

New Urban Arts is a nationally recognized interdisciplinary arts studio for high school students and emerging artists in Providence, Rhode Island. Our mission is to build a vital community that empowers young people to develop a creative practice they can sustain throughout their lives. Visit newurbanarts.org for more information.

News in 2006:

SARAH MEYER, from Chicago, Illinois, joins New Urban Arts as its third Program Director. She is currently completing an MA Degree in Arts Management, concentrating on Community Arts and Youth Development.

The Arts and Business Council of Rhode Island honors New Urban Arts with a **JABEZ GORHAM AWARD** for organizational excellence.

Mayor David Cicilline presents New Urban Arts with a **CITIZEN CITATION** for "the invaluable support and guidance provided to students and emerging artists, a record of devotion to our local arts scene."

Two galleries, **OOP!** and **TINY SHOWCASE**, have elected New Urban Arts as a recipient of proceeds from artwork sales. Visit oopstuff.com and tinyshowcase.com.

NEW SUMMER PROGRAMS including Creative Cartography, a Poetry in the Park event, and zine workshops and swaps.

right: Self-portrait collage by Pedro Gonzalez, 16, student.



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NEW URBAN ARTS
743 Westminster Street
Providence, RI 02903
USA

NEW in 2006

Dedicated to lifelong creativity.

URBAN

Becoming the change we want to see in the world.

ARTS

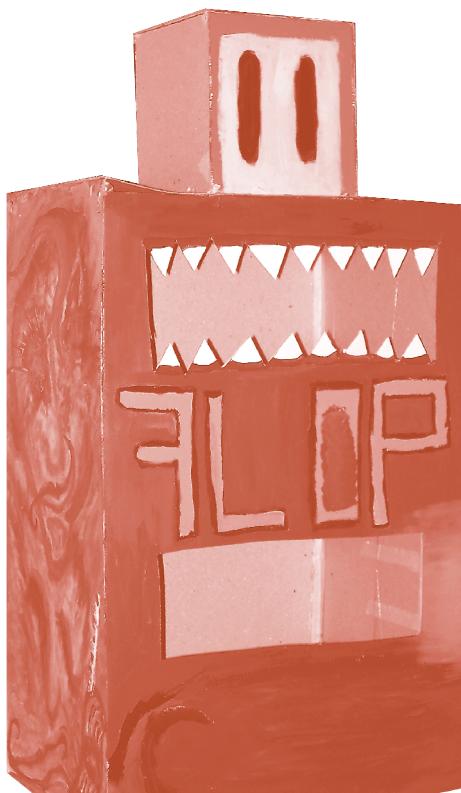
For more information
visit us online at:
newurbanarts.org

A STUDIO DYNAMIC

We are best known for our after school

“We’re all high school students trying to be accepted by the world and this is one place where you can be.”

—Mary Adewusi, 17, student



The studio is the “place where you connect with people and create magic,” according to one student from this past year. In this studio, over one hundred high school students from the Providence Public High Schools participate in free after-school and summer arts mentoring programs. Each year, they are partnered with fifteen inspiring artists who provide mentoring in the visual, performing, and literary arts. On average, the artist mentor to student ratio is 1:6, creating meaningful opportunities for students and artist mentors to connect and support one another.

