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# Voices

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## An Act of Inspiration

When Jenny asked me to write an article for Voices, I accepted, then sat for days and stared at a blank screen. What message could I possibly share that would not sound ingenuine or as an exercise of privilege? One of my colleagues’ experiences sprang to the forefront of my mind<sup>1</sup>. I was inspired (given the courage through my USSEA familiarities) to share Shera’s story given that equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility (EDI&A) are what drive me in my life and pedagogy, especially within the context of USSEA, Indigenous Knowledge and confluence of that knowing, in the art classroom. What Shera had been witnessing at her school regarding the following circumstance (over what she thought was only the last eight months) she firmly stated she would do for any student (with their permission, of course). Throughout her employment at her school<sup>2</sup>, students who feel discrimination by those in educational power have approached her for support and guidance. On more than one occasion, she has spoken to university Provosts regarding the lack of concern for EDI&A on campus that goes unchecked. However, the present circumstance went further, shattering her perception of what a higher education institution can be with and for its students and larger society.

Not long ago, Shera reached out to me because the administration of her university released a new policy regarding consensual relationships with students<sup>3</sup>. Under normal circumstances, this would not unseat her. Oddly, though, she felt threatened given that the policy was punctuated by an equally lengthy description of punitive measures to be imposed on the employee in the event that any other person or department on campus was negatively impacted if the relationship results in a formal complaint. Shera is a white, tenured, advanced rank professor who happens to be life-partnered with a non-white (Indigenous), differently abled, non-gen-

der normative individual who was enrolled in a graduate program in a different department and college at her university. Shera and her partner<sup>4</sup>, Alvan, were brought together nearly twenty years ago but Shera did not begin her present higher education employment until eight years ago. Nevertheless, she perceives the policy as being connected to her given that she is in a relevant relationship and Alvan has had several biased-appearing run-ins with his/her professors and administration recently. More precisely, Alvan has suffered discriminatory behavior<sup>5</sup> from one specific instructor who has failed him/her in every class taken with this instructor, yet the instructor has continually denied his own bias. Alvan sent the case to the department Chair, Dean, and Provost sequentially and within the prescribed timeframes, respectively. All three initially ignored the contact. When the Provost finally decided to attend to the matter, he told Alvan that he/she had to re-start the entire complaint process at the instructor's level because the Chair and Dean did not have a chance to voice their opinions on the matter, thus privileging their experiences over Alvan's. (I learned that their university policy states that, if the request for review receives no response from the administrator, then that person loses their opportunity to respond. Yet, the Provost demanded the re-initiation by the student.) When Alvan did so, he/she went unsupported by the department Chair and Alvan elevated the request once again to the Dean. The Dean then requested a meeting with Alvan. In the virtual meeting, he informed Alvan of his colorblindness, that he treats all his students the same, and that Alvan should "put [his/her] culture aside" to learn the content. Alvan's request for support was denied, again, on that basis. Upon elevating the issue to the Provost (the second time), all support for Alvan was denied. The Provost stated that his word was final and the case could not be raised any higher. The

***Owning our life experiences, practicing art making, teaching, researching, intentionally practicing EDI&A, and contributing to USSEA have supported my strength and my insight to speak with those who continue to be ignored or disregarded by policy makers and the "colorblind."***

situation took on an air of helplessness and increased tension, negatively impacting Alvan as he/she relived the acts of bullying, exclusion, and silencing. He/She reached points of re-traumatization and need for therapy. Shera then filed a hotline complaint against all four persons' actions described above. Her own complaint was met with silence. While writing this article, I followed up with her to determine if there had been any progress since her filing. She said she still has heard nothing. Shortly thereafter surfaced a single university-wide workshop on "unconscious" biases, and the relationship policy. Shera attended the workshop yet noted that none of the persons described above were present.

