

# NACSC Outreach Year Seven Report

Pomona College Museum of Art

Native American Collection Study Center (NACSC)

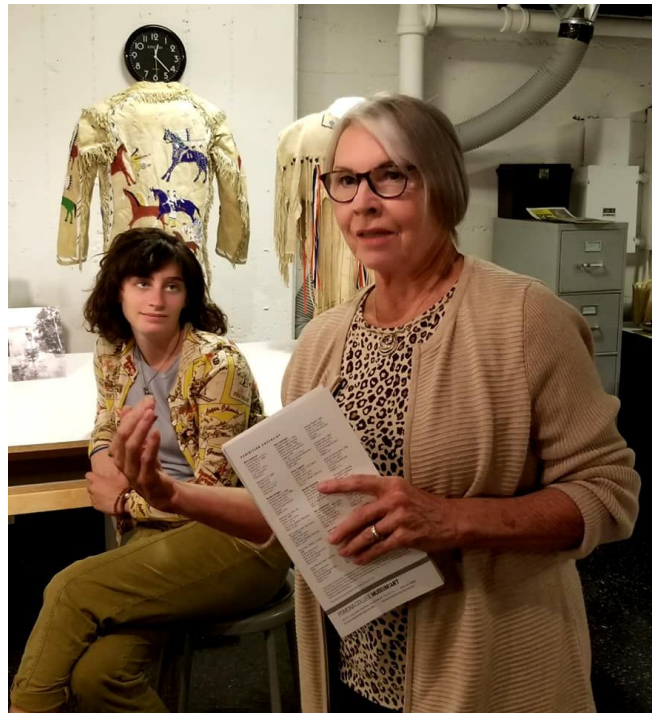


PCMA NACSC Outreach Intern Barbara 'Babs' Peisch (PO '19) leads an introduction for the on-site visit to NACSC, at Bridges Auditorium while Daphnide McDermet, PCMA Intern (PO '20), looks on.

**Project Review by Rich Deely  
Forth/Write Muse Consulting**

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(L) Rembrandt Docent leads a sketch-to-observe activity comparing basketry for Sumner/Danbury students in the classroom at the NACSC; (R) Rembrandt Club President Areta Herr addresses new club members while NACSC Education Outreach Intern Babs Peisch, (PO '19) looks on.

# NACSC OUTREACH REPORT FOR PROJECT YEAR SEVEN

## Introduction:

It is safe to state definitively that the Native American Collection Study Center outreach program's continued focus on engaging community schools through indigenous cultural artifacts has never been stronger. Having just completed its seventh year of operation, Pomona College Museum of Art's NACSC Community Outreach Project's mission has effectively activated a long-underutilized museum collection and institutionalized the practice of engaging with the third grade curricular needs of our community's local schools.

The NACSC Project remains focused on the following goals, which are carried over unchanged here:

1. **Empowering** Claremont Colleges NACSC student outreach interns with the opportunity to educate and engage local elementary students about an important local collection, and connect museum collections with the community's learning.
2. **Providing** opportunities for Claremont-based educators to learn about and make use of the Pomona College Museum of Art collections of indigenous artifacts contained at the NACSC;
3. **Highlighting** the intrinsic value of the collections and resources of the Museum to a wider community audience;
4. **Galvanizing** PCMA's role as a provider of value-added content and as a curriculum partner with local CUSD schools.

## Interim Report: A Two Year Process

This year's report details year one activity and progress from my two year contractual arrangement with PCMA, with a final report due in 2020. The focus of this year's 'progress report' will not only include key information on the success of this year's offerings, but delve more fully into the way that the outreach program will necessarily need to evolve over the coming academic year, and emphasize possible innovations from community stakeholders with whom we might work in future at the emerging Benton Museum of Art at Pomona College.

This report includes a reiteration of the project purpose and roll-out in brief, along with:

- A **'By the Numbers'** section to compare CUSD students/visitation for '18-'19 with numbers from the prior year. Within this section, the reader can find a total attendance listing (points of contact) and absolute number of students served by the NACSC.
- A **Multi-Visit Museum Education Sessions** section, which provides a programmatic summary that PCMA staff and NACSC Education Outreach Interns Barbara 'Babs' Peisch, (PO '19) and Alessandro 'Zandro' Ruvalcabo, PO '21, along with Rembrandt Club Docents, provided to the participating CUSD schools in 2018-19
- A **'Looking Forward'** section, where I've set out additional ways to change in direction of the program, given the uncertainty of the move-in schedule for the new building, and as Museum staff seek to best capitalize on both the NACSC collection experience to inform 2019-2020 programming and feed possibly 'sister' programs in the future.

### **Summary Timeline for NACSC Project Year Seven**

The NACSC education outreach project rolled out as it has in past years, with the same organization, recruitment of interns and volunteers, preparation of said interns/volunteers, and roll out to schools. Here is a summary timeline of the academic year:

- FALL 2018 - a) Contacting all seven Claremont Unified School District elementary campuses; of the seven, five expressed a willingness to take part in PCMA's free educational outreach project; b) Outreach to recurring and to prospective Rembrandt Club Docents; c) Planning and delivering orientation for new NACSC Outreach Interns and PCMA staff; d) Procuring materials required for introductory lessons; e) Scheduling of pre-visit introductory lessons for all participating school sites.
- WINTER 2019 - a) Meeting with NACSC Interns to practice/rehearse roles and lessons produced in prior project years; b) Delivering pre-visit classroom based lessons to all 3rd grade classes with NACSC Outreach Interns; c) Planning, coordinating and leading site visits to the NACSC to all participating 3rd grades; d) Overseeing NACSC Outreach Interns as they teach aspects of the pre-visit lesson, and rehearse the post-visit lesson;
- SPRING/SUMMER 2019 - a) Concluding NACSC Visits with Rembrandt Docents and NACSC Interns; b) Teaching NACSC Post-Visit Lessons at Partner School sites, c) Targeting second year new partner schools and teachers; d) Finalizing report and follow up with participating teachers to elicit comments.

### **PURPOSE, PROJECT, AND GOALS IN BRIEF**

As in prior years, Steve Comba, soon to be Interim Director of the new Benton Museum of Art at Pomona College and long-time champion of the Native American Collection Studies Center (NACSC) contracted me to teach on a two year retainer for the NACSC outreach program. Since the time between the first and second years of our agreement would see the 'sea trials' of the new Benton Museum building, I received a two year retainer for NACSC so that I could oversee any adjustments or changes in program delivery that might be required.

