

OGDEN MUSEUM OF  
SOUTHERN ART

Artists and Sense of Place

Magic in Our Neighborhood  
Magic in Our Neighborhood

Guste Elementary

Artist-in-Residence Jeffrey Cook

# Magic in Our Neighborhood

- Overview
- Enduring Idea
- The Artist - Jeffrey Cook
- Scope and Sequence
  - Preparation
  - Students Work
  - Teacher Participation
  - KIDsmART Focus Group
  - Neighborhood Discovery
  - Documentation
  - Exhibition
- Related Louisiana Content Standards and Benchmarks
- Vocabulary

# Magic in Our Neighborhood

## Overview

In the pilot year of the program, *Artists and Sense of Place*, the Ogden Museum of Southern Art – UNO selected three nationally recognized artists represented in the collection to participate in a month long residency in their neighborhood schools. The purpose of the project was to show students how to explore a sense of place through art. In preparation for the upcoming opening, the Ogden Museum designed this project to introduce community audiences to the museum and its collections by celebrating the communities reflected in the art.

### **Residency at Guste Elementary**

During the four-week residency, each student worked directly with the artist. A smaller, in-depth group further collaborated with the artist to create site-specific works for the school and the museum's study collection. Students from Kindergarten to 6th grade participated in a collaborative project with the artist. By adding layers of multiple media to line drawings of actual buildings in the neighborhood, students worked with Jeffrey Cook to make a series of collages touched by every student in the school. Mr. Cook also worked with students on Saturdays through the KIDsmART Program to create site-specific works of art.

# Magic in Our Neighborhood

## Enduring Idea

*I see magic there...*

*As an artist, I see beauty there...*

*I see history there...*




*What do you see in our neighborhood?*

Jeffrey Cook

# Magic in Our Neighborhood

## Enduring Idea

**By finding beauty in the blighted, we discover the magic of the neighborhood - its history, its people, its place. All we have to do is ask questions and search for clues to uncover the stories. The magic unfolds from there...**

-  How can we find beauty in abandoned buildings? (aesthetics, art making)
-  How do buildings and objects found there tell stories? (anthropology, history, oral history)
-  What can we create to retell the story of buildings in the neighborhood? (art making, poetry, journal writing, history, change)

# Magic in Our Neighborhood

## The Artist - Jeffrey Cook

Jeffrey Cook is a nationally recognized visual artist, performing artist and dancer who returned to New Orleans and the neighborhood of Central City after traveling the world with the Los Angeles Repertory Company. Mr. Cook grew up on Josephine Street in Central City and remembers the neighborhood when it included Jewish, Italian and African American communities. During high school, he became interested in break dancing, which would play a role later in his life. He studied visual art with artist and mentor John Scott at Xavier University. Traveling around the world, he noted the rich visual arts of other cultures, ancient and modern. He returned to New Orleans to pursue the visual arts. Mr. Cook now focuses on creating works of art that incorporate his surroundings. Literally collecting objects from property and abandoned buildings, the artist saves the memories and histories of his neighborhood. In *Club Rock House* in the Ogden Collection, the artist makes reference to abandoned buildings that end up used for negative purposes. Just by adding the term “club” in front of “rock house” changes the meaning.

# Magic in Our Neighborhood

## Scope and Sequence - Preparation



- Mr. Cook and Ann Rowson Love, Education Curator, OMSA met several times to determine the scope and sequence of the residency and prepare activities.
- Guste Elementary prepared a space to serve as the “art room.”
- Mr. Cook photographed abandoned buildings and fences in Central City. The photographs were photocopied to be used as the foundation pieces in the collaborations.
- Ms. Love led a teacher workshop to discuss the residency, introduce the artist and provide teachers with related Louisiana Content Standards and Benchmarks. Teachers were encouraged to incorporate art as they worked to help students excel in all academic subjects.

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## Scope and Sequence - Students Work



- Mr. Cook provided students with photocopies of the detail of a broken down fence and art supplies of crayons and craypas.
- Introducing certain art terms, such as texture and detail, Cook instructed students to change a black and white image of a detail of an abandoned building into a colorful scene.
- Students use crayons, markers, and craypas to brighten the darker, negative spaces and darken the lighter, positive spaces.
- Re-named “magic” crayons, the craypas or oil pastels allowed the students to completely alter the black and white image before them. They learned to paint over the areas that they wanted to cover up and change and reveal the areas they want to enhance.

