Cilker Sessions

**Friday Keynote: Chike Nwoffiah**

**Through Another Lens: Reimagining Arts Education in a Post COVID World**

**Bio:** Chike Nwoffiah is a theater director, educator, award-winning filmmaker and actor. He is a member of the Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (SAG-AFTRA) and founding director of the Silicon Valley African Film Festival (SVAFF). Now in its 11th year, and aptly themed “Africa through the African lens”, the Silicon Valley African Film Festival is the only film festival in California that is exclusively focused on films by African filmmakers and provides a platform for Africa's seasoned and emerging filmmakers to share their stories with a global audience. Nwoffiah was listed as one of the "Top Ten Most Influential African Americans" in the San Francisco Bay Area by CityFlight Magazine in 2000, and has served on several regional, national and international arts policy and grant panels including the National Endowment for the Arts - Education Leaders Institute. He served 8 years as a Trustee and Grants Committee Chairman of the Arts Council Silicon Valley (now Silicon Valley Creates). In 2013, he was appointed by the California Superintendent of Education to serve on the California Blueprint for Creative Schools Task Force. Nwoffiah is a past president of Mountain View Television (KMVT Channel 15), and former Arts Advisory Commissioner for the San Diego International Airport. He presently serves on the President’s Community Advisory Council of Silicon Valley Community Foundation, and is on the boards of the Alliance for California Traditional Arts (ACTA), Pan African Film Consortium and Families Without Borders. Nwoffiah is a Senior Fellow of the American Leadership Forum - Silicon Valley and a 2021 Creative License Ambassador for the City of San Jose.

**Saturday Panel Discussion: A Call for Teacher Creativity: On and Offline**

Moderator: Susan Verducci; Panelists: Gina Muriera, Kara Ireland D’Ambrosio, Sheila Cliff

Susan Verducci earned her doctorate in philosophy of education and her masters in gender issues in education at Stanford University. She also holds a Masters of Fine Arts in theater from Rutgers University. She currently researches the intersection between arts education and open-mindedness, and was named San José State’s Professor of the Year in 2019.

Gina Padilla Muriera is a bicultural, East Bay Chicana, 2-time SJSU Spartan alumnus, earning her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Creative Arts, and her Master of Arts Degree in Counseling and Guidance, specializing in School Counseling with a K-12 PPS Credential. She is passionate about Integrated Arts co-equal instruction since she personally struggled in her own K-12 education, with no one to connect the multiple intelligences she honed as a competitive swimmer, a percussionist, an actor, and a professional dancer to non-arts subjects. Gina’s higher education career path was paved by over 15 years of serving low-income, first generation middle and high school students in Title I schools via writing curriculum for after school, STEAM programming. She currently serves on SCCOE's Artspiration Leadership Council of Community Practice. Gina teaches back what resources teachers need to engage every child’s learning style for deeper understanding of core subjects by intentionally integrating the arts into their goals, assessments, and instruction.

Dr. Kara Ireland D'Ambrosio holds a Bachelor of Music Education Degree from the University of New Hampshire, a Master of Music Education Degree with a Kodaly emphasis from Holy Names University in Oakland, a Doctorate of Musical Arts from Boston University, a Graduate Certificate in Orff-Schulwerk from Mills College, and a Graduate Certificate in Music for the Unborn from Silver Lake College in Wisconsin. In 2004, Kara earned her National Board Certification in Early/Middle Childhood Music Education and renewed this certificate in 2014. Dr. Ireland D’Ambrosio is a Supervisor of student teachers in the SJSU Secondary Education department and is adjunct faculty in the Music Education department. Dr. Ireland D'Ambrosio teaches grades TK-8 at Woodside School, where she won a Grammy Gold in 2002 for Excellence in Music Education. Recently, the California Music Educators Association has recognized Kara for her work in music education with the CMEA Peripole-Bergerault General Music Educators Award 2011. Furthermore, the Bay Section CMEA organization awarded her with the Outstanding Classroom General Music Award 2012.

Sheila Cliff has over thirty-five years of experience in teaching children in the areas of Special Education, Music and Creative Arts. She holds a Master’s degree in both Special Education and Social-Clinical Psychology as well as training in the areas of Waldorf Education and Orff Music Education. She is a strong believer in the value and importance of creative expression for children of all ages through song, dance, creative storytelling and dramatic play.

This panel will offer examples, practical and inspirational, on how teachers can employ the arts in this time of distance learning. Why does distance learning call teachers to respond with the arts? How can they respond? How have you responded to designing arts education curriculum?

