

# UPROAR

An Artistic Noise Retrospective  
Exhibition 2001-2011

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD	2
LOOKING OUT	4
LOOKING IN	20
LOOKING AHEAD	40
BIOS	56
PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS	57



## **ARTISTIC NOISE AND JUVENILE JUSTICE OVER TEN YEARS:**

### Reasons for Optimism

As the President of the Board, and one of the founders of Artistic Noise, I am extremely proud to be marking the 10th anniversary of Artistic Noise through this retrospective exhibition. There are reasons to be optimistic about the direction of juvenile justice policy over the last ten years and in many ways that same optimism is reflected in the growth and impressive body of work of Artistic Noise over the same time.

In 2005 and 2010, the Supreme Court, in two cases considering the death penalty and sentences of life without parole, found that youth are different than adults developmentally in fundamental ways that support a need for youth focused treatment and systems. Although they dealt with narrow situations, these two cases have helped frame juvenile justice in terms of youth development, a view that is central to our work in Artistic Noise.

Consistent with this trend in the law, positive youth development (PYD) is beginning to take hold as a framework for juvenile justice policy and programming. PYD asserts that all youth can develop and flourish with the right mix of positive opportunities and supports, focusing on youth's strengths rather than deficits and emphasizing the power of positive relationships to youth development. These are precisely the core beliefs on which Artistic Noise has built its programming and which have allowed so many young people to thrive in that programming over the last ten years.

This positive youth development focus can be seen on the ground around the country and particularly in Artistic Noise's homes in Massachusetts and New York. Both jurisdictions are reducing the use of incarceration for youth and moving youth closer to their families and into their communities. Both are encouraging programming to support youth in their homes and communities based on PYD and both have valued and supported Artistic Noise over this decade.

The last ten years have also been a time of raised national consciousness about disparities in the juvenile justice system, where youth of color are disproportionately represented and girls are swept into the system for misbehavior that would not result in confinement for their male peers. Similarly, over the past ten years identity has been a consistent theme among Artistic Noise's youth artists. Since its beginning as an art and entrepreneurship program for girls in Boston, girls have portrayed their will to address and overcome personal and societal obstacles. Youth of color in Artistic Noise consistently use art to explore their cultural identities and through that exploration to develop a stronger self-identity.

As a lawyer for system involved youth I have always believed that the voices of youth are powerful, insightful and essential to any successful vision of juvenile justice. This is the foundation of Artistic Noise and the last ten years have seen the growth of organizations, individuals and systems sharing this core belief. One has only to look at the body of work from Artistic Noise artists to see how compelling their voices can be.

Francine Sherman,  
Clinical Professor, Boston College Law School  
President, Artistic Noise

## THIS IS MY STORY

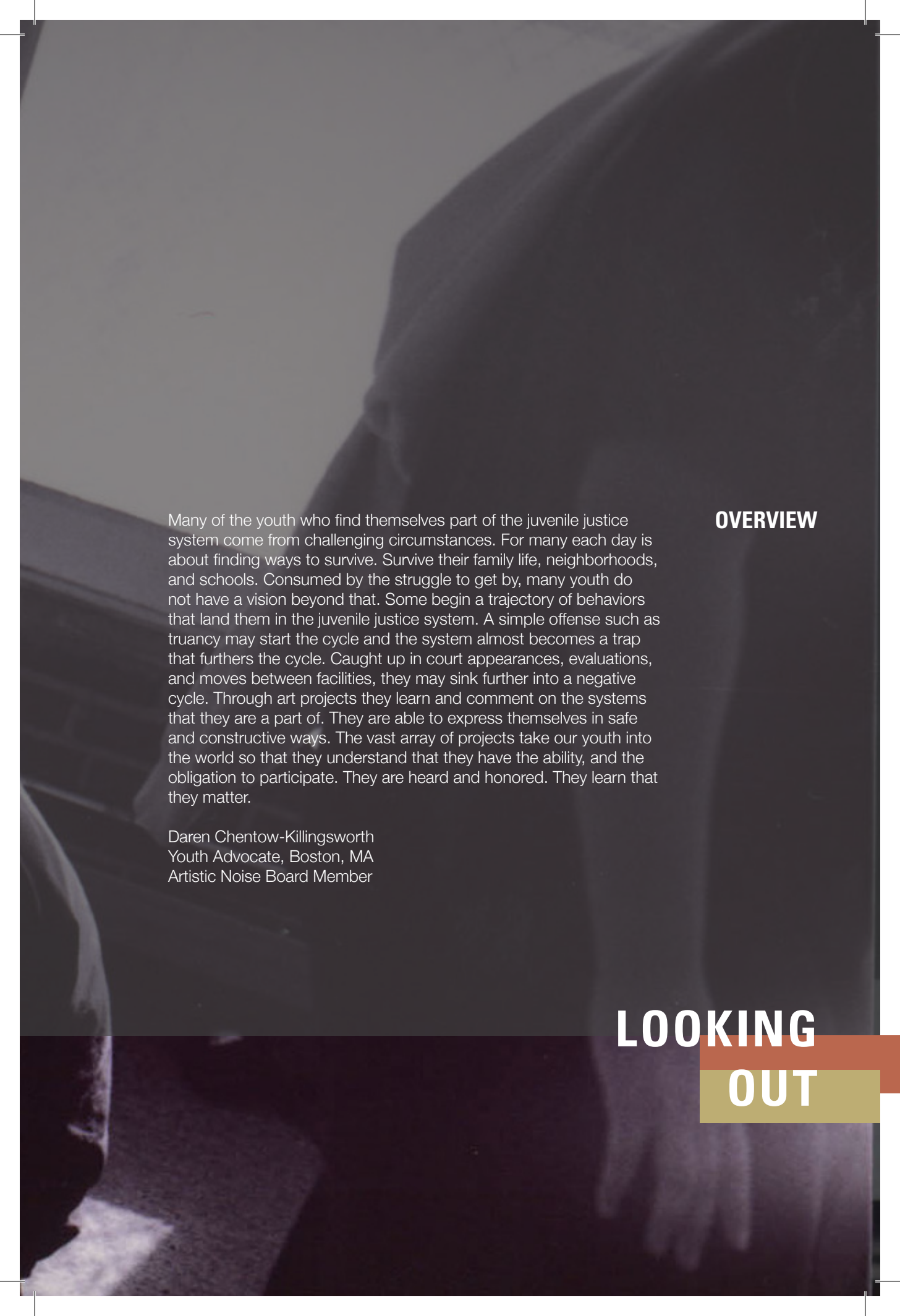
I grew up in Boston seeing a lot of things I didn't want to, and doing a lot of things I regret that involved hurting people. But I spent most of my time in school. My mother was a great mother. When growing up though, I didn't get the attention I wanted from her, so I felt like getting in trouble would make my mother spend a lot of time with me. And she did. She took me to court, and came to my visits while I was in detention.

Once in the system everybody looks and treats you according to your rap sheet and stereotypes that they have. Before knowing me people would judge me and thought I was a bad person, but I knew I just wanted something to call my own. Things started to get out of control and get more serious. I was sitting on the inside, behind bars, and this made me feel like a criminal, and that is what they called me. A number, that's what I was, but I knew I wasn't. For the first time I broke myself down and emotionally unwrapped things to see where all of this negativity was coming from. I had a lot of hate inside of me and even today I try to deal with these emotions. It takes me to a place where the hate fills me up like a balloon and I pop. As I started the process of reconstruction with the help of others, my time inside was like a vacation from my negative experiences. It helped me to see that there were other ways to express all I withheld. As many people, from all walks of life started to rebuild me, I felt like I still needed something to call my own. I planned to do my time, come home, sell drugs and put money in my pocket. I had a set mind frame, until this short lady walked in. She had short hair and a big smile on her face and was ready to do art. I was facing 5-8 months but was going to age out after 4 1/2. I was already two months into it, so I said "alright I'll do art." I won't have to go to my room, and I get to make art, which I loved because my brother and I would draw all the time. She gave me a blank piece of paper with a magazine and I started to cut, and it was helpful. I felt better later just knowing that some of my raw emotions were down on paper and it was a way to express myself, and something to call my own. I started with art to get out of my room at quiet time, and it changed my life.

I knew I had to make the right decisions but it's hard to go straight after you already took the wrong road. I learned there wasn't a right or a wrong way of making art. It was just about expressing all that I was feeling, all the dark, upset, and suicidal thoughts were now on paper. I'm still struggling with things in my life. I feel like sometimes it's all coming back from my past. But throughout everything artmaking stayed a part of my life. I never could disconnect from my one true love. The art experience was a world, my world where I could find myself that I felt no one could change. Artistic Noise gave me a voice I never had. People understood me through my art, that's all I wanted was for people to understand me. Artistic Noise and its many directors have helped me understand the business world and the many different aspects of my life. They helped me grow. Paying for me to take college classes, teaching me skills, giving me a job, aiding me with legal help and the ability to function in society, Artistic Noise has made me the woman that I am today. When I turned 18 DYS kicked me out with no knowledge of the real world and Artistic Noise took me in. I think to myself: where would I be without Artistic Noise, maybe dead or in jail. If I never got the chance to join, learn and grow I would be going back to a place I never wanted be. But now when I go back as a mentor to teach, it feels good for the girls to know I was there and I turned my life around, and they can do the same with their lives. Once I tell them I was locked up the girls start asking about me. Now, when I cry, I cry because all is not lost and I know I came a long way from being lost.