After an eight-month-long fight for his/her educational life, having to re-take courses from the same abovementioned instructor multiple times (but continuing to be failed), and only his/her internship from completing the degree, the Provost recommended that Alvan be retroactively withdrawn from the university effective immediately. As a last resort, Alvan, petitioned to have the failing grades dropped from his/her transcript so that he/she could still have

an opportunity to complete the degree elsewhere. However, the request was denied. Those failing grades remain on Alvan's transcript resulting in a GPA<sup>6</sup> that will prevent him/her from participating in other graduate programs in the near future. Additionally, any opportunities for Financial Aid/Scholarships to pay for that education are also removed. All the persons involved in the complaints remain in denial of any discriminatory perspectives or behaviors.

When the relationship policy was implemented at the end of the current semester, Shera reached out to her own Chair to express her intense fear of being terminated given how voiceful she had been on the lack of student focused EDI&A on her campus considering Alvan's – and other students' – treatment. She revealed that, nearly two years ago, when their current

Provost came on board, Shera opened the EDI&A conversation with him trusting him to engage that university-wide effort and be a part of that project. During that discussion, he said he would present the topic to the Chancellor in support of EDI&A actions across campus and include Shera in those discussion. However, when a task force was formed, Shera was excluded from the discussion and when the Provost ignored Alvan's case, ultimately siding with the employees, Shera said that her hope for fundamental institutional support with/for non-normative students was also beleaguered. She said that by the end of the events shared above, she realized that she had witnessed the entire process from the student's point-of-view and now knew precisely how they felt. Many of Alvan's courses in question occurred during and just after the covid shutdown resulting in Alvan and Shera being in the same environment during those online class meetings. She had, indeed, heard the instructor's, Dean's, and Provost's comments and visibly observed Alvan's continuum of vexations. Neither the instructor, Chair, nor any of the administrators ever asked him/her what he/she needed or felt. Although, Shera witnessed the discrimination first-hand, given her relationship to the student, she felt it would jeopardize her position with the university and their family's only means of solid financial support had she spoken up at the time. When the relationship policy was released, she said she knew she had made the right decision and concurrently felt the extreme sense of silencing that her partner was experiencing.

This returns us to why I share this story. Asking ourselves what we have the ability to share with, and need from, silencers through our individual experiences and backgrounds is key to strengthening our inclusive competences and actions in the art classroom. USSEA is in an excellent position to serve national and global art educational communities through the voices that make up our membership, as well as those who depend on educators for growth and development. Every single USSEA member is part of that conversation, has intrinsic value, and has space for organizational agency. USSEA's voice is the collective "we" of visual and cultural teaching/telling.

Owning our life experiences, practicing art making, teaching, researching, intentionally practicing EDI&A, and contributing to USSEA have support-

ed my strength and my insight to speak with those who continue to be ignored or disregarded by policy makers and the "colorblind." Thus, as I transition from President-elect to President in the next year, I pose this question: What would you like to take away from your experience as a USSEA member, what will you continue to discover as an educator or artist, and what might you contribute to learners and knowledge-keepers as we move onward? I look forward to hearing from & working with each and every USSEA voice today, tomorrow, and always.

Thank you.  
Mara  
President-Elect  
of USSEA



*Dr. Mara Pierce is the Associate Professor of Art Education at Montana State University Billings and the President-elect of USSEA  
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<sup>1</sup> I received her permission to share the story widely. She chose the pseudonym of "Shera."

<sup>2</sup> Shera is still employed at her university currently.

<sup>3</sup> The policy states: "Relationships subject to this policy are those romantic or sexual relationships where consent appears to be present, but where there is a power differential within the university between the parties."

<sup>4</sup> I received his/her permission to share the story widely. He/She chose the pseudonym of "Alvan."

<sup>5</sup> Incidents include mocking during class, attempts at translating Indigenous concepts for the classes through his own non-Indigenous lens, and disregarding Alvan's needs for properly formatted readable digital documents to accommodate for his/her learning differences

<sup>6</sup> Alvan's GPA was 3.5 at the graduate level from his/her first semester in spring 2020 through summer 2021, which was prior to the taking any courses with the instructor noted in the article. At the undergraduate level (fall 2017 – fall 2019), Alvan carried a near-4.0 GPA and was on the Dean's list multiple semesters.