At the outset of Year Seven, all parties involved reprised their respective roles, recognizing that changes in program direction were neither warranted nor welcomed by partner schools in the 2018-2019 school year. For that reason, two interns were recruited and the established pre-visit, on-site, and post-visit lessons continued in the prior year's format, with only one change in the third post-visit session, as noted in the lesson summaries.

### **NACSC Community Outreach Interns**

Since September of 2017, Steve had established a practice of hiring two outreach interns to work in collaboration. The idea would be that they would form a teaching team who could support each other's work in the classroom and the Museum. For this reason, Steve set out to recruit two interns who could complement each other in the areas of research and teaching. A strong benefit of recruiting two interns meant that the Museum could plan to have students involved in presenting the entirety of the in-class and on-site teaching for the NACSC lessons, even if schedules prevented one intern from attending a session. For the 2018-2019 academic year, Steve met with a variety of candidates before selecting Alessandro 'Zandro' Ruvalcabo and Barbara 'Babs' Peisch, both Pomona College students.





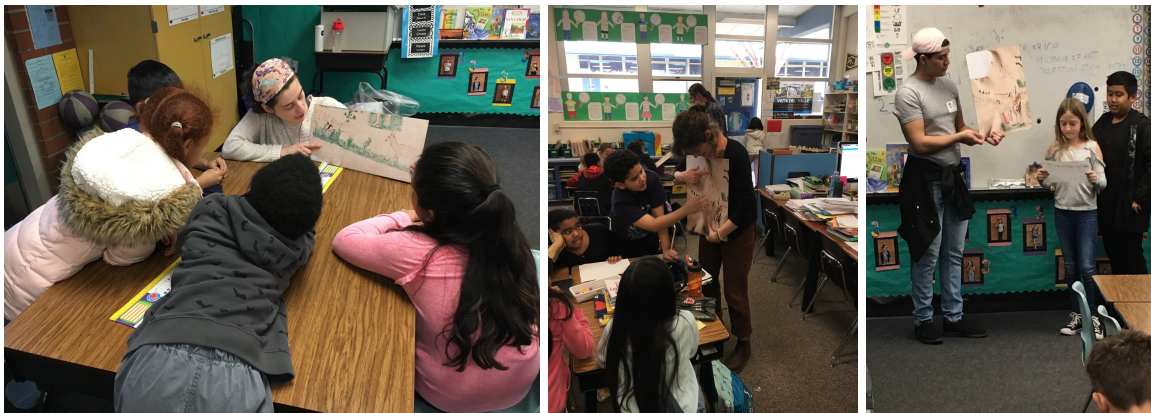
### **Barbara 'Babs' Peisch and Alessandro 'Zandro' Ruvalcabo, Community Outreach Interns for NACSC**

As it turned out, Babs and I had met briefly in her second year, when her advisor Kathleen Howe, the Sarah Rempel and Herbert S. Rempel '23 Director of the Pomona College Museum of Art and Professor of Art History, had encouraged her to reach out to me for ideas about museum education thought leaders. She had subsequently taught in Museum settings, and had incorporated her interest in museums into her Art History major. Like some of her predecessors, she was familiar with the collection because of prior coursework with Pitzer Professor Bill Anthes. Given her demonstrated interest in the arts and in museum education, and her prior experiences working with young students, Babs proved to be more than capable as the first of two Community Outreach Interns for NACSC.

Alessandro, or 'Zandro' filled the spot for the second NACSC Education Outreach Intern. A sophomore, Zandro was interested in some of the cultural aspects of the collection we were meant to teach with, and brought an activist's sensibility to our endeavors. Steve's rationale in bringing Zandro on board was to provide the opportunity for program continuity and future museum internship prospects for Zandro, much like Daphnide McDermet (PO '20) who made her debut as a NACSC Outreach Intern while still a first year student, and has subsequently been involved in several other museum projects. In addition to familiarizing themselves with lessons developed by prior year Community Outreach Interns, Babs and Zandro were asked to make suggestions on lesson improvements within the existing outline footprint.

At my first meeting with both of them, we discussed some of the key meanings inherent within the entire Silver Horn hide painting with help from the book Silver Horn: Master Illustrator of the Kiowas, by Candace Greene. The book, which we've used to prepare all interns to this point, highlights techniques and subject matter employed by the famed Kiowa hide painter Haungooah, or 'Silver Horn' who created the painting included in the NACSC collection. Prior to their introductory meeting with me, both interns reviewed electronic versions of the script or lesson plan outline for docents to review in order to familiarize themselves with Steve's vault tour, the lessons I'd developed with prior interns, and the classroom object-based activities.

In addition to lesson plans, we shared documents Steve had produced for the Rembrandt Docents to acquaint them with the origins of the Native collection at Pomona College Museum of Art. Subject matter included the origins and patternography of basketry, and an explanation of weaving techniques used in pieces represented in the Museum's collection. The booklet also contained information on collectors Walter Parker, Emil P. Steffa and Jonathan Tibbet, along with details on the collection itself, excerpted from the 1979 exhibition catalogue Native American Art from the Permanent Collection.



NACSC interns Babs Peisch (L & C) and Zandro Ruvalcabo, (R) share samples of the hide painting styles of Silver Horn (Kiowa) during the students' pre-visits at Mountain View & Vista del Valle Schools.

### The Schools & Teachers Served

In keeping with its mission to serve 3rd graders throughout the Claremont Unified School District (CUSD), Museum staff committed to delivering programming to all CUSD Title One<sup>1</sup> and Non-Title One public schools free of charge. Offers were made to all seven elementary schools in the district. Schools that accepted the Museum's offer for the 2018-2019 academic year were: Condit, Mountain View, Oakmont, Sumner, and Vista del Valle schools. Offers to Chaparral School, and to Sycamore Elementary this year did not result in programs because teachers there had other curricular priorities, (Chaparral) and were on the 'off-year' of a 2nd/3rd grade curriculum rotation (Sycamore). Preparations for bookings included outreach to long-term teaching partners and an orientation to individual teachers new to 3rd grade educators - such as Carolyn Maganelles at Sumner/Danbury School - providing an overview of the NACSC Program. Efforts to once again attempt to expand programming - this time with an eye to further experimentation - beyond the partner school sites will be addressed as a potential second year opportunity later in this report.

