

# AMY BERK, MFA

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## OVERVIEW

A visionary educator who is passionate about working with youth and collaborates across and outside of organizations to create rich educational experiences. Highly organized, with extensive experience with managing budgets, schedules, resources, and staffing. Enjoy working with and coordinating multiple internal and external stakeholders to enrich the community learning experience. Keen interest in the intersection of culture, history, religion, art, race, gender, and politics. Related experience that enriches personal pedagogy includes teaching art, art-related projects, curating, writing, lectures, tours and presentations.

## EDUCATION

MFA, Painting/New Genres, San Francisco Art Institute, 1995

BA, Studio Art/English, Wesleyan University, 1989

## ARTS EDUCATION MANAGEMENT

**Director, City Studio Program, San Francisco Art Institute (2018-2022) Capp Street (2023-present)**

Provide strategic direction for SFAI's award-winning City Studio program that engages underserved youth in their own neighborhoods through sequenced art classes that are both rigorous and joyous. Taught by working artists who create alongside the students and extending its reach and impact through a range of organizational partnerships, City Studio nurtures a sense of self, encouraging young artists to find their voice; strengthening their conceptual thinking and foundational skills; and inspiring investment in a holistic creative life. Responsible for hiring and training lead artist instructors, finding and collaborating with community partners, and managing schedules and budgets. Created new partnerships with the David Ireland house, ARTIVATE, SF Park and Rec, Chinese Historical Society of America, Haight Street Art Center, Tel-Hi, etc... and brought SFAI's life-drawing class online and accessible for all ages during the pandemic.

**Program Director, Industrial Design Outreach (IDO) (2022- present)**

Hire mentors, create curriculum and empowering the next generation of innovators. [Industrial Design Outreach](#) provides a dynamic curriculum and mentorship program for high school students-especially those whose voices are often ignored. Our mission is to foster curiosity, promote creativity, and build self-confidence in youth from marginalized communities through design education.

**Program Chair/Contemporary Practice, San Francisco Art Institute (2011-2013)**

Directed all aspects of the first-year foundation program serving over 200 students including creating a broad interdisciplinary vision, hiring faculty to fulfill that mission, budgeting and committee work.

**Admissions Counselor/Career Counselor, San Francisco Art Institute (2007- 2010)**

Reviewed portfolios with potential undergrad and graduate students; travelled to admissions portfolio events representing SFAI and worked with current students on resumes and job options.

**Co-Director, Meridian Interns Program (MIP) (1996-2004)**

Co-creator, instructor, and coordinator of an innovative after-school artmaking program for inner city teenagers using the gallery as a microcosm for learning life skills. Hired instructors, wrote syllabi and fostered a safe environment for the youth to break down cultural boundaries and increase modes of communication. We worked together to produce artwork (installations, performances, murals, etc.) and in the process we challenged and changed the way we all viewed the world.

## TEACHING

### **Lead Artist/Teacher/Mentor, ARTIVATE (2019-present)**

Artivate is a program run by artists and educators Amy Berk and Chris Treggiari, which works to bring activism and art to youth in the Bay Area while bridging communities through public art projects. The semester-long Artivate classes involve the youth collaborating in researching and in the creation of interactive public art projects with a community partner. The Artivate program has acted as a lifeline for Bay Area youth during the pandemic and post pandemic world, acting as a connection point to fellow youth, artists, and community.

### **Visiting Professor, San Francisco Art Institute (2006-2021)**

#### *Foundation Program*

Collaborated with faculty members from disparate disciplines to create a comprehensive program for incoming freshmen. Developed the Contemporary Practice interdisciplinary studio, "Contemporary Practicum," a day-long course engaging students from the BFA and BA programs in collective exploration of the creative process, the urban environment, and significant methodologies and histories culminating in a collaborative group project.

#### *Urban Studies Program*

Created a seminar/practicum "City as Studio Practicum" where students link theory and practice by examining and participating in one of a number of community projects with lead artists and youth to create artworks in diverse media and "Defining Art Through Community" where students do just that through readings, field trips and projects.

#### *Painting Department*

Taught "Collage," a mixed-media seminar on the physical, intellectual, and spiritual elements of two and three-dimensional thinking and making. Class created and critiqued work in response to five broad prompts and wrote reflections on each work.