# USSEA Awards Call for Nominations for NAEA 2023

## Deadline: February 15, 2023

### 2023 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 San Antonio, Texas, April 13-15, 2023.

- 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 has demonstrated leadership in and commitment to multicultural, cross-cultural educational strategies in their school/s 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/Dissertation**

The USSEA Graduate Thesis award is presented to a Master’s graduate whose thesis 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 master’s work promotes pluralistic perspectives, deepens human and cultural understanding, and/or builds respect for diverse learners.

Nominations: 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, [fbenzer@missouristate.edu](mailto:fbenzer@missouristate.edu)

**Deadline Date:** Nomination materials (nomination form, vitae, letter of nomination, and two additional letters of support) are due by February 15, 2023. Letters of nomination, acceptance, and support must be written in English. Recipients will be recognized at the annual NAEA conference.

# Call for Artworks

2022-2023 USSEA Student Art Exchange and Online Exhibition Theme: Conflict Transformation

What is Conflict Transformation?

Based on the work of J.P. Lederach (1995), conflict transformation refers to handling opposition with optimism. Rather than trying to eliminate or control conflict, conflict transformation involves recognizing conflicts as opportunities for positive growth. For example, engaging in respectful dialogue with someone who holds a different point of view provides the opportunity for both parties to learn from each other's perspective.

Guiding Questions



Invite students to reflect on questions such as:

What is a conflict?

How do you experience internal conflicts (conflicts occurring in your head)?

How do you experience external conflicts (conflicts with other people or things)?

What conflicts have you witnessed in the world around you?

What causes these conflicts?

How might the conflict transform into something positive?

What would be lost if the conflict had been avoided?

Dr. Rebecca Shipe, Director of our USSEA Student Art Exchange and Exhibition, invites students at all levels (including pre-service art educators) to create artworks that reflect on Conflict Transformation through images and text. For more information, go to our [website link](#). Please consider involving your students in the online exhibition.

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## Featured Artist: Dr. Nanyoung Kim Aesthetic of Romanesque Architecture

My artistic medium was originally ceramic sculpture. When I began my clay work, it became obvious to me that architectural forms and spaces would be the means of my expression. I have had a deep interest in history, so I could explore many eternal human meanings and conditions in various architectural settings. I would build forms with clay slabs with oddly angled planes and sharply defined edges. I would place a lone figure or two there, seemingly lost in their thoughts. The salt-firing technique with various surface treatments seems to have enhanced the effect I desired. It made my works look ancient, mysterious, and timeless.

However, due to the logistics of ceramic work and my frequent travels abroad, I had to switch my medium to photography. I found my subject in 2007 while travelling through Auvergne, central mountainous region of France. I was visiting pilgrim churches there after my husband's untimely death. Even though I did not especially seek solace, I experienced the power of beauty in healing emotional wounds, since those churches were so beautiful. They were built in the Romanesque style, which is characterized by ancient Roman architectural motifs, such as round arches, columns, and vaults, and flourished in





church buildings all over Western Europe in the 11th century. As a student of art during my whole life, although I “knew” this architectural style from books, encountering them in person was a totally different experience. I swore then and there that I would come back. Thus began my Romanesque journey.

During summer or winter breaks from 2007 to 2016 I visited about one hundred fifty Romanesque churches in France, Italy, and Spain. Before embarking on a trip, I usually did research about the churches I would visit, take as many photos as possible on location, and upon returning, analyze the architectural forms and details in the photos. I visited not only famous and large pilgrim churches, but also many small and remote monastery churches. Each time, I had to rent a car and sometimes drive on a tortuous mountain road for several hours to get to a remote monastery church. I found that the usual descriptions found in art history books, such as stone vaults, thick walls, small windows, and dark interiors, did not do





justice to the real experience of them. They emphasized the physical and technical limitations of the period, not what the medieval builders achieved with these limitations.