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<sup>1</sup>Title 1 IS Defined by the US Department of Education as a school site where 40% of students or greater are classified as economically disadvantaged, enabling them to take part in free or reduced lunch programs offered by the school.





Rembrandt Docent Paul Martinez, (R) who took over coordination of volunteers in Year Seven, leads an observe and sketch activity, which includes VTS, inside the classroom at NACSC as Babs Peisch (PO, '19, L) listens in.

### Rembrandt Club Docents - Key On-Site Facilitators

In keeping with past years, PCMA Museum Director Kathleen Howe and Steve announced to the Museum's philanthropic support group - the Rembrandt Club the opportunity to take on a direct role facilitating museum programming. They then invited both returning and new Club members to become Rembrandt Docents for the NACSC on-site visits. We hosted an Open House for prospective participants on 5 October 2018, during which experienced Rembrandt Docents explained their teaching roles and we outlined the entire three session sequence. A follow up 'dress rehearsal' meeting occurred on 18 January 2019 just before scheduled programs commenced. On the 18th, Steve and I shared procedures for hosting students on-site, and asked Rembrandt Docent program veterans to go in depth about their respective areas of specialty when they facilitate observation stations at the NACSC<sup>2</sup>.

Much of the 2017-2018 Rembrandt Docent corps was made up of program veterans; many of them are experienced retired educators. To schedule Docents for the on-site lessons, Rembrandt Docent program veteran Paula Martinez

<sup>2</sup> Under the direction of Rembrandt Club President Areta Herr, Rembrandt Club members came together in Project Year Three to form a docent pool, and were trained to deliver programming at NACSC. Over time, those recruited and organized embraced a primary role leading the third grade activities in the Center during the field trip component of the visit.

took over from Judy Smith as volunteer coordinator. Rembrandt Docents, a capable complement of former educators and engaged community volunteers, remain the backbone of the NACSC on-site programs. In addition to providing facilitators for the on-site component of the visit, members of the Rembrandt Club continue to support bus transportation to and from the Bridges Auditorium, allowing Title 1 schools in the district with minimal travel budgets to take part.



My introductory remarks at the 5 October Open House meeting of new docents at the NACSC (photo by Reine Bouret).

## SCOPE OF PROJECT - YEAR SEVEN

Here, I've continued the tradition of linking earlier reporting documents below to provide a global view of the NACSC Outreach Project's scope since its inception. The prior reports chart program developments over the past six years, from a review of the original project and the implementation stage/pilot programming in years 1-3, to full program maturity in years 4-6. The documents are closely related to one another. Here are links to prior NACSC reports:

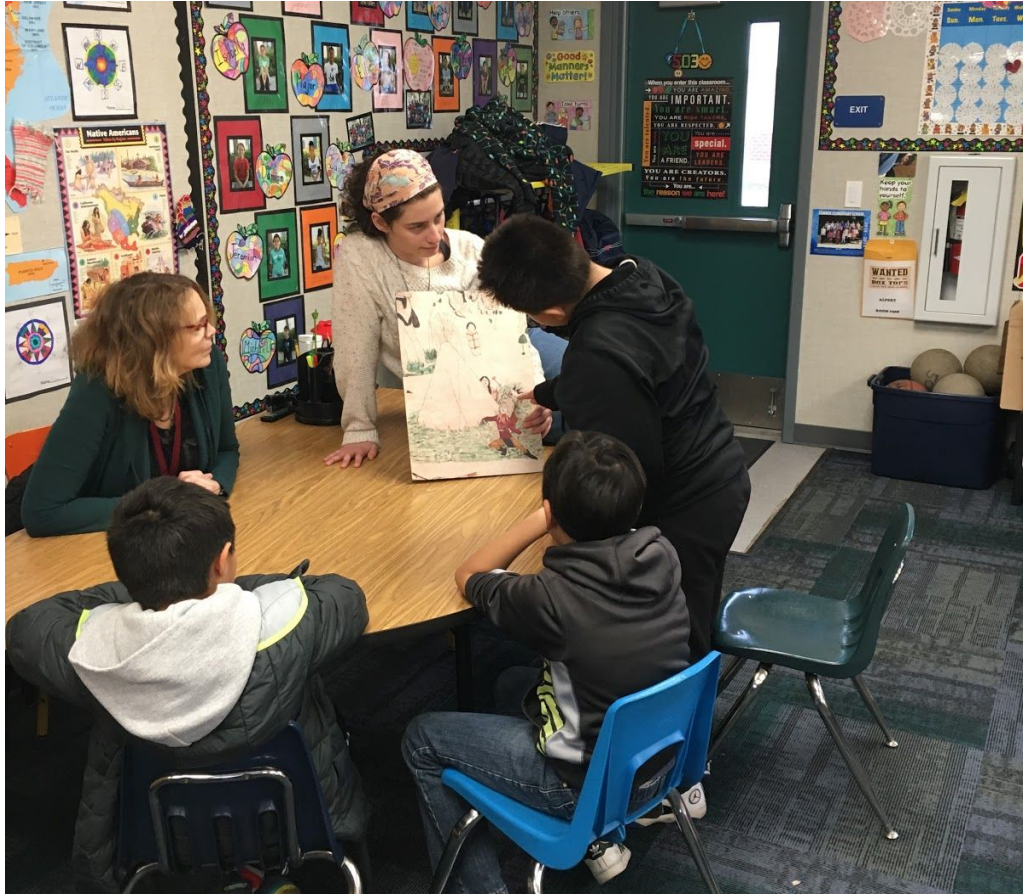
[NACSC Final Report Education Outreach Year One](#)  
[NACSC Final Report Education Outreach Year Two](#)  
[NACSC Final Report Education Outreach Project Year Three](#)  
[NACSC Final Report Education Outreach Project Year Four](#)  
[NACSC Final Report Education Outreach Project Year Five](#)  
[NACSC Final Report Education Outreach Project Year Six](#)

For Year Seven, the scope of services was as follows: a) each 3rd grade class served received a pre-visit presentation in-class, involving narrative elements featured in the Silver Horn hide painting, along with b) a visit to the NACSC that incorporates both close observation studies of collection artifacts and a tour of the collection storage (or what Rembrandt Docents, interns, and staff referred to as 'The Vault.') c) Elements of both the pre-visit classroom introduction and the on-site visit are integrated into a post-visit lesson back at the schools to all classes, during which we take a look at the work of contemporary Native artists, who seek inspiration from historic artifacts and traditions,



and make our own 'Then/Now' artworks based upon what we observed. Summaries of each of the three lessons, with more details, are included in the section to follow.

