“Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day, teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.”
Chinese proverb

FISHTOWN DIARIES II
Documenting Neighborhood Art
by and for the Fishtown Community

Fishtowners of all ages participated in citywide “Philly Cleanup” sweeping, picking up trash and painting over graffiti at FRC playground and neighborhood with help from Temple University students, and Fishtown Neighbors Association.

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"Friendship multiplies blessings and minimizes misfortunes; it is a unique remedy against adversity and it soothes the soul."  
Baltasar Gracian

Insightful comments from our participants:

"3/13/08 -I love the idea of painting over graffiti, especially in areas where children play. I studied the broken window theory in school which states that the presence of dereliction and neglect, if unchecked, almost inevitably leads to further disregard for the environment. When you see trash everywhere, you're more likely to litter. So painting over the graffiti really helps ensure that this community center remains a clean and enduring environment."

"Fishtown sometimes seems to be a place that lost hope long ago and with that lost drive, and want for something more. Art Sphere has broken through that despair by giving the town a strong sense of community and pride all through art. It is inspirational and beautiful and I really enjoyed being a part of it and really seeing change manifest itself on a wall."

"Today was nice because we got a choice to work on whatever project we were best suited to, and when the little children came out to visit, we got to witness the community center in action, being used as it is intended."

"Fishtown: Reflections - I thought the way individual styles were obvious but blended added to the overall effect. Like a community it came together with individual effort towards a common goal. Clearly the Fishtown community enjoys the recreation center and murals. Part of the exciting part is its ever changing look. The way the kids would come by to paint a few details and observe the progress." MB

"I really enjoyed being hands on. The work we did today will directly reach the community. I like the fact that the park area is open to all." EL

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Sharing experiences from University of PA, Bryn Mawr College, Swarthmore College, Temple University, Arcadia University, Moore College of Art and Bucks Coutny Community College with majors from International Studies, Philosophy, Sociology, Art, Architecture, Japanese, Anthropology and others, college students indirectly brought new ideas, hard work ethics, exposure to academic success, and the inspiration to continue to follow career pursuits.

Artwork made by participants: below and above

Participants generate care within our community with their generosity of spirit.

"We successfully completed murals begun by previous groups and removed trash and graffiti."

"Drawings and cards from earlier participants inspired our artwork."

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"We know what we are, but know not what we may be." William Shakespeare

"Art is not what you see, but what you make others see." Edgar Degas

"Art is literacy of the heart" Elliot Eisner

Create your own poem with the first letter of the first word of each line spelling Fishtown.

F - Friendly
  Recommended reading:
  This is a Poem That Heals Fish
  Exuding magic and unbridled creativity on every page, this is a book with the potential to heal more than just fish.—Publishers Weekly

I - Individuals are Supporting

S - Helpful

T - Teens

O - Organizing change, this is Worthy News!
“May the holes in your net be no larger than the fish in it.” Irish Blessing
Your commitment to community art contributes to the maintenance, painting and care of FRC and builds connections between people.

Help Fishtown Get its Wish
With 1000 Folded Fish! Please support our community efforts and buy a fish! Origami lesson plan kits with magnets, beaded hanging fish and cranes were made by numerous volunteers just for you. Available at The Spirit Newspaper, 1428 Susquehanna Ave. and Barefoot Doctor Community Acupuncture, 1550 E. Montgomery Ave @Angler Movement Arts Center for $5-$10 donations.

Share Art with Someone close to your Heart
With One-of-a-Kind Handmade Watercolor Cards
These small works on acid free archival watercolor paper are adorable and frame-able! Show someone you really care with a unique work of art by local artists. Limited supply available with $10 donation at Flower Etcetera, 637 N. 2nd Street (N. Liberties)

ASI Art Programs with FRC Preschool and Daycare engage a new generation in neighborhood stewardship.

Communities welcome exposure to diverse experiences and various types of education made possible through interactive art activities.

