

Eisner Lifetime Achievement Award

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Introduction: **Tribute to Elliot Eisner**•1

- 2 I'd like to thank two outstanding art educators, Melody Milbrandt and Marilyn Stewart, for nominating me for this award.
- 3 In addition, I'd like to express gratitude to the Miami University at Oxford, Ohio, where I delivered the 2013 John A. & Betty J. Michael Autobiographical Distinguished Lecture Series in Art Education, and especially to Julie Lindsey, for granting me permission to use parts of this lecture.
- 4 This is bittersweet moment for me. I was very happy when I learned that I would be receiving this Award named in honor of one of my art education heroes Elliot Eisner. I looked forward to sharing this moment with him. But this was not meant to be. He knew that I received this award and his wife, Ellie Eisner, wrote to me, "When I read the letter announcing the committee's decision about your being chosen, Elliot said "Great! Wonderful choice." I was pleased he responded so positively. I have known Eliot Eisner most of my professional art education higher education life. My husband Gilbert Clark, who has helped and supported me in all that I have accomplished, was one of Elliot's doctoral students and through this relationship I became an honorary Stanford alumna. Of course, Elliot's scholarship and his prominence in helping shape the field of art education

into a vibrant research and teaching community has been manifest in all my thinking and praxis over the years.

Elliot Eisner and I both are first generation Americans from families of Russian Jewish immigrants. His father like mine, held socialist ideas and supported union activities. I also connect deeply with Elliot's notion of promoting art education as a means of conserving the world of art for future generations.

•5 I was told that this award talk absolutely was to be about me and not Elliot Eisner; but, I am sure you will note his influence in many of my comments and observations. Before I begin, however, I would like to pay Dr. Eisner a special tribute. Words I have written in the background of this slide exemplify somebody who was a wise teacher and leader.

The wise shall inherit honor.

A respected art educator and scholar.

A leader of the art education community.

A goal keeper and councilor for art educators.

A scholar qualified to collect, interpret, and disseminate art education knowledge.

Rav רב (in Hebrew) the great one.

•6 Title **Traveling Against the Tide: A Conversation About the Ebb and Flow of My Past, Present, and Future Excursions in Art Education**

It is a common practice among people of all generations to become members of [ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com)•7 and find roots of their family histories. When I look back at my own beginnings, I find direct connections to the roots of influences of past events that have shaped my career in art education. Over almost a 50 year career as an art teacher and art educator, I have applied both imagery and the written word to present my own

observations and ideas to support art education. I have found similar themes emerging, receding, and returning in my repertoire of activities and passionate engagements.

Traveling against the flow•8 has always challenged me and set a course for my research in art education that focuses on curriculum, assessment, and teacher education; art talent development; feminist issues; multicultural and global concerns; research, mentoring, and advocacy; and creativity. It appears that I have worn a number of different hats•9 of an eclectic nature; however, all these represent concerns, that at the time I first practiced, researched, and wrote about them, were not popular and sometimes not acknowledged as matters of importance for the field of art education. They are all interconnected, however, as they address issues related to research and practice in art education that are at the core of what is done, how it is done, and what needs to be done to make art education a priority in our nation's schools and in other venues where art education is taught and practiced. My daughter Laura presented me with a sign a few years ago that she said summed up my views about life:•10 'If you obey all of the rules you'll miss all the fun.' Although it hasn't always been fun it has always been challenging.

Retirement

I raise the first of my many hats•11 to my 10th year of retirement from Indiana University. Most of the art educators with whom I originally collaborated have long since left the field. Retirement for me has not meant withdrawing from my active working life nor has it meant retreating to a place of privacy or seclusion. Presently, I am involved in a number of activities that are evidence of my enduring involvement in the field and my interests in collaborating with others and building communities of art educators. To follow my journey in the field of art education, I will look back at my roots

and show how they have influenced the paths I have taken and the interests I continue to pursue.

Roots from the Past¹

I have the blood of immigrants coursing through my veins; old hats•12 from my past become new ones in the present. My lifetime dedication to learning, knowledge, and social justice can be traced back to my family roots. Prior to immigrating to the United States in 1913, my father, who was the youngest of five children•13, and his family had lived in a small traditional town Dryska in Polish Russia. My father's family left their 19th century world to start a new life in 20th century United States. They settled in New York City, on the lower East side•14, in a community populated by many other Jewish émigrés from Eastern Europe.

I grew up in the Bronx, New York City. Many family members were socialists and political activists. Values stressed in my family were education, social justice, and taking advantage of cultural activities that New York City offered. Growing up in a diverse multicultural environment allowed me to meet and have direct contact with people from a variety of different backgrounds.

