

GUILD HALL

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Press Inquiries: 631.324.0806 x29

Samantha Young, syoung@guildhall.org

Approved Images (click "i" for captions/credits):

<https://adobe.ly/3IGx4q6>

Interviews available on request

A Community Program Initiative

Guild Hall's Reimagined Student Art Festival Brings Art Into Local Schools Connecting 23 Artists with Over 4,000 Students



Students at East Hampton High School working on a project with Student Art Festival Artist-in-Residence Beau Bree Rhee. Photo: Patrick Dawson for Guild Hall

May 3, 2022—East Hampton, NY — Guild Hall (158 Main Street, East Hampton) is deepening their relationships with local schools, students, and artists through their Learning + Public Engagement department who have recently taken to the classrooms as part of a long-range project leading up to the 2024 Student Art Festival. To date, **23 artists** have been hired to work with teachers to create and conduct approximately **350 workshops** in **14 schools** with over **4,000 students** participating. The 2-year initiative is inspired by the theme “Eco vs. Ego” and has been devised as an inventive and forward-thinking new approach to the Student Art Festival. **Eco vs. Ego** will explore our symbiotic relationship with nature, and will be led by landscape designer and guest **Thought-Leader, Edwina von Gal. The Student Art Festival (SAF): Eco vs. Ego** will ask students, schoolteachers, and artists to delve into topics such as Needs/Survival: Shelter, Food, Water; Infrastructure & Growth; Anthropomorphism & Symbolism; and Biophilia, through the practice of art, design, horticulture, and performance.

Over the next 2 years, Guild Hall will provide opportunities for all involved to “think like an artist,” to see and respect a world of various colors and shapes, to experiment with harmony and dissonance, and to value process over product. By pairing East End artists and eco-activists with local schools, Guild Hall encourages the next generation of creative thinkers, and in reference to Guild Hall’s founding mission to be “a gathering place for community where an appreciation for the arts would serve to encourage greater civic participation,” connects the tenets of creative production to civic action.

“Welcome to an exploration of the origins, drivers, and outcomes of the human/nature experiment,” said Edwina von Gal. “How can we, by looking at ourselves through the lens of Eco V Ego, perhaps find some understanding of, and solutions to, the existential challenges we now face? After so many centuries of increasing our separation from, and “supremacy” over, nature, can we return to a place of harmony? Can we re-unite with the forces that formed us to forge a new kind of relationship that allows us to continue to live here in peace?”

“As a school district, we are in a fortunate position, that many other communities do not have, to take part in an exciting and innovative collaboration with an overarching theme of Eco vs. Ego with guest curator, Edwina von Gal,” said Heather Evans, Unified Arts Department Coordinator, and fine arts teacher in East Hampton School District. “The concept of pairing artists with teachers and schools along accentuates the creative vision of the Guild Hall Education team.”

East Hampton High School Senior and Guild Hall Teen Arts Council Member Kym Bermeo recently shared “Through Eco vs. Ego, we were fortunate enough to work with two amazing artists Beau Bree Rhee and Lionel Cruet. Both provided amazing insight into the art world and showed us a different side to the arts that we wouldn’t usually see in a classroom. Beau Bree Rhee introduced us to natural paints and the chemistry behind painting. We were cooking and experimenting with acids and bases from common fruits and vegetables which allowed us to create unexpected pieces. Lionel Cruet allowed the Teen Arts Council to ask questions about the art world through five topic lenses (concept, process, preparation, financial, funny anecdote) and then allowed us to create art pieces, of any media, about water and its relation to other topics. Both artists came back to the topic of Eco vs. Ego in such different ways but also in such a way that allowed us to be more aware of the world of art itself and our impact on the earth.”

Core to the Festival is the **Student Art Festival In-School Artist-in-Residence program** (SAFAIR). SAFAIR began in 2021 with 6 local artists helping over 150 students in 5 different schools to create work for the *2021 Student Art Festival: Past-Present-Future*. The program has grown in 2022 to 23 artists working with all 14 participating schools to research, experiment, and produce works throughout the 2022-2023 school years, **culminating in a festival of exhibitions and performances in January and February of 2024.**

Anthony Madonna, Guild Hall’s Patti Kenner Senior Associate for Learning + Public Engagement stated “When I started at Guild Hall as an Education Fellow, the first exhibition I saw was the annual Student Art Festival. I was immediately impressed with the talent of the student artists, the commitment and instruction of the teachers, and the way the community embraced the program. These variables allowed us to find ways to advance the SAF, and progress it towards a true collaboration between students, teachers, Guild Hall, and our locally-based artists.”

Student Art Festival: Eco vs. Ego in-school artists-in-residence include Pamella Allen (Interdisciplinary Artist & Educator), Keren Anavy (Visual Artist), Cliff Baldwin (Musical Artist), Darlene Charneco (Visual Artist), Viv Corringham (Vocalist & Sound Artist), Andrea Cote (Multi-disciplinary Artist), Lionel Cruet (Multi-media Installation Artist), Mare Dianora (Interdisciplinary Artist), Denise Silva-Dennis (Artist & Educator), Jeremy Dennis (Fine Art Photographer), Courtney Garneau (Surfrider Foundation), Brianna Hernandez (Interdisciplinary Artist & Educator), Matthew Jensen (Conceptual Landscape Artist & Photographer), Liz Joyce (Puppeteer), Laurie Lambrecht (Visual Artist), Brett Loving (Excavator Artist), Tucker Marder (Interdisciplinary Artist & Landscape Designer), Cheryl Molnar (Visual Artist), Mamoun Nukumanu (Artist & Bio Art Designer), Jody Oberfelder (Director, Choreographer & Filmmaker), Beau Bree Rhee (Visual Artist & Choreographer), Alexandra Talty (Journalist & Reporter), and Rosario Varela (Abstract Landscape Artist).

Student Art Festival Artist-in-Residence program sponsors:

Lead Sponsor: The Hearthland Foundation, and Milton and Sally Avery Arts Foundation

Co-Lead: Lynn and Bruce Surry, Neda Young

Additional Support: Nina Gillman

Learning & Public Engagement programming is supported by The Patti Kenner Arts Education Fellowship, The Hearthland Foundation, Stephen Meringoff, Susan and Stephen Scherr, and funding from the Lewis B. and Dorothy Cullman Endowment Fund, and The Melville Straus Family Endowment.

ABOUT GUILD HALL

Guild Hall, one of the first multidisciplinary centers in the country to combine a museum, theater, and education space under one roof, was established in 1931 as a gathering place for community where an appreciation for the arts would serve to encourage greater civic participation. For nine decades, Guild Hall has embraced this open-minded vision and provided a welcoming environment for the public to engage with art exhibitions, performances, and educational offerings. Art and artists have long been the engine of Guild Hall's activities and the institution continues to find innovative ways to support creativity in everyone.

ABOUT GUILD HALL'S LEARNING + PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

The Learning + Public Engagement (L+PE) department manages all of Guild Hall educational and community initiatives on site, and in schools, the Guild Hall Teen Arts Council (the first paid teen arts program in the region), and the Guild Hall William P. Rayner Artist-in-Residence Program. Through programming that uses their exhibitions, theater roster, and rich artistic history, Guild Hall's L+PE department strives to create experiences for all our communities to think like an artist: to see and respect a world of various colors and shapes, to experiment with harmony and dissonance, and to value process over product. This means that while a focus on technique, play, and history are foregrounded, problem solving, media literacy, communication, collaboration, design, and critical thinking are the underlying goals of all our educational initiatives.

For more information about this and other programs, visit www.guildhall.org.

@Guild_Hall #GuildHallOffsite