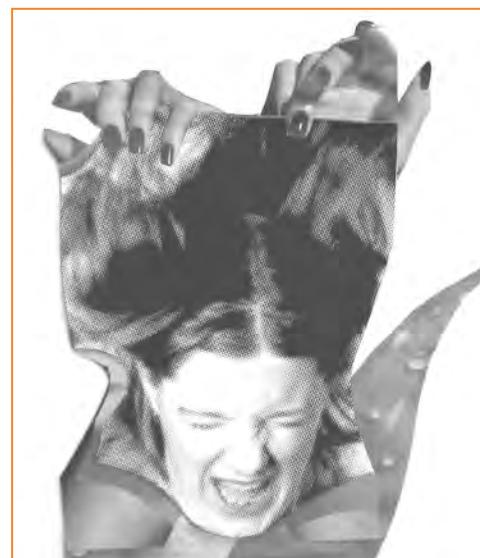
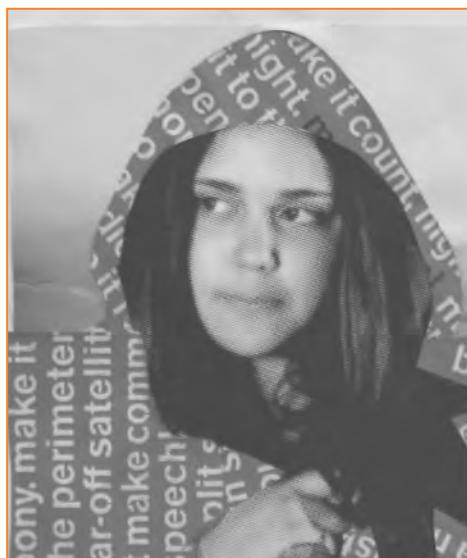
Our goal is for students and artists to build a foundation for a lifetime of exploring creative thought and expression, what we have termed “a sustainable creative practice.” In our studio students and artists explore: drawing, painting, collage, sculpture, public murals, printmaking and silkscreening, black and white photography, digital photography, fashion design and textiles, digital media, graphic design, zines and comics, creative writing, music and poetry, papermaking and bookmaking, creative movement and dance. Students have regular opportunities to exhibit, perform and publish their works, and to teach what they have learned.

The Importance of the Student-Artist Mentor Relationship

In New Urban Arts' arts mentoring model, educators do not abide by formulaic teaching methods. The role of the artist mentor is based on the beliefs that self-directed learning and relationships with mentors are essential to forming a sustainable creative practice. By working with students, artists also are challenged to question the role of public service in their artistic practice.

According to **Rebecca Volynsky**, student, age 16, the social atmosphere of the studio is different from that of the regular high school experience because, "Everyone is friendly, and no one ever judges anyone else... The friendship that artist mentors make with their students is different than the relationships teachers have with their students. The bond that they make with their students makes New Urban Arts an incredibly special place."

Because this model is one of peer learning, students and mentors are encouraged to explore. "I loved screen printing with Jean! She encouraged me to do anything that I wanted to do!" said **Sheyna Vargas**, student, age 16. Artist mentors learn just as much as the students do. According to artist mentor **John Jacobson**, "I feel my sessions were most successful when I didn't teach workshops but acted as a guide and helped students realize an idea."



Collaborative portraits from Charlotte O'Donnell's mentoring group:
Tamara Gonzalez, Natalie Reyes, Tiffany Pires, Rebecca Padilla,
Elizabeth Keith, Rosa Carter, Pedro Gonzalez, Maria Gonzalez

studio arts programming.



to others. Students voluntarily participate in our dynamic arts studio at least 1 day a week throughout the school year, often for several years. Artist mentors volunteer two days a week for the duration of the school year. Artist mentors and students work together to develop in-depth arts learning opportunities, and take the risks they need to further develop an active imagination and a passion for learning.

facing page, top: Adrienne Adeyemi, 17, student, and Seth Gruenwald, volunteer, perform one of Adrienne's original songs at our annual Art Party. facing page, left: "Muncho," the student-crafted art and writing submissions box for the studio zine, Flip, generated interest in contributing to the publication. this page, above: Artist mentor, Kedrin Frias, demonstrates how to make marbled paper. This was one of many workshops and collaborations held at the first-ever all-night Studio Lock-In.

A Lasting Impact

New Urban Arts is a place where people come together to make art. That is what you see. What you do not see are the relationships they build with one another and with the studio as a space. It is a place that attracts amazing people that want to learn from one another and grow together.