In 1948 when I was seven and my sister was three, we both contracted polio that resulted in long hospitalizations. •15 My form was bulbar polio and residual effects are that I have a paralyzed vocal cord. From this experience, I was left with a belief that I had been saved to do some good in the world as bulbar polio often restricted victims to an iron lung for the remainder of their lives or resulted in death. I was lucky; I spent only a few weeks in an iron lung.

In elementary school, I studied art in a community art studio•16, in middle school I attended a special program for gifted students, and then was a student at Music and Art High School•17 (now LaGuardia School for the Arts in Lincoln Center). This high school, with its focus on academics and the arts, greatly influenced my future advocating for differentiated art programs for students with special interests and abilities in the visual arts.

Along with many first generation college students, I attended City College in New York City (now City University)•18 that was on the same campus as my high school. I graduated from college in 1961 with a Bachelor of Arts degree and a teacher certification. I became an art teacher •19 in the New York City public schools and taught students from minority backgrounds who faced challenges of living at a poverty level. My dedication to developing the art talents of all my students as well as understanding issues of social justice and multicultural education was nurtured in these teaching environments.

I was teaching art in elementary school and studying for a master's of fine arts degree at Hunter College where I completed my painting thesis with Donald Judd 20 as my mentor. Originally I was influenced by the minimalist school of painting 21, but soon after embraced a more organic and multi-media approach to self-expression. •22, 23, then with content that held messages about a variety of social issues•24 manifest in the 1960s which was a time of ferment, revolt, and protest, until the present. •25 Here lie the roots of my early interest in arts-based, feminist, and equitable issues in art education that continues until today.

My husband and I were doctoral students at Indiana University and when he graduated, our family moved to Ithaca, New York, where I founded a community-based

visual arts school•26 that still exists. In 1977 I returned to Bloomington to complete my doctorate in art education. Sadly, that year both Mary Rouse, who was my mentor and an early feminist leader in art education, and my husband died. Elizabeth Steiner, a professor in the Philosophy of Education Department at IU, then became my mentor.•27 and I completed my doctoral dissertation under her tutelage. Concurrently, Gilbert Clark joined the faculty at IU and we worked together on several art education projects and married in 1979. Eventually, I became a faculty member in the art education program at IU along with Guy Hubbard and Gil Clark•28. At present, my children are both involved in teaching;•29 my daughter is a pre-school teacher of special needs children and my son is a Professor at New York University's Tisch School of Fine Arts.

Now that some of the roots of my background have been exposed, I will endeavor to show how various concerns and issues from the past have influenced my current interests and advocacy practices•30 through a few of my most current research initiatives and educational practices. Contemporary times, with economic challenges and long-established views about the limited role that the arts should play in the lives of young people, make it more important than ever that an education that fosters appreciation and participation in the visual arts is preserved for the next generation of art students.

Curriculum Development and Teacher Education in Art Education

The genesis of this hat•31 is my continued devotion to connections between research, practice, curriculum development, and teacher education hearken back to the rigor of theory analysis and construction originating in my doctoral dissertation. Often, art curricula found in public schools takes the form of individual 'make and take' art lessons without attention to underlying conceptual frameworks and scope and sequence of the

content being taught. Returning to my teaching experiences, first as a K-6 art teacher and then as a university professor at the higher education level, I created in-depth art education curricula with accompanying professional education strategies.

Gil Clark and I worked on a number of collaborative projects including a widely used curriculum-based textbook published in 1978, *Art Design: Communicating Visually* •32. In 1982, I co-authored a book •33 with Guy Hubbard, *Artstrands* that is still taught at IU, but now as an on-line art education course. In the years following, I published a number of articles, book chapters, and books •34 emphasizing authentic assessment in art education, an area that had not been addressed to any extent when I first conducted research and wrote about it. Use of standardized evaluation procedures is now a contested issue in school evaluation and reconsideration of authentic assessment procedures needs to be brought to the forefront again.

•35“When artistic heritages of students, and those of their local communities, are incorporated into authentic assessments, researchers, students, parents, teachers, and community members can learn to value traditions of their own cultures and those of others. Then, they can begin to take actions to ensure that assessments are appropriate and equitable.” (Zimmerman, 2008, p. 51)

Over the years, I also have focused my research and practice on pre-service and professional teacher education issues and edited and wrote the introduction to the section on Teacher and Teacher Education in the *Handbook of Research and Policy in Art Education*:

•36“We need to create bodies of research that are sustained over long periods of time ... teaching and teacher education provide the basis for searching critically and examining

theory and practice in art education and then offers a research agenda for succeeding generations of all those who have a stake in building a future where art education is valued for all those qualities that we believe are important for everyone's education.”