What I have learned from this experience is that first, those medieval builders, whose names we will never know, were indeed superb designers. The simple intention of building a beautiful edifice that deserves the name of a “heavenly Jerusalem” would not automatically produce a beautiful building. The builders knew all the design principles that nowadays college art students learn and applied them to mitigate the negative visual effects imposed by the structural requirement of sustaining a stone vaulted building.

Another aspect of Romanesque architecture, especially in the churches in Latin Europe, is that they were amazingly various. Throughout this ten-year journey, I have never encountered any two churches that are exactly alike. Even though their basic

floor plan is mostly a longitudinal Latin cross or a basilica design, they are infinitely different in all other aspects, such as size, location, and topography of the site, building materials, and decorative treatment. It had an addictive effect on me: even after, say, visiting a hundred Romanesque churches, I would eagerly await for the surprise the next church would bring me.

The beauty of Romanesque churches, the creativity of medieval masons, and the variety of their design are virtually unknown to the general public or even art students or art history professors. Not many people know about them. Thus, my photographs of Romanesque churches are invitations to linger in imagination and thoughts on these remote, hidden, quiet, beautiful, and sacred spaces. Indeed, they are the embodiments of the Christian faith in the Romanesque era a thousand years ago, which was fervent, but still innocent and sincere.



Dr. Nanyoung Kim received her Master's and Doctorate degree in Art Education from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Before coming to the US to study art education, she received a Bachelor's degree in Music (piano) and a Master's degree in Aesthetics, both from Seoul National University, Seoul, Korea, and taught music in high school and art history in various Korean universities.

She has been working as a professor of art education at East Carolina University since 1999. She publishes theoretical articles on aesthetics, design education, art criticism, and craft education. The most recent such article is "Aesthetics of Romanesque architecture" published in the Journal of Aesthetic Education in Spring 2022. She also contributed pedagogical articles for art teachers in Arts and Activities based off her teaching on various subject matters, such as drawing, painting, composition, color harmonies, crafts, and architecture.

She published a book on Romanesque architecture in Korea in 2016. The cover is shown here. She is preparing for the publication of the book in English.

She can be reached by e-mailing her at [kimn@ecu.edu](mailto:kimn@ecu.edu).



# Learning from Experience

From the Editor: Jenny Evans

Now that we are all back on campus and face to face, the new trend is experiential learning. Swinging to the complete total opposite of online/digital learning, we are gearing back up to not only be face-to-face but to also be out in the world beyond the campus greens, in the field, museums, factories, labs, etc. As art educators, experiential learning is nothing new; this is how we learn in art. We know that in art, the best teacher is experience. We could all watch Bob Ross videos until we are blue in the face, but until we have a paint brush in hand, the feeling, the force, and the creativity that wields behind the paintbrush is unimaginable. The same goes for a lump of clay. During confinement, we binged watched the Great Pottery Throw Down. Even non-artists thought they could sit and a wheel and throw a pot at one go. However, as art educators we know.... *it comes from experience.*

Experiential learning has a deep-rooted theoretical history, from Plato and Aristotle to Dewey, Kolb, Piaget, and Vygotsky. All have expanded their predecessor's ideas, by pushing them further – such as Vygotsky's learning from play or Kolb's extension of lifelong learning to meet the needs of society (Kolb, 2015). My personal favorite is Dewey's take: Experience + Reflection = New knowledge (Dewey, 1938). Taking the experience to a whole other level by adding in the act of reflecting. Which as educators and artists this is what we do regularly because we know it works ... *from experience.*

***But why is it this is such a new or trendy topic in higher education?***

***Is this because we spent the last two years hiding and learning in our homes?***

Journal articles like *Reinventing the Student Journey or The Future of the Immersive Campus' for all Subjects across the Campus: Accounting, Engineering, to Computer Science to Horticulture* illustrate the expansion of the trend. There are even new articles with art related topics *The Course Has Left the Classroom: Community Engagement, Consensus Building, and Experiential*

