



**December  
2025**

**Voices** Volume 47 Issue 2

**In This Issue**

**From the Editor .....1**  
**Dr. Lucy Bartholomee**

**InSEA 2025 ..... 2**

**Award Winner ..... 4**  
**Dr. Mousumi De**

**USSEA Conference 2026 .....6**

**USSEA Leadership ..... 7**

**Art Educator Spotlight..... 8**  
**Sharon Miller**

**Call for Awards.....12**

**NAEA Conference .....13**

***Tenacity for Turbulent Times***

December is a time for reflection. As the semester and calendar year close, we naturally look back and consider the past, the present, and the near future. Certainly, this has been a tumultuous year in the U.S, with sudden funding and legislated changes bringing much trouble to the academic and artistic worlds in which we live and work. Yet we stand together. As colleagues and friends we remind each other that what we do really matters and is worth fighting for.

Art classrooms are places for refuge, for creativity, for support, and for breakthrough ‘Ah-hah” experiences. I think about those moments when a beginner student says, “I can’t believe I drew that,” and takes a picture of their artwork to show others. When a student brings in their well-used or brand-new sketchbook, eager to record their creativity. When an anxious child asks to eat lunch in your room, knowing you offer a safe space. When a novice teacher gives their first lesson and says, “Now I know I can be a good teacher,” a hopeful light shining from their eyes. When the storms seem to rise up on every side, we can focus our attention on the things that we love and care about and fill ourselves and each other with the motivation to stand strong.

“You are not giving up, and neither am I. The fact that we cannot save everything does not mean we cannot save anything and everything we can save is worth saving. You may need to grieve or scream or take time off, but you have a role no matter what, and right now good friends and good principles are worth gathering in. Remember what you love. Remember what loves you. Remember in this tide of hate what love is. The pain you feel is because of what you love.”

-Rebecca Solnit, November 7, 2024

We are the Willow trees in the storm. We may bend and sweep with the wind, but our roots run deep and are interconnected, and we are not broken. Together, we will outlast the storm.

By Lucy Bartholomee, Co-Editor

## Highlights from Olomouc

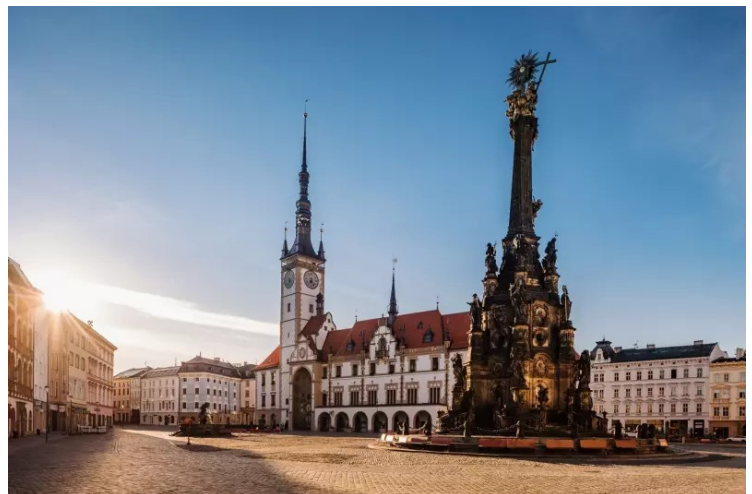
The 38th InSEA World Congress was held this past July in the charming, historic town of Olomouc, Czech Republic, hosted by Palacký University. The aim of the World Congress is to promote international dialogue and the exchange of experience, research, ideas, expertise, and creativity in the field of art education and related disciplines. This year's program, titled "Unexpected Territories, Shifting Grounds and Permanence in Art Education," fulfilled those goals and much more.



Incoming President  
Dr. Patsey Bodkin

As congress participants filled the assembly hall for the opening ceremony, the aura of creative exchange swept into the room with us. Each day offered numerous sessions, workshops, and panel discussions, along with opportunities to reconnect with global colleagues and network with new friends. Sharing research, challenges, and strategies brought us together from every continent across the globe.