I have learned from these people that art can be used as a tool to connect and relate to others. I can give Curtis a call when I need to write poetry or words or letters or lines. He showed me how fun it can be to explore thoughts freely through writing. No matter how much I would whine, Kedrin and Jesse taught me the importance of patience while drawing and working in a darkroom. If I need a laugh I can go to the studio to talk to Tyler or Jesse or Kedrin for a few minutes. Tyler reminds me not to take everything too seriously all the time. If I need comfort, I can go to Tamara, Heather, or Sarah. Everything will be okay.

"These are only a handful of people at New Urban Arts who challenge and affect the way I live my life."

One of my first workshops at New Urban Arts involved binding and making books. I eventually had the opportunity to work with other high school students to teach adults taking ESL classes to make books through a series of workshops. We worked together to create books that allowed them to weave their cultural experiences from their native countries with their experiences here.

As a student trying to teach with a slight language barrier, it proved to be challenging but also very rewarding. To have that experience at age fourteen is amazing to me.

When you walk into New Urban Arts, you will most likely see chaos. Students, art supplies and loudness everywhere. It is beautiful. Everyone is feeding off each other's energy. You grow, they grow, and the place grows together.

by Ashley Paniagua

Freshman, Eugene Lang College: The New School for Liberal Arts
New Urban Arts Student, 2001-2005

Studio Participants 2005–06

staff

Tyler Denmead
Executive Director
Sarah Meyer
Program Director
Tamara Kaplan
Recruitment & Engagement Coordinator
Priscilla Carrion
Administrative Assistant

artist mentors

Jesse Banks III
Sara Berg
Erica Carpenter
Jeanie Chu
Jean Cozzens
Kedrin Frias
Eva Gieberman
Erik Gould
JJ Jacobson
Anne McMahon
Charlotte O'Donnell
Adenike Omisore
Jennifer Rice
Arthi Sundaresh
Lynn Yarne

students

Mary Adewusi
Adrienne Adeyemi
Funmi Adeyo
Abdul Adio
Aneudy Alba
Tola Badejo
Alex Baker
Jessica Baker
Francis Bautista
Elizabeth Biaggi
Sophie Blum
Jillian Burdick
Sergio Cabrera
Titilayo Adedeji Campbell
Hannah Candelaria
Rosa Cantor
Enrique Cantor
Maria Yajaira Carriacho
Casandra Castillo
Karen Joy Castillo
Randell Dauda
Kia Davis
Damel De La Cruz
Joshua Deans
Leah Edelman-Brier
Perla Fermin
Nichelle Ferrell
Melvin Figuera
Janessa Frias
Dennes Garcia
Miguel Garcia
Jorge Garcia

volunteers

Alexander Gonzalez
Pedro Gonzalez
Elder Gonzalez
Maria Gonzalez
Tamara Gonzalez
Goldie Hang
Corry Harris
Abel Hernandes
Junior Iarias
Jazmin Interiano
Arthurlyne James
Jeremiah Joseph
Elizabeth Keith
Rhiannon Ketchem
Marlana Lewis
Hannah Lutz Winkler
Jasmine Marrow
Bret Martin
Ryan Marslend
Gina Maycock
April Medina
Alison Migliori
Diana Morales
Sofia Morales
Michael Moretti
Fidan Mustafaya
Phoebe Neel
John Nguon
Tammy Ogoffa
Tayo Omodunbi
Madelin Ortiz
Colin Padbury
Rebecca Volynsky
Ari Winkleman
Lena Pan
Jacqueline Paniagua
Franceska Payen
Annason Phothisarath
Tiffany Pires
Hayden Prouty
Rain Reyes
Natalie Reyes
Luz Rivera
Julien Robinson
Alesha Rodriguez
Nicholas Russas
Dania Sanchez
Jenna Sanchez
Shaonessy Santana
Daneele Savoury
Kian Shenfield
Leah Michelle Smith
Sidney Son
Ghense Sor
Victoria Stilwell
Erin Thompson
Daniel Valmas
Nell VanNoppen
Sheyna Vargas
Vellmarie Vazquez
Rosalia Velis
Kiviana Ventura
Rebecca Volynsky
Ari Winkleman

Find out how to...

get involved with New Urban Arts. Like our studio environment, everyone brings something unique to the community, and together all of these talents and efforts make us stronger.

