

TriBeCa Community School Newsletter

October 16, 2009

General Notices

PARENTS WORKSHOPS ARE HERE!

We invite you to see the work that the children have been doing.

If you did not RSVP yet, please do so to your child's teacher:

All workshops are held here at the school 7:00PM-8:30PM (no children).

RM1: Oct 27, 2009

RM2: Nov 9, 2009

RM3: Nov 4, 2009

RM5: Oct 27, 2009

RM6: Nov 4, 2009

Next week's snack:

Tricia Williams (chefanator@mac.com), a certified holistic nutritionist and chef (also a parent in our school!) plans and prepares our snack. For next week, the menu is (snack may change without notice):

Monday: Happy Herbert's Organic Whole Grain Pretzels

Tuesday: NY State Farmstead Cheddar and Whole Wheat Crackers

Wednesday: Banana Bread (buckwheat, bananas, maple, dates, vanilla, butter, eggs, sea salt)

Thursday: Greenmarket Pears and Apples

Friday: Fall Harvest Veggies with Roasted Pumpkin Seed Dip

Jinsey Dauk Photography:

Get your Holiday Pics done soon! Pro Photojournalist (and Room 3 mom!) Jinsey Dauk would like to extend a warm welcome to all the new students of Tribeca Community School by offering a \$100 discount on a Pro Shoot to anyone attending the school, and their families! Jinsey is a celebrity portraitist, wedding, fashion and fine art photographer and is very excited to offer the reduced price of \$400 for unlimited amounts of images shot.

More shoot and package details on her website below - the "Baby Pics" link: <http://www.Jinsey.com> (Fine Art: <http://www.JinseyArt.com>)

Last year she successfully shot each class and each student by photographing "A Day in the Life of the Children of TCS." Jinsey captured fun, spirited, documentary styled portraits in and out of the classroom, as well as awesome class pics!

Jinsey "love is good!"

<http://www.Jinsey.com/>

<http://www.JinseyArt.com>

jinsey dauk photography, inc
50 murray st #2109 ny, ny 10007
212-243-0652

Room 1

Community

During this first month of school, the children have begun to find comfort in our daily routines. One routine in particular: morning greeting, has become a truly social gathering, during which the children recognize each other, greet one another and engage in verbal and non-verbal interactions. In order to promote a sense of community within our classroom, during this time (morning drop off time), we also invite parents and family members to use this part of the day to converse with the teachers. We would love to have a time to get to know families and important happenings in each household.

Classroom Pet

Our neighboring classroom, room 2, has recently begun a long-term investigation about snails, their class pet. In order to increase and encourage collaboration between the two rooms, we have decided to also incorporate snails into our classroom. The children of room 1 observed the new animals and made several hypotheses about what they are, about their feelings, and about what they need to survive. The children's first approach with the snails was exclusively visual: they chose to be mindful of not touching them. The teachers have made the conscious decision to not give the children the answers in terms of what these animals are, so please do not talk to them about snails at home, as this would alter their investigation. To promote continuity and investigations between the two rooms, we will in the near future invite room 2 to offer their knowledge and experience about the "snails" with the children of room 1.

Collaborative Small-Group Work

As our philosophical values and core principles promote the concept of collaboration and community, and the children of room 1 are becoming acquainted within the context of their classroom, daily routines, and classmates, it is essential to begin developing connections to the remainder of the school. To begin this inquiry, we place immense value in the children of room 1 connecting to their peers in room 5. This week, small group investigations have begun in order for the two classrooms to meet. Leaving our room promotes both confidence and autonomy. Entering a new room has been an enriching experience: the children have had the opportunity to interact with peers and a new environment, with a variation of provocations and materials. We plan to continue this valuable long-term connection.

Music & Movement

During our movement time we noticed that some of our children have been working independently around concepts of equilibrium and balance. Based on these observations, we offered a more challenging setting: small group work has begun in order to create an obstacle course in the our future Piazza (our parents seating area.) In this space, the children work with challenging balancing mediums: hollow blocks and tunnels in order to take risks with body movements.

Reminder

Please, remember the Family Binders! During morning meeting, as part of our routine, we started reading the personal

history of each child: we want all of the children to have the opportunity to share

about their families.

Room 2

Dramatic Play

We added a subway map into the dramatic play area because of the students' interest in the subway. This led to interesting shift in their dramatic play. A.G said that he needed to go to the grocery store and H.H pinpointed its location on the map. They then decided that they would use the map to steer the boat (our loft and couch) to the Statue of Liberty and were joined in their adventures by a few other students.

This shows us that their symbolic play is evolving to more calculated and collaborative acts of imagination.

Mini Atelier

This week we introduced Gerbera Daisies into our mini atelier. We wanted to see if the children would notice the differences between the sunflowers and the fuchsia daisies and if they would reflect these differences in their paintings. We noticed that the children took to painting the individual parts of the flower rather than focusing on the flower as a whole. O.P said that he painted the green part of the flower and pointing out the stem of a daisy.