The closing gala was an incredible celebration with traditional music and dance performance, local beer and wine, and an incredible spread of food in multiple locations around the historic terraces at Palacký University. Conversations and musical entertainment continued all evening, culminating with post-party karaoke in the chapel. It was truly a trans-national collab of music, art, and good cheer.

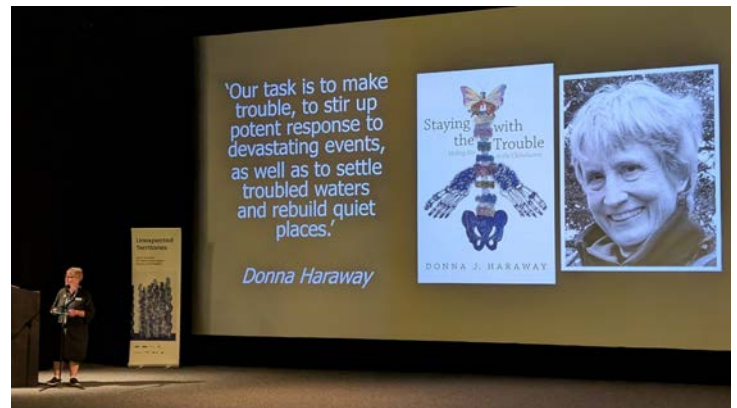


# Highlights from InSEA World Congress 2025



Stairwell in the art department at Palacký University.

World Councilors for 2025-2027 (below)



Vice President Susan Cole  
Keynote speech

The full program of workshops and events can be downloaded here:

Unexpected Territories

The book of abstracts from the 2025 World Congress 'Unexpected Territories', edited by Jana Jiroutova and Petra Šobáňová with an introduction by Glen Coutts, is now available as a FREE download from the InSEA website: <https://www.insea.org/insea-world-congress-2025-book-of-abstracts/>



# National Ziegfeld Award Winner 2025: Dr. Mousumi De

## **Advancing Ziegfeld's Vision Through Global and Intercultural Art Education**

(Excerpts from the acceptance speech.)

I am deeply honored to receive the prestigious National Edwin Ziegfeld Award this year.

Among my recent research works that exemplify Ziegfeld's vision is a collaborative study with Dr. Ryan Shin, which explored the converging perspectives of Daoist and Hindu philosophies with the emerging paradigm of New Materialism in art education. Our research examined Lao Tzu's teachings and Rabindranath Tagore's educational philosophies, grounded in Daoist and Hindu ideologies respectively. It highlighted how the concept of non-human agency within these Asian philosophies resonates with New Materialist thought, particularly in challenging the anthropocentric (human-centered) ontologies dominant in Western discourse. Daoist and Hindu philosophies share key principles such as Wu-Wei (nonaction) and Ni kāma Karma (desireless action), which are key principles that recognize the agency of non-human entities, including objects, technologies, and environments. These principles align with New Materialism's emphasis on relationality and advocate for a harmonious, interconnected, and non-dualistic view of existence. This research not only enriches our understanding of New Materialism but also fosters a more global and pluralistic discourse, underscoring the profound interconnectedness of Western and non-Western philosophical traditions.

## **Advancing Ziegfeld's Vision Through Global and Intercultural Art Education**

Since 2013, I have integrated the art practice of Mandalas into a variety of K-12 and higher education settings, both as a pedagogical resource and as a means of promoting social skills. Originating in Hindu and Buddhist traditions in India, Nepal, Tibet and Bhutan, Mandalas are intricate geometric designs that synthesize aesthetic, spiritual, and cultural dimensions. They have been an important component of my multicultural art education curricula, enabling students to explore the philosophical, cultural, and practical aspects of Mandala-based artmaking. I have additionally adapted Mandalas to design and implement arts-based peace education and bullying prevention initiatives aimed at fostering prosocial behavior, kindness, and a culture of peace within elementary schools. Students are introduced to this international art practice and then they create individual artworks reflecting their personal notions of peace, which are collectively assembled into large-scale Mandala installations. These projects fostered a sense of community, enhanced social engagement, and nurtured prosocial skills. They also echo Ziegfeld's advocacy for the humanizing capacity of art in technologically saturated environments by mitigating the alienating effects of technology often present in students' lives. Lastly, I incorporated Mandalas in my teacher preparation courses and mentored preservice teachers in creating Mandala-inspired artworks and artifacts using traditional media, digital tools, and makerspace technologies.



