

PUPPETRY in PRACTICE



Fall 2015



PiP Center at Brooklyn College / 2900 Bedford Ave / James Hall, Rm 0712 / Brooklyn, NY 11210

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Council on
the Arts



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Cover: Pre-K students perform *Apartment for Rent* at the PiP Center at Brooklyn College. Magazine design by Jason Leinwand 2015

PIP's PARTNERING with TEXAS A&M

A Summer Institute and Future Plans for a Satellite Office

by Jennifer Wollock

I was happy to join four Texas A&M students at Brooklyn College this July for a week of puppets, theatre, and exploring New York. The four students, Allie Diaz (who was our lead PiP Undergraduate Research Program student this spring - a dedicated Shakespearean), Scarlett Ferguson (who came to us from the Visualization program of the A&M College of Architecture), and Clayton Hensley and Elizabeth Peltier (both from English 330, my King Arthur course at Texas A&M).

This group followed up on a previous one-day visit May 29 by a group of Texas A&M kinesiology graduate students and their professor. The group included a personal friend, Coach Melissa Rhodes, formerly of South Knoll Elementary in College Station, TX, where Michael Perreca (PiP's theater specialist) and Professor Wayne Reed (Childhood Education Program Head) visited this past April amidst their seminars about puppetry, theater and english language learning.

One action-packed week engaged the four pioneering Aggies in building puppets in the PiP walk-in center, watching puppet shows, and meeting the artists of the PiP staff, affiliated faculty members in the Brooklyn College School of Education, and their fellow Fightin' Texas Aggie, Dr. April Bedford, Dean of the School of Ed.

We are all looking forward to the exciting task of building our own satellite PiP office at Texas A&M in College Station. We anticipate a happy and productive collaboration between faculty, students, artists, children, parents, and puppets of Texas and New York.

- Jennifer Wollock is a Professor of English at Texas A&M University



PiP's Michael Perreca presents a workshop at Texas A&M on his work using puppetry, theater and play adaptation with ELL students.



MURAL PAINTING AT PS 224

Dozens of 4th grade students from PS 224 in Brooklyn, NY, embarked on an artistic adventure with PiP's Jason Leinwand and Alexandra Evans to adorn a wall in their schools courtyard with a 40-ft mural focused on respect and community. Students planned, primed and painted this one-of-a-kind work over a 5-week period in the spring of 2014. Mural painting exposing young students to the teamwork and dedication it takes to create large public artworks.

The mural proudly faces a public park for parents, teachers and the community to enjoy. PS 224 and PiP plan to extend the mural further, incorporating more students into the project. Future themes include a cityscape celebrating the Brooklyn Bridge and NYC Skyline.

Special thanks to Asst. Principal Ms. Vosges for supporting this incredible project.





IMMERSIVE THEATER FOR THE CLASSROOM

A discussion about using theater and performance to impact literacy and classroom learning



PiP's Michael Perreca, a longtime theater professional, sat down with Bobby Randazzo, a school-wide drama teacher at PS 159 in East New York, Brooklyn, to discuss the impact of integrating theater skills in classroom learning. Michael recently conducted a theater-based, 15-week residency at PS 159 for PiP, based on the 2,000-year-old Panchatantra folktales from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. He then engaged three ELL classes in a 10-week exploration and performance of African folktales, and eight classes in a residency based on Native American folktales

MICHAEL: Bobby, this has been an incredible experience, working with a variety of classes—some of which have a high percentage of English Language Learners—creating theater pieces and

incorporating puppetry. Theater has an immediate impact on the students' communication and creative expression skills, as well as classroom learning and writing.

BOBBY: It's nearly instantaneous. By nature, theater is kinesthetic. You and I do theater-based vocal and physical warm-ups, for example, that improve vocal production, breathing, diction, enunciation and pronunciation, as well as enhance letter-sound relationships. And they add the element of physicality to creative expression, connecting a physical life to descriptive words.

MICHAEL: Right, we've been adding physical interpretations to character differentiation, using physical expressions to define character traits and personalities.

We also use improvisation to delve into character traits, plotlines and dialogue writing—this really excites the students, and especially bypasses the self-editing phase of the ELL students. They don't think about how they speak when they are entrenched in the creative process. Some have been volunteering to read aloud or add dialogue during script development, where they never have before. The classroom teachers have been consistently surprised—which is great.