To Get Your Free Copy of Fishtown Diaries II
or previous issue (Fishtown Diaries) with Fish origami and art lesson plans or for more information regarding our programs or volunteering contact us at Art Sphere Incorporated at: info@artsphere.org
Community art teaches skills and increases participant confidence. Going out there, working with new people and thinking on your feet is also what community service and life is about.

Several Arcadia University students from Fishtown led others; making improvements to FRC playground with Fishtown Neighbors Association and local youth. Some students returned to participate for their third year; adding details to benches, painting trashcans, and sharing in the making of Fishtown history and pride.

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“Non-violence is not inaction. It is not for the timid or the weak...Non-violence is hard work. It is the willingness to sacrifice. It is the patience to win”
Cesar Chavez - Farmworker Activist

Feedback from Fishtown Events
"Great work, we look forward to the next Art Sphere event"
Ed Carpenter, Director Fishtown Recreation Center

"What a difference it makes" "When I came in I couldn’t stop looking at it"

"I really enjoyed working with the Fishtown Recreation Center. I learned a lot about the community and the many needs of this area of Philly of which I am honored to be serving. Painting was meditative in a way which made me think of the importance of volunteering and helping others. I also thought about the children that play in this park and the fact that they represent our future, so we really must give them a nurturing safe environment to grow up in. I hope I made a small difference today."

"Thank you for having us today. It was great being able to contribute to your project. This is a great thing you have going on. I feel like this idea can be also spread to different parts of the city. Like parks, community center, and schools. Having art like the one displayed in this center makes people feel better and brings smiles to their faces...so having an expansion of this would improve the community feeling."

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Bet Adams gave her sincere appreciation to those involved in neighborhood revitalizing and mural renovating efforts. Consider learning more and being involved in the commemorative soccer tournament http://www.freddyadams.com/

Soccer team members above reading Fishtown Diaries I

"I had a great time today and hope this program continues to grow and gain community support in Fishtown. This place, the recreation center looks beautiful and I would love to return and help with future projects. It was most definitely a pleasure." Binata
Greetings Friends of Art Sphere Inc.,

I am happy to share Art Sphere Inc.’s recent activities and community artwork collected in Fishtown Diaries II with contributions showing our progress since our first issue. As a local grassroots arts 501C3 non-profit serving local inner city communities we invite you to our upcoming events and could always benefit from your support. Keep us in mind for donations, volunteering, and of course sending your submissions for Fishtown Diaries III!

Best Regards,

Kristin Groenveld
Executive Director and Founder
Art Sphere Incorporated
www.artsphere.org

Fishtown Stencils Pride

Our interactive Fishtown Neighborhood Stencil Project uses images collected from the neighborhood to create community art that builds pride; reinforcing community values with creativity and was made possible through the generous support of the Five County Arts Council, A Pennsylvania Partners in the Arts program serving Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia Counties.

We look to apply our model for future programs (beginning with Friends Neighborhood Guild and Gwynedd Friends School, Winter 08).

Making it all possible

More participants than expected...will there be enough food and brushes? Additional support from the following agencies made our projects possible: Darrell Clarke’s Office, City of Philadelphia, Department of Parks and Recreation, Anti-Graffiti Network, NKCDC, Friends of the Fishtown Branch of the Free Library, Johnny Brendas, Bambi Gallery and Old City Publishing.

“Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once we grow up.”

Pablo Picasso

Team effort

We want to give thanks to our partnering groups. These include: Fishtown Residents, Campus Philly, Friends Neighborhood Guild, Arcadia University, Moore College of Art, Temple University, Campus On Epsilon Delta Chapter Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Zwingli/St John's Youth Groups, Philly Fellows, First Methodist Church, Primitive World Productions, First Methodist Church, Bucks County Community College, Greater Philadelphia Cares, Adaire Middle School, Friends Middle and High School work camps, ONE Philadelphia, Fishtown Neighbors Association, 26th Police Precinct, and Fishtown Recreation Center Staff, Teachers, Parents, Grandparents, Students and Bingo group.