...enroll as a student

at any time. The best time is in September when the school year begins because we host social events for students and mentors to mingle and orient themselves.

...mentor for an entire school year or the duration of a special project. Just be sure to complete and submit your application.

...volunteer, especially if you are skilled at data entry, carpentry or tech support.

Visit us at

743 Westminster Street
in the West End of Providence, Rhode Island.
The best time to catch the studio vibe
is weekdays from 3-5 PM when students are there.

You can also visit our website at:

newurbanarts.org

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Making Creativity a Greater Part



“Wonderfully thoughtful and inventive work. I am impressed by the magnitude of art in this room, although each piece clearly maintains its own distinctive style and expressive identity.”

above: Art Party, the annual student art exhibition in the spring, drew a record number of visitors: over 260 people attended!



above: photograph by Erik Gould

Documenting Providence with Artist, Erik Gould

For several years, **Erik Gould** has been photographing Rhode Island through his initiative, the **Rhode Island Photographic Survey**. With support from the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts and the Rhode Island Foundation's New Works program, Gould focuses his exploration on the twenty-five neighborhoods of Providence.

Gould has been an artist-in-residence at New Urban Arts for the past two years. He developed his body of work, which involved collaboration with other studio artists and students. Three students from New Urban Arts, **Pedro Gonzalez**, 16, **Tiffany Pires**, 17, and **Adrienne Adeyemi**, 17, participated in a 6-week paid apprenticeship with Erik Gould, assisting him with set-up at each location, documenting the process, and assisting with printing Gould's images. The apprenticeships provide high school students who are considering photography as a career with the opportunity to work with a mentor who has an established reputation and an impressive body of work.

Documenting urban decay and renewal in 422 photographs accompanied by a digital sound capture piece and interviews produced by Adeyemi, Gould's panoramic views of city blocks and street corners present Providence as an urban landscape in flux.

Junior high school students from the **Boys and Girls Club** attended the exhibition. Students enjoyed seeing their neighborhoods in Gould's artwork. After talking about the process behind the photographs on view in the gallery, Adrienne led an arts based workshop in which the visiting students participated in making art about Providence, as they drew their own artistic representations of the neighborhoods they live in.

If you are interested in arts workshops run by New Urban Arts students, please contact us. Visit www.erikgould.net for more information about the Rhode Island Photographic Survey.

of Public Life

The challenges affecting young people in Providence are immense, and no organization can address them alone. Sadly, the arts are also becoming less of a part of public school education each year. This makes it difficult for young people in Providence to develop a passion for the arts.

New Urban Arts cannot tackle these challenges alone, and we are invested in **partnerships to strengthen arts opportunities for young people** and to build a greater audience that appreciates how integral a creative practice is to their positive development. This past year, our engaging exhibitions and performances attracted over 1,000 people. These events allow people in Providence to come together in ways that are too rare —across barriers, in celebration of teenagers, and through the inspired thoughts, dreams, and new works of young people.

Some highlights this past year include musical performances featuring songs about true love, "random acts of poetry" which featured the reading of the well-received "Black Magnificent Woman," a poem by **Titilayo Campbell**, DJ performances by **JJ Jacobson**, the senior send-off at the **Art Party** when artist mentors spoke individually about each senior and presented them with a care package for college, public collaborative writing projects, collaborative paintings, and much, much more!

Events to look forward to in 2006 and 2007 include:

- **September: "Creative Cartography," an exhibit of students interpretive maps**
- **November: Artist Mentor Exhibition**
- **December: Poetry Publication Release Party**
- **January: Student Mid-Year Exhibition**
- **March: Annual Mail Art Exhibition**
- **May: Our Tenth Anniversary Celebration**

Check www.newurbanarts.org for dates and times, as well as additions to the calendar.