“All students can benefit in some way with the integration of the arts in the classroom, but we're witnessing an acceleration of learning among English Language Learners.”

BOBBY: We've found that integrating theater in the classroom addresses all sorts of skills—including reading fluency and reading comprehension. Rubrics are developed to evaluate student work, track academic growth and interpret data. We are finding theater arts address a myriad of Common Core requirements as well. For instance, students are able to provide a deeper understanding of the text by using discussion and question techniques, drawing conclusions, sequencing, engaging in a strong understanding of character analysis, and being exposed to a wide range of literature, including drama, poetry and plays. I've seen you use storyboarding to create narrative writing, for example. That's very cool. They draw scenes and create dialogue.

MICHAEL: The Social Studies connection is interesting too. One teacher wrote to me, “We are read and interpreted stories from Pakistan, India and Bangladesh, which was special to the 75% of my class that is from this region. Map skills [locating these countries and discussing the environment] were an easy tie-in as well. We studied cultures, and how one’s environment and culture affects behavior. The symbiosis of Puppetry in Practice and the curriculum is outstanding.” Teaching students about their classmates’ cultures of origin through the arts is very exciting to me. It’s so interesting because you, as a classroom teacher with a theater background, and I, as a theater professional working the education world, have come about the same conclusions from two different directions.

BOBBY: We are finding that you can successfully envelop Social Studies, Language Arts, oral interpretation, presentation skills, collaboration and self-confidence all in one, dedicated, comprehensive project.

MICHAEL: And it’s fun!

BOBBY: Yes. Most of all—it’s fun! These techniques can be incorporated into a classroom teacher’s skill set. They can help teachers hold students’ attention for a lesson throughout the course of a school day. For example, specifics techniques can enhance an average read-aloud to an engaging one just by adding an expressive voice. We’ve created scenes that jump off the page to engage in a physical, active discussion.

MICHAEL: We rewrite the endings of stories, create “offstage scenes” and develop modern-day interpretations of classic tales, historic events and plays. This isn’t just restricted to theater teachers and theater professionals. Theater arts don’t have to be extraneous or outside the school day. I used to call this “hit-and-run theater,” where you come into a school, do a performance and go—there was no reflection, connection to curriculum or follow-up. It’s changing fast.

BOBBY: Right. More and more, theater is being used to enhance all aspects of classroom learning. I think this is just the beginning of something very important for wide spectrum of student populations. All students can benefit in

some way with the integration of the arts in the classroom, but we’re witnessing an acceleration of learning among English Language Learners. We’re very excited about what’s ahead.



Bobby Randazzo and Michael Perreca also teach “Performing Arts Techniques for the Classroom Teacher” at Brooklyn College, a Theater course in the Childhood, Bilingual and Special Education department.

The most profound strength of the program is the students’ interest was sparked and they wanted to read and speak. The children loved expressing themselves.

-3rd Grade Teacher, PS 159



NEW PUPPET SHOWS FROM PIP



APARTMENT FOR RENT

Inspired by the classic tale *Flat for Rent* by Leah Goldberg, this exciting, interactive presentation, will have young audiences engaged in learning about what it means to be a good citizen and live in harmony with different-minded neighbors. A delightful assortment of animal characters discover the meaning of community. Great for younger audiences Pre-K and up!

ANANSI AND HIS CHILDREN



Based on a West African folk tale, *Anansi and His Children* is about a mischievous spider that gets into some big trouble while on an adventure. Luckily, Anansi's six children quickly come to the rescue. When they put their powers together, though, the children find that they can overcome any obstacle. Suitable for any age!

MY NEW YORK

AN ARTS-BASED EXPLORATION of **NEW YORK CITY** for EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING

Puppetry and new media technologies are in demand in schools today. The **MY NEW YORK** program uses these art forms to explore historic figures, neighborhoods, current issues and landmarks of NYC. General population, ELL and Special Ed students are engaged on multiple creative levels.

These residencies develop creative problem-solving, critical-thinking, communication and collaboration skills through hands-on learning.

Pre-K and Kindergarten residencies begin with a delightful age-appropriate puppet show with Luciano Cohen. This literacy-based program immerses students in live puppet theater focused on cooperation and being a good neighbor. Students will create puppets, improvise scenes and use dramatic play to interact with one another in positive and creative ways.