(Zimmerman, 2004, p. 413)

Art Talent Development

My own advantages of having a first rate public education that met my interests and abilities were motivation for donning my next hat^{•37} in the area of research and practice focusing on educating artistically talented students. In art education, there has been a predominant view that creating opportunities for high ability art students is elitist and does not address the educational needs of all students. Based on my own background and Gil Clark's many years of teaching gifted students, we both, individually and together, researched and developed programs for artistically talented students and their teachers. We have always believed what is learned from these best practice environments for talented art students should be adapted for **all** art students.

For over a decade in the 1990s, Gil Clark and I coordinated a summer program^{•38} for artistically talented junior high and early high school students with a concurrent professional development program for art teachers. We also received a large federal grant to fund seven community-based programs^{•39} in rural areas^{•40} designed to serve students, with high interests and abilities in the visual arts, ^{•41} who came from economically disadvantaged and racially and/or ethnically diverse backgrounds. In addition, we received Indiana state grants and wrote many articles and books on this topic. In 2004 and 2008, we spent time in Hong Kong^{•42} and South Korea^{•43} working with government agencies developing programs for high ability^{•44} visual art students

focusing on community-based art education practices. For the past two decades, •45 I have been Coordinator of Gifted and Talented Programs at Indiana University and continue to teach and organize a summer High Ability License program for teachers of all K-12 subjects. The courses in this program, like the cornfields that surround us in Indiana, are hybrid as the classes meet for one week and then the rest of the program takes place on-line.

•46 “ Creating a balance between excellence and equity demands that students, parents, teachers, administrators, and community members need to take responsibilities for action. Curricula and assessments should be designed to develop goals that serve the needs of all students and are high enough to challenge those who are artistically talented.” (Clark & Zimmerman, 2004, p.16).

•47 “Visual art education has a major role to play in the increasingly visually oriented world by encouraging and supporting all students’ and art teachers’ skills, talents, and imaginations ... are encouraged and rewarded to find and solve problems in personally unique ways that take into account their creative abilities (Zimmerman, 2014, p.18).”

Feminist Art Education

From the time I was an art student to when I became an art teacher and union representative for an elementary school, to being a doctoral student at IU, I was always aware of inequities of how women were treated and how their access was limited to leadership roles in general education and art education in particular. Thus is a tale of the aegis of my next hat. •48 When I was a graduate student at IU in the late 1970s, I was influenced by Jessie Lovano Kerr and Mary Rouse and their dedication to researching and confronting women’s issues in art education. During the next few years I was

involved in several research projects and publications related to this topic^{•49}. In the early 1980s, Mary Ann Stankiewicz and I co-edited three issues of *Women Art Educators* (1982, 1985, 1993)^{•50} inspired by the fact that at that time there was no body of research on this subject matter. This publication became an ongoing series on the topic of women's contributions to art education. I continued to co-edit two more issues in this series with Elizabeth Sacca in 1998, and the last in 2003 with Kit Grauer and Rita Irwin. Mary Ann Stankiewicz and Ami Kantawala now are planning to publish a sixth volume in this series. I have since have written numerous articles and book chapters dedicated to a feminist consideration of art teaching and learning. Over the years I served in a number of leadership roles in the NAEA Women's Caucus and still am active in this organization.

In addition, with Frances Thurber I devoted ten years to developing a feminist leadership and empowerment models for art education. ^{• 51} During the 1990s, we published a dozen articles on this theme, the last in 2002, which resulted in a feminist leadership model for art education. I have continued to conduct research using this model with various groups including national in-service and pre-service art teachers and international art education doctoral students. The most recent article I wrote using this model was with Marjorie Manifold and involved pre-service elementary teachers in an arts methods class (2011).

^{•52} “This feminist leadership model suggests a guide for steering elementary education majors away from pessimistic views about art's place in K-6 curricula toward more affirmative ones. The model is appropriate for guiding instructors and their students to move from self-empowered voices to collaborative voices and eventually to becoming

positive agents for change.” (Manifold & Zimmerman, 2004, p. 34.)

In collaboration with Renee Sandell and Carol Henry, I received funding from NAEA, to use this feminist leadership model in summer 2014 to assess SummerVision DC, a museum education program sponsored by NAEA.