New Urban Arts also takes shows and events on the road. This past year, we exhibited at the **Rhode Island State House, Providence Place**, and **Classical High School**. If you are interested in hosting an exhibition or performance at your business or venue, feel free to contact us.

New Urban Arts also participates in **a learning network of six youth arts programs in the city** to expand access to meaningful and creative learning opportunities. These wonderful local programs include **Community MusicWorks, AS220 Broad Street Studio, Everett Dance Theatre, Providence Black Repertory Company**, and **Providence CityArts**. We share resources, ideas, and work together to plan for the future so that more young people will have greater access to youth arts programs.

College Visions, which provides life-changing college advising to students and families in Providence, also partners with New Urban Arts so that our seniors are supported and directed through the strenuous college application process. This is particularly important given our students are often the first members of their families to attend college.

New Urban Arts provides **presentation and performance opportunities for artists and poets** from throughout the country to share their creative practice with young people. Students open their public performances and exhibits with original songs and poems, and affiliated artists use this studio to develop independent bodies of work.

Providence is becoming a national pioneer in providing innovative arts learning opportunities for young people after school. Become a part of these efforts at New Urban Arts by supporting young people at their exhibitions and performances, connecting with them as artist mentors, sharing your work and creative practice, and providing donations of time, money, and arts materials. Being involved with New Urban Arts is an inspiring and heartwarming way to strengthen Providence and critically important arts opportunities for young people.

"The whole performance was mind-boggling. I had this instant urge to write."

—student in attendance at a performance event



above: Sandra Sanchez, parent of student, Dania Sanchez, admires fashion designs exhibited at the annual Art Party gallery exhibition.

Creating a "Safe Space" with Youth Pride Inc.

"The sign-up sheet was jam packed in the first ever open mic put on by **New Urban Arts** and **Youth Pride Inc.** on February 24th. The partnership brought together young people from both organizations in an evening of performance, music and a supportive atmosphere. In addition, the partnership informed participants from each organization of the others' services and programs. In total, 78 people came to the event.

Youth from Youth Pride and New Urban Arts planned the evening, beginning with short writing workshops, food, and a "no hate" open mic. The young people also discussed how to create and uphold a "safe space" that was respectful of all people regardless of race, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation, class, gender identification, or age.

"There was a wonderful turnout," **Sarah Meyer**, New Urban Arts Program Director commented, "There were more people there than I'd ever seen at an open mic. The people who read seemed to be performing to genuinely express themselves. And, it felt like a safe space because so many young people were comfortable enough to take a risk and just read something!"

DJ Simon provided the music and **Sasha Warner-Berry**, a Providence poet, opened the mic with her featured performance. Warner-Berry performed a number of recent poems, and is anticipating releasing a chapbook of her work."



above: Student, Aneudy Alba, 17, hosts the first-ever New Urban Arts / Youth Pride Open Mic event.

Excerpted from "In the Spotlight" by Arthi Sundares, originally printed in Options Magazine in April 2006. Arthi served as an artist mentor at New Urban Arts from 2004–2006, and now works for Youth Pride Inc.

New Urban Arts and Youth Pride see this as just the beginning of joint efforts to provide more opportunities for youth in Rhode Island. Check out Youth Pride online at: youthpride-ri.org to learn about their precedent-setting recommendations for addressing ongoing homophobia and transphobia experienced by young people in Rhode Island.

IDEA EXCHANGE



this page, top: Ari Winkleman, student, 17, prepares a screen for printing.

this page, bottom: Janessa Frias, student, 15, participates in a poetry workshop led by Erica Carpenter.

“I never considered myself a writer. My artist mentor has convinced me that I am, and if I wanted to, I could pursue that as a career.”

—Rebecca Padilla, 16, student



Investing in Ourselves and in Others.