### **Instructor, UC Berkeley Extension Post-Baccalaureate Program (2004-present)**

Teach Post-Baccalaureate Seminars 1, 2 and 3 focusing on discussion and critique pertaining to student interests and what is happening in the contemporary art world; and Portfolio Development & Professional Practices, the culminating course in the Art Studio Certificate Program. In the Art History Department, taught "Seeing Art" centering on how we see and communicate about art and the creative process both in public and private and "Art of the Bay Area," a survey of trends and movements from the Bay Area.

### **Lead Artist, City Studio San Francisco Art Institute (2010-2012)**

#### *(Excelsior Boys and Girls Club; Sanchez Elementary School)*

Worked with Middle and High School Students at the Excelsior Boys and Girls Club on two murals, both in collaboration with San Francisco Community School. On the first mural, we researched green practices and created our own version of a "green dream" in the organic garden of SFC. On the second, we polled students from SFC on their favorite books and created a fantastic vision incorporating students' favorite characters on the wall outside the library. At Sanchez I worked with 5th graders on their "dreams and nightmares."

### **Instructor, San Francisco Art Institute's Adult Community Education (2003)**

Organized "Bay Area Now," a course focusing on current trends in creative practices featuring visits to exhibitions, events, and performances, and visits by artists, curators and critics. Serves as a forum for discussion of contemporary movements as they pertain to student's interests and creative work.

### **Facilitator, Youth Arts Collaborative, (YAC) San Francisco Art Institute (2003)**

Led a project surrounding the One Tree(s) project with students from SFAI and youth from local Boys and Girls Clubs. One Tree(s) project participants investigated the nature of relations, conceptually and practically, within the group, within the community, and within tree systems.

**Artist in Residence, San Francisco Arts Education Project (1998–1999)**

Created curriculum and taught 105 9th graders with "learning differences" about creativity and open mindedness through art projects relating to their other course work in a charter school.

**Instructor, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco, CA (1998)** Led several workshops for elementary school students in creating small-scale pin and Styrofoam miniatures and white-out drawings based on things found in nature or man-made objects inspired by my work in the exhibition "Needles and Pins."

**SELECTED PRESENTATIONS AND INVITED LECTURES**

Presentations and lectures in the fields of education, art, Jewish culture, the environment, etc., including:

- **Youth Art Exchange** - panel leader with Chris Treggiari for Artivate's "Healing Through Community" presentation with TA Daria Belle for the 12th Annual Youth Arts Summit (December 2022)
- **Drawing Room Gallery** – artist talk for "Women Rising" exhibition (March 2022)
- **Youth Art Exchange** - panel leader for "Best Practices During COVID: How Are We Managing?" for the 10th Annual Youth Arts Summit (December 2020)
- **San Francisco Art Institute** - speaker for SFAI's "Faculty Speaks" with Maria Elena Gonzalez (January 2019)
- **San Francisco Art Institute** - guest professor for graduate seminar "Concepts of Creativity" (Meredith Tromble) (November 2015)
- **Sacramento State University** - "Time and Place" panel discussion by artists associated with the artist-run exhibition space Refusalon in the 90s. (Invited by Bob Ortbal) (April 2015)
- **Oakland Museum** - participated in, "In Focus. An Open Conversation with Jonathan Keats" led by Alla Effimova as part of Open Source to re-evaluate the impact of the REVISIONS program for Jewish (and other) Museums and institutions. (March 2015)
- **California College of the Arts** – guest professor for advanced painting critique seminar (Kim Anno) (October 2014)
- **San Francisco Art Institute** - artist talk on green art practices. (SFAI City Studio youth) (October 2012)
- **San Francisco Art Institute** - SFAQ panel, presentation on the history of the Mission School and art groups in the Bay Area (November 2010)
- **Southern Exposure** - "Arts Publishing Now," presentation on the history of stretcher.org (November 2010)
- **Berkeley Art Center** - panel/walk through for exhibition "Process and Place: The Transformative Potential of Artist Residencies" (Curators-Suzanne Tan/Elizabeth Sher) (March 2010)
- **Stanford University** - lecture about "Das Vegetal" our 1985 Mercedes run on vegetable oil for the "Rising Tide, Ecology and Art Conference" (Instructors – Kim Anno/Gail Wight) (April 2009)
- **Judah L. Magnes Museum** - "CONVERSATIONS ON ART: The Fabrication of Memory": panel discussion exploring intergenerational dialogue through the medium of textiles (February 2007)