**Bring Out Your Students Cultural and Linguistic Capital With the Arts**

Authors: Abby Almerido, Gena Pacada, Santa Clara County Office of Education  
Academic Tech Specialists

Design classrooms where learner identity, arts, and deep, authentic learning intersect. Join us for an interactive session that harnesses learner creativity and cultural capital and shows how to do this all through distance learning. Leave this session with ways to increase visibility, joy, and voice for all your students! (All Grades;)

Abby Almerido is currently a Coordinator of Workforce Development and Organization Culture for the Santa Clara County Office of Education. She is a proud member of the MERIT, Google Innovator, and Our Voices Academy families. Although a strong advocate for adeptly using tech in the classroom, she uses any available resources to help students construct learning whether it be through LEGOs, drama, or baking. She is excited and committed to helping students and teachers leverage their passions and their identities in developing the mindsets.

Genevieve Pacada is an Academic Technology Specialist at the Santa Clara County Office of Education. She started her career in education in 2003, where she taught elementary school, middle school, and teacher professional development. She has a Master of Science degree in Education Media Design & Technology and is a Google Certified Innovator. She has rediscovered her love for doodling through sketch-noting.

**Understanding Equity Accessibility through Art Lessons: Creating an Overlay Portrait**

Authors: Amy Sargent, San Jose Museum of Art

(Grades 4 - 8)   
  
Supplies Needed: Paper, pencil; optional sharpies, tracing paper, magazines, glue, scissors   
  
SJMA will present a working demonstration in developing the framework of designing an all-abilities accessible lesson plan by utilizing visual art as a teaching methodology in the classroom. In our example, we will pair the curriculum standards of California Common Core 6th grade Social Science standards with SJMA's current exhibition Barring Freedom, highlighting the portraiture work of artist Titus Kaphar. This presentation will emphasize the use of primary source learning while acknowledging the barriers autistic spectrum disorder students encounter in recognizing and articulating emotion. Walking participants through the thought process and organization of developing a lesson plan which meets 6th grade social sciences curriculum standards, while integrating creative problem-solving, artistic practice and allows students of all abilities to gain confidence in recognizing nuanced emotion, leading to empathy and understanding.

**Blending Music with ESL-Math**

SJ Jazz - Progressions: Angel Ortega, Hugo Garcia, Monique Valenzuela;

Author: Marcos Zambrano

Bio: I am currently finishing my undergraduates in music Education at San Jose State University. I studied trumpet under Kathryn Adduci and John Freeman. I have been able to perform with a variety of Ensembles and play a hand in the development of San Jose States Mariachi Oroazul in recent years. I have also been working with San Jose Jazz Progressions close to a year now and have been able to learn from and work with other teachers. I have been a Teachers assistant, learning and growing every week and am excited to see where the path of education leads me.

Hugo Garcia joined the Progressions team in August 2017. Hugo received his BA in Music from University of California, Davis and his MM in Music Education from San José State Universit

(Grades 1 - 3)

Marcos Zambrano is a conductor, composer and violinist from El Sistema, Venezuela. He became involved with this program at age 7, and after 15 years of training inside El Sistema Orchestras, he was hired as teacher/tutor for several Núcleos and appointed as conductor of Orquesta Tipica Merideña, Coro de Belen and other Venezuelan music ensembles. In parallel with El Sistema, he attended the Music Institute of Caracas (IUDEM), Laudelino Mejias School and the Latin-American Violin Academy. Also, he went to Spain to study at Berklee College of Music, in L’Aula School. Marcos earned a Bachelor and Master degree in Physics and Mechanical Acoustics Engineering, at The University of The Andes, Venezuela.

Monique Valenzuela is a music educator with San Jose Jazz as well as the Alum Rock School District. My music studies of 20 plus years are rooted in the Mariachi Music Culture. As well as a teaching artist, I am also the Director and performing artist of “Mariachi Trio” from San Jose CA. I’ve been working as a Music Teacher for just over 4 years, working at several districts across the bay. The art of music is my passion and I truly enjoy sharing it with others in any way that I can.  
  
Supplies Needed: None  
Three 30 min sessions of equitable access education, integrated music and language-math subjects. Motivating activities to increase awareness in students and develop artistic competences. Implementation of the successful music educational program “El Sistema”, with an innovative cross-cultural enriched curriculum.