### **MULTI VISIT MUSEUM NACSC SESSIONS -(Condit, Mountain View, Oakmont, Sumner, & Vista del Valle)**



In this photo, NACSC Intern Babs Peisch shows an enlarged photo of a section of the Silver Horn hide painting in the Museum collection, while students note and record details.

### **3rd Grade Relevant CA Content Standards - (From California Common Standards Summary)**

Content standards remain largely the same for 3rd grade since the beginning of this project, and are reproduced here from prior reports -

*Reading: Literature*

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY. RL.3.2**

*Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message, lesson, or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.*

*Writing*

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY. W.3.3**

*Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.*

## *History and Social Science*

*3.2 Students describe the American Indian nations in their local region long ago and in the recent past.*

- 1. Describe national identities, religious beliefs, customs, and various folklore traditions.*
- 2. Discuss the ways in which physical geography, including climate, influenced how the local Indian nations adapted to their natural environment (e.g., how they obtained food, clothing, tools).*
- 4. Discuss the interaction of new settlers with the already established Indians of the region.*

*3.3 Students draw from historical and community resources to organize the sequence of local historical events and describe how each period of settlement left its mark on the land.*

- 1. Research the explorers who visited here, the newcomers who settled here, and the people who continue to come to the region, including their cultural and religious traditions and contributions.*
- 2. Describe the economies established by settlers and their influence on the present-day economy, with emphasis on the importance of private property and entrepreneurship.*

*3.5 Students demonstrate basic economic reasoning skills and an understanding of the economy of the local region.*

- 1. Describe the ways in which local producers have used and are using natural resources, human resources, and capital resources to produce goods and services in the past and the present.*
- 2. Understand that some goods are made locally, some elsewhere in the United States, and some abroad.*
- 4. Discuss the relationship of students' "work" in school and their personal human capital.*

## **NACSC Preview Lesson for Third Grade - At School Sites**

NACSC Pre-Visit Lesson has been the vehicle which allows us to introduce the Pomona College Museum of Art, the NACSC, its purpose, as well as the core functions of a museum, followed by a retelling of a Kiowa Legend, which Silver Horn partially (but not completely) illustrates in the hide painting at NACSC. The lesson concludes with a close observation activity that enables the students themselves to glean details from certain high photographic resolution images of the Silver Horn hide painting's vignettes, which they then present to their classmates.

During the preview lessons scheduled, Zandro and Babs taught with me, or offered the preview lesson unaccompanied at schools. The lesson provided benefits to both college and primary school student learners: a) the opportunity for young students to learn about the Museum and one of its significant collections, and b) the opportunity for our student interns to share their knowledge about the NACSC and museum work while further honing their presentation skills with a younger audience.

## **Preview Lesson Summary**

At the start of the lesson, students are taught what museums are for, or what purpose do they serve. We then highlight the two main functions of the museum, *SHOW* - as in exhibiting or displaying - and *SAVE* - as in collection and secure storage. (Steve later reviews this same concept during their on-site visit at NACSC.) The concept of storytelling, and its importance to Native people who created the hundred year old (or more) objects in the NACSC collection, is key to this lesson.

We next share a dramatic retelling of the Kiowa Legend of *The Sisters and the Bears*, The interns then select two students to assist us in locating story elements in an enlarged photograph of the Silver Horn hide painting we bring to each classroom. Once students discover the pictograph within the hide painting, Babs or Zandro point out techniques Silver Horn used (to create the impression of movement, etc) by providing another example of the artist's

work for them to compare and notes that the original painting is at the NACSC. As part of their observations, students are challenged to answer three questions - (what or who is in the picture? 2) what evidence is there/how can you tell? and 3) based on your observations, what story do you think is being told?), For the lesson share out, each group of students to come present their theory of what the story depicted might have been about, using evidence to prove their particular interpretation of the piece.

Students are able to apply their creativity to these stories, but they must be based on what they've observed.

### **Pre-Visit Dates to Classrooms - A Breakdown by School**

Preview, or Pre-Visit lessons took place at school sites on the following dates in Project Year Seven:

- Condit - 6 March
- Mountain View - 27 February
- Oakmont - 20 February
- Sumner/Danbury - 13 February
- Vista del Valle - 1 February

### **NACSC On-Site Class Visit - At the Bridges Auditorium**

The on-site component of our program primarily in February and March of 2019. As noted earlier, Rembrandt Docents corps members were largely holdovers from the prior program year. They were at ease facilitating the observation stations in the classroom areas, or providing break-out session support to Steve during the vault tour in collection storage. Already accustomed to working with students from her prior museum work, Babs took the early lead delivering introductions, observation station facilitator, and logistics coordinator. As the semester went on, Zandro claimed a larger share of instruction, and both interns experimented with roles and served in a variety of stations. In the current [On-Site NACSC Lesson Plan](#), one can readily see how staging materials and designating areas of the observation classroom remain a high priority and key organizing principle. The 'foyer' outside the men's room continues to double as the gathering area, with Steve offering a hands-on experience with a lacrosse ball once used by the Sioux people for all students before activities in the NACSC observation classroom and vault/storage area begin.

Students circulate repeatedly to four 'zones' (three within the observation classroom, and one within the NACSC Vault in the space of an hour's time, with the remainder of the hour and twenty minute 'window' allotted for travel, a hands-on introduction, and transition times. Session timing remains the same, to provide for a consistent experience every year, and to limit student burn-out. During the on-site visit, Rembrandt Docents facilitators at each observation station encourage students to sketch details they see, and then ask follow up observation questions to get the students to notice similarities and differences in the object materials, fabrication, and potential use.





Volunteer Rembrandt Docents lead sketch to observe stations in the NACSC observation classroom basketry section (L) and clothing station (R).