**SELECTED PROJECTS****ReAP Projects (2016-2018)**

Founded, with Laura Boles Faw, to provide inventive art-related experiences to promote individual and community development. ReAP works with people (individuals, groups of all types, families, and companies) to tap into their creative energy and make art accessible. ReAP (re)invigorates the creative impulse while planting seeds for individual and collective growth and activation. ([www.reaprojects.com](http://www.reaprojects.com))

### **Community Engagement, ART & AUDIENCE (2015-2016)**

Consultant for an innovative beta app that hoped to bridge the worlds of fine art, tech and more to enlarge (and engage) audiences for artists and entities.

### **Camp ArtSeen (2015)**

Led a workshop entitled "Into the Woods" in Guerneville where participants channeled Andy Goldsworthy in a supportive and collaborative environment. "Campers" worked together to build site-specific installations using materials found on site.

### **stretcher.org (2000 - 2016)**

Co-founded an early website for art and culture focused on the Bay Area and beyond. Contributions included: (reviews) Sonoma Round-Up; Rachel Neubauer and Abstraction at Rena Bransten Gallery; Early One Morning at Whitechapel Art Gallery; The Chartwell Collection at the Auckland Art Gallery; Ernesto Neto at BAM; (essays) Aboriginal Cave Paintings and Engravings; and (salons) Rishikesh: New Pacific Studio; and The Making of Stretcher.

### **Together We Can Defeat Capitalism (1999-present)**

Member of an art collective focused on a sardonic critique of capitalist society. Projects include: The Guerrilla Café (2012) and Guerrilla Tea Room (2000), MAY DAY 2000 (2000), Das Vegetal (2005), and Stop Bush (2002)

### **Capitalism is Over! If You Want It (2010-2017)**

Co-curator of, and participant in a series of public performances launched in July 2010 by artists from around the world in response to the need for a fundamental shift in society. The project included a comprehensive website of documentation, commentary, and resources.

### **Bed in for Peace (bed-in-for-peace.net) (2001)**

International internet conference. Frustrated by the events post Sept. 11, Andy Cox and I took to bed, fasted for 48 hours, and held an international video conference over the internet on alternatives to war and ways to achieve a lasting peace. Held at New Pacific Studio, Mount Bruce, New Zealand. November 2001 (please see www.bed-in-for-peace.net for full transcripts and documentation of the event).

## **SELECTED CURATORIAL PROJECTS**

Curator of contemporary art, student, and youth art exhibitions, including:

- **PLANET/DRUM Bundles**, SF Main Library Stegner Environmental Center, SF, CA (Sept-Dec. 2023)  
Conceived and curated 5 installations of Planet Drum's Bundles--poetry, art, writings--exploring bioregionalism and asking others to explore and engage in place centered awareness. (With Cheryl Meeker)
- **Imaging: Responding to Our Current Political Climate**, Partners Gallery, Fort Bragg, CA (March 2019)  
Selected theme and artists for a regional juried show (Barbara Pollak-Lewis, Chris Chinn, Brianna Eng).
- **3 x 3**, Berkeley Extension Student Gallery (Summer 2015)  
Selected images for three solo exhibitions for final show of post-baccalaureate students.
- **Our Little Angel**, San Francisco Art Institute (Fall 2013).  
Collaborated with artists and Mission School exhibition to create a living room space that connects first year students to their past and future.
- **MAKING HISTORY**, San Francisco Art Institute (Spring 2012)  
Led the Funked Ups section and curated the group exhibition.
- **Tweet/Cry/Drink/Connect/Soar**, Berkeley Extension Student Gallery (Fall 2011)  
Selected images for a group exhibition of Berkeley Extension students in the seminar "Exhibit Art."
- **Nine on the Line, Berkeley Extension Student Gallery** (Summer 2010)  
Selected images for a group exhibition of Berkeley Extension students in the seminar "Exhibit Art."
- **Prop 9, Berkeley Extension Student Gallery** (Fall 2007)  
Selected images for a group exhibition of Berkeley Extension students in the professional practices seminar.