New Urban Arts advances the fields of after-school and youth arts programs by collecting and sharing information about its programs, methods, opportunities, approaches and impact.

Our [2006 Program Evaluation Report](#), recently available on-line, shares extensive information about the structure of our programs, how impact is measured, what we learned this year, and our recommendations for strengthening programs next year. The document is free and available at www.newurbanarts.org.

A paper written by staff at New Urban Arts, [“Making Creativity Possible for All: An Introduction to a Sustainable Creative Practice”](#) is also available on-line. This paper describes the theories for our educational model, and a framework for how these theories are put into practice. This framework can be adapted and refined by artists, educators, and young people who are interested in starting innovative community arts programs.

Tyler Denmead, Executive Director, has participated in a series of conversations with [Greg Kelley](#), from [The Bridge: PROGRESSIVE ARTS INITIATIVE](#).

These discussions have explored how to start a new community arts organization, as Greg is playing a leadership role in launching this organization in Charlottesville, Virginia. These conversations have been transcribed and presented online for other entrepreneurs to use to facilitate further conversation.

Building an online community with [White Whale Web Services](#) using Web 2.0 technology has been one of our major achievements this year. New Urban Arts updated its website and added social network tools to better document and share what is happening in the studio. Our studio blog (hosted by Blogger) allows for more in-depth writing and discussion about recent news and conversation about the value of community arts programs. Flickr allows us to document and share event and studio photos and YouTube presents video from recent events and performances. This upcoming year we look forward to launching a searchable database of arts workshops developed by artist mentors in the studio.

Youth-led Poetry Workshop Guide Now Available

One of our unique approaches is to make teaching a part of students' creative practice. Teaching is used as a tool for young people to reflect, to understand, and to re-communicate their creative practice. This year, we created a [Poetry Workshop Planning Guide for Youth Mentors](#) as a resource for high school students to lead poetry workshops for middle school students. The rationale for creating this was to provide youth mentors with structure and support, as they develop their own teaching styles. The Poetry Workshop Planning Guide exists within a “choose your own adventure” framework, in which youth mentors can choose and adapt freewriting prompts or writing activities to their liking. This gives young teachers the support and confidence they need to be successful.

An interview with Mary Adewusi, 16, on her experience leading a project using this poetry guide.

Can you tell me what you are doing as a part of this program? We go to the YMCA and we do exercises with middle school kids to help them grow in their writing process and as poets. **What is your role?** I am there to listen and give positive feedback on their writing. You cannot become a great poet if everybody is telling you bad things all the time. Where are you going to get the confidence? **Can you give an example of an exercise you have led?** We recently did “I remember.” The students write a line that begins with “I remember” for each year of their age. So, if they are 12, they write a 12-line poem. One student began with “I remember being scared watching Superman.” Another started with “I remember spending time with my grandmother.” They come up with great ideas and stories. It’s so great to hear what they have to say. There is so much meaning. If you don’t ask, you wouldn’t know though.

You have been a mentee in our programs for a couple of years, and now you are a mentor. What perspective have you gained from mentoring? I have gained even more respect for the mentors here. I do not ever want to say the wrong thing to the students. They are in middle school and if you say the wrong thing, they could be scarred for life. When someone says something negative, that’s what sticks. Mentors here have never said the wrong thing to me. Never. They are always positive and it always feels like the right response. That’s amazing. Mentors here are making a choice too when they do it. That’s what I never realized. They are choosing to do and say positive things.

Final thoughts about your experience? Meeting these kids over there has influenced me. They are very thoughtful. There is so much meaning in what they have to say. I don’t think too many people pay attention to what younger children say or do. They don’t recognize that when they say and do things, they do it for a reason. I think it’s important to sit and listen. There is something to be heard.

The guide is now available for free online.