### Visit Dates to NACSC - A Breakdown by School

On-site visits occurred on the following dates, and followed the same class rotation finalized over the last two Project Years - (introduction in the foyer, observation and sketching activities in the classroom; and behind-the-scenes tour of the vault in the storage room)<sup>3</sup>

- Condit - 8 and 15 March
- Mountain View - 1 March
- Oakmont - 22 February
- Sumner/Danbury - 15 February
- Vista del Valle - 8 February

### NACSC On-Site Lesson Summary

When students arrive in the foyer, they have already met interns outside, and have discussed the building and what they're about to see. Once seated, they are given museum conservator white gloves, and meet Steve, who is seated near the front door of the NACSC. Much of the conversation has been scripted for maximum involvement by students. As part of this script, Steve reviews the concepts of sharing through exhibitions, and saving collections for the future. Third grade students then handle an embellished Sioux lacrosse ball to highlight the idea that though the items are historic, rare, and part of a museum collection, the objects at NACSC have much in common with the students' own material culture and experiences with outdoor games. In this instance, they point directly to a debt owed by many familiar sports to games developed by America's first nations.

Students then return the gloves, and the class is split into two groups prepared to travel to the classroom and storage vault that comprise the NACSC space. Once students walk into the observation classroom, members of the Rembrandt Docents provide them with Museum clipboards, sketching pencils, and parchment style drawing paper. During the time Steve and one of the Community Outreach Interns take turns revealing portions of the NACSC vault

<sup>3</sup>As in past years, Fridays are visiting days at the NACSC. Other visits to classrooms are contingent on interns' class schedules, and my availability to teach. In Project Year Seven, both interns had dramatically different class schedules, which resulted in a compromise teaching date of Tuesday and Wednesday mornings and early afternoons. Ability to lead activities at Bridges on Friday mornings is required for the NACSC internships.

collection with their half of the class, Rembrandt Docents, a remaining intern and I introduce and facilitate activities at three observation groupings in the classroom.

For the observation classroom portion of the visit, students initially fold their paper into four sections, we then split them into three observing teams of 3-4 students each. The students then cycle through to each artifact station, and repeat the same activities, sketching to observe initial object details, discussing their observations with their station facilitator, and recording observations in a few notes.

Though artifacts have been refreshed over the years to prevent one item from damage due to excess exposure to the elements, light, and handling, three main groupings remain: **fashion and wearables; baskets and vessels; and items featured in the Silver Horn hide painting**, which are grouped around the area where the Silver Horn hide painting hangs. The full selection of artifacts selected and used for the NACSC Project Year can be viewed in its entirety through the PCMA's embARK program linked here at [NACSC Outreach Portfolio](#).<sup>4</sup>



(L) NACSC Intern Babs Peisch acts as time-keeper while Rembrandt Docent Areta Herr reveals basketry; (R) Steve allows students to view the moccasin collection in the NACSC Vault tour for Oakmont School students.

For the Vault tour, an additional collection facilitator - either a Rembrandt Docent or one of the NACSC Community Outreach Interns - was on hand during all sessions. This provided greater flexibility for close observation and enabled the docent or intern to break off and take smaller groups of students into the storage racks to better utilize materials stored in more inaccessible areas of the collection. By splitting up the 12 student vault group at specific times, the portion of the class visiting the vault can closely examine the collection of Native micro-objects located in nearby drawers. Steve has continued to streamline talking points included in the lesson plan. A full lesson script is listed here in the [On-Site NACSC Lesson Plan](#).

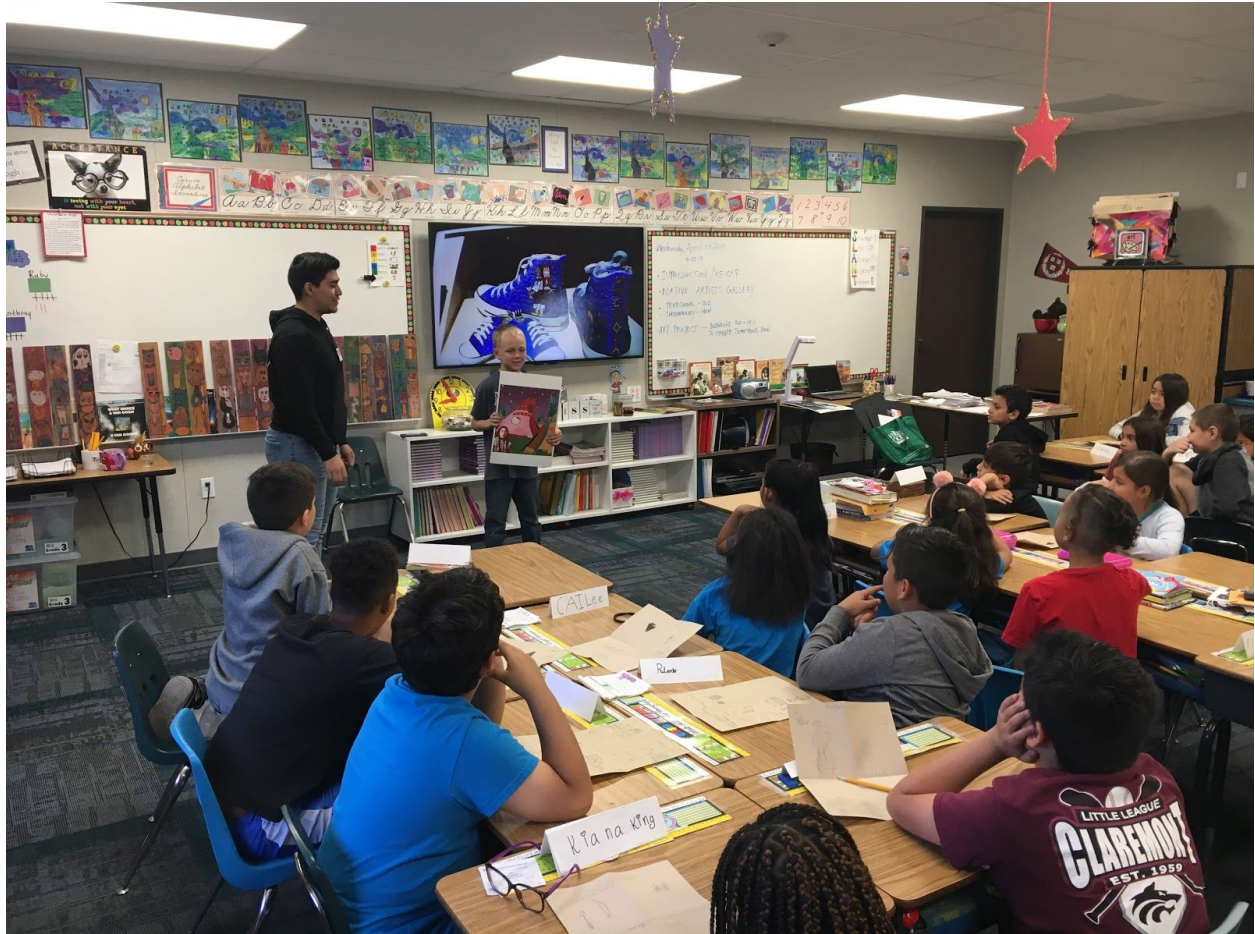
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<sup>4</sup> The 3rd grade "list of objects for viewing" was compiled by Steve on PCMA's EmbARK system and can be accessed at the Center and online via the link provided. It should be noted that not all collection items used have a current photograph. Efforts continue to photo document this collection as it moves to the new facility.