Minotte Romulus  
Assistant Director and Former Youth Participant of Artistic Noise  
Artistic Noise Board Member





Many of the youth who find themselves part of the juvenile justice system come from challenging circumstances. For many each day is about finding ways to survive. Survive their family life, neighborhoods, and schools. Consumed by the struggle to get by, many youth do not have a vision beyond that. Some begin a trajectory of behaviors that land them in the juvenile justice system. A simple offense such as truancy may start the cycle and the system almost becomes a trap that furthers the cycle. Caught up in court appearances, evaluations, and moves between facilities, they may sink further into a negative cycle. Through art projects they learn and comment on the systems that they are a part of. They are able to express themselves in safe and constructive ways. The vast array of projects take our youth into the world so that they understand that they have the ability, and the obligation to participate. They are heard and honored. They learn that they matter.

Daren Chentow-Killingsworth  
Youth Advocate, Boston, MA  
Artistic Noise Board Member

## OVERVIEW

# LOOKING OUT

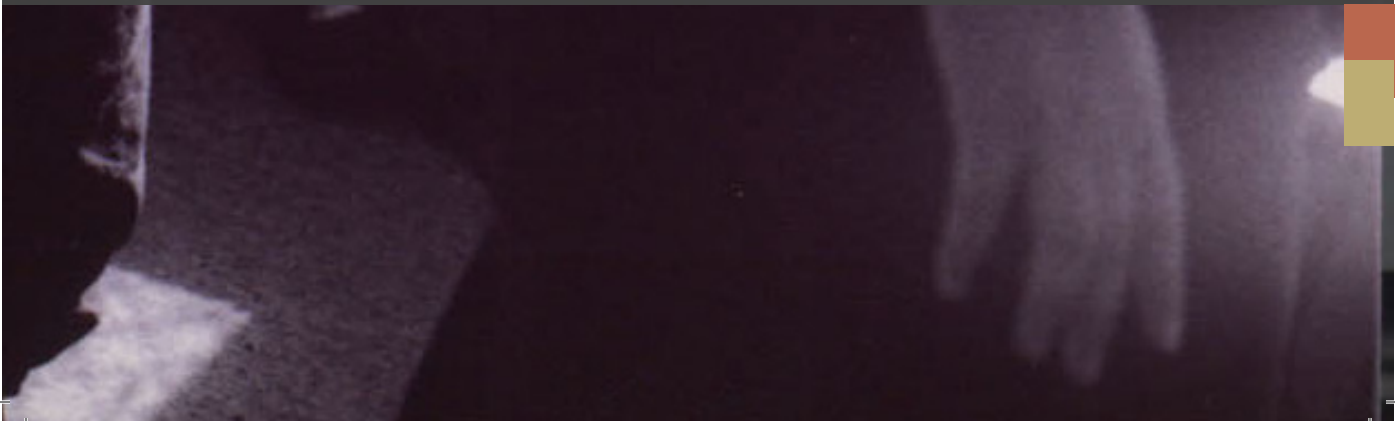
## TEEN VOICE

Illusions forming in my head  
racing thoughts feeling blacked-out dead  
can't take this pain  
slit my wrist instead.  
Calm, drunk, screaming in silence  
erupting to fateful unexplained violence.  
An unborn child cried in my womb  
only one of the reasons it'll be over soon.  
Pain, tears, dirt and blood  
memories that seem to be covered in mud.  
Raped, beat, and left in the street  
cuz I'm all alone  
freezing cold in the combat zone.  
Man of my dreams save's my life  
he didn't want sex, he took away strife.  
Then god took his life  
bullets before my eyes  
his chest bleeding heavy  
before he even realized.  
I still see these visions  
and it's no surprise  
it's all in my dreams and I just want to die.  
Cuz I'm still sitting here wondering why,  
just sitting in my shit  
I feel filthy, can't get rid of it  
his blood stained my mind  
now it's like a tape  
play and rewind  
there are no reasons I can't find,  
my family's fucked up  
even more than they look  
with all the secrets I could write a book,  
close my eyes at night and you wonder why I'm shook-  
at age 11 my innocence took-  
and I could never tell 'til I fell and  
hit the ground with no sound  
then I was bound to go down.  
Knocked up by a nigga who didn't give a fuck  
put me on the street to make him a quick buck  
but then I ran outta luck.  
Lost the place, the car, the money and the phone



the nigga left me to be left all alone.  
Became homeless and stayed on the streets  
smoking my cane  
just for a few weeks  
then I met a guy under a highway bridge,  
this became my home, this was how I live.  
I remember at night  
when the candles were gone  
the trucks drive on the road almost making a song  
BANG BANG BANG  
'til one night it sounded like thunder,  
I lay in the dark, scared it made me wonder  
I was so strung out I might be going under.  
The sound used to be a comfort, now it's loud an obscene  
I don't know what to do  
it makes me want to scream.  
the bridge above me is shaking  
and car lights are looking mean  
it's about to crumble  
am I having a dream?  
I wake up in the hospital  
Mass General, I think,  
there's a doctor and my uncle, a nurse standing at the sink.  
I don't know what happened  
how did I get here  
I was about to ask  
when a policeman came near  
he asked if I remembered anything  
had I been with a friend  
I really couldn't tell him  
and I couldn't pretend  
turns out they had found me on the pavement  
unconscious almost dead,  
they said I must've fallen cuz I had cracked my head  
he said – you're lucky you didn't die-  
and then he asked me why  
and all I could respond is  
I just wanted to get high.

Heather  
Artistic Noise Participant, 2003



**ALTERED BOOK**  
**PROJECT: THE JUVENILE**  
**JUSTICE PROCESS | 2003**  
NFI Girls – Dorchester, MA

This project was a collaboration between girls in detention at NFI, juvenile defenders, teaching artists, and others working within the juvenile justice system. A common textbook for law students studying juvenile justice was passed from one participant to another and each person created a visual response to a section or page of their choice. The book



**Altered Book**  
Mixed Media  
11" x 22" x 8"





became a forum and conversation on issues that affect the young women we work with. Francine Sherman, one of the participating artists, uses the altered page on strip searches as a teaching tool in her law school juvenile justice seminar to humanize the issue for her students.



# BANNER PROJECT

| 2005

Brooklyn Residential Center –  
Brooklyn, NY

This project was completed prior to the creation of Artistic Noise in NY. As a result of the success of this project and others like it though, Artistic Noise expanded into NY. In this project we came together to discuss issues of identity and explore art as a vehicle for sharing one's personal stories, and how these stories can raise awareness to the lived experiences of incarcerated young

**Beautiful, Dominique,  
Donesha, Chris**

***Dedication - Motivation - Education***

Acrylic and Latex paint on Canvas, 5  
banners each 3'x7'

“  
*Three things we need to Survive in this  
world  
A blunt - street knowledge - cash  
Three things the hood needs just to  
get by - why  
Because the government as well as  
the president aren't doing anything  
To keep our faith alive  
'Tis the year '05 and we are  
brainwashed with mesmerizing lies  
That only the institutionalized are able  
to realize  
Because we are the ones who are  
sentenced with time  
From 3-5 to 6-9 but no, never mind  
I will survive*  
“



women. This project began by viewing a digital slide show of contemporary artists who create socially engaged work in the public sphere. In response to the conversations around this slide show, the girls chose to paint large-scale banners, sharing stories about themselves, as

their public artwork. This was the first banner project and has since been replicated in both Boston and New York.



## **VIOLENCE TRANSFORMED | 2007**

Spectrum Girls -  
Dorchester, MA

This digital film group project explored the theme Violence Transformed through drawing, painting, collage, stop-motion animation, and performance art. Nineteen girls participated in this six-week project. Given that the girls' identities needed to be protected and no faces could be filmed or voices recorded, making a film required creative problem-solving from all



***Violence Transformed***  
Stop-Motion Film

involved. Girls developed a visual narrative about transformation through hand-drawn elements and digital animation, working off the musical soundtrack of Lauryn Hill, Everything is Everything, with the refrain 'after winter, must come spring.'