First graders work with author/illustrator Angelo DeCesare on the creation of a three-dimensional neighborhood and explore scenarios that affect our neighborhoods in their interactive cardboard playscape. Students learn pop-up mechanisms and practice

paper engineering techniques as they create the backdrop for an interactive puppet theater representing their very own neighborhood.

“I really believe that my class left the final week with a better understanding of NYC history!”

-2nd Grade Teacher, PS 28Q

Second graders work with PiP’s Jason Leinwand, who brings famous landmarks to life with stop motion animation.

During the **MY NEW YORK** residency, 2nd grade students will gain a deeper understanding of some of the city’s most colorful, historic figures and its diverse neighborhoods. Students become expert virtual tour guides of their surrounding boroughs via technology and animation.

Puppetry in Practice uses a multi-arts approach to language learning and literacy. These techniques—focused on language development, written and oral creative expression, and the creative arts—enhance classroom learning, speed literacy and actively engage students on many levels.



PRE-K AND K PUPPETRY



‘GOOD NEIGHBOR’ RESIDENCY

1ST GRADE PAPER ENGINEERING



CREATE A NEIGHBORHOOD WITH AN AUTHOR/ILLUSTRATOR

2ND GRADE STOP-MOTION ANIMATION



EXPLORE LANDMARKS OF NYC



NEW DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION INITIATIVES Are EXPANDING PiP's PROGRAMMING

LITERACY, LEARNING AND LAUGHTER with A WIDE RANGE of NYC PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS

In the 2014-2015 school year, PiP was honored to be the recipient of special funding through multiple school partnerships made available through two new initiatives developed by the New York City Department of Education, through the office of Schools Chancellor Carmen Fariña.

The Department of Education's Arts for English Language Learners and Students with Disabilities was a program that funded arts partnerships to serve a diverse group of student participants, including ELL and Special Education students. The DoE's Arts Continuum was a new arts partnership initiative designed to bridge arts learning between the elementary and middle schools.

"This ten-session program has been absolutely wonderful. This program is by far my favorite program I have ever seen come into our school."

-4th Grade Teacher, PS 255

Under the umbrella of the Arts for ELLs and Students with Disabilities, school recipients that worked with PiP included PS 217, PS 159 and IS 228 in Brooklyn, and Junior High School 185 in Queens. For the Arts Continuum programs, Puppetry in Practice worked with PS 193 and IS 240 Hudde Middle School, and PS 255 and Junior High School 234, all in Brooklyn.

Through these new initiatives Puppetry in Practice widened its reach to language learning student populations and incorporated a variety of art forms through dynamic, interactive programming.





THE MAGIC PAINTBRUSH with PS 255 and IS 234

The Magic Paintbrush, a classic Chinese folktale, was the focus of a dynamic arts partnership that spanned four grade levels between two schools. With PiP's Jason Leinwand, 4th and 5th graders from PS 255 created a stop-motion animation of the story, while 6th and 7th graders from IS 234 created spectacular larger-than-life sized puppets of the characters from the story. A culminating event with the students, parents, teachers and administrators from both schools began with an auditorium presentation of the animation, followed by a raucous parading of the puppets in the schoolyard.



GIANT PUPPETS of the 5 BOROUGHS of NYC

I.S. 228

Designed by PiP's Jason Leinwand, this project was created specifically for ELL and Special Ed students who benefit greatly from the ability to socialize and work together in a creative atmosphere. With projects like this, every student is on an equal level and can effectively participate regardless of their language comprehension or disabilities.



This is an amazing program for Newcomer ELLs. They are at NO disadvantage and [PiP] makes them comfortable, cooperative and artistic.