Once all students have taken part in both the vault and classroom visits, the session is concluded in the foyer space, where it began. A Rembrandt Docent presents a Museum magnet to each student as a souvenir. We often make a brief announcement informing students we will see them all again for a final post-visit lesson that reinforces the ideas of contemporary tribal people taking inspiration from both the traditions epitomized in the Museum's collections, as well as our modern world.

### Post Visit NACSC Lesson - Return to School Sites



NACSC Outreach Intern Zandro Ruvalcabo selects an assistant to share a photograph of "Hello Kitty Tipi" by Debra Yepa-Pappan to 3rd grade students at Mountain View school while an image of the prior artwork discussed, "Beaded Converse," by Teri Greeves, Kiowa, is shown on the monitor.

Post-visit lessons took place at school sites on the following dates in Project Year Seven:

- Condit - 24 April, 3 May
- Mountain View - 27 March
- Oakmont - 12 April
- Sumner - 17 April
- Vista del Valle - 29 March

As in prior years, the Project team used images of several art pieces that had been researched in recent Pomona College art acquisitions class projects for PCMA. One of the lesson's featured photographs, Pueblo artist Rose



Simpson's sculpture *Directed North*, is actually part of the Museum's permanent collection.

In order to strengthen the connection between museum exhibiting and contemporary Native art, we replaced the video used last year with the film [Cross Currents](#), part of the 'Local Beat' feature for the PBS Newshour. The film features Merritt Johnson, a multi-disciplinary artist of Mohawk and Blackfoot descent, along with other Native artists, discussing their work and what it's like to make things that reflect the past and the present. The overt discussion of artists of indigenous heritage working today was what we always wanted as the central focus of the lesson. As can be seen by the [NACSC Post-Visit lesson plan](#), the new film integrated well into the lesson's 'then' and 'now' focus, and aided students in understanding how Native artists are inspired by what's around them, as well as their heritage as indigenous people. Put simply, Native people living and working now have new techniques and inspirations. The lesson invites students to see the cultural source materials present in the NACSC collection as the departure point for their own inspired re-imaginings.

### **NACSC Post-Visit Lesson Summary**

The lesson is divided into three parts 1) an introduction asking students to recall key pieces in the NACSC collection (such as the hide painting by Silver Horn, or the beaded coat, water basket, or pottery pieces; 2) a short video excerpt produced by the PBS NewsHour that highlights the lives of contemporary Native artists featured in the exhibition *Cross Currents*, which was staged at the Center for Visual Art in Denver in 2014, followed by a 'Living Gallery' of new Native artists works held up for viewing by students; and 3) a 'Then and Now' creative response, which asks students to re-conceive a historic object they first sketched at the NACSC, and then make it into an art piece.

Before screening an excerpt from the film *Cross Currents* Babs and Zandro asked students to look for items that they might expect to see (such as traditional crafts) and what parts they were surprised to see (Native artists using old clothing to make a wounded elk sculpture, or add military helicopters with tribal names to paintings of the west.) Once we elicit some responses for both categories, we highlight how contemporary Native artists blend their traditional ways (examples of historical pieces from NACSC) with the contemporary (as seen in the film, and also in art.) In order to ensure that the students understand the difference between Native artists making work today, and historic artifacts in the NACSC.)

We spend the remainder of the session developing student art projects based in part on historical artifacts first seen at the NACSC, and how they might be re-imagined and updated by people living today. Students then learn how to use oil pastels to make their projects and spend the balance of the lesson making a picture blending a now and then object. To conclude, we touch upon the two prior lessons, and ask students to reflect upon how a museum can preserve history, but also embrace the future, as they seek to creatively revitalize their cultures.



NACSC Outreach Intern Zandro Ruvalcabo, addresses a group of Condit students for their post-visit lesson while Babs prepares drawing paper and pastels

## **NACSC: BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019**

Project Year Seven School Year NACSC Outreach -

### 2018-19 NACSC Schools Served - exclusive to 3rd grade CUSD students

- Condit Elementary School - 3rd Grade; Ms. Evans, Mrs. Jensen, Mrs. Morgan, Ms. Murphy, (4 classes) Multi-visit unit including: in-class observation introduction, NACSC field trip, and post-visit lesson - 96 students x 3 visits = 288 points of contact
- Mountain View School - 3rd Grade; Ms. Ho, Ms. Mowbray, Ms. Riley - (3 classes) Multi-visit unit including: in-class artifact observation introduction and NACSC field trip, and post-visit lesson - 72 students total x 3 visits = 216 points of contact
- Oakmont Outdoor School - 3rd Grade; Ms. Campos, Ms. Gibb - (1 and ½ classes) Multi-visit unit including: in-class artifact observation introduction and NACSC field trip, and post-visit lesson - 36 students total x 3 visits = 108 points of contact
- Sumner Elementary School - 3rd Grade; (2%) - Ms. Alpert, Ms. LaForge, Ms. Magallanes - Multi-visit unit including: in-class artifact observation introduction and NACSC field trip, and post-visit lesson - 65 students total x 3 visits = 195 points of contact