**Beyond Colonized Music Education**

Armando Castellano, Quinteto Latino

Bio: Armando Castellano is a musician, bilingual teaching artist, and arts advocate from San Francisco. As a French horn player he performs in orchestras and chamber ensembles all over the world. In addition, he manages and performs in his chamber ensemble Quinteto Latino, an organization that advocates for classical music by Latin American and Latino composers through performance and education. As a bilingual music instructor and teaching artist he has taught in both English and Spanish. His advocacy work has him sitting on three boards, nationally, working as a mentor to young artists of color and presenting regularly at conferences on chamber music, advocacy, diversity and teaching artistry.

Let’s root our learning beyond the colonized aesthetic: linguistically, culturally and musically. Engage in a series of fun, group-based activities composing music by making sounds with our bodies culminating in performing for each other.

**Student-Driven Classroom Culture**

Cullen Blain, Jennifer Mineer, Community School of Music and Art

Bio: Cullen Blain is an innovative performing musician with a passion for music education. Cullen is the Music4Schools Program Manager for the Community School of Music and Art. He holds a DMA and MM from the College-Conservatory of Music with a BA in Music from Central Connecticut State University. He has experience teaching preschool through 8th-grade music programs and working with middle school and high school band programs.

Jennifer Mineer is the Program Manager for Art4Schools, the in-school art program at Community School of Music and Arts in Mountain View, California. She received her BFA from Colorado State University and her MFA from the University of Oregon. Her artwork has been shown in domestic and international galleries, and employ a wide range of materials. She manages a team of up to 40 teachers across 11 districts, and always finds time to dig for rocks.

In this musical workshop we invite teachers to imagine what oral and musical traditions they would leave, or teach their families, to tell future generations what is important to them now. Creating and performing music provides an outlet for processing strong emotion which is synergistic with children’s social and emotional development. From reflection on current events in creating new classroom traditions, we will explore, improvise, and perform a shared cultural emotions linking self-expression and musical expression through the lens of American folk song.

**A Seat at the Table: Connecting Through Culture**

Heidi Lubin, Jessica Torres, Children’s Discovery Museum

Heidi Lubin, Visual Arts Program Developer, creates art and education programs for Children’s Discovery Museum of San Jose both on-site and virtually. She has over 16 years experience developing interdisciplinary arts and education programs for learners of all ages. Heidi holds her Bachelor of Arts in Organizational Studies from Scripps College and a Master of Fine Arts from California College of the Arts.

Jessica Torres, Director of Education, leads the vision and strategy for the Education Department at Children's Discovery Museum of San Jose. She has an extensive background in the performing arts, arts education, and education management. She has served as consultant, teacher, and performing artist for the School of Arts & Culture, the San Jose Unified School District, and Teatro Vision. Jessica holds a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from Stanford University.

A Seat at the Table: Connecting Through Culture is inspired by the Museum’s very own traveling community space that engaged families in culture-sharing through art and poetry (https://www.cdm.org/common-ground/). Workshop participants will be invited to the virtual table to find connections among one another and share their individual identities through the mediums of drawing and poetry culminating in a collective group project using text from their poems. Each participant is asked to bring a cooking object that they use on a daily basis or for special occasions that has special meaning to them. We will engage each participant through object sharing, observational drawing, and poetry writing which will encourage participants to explore/reflect on their individual identities and foster conversation among other participants.

**Cognition, Culture, and the Arts**

Jessa Brie Moreno, Mariah Rankine-Landers, Studio Pathways

Jessa has been a professional theatre artist, facilitator and arts educator for over twenty years, which serves as her template for healthy collectivism in action. She recently served as Local Advocacy Field Manager for the California Alliance for Arts Education, is ongoing Adjunct Faculty with the California Institute for Integral Studies and San Jose State University, and is a founding member of White Educators for Racial Justice, a study group for decentering whiteness and disrupting bias in the classroom. As former Co-Director of School Transformation Through the Arts and the Integrated Learning Specialist Program out of the Alameda County Office of Education, she had the pleasure of midwifing educators and leaders through whole-school mindset shifts.

Mariah’s work promotes and invites the educational system to redesign its purposes with the role of the contemporary artists at the forefront of how young people can develop the capacity for imagination, innovation, perception, and critical thought that will bridge and build a society that we all deserve. Mariah leads with conviction that if you tend to your heart, tend to the art that motivates you, and lead with love, that our schools can dissolve the oppressive systems they uphold and become the sanctuaries we all need to fully bloom and become. She was particularly motivated to co-found Studio Pathways after co-creating Rise Up! An American Curriculum inspired by the musical “Hamilton, An American Musical,” to transform teaching and learning through creative inquiry. Mariah is the former director of the Integrated Learning Specialist Program and the School Transformation Through the Arts grant at Alameda County Office of Education. She is co-founder of Canerow Kids and a founding board member of Chapter 510. She is a former classroom teacher with 20 years of service dedicated to improving the landscape of learning for our children.