## SOLO ART EXHIBITIONS

- 2012 **Meridian Gallery**, San Francisco, CA, *near and far*  
2007 **Magnes Museum**, Berkeley, CA, *Recoverings*  
2002 **Meridian Gallery**, San Francisco, CA. *cloaked*  
2001 **New Pacific Studio**, Mount Bruce, New Zealand. *Cloaked*  
2001 **Traywick Gallery**, Berkeley, CA. *it's not easy being green*  
1999 **Museu da Republica**, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, *holy cow! divine bovines*  
1998 **scene/escena**, San Francisco, CA, *pinned*  
1995 **Herbst Pavilion**, Fort Mason, San Francisco, CA. *sweetmeats*

## SELECTED GROUP ART EXHIBITIONS

- 2023 **Market Street**, SF, CA, *Market Street Stories*  
2022 **Drawing Room**, SF, CA, *Women Rising 2*  
2021 **Haight Street Art Center**, SF, CA, *Artivate: Feminism Now*  
2020 **Parklet on Valencia Street**, SF CA, *Mission Kiss*; **Drawing Room Annex**, SF, CA, *Women Rising* (Curated by Renee DeCarlo)  
2019 **Arion Press**, SF, CA, *Open Book Show 6* (Curated by Kate Laster and Samantha Companatico).  
2018 **518 Valencia**, SF, CA, *Arise!//Power of Political Art*; **Root Division**, SF, CA, *Open Book Show V* (Curated by Kate Laster)  
2017 **Royal Nonesuch Gallery**, Oakland, CA, *Objects of Mutual Affection* (Curated by Matt Sussman).  
2016 **Aratoi Museum**, Masterton, New Zealand, *ART IS A LIVING THING*; **Utah Arts Alliance Gallery**, Salt Lake City, Utah, *small works*  
2015 **Paxton Gate**, SF, CA *The Birdhouse Show*; **University of California Berkeley Extension Gallery**; SF, CA 3 x 3  
2014 **The Bancroft Library**, Berkeley, CA, *Gourmet Ghettos: Modern Food Rituals*, (curated by Francesco Spagnolo and India Mandelkern) <http://bit.ly/gourmetghettos>  
2013 **Elizabeth S. & Alvin I. Fine Museum at Congregation Emanu-El**, SF, CA, *Tradition by Conception, Modern by Design*  
2012 **Walter McBean Gallery**, SF, CA, *Temporary Structures*; **Beacon Arts**, LA, CA. *Capital Offense: The End(s) of Capitalism*  
2011 **SOMARTS**, SF, CA. *Third Strike: 100 performances for the hole*; **667 Shotwell**, SF, CA. *Next; Luggage Store Projection Series*, SF, CA. *Political Messaging* (curated by Eliza Barrios); **Right Window**, SF, CA, *How Much for that Piggy in the Window?*  
2010 **SFMOMA**, SF, CA. *Shadowshop* (curated by Stephanie Syjuco); **UC Berkeley Extension Art & Design Center Gallery**, SF, CA. *Capitalism is Over if you want it* (mural in conjunction with Meridian Interns Program youth); **Berkeley Art Center**, Berkeley, CA. *Process and Place: The Transformative Potential of Artist Residencies* (Curators-Suzanne Tan/Elizabeth Sher)  
2009 **Meridian Gallery**, SF, CA. *Favorite This!* **Contemporary Jewish Museum**, SF, CA. *The Dorothy Saxe Invitational*

## SELECTED PUBLISHED ARTICLES AND REVIEWS

Writing for a wide range of cultural organizations and publications, including:

- **Talking Cure: Did I, I did: David Ireland tribute** (Summer 2009)
- **Art Contemporaries: Artist At Work: Sabina Ott** (Winter 2004)

