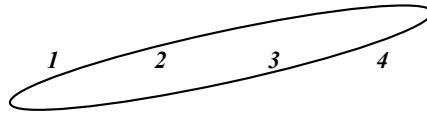


C h r i s t i n e W h i t t a k e r

Performance, Installations, and Multi-Media Sculpture



Arts Van Go

A \$60,000 National Endowment for the Arts Special Projects Grant

Being a multi-media sculptor with interests in and dedication to public art, I was selected by the Christina Cultural Arts Center to design and manage a mobile arts program. As Program Director, I was also financial supervisor, studio designer, teacher supervisor and art instructor. In the beginning, I was given an empty Ford van to build a mobile studio in and had two dance instructors and a literature teacher as assistants. I was in charge of the program for three years, during which we had a change in instructors and syllabi due to growing budget restraints. The focus of the programs was to service three culturally deprived neighborhoods in Wilmington, Delaware. My goal was to go into these neighborhoods and “make magic happen”.

As the budget and program director:

As program director I managed the budget for Art Van Go’s program and hired instructors. I also managed literature, dance, and art teacher’s syllabi, teaching process and weekly hours. As program director, I coordinated the Art Van Go’s program with communities we serviced. An integral part of this process entailed navigating the politics in the communities to make sure that our focus was in line with what the neighborhoods directors wanted.

As the mobile studio and program designer:

As the mobile studio developer, I designed and fabricated an entire mobile art studio within an empty 1989 Ford van. I built steel equipment racks for storage of supplies and silkscreen jigs, a documentation storage compartment for 35 MM and video camera, a fully portable, collapsible 320 sq. ft. dance floor and dance floor storage rack.

As program designer, I produced a series of charts and diagrams that supported the syllabi. The charts and diagrams outlined all equipment, materials, and detailed diagrams of the proper usage of the dance floor. The diagrams were permanently attached to the interior of the van to help future teachers run the program.

As teacher supervisor and teacher:

In the Art Van Go program, we taught painting, drawing, silkscreen, video, 3-D projects, public projects, and various crafts. I designed a syllabus that included a diversified curriculum in large public projects, dance programs and smaller individual craft projects. Part of the difficulty of designing a mobile syllabus was that every site had different limitations so the syllabi had to match that. I worked closely with the teachers to develop their syllabi, assist in their projects and evaluate the effectiveness of their process. I also had my own curriculum and projects.

Meeting one of the original NEA committee members, current program status, and program duplication throughout the United States:

In 1991, one of the original NEA committee members that nominated the Art Van Go’s program as the recipient for the Special Projects Grant came to evaluate the program. Upon looking at the Art Van Go, watching us work with the children and reviewing past projects, he was very excited and commended me on my dedication to this project. In response, I said, “No problem, I loved building this, and thanks for the opportunity.”

The program was established from 1990 to 1993. All of the original art, literature and dance syllabi that I designed are still central to the success of the Art Van Go program. Furthermore, this program was a very successful pilot and since has been duplicated by other organizations in other cities throughout the United States.