## **National Ziegfeld Award**

Dr. Mousumi De

Associate Professor, Curriculum &  
Instruction University of Redlands

[mousumi\\_de@redlands.edu](mailto:mousumi_de@redlands.edu)

# National Ziegfeld Award Winner 2025: Dr. Mousumi De

In parallel with these initiatives, since 2014, I have also conducted extensive research on best practices for teaching about and for peace through art education across diverse international contexts and implications for art education praxis aimed at fostering peace. My scholarship examines various dimensions of peacebuilding efforts in regions such as Vietnam, Mozambique, the Balkans, Middle East, Germany, the former Yugoslavia, the UK, and India. These studies explored diverse approaches, including war photography, Transforming Arms into Tools' projects, art-based interventions with community members, media art installations, art therapy practices, and public monuments and sculptures, which demonstrate how the arts, media, and new media contribute to peacebuilding and reconciliation. By integrating these international case studies and art practices into my teaching, I aim to promote global awareness, empathy, and intercultural understanding, thereby advancing Ziegfeld's vision of using art education to support healing, foster peace, and cultivate global citizenship.



My own work and our work as a community will be tested and tried in the context of rapidly emerging sociocultural landscapes and geopolitical conflicts. Our collective efforts will stand the test of time, and when times and diverse views challenge our own outlooks and perspectives – we must remember to practice what we preach in our own classrooms and be in solidarity with those with differing views. It is very easy to appreciate our similarities, and much harder to honor our differences, and that, in my humble view, serves as the 'root' and the 'route' to international understanding.

Thank you again for this honor and for the privilege of becoming part of the USSEA community. I am grateful to this community for supporting my efforts to build on Ziegfeld's legacy and advance international visual arts education in response to complex local and global challenges.

Mousumi De, Ph.D.

Virginia C. Hunsaker Endowed Chair in Distinguished Teaching,  
Associate Professor, Curriculum & Instruction,  
Department of Teaching and Learning,  
School of Education, University of Redlands,  
Redlands, California, USA

# USSEA Conference ~ June 11-13, 2026 Montana State University ~ Billings, MT

## Theme: Cultural Conversations in Art Education as Social Advocacy

What is cultural conversation?

What is social advocacy within the art and visual education field?

How do our personal and professional conversations lend themselves to support and advocate for the health of our society?

How can cultural conversations and social advocacy in art education classrooms promote a healthy society?

What does pedagogy that includes cultural conversation look like?



See our conference website for  
proposal details. Deadline  
for submission is  
January 15th, 2026  
Decisions by  
February 15th, 2026



# USSEA: Working for You



**President** Dr. Mara Pierce  
Associate Professor of Art,  
Social Sciences and Cultural Studies,  
Montana State University,  
[mara.pierce@msubillings.edu](mailto:mara.pierce@msubillings.edu)

**President - Elect** Dr. Jenny Evans  
Lecturer in Art Education  
Syracuse University  
[jevans34@syr.edu](mailto:jevans34@syr.edu)



**Secretary** Barbara Caldwell Associate  
Professor of Art and Design  
Iowa State University  
[bacald@iastate.edu](mailto:bacald@iastate.edu)

**Treasurer** Liz Langdon  
Retired Associate Teaching Professor  
Art Education  
University of Kansas  
[lizlangdon@ku.edu](mailto:lizlangdon@ku.edu)