- Vista del Valle School - 3rd Grade; Ms. Holbrook, Mr. O'Reilly - Multi-visit unit including: in-class artifact observation introduction and NACSC field trip - 48 students total x 3 visits = 144 points of contact

TOTAL INDIVIDUAL 3rd GRADE STUDENTS SERVED 2018-2019 - 317

**TOTAL PROGRAM ATTENDANCE/POINTS OF CONTACT: 951**

#### **FOR COMPARISON PURPOSES Project Year Six- 2017-2018 Attendance**

2017-2018 NACSC Schools Served - exclusive to 3rd grade CUSD students

- Condit Elementary School - 3rd Grade; Ms. Evans, Mrs. Jensen, Mrs. Morgan, Ms. Murphy, (4 classes) Multi-visit unit including: in-class observation introduction, NACSC field trip, and post-visit lesson - 96 students x 3 visits = 288 points of contact
- Mountain View School - 3rd Grade; Ms. Ho, Ms. Mowbray, Ms. Riley - (3 classes) Multi-visit unit including: in-class artifact observation introduction and NACSC field trip, and post-visit lesson - 72 students total x 3 visits = 216 points of contact
- Oakmont Outdoor School - 3rd Grade; Ms. Campos, Ms. Gibb - (1 and ½ classes) Multi-visit unit including: in-class artifact observation introduction and NACSC field trip, and post-visit lesson - 36 students total x 3 visits = 108 points of contact
- Sumner Elementary School - 3rd Grade; (¾) - Ms. Alpert, Ms. Colinco, Ms. Plumley - Multi-visit unit including: in-class artifact observation introduction and NACSC field trip, and post-visit lesson - 72 students total x 3 visits = 216 points of contact
- Sycamore Elementary School - 3rd Grade four 2nd/3rd Combination classes + 1/2 combination class 2nd graders - Ms. Derleth, Ms. Jackson, Ms. Kelly-Diaz, Ms. O'Connor, and Ms. Texiera - Multi-visit unit including: in-class artifact observation introduction and NACSC field trip, and post-visit lesson - 120 students total x 3 visits = 360 points of contact<sup>5</sup>
- Vista del Valle School - 3rd Grade; Ms. Holbrook, Mr. O'Reilly - Multi-visit unit including: in-class artifact observation introduction and NACSC field trip - 48 students total x 3 visits = 144 points of contact

TOTAL INDIVIDUAL 3rd GRADE STUDENTS SERVED 2017-2018- 444

**TOTAL PROGRAM ATTENDANCE/POINTS OF CONTACT: 1,332**



<sup>5</sup> It should be noted that Sycamore only participates in the NACSC Outreach program every other year, and that 2018-2019 was an 'off' year, leading to a reduction in total students served.





NACSC Outreach Interns Babs Peisch and Zandro Ruvalcabo greet students from Oakmont School outside of Bridges for their NASCC Visit.

## RESPONSES

At the conclusion of the Project Year, Steve hosted the interns and me for a wrap-up luncheon to debrief us all on aspects of the program that we found to be particularly effective, and ideas for going forward. Both interns had been quick to engage with the material and with our third grade audience, showed themselves to be competent teachers, always prepared, and were even able to teach independently of me for two in-class lessons. Given that this was the final time that both of us would have a chance to hear candid, unvarnished responses from Babs and Zandro, I was particularly interested in how they could see the model of NACSC Education Outreach Internships evolving and informing other work in the new Benton Museum of Art.

Overall, Babs and Zandro reported that they were comfortable with the level of preparation before teaching got underway, which included meetings with me, a discussion of the work of Silver Horn, creation of a new lesson outline (Babs created to augment our in-class experience that she subsequently shared with all partner teachers) and walk-throughs with Steve, Rembrandt Docents, and me in October 2018 and in January 2019. As Babs wrote: *“The NACSC Outreach Internship gave me the opportunity to really be a leader in the classroom and this level of responsibility made me feel ready and excited to continue pursuing educator roles.”*

That being said, both interns felt strongly that, given the cultural import of many of the objects under PCMA’s care, it was of paramount concern to them to hear more Native perspectives on the works before using them as the basis of teaching in classrooms and the NACSC. Zandro in particular stressed that he didn’t always feel comfortable as a presenter in classrooms because he feared that young students wouldn’t grasp that we were all there to share experiences based on *observation*, rather than as representatives whose expertise was rooted in *cultural familiarity*. Adding to his sense of discomfort was his take that students of color were being reprimanded disproportionately in

the classes we visited. He concluded by stating that without authentic representation of the cultures who originally produced the artifacts we share, we risked providing an incomplete picture of their true meaning to their home cultures. While Babs shared this sensitivity, she focused her comments instead on how the Museum could leverage more information about Native cultures from those with expertise in the field, either through lived experience, or in the academy. This precipitated a conversation about adding a Fall semester meeting with Bill Anthes, an elder in residence like Pitzer College's Julia Bogenay or Barbara Drake, or an educator steeped in Native issues who has worked with us before, like Gretchen Potter, who has proposed a joint program with PCMA related to the Blanket program.

The issue of an authentic voice remained the top concern of both interns, who felt that we should challenge ourselves to bring more voices into the planning and implementation stages. As Babs subsequently wrote in her reflection to me: *"I think future interns could spend the fall semester researching how to bring indigenous voices into the program— facilitating community partnerships, creating new lessons, etc. The new museum space might offer some awesome possibilities for this!"*

Teacher responses to this year's offerings were muted, in part because I'd asked them to complete a survey the year before, and text messages I received when approaching them for follow up comments for 2018-2019 Project Year varied from *"I did this last year"* to *"the program hasn't changed, so there's nothing new to comment on..."* That being said, I did want to speak more at length about the response of the newest partner teacher to our program, Carolyn Magallanes, who teaches at Sumner/Danbury School, and has just moved to 3rd grade from 5th grade. As a new teacher to third grade, Carolyn had not experienced the NACSC Program before, and so I wanted to give her the opportunity to comment on how all three lessons supported her curriculum.