# LETTERWRITING PROJECT

| 2008-2010

Spectrum Girls – Dorchester, MA  
Brooklyn Residential Center –  
Brooklyn, NY  
Bronx Residential Center – Bronx, NY

City Challenge Center – Brooklyn, NY  
Milbank LINC Program – Harlem, NY  
Next Generation Center – Bronx, NY  
Rose M. Singer Center –  
Riker's Island, NY



**Tyraya**

***Thinking (opposite page, top)***

Printed card, 4"x6"

“  
Everything is lost in the sea. I'm trying  
to get out of the woods — get out of  
feeling down, feeling bad.  
“

**Catherine**

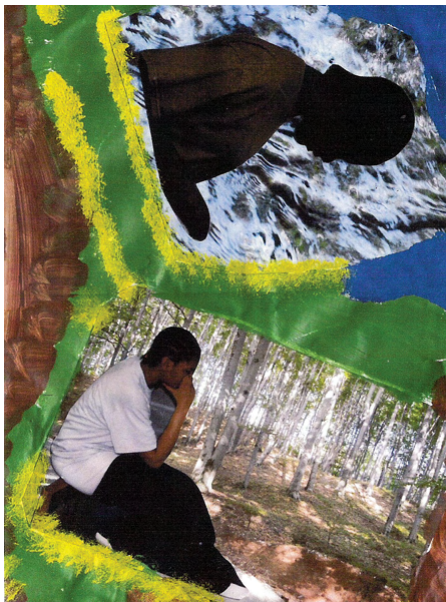
***Ready to Be Free (opposite page, bottom)***

Printed card, 4"x6"

“  
My picture is about a girl that's  
been through so much. She uses her  
imagination to dream of a better place.  
The bird stands for imaginations, peace  
and freedom.  
“

This project create a forum for dialogue between incarcerated girls in Boston and NY, formerly incarcerated and community youth in NY and the larger public. The teens created visual statements that were made into cards and mailed to those involved in the other city. The recipients then chose a card that resonated

with him or her and wrote a letter to the artist responding to the artwork and artist's statement. Through art and writing these letters created a dialogue among the members of our programs and allowed the Artistic Noise community to express and respond to the voices of incarcerated teens.



A girl is thinking about getting out of jail in the woods thinking about going home she thinking in the woods and she looks depressed worrying about her case and when is she going home. She's telling us that she's letting her mind tree and being expressive about her self. I think that her message is a good message and a bad message because it's sad that young girls have to be locked up and it's good to express your mind. I can relate to this message because I want to go home too, and I'm locked for something stupid. Now I learned my lesson. Now I know good from bad and we will all go home. I believe it.

Dear tyra I want to thank you for making me realize I want to express my self and believe that all of us are going to go home very soon and don't worry about anything. I know you want to go home but you just got to take time and relax and let your mind stay on business. I'm in Riker Islands women's facility. See you is my age and I understand that it's hard for us to be locked up. I miss my family and you miss your family all. I have to tell you is please learn your lesson do not go back to jail because it's not a place for anybody that is a smart person. I learned my lesson as you can see cause I can't want to come back here at all so keep your head up stay strong be positive not give up pray to god and ask him for forgiveness. I don't know you but I love you and remember stay strong.

From: TIFFANI



Dear Catherine  
I hope your in the best condition well im doing ok but wanting go home i got a couple more days you know something you wrote this letter to me because everytime they close they cells i put the blanket over my head and think about alot i been crying fighting but at the end of the end of the day ruffin change but my imagination but im still in the cell at the end of the night lockdown at 10:30pm the hall lights is off at 11:00pm that when I imagine a better life its not going to be an imaginal i leave in 2 days

Love,  
L. Sierra

Age: 16

# DOCUMENTARY FILM : TWO DIFFERENT LIVES

| 2010

Bronx Residential Center –  
Bronx, NY

The documentary film, *Two Different Lives*, was created by a group of young filmmakers at the Bronx Residential Center to address the question “How does growing up in the city environment affect teenagers and the choices they make, positive and negative?” By filming inside the Center and on city streets, interviewing staff

**Carlos, DelRoy, Derrick, Devon,  
Elijah, Ivan R., Ivan S., John,  
Matthew, Orlando, Rayshawn,  
Terrell, Tremaine, William, Vidal**

***Two Different Lives***  
Documentary Film

“  
*How does the city environment  
affect teenagers  
and the choices we make, positive  
or negative?  
It makes us want things we can't  
afford  
It makes us act different  
It illusions us with riches of different  
kinds  
Makes us look beyond what's true  
It blinds the truth  
It destroys our opinions  
It makes us go a mile long non-stop  
It also makes us try new things  
Look for new friends  
Look for excuses to get out of a  
situation  
Lets us get in a situation controlled  
by nothing  
Lets us go anywhere we choose  
Lets the people we love change  
It brings us unfairness  
Leaves us powerless, humorless  
Makes us feel loneliness  
It makes us change  
Forces us to act out  
Forces us to be someone we aren't  
Ivan, 16*  
“





members and each other, and creating audio recordings of their writings, the filmmakers have produced a statement about their urban environment and its impact on their community.



# UBUNTU MEMORY VESSELS | 2010

Spectrum Girls -  
Dorchester, MA

This project was made by over 25 girls, ages 13-17, in juvenile detention. The girls explored the idea of UBUNTU, through the creation of sculptural 'memory vessels'. The vessels are containers that each hold an idea, or part of a story, taken from our group storytelling. The small figures present the vessels, much like ancient votive statues. The girls are offering up their



memories, valuing them and sharing them, as people do among friends. The small scale of the figures (compared to the vessels) emphasizes the importance of memory and how we hold on to, preserve and cherish our memories, and the wisdom we gain from them.



**Nyssa, Melissa, Valerie, Kim, Christina, Myjessica, Salia, Shantae, Diamond, Brenda, Shea, and others**

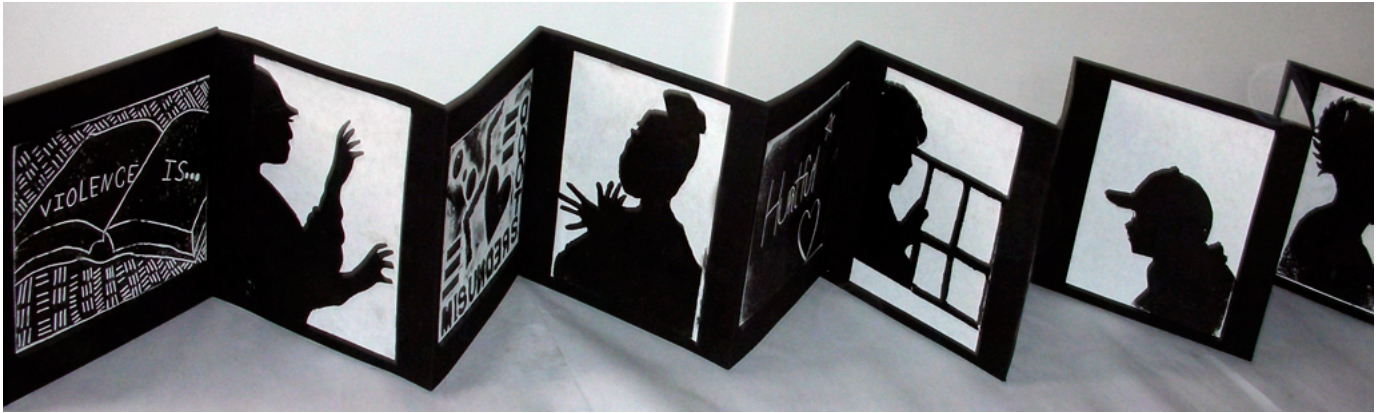
***Ubuntu Memory Vessels***  
Mixed Media Sculptures,  
approx. 10"x14"x10" each

# VIOLENCE TRANSFORMED

|2011

Spectrum Girls – Dorchester, MA

The handmade accordion book entitled Violence Transformed, was created by a group of girls to address the question: "How does violence effect each of us, and what transforms violence?" One side of the accordion book features self-portraits, juxtaposed with text written by the artists that reads: "Violence is...misunderstood, hurtful,



**Ce Ce, Chelsea, Georgina,  
Kathy, Kyana, Jazmine, Jessica,  
Quiarah, Stacia**

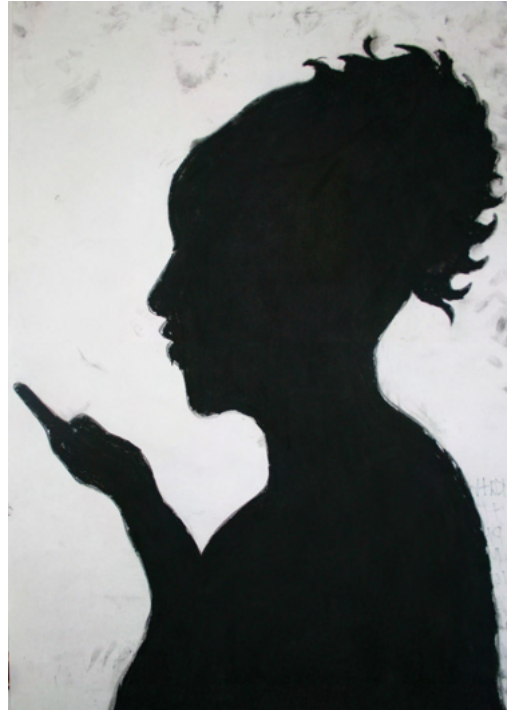
***Violence Transformed***

Handmade accordion book,  
with block prints

**Kathy**

***My Shadow***

Charcoal 24" x 26"



unacceptable, wrong, ugly.” The self-portraits were inspired by silhouette art, including the work of contemporary African American artist Kara Walker. The girls worked together with light and shadow to create large silhouettes in charcoal, which they later turned into block prints. In the words of the artists the

self-portraits are about “expressing yourself and loving yourself,” “flying to freedom”, and “never giving up.” The other side of the book features images of transformation, and text that reads: “Ubuntu, love, community, kindness, help, hope, dance, peace, good leadership... Transforms violence.”