As teachers, our ability to recognize the context of power dynamics and histories of inequity are starting points for creating more liberated spaces of learning. This workshop focuses on the skills and techniques to “choreograph” and facilitate a set of teaching moves grounded in practices developed for inclusion and belonging. As our diverse children face an uncertain future, what we know for sure is that we can equip them with competencies for co-creating and participating in meaningful classroom cultures rooted in racial justice. This hands on workshop provides frameworks for inclusive learning environments, current educational equity practices including power analysis and reconciliation and classroom management as facilitated choreography focused on democratic values of liberty, justice and belonging. (All Grades)

**Concepts Come Alive!**

Karen Altree Piemme, Red Ladder Theatre Company

Karen Altree Piemme is the Director of the Red Ladder Theatre Company, the nationally-acclaimed, award-winning improvisational theatre company which works with a wide range of groups and organizations within the community to assist participants in the development of creative thinking and problem-solving skills through the art form of theatre. Ms. Piemme is an accomplished director, actor, workshop facilitator and acting instructor specializing in youth and community access to the arts, and is a member of Actors’ Equity Association. As a theatre professional, Ms. Piemme has directed theatrical productions, led workshops and has been a guest speaker on the topics of arts education and community partnerships locally, regionally, nationally and internationally at conferences and arts organizations for over twenty-five years. Ms. Piemme is the recipient of the 2011Champion of Arts Education Award, awarded by the Mayor/City of San Jose and the San Jose Arts Commission, and in 2012 she was named one of the 35 Faces of Theatre Bay Area.

This workshop lets educators explore how to make classroom content concepts come alive through the art form of improvisational theatre. Participants will engage in (and ultimately create) a variety of lessons that integrate interactive theatre activities with other core curriculum. In this active workshop, participants will learn by doing - experiencing activities in the creative process - and will ultimately come away with some "creative springboards" that they can use to develop lessons that address both core content and performing arts curriculum standards. (All Grades); Supplies Needed: Pen or Pencil, Paper or Index Cards.

**Embodied Practices to Nurture Teachers, Students, and Our Communities**

Kati Silva, Artspiration, Santa Clara County Office of Education  
  
Kati Silva, MA ILS is a circle keeper,  a scholar-practitioner, and an educator bridging social justice and spiritual transformation. Born and raised in the territory that is known today as San Jose, Costa Rica, she worked as a Bodywork Practitioner and a Yoga and Somatics Educator. As a woman of color with Afro-Meztiza lineages raging from Nicaragua to Europe and Huetar and Chorotega heritages, Kati is committed to cross-cultural liberatory praxis that reflects her deep respect and service to Mother Earth, as well as to Radical Collective Transformation. Currently living in occupied Tamien Ohlone land, San Francisco Bay Area, she serves as a Popular Educator and Leadership Development Coordinator, integrating transformative and restorative practices within a collective of community leaders in the neighborhood of Mayfair in East San Jose. Kati has had the privilege of higher education, holding a Master’s Degree in Women, Gender, Spirituality, and Social Justice from the California Institute of Integral Studies in San Francisco. Her inquiries are centered in embodiment, Indigenous and experiential ways of knowing, Abuelita wisdom, foodways, the arts, eco-feminism, and community resilience.

In this session we will explore movement inquiries to help us get centered in our bodies, and create a sense of connection with our purpose as educators, and members of communities of care. We will learn together Social Emotional Learning skills and Restorative Practices that will benefit us as teachers and will support our students in their learning. Supplies Needed: None  
(Grades 4 - 8)

**The Art of Self Care: Create Your Own Resiliency**

Michelle Holdt, Arts and Restorative Learning Coordinator, San Mateo County Office of Education

Michelle Holdt is the Founder of Arts Ed Matters and The Art of Self Care. She is also an arts integration specialist and theater educator with a strong commitment to leading an arts rich life and making the arts available for all children. For 20+ years, she has been a drama teacher, professional development leader, and arts administrator in a wide variety of educational settings. She is the Arts and Restorative Learning Coordinator at the San Mateo County Office of Ed and holds a Masters and Credential in Educational Administration from San Francisco State University, an Art Integration Certificate with The Alliance for Arts Learning Leadership, a BA in Drama and Human Development from Harvard University, a Masters in Theatre and Dance from the University of New Mexico, and a clear K-8 multiple subject credential from New College of California in San Francisco.