During our correspondence this Summer, she was particularly appreciative that the NACSC Outreach program includes a component where we prepare students for what they're going to see at the Center, and that the teachers are student interns. She noted that *"It was an advantage to have someone who was specialized come in and prep the kids for the field trip. The field trip, with experts at each station, was beneficial because they were able to be experts in one area versus me needing to be an expert at all of it."*

Another aspect she enjoyed was receiving a follow up lesson from Babs, who wrote a more in-depth exploration of how Silver Horn's artistic style changed over time, with exposure to other artists and materials. Carolyn notes that what she called this 'back and forth,' or sharing of information through several lessons, especially the return visit to the classroom after the field trip *"felt like a team effort and felt like the kids really got the best of both worlds learning from both your program and myself. In my experience having a guest speaker or going on field trips to see in person what they were presented with really engages the kids and seems to hold their attention as well as raise the interest level. I appreciated the field trip as well as the pre and post lessons. It really brought it to life for my students."*



(L) Soon to be Interim Director of the Benton Museum of Art Steve Comba explains the technique of quill-work using collection items in the Vault, (R) A detail of one of the artifact stations in the NACSC Observation Classroom. (photos by Reine Bouret)

## LOOKING FORWARD: FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

There is much excitement as we look toward to transitioning to the new Benton Museum of Art museum building for the second year of my retainer in 2019-2020. As of this writing, the Museum building has largely been completed, and collection cataloguing and moving plans are well underway. While the possibility of disruption of access to the collection is still a possibility, current planning indicates that much of the collection will be on-site at the new Benton in time for the Winter of 2020, when we expect the NACSC program to begin hosting visitors once more. Given the fluidity of the situation, and our need to be flexible, I have recommended the following approaches, taking into consideration a situation in which the collection is accessible, and one where it is not -

### Scenario One - COLLECTION/AREAS NOT READY

**Pre-Visit at School** - interpreting stories through Silver Horn hide painting [current lesson]

**On-site at New NACSC** - Preview of new Benton building, selected staging of key objects for one station (in Pavilion space or similar), a 'moving the museum' activity, to be followed by an on-site art project - creating works inspired by hide paintings, and an appearance by a Native culture bearer to discuss her experiences

**Post-Visit at School** - contemporary Native artists video + sketch inspired Now/Then reimagined Native art artifacts [similar to current lesson]

### Scenario Two - COLLECTION IN PLACE AT BENTON

**Pre-Visit at School** - interpreting stories through Silver Horn hide painting [current lesson]

**On-site at New NACSC** - Preview of new building, culture bearer/speaker, and other activities carried forward from NACSC at Bridges [similar to current lesson]

**Post-Visit at School** - contemporary Native artists video + sketch inspired Now/Then reimagined Native art artifacts [similar to current lesson]



## ONTARIO MONTCLAIR SCHOOL DISTRICT - ARROYO & HAWTHORNE SCHOOL TEST SUBJECTS

In May, Steve and I invited the IB Coordinators Maria Dunlap and Barbara Gruetzmacher from Ontario Montclair School District's Arroyo and Hawthorne IB Primary Years Program schools to visit the Museum and discuss possible collaborations. Both expressed a desire to work with NACSC interns as early as the Fall of 2019. I am hopeful these schools, which focus on the International Baccalaureate model of in-depth learning, culminating with an 'exhibition' at school created by students, will be a fertile testing ground for ways to adjust the NACSC program. I propose that the Museum invites 3rd grade students from these two schools as 'test subjects' and others in the Ontario Montclair School District, to try variations on a Benton-based experience. Since they are new to the process, we can change/adjust lessons without disrupting existing expectations from partner teachers at Claremont Unified School District.

## ADDING AN AUTHENTIC NATIVE VOICE

Given the feedback we received from both interns this year, and the increasing scrutiny that the Museum is likely to receive as the Native American Collection Study Center moves to its new home, I strongly recommend that we augment existing NACSC programming taught by educators and interns with a Native presenter, whether it be someone who has consulted with the Museum before, like independent educator and Iroquois Nation member Gretchen Potter, or someone with academic standing at the Claremont Colleges, to provide an authentic Native voice for the elementary students that we serve. Gretchen has proposed that PCMA feature a version of the blanket project that she and Pitzer Professor Erich Steinman have worked on, which is detailed in last year's report. Partnering on a project already intended for this third grade audience would be a cost effective way of addressing the lack of Native presenters currently involved in planning and presenting the program.

## SISTER PROGRAMS TO NACSC, LED BY STUDENTS, IN AREA SCHOOLS

As the Museum and its combined collections come on-line in the coming year, we have the opportunity to grow the type of programming that the NACSC currently offers - student-taught; collection-specific outreach. One such model for expanding student intern-taught art engagement in the community already exists here in Los Angeles in the ARTsmart Program at Loyola Marymount University <https://cfa.lmu.edu/programs/studioarts/program/artsmart/> Professor Terry Lenihan, who is an arts education specialist, directs the LMU ARTsmart Service Learning Program. During a recent conversation, she and I discussed the ARTsmart Mentoring Program as an intensive art education based strategy that involves college students directly in delivering a series of weekly lessons to elementary school kids who would not otherwise receive art classes. As a CGU alumna, she has fond memories of Claremont, and indicated her willingness to meet with Museum leadership.

This model, if applied to the Benton, could enable the institution to find a new community-facing role bringing stakeholders (i.e. Pomona College undergraduates/faculty, CGU students in education, museum professionals, Rembrandt volunteer docents, and exhibiting artists) together with high needs local elementary schools in Montclair, Pomona, and even in Claremont, seeding NACSC 'sister programs' that would make use of PCMA's other collections at the new site.

Once new leadership is found for the Benton, all of these futures are possible. We have a great model program that directly involves students, and is valued by a variety of community stakeholders. It can be used to cement the new museum's reputation as a true teaching museum, and unlock the arts and arts access for the college community and beyond.

**UNTIL NEXT YEAR - 2019-2020 2nd PROJECT YEAR**

Many thanks go as always to Steve Comba, Associate Director and Registrar, and soon to be Interim Director of the Benton Museum of Art at Pomona College, without whom the NACSC would not exist in its present form, and to Kathleen Howe, Executive Director, who is ready to begin her retirement after working tirelessly on behalf of the new museum. Congratulations to you both! - RWD