Class Pet

We began the week by regrouping the children with those who had theories that conflicted with their own and witnessed some serious debates among the children. Ideas currently on the table are bumble bee, elephant, bug,

snake, caterpillar and snail. The children began to work with Monique in the Atelier to draw the animal from both direction observation and from enlarged photographs.

We are asking parents and caregivers to refrain from engaging in discussions with children that may influence their theories about what the animal might be. For example, if your child has reported that we have a tiger in the classroom, ask about their ideas, but do not lead them in another direction or suggest that they may be incorrect. We want them to engage in these discussions in the classroom with their peers.

Tree Investigation

On our last walk, the students were interested in hitting the tree in attempt to knock it down. MM proclaimed that hitting the tree would make it sad. This made us curious as to what the children thought about trees having feelings. NM said that they do not have feelings, only branches. HH said that if he knocked the tree down, it would be dead and it would cry. We will continue to visit the tree and explore feelings. Monique will also begin to assist the group in expressing their ideas through drawing.

Reminders

We are continuously in need of plastic grocery bags and appreciate contributions that have been made thus far. Whenever you feel that you may

have too many in your home, please

send them in.

Room 3

Room 3 has had a wonderful week of fall colors and experiences.

At the end of last week, students began to observe color objects relating to their painting as they worked. These small provocations were intended to encourage dialogue about the colors the students were using, inspire them to mix and create new ones, or spark inspiration around an image. When students first noticed the provocations, they enjoyed exploring them, and sharing their ideas with their friends. Some of these objects included red and blue water prisms, and small pieces of colored cloth laid out on the painting table in the atelier. Students flipped the water prisms over to watch the rush of upside down colored water, and then through them, at their peers and the classroom, to observe through colored lenses. Some carefully arranged the color swatches on the table, and felt the different textures next to one another. While the students excitedly explored the provocations, very few related them to their painting. Most enjoyed the two experiences independently.

We wanted to better merge the experience of their color noticing with their hands-on experience in the class. To this end, we began to take small groups of students outside, to make observations about the community. Small groups shared their information

with the whole class, and used large photographs taken on their walks to help explain their findings. There was much conversation about orange pumpkins, the red-colored columns of the toy store, blue and yellow benches, and beautiful colored flowers outside the markets. After talking about these pictures, we placed them in the atelier, hoping to inspire students as they painted. We noticed that students began to use more colors- closer in space- making beautiful color designs. Most noticed the way their colors turned after inadvertently blending them on the paper, but were happy to compare them to one another, saying, “Wow, I made purple”, or “Look-- Brown!”

In an effort to more closely connect the students to their observations as they painted inside the classroom, we took pictures of them engaged in their environment on our second trip outside. It was very exciting to listen to the group who went outside talk about their color experiences with the children who stayed in, and so were viewing the scenery for the first time. This set of pictures led to increased conversation about the colors the children were using as they painted, and subsequent color blending. As we move forward, we’re hoping to create more dialogue between the students about their intentions as they use color, reference experiences, and find inspiration for images.

Room 4: Atelier

Room 1

Room 1 had a wonderful addition to their mini atelier. Room 1 teachers and I added large laminated images of works by Ana Mendieta. These images were chosen because of their specific links to clay materials in a natural environment with the addition of water. We decided to add images of the children working in the clay next to the images of the contemporary art works. There were many new explorers in the clay this week possibly due to the change in the environment. Our philosophy holds great importance to the environment as the third teaching devise.

Room 2

Watercolor painting in the mini atelier has gained interest after the addition of the sunflower and image of the sunflower were set up near the easel. After exploring the details of the sunflower, we changed the flower to a colored daisy keeping similar form to the sunflower. Small groups started coming into the atelier to begin their drawing explorations, we have been using the new class pet as inspiration.

Room 3

As Room 3's painting progression continues we have added images from our first neighborhood walk. Images of flowers, pumpkins, and storefronts were added to the mini atelier. Wednesday we took a small group outside and reexamined colors around the block. The children became much more verbal about pointing things out, debating which colors are where and interacting with their surrounding materials. Small groups have continued to come into the

atelier to work on self- portraits. We have begun starting the class off with warm up drawings. Together we practice by making a series of different types of lines to develop their control and hand eye coordination. The students were introduced to images by Matisse from "Florilege Des Amours de Ronsard". The illustrative portraits have many images of simple line drawings done by Matisse, which demonstrate the type of lines they have been exploring with.

Room 5

Deciding to change up the materials in their mini atelier, Room 5 teachers and I decided to add clay. We set it up as small pieces on a canvas board, introducing the clay as a new material we wanted to offer it organically on the table, stirring away from independent pieces. In the future, we will start to bring small groups into the atelier to continue a full and deep investigation within the clay material.

