

## The Great Temporary and Permanent Kid's Art Mural Project

*With Richard Johnson, PO Box 818*

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8 to 15 class sessions, adaptable for grades K through 8, High School and Adult.

Preliminary exercises and seminars on patterning and symbolism of color and shape will begin the process. A temporary mural will be created using pencils, crayons, colored markers and tempera paint on a large roll of paper. The students' outlines, and overlapping outlined figures will create a spirited crowd scene of young people. Individually designed symbols of their childhood culture, or symbols and images of whatever theme is chosen for the mural will be incorporated within the shapes created by the overlapping figures.

Upon completion, critique, and presentation, a second mural can be created upon a designated wall, surface, or sheets of 3/8 inch, by 4 foot by 8 foot plywood. Only the three primary colors plus white and black and a primer will be purchased (quality latex paint). The art of mixing colors will be taught, as well as the review and utilization of techniques learned in the first mural.



Summer 2008, Neighborhood Art Project: 4 foot by 12 1/2 foot lower left portion of the "Rockstock Music Festival" Stage Art Murals, Gold King Mine, Jerome, Arizona.



Summer 2008, Neighborhood Art Project: 4 foot by 6 1/2 foot lower right portion of the "Rockstock Music Festival" Stage Art Murals, Gold King Mine, Jerome, Arizona



Teaching Artist Richard Johnson and Art Teacher Kayla Tracy with One of The Black Mountain Elementary School's, 4' by 16' Murals: "Stewardship of a Healthy Environment", May, 2010.

The 2: 4' by 16' murals were created with 12 different classes of 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students, in Cave Creek, Arizona, using latex paints on 3/4" by 4' by 8' sheets of plywood.



Detail from the Black Mountain Elementary School's murals featuring plants and animals from their local environment, in and around Cave Creek, Arizona.



Another detail from the Black Mountain Elementary School's murals featuring a boy crushing and recycling a can.



Another view of one of the 2 murals at Black Mountain Elementary School in Cave Creek, Arizona, created in May of 2010, depicting "Stewardship of a Healthy Environment".



The second 4' by 16' mural at Black Mountain Elementary School depicting "Stewardship of a Healthy Environment", created in May of 2010 under the direction of Teaching Artist, Richard Johnson.



"You Can't Say: You Can't Play!" A commemorative mural in Memorial Spaulding Elementary School, Newton, MA. April, 2011. approx. 192 square feet, including a 3 ½ by 6 ½ foot map of the world, and a 3 by 4 foot bulletin board area for interactive weekly additions.





2nd view: "You Can't Say: You Can't Play" / The Memorial Spaulding mural project – interactive area; the execution involved K through 5<sup>th</sup> grade students.

Symbolism in the mural:

**You Can't Say "You Can't Play"**: Long time and beloved Kindergarten Teacher Pat Prime's way of teaching inclusion to young students in a way they could understand and utilize everyday and was the continued theme for our school. This theme is further extended by the rainbow of skin, hair, eyes, body types and abilities depicted by the children of the mural. This beautifully concise phrase was originally created by past Principal Bunny Meyers.

**Many Children, One School – Many Nations, One World**: the natural extension of "You Can't Say: "You Can't Play" and reflects our school's pride in the multicultural nature of our community and our connection to and our vision for a better world.

**Smiling Teacher**, (Pat Prime), top left: a representative of the creative, caring, skilled and excellent teachers and staff that contribute to our wonderful Memorial-Spaulding community, past, present and future.

**Chickadees**: Pat Prime would call her Kindergarten Student's "chickadees"; the chickadee is also the state bird of Massachusetts.

**Multi-colored Skin and Band-aids**: Pat Prime students wrote letters to bandaid companies that labeled peach colored band-aid boxes "skin color" to tell them that every kid deserved their own special "skin color" band-aid. Whether by coincidence or as a result, band-aid boxes are no

longer labeled this way and it is now possible to purchase translucent band-aids so that each child's unique skin color shows through.

**Kids in Angular March**, bottom left: are performing the "I'm a Little Robot" song during Pat's annual "Invention Night". They also sang "A is for airplanes, B is for buttons, C is for cars and D for dice"... on through the alphabet of inventions (some of their own inventions are pictured at their feet). Pat's students were challenged to

**"Find a problem at home and to invent something to solve it"**. This empowered our littlest students to feel not only a part of their world but capable of improving it

**Child Wearing a Fruit Loop and Gummy Lifesaver Necklace**: These necklaces were one of the "100<sup>th</sup> day" learning projects made by counting and stringing 100 "beads". One of the many ways Pat taught with "learning through play".

**Child Holding Pumpkin Seeds**: Pumpkin Math: every October, children would measure, weigh and count by 10s all the seeds in their pumpkins. The seeds would be compared from individual pumpkins, but then an enormous total from all the pumpkins was counted by the class as a whole.

**Book by Room 105**: Each year that class would write, rewrite, add details, edit, illustrate and "publish" a story together about a classroom adventure or idea. Pat was adept at recognizing and following a "teachable moment" that was child-led. Snow forts in October, impromptu leaf fights in the Fall, chasing wild turkeys across the playground with bowls of cereal offerings, or imaginings of when "thunder struck lightening" inspired and taught the writing process to our newest students.

**Green Footprints**: Every March 17<sup>th</sup>, Pat always caught "Sean McFlaherty", a leprechaun, in a cloth bag and would try to bring him to the classroom to show her students. Yet every year Sean would cleverly trick her into loosening the tie on the bag so "he could get a wee breath" but which really made his escape possible. That morning children would hear of this adventure and would find his footprints throughout the classroom, his miniature bowling pins and ball, his wee bicycle and other tiny evidence of his presence. Children were then inspired to excitedly create and write their own plan for "How to Catch a Leprechaun".

**Smiling Sun with Clothespins for Rays**: Everyday children would "sign in" by placing a clothespin with their name on it onto the edge of the sun. Morning Meeting would begin with everyone singing together as Pat would pull the line to raise the sun and signal the start of the day. Pat also felt very strongly that each child should be greeted and welcomed into the classroom every day, and did so.

**Squeaky the Mouse**: Pat's "teaching assistant" who, although having spent many years in Kindergarten, still needed all the Kindergarten students' help to correctly sing the "ABCs."



Detail of "You Can't Say: You Can't Play!": showing Pat Prime, Squeaky the Mouse, the leprechaun's foot prints, multi-colored skin and band-aids, fruit loop and gummy lifesaver necklace, pumpkin math, one of many chickadees, the smiling sun with clothespins rays, and the march of the robots on "Invention Night".

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