It has been downloaded dozens of times by poets and educators throughout the world. For information and to download your own copy of the guide, visit:

newurbanarts.org/blogs_poetryguide.html

This guide has been developed by New Urban Arts Program Director, Sarah Meyer, in cooperation with students: Rosa Cantor, Mary Adewusi, Pedro Gonzalez, Elizabeth Keith, and Executive Director, Tyler Denmead.



I am

I am from Laban St.
I am from the room that I don't like,
dragon pictures on the door,
and the orphaned kitten
me and my mother tried so hard to rescue from starvation.
I am from Laurel Hill.
I am from playing make-shift baseball in a crumbling driveway
with the kids from second floor
and using a leaf, a crack and a rock as bases.
I am Wallace St.
I am from the untamed rhododendron bush
that was such a good place to imagine
and the basement floor I used to draw chalk pictures on.
I am from Webster Ave.
I am from Katrina's pit-bull puppies, the funny fruit trees,
the biggest maple tree on the block and going to Marissa's house.
I am from a moving van.
I am from "AAAH! Mom, there's a giant bug in the bathroom!!!"
and seeing my first Rhode Island mosquito at the rest stop.
I am from the road.
I am from losing a frightened cat and then finding her again.
I am from Georgetown.
I am from the backyard where I learned to cartwheel
and the one where I caught a bull frog.
I am from the middle of nowhere and the trailer that came with it.
I am from the road.
I am from a moving-out room
and "I'm not gonna move and you can't make me!"
I am from Wayland, Massachusetts.
I am from grinding away on the sidewalk in my first set of blades,
the Winnie-the-Pooh story book I found under the Christmas tree,
and the garage band my dad had.
I am from...
I am from...
Where am I from again?

—Poem by Elizabeth Keith, 15, student

**"When other people
look at my artwork,
I want them to see
the world from a whole
different perspective.
I want them to think
about diversity."**

—Randell Dauda, 17, Student

this page, top: Casandra Castillo, student, 17, applies the first layer of paint strokes to a collaborative mural.
this page, center: Sara Berg, artist mentor, demonstrates sculpture using found objects to students, Miguel Garcia, 16, Rhiannon Ketcham, 16, and Sheyna Vargas, 16.
this page, lower: Jeannie Chu, artist mentor, discusses color choices with Damel De La Cruz, student, 17.

2006 Impact Report:

101 students actively participated in our after-school and summer programs this year. 24 students returned for their second or third year.

100% agreed or strongly agreed that New Urban Arts is a safe and supportive environment. More than two-thirds of students rated New Urban Arts' programs "outstanding."

1-2 days a week for 5-7 months was our average student participation.

9 seniors participated in College Visions, a year-long college preparatory program, and enrolled in college. Two received full scholarships.

92% of student participants strongly agreed that they have developed more confidence and improved as artists as a result of our program.

\$70,000+ in individual contributions were raised in this year's Annual Campaign—that's an increase of 40% from last year.

Over 300,000 people visited www.newurbanarts.org last year.



Jesse Banks III, artist mentor, board member and photographer, documents the gallery before the Art Party celebration.

THANK YOU

Become a donor of tax-deductible art materials and equipment or monetary gifts. Sponsorship opportunities are available for exhibitions, performances and our annual fashion show. [Ask how!](#)

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Visit us at 743 Westminster Street in the West End of Providence, Rhode Island. The best times to catch the studio vibe are weekdays from 3-5 PM when students are there. Visit our website at: newurbanarts.org

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Ken Mingis

Elise Mischel

Maribel Morel*

Owen Muir*

Mary-Jane & Bob Newbert

Corey & Allison Nyara

Kathleen O'Donnell

Adeola Oredola

David and Renee Petrillo

Scott Reber

Sebastian Ruth & Minna Choi

Jonathan Saltzman & Nancy Safian

Laura Seeley

Richard Seges

Henrietta Sklar & Elaine Gold

Shannon & Mike Spaeder

Karl and Doris Stephens

Caitlin Strokosch

Quyen Truong*

Valerie Tutson

Kurt Van Dexter

Betsy & Roy Zimmerman