Room 6

As Room 6 clay study progresses, we began to discuss textures and the intentionality within surfaces. As the children make specific decisions about the details within their own work, their skill and speed of working has become more concentrated. Room 6 teachers and I will be preparing for an installation of the student work from their wire explorations. The space will have examples of their work along with images of their process of working. We will continue to have wire set up in their mini atelier.

Room 5

The Introduction of a New Material in the Mini-Atelier

We offered the children clay to work with this week in the classroom. During the first few days the children were given small squares of malleable brown clay, and the teachers observed the class's interest in manipulating the clay into many different shapes. Some of the strategies that were used included flattening, poking, ripping, pounding, rolling and squishing. The children also noticed that the clay rubbed off on their skin and they used their fingers to make marks on the cardboard workspaces. Please talk to your children about the work in the mini-atelier this week and tell the teachers any comments the children share. We look forward to continuing our work with clay and will offer the children natural materials as clay tools to work with next week.

Light and Shadow

The light table has been an area of concentration in our classroom. The teachers noticed the children's interest in stacking in this area, and at the end of last week we added a new provocation based on this observation. The addition of magna tiles, has invited children to build, connect pieces, and make three-dimensional structures. Children view these tiles as many different things. One child commented on the tiles, stating "shapes, shapes". Another child worked intentionally building a "music box" on several occasion.

Toilet Learning

In Room 5, we decided to add the children's book: "Once Upon a Potty

Girl" by Alona Frankel about toilet learning, as a provocation for the continuation of the children's toilet learning experiences. The book was situated in the dramatic play area next to the doll, diaper, bin and wet wipes. The children responded to the provocation by picking up the book, talking about the pictures in the book and especially about the girl getting her diaper changed and sitting on the potty. The children asked us to read the story for them and afterwards they would read it by themselves or for each other. Here are some of the quotes that the children said while reading the book:

"Is that a hat? Is that a cat? No, that's a potty."

" Poop came out and the baby cries."

The children have continued to be engaged in the dramatic play area where they are collaborating on taking the diaper off the doll, wiping her with wet wipes and putting a new diaper on her again.

Furthermore, some of the children have been using the book as a language to combine the figurative and operative learning process. * The children have been reading the book and then bringing the doll to the restroom, taking her diaper off and placing her on the toilet seat, wiping the doll, washing the doll's hands and putting a new diaper on her. Here are some of the quotes the children have said while doing these things:

“Now take off your diaper. Are you done? I’m going to hold you, so you don’t fall. You did! Wash your hands”.
“The baby is making pee pee on the toilet. Toilet paper. Wash your hands”.

Please continue to send your children to school in clothes that encourage their awareness of their own bodies and independence. We recommend, “wash

and wear clothes” with elastic in the waist, tank tops/t-shirts under long-sleeved shirts (instead of baby body stockings) and Velcro shoes/boots.

We look forward to sharing more toilet learning experiences with you.

*Source: Udviklingspsykologiske teorier – Redigeret af Espen Jerlang.

Room 6

Changes to the Room

We now have a storage closet in back of the N. Moore side of the school. In addition to providing storage space, we have found that it helps create a cozier feel, particularly for our meeting area.

We have also redefined our reading area. In this area you will find the green couch and bookcase with family books, as well as our class bookshelf. Our intention for the reading area is that it be a comfortable place for parents to share

a book or work on a puzzle with children in the morning.

Scientific Theories

We have been revisiting and discussing the children’s theories that emerged from our exploration of the fountain at CaVaLa Park. The most prominent discussion that emerged centered around why the wood floated and the pennies sank in the fountain. We selected several objects and with a small group of children discussed whether or not they would sink or float and why. After becoming familiar with the terms “prediction” and “experiment” this small group of children decided that

they only way to find out for sure would be with an experiment.

Grocery Store

The process of pricing items is underway. The children are noticing that while some items have prices, many still do not. We have introduced post-it notes to facilitate the pricing process, as well as a number line that includes printed numerals with corresponding dots for counting. These new materials allow the children to think about how much an item should cost, count the dots, and copy the numeral.

Journals

We have started journals! This week we introduced the children to the format of a journal page. It has a horizontal line a few inches from the bottom separating the page. The bottom is used for writing the stories the children wish to tell (either on their own or dictated to a teacher) and the top is for illustrations. We will use pencils for journals and work on them several times a week.

New Materials

After noticing the popularity of the large trucks in the building area, we introduced a set of interconnecting tracks with trains, buses and cars.

These materials are used on the large carpet during work time and address several skill-building elements: collaborative building, communication, negotiating space, problem solving, and creative thinking.

We have also added large hollow blocks to our building area for the children to use in their structures. The variety of building materials is important as the children work together to build structures, create tunnels, and experiment with ramps.

Reminders

We are still missing a few family books. Please bring them in as soon as possible.