**Ce Ce**

***Black is Beauty (top)***  
Charcoal 24" x 26"

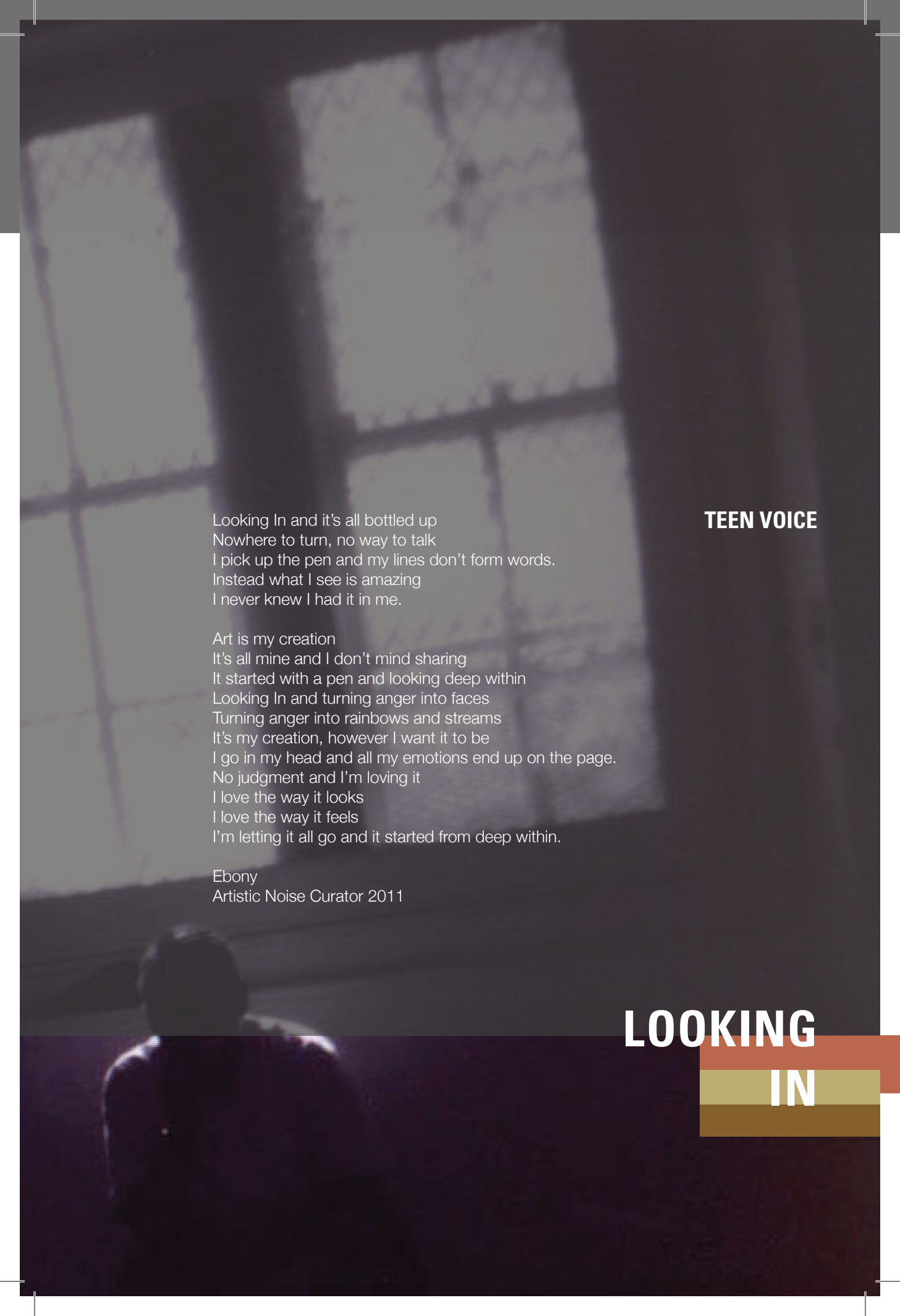
**Quiarah**

***Flying to Freedom (bottom)***  
Charcoal 24" x 26"

## OVERVIEW

Artistic Noise is about creation. The creation of meaning, the creation of a voice, the creation of self, the creation of a future, the creation of opportunities, and, of course, the creation of compelling, meaningful art. The young people who participate in the program do all of this by exploring through art-driven processes, their cacophonous pasts – many voices, often not even including their own, dictating their actions or their inaction – to make sense of the present, discover who they really are and find a unique voice with which to clamor for a cause, whether personal or social. Ultimately, all the participants craft a better future for themselves and show, in particular, how their past flash points end up becoming beaming flashlights pointing them in the right direction.

Ana Bermudez  
Deputy Commissioner for Juvenile Services,  
NYC Department of Probation  
Artistic Noise Board Member



Looking In and it's all bottled up  
Nowhere to turn, no way to talk  
I pick up the pen and my lines don't form words.  
Instead what I see is amazing  
I never knew I had it in me.

Art is my creation  
It's all mine and I don't mind sharing  
It started with a pen and looking deep within  
Looking In and turning anger into faces  
Turning anger into rainbows and streams  
It's my creation, however I want it to be  
I go in my head and all my emotions end up on the page.  
No judgment and I'm loving it  
I love the way it looks  
I love the way it feels  
I'm letting it all go and it started from deep within.

Ebony  
Artistic Noise Curator 2011

**TEEN VOICE**

**LOOKING  
IN**

# VISUAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY

| 2001-2003

NFI Girls – Dorchester, MA

This was Artistic Noise's pilot project in 2001 and was developed specifically for young women in detention at the NFI Girls Treatment Facility in Dorchester, MA. Through film photography and mixed media collage composition, content and color were discussed and explored. Each young woman ideally created her own complete visual autobiography with pages created from her



**Adrian**

***Missing Home***  
Mixed Media Collage,  
11" x 14"

“  
This is a picture of me crying from  
the DYS Center window missing my  
home.  
“



collages and photographs. The participants also wrote text to accompany each page. The project was designed to address the transience of this population and engage young women who could participate for only a short time, as well as those who were able to see their complete

autobiography through to fruition. The finished autobiographies and pages combined photographs the girls took within the facility, photocopies and magazine imagery introducing participants to mixed media as a viable form of expression.



**Minotte**

**Timer**  
Mixed Media Collage,  
11" x 14"

“  
Time is running out for  
me and no one is paying  
attention.  
It makes me feel horrible.  
“



**Magan**

**Hate and Envy**  
Mixed Media Collage,  
11" x 14"

“  
Sometimes I feel like my  
hands, no matter what I'm  
trying to do, if I'm trying to  
help someone, it's still hate  
and envy.  
“



## SEPIA STORIES | 2006-2011

Spectrum Program, DYS Metro Youth Center -  
Dorchester, MA

Brooklyn Residential Center – Brooklyn, NY

Bronx Residential Center – Bronx, NY

Next Generation Center – Bronx, NY

Milbank LINC Program – Harlem, NY

Sepia Stories/ Self-Image This project provided specific guidelines for collage work in mixed media, teaching students how to build a visually unified and compelling image. The project allowed for great freedom in thematic exploration. Girls



**Maria**

### ***The Value of a Precious Soul***

Mixed Media Collage,  
11"x17"

“

This piece of art is about a loved one being missed, black tears that can only be brushed away by the wing of an angel, and how life is just a game no matter what, we are just one blood, so let's be treated equal.

“

developed the themes themselves, choosing to address issues of poverty, beauty, social acceptance, racism, suffering, and forgiveness, among others.