*Learning as Socially Engaged Art History* (Wallis, 2021) and *Mind the Gap: Workshop satisfaction and skills development in art-based learning* (Sandberg, Stasewitsch, & Prumper, 2022). All of these articles are specific to higher education and highlight the various characteristics of experiential learning:

**Active** – learners engage through hands-on activities and simulations

**Minds-on** – learners connect intellectually with content and build deeper understandings

**Sensory** – learners immerse themselves in the historic resources and natural environment.

**Collaborative** – learners unite through dialogue, by working together and sharing authority, affective – learners reflect and make emotional connections

**Inspirational** – learners feel empowered toward action thinking, agency, and stewardship

**Fun** – learners have the freedom to play and be creative

One has to consider that the last years of modifying our pedagogy to survive are moving us in the direction with a very firm swift kick. Time has been spent organizing the ideas of what we did pre-COVID with what we did during COVID as well as how we are reaching or trying to teach to students that have forgotten what it's like to be in a classroom with responsibilities, homework, deadlines and a lot less flexibility. We are in essence modeling our experiential learning from the past three years to create the future of the classroom now. While studio classes have always incorporated experiential learning, not all of art education or even education classes have that opportunity. We re-convened, peer assessments here at my university. It is very obvious how some faculty have tried to continue teaching face-to-face with online pedagogy and habits, but it's not working. Students are not engaged, not interested, not participating in discussions, critiques, and would rather just work online in the solitude of their own personal space. So, where do we go from here? How do we take the lessons that we learned beyond how to use the technology, and adapt it, improve it and apply it back in the classroom? What were the best parts of teaching online?

Let me introduce you to hybrid classes: the best of both worlds. The interdisciplinary pedagogy is mixing multiple methods into one to see which works best. For example, our Art Criticism course there is an online component: – student discussions and group assignments: there is an experiential visual culture out in the world component, there are also face-to-face classes. It is an all in one three-credit class. This brain child was developed by our art history professor, Dr. Reynolds, as a way to deal with post-COVID reality. She was taking specifically what worked with the students (online discussions were more productive than face to face discussions) and blending with face-to-face presentations (peer to peer teaching) to create a class that works for the upper classmen. Why? Because Dr. Reynolds knows... *from experience*.

Without another irrelevant professional development course from the powers that be, many of us have done the exact same thing with our courses. Studio teachers are doing art critiques online, or incorporating group projects such as planning a gallery layout done collaboratively online as well as face-to-face building interpersonal relationship skills. Even student teachers are meeting online as well instead of in-person for their seminar course to ease the stress of being in clinical practice and reduce driving to campus from a distance. We are all being stretched to re-define, re-develop, and re-create pedagogy once again from our past experiences.

As we move forward in this school year I encourage you all to continue teaching experientially and from your experience. I encourage you, share your experience, how you learned, what you learned, and why it was useful to have this new knowledge. Share with colleagues, students, pre-service teachers, and even mentors out in the field. We all know

we would not have survived the last two years without the sharing of survival methods. So where are the best places to share? We have some wonderful conferences coming up:

- NAEA San Antonio in April 2023
- InSEA in Çanakkale, Turkey in September 2023
- USSEA in Santa Fe, New Mexico June 2024,

Additionally, there are many publications like our own: *Journal of Cultural Research in Art Education* ([jCRAE](#))

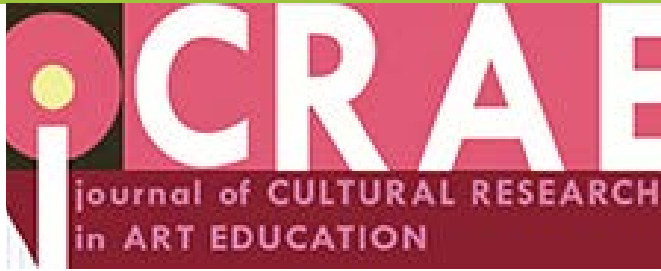
(which is currently seeking submissions) or *International Journal of Education through Art* ([IIEA](#)). Not in the mood to write a full article? Share a quick idea, question, reflection, etc. on social media in our [FaceBook group](#). Research shows that FaceBook groups provide a positive safe space where members can ask, learn, share and vent immediately with their peers without demands of deadlines, financial constraints or time requirements of certified professional development (Evans, 2021). Whichever method you choose, share and learn from others that are sharing their experience because as art educators we know... *from experience*.