Many people think self care is a massage or a glass of wine with friends. Let’s explore how self care can foster your own resiliency in these incredibly difficult times. The time is now, more than ever to fill your own container so that we can work together to turn this world around. As teachers and leaders, we often give so much of our energy and creativity to our job, our students, our families and forget to take care of ourselves. So how about returning to the inspiration in our own hearts to reboot? What if self care was more like coming home to you? Join this restorative and innovative workshop! Supplies Needed: Paper, Pens (All Grades)

**Visual Arts Integration Across the Disciplines**

Ruby Ming, Independent Scholar

Ruby Ming aims to ignite curiosity and spark joy through engagement with arts and culture. As a visual arts educator for over twenty years, she teaches art making and visual literacy to promote students’ self-expression, inventiveness, and exploration. She focuses on arts integration, Social-Emotional Learning, and museum education.

Artworks are primary sources that reflect their societies, and can be a gateway for students to understand historical time periods, inspiration for writing, and a bridge to other cultures. We’ll practice techniques that promote critical and creative thinking skills, including close observation, evidentiary reasoning, making inferences, problem solving, evaluation, interpretation, reflection, analysis, acknowledging multiple viewpoints, and connecting to previous knowledge. Supplies Needed: Pencil or Pen, Paper, optional Colored Markers. Grades 4 - 8)  
  
**Cinderella: Exploring a Fairytale Through a Culturally Relevant Lens**

Sherri Young, African American Shakespeare Company

With over 3,000 versions throughout the world, the story of Cinderella has been identified around the world as one of the most popular tale from every culture. African-American Shakespeare Company has designed an online curriculum course for 3rd – 5th grades that provides arts integration for English Language Arts, Science, Math, and Social Emotional Learning. This course will show teachers the different methods that an arts integration can be shared with their students in an online platform. Already created content can be used or customized for classroom teachers to find ways to engage their students through classroom interactions, interactive games and activities, and break-out discussion prompts. The program will include clips, scenes, photos from the play, with some pre-recorded interaction with our artists for your class. This is meant to be a course where you can stimulate your own ideas as well as take what we have already created to use in your classroom tomorrow. Supplies Needed: None (Grades 3 - 5)

**The Four-Bar Breakdown: A Paradigm Shift in Culturally Relevant Practices and Pedagogy**

Tyson Amir, Freedom Soul Media Education Initiatives

Tyson Amir is an author, musician, educator, community organizer, and freedom fighter born and raised in the San Francisco Bay Area. Tyson is the author of the book Black Boy Poems, the Black Boy Poems Curriculum and the founder/director of the Black Literary Collective and the revolutionary education firm Freedom Soul Media Education Initiatives.  
  
A workshop facilitated by Tyson Amir, the author of the books Black Boy Poems, the Black Boy Poems Curriculum and the creator of the 4 Bar Breakdown. You’ll have to experience the 4 Bar Breakdown to understand its power and relevance in the 21st century learning environment. Participants will analyze the text, its themes, philosophies and methodology of structure and delivery; and how it relates to our more socially and culturally diverse learning environments. The 4 Bar Breakdown is a mixture of socially, politically, culturally relevant pedagogy and authentic hip hop pedagogy, that prioritizes community voices and experiences that are too often systematically ignored in “standardized” curricula. It’s a tangible example of cultural responsiveness in practice while incorporating content standards from History/Social Science, English Language Arts, arts, music and ethnic studies. Supplies Needed: None. (Grades 4 - 8)

**Understanding Equity Accessibility through Art Lessons: Creating an Overlay Portrait**  
Zartashia Shah, SJ Museum of Art

SJMA will present a working demonstration in developing the framework of designing an all-abilities accessible lesson plan by utilizing visual art as a teaching methodology in the classroom. In our example, we will pair the curriculum standards of California Common Core 6th grade Social Science standards with SJMA's current exhibition Barring Freedom, highlighting the portraiture work of artist Titus Kaphar. This presentation will emphasize the use of primary source learning while acknowledging the barriers autistic spectrum disorder students encounter in recognizing and articulating emotion. Walking participants through the thought process and organization of developing a lesson plan which meets 6th grade social sciences curriculum standards, while integrating creative problem-solving, artistic practice and allows students of all abilities to gain confidence in recognizing nuanced emotion, leading to empathy and understanding. Supplies Needed: Paper, pencil; optional sharpies, tracing paper, magazines, glue, scissors (Grades 4 - 8)