**Membership Coordinator**  
Dr. Alan Richards  
Professor of Graduate Studies,  
Area Head of Art Education  
University of Kentucky  
[allan.richards@uky.edu](mailto:allan.richards@uky.edu)

**JCRAE Editor** Dr. gloria j. wilson  
Associate Professor,  
Undergraduate Studies Chair  
Ohio State University  
[wilson.5325@osu.edu](mailto:wilson.5325@osu.edu)



**Voices Co- Editor** Dr. Lucy Bartholomee  
Assistant Professor Art Education  
Department of Art & Art History  
The University of Texas at Arlington  
[lucy.bartholomee@uta.edu](mailto:lucy.bartholomee@uta.edu)



**Awards Coordinator** Dr. Fatih Benzer  
Associate Professor, Art Education  
Missouri State University  
[FBenzer@MissouriState.edu](mailto:FBenzer@MissouriState.edu)



## Art Educator Spotlight: Sharon Miller The Power of Creative Advocacy

Introducing Sharon Miller, art educator and advocacy proponent. Her ideas and expansion for the visual arts program at Martin High School in Arlington, Texas, is an inspiration with exciting results.

When Sharon came to Martin HS five years ago, she wanted to raise awareness for the accomplishments of her art students. Their award-winning studio work and scholarships seemed to go unnoticed in the large, STEM and athletics-focused school community. In this article, we will share some of the strategies Sharon uses to shine a light on the visual arts program.

Sharon opened the school's first chapter of the National Art Honor's Society (NAHS), offering new opportunities for achievement for her art students. She holds weekly after school studio time and challenges her students to dig deeper to create meaningful, ambitious artworks. They participate in regional and state art contests with excellent results. Each spring she adds up the total scholarship funds her art students are awarded and lists the universities where they are accepted. She promotes these accomplishments through school announcements, lighted text on the school marquis, print posters and bulletin board vignettes.



Advocacy arises through such strategies to visually enhance your program on your campus. A few years ago, Sharon organized a large-scale mural project designed and painted by the National Art Honors Society students (pictured above). They included many areas of the school community in the painting, and also prominently credited their organization. As students and faculty see the mural each day, they are reminded of the arts program that created it.

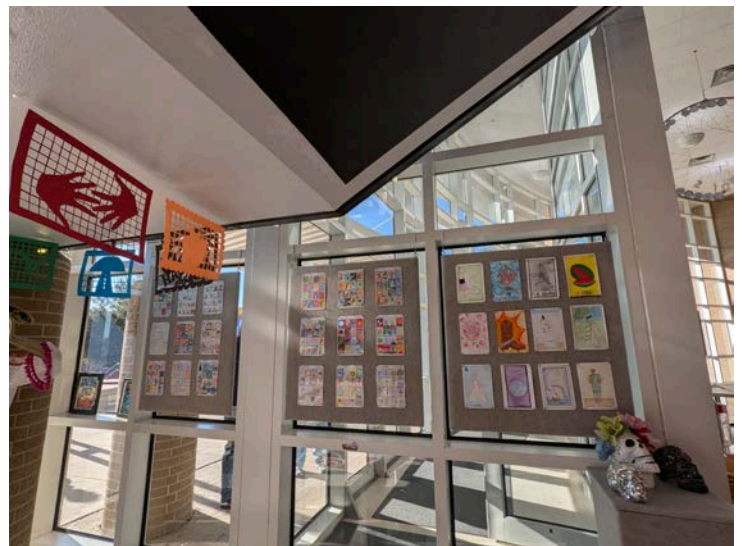
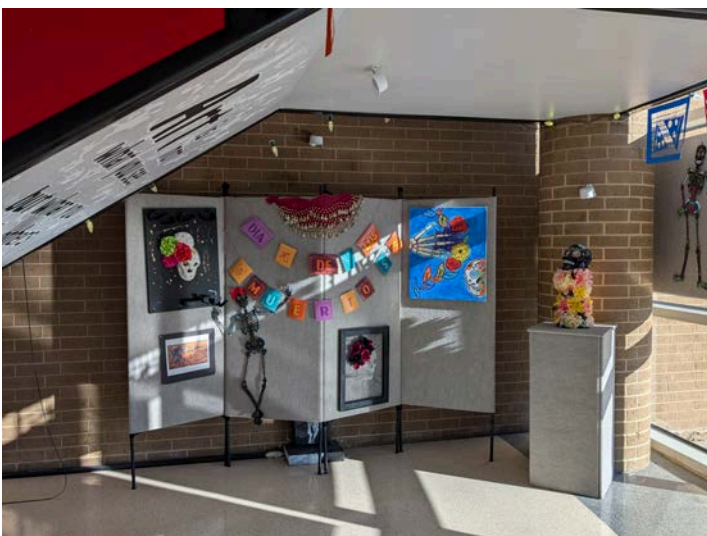
**Sharon Miller** is the Studio Arts II/III Director and National Art Honor Society Sponsor at Martin High School in Arlington, Texas. She can be reached at: [smille12@aisd.net](mailto:smille12@aisd.net)