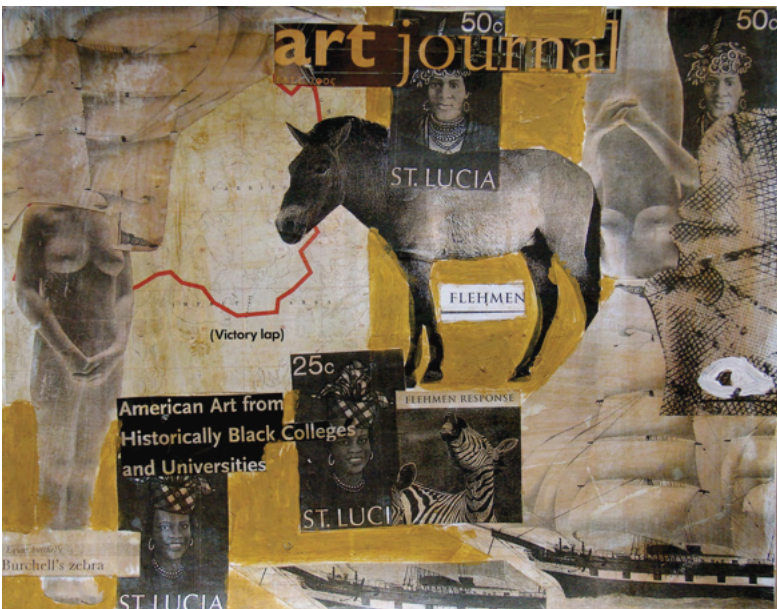
**Danielle**

***Despite My Flaws***  
Mixed Media Collage,  
11"x17"

“

My piece is talking about all the different patterns and pieces of someone. They are still beautiful, no matter how mixed they are.

“



**Shayla**

***The Motherland: 'Heritage'***  
Mixed Media Collage,  
11"x17"

“

The Motherland: 'Heritage'  
My family and a lot of other people have overcome many things and come a long way - since slavery and women's right to vote. As an African American Jamaican and Haitian young blossom lady, I decided to transform myself from angry to happy - from bitter to sweet. A person who lashes out on common sense is someone who lacks wisdom and is heading for a road of destruction. I don't want to be that. I may be hated by many, and loved by few, but I'll be respected by all. But in the end I am happy being me. I can accomplish anything.

“

## PORTRAIT PROJECT

| 2008-2009

Milbank Restart GED  
Program - Harlem, NY  
Next Generation Center –  
Bronx, NY

This project was developed for the Milbank Restart GED program. The young artists studied the historical context in which German Expressionist prints were created and how the events in the world affected the portraits created during this time



**Farah**

***In The Dark***

Linoleum Cut, 11" x 17"

“

My picture depicts a person in the shadow of a window. What you will notice the most is the details in the hands. They're wrinkly and huge which depicts hard working hands. This print was inspired from an original artwork by Kathe Kollwitz. I drew this picture in charcoal and then carved it out from linoleum and then printed it. It's beautiful anyway you perceive it. This print relates to me a lot and depicts all the hard work I have done in my life to become the person I am today.

“



**Royal**

***Money In The Rain***

Linoleum Cut, 11" x 17"

“

My picture shows that being fly and having money is not everything, there is always sorrow. The message that my picture expresses is that just because someone may have everything there will always be something missing in their life. I hope that someone looking at my artwork will understand that money is not something that really makes a person happy.

“

period. Like the German Expressionists, students discussed as a group the issues in society that affect their lives. They created their own self-portrait prints to further explore these issues.



**Aron**

***The Thinker***

Linoleum cut, 11" x 17"

“  
My picture is about a man thinking. The trick is I don't want you to know what he's thinking about. I just want the person to think what he or she will think about. I first drew the picture from a photo I had taken of myself. I then carved it out from linoleum, and then I made a print from it. I just hope when someone sees this artwork that it will help them think about their life and how they can make it better.  
“



**Tamara**

***To See***

Linoleum Cut, 11" x17"

“  
If you look into my eyes what do you see? Pain, hurt, lies, darkness and more. Just by looking in her eyes you will start to understand her story. You will begin to feel her pain, hear her lies and become one with her in her world of darkness.  
“

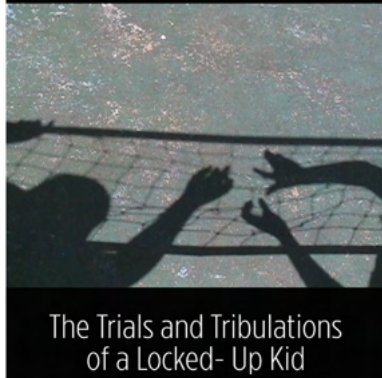
**VIDEO PROJECT :  
THE TRIALS AND  
TRIBULATIONS OF A  
LOCKED-UP KID | 2009**

Brooklyn Residential Center –  
Brooklyn, NY

The young women involved in this project created props and a narrative to produce their own art film using stop-motion technology. Through the in-depth study of contemporary artists and ideas, the young women approached the restriction of creating a film within a secure facility (such as not being able to use their faces) and used these limitations to their creative



The Trials and Tribulations  
of a Locked- Up Kid



The Trials and Tribulations  
of a Locked- Up Kid

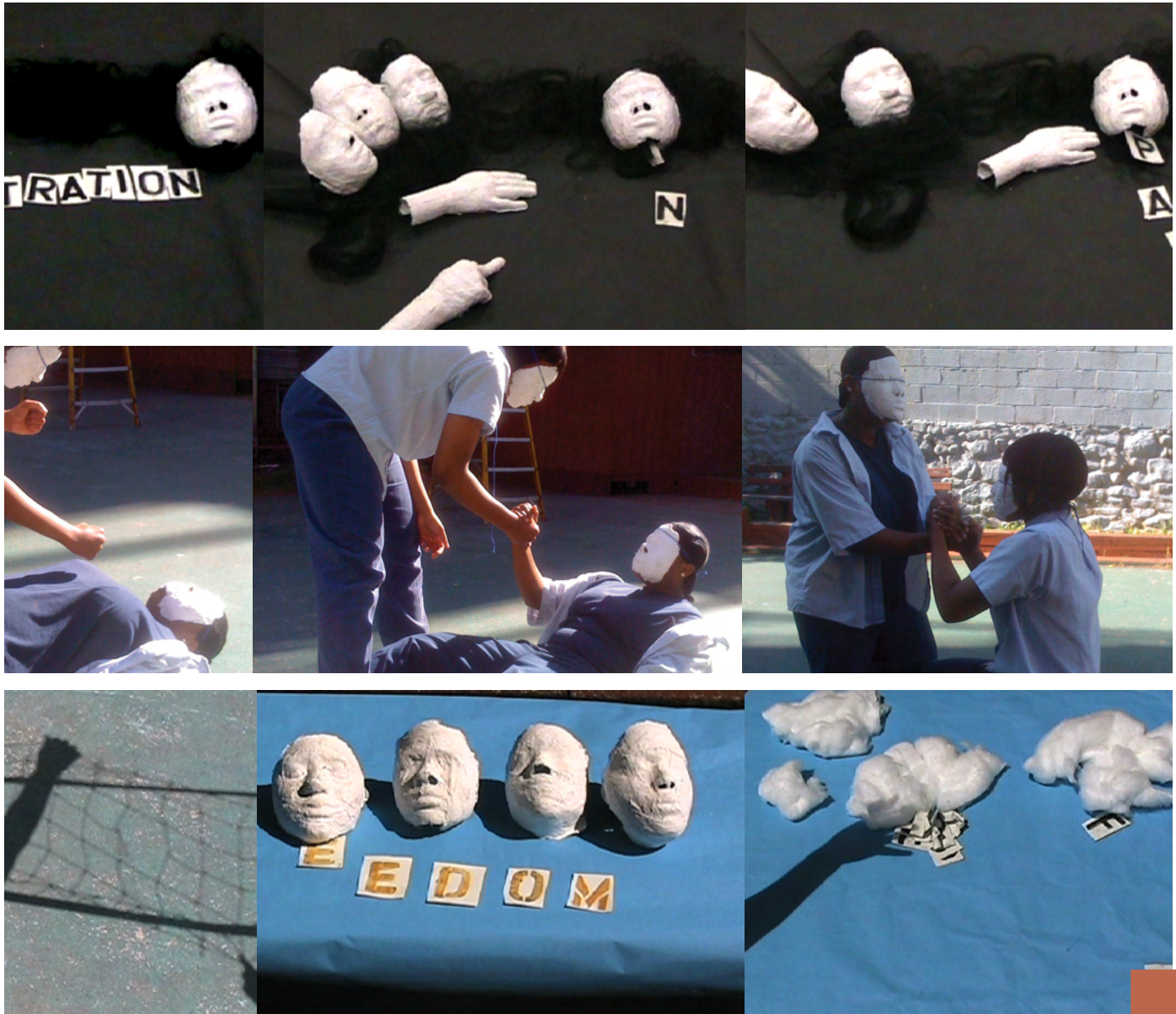


**Ashley, Desiree, Jade, Jamie,  
Na'Quana, Nakeda, Raquel, Sabrina,  
Sharrell**

***The Trials and Tribulations of a  
Locked-Up Kid***  
Stop-Motion Animation Video

“ In this video we are trying to express what life is like as a few kids act out their way through a lock-up program. During the video you can see the young people overcoming obstacles in their search for freedom. They must prove that they can get through these obstacles first. The masks represent the kids that

advantage. This project culminated in the premier of their film at our annual art exhibit. A well-known contemporary artist the participants had studied attended the exhibit and visited the young women in the facility to present and discuss his work and share ideas.



are in lock-up, the many faces and races, and that through it all they can come together. Throughout the movie you can see the movement is really disoriented and unstable, like life is for juveniles that get locked-up.