Feeding the Creativity

Continued generous donations made by Rustica Pizza, 903 N. 2nd Street (Northern Liberties) Red Bull- (reps above even joining in the fun), and Primos Pizza (Fishtown) keep all well fueled.

Special Thanks

Much appreciated financial support has also been provided by the Clayman Family Foundation, the Siemens Caring Hands Foundation, and donors like you.

And of course, we appreciate our participants and volunteers working with us to make each project successful. We hope to continue to honor the spirit of our work together and encourage you to share the joy of community art making and community clean up efforts with others.

Thank you!

www.artsphere.org
“We have never discovered a culture on this planet, past or present, that doesn’t have art. Yet there have been a number of cultures - even today - that don’t have reading and writing. Why is that? One possible explanation is that the activities represented by the arts ... are basic to the human experience and necessary for survival. If they weren’t, why would they have been part of every civilization from the Cro-Magnon cave dwellers to the urban citizens of the 21st century?”

David A. Sousa How the Brain Learns

Events such as the celebrating of the Fishtown Library and MLK Day brought people from as far away as Japan, Finland and Florida to work together with Fishtowners.
“When we show our respect for other living things, they respond with respect for us.” Arapaho Proverb

“The earth is the mother of all people, and all people should have equal rights upon it.”
Chief Joseph, Nez Percé

For more art projects and materials see our red notebook at Fishtown Library to make: origami fish, Fishtown memory scrapbook, fish collage, your own stencil, collecting your own Fishtown facts from newspaper, or have an artist dialogue with your friends about Diaries I and II.

Alphabet of Favorite Fishtown Places- Add your Fish Local
Abandoned building
Bridge
Coffee shop
Doghouse
Educational establishment
Funny sign
Garden
Hangout
Invisible Space
Junkyard
Kitchen
Lounge
Musical venue
Neighbors place
Organization headquarters
Place of worship
Quiet city space
Recreation Center
Street corner
Traffic light
Underground
Very Fishtown place
Wonderful home
X-travagant Street
Yummy food joint
Zippy Mural Site

Alphabet of Fishtown Favorite Fish Illustrate, Describe or Add your Fish Species:
Artistic fish
Big bold fish
Cat fish
Dog fish
Easygoing fish
Flying fish
Greedy fish
Happy fish
Intelligent fish
Joker fish
Kissing fish
Laughing fish
Mystic fish
Naughty fish
Overweight fish
Perplexed fish
Quick fish
Radical fish
Soul fish
Tiny fish
Unique fish
Very Fishtown fish
Wandering fish
X-tra large fish
Yelling fish
Zebra fish

www.artsphere.org
Fishtown by Aakash Suchak
(Fishtown Participant)
In response to ASI “IMO” mural- In Memory of... and Freddy Adams mural

Fishtown, submerged in bubbles and murder, subsumes a sinking school of the urban poor. Here we touch the decaying mural of Freddy Adams, chip our teeth, hog the ball. In the depths of our apathetic streets, fierce cusps of coral rip at our clothes, our skinned forearms, tender ankles.

Our teacher, twice removed, has learned to point her trident accusingly from across the yard, to inflate her sides at the first swirl of danger, to dive beneath the isle.

Daily we get scratched, loose our balance, skip in line. Daily we are drenched in a violent surge of murder.

As we glide, we drop our gleaming scales, feeling the mute throb of the ocean that drowns us, and make despondent bubbles that float quietly towards the sky.

While we facilitate art projects, we help participants visualize and create new futures by redefining interpretations of themselves and others.
The Fishtown Diaries I and now II have been a powerful method to document projects, receive and share feedback from various participants.

“Thank you so much for the great experience and opportunity. Your artwork inspires me to be more passionate about being able to make a difference. I hope to see Fishtown continue into something bigger and better than it ready is. God Bless! ” Grace K

We incorporate feedback into improving our programs.

“I can’t tell you enough how great it is to see God working through your team and this place! (heart)
Christine

“Thanks so much! I’ve gotten such a totally new appreciation for art!”
Becky C

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