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## Scope and Sequence - Teacher Participation



- Teachers enthusiastically participated in the exercise. Generally, teachers who participated in the same activities as students understood the concepts of the residency better and were more likely to incorporate them into their own lessons. Also, student behavior was less disruptive when teachers were present.
- Students and teachers used color to alter the perception of abandoned houses. Instead of focusing on ignoring the blighted property in the neighborhood, transforming a detail image from an abandoned house shows how we can all work together to change our surroundings.

# Magic in Our Neighborhood

## Scope and Sequence - KIDsmART Focus Group



- Over five Saturdays, students from KIDsmART worked with Mr. Cook in an in-depth project.
- **Finding the Magic** - Using photography, students explored Central City neighborhood seeking beauty in abandoned buildings and property. The students were instructed to photograph objects that conveyed a sense of magic. The photography exercise introduced cropping, scale, and capturing details.
- Students focus on a tear in corrugated metal, illustrating how things change over time. Mr. Cook illustrates through photographs how nature alters our surroundings creating beauty in simple things.
- Students also created simple line drawings based on buildings in the neighborhood.
- **Found and Rescued** - A search for “keep sakes” was conducted on the streets and properties of Central City. Students discussed the history and value of found objects – how they help to tell the story of the neighborhood.

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## Scope and Sequence - Neighborhood Discovery

- **People in the Neighborhood** - Students were introduced to artists, from the past and present, who worked in Central City.
- Mr. Cook shared imagery produced by Willie White, a folk artist; Marion Porters, a photographer who documented the people and environment of the neighborhood during the 20<sup>th</sup> Century; and a contemporary folk artist, whose yard is filled with art today.
- **The Rare and Beautiful Disappear** - Rare and valuable adornments on commercial and residential buildings in the neighborhood have disappeared. Gingerbread brackets and motifs, ironwork fences, fireplace mantels, marble work, cypress wood floors and moldings have been lost as buildings fall to ruins and people collect their riches.
- **Change** - The artist and students explored both positive and negative aspects of neighborhood change. As change took place in the neighborhood, homes and shops were robbed of their special architectural adornments. On the positive side, preservation and renovation efforts try to rectify the damage and repair it.
- Students identified and gathered evidence of negative and positive attributes in buildings and how they can affect positive social change.
- Students wrote poems expressing the contrasts.

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## Scope and Sequence - Documentation

### **Photographic Documentation**

Students documented the residency using digital cameras for the web based component. They were taught basic technical skills to use the camera and were shown tips on creating interesting images by Kate Stewart, *Artists and Sense of Place* Coordinator. Ms. Stewart also documented the process through photographs.

Students and artists photographed buildings to use in their own artwork.

### **Interview**

Students interviewed generations of their own family members and neighbors to learn how the neighborhood changed over time.

### **Poetry**

Students wrote poetry to document and reflect upon the residency.

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## Scope and Sequence - Exhibition

The *Artists and Sense of Place* Residency concludes with an exhibition of the collaboration among students and Mr. Cook. The reception was held June 1, 2002 at the Ogden Museum of Southern Art's Julia Street Gallery. The exhibit featured art by students dealing with abandoned buildings, classroom collaborative pieces and the two final site-specific collages. The site specific collages are made of renderings, photographs, strips of color and poetry woven by the artist into larger collaborative works.

Guste Elementary will keep one collage and one will become a part of the Education Collection at OMSA.



# Magic in Our Neighborhood

## Related Louisiana Content Standards and Benchmarks K4



### Visual Art

- CE-1VA-E1 Explore and identify imagery from a variety of sources and demonstrate visual representation;
- CE-1VA-E2 Explore techniques and technologies for visual expression and communication;
- CE-1VA-E3 Use art vocabulary and the elements and principals of design to communicate the language of art;
- CE-1VA-E5 Work individually and as a group member in a responsible and productive manner;
- AP-2VA-E2 Recognize and respond to concepts, such as beauty and taste, which are determined by culture and differ from person to person;
- AP-2VA-E3 Discuss and identify the role and status of the artist and how art is used in daily life, in the workplace, and within the community;
- AP-2VA-E5 Participate in elementary inquiry into the basic question “What is art?”
- HP-3VA-E2 Express how visual symbols communicate a universal language;
- HP-3VA-E3 Explore and discuss art images from the past and the present;
- HP-3VA-E4 Identify media used in works of art throughout history;
- HP-3VA-E5 Describe ways the visual arts are used in daily life;
- CA-4VA-E2 Work individually and/or collectively to identify symbols and images in art and other core curricula;