“

# BANNERS PROJECT

| 2010

Spectrum Girls –  
Dorchester, MA  
Brooklyn Residential Center –  
Brooklyn, NY  
Milbank LINC Program – Harlem, NY

The artists in this project created banners that represented their experiences, emotions, and surroundings. The Brooklyn Residential Center Banners were greatly inspired by the work of William Kentridge as well as their own words and poetry. Students working on the Milbank banner chose to incorporate imagery from the



Artwork design by:  
**Zanovia**  
Painted by:  
**Angel, Fanta, Genny, Olivia, Selena, Sierra, Zanolvia**

***The Water of My Tears***  
Acrylic Paint on canvas, 3' x 7'

“  
The water of my tears  
cry the keys of freedom  
I stare out the window  
and reminisce on the weight of my past  
Why am I not being heard?  
Why do I not receive what I deserve?  
Why does no one want to hear my part?  
Why does everything that comes my way  
break my heart?  
- Fanta  
“



**Dennis, Devon, Javier, Kareem,  
Lamar, Michael, Quantavia**  
***Joyful Confusion***  
Acrylic Paint on canvas, 3' x 7'



Artwork Design and Statement by:  
**Sierra**  
Painted by:  
**Angel A., Angel R., Fanta, Genny,  
Olivia, Selena, Sierra, Zanolvia**

***Hope and Love***  
Acrylic Paint on canvas, 3' x 7'

“  
I hope to find love, love from  
someone special  
I hope you find the key to my heart  
and mind  
But I cannot lose you  
Like someone that loses their  
special someone  
From death, danger or being hurt.  
“



Brooklyn Residential Center's film from 2009. Girls at Spectrum were inspired by the NY banners and created collages to show their own journey. Participants sketched, painted, and created the final pieces.



Statement by: **Minotte**, lead artist

Artists: **Shakera, Salia, Sarafina, Na-kenya, Bailey, Lusanis, Karena, Curtessa, Haley, Jessica, Lindsey, Melissa, Marissa, Danielle, Justice, Kelsey, Rebecca, Carmen, Makalah, Tiffany, Jessica**

***Epiphany***

Acrylic paint on canvas, 3 banners each 3'x7'

“

A still moment in time, society shows us the best  
But all of society's visions don't happen for most of us  
Now I'm walking a path of righteousness  
to achieve society's dreams  
so I'll never let you down.  
“



# HANDS FULL

| 2010

Next Generation Center –  
Bronx, NY

Hands Full was 2010's culminating project of Artistic Noise's Art and Entrepreneurship Program. In the first step each student chose an emotion to represent with their hands and then carved and created a print. In the second part of this project, students used their prints to create large multimedia pieces that expressed aspects of their identity in various materials including pennies,



## Franeline

### *Evolving (above)*

Dried Flowers, pumpkin seeds, paintbrush, dried leaves and paint on wood, 2' x 4'

“ I started this project just wanting to express my love for art and literature, but it turned into something else. Rose buds, pumpkin seeds, paintbrush and leaves. These are things from the world that are what they are. Yet, simultaneously my painted hands and I can change. As human beings it is important to evolve, growing into a better version of you.

“

## Fatima

### *Eating Twizzlers On My Suede Couch (right)*

Suede and Twizzlers on Board, 2'x4'

“ Purple is my favorite color and red is a very bright color. They are confident colors. This piece reminds me of when I used to sit on my suede couch in the living room eating twizzlers when I was 8 years old. I don't feel as young as I used to and when I think about it I feel sad. I want somebody else's hand to connect to mine because my hands have been lonely ever since I gave them life in suede. Suede is smooth like fur, and that expresses my personality —soft and nice.

“



petals and suede. This project was created at a community center with youth living in the surrounding neighborhood.



**Mike**

***Pugnacious (above)***

Pennies, shellac and paint on wood, 2'x4'

“

My piece symbolizes the way I feel about people and sometimes I feel pugnacious. One of the textures is pennies, showing that I'm all about my money because money is power. The second texture is shellac. I used it because I like the color and wondered how it would look.

“

**Niem**

***Path of pain (left)***

Aluminum foil and paint on wood, 2' x 4'

“

My hand represents me always looking out for people, animals and others. Those things have my hand about to close, but it still remains open because I care and always will care.

My hand also means that I have been through a lot of pain. It holds the things that have happened.

The textures in this piece express how solid my heart is. It is like metal that cannot break but only get scarred.

“



## PIECES OF ME

| 2010 - 2011

Next Generation Center –  
Bronx, NY

This introductory project encouraged participants to explore emotive portraiture in black and white. Students learned charcoal techniques and improved their drawing abilities while examining powerful black and white drawings by Kathe Kollwitz, Georges Seurat, Adrian Piper and others. As students developed foundational art skills they also exposed compelling feelings in faces and other pieces of the body.



**Reggie**

***Untitled***

Charcoal and pencil on paper,  
9" x 12"



**Tyreek**

**Untitled**  
Charcoal and pencil on paper,  
9" x 12"



**Barbara**

**Unfinished**  
Charcoal on paper,  
9" x 12"

“

My artwork is called unfinished because half of the drawing is not done. I can't really think too much because this is exactly how she is feeling. She looks like she has problems of her own. She looks like she is struggling to see what she's going through. She is just confused.

“

## CONVERSATIONS | 2011

Bronx Residential Center –  
Bronx, NY

In this project, participants explored the collaborative process through the creation of a mixed media piece. The work developed like a dialogue in which the pieces were passed from one resident to another. An artist would work on one painting until they left the facility and then their piece would be chosen by a new member of the workshop. The paintings are conversations between the artists around the concept of letting go and holding on. Through



**Anthony, Charles, Marcus**

**Untitled**

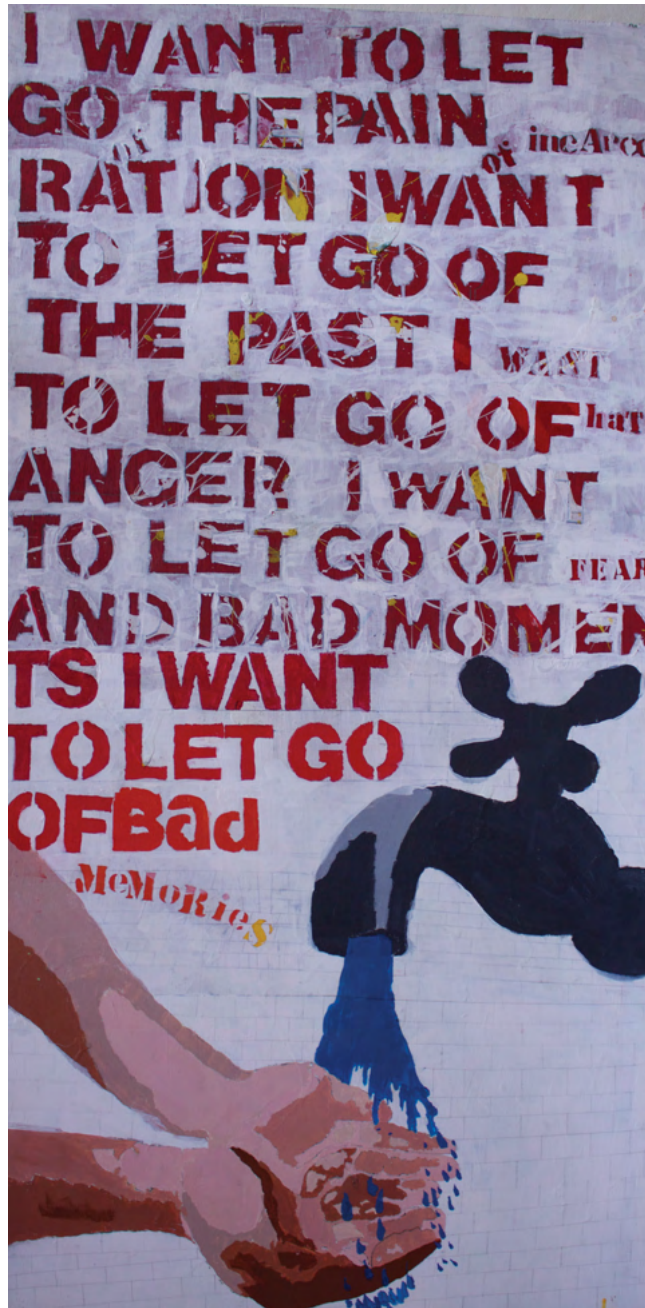
Acrylic paint on board,  
2'x4'

“

When I first saw this painting it had a yellow and gray background painted on it with the words letting go. It ended up standing out the most to me out of all the other paintings. I then added two kinds of blue and a black spaceship with hurt, pain, stress, hate, past and depression in it. Then I made the spaceship look like it was blasting off with all those words inside.