- **Encyclopedia of Sculpture:** *Ancient Sculpture in England and Wales; The Hagenauer Family* (Jan. 2001)
- **San Francisco Art Institute i magazine** Libby Lumpkin; *Youth Arts Collaborative* (2000 - 2001)
- **World Sculpture News:** *Forever on the Move* (Bay Area Overview feature Winter 2000)
- **Artpapers:** "Margaret Harrison and Conrad Atkinson at Refusalon" (May 2000)
- **Catalogue Essays:** Kent Alexander (April 2004); *Jernigan Wicker "Barbara Ravizza: More Conversations"* (September 2001); "Richard Overfield: Redreaming the South" (February 1999); *Refusalon "stirred, not shaken"* (March 1997)
- **Art in America:** Randy Moore at John Bergruuen (March 1999); Marisa Hernandez at scene/escena (September 1998); Arnold J. Kemp at ESP (May 1998).
- **Artweek:** "Blurring the Boundaries at the San Jose Museum of Art" (July/August 2000); "Conrad Atkinson at Intersection for the Arts" (June 2000); "FarmCity" (September 1998); "'Shining Stars' at the Pacific Heritage Museum" (March 1998); "Black is a Verb! At WORKS/San Jose" (December 1997); "Brett Reichman 'On Painting'" (September 1997); "Chris Komater at 509 Cultural Center and Doug Jeck at Dorothy Weiss Gallery" (July 1997)
- **Speak:** "the Art of spending the Night" (world section April/May 1998); "Some Kind of Twisted Female Frankenstein Thing" (world section summer 1997); "25 and Under" (photography book review - spring 1997).
- **Art Issues:** "San Francisco Fax" (Jan/Feb 1997); (Sep/Oct1996); (Jan/Feb 1996).
- **The San Francisco Bay Times:** Wrote weekly articles as Artemesia Reiter on the Bay Area arts scene (1995-1996).

## SELECTED MEDIA COVERAGE

My teaching and art practice has been covered by print and online publications, including:

- **Broke-Ass Stuart**, *THE YOUTH MAKING ART ACTIVISM A PROFESSION IN SF* by Vita Hewitt (June 8, 2023) <https://brokeassstuart.com/2023/06/08/artivate-the-pop-up-celebration-of-activism-creativity-on-market/>
- **The Oaklandside, My Oakland Agenda: Residents share their vision for the Town** by Celeste Hamilton Dennis, Max Harrison-Caldwell and Cayla Mihalovich <https://oaklandside.org/2022/12/22/my-oakland-agenda-uc-berkeley-school-of-journalism-lowdown/>
- **Teaching in the Arts Podcast**, Interview by Peter Hawley (2018) <http://teachinginthearts.com/index.php/2018/04/25/amy-berk-from-the-san-francisco-art-institute/>
- **Rizzoli**, *Jewish Worlds: 100 Objects from the Magnes Collection* by Alla Efimova (2014)
- **Jweekly**, *Artists offer fresh take on Judaica* by Emma Silvers (June 20, 2013) <http://www.jweekly.com/article/full/68921/artists-offer-fresh-takes-on-traditional-judaica/>
- **SF Chronicle**, *Meridian Gallery Show on ancient rituals* by Jesse Hamlin <http://www.sfgate.com/art/article/Meridian-Gallery-show-on-ancient-rituals-4112461.php> (December, 12, 2012)
- **Art Practical**, *A Beautiful Concept of Far* by Jeanne Gerrity (October 10, 2012)
- **stretcher.org**, [http://www.stretcher.org/features/tea\\_and\\_symphony\\_the\\_promise\\_and\\_perils\\_of\\_tea\\_with\\_strangers/](http://www.stretcher.org/features/tea_and_symphony_the_promise_and_perils_of_tea_with_strangers/)
- **Daily Serving**, *The Good, The Bad and The Temporary* by Julia Glosemeyer (September 27, 2012)
- **Huffington Post**, *Haiku Reviews: Paper Hearts And Harpsichords* (February 29, 2012)
- **EcoLocalizer**, *Capitalism Is Over! (if you want it)* by Rhonda Winter (July 31, 2010)
- **Bay Guardian**, *Artists Attack Capitalism In Streets of San Francisco* by Steven T. Jones (July 26, 2010)
- **Artweek**, *Amy Berk at the Judah L. Magnes Museum* by Alison Bing, (October 2007)
- **Oakland Tribune**, *Art springs from everyday life* by Brenda Peyton, (June 29, 2007)
- **Artweek**, *Swell at Meridian Gallery* by David Buuck, (October 2006)