•53 “The leadership and empowerment model provides a structural outline for encouraging teachers to be reflective practitioners through an environment constructed of cooperation, collaboration, equity, and support among all members of a community of teachers.” (Zimmerman, SummerVision proposal, 2013)

Multicultural and Global Concerns

When I was growing up in the Bronx I never imagined I would travel to over 46 countries and teach or conduct workshops in over 25 of them. •54. With assistance from IU, the US government, and a variety of non-government organizations, I was supported while wearing yet another hat. My comfort, growing up in a large metropolitan area and now living in somewhat rural circumstances in Indiana, allowed my travel experiences to blossom in from multicultural settings to global locations • 55. I have been fortunate to have opportunities to have taught or conducted workshops, and lived for extended periods of time in Asia, Africa, Europe, the Middle East, Canada, Australia, and South America. Recently Gil and I have served as consultants, over a number of years, developing community-based art programs for students with art interests and abilities in Korea and Hong Kong.

I also have held in leadership roles •56 in the International Society for Education through Art (InSEA) and the United States Society for Education through Art (USSEA). •57 From 2005 through 2007, I was senior editor of the USSEA *Journal of Cultural*

Research in Art Education and had served several times as an InSEA World Councilor. A handbook about teaching in a global world, that I co-edited with Marjorie Manifold and Steve Willis, is in a queue of books to be published by NAEA.

• 58 Focusing on commonalities requires that students recognize attributes that provide a basis for harmonious interactions among peoples and interdependence in a global world ... Concomitantly, teachers should challenge their students to consider how artworks also represent differing cultural interpretations of common experiences” (Zimmerman, in press c).

In a book co-edited about globalization and art education by Delacruz, Arnold, Kuo, and Parsons, published in 2009 by NAEA, I wrote a chapter about strategies for teaching in international settings.

•59“Clearly, cultural differences ... challenge those teaching in countries other than their own to be both aware of and sensitive to these differences and value systems ... in democratic societies equality for all persons regardless of race, gender, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, or socio-economic status should be an underlying principle.” (Zimmerman, 2009, p. 298).

Research, Mentoring, and Advocacy in Art Education

I wear my next hat •60 with serious engagement. My interests in social justice and equitable art education for all have inspired my social action notion of *tikkum olam*, • 61 repairing or healing the world. I believe it is the obligation of each of us individually and in groups to help perform this repair even when it is not popular or customary to do so. My way of accomplishing this healing has been to be an advocate for art education through policy papers, research, and teaching from pre-school to doctoral levels. I also

have nurtured a community of researchers and leaders among my students •62 and colleagues in the field of art education through mentoring that does not terminate within the brick and mortar walls of a classroom, but reaches out in a variety of personal and public contexts. The rewards of these relationships, as well as the many times my students and colleagues have mentored me, have lead to creating caring communities as nurturance of both the intellect and spirit.

For six years, from 1993-1998, I served as the first Chair of the NAEA Research Commission and in 1998 I co-edited •63 *Research Methods and Methodologies for Art Education* (1997) with Sharon La Pierre. This was the first book that had been published for a long time about research methods in art education. Then in 2011, I edited a group of 14 advocacy White Papers for NAEA (2011-2012) and also wrote one about arts integration. These papers were written in order to help inform policy decisions about art education at local, state, and national levels. In 2011 I was on a task force to form a new Research Commission in Art Education and now serve as a Research Commissioner.

Presently, •64 I have been engaged in conducting research using data visualization methods as a means of networking and translating complex ideas into easily understood graphic forms. In particular, I am focusing on visual conceptual mapping in order to demonstrate links among interconnected, theoretical concepts •65. This present inquiry has its origins in my doctoral dissertation where I used digraph theoretical analysis to map June King McFee's perceptual delineation theory and •66 later in a number of research studies with Frances Thurber in which we used conceptual mapping as a research tool (Thurber & Zimmerman, 2002).

•67“ Research in art education is about searching and critically examining theory and practice with an aim toward creating, critiquing, extending, revising, and constructing new knowledge based on rigorous and exhaustive inquiry methods and methodologies”(Zimmerman, 2005, p. 72, *Studies Invited Lecture*).