Early on, Sharon recognized the need to establish a logo to link Martin HS with the Art Department. Through the collaborative efforts of the Visual Arts team, the new logo was created. It is now featured on all print material for hallways, business cards and event materials. She regularly produces student-designed t-shirts as both a fundraiser and cheerful advertisement, so to speak, for the visual art program.

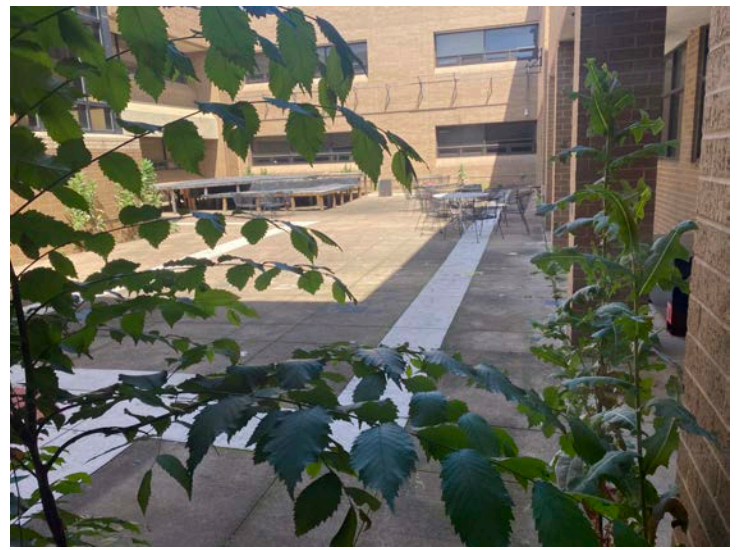
Martin HS had very little exhibition space on campus. Student artwork was shown in a few glass cases built into the walls, and Sharon wanted to create a stronger presence. She found a large alcove near the front of the school and transformed it into the Open Call Gallery. The glass walls and open space (pictured on this page) feature a steady rotation of student artwork curated by the NAHS group. The school's four thousand students enter through the nearby doors, giving a pride of place to the visual arts program.



## The Art Courtyard: Art For All

Renovating a neglected courtyard began as another NAHS project but soon grew to a larger endeavor that engaged participation across the school community. This outdoor space opens off of two art classrooms on the ground floor, and can be viewed from many other classrooms. During the pandemic years a stage was built to host outdoor theater performances but later was neglected and even caused flooding. Sharon knew this was a prime opportunity for the art program to shine and provide a lasting benefit to the school.

Sharon and the other art teachers in the department worked with parent volunteers to dismantle the remains of the stage and clear out other debris. She worked with school leadership to plan the renovation and allocate modest funds. Then Sharon sought out grant funding for the project. Sharon said, "I had never applied for a grant before, but I learned how for this project." Before long she had secured a total of \$25,000 in grants from the Arlington Independent School District Education Foundation, Learning Environments of North Texas, and Texas Health.