“

writing exercises and fieldtrips to the Museum of Modern Art the participants created layered and in-depth conversations.



**Denzell, Melvin, Tevin and Haymant**

**Letting Go**  
Acrylic paint on board, 2'x4'

“  
I want to let go of the pain  
and let the rain wash it away.  
I want to let go of the past  
but my present never seems  
to last.  
I want to let go of everything  
that has hurt me and made  
me cry  
You can see in my eyes,  
read it on my face  
Trapped inside are lies of the  
past that I cannot erase.  
I have to let go of my past,  
and focus on the present.  
I want to let go.  
“



## OVERVIEW

For many of the young artists of Artistic Noise, looking ahead is fraught with insecurity and anxiety. The challenges incarcerated youth face are myriad: many have troubled pasts in school, in their communities and at home. Overcoming those obstacles and beginning to think positively about the future is often difficult. At Artistic Noise, we aim to provide a creative space in which young people can develop a sense of hopefulness and possibility about their lives.

Art - both public exhibits and the process of creating itself - not only empowers young artists by letting their voices be heard, but also educates the public on the deeper issues these young people face. Participants in Artistic Noise learn to see themselves as agents of change as they create, exhibit and market their own work. Looking forward, art making at Artistic Noise will continue to be collaborative and interactive in the broadest sense -- addressing both personal issues and expansive social concerns. Through traditional and digital media, our projects have the potential to reach audiences on a global scale and to create meaningful and hopeful connections within local communities.

Kate Jellinghaus  
Artist and Art Educator  
Artistic Noise Board Member and  
Former Boston Director

Anne Tobey  
Associate Professor and Director  
of Juvenile Justice and Youth  
Programs at Wheelock College  
Artistic Noise Board Member



Being back in family court as an artist for me, was such a big deal. It brought back memories and many regrets. To think that I sat in that courtroom makes me think a lot of things like, "was I really that bad?" Or what I could've changed if I could change it all. Everything that's happened to me has been a learning experience. These past few months we've been creating art to give back to the people waiting in this courthouse. People going through what we've experienced.

If one were to experience our situations, they'd find our giving back to be a joke when we've been in that judgmental room ourselves. We think of it as just letting go of the past, pushing forward and looking ahead towards a better and brighter day. We give back to help those who are where we were, and to push them along to an empowered future.

Nick  
Artistic Noise Curator 2011

## TEEN VOICE

LOOKING  
AHEAD

## POSTCARD PROJECT

| 2004

Crossroads Juvenile Detention  
Center – Brooklyn, NY

This project was completed prior to the official creation of Artistic Noise in NY. As a result of the success of this project and others like it though, Artistic Noise expanded into NY. These early projects were instrumental to the formation of our NY branch. These postcards were created with a grant entitled “Art and Social Activism: A Visual Research Project”. Young women incarcerated



**Shamika**

**Angels**

Offset printed postcards,  
4.25”x6”

“

Today there's Angels all over  
the place.

Today there are ladies.

Today there's anger.

Today there's no freedom.

Today that's me

“

**Shamika**

**Faces**

**(opposite page, top)**

Offset printed postcards,  
4.25”x6”

“

Today there's faces

Today there's painting

Today there's colors

Today there's paper

That's what I really want to  
talk about

Faces

Everybody calls me Black

But I really don't care

Black is beautiful, That's me.

“

at a juvenile detention center in Brooklyn created all of the artwork and writing. The young women selected social issues relevant to their lives as incarcerated teens and chose an audience to mail their artwork to. The audience was encouraged to respond to the young women

and their questions, artwork and writing. Through this project students explored the power of social activism and art as a means to create fruitful dialogue between different communities.



**Charisma and Felicia**

***Untitled (bottom)***

Offset printed postcards,  
4.25"x6"

“  
To all the judges around the world:  
My name is “Tiny” and I’m incarcerated.  
Me and another associate would like to know  
Why are you locking innocent people up?  
Why are they building more jails for adolescents?  
Why are you locking us up for every little thing?  
Why don’t you build more homes for poor people?  
Build community centers so kids can stay out of trouble?  
Build more playgrounds, schools and hospitals.  
Why don’t you understand and listen?  
“



## THEN, NOW, LATER

| 2004

Youth Opportunity Boston –  
Roxbury, MA

These three pieces are a series created for a book displaying artwork by girls in the Juvenile Justice System in Massachusetts. They are from the perspective of a girl going through a life crisis, (incarceration). They are autobiographical. “Then” shows where she’s been. “Now” represents a period of transformation, and “Later” shows her vision for the future.



### Minotte

**Then (above)**  
Photocollage, Digital

“  
Shows a confused and painful state, when I started making the wrong decisions for myself, and my life was going downhill, I had no one.  
“

### Diana

**Now**  
(opposite page, top)  
Photocollage, Digital

“  
The fire represents the hard times I have had, the images in my head show what I’m thinking about and what’s making everyone in my community go downhill, and how I do not want to end up at the end of my life’s timeline. The water shows my new direction and how I feel when I’m avoiding things that will lead me right back into the fire.  
“

### Minotte

**Later**  
(opposite page, below)  
Photocollage, Digital

“  
The words express how I felt when I was released, and on the out. Power because I was feeling like a leader. Goals because I wanted to go somewhere in Life, and self-love – well, you know!  
“



## THE GHANA THINKTANK: DEVELOPING THE FIRST WORLD | 2006-2011

Spectrum Girls – Dorchester, MA  
Bronx Residential Center –  
Bronx, NY

Founded in 2006, the Ghana ThinkTank is a worldwide network of think tanks creating strategies to resolve local problems in the “developed” world. The network began with think tanks from Ghana, Cuba and El Salvador, and has since expanded to include Serbia, Mexico, Iran, Afghanistan - and youth in the Bronx and Boston penal system. These think tanks analyze the problems and propose solutions, which are put into action back in the community where the problems



originated – whether those solutions seem impractical or brilliant. It's become a way to explore the friction caused by solutions that are generated in one context and applied elsewhere, while revealing the hidden assumptions that govern cross-cultural interactions. The Ghana ThinkTank has worked with Artistic

Noise participants at the Spectrum Girls' Detention Facility in Dorchester, MA and The Bronx Residential Center in New York. The Ghana ThinkTank project is run by Christopher Robbins, John Ewing, Matey Odonkor and Carmen Montoya.



## WHETHER / WEATHER

| 2006

NFI Girls – Dorchester, MA

In 2006 Artistic Noise collaborated with visiting Artist Morgan Schwarz on his project Whether/Weather. Girls at NFI made artwork and a message to put on a card. Each card was attached to a helium balloon and 48 Balloons were released.

In Whether/Weather aerial beacons are dispersed into the weather system. Whether used by an individual or a large organization, the project explores the idea of memory and memorialization through





ephemeral and participatory public art. The person who happens upon one of the beacons that has landed, encounters a message and the option of logging into a website to find out more about where/why the beacon originated. They can contribute their own response at this point and even decide to re-launch the

beacon. The hope is that the project will function like a collective 'message in a bottle' and tap into romantic and poetic possibilities of communication and chance discovery. <http://sodacity.net/whether/about.php>



## PILLOW PROJECT | 2008

Brooklyn Residential Center –  
Brooklyn, NY  
Rose M. Singer Center –  
Riker's Island, NY  
Spectrum Girls –  
Dorchester, MA

The Pillow Project is an ongoing public artwork piloted with incarcerated girls. Participants of this project are asked to illustrate their dreams onto pillowcases. They may interpret the definition of a dream as fragmented visions they remember from their subconscious state, or as an aspiration for the future. These paintings represent the creative minds of the young artists involved and are intended to share personal insight into a universal human



### Skye

#### **Remembered** *(opposite page, top)*

Paint on Pillowcase, 19" x 29"

“

When I lay my head down on my pillow I begin to remember that I was going on the right path but then I turned around and went the wrong way. I made positive choices and I made negative choices. When I was going

on the right path I made the wrong turn and ripped my life in half. After I ripped it I felt like I was in a black hole, but then I realized that it was a wrong turn and I turned around and did what was right.

“

### Silky

#### **Untitled** *(opposite page, bottom left)*

Paint on Pillowcase, 19" x 29"

### Jamie

#### **The Good and the Bad of One Dream** *(opposite page, bottom right)*

Paint on Pillowcase, 19" x 29"

“

To me my art has two stories to tell. I feel as though my art expresses my future goals and something that scares me. Being a dancer is my biggest dream. I want to open my own dance school. That is what the dancers represent. The soldier represents many people I let into my world and ended up letting them change it.

I am turned to the outer part of my web because now I will no longer let anyone stop me. The words in the web represent how I feel no matter what. It also means that meaning comes through my dancing. The story I am telling is never give up no matter what life throws at you. Never get discouraged, always be optimistic.