•68“Collaboration among researchers and practitioners is required in order for the field of art education to move forward ... Alliances among art educators and those from other disciplines around the globe will be needed as social communications through new technologies make possible partnerships that in the past could only have been conjured in our imaginations.” (Zimmerman, in press)

Creativity and Art Education

I have noted the ebb and flow of support for creativity in art education with a high point in the 1960s and 1970s, to its fall during the 1980s, and until recently, when it has been rising again. Wearing my eighth hat •69, I consistently over the years have been an advocate for creativity as a vital component of art education theory and practice. In the 1980s there was a negative reaction to Lowenfeld’s child-centered •70 emphasis in art programs by discipline-based art education (DBAE) advocates who supported a movement in which subject-matter-centeredness was in tune with social and economic trends of the time. After having several of my proposals emphasizing creativity rejected •71 for inclusion in NAEA publications, I switched hats and found a new audience for my creativity writings (and those with Gilbert Clark) about research and practice •72 in the field of gifted and talented education where they were they were readily accepted.

In the past few years, however, there is within and outside the field of art education an overwhelming interest in the theme of creativity and art education. Creativity today is positioned as being relevant to business and industry leaders; national education policy; science, technology, engineering, and mathematics as well as the arts and social sciences. The NAEA Convention, that took place in 2011^{•73}, had as its theme Creativity, Innovation, and Imagination in the visual arts. Two articles in the 50th anniversary issue of *Studies in Art Education* ^{•74} focused on creativity; one was by Judith Burton (2009) about Lowenfeld's notions of creative intelligence and creative practice and one I authored (2009) about reconceptualizing the role of creativity in art education. In 2010, ^{•75} I guest edited one issue of *Art Education* devoted to creativity and in 2011 I co-edited another issue of *Art Education* with Flávia Bastos. In addition, I have a leading chapter in *A Handbook of Research on Creativity*, that is a critical analysis of current creativity research in visual arts education (Zimmerman, 2013). ^{•76}

At the Lowenfeld Lecture in 2010, I spoke about the background and new emphasis on creativity and art education.

^{•77}“Teachers and students need to be risk-takers and allow bodies of work.

to evolve over time through self-directed learning because this is where true creative self-expression can be supported and valued ... All art students are entitled to freely develop their own bodies of work, become enlightened through critical thinking and creative art processes, and be able to express their own creative reactions to the world about them.” (Zimmerman, 2010, p. 91)

Flavia Bastos and I co-edited a book, soon to be published by NAEA, about creativity research and practice in art education.

•78“Creativity needs to be reconsidered in art education with emphasis not only on development of cultural identity, technology, good citizenship, and realities of the economic sector, but also on individual creative expression. Student creative efforts should be encouraged with appropriate teacher interventions. Art education researchers and practitioners working collaboratively need to reconceptualize creativity ... for all students.” (Zimmerman, in press b)

•79 FINAL Words

Excerpts from *Hats* by Glenis Redmond (2000)

HATS...•80

Big ones, tall ones, small ones, fruity ones,

pointy ones, veiled ones, flowered ones

sporty ones,

polka-dot ones,

plain ones,

and *kufis* too! ...

Do you dare to wear?

How do you fare?

Do you want to be bad to the bone?

Then, get you a hat and get it going on!

Although I have worn many different hats in my career as an art teacher and art educator, a hat that has brought me many gifts is the one I have worn as a traveler •81 to many different countries, meeting and learning about my students’ and colleagues’

countries of origin⁸². I have been welcomed in the traditional role of a ‘matchmaker’ at three Asian engagements and weddings, the number three being good luck. I also have had a long teaching career⁸³ teaching, conducting workshops, and writing, and often working collaboratively with many pre-service, in-service art teachers, and graduate and doctoral level art educators. Over these years, I have had the honor of receiving many local, national, and international awards.

I have been influenced by Elliot Eisner’s ability to challenge prevalent ideas, focus on new conceptions, and then establish communities of scholars who present their research findings and create policies advocating that art education is a significant component in the education of all students.

Through the Prism,⁸⁴ co-edited by two of my former students, Robert Sabol and Marjorie Manifold (2009), is a compassionate summary of my influence on art education through my writings and those of my former students and colleagues who have both been influenced by and extended my body of work as a basis for their own contributions. I have had the privilege of collaborating with many art educators as co-author and co-editor of books and monographs, recipient of grants; coordinating art education programs; serving on the editorial boards of a variety of journals, and as a member of local, national, and international art education committees; teaching collaboratively in international contexts; and conducting research related to practice with P-12 art teachers in a variety of educational settings.⁸⁵

As a senior member of the field of art education, I am continuing to mentor my own former students and other young colleagues in the field of art education and at the same time they are mentoring me as I endeavor to comprehend, with all its ramifications,

the new technology and social communication world that has formed the 21st century and how they can be used to support art education theory and practice for future generations.

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