# Magic in Our Neighborhood

## Related Louisiana Content Standards and Benchmarks K4



### Language Arts

- ELA-2-E2 focusing on language, concepts, and ideas that show an awareness of the intended audience and/or purpose (e.g., classroom, real-life, workplace) in developing compositions;
- ELA-2-E3 creating written texts using the writing process;
- ELA-7-E2 problem solving by using reasoning skills, life experiences, and available information;



### Social Studies

- H-1A-E1 demonstrating an understanding of the concepts of time and chronology;
- H-1B-E1 describing and comparing family life in the present and the past;
- H-1B-E2 relating the history of the local community and comparing it to other communities of long ago; H-1C-E1 describing the people, events, and ideas that were significant to the growth and development of our state and nation;
- H-1C-E4 recognizing how folklore and other cultural elements have contributed to our local, state, and national heritage;
- G-1B-E2 identifying and describing the human characteristics of places, including population distributions and culture;
- G-1B-E3 describing how the physical and human characteristics of places change over time;
- G-1D-E1 identifying and explaining ways in which people depend upon and modify the physical environment;

# Magic in Our Neighborhood

## Related Louisiana Content Standards/Benchmarks 5-8



### Visual Art

- CE-1VA-M1 Demonstrate art methods and techniques in visual representation based on research of imagery;
- CE-1VA-M2 Select and apply media, techniques, and technology to visually express and communicate;
- CE-1VA-M3 Use the elements and principles of design to visually express individual ideas;
- CE-1VA-M5 Produce ideas for art productions while engaging in both individual and group activities;
- CE-1VA-M6 Identify the relationships between arts and other disciplines through art production;
- AP-2VA-M1 Use art elements, principles of design, and art vocabulary for responding to the aesthetic qualities of a work of art;
- AP-2VA-M2 Develop and communicate an awareness of the ideas and creations of others, and recognize that concepts, like beauty and taste, differ by culture;
- AP-2VA-M3 Identify and explore the meaning of art and the role of artists in their culture and environment;
- AP-2VA-M5 Identify, reflect, and distinguish differences of images, symbols, and sensory qualities seen in a work of art and those in nature;
- HP-3VA-M2 Understand how works of art cross historical, geographical, and political boundaries;
- HP-3VA-M3 Recognize the significance of themes, symbols, and ideas in art that convey messages from the past and present;
- HP-3VA-M4 Analyze and identify media and techniques used by artists throughout history;
- HP-3VA-M5 Recognize individual artistic expression and cultural influences to understand the arts within the community;

# Magic in Our Neighborhood

## Related Louisiana Content Standards/Benchmarks 5-8



### Visual Art

(Cont'd)

CA-4VA-M2 Work individually and/or collectively to analyze/interpret symbols and images for meaning, purpose, and value in art and other core curricula;

CA-4VA-M4 Discuss how culture influences artists' use of media, subject matter, symbols, and themes in relation to works of art;



### Language Arts

ELA-2-M3 applying the steps of the writing process;

ELA-2-M4 using narration, description, exposition, and persuasion to develop various modes of writing (e.g., notes, stories, poems, letters, essays, logs);

ELA-2-M5 recognizing and applying literary devices (e.g., figurative language, symbolism, dialogue);

ELA-2-M6 writing as a response to texts and life experiences (e.g., letters, journals, lists);

ELA-5-M3 locating, gathering, and selecting information using graphic organizers, outlining, note taking, summarizing, interviewing, and surveying to produce documented texts and graphics;

# Magic in Our Neighborhood

## Related Louisiana Content Standards/Benchmarks 5-8



### Social Studies

- H-1A-M1 describing chronological relationships and patterns;
- H-1A-M2 demonstrating historical perspective through the political, social, and economic context in which an event or idea occurred;
- H-1A-M6 conducting research in efforts to answer historical questions;
- G-1B-M1 explaining and analyzing both the physical and human phenomena associated with specific places, including precipitation and settlement patterns;
- G-1B-M4 describing and explaining how personal interests, culture, and technology affect people's perceptions and uses of places and regions;
- G-1C-M4 analyzing types, patterns, and effects of human migration over time;
- G-1C-M5 tracing local and worldwide patterns of cultural diffusion and analyzing their causes and effects;
- G-1C-M6 comparing historical and contemporary patterns of economic interdependence;
- G-1D-M1 analyzing and evaluating the effects of human actions upon the physical environment;

# Magic in Our Neighborhood

## Vocabulary

- **photography**
- **collage/assemblage**
- **found objects**
- **blighted**
- **abandoned**
- **renovation/preservation**
- **line**
- **color**
- **pattern**
- **balance**
- **scale**
- **unity**