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# CALL FOR CONTENT



## Journal of Cultural Research in Art Education

Mini-Theme: Rethinking Ritual Ecologies

Editors: Dr. Amanda Alexander, & Dr. Cala Coats,

Submissions Due: January 15, 2022

<https://www.ussea.net/jcrae>

How do rituals create worlds, embody historical beliefs, and evolve through emerging technologies? What do rituals produce, consume, conjure, and endanger in spaces and communities, and through the materials they enliven? How is art education entangled with ritual(s)?

Rituals are often associated with religious, ceremonial, or spiritual practices, but they can also be health-related, habitual, or superstitious acts or patterns. They can bring together communities and emerge from collective activities. Objects, such as clothing and other textiles, tools, idols, food and liquids, plants, jewelry, and other adornments become associated with and embedded in ceremonial and ritualistic practices. An investigation of rituals connects global cultural values and beliefs, natural materials and man-made objects, place and geography, history and politics, technical and creative skills, as well as formal and informal arts education.

This issue of jCRAE examines the effects, processes, practices, and beliefs of historical, traditional, and contemporary rituals on humans and other life forms, the sites from which they emerge and continue to take place, and the agency of their associated materials. Some questions to consider are:

How are rituals embedded in forms of consumption and production?

How are rituals (art) educational?

What is at stake with the commodification and growing tourism industries emerging from and desire for other cultures' rituals and the art that surrounds them?

How are the complex detrimental and beneficial effects of cultural ritual felt differently depending on the population?

What art making and materials are created for or from rituals, and what were their conditions or emergence?

How are the participatory and relational turns in art, culture, museums, and art education related to a desire for ritual, connectedness, and community?

What does this mean for art educators learning the life of objects beyond aesthetic principles of visual quality?

How do the current phenomena echo or continue histories of colonialism and imperialism, now rooted in capitalism, where the desire or the joy is found in acquisition and consumption?

How can art education encourage respect for that which we desire, consume, colonize, and/or fetishize?

How are conceptualizing and implementing pedagogical practices and/or examining classroom communitarian action a form of ritual?

Submissions to this issue may draw on historical, traditional, and contemporary research in art education related to visual and material culture, K-12 and community-based art education, Indigenous practices, multiculturalism, postcolonialism/decolonization, New Materialist theories, object-oriented ontologies, ecofeminism, Afrofuturism, critical theory, and public pedagogy.

The Journal of Cultural Research in Art Education accepts a variety of submissions types, including traditional manuscripts, graphic novels, photo essays, videos, interactive pieces, and more. Additional submission details and policies as well as archived journal issues can be found at <https://www.jcrae.org>.

Please direct questions and submissions to Co-Editors, Amanda Alexander and Cala Coats at [jcrae1983@gmail.com](mailto:jcrae1983@gmail.com).  
<https://journals.librarypublishing.arizona.edu/jcrae/>

## Looking Ahead:



NATIONAL ART EDUCATION ASSOCIATION



**SAN ANTONIO**

SAVE THE DATES | APRIL 13-15

**World Congress  
Canakkale, Turkey  
September 4-8, 2023**

More information on submitting proposals, registration, accommodations and travel at: <https://www.insea.org/insea-congresses/>



**2024**

**Santa Fe, New Mexico  
[more details to come.](#)**

*Would you like to be a featured artist in Voices or know someone who does?*

Our next opportunity will be for Winter 2023 !

Nominate a fellow artist or send your images and artist statement/art-making philosophy to Dr. Jenny Evans, Voices Editor-in Chief at [jenevans@valdosta.edu](mailto:jenevans@valdosta.edu)