-ELL Teacher, IS 228

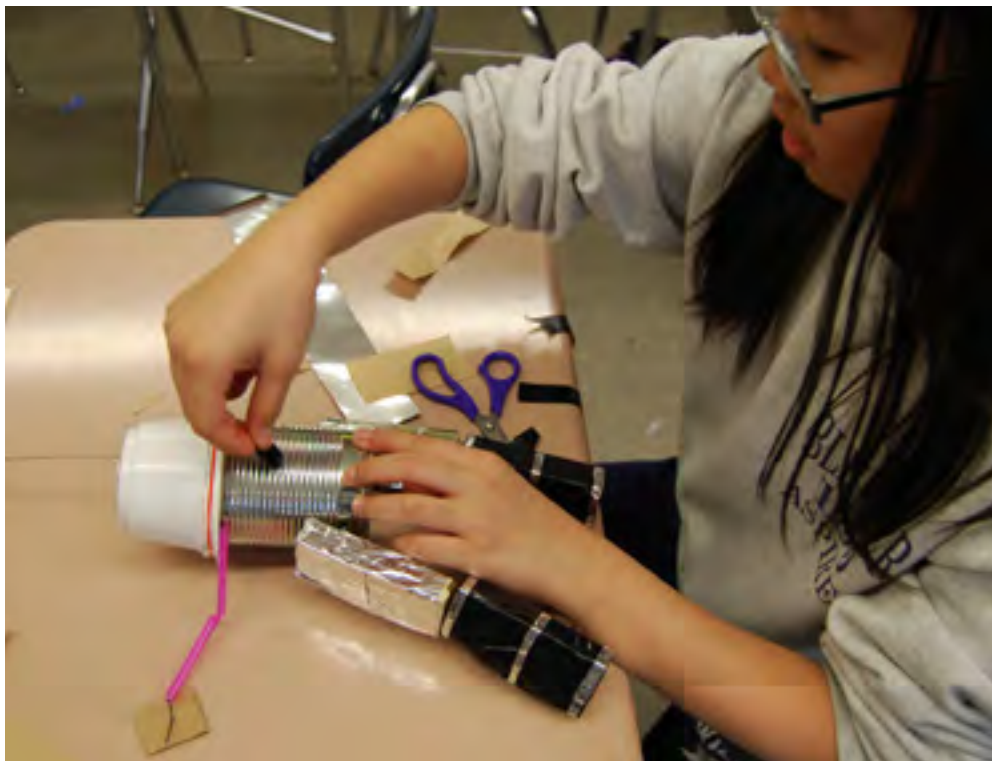




JHS 185

SAVING the EARTH, ONE ROBOT MARIONETTE at a TIME!

Middle school students worked with PiP's Andrew Murdock to construct robot marionettes made exclusively from recycled materials. Throughout the residency, students discussed environmental issues, such as the pollution of air, water and land, and developed creative ways for their robot marionettes to find solutions to the problems our environment faces today. This program aims to educate students in environmental science, “up-cycling” and puppet-making while reinforcing language development through continuous conversations and collaborations amongst peers and teachers amidst a lively, creative process.



Students of all ability levels were completely engaged in the process, developed art-making, literacy, and technology skills, and left with an amazing finished product. The curriculum... was well conceived and executed. There was a well developed theme and progression of activities.

-Parent Coordinator, JHS 185



POETRY in MOTION at PS 193 and IS 240

The poetry of Langston Hughes, Francisco Alarcon and others came to life as a total of eight NYC-themed poems were transformed into dynamic stop motion animations by a wide range of student populations with PiP's Jason Leinwand in PS 193 and Hudde Junior High School, IS 240. This project served students from grades 3 through 6 and addressed literacy, collaborative art making, technology, and NYC history.





BROOKLYN COLLEGE CAREER VISITS

Many of our new projects included funding for students and their teachers to visit the Puppetry in Practice Resource Center at Brooklyn College. Visits to the college introduce students to opportunities in both college life and career options for their future. Students participated in a variety of workshops with all of our teaching artists and experienced first hand how our artists create with a multitude of mediums, styles and cultural references.





EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS





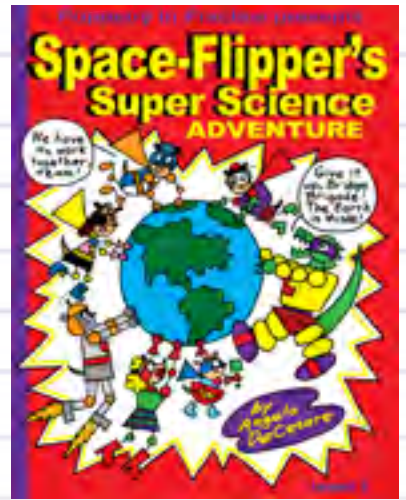
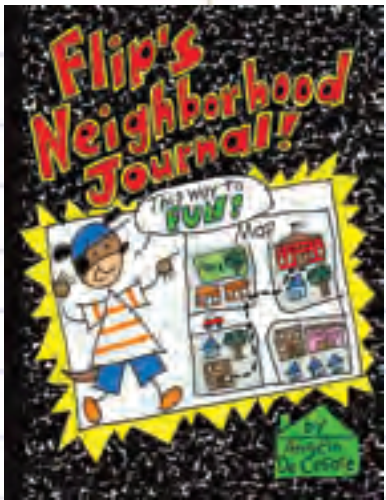
Stories like *Apartment for Rent* and *Too Much Noise* are the foundations of PiP's dynamic programming for early childhood. Blending puppetry and artmaking with interactive storytelling and dramatic play, students are immersed in a hands-on, collaborative approach to learning and literacy.

