

## Teaching Lab at the Yale University Art Gallery

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Teaching Lab at the Yale University Art Gallery is an interdepartmental platform for reflecting, experimenting, and collaborating on issues and ideas related to teaching and learning. Monthly sessions seek to explore commonalities and intersections among traditionally segmented areas of work both within the Education Department (e.g., adult, family, academic, K–12, and public programs) and across the Gallery (e.g., curatorial, exhibitions, and registrar departments) by facilitating dialogue and unlikely collaborations related to the project of teaching in museums. Sessions, which last one and a half hours, are held in the galleries as often as possible and can range from philosophical discussions to more practical exercises that test ideas. There is no specific end goal in mind for the sessions other than to deepen and enrich both our individual and collective teaching practices.

Teaching Lab originally began at the Brooklyn Museum in the late 1980s as a space for museum educators to workshop and strengthen teaching outside of administrative and logistical concerns. At the Yale University Art Gallery, educators have adapted the model to suit the needs of both the Education Department and student educators.

### Sessions:

- are proposed and often facilitated by participants.
- are framed and moderated by the organizer of Teaching Lab.
- present a “big idea” to the group for conversation, brainstorming, or workshopping.
- encourage a focused conversation by adhering to limited guiding questions.
- follow one of five formats: case study, outside “expert,” roundtable, site visit, or workshop.

Jessica Sack, the Jan and Frederick Mayer Senior Associate Curator of Education, [jessica.sack@yale.edu](mailto:jessica.sack@yale.edu)  
Elizabeth Williams, the John Walsh Senior Fellow in Education, [elizabeth.j.williams@yale.edu](mailto:elizabeth.j.williams@yale.edu)

## Teaching Lab: Past Session Topics

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### **Teaching Lab: *Expanding/Exploring Gallery Activities***

Elizabeth Manekin, Assistant Curator of Education

Participants in this session will brainstorm and experiment with new activities that were developed for a range of the Gallery's audiences. Focusing on written activities in particular, we will explore the concepts of material and meaning, thematic connections, and the ways in which we might parallel the process of looking and the process of writing.

### **Teaching Lab: *Art(ifact) in the Museum Context***

Jennifer Reynolds-Kaye, the Lewis B. and Dorothy Cullman–Joan Whitney Payson Fellow, and David Heiser, Head of Education and Outreach[Or "Director of Student Programs" (per Peabody site)?], Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History

This teaching lab will bring together the education teams from the Yale University Art Gallery and the Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History for a discussion of different approaches to teaching from objects. How do we talk about an object that can be classified as both art *and* artifact? What does it mean to teach about time and geography in the art museum, or to teach about style and the artist's hand in the natural history museum? We will begin with model teaching by educators from the two museums and then workshop ways to approach teaching in another gallery. The session will take place in the exhibition *Samurai and the Culture of Japan's Great Peace* and the exhibit "Birds of America" at the Peabody.

### **Teaching Lab: *ARTLAB+: A Case Study for Moving Research into Practice***

Ryan Hill, the Nolen Curator of Education and Academic Affairs

This session will include a presentation and informal discussion using ARTLAB+, the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden's signature drop-in teen program, as a springboard. ARTLAB+ began as a digital creation space inspired by HOMAGO, an experiential learning theory based on a three-year, MacArthur Foundation–funded ethnographic study of how youths use digital media to learn. The presentation will cover the ways in which programming evolved in response to its audience and the broader impact of youth voices on the museum.

### **Teaching Lab: *To Open Eyes: An Introduction to Albers and His Teaching Methods***

Anoka Faruqee, Associate Professor, Yale University School of Art, and curator of the exhibition *Search Versus Re-Search: Josef Albers, Artist and Educator* at the Edgewood Avenue Gallery

This hands-on session will focus on the teaching methods of Josef Albers by showcasing some of the simple exercises he did with his undergraduate and graduate students, including assignments using line, color, and simple paper constructions.

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