

What is a Teaching Artist?

“A teaching artist is a practicing professional artist with the complementary skills and sensibilities of an educator, who engages people in learning experiences in, through, and about the arts.”

Eric Booth, Nationally recognized actor, teaching artist and author

A teaching artist, by definition, is a two-career professional: a working artist and a working educator. As a working artist they are involved in an ongoing process of discovery, problem solving, discipline and refinement of skills in their discipline. As a working educator, it is essential that the artist is also developing a knowledge base and skills to be an effective partner in education. Achieving a meaningful balance between these two professions, whereby one feeds the other, is an ongoing process that requires a deepening awareness for the teaching artist of what their teaching brings to their art and what their art teaches them about learning.

Teaching artists are a crucial resource for the future of arts education, the arts in general, and the overall process of learning. The role of the teaching artist is an integral part of the overarching arts education constellation, which includes:

- short and long-term school and after-school residencies.
- arts experiences, including in-school performances by professional artists, as well as field trips to studios, galleries, museums, and performances.
- integrating the arts throughout the curriculum as a way of engaging all types of intelligence's in the learning process.
- arts education standards backed up by ongoing curriculum-based arts instruction in pre-K-12.
- discipline-specific learning in the arts: visual art, dance, theater, music, poetry, etc.
- higher education and on-going development for the professional artist, as well as the professional artist who is also a *teaching artist*.
- lifelong learning in the arts through community arts events, classes and workshops.

Successful teaching artists help provide a tangible link between the creative process and all kinds of learning, and they make manifest in classroom and community settings the human drive to survive by making meaning of the world.

For more information contact the Arts Learning Department at the Arizona Commission on the Arts.

<http://www.azarts.gov/who-we-are/staff>