Throughout NYC public schools and at the PiP Center, Luciano Cohen (Mr. Lu) has been entertaining early childhood students with performances and workshops related to *Apartment for Rent*. Additionally, he collaborates with the Early Childhood Center at Brooklyn College to create engaging, semester long projects for 2-4 year olds.

Furthering our work in early childhood, Jason Leinwand presented his work with Pre-K students at the CUNY Early Childhood conference this past spring. He has also been working alongside Herman Jiesamfoek, Associate Professor of Early Childhood Education/Art Education in the School of Ed at Brooklyn College on introducing animation techniques into early childhood arts education. Jason instructed teacher candidates and supervised their fieldwork at PS 152 Annex in Brooklyn.



Flip's FANTASTIC JOURNALS



SOCIAL STUDIES AND SCIENCE RIGHT IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

PIP and Flip have teamed up once again to create an exciting new format for teaching students all about environmental protection as it relates specifically to their neighborhood.

The Pop-up Journal is the centerpiece of a brand new science/social studies program in which schools provide the opportunity for their students to create stop motion animations, pop-up books of their own or 3-D models of their neighborhoods that can be used for puppet shows.

Using the popular characters from author/illustrator Angelo DeCesare's *Flip's Fantastic*

Journal series, this program puts the focus on the wonderful variety of people, cultures and experiences that the neighborhoods of NYC offer. It teaches students that respect and care for their neighborhood starts with understanding how to keep it clean and free from pollution.

Through his fun and imaginative approach to curriculum and storytelling, Mr. Angelo expands the environmental science lessons to include larger issues concerning pollution and the problems that our Earth will face.

Mr. Angelo has created *Space Flippers Super Science Adventure* comic book to accompany

the science aspects of these residencies while the classic *Flip's Neighborhood Journal* contains wonderful social studies themes perfect for students grades 1-3.

Students will marvel at the colorful illustrations in his books and delight in the 3-D elements of the giant Pop-up Journal that add fun and humor to the storytelling. By the end of the residency, students will feel a great responsibility to preserve and cherish the Earth's fragile ecosystem as they problem solve in groups to generate incredible artwork, animations and performances.



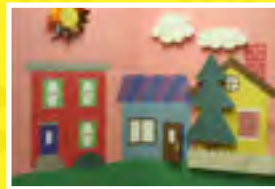
ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE HAS NEVER BEEN SUCH FUN!



POP-UP BOOKS, ANIMATIONS OR 3D MODEL NEIGHBORHOODS



SAMPLE POP-UP SCENES INCLUDE:



A NEIGHBORHOOD

Where Flip first learns about recycling.



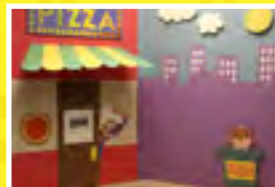
FLIP'S CLASSROOM

Here, Flip's teacher tells him all about Earth Day via the Smartboard.



A LANDFILL

The focus here is pollution caused by plastic bottles.



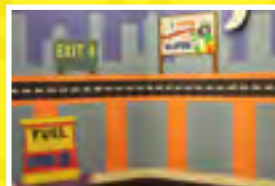
A SUBURBAN STREET

Where we learn about solar energy.



A FOREST

The topic is deforestation and animal rights.



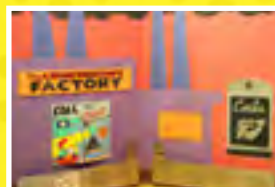
AN URBAN HIGHWAY

Air pollution is the main focus here.



A BEACH

This scene highlights the importance of keeping the Earth's bodies of water pollution-free.



A FACTORY

We learn about the dangers of mining and using coal.



OUTER SPACE

The final scene features all the characters celebrating the Earth, our home.

PIP'S PROGRAMMING



Stop-Motion Animation



Flip's Fantastic Journal Series



Lunar New Year Dragon Walk



Chinese Folk Arts



Early Childhood



Puppets Galore!



Puppet Shows



Immersive Theater



Mural Painting



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