characters inspired by the real people involved were created, to provide a safe

Session Notes: TAPESTRY (continued)

forum. But fundamentally the play is about the reasons why people turn to violent extremism. The title of the play came from the quote above which we read when we were rehearsing. *"We are one people, forever woven together in a Tapestry"*. The metaphor of a community being like a tapestry, in which people are the different, unique threads and our lives are woven together to create something beautiful, was one which we used and discussed with the audience during the play.

The high school students that the play was made for were directly involved in the action. Before the play started, actors out of role met the student participants and asked them to be part of the action. Students were asked to imagine that they were in Birmingham city centre, where a riot was 'kicking off' and so they had sought safety away from the violence in a disused shop. Students were asked to imagine what would be happening outside in the street, what they would be able to hear from inside the shop, what they might be feeling like. So, by the time the play started, the audience were 'in it'.

During the action, they discussed with the characters freedom of speech, diversity, legal and illegal forms of protest, the tactics that extremist leaders use to provoke their followers, and how they thought we could avoid events like the riot in the future. The play was staged for a thrust space: that is, the class of students who were participating sat around the action on three sides, and the actors would sometimes sit in the audience. All of this was to help the audience feel like they were part of the action, included and valued.

Whilst we were researching Tapestry, we used three statements as a touchstone, and these statements found their way into the script, to be debated by the characters and the audience. *Rachel would like you to think about those same statements, which she'll ask you about during the session:*

1. There is more that unites us than divides us. What do you think? Do you agree, disagree, or are you not sure? And, most importantly, WHY?
2. I have the right to say whatever I like. What do you think? Do you agree, disagree, or are you not sure? WHY?
3. If you want things to get better you have to be prepared to fight.

What do you think? Do you agree, disagree, or are you not sure? WHY?

Tapestry ran for ten years. Over that time, the play evolved in response to the changing world around us. Thousands of young people in Birmingham experienced the play. Of course, no play is complete without an audience, and it is in the response of the audience that theatre makers gauge the effect of their work. We collected the things that the participants in Tapestry said, and here are a few examples:

"We're all humans and we should all be together. We lose our uniqueness if we're all the same, but we should all be equal."

"If you want peace you have to show peace."

Session Notes: TAPESTRY (continued)

"Try not to feel sorry for yourself too much. Trust other people."

"Look around and research. Look at all the things you see, you have to decide what to believe."

"Don't judge people before you get to know them."

"If we all joined together, the Tapestry is us. All of us."

At the end of the play, out of role, the actors asked the audience for suggestions of what they could do to weave the tapestry of their school community closer together. In many schools, they suggested celebration ('Mela') events in school to share cultures, music, food and storytelling. In Frankley school, they invited families into school to share how and why they were in Birmingham and what the city meant to them. One of my favourite outcomes was at Queensbridge School, where a student suggested, 'make an actual Tapestry to show off our area'. Although they didn't make a Tapestry, they did create a digital collage of images and words which was a beautiful, collective celebration of what their area meant to them.

**"If we all joined together,
the Tapestry is us. All of us."**

But the real healing that happened through Tapestry was that participants suggested personal action: things that seem simple like, 'listen to each other', 'respect our differences', 'find someone you've never talked with properly and make an effort to find out about their lives'. Those quiet, human, personal acts can make huge differences in understanding and acceptance, and hopefully heal some of the divisions between us.

Presenter Bio: ARTIST ACTIVISTS



Rachel Gartside is a freelance director, actor, writer and educator based in Birmingham, UK. She has spent her career exploring the possibilities for learning through theatre. She has an MPhil in Drama in Education from Warwick University, and is an Associate of The Royal Shakespeare Company, with whom she works with students and teachers all over the world. For AIS Symposium 2021 she will be talking about devising and directing 'Tapestry', commissioned by The Playhouse Birmingham to tour into High Schools in the city. The piece explores how and why young people turn to violent extremism, at a time of political and cultural debate, and offers a creative way to find cross-cultural understanding.

Art in Society: Mission & Leadership Team

ART IN SOCIETY MISSION

“Nurturing Citizen Artists through community partnership and advocacy.”

By understanding that they are part of a global community, students discover the empowerment of being a Citizen Artist: having an impact beyond individual or isolated achievement.

LEADERSHIP TEAM

Erica Nashan, *Art in Society Coordinator*

James Kent Arnold, *Film and Digital Media Faculty*

Shaliyah Ben, *Native American Arts Program Coordinator*

Abbie Bosworth, *InterArts Chair and Creative Writing Faculty*

Jennifer Chassman, *Director of Innovation and Curriculum*

Ginger Dagnall, *Assistant to the Head of School*

Heather Netz, *Music Faculty, Coordinator of Music Partnerships*

Shelly Short, *Film and Digital Media Chair*

AIS Alumni Advisors

Jackson Bujnosek, *'20 Inter Arts*

Michael Dunaevsky, *'20 Music / Jazz*

Kate Adeleson, *'20 Film and Digital Media*

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