

Oh, The Places You'll Go! Public Art and Accessibility for All

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This presentation explores a semester-long journey where students with a variety of language-based and nonverbal learning disabilities gained exposure to the innovative process of creating art in public spaces. The Second Avenue subway station recently opened just blocks away from a special needs elementary school in New York City. It was an opportunity for the school's art teacher to introduce her students to the beautiful mosaics in the stations designed by artists Chuck Close, Sarah Sze, and Vik Muniz. By using the new stations' mosaic art as the focus of the exploration, the art educator was able to promote learning and engagement while building on conversation and social skills. Inspired by the different mosaic styles and themes of identity and community seen throughout the artwork in the stations, students then worked to create personal mosaics that represented their unique contributions both as individuals and as members of the school community.

Bio:

Kate received her B.A. in Studio Arts and Art History from the College of Charleston, her M.A. in Art and Art Education from Teachers College, Columbia University, and is a Doctoral Candidate at Teachers College, Columbia University. For ten years she has been the art teacher at The Gillen Brewer School, a pre-school and elementary school for students with special needs, in New York City. Kate has also been an adjunct instructor at Moore College of Art for the past three years. Kate regularly conducts workshops and presents at professional conferences focusing on art and disabilities, STEAM, and interdisciplinary learning.