Sharon also started the first Art Booster Club, an outside parent organization that can raise funds and organize support for the visual art program at Martin HS. Taking on such challenges is admirable, and it is inspiring to learn about art educators who take a chance and try new things, especially when they meet with such success.

Planning for the renovation brought the school community into the picture. Students in the STEM program who were interested in architecture helped redesign the space. The garden club planned out the green space and raised plant beds. The mural was designed by art students and painted by a host of volunteers. Photography students documented the transformation.

At the opening reception, the school and district leadership assembled to cut the ribbon and honor their achievements with music, live painting, and refreshments (pictured below), a worthy celebration of arts advocacy and the achievements of an inspiring art educator.

Ms. Miller can be reached at [smille12@aisd.net](mailto:smille12@aisd.net).



Would you like to be a featured artist / educator Voices or know someone who does?  
Our next opportunity will be for Summer 2026 ! Nominate a fellow artist or send your images and artist statement/  
art-making philosophy to Dr. Jenny Evans or Dr. Lucy Bartholomee, Voices Co-Editors

# USSEA Awards Call for Nominations for NAEA 2026 Deadline: January 15, 2026

## 2026 USSEA Edwin Ziegfeld Awards

USSEA's Annual Edwin Ziegfeld Awards honor distinguished leaders who have made significant contributions to the National and International fields of art education. Two Ziegfeld Awards will be presented during the National Art Education Conference to be held in Chicago, IL in March 2026.

- One national award to honor an art educator from within the United States
- One international award to honor a colleague from outside the United States who has made contributions of INTERNATIONAL significance to art education

*Eligibility:* Nominees must be members of USSEA or InSEA and persons who have brought distinction to international aspects of art education through an exceptional and continuous record of achievement in scholarly writing, research, professional leadership, teaching, professional service, or community service bearing on international education in the visual arts.

### The USSEA Award for Excellence in PK-12 Art Education

This USSEA award is presented to a PK-12 art educator who demonstrated leadership in and commitment to multicultural and cross-cultural educational strategies in their schools and communities. This art educator actively implements an approach that builds respect for human dignity and diversity through art. The teacher must be a member of NAEA and USSEA to be recognized for their contributions. Their work must be confluent with the mission of USSEA, which is to foster “teamwork, collaboration, and communication among diverse constituencies in order to achieve greater understanding of the social and cultural aspects of art and visual culture in education.”

### The USSEA Award for Outstanding Student Project, Master's Thesis, or Dissertation

The USSEA Graduate award is presented to a graduate student whose thesis, dissertation or creative component reflects the mission of USSEA: to foster teamwork, collaboration, and communication among diverse constituencies in order to achieve greater understanding of the social and cultural aspects of the arts and visual culture in education. The topic investigated in the work promotes pluralistic perspectives, deepens human and cultural understanding, and/or builds respect for diverse learners.

Nominations may be submitted by any member of USSEA, InSEA, or NAEA.

Forms are available at the USSEA website at <http://ussea.net>.

E-Mail nomination materials to: [Fatih Benzer](mailto:Fatih.Benzer@ussea.net),

Nomination materials (nomination form, vitae, letter of nomination, and two additional letters of support) are due by January 15, 2026. Letters of nomination, acceptance, and support must be written in English. Recipients will be recognized at the annual NAEA conference on March 6, 2026, 2:00 pm, Hyatt Regency Wright room.



2026 NAEA NATIONAL CONVENTION | MARCH 5-7



*You are invited to attend our USSEA events:*

USSEA Executive Business Meeting  
Saturday, March 7, 2026 12:00 PM - 01:20  
PM Hyatt Regency Chicago | Wright

USSEA Awards Celebration in Chicago at  
NAEA Friday, March 6, 2026 2:00 PM -  
03:20 PM Hyatt Regency Chicago | Wright

USSEA Engagement & Membership Event  
Thursday, March 5, 2026 2:00 PM - 03:20  
PM Hyatt Regency Chicago | Dusable