“

experience. This is of particular importance with girls involved in the juvenile justice system, as it confronts viewers to consider the youth as individuals rather than statistics. As teenage girls were the fastest growing segment of the juvenile justice system at the time of the original project, public awareness was crucial. Though girls in the

system have a rich experience and a great deal to say, they have few places to be heard.



# UBUNTU QUILTMAKING PROJECT | 2007-2009

Spectrum Girls - Dorchester, MA  
Cloud Foundation - Boston, MA  
Boston Trinity Foundation - Boston, MA

Girls in Boston created a large-scale quilt on the theme of UBUNTU (“I am because we are”). The project had many stages, including making the initial drawings, translating these drawings to embroidery and piecing on a sewing machine. The entire process, from design to completion, lasted over a year and was a major collaborative experience. It involved over fifty people – including girls in the juvenile justice system and their



friends, undergraduate and graduate students of juvenile justice from Boston College and Wheelock College, and adults. The finished quilt was then donated in June 2009 to the National Center of Afro-American Artists in Roxbury, Massachusetts.

Source material for the quilt derived from drawings and paintings of ancient and

contemporary African and African-American masks and heads, with a specific focus on hair and braiding. Hair braiding is a favorite weekend activity for girls in lockup, and relates to their sense of beauty, sisterhood and friendship. It is also a perfect metaphor for UBUNTU – because not only is it difficult to braid one's own hair, it is not as pleasing or enjoyable.



Original Drawings

**Krystal, Darlene, Jaharrie, Ashley, Dimonique, Alex, Lakeisha, Lanisha, Danniela, Tayla, Shamay, Nuishcka, Laquisha, Janessa, Debra, Nina, Nicole, Jessica, Jazzalyn, Anita, Kelly, Shatearia, Margaret, Talia, Khalia, Kamyyah, Chantel**

Wheelock student and BC Law Students:  
**Heather, Rachel, Jason, Jane, Kristin, Erin**

EMBROIDERY AND EMBELLISHMENT  
**Lakeisha, Dasha, Jibrie, Sayyid, Myleicia, Medina, Teirra, Nicole, Tyraya, Victoria, Neffi, Jaquell, Neferteari, Jai-lah**

Artistic Noise Mentor Artist:

**Diana Gomez**  
Staff from Germaine Lawrence

GIFT Home: **Nicole**  
Artistic Noise volunteers:  
**Francine Sherman and friends**

Designing, Piecing and Sewing  
**Victoria, Jaquell, Jai-lah, Jibrie, Kenny, Brianna**

Artistic Noise volunteers:  
**Francine Sherman, John Ewing and Caroline Bagenal**

**FAMILY COURT  
PROJECT | 2011**

EGA LINC Program –  
Harlem, NY

In late 2010, Creative Arts Workshops for Kids secured a space for a public art project in the Manhattan Family Court. The project grasped the unique potential of embracing a restorative justice model and asked Artistic Noise and our court-involved youth to create the artwork. All of our youth have themselves spent time in the courthouse waiting room and the opportunity to involve them



in the creation of artwork for it is particularly meaningful. The painted canvas banners, loosely based on the Tibetan tradition of prayer flags, will fill the space with much-needed color and hope. The themes derive from the youth's artistic interpretation of waiting and sitting, and methods

for passing time peacefully. These themes are sure to resonate with those inhabiting the waiting room, and provide a positive model for self-expression.



**Andrew**

***Escape (above)***

Detail photograph of work in progress. Gouache on Cotton Fabric, 4'x4'

“  
I want my work to symbolize how people should be act or feel in family court. People should be brave and have a peaceful mind.  
”

**Nick**

***Future (left)***

Gouache on Cotton Fabric, 2'x4'

“  
This work shows the mentality of those in stressful times. It takes root in the words hopeful, reassuring, balance and judgment. Portraying the words “where to go next”, and speaking the thoughts of everyone observing this piece.  
”



## BIOS

### **Andrew**

#### **Curator/ Artist, Artistic Noise NY 2011**

Andrew is a seventeen year old male who re-discovered the artistic side within him while upstate in lock-up. Art keeps him in a relaxed and wise state of mind. Andrew just received his GED and is planning to start college in September. He currently resides in the Bronx.

### **Danielle McDonald**

#### **Artist in Residence, Artistic Noise NY 2005/2008**

Danielle McDonald is an artist and educator who worked with Artistic Noise since it's NYC emergence in 2005. She has been teaching in the arts with various organizations, including the Philadelphia Mural Arts Program, Creative Arts Workshop for Kids, the Brooklyn Art Museum, Village Community School and the NYC Department of Education. In addition to her community work, Danielle has designed several productions for Opera Delaware and continues to work on her own illustrations.

### **Ebony**

#### **Curator/ Artist, Artistic Noise NY 2011**

Ebony is a 15 year old Brooklyn native. She is currently working for Artistic Noise. She feels it is a positive outlet and a wonderful way to express herself. Ebony is attending Jonathon Levin High School for Media and Communications. In her spare time Ebony loves to read and write. In the future she would like to become a media based lawyer.

### **John Ewing**

#### **Director, Artistic Noise Boston 2003-2006**

John Ewing is a new media artist merging dialogic public art with activism and education. He worked for two years in El Salvador, using the arts to organize and inspire dialogue about human rights. In addition to the US he has exhibited in Cuba, Israel, Great Britain, Germany and this Fall in China. Major projects include Symphony of a City ([www.symphonyofacity.org](http://www.symphonyofacity.org)) Virtual Street Corners ([www.virtualcorners.net](http://www.virtualcorners.net)), and Ghana ThinkTank ([www.ghanathinktank.org](http://www.ghanathinktank.org)). Ewing was Director of Artistic Noise from 2003-2006 and resides in Boston, MA.

### **Julie Martini**

#### **Director, Artistic Noise Boston 2011-present**

Julie Martini is the Boston Director of Artistic Noise, and a practicing visual artist. She received her MFA from Massachusetts College of Art and Design and she has taught the visual arts at the Cancer Center at Massachusetts General Hospital, the Museum of Fine Arts, and the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth. Her work has been exhibited in numerous exhibits in Massachusetts and beyond, and she has received residencies at the Petrified National Forest, the Women's Studio Workshop, and the Vermont Studio Center.

### **Kate Jellinghaus**

#### **Director, Artistic Noise Boston 2006-2010 Board of Directors, 2010-present**

Kate Jellinghaus is an artist and art educator interested in using collaborative art to address social and

environmental issues. She studied painting at the National Academy of Art in Sofia, Bulgaria, where she received a CEC Visual and Media Artslink Award to help young people living in state-run orphanages create social documentaries through photography. She has taught studio art and art history at Montserrat College of Art, Massachusetts College of Art, Boston Arts Academy, Charlestown High School, and Westwood High School, and has exhibited her work in the US and Bulgaria.

### **Kiran Chandra**

#### **Artist-in-Residence, Artistic Noise, NY 2011-present**

Kiran Chandra is currently getting her MFA at Hunter College, NY. Her work incorporates language and aims at presenting the interconnectedness of seemingly separate systems. As a teaching artist she has worked with The Sadie Nash Leadership Program, Children's Village, Brooklyn Arts Council and MoMA. This summer she will be working with the Laundromat Project running public art projects in Harlem and Brooklyn. Living between Calcutta, India and Brooklyn, NY has been an extremely enriching experience and the privilege of having two homes has been a position from which Kiran understands and engages in the world.

### **Lauren Adelman**

#### **Director/ Co-Founder, Artistic Noise Boston 2001-2003**

#### **Director/ Co-Founder, Artistic Noise NY 2008-present**

Lauren Adelman is an artist and educator based in Brooklyn, NY. She received a BFA from The School of The Museum of Fine Arts and a MA in Arts Education from NYU. She has worked as an educator at the Museum of Modern Art since 2006 and currently runs partnerships with adults and youth involved in the criminal justice system there. Lauren has taught art in many varied settings such as public schools, juvenile detention centers, and non-profit arts organizations both locally and abroad. Lauren has shown her work nationally and has been awarded residencies at The Wassaic Project and Anchor Graphics.

### **Lauren Madow**

#### **Artist-in-Residence, Artistic Noise NY 2010**

Lauren Madow is a documentary filmmaker, curator and educator from Brooklyn, New York. She has worked with the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, the Downtown Community Television Center and the Tribeca Film Institute. Lauren is currently at work on a new documentary project which will begin production in summer, 2011.

### **Minotte Romulus**

#### **Artistic Noise Co-Founder/ Youth Participant, Artistic Noise Boston 2001-2006 Artistic Noise Assistant Director and Board Member- 2006-present**

Minotte Romulus is an emerging artist, mentor and educator who has collaborated with John Ewing on several large-scale public art projects. She has taught for St. Stephen's Be Safe Program and led projects for Artistic Noise in both New York and Boston. Minotte