

Artist Educator Skills Development Course

Facilitators' Bios

Angela Elster (Course Director)

Angela Elster, Vice President Academic, The Royal Conservatory, is the founder and Executive Director of Learning Through the Arts. A musician and educator by training, Angela has held positions in higher education, elementary education, and senior administration. She started her career in music studying voice at the University of Toronto and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Music Education before undertaking graduate work at The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto, receiving her Masters Degree in Curriculum, Teaching and Learning in 1998. Most recently Ms. Elster graduated with a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies, Research, Leadership and Training in Expressive Arts: Therapy, Education and Consulting at the European Graduate School, where she is currently completing her PhD. Her research interests include teacher change and how the arts inspire resilience.

Nicole Arends (Course Manager)

Nicole Arends has been working in the arts industry for the past 18 years as an arts administrator, special events coordinator, theatre director, casting director, performer, workshop facilitator and fundraiser. Since receiving her Bachelor of Arts in Theatre Studies from York University and a diploma in Events Management from Algonquin College, Nicole has worked for such arts organizations as The Royal Ontario Museum, Equity Showcase Theatre, Lorraine Kimsa Theatre for Young People, Theatre Columbus, Theatre Smith-Gilmour and now The Royal Conservatory (RCM). She has also worked as an independent theatre producer and director for several small companies and fringe shows in Ottawa and Toronto. Nicole has recently graduated from the International School for Interdisciplinary Studies-Canada in Expressive Arts Therapy and is currently working for Learning Through the Arts at the RCM as the Community Programs Manager of the Living Through the Arts Outreach Program, the Active Ecology Program and the Institute for Creativity, Health and Social Change.

Nicole Fougère (Facilitator – Mississauga, Ottawa, Toronto, Sudbury)

Nicole Fougère believes that the arts are a powerful force that can be harnessed to inspire growth and emotion in people of all ages, in all places. Nicole is a Mentor Artist with Learning Through the Arts and has facilitated teacher and artist professional development in the UK, USA, Germany, Finland, Sweden and Cambodia and across Canada. She works with thousands of students in Europe and Canada every year and enjoys inspiring creativity in teachers. As a choreographer Nicole often uses multiple arts forms, performs in outdoor and unusual settings and incorporates audience participation in her work. She has created about 55 works over the past 15 years. Most recently, Nicole informally presented a full evening work “Half a Harmony” in Brussels, Belgium with live original music by Nicole’s father David Fougère. In her life as a dancer Nicole has performed and toured with several Canadian Dance companies including The Karen Jamieson Dance

Company, Dance Theatre David Earle, Kaeja d'Dance2, The Newton Moraes Dance Company, REASon d'être and Foundation Jean Pierre Perreault. Nicole's secret love is world culture and this keeps her busy adventuring everywhere from the Amazon jungle to the Sahara desert to the Arctic Circle.

Suzanne Konyha (Facilitator – Windsor)

Born in Paris, France, Suzanne Konyha spent her early life living and traveling between Europe, Canada, and the United States. She attended both public and private schools and then settled in Windsor in 1972. Suzanne received her Bachelor of Fine Arts from Marygrove College (Detroit) and her Bachelor of Education from the University of Windsor. She is a professional artist and has exhibited her work in Windsor and Detroit. Suzanne is also an avid art educator. She has conducted workshops with children at the Art Gallery of Windsor and the Chatham Cultural Centre. This year Suzanne will again facilitate a book-making workshop at the Art Gallery of Windsor as part of *BookFest Windsor*. She is a board member of the Arts Council, Windsor & Region where she assists with fundraising and arts advocacy projects.

Karen McClellan (Facilitator – Windsor)

Karen McClellan is a certified Learning Through the Arts (LTTA) Mentor Artist-Educator, and co-manager of the LTTA program in southwestern Ontario, Canada. Karen's principal music studies took place with renowned Canadian cellist James Hunter at the University of Victoria, where she completed a Bachelor of Music degree in Performance with distinction in 1989. She was awarded an Associate of the Victoria Conservatory of Music certificate in Cello Performance and Teacher Training in 1996. Karen has taught cello privately for more than twenty years and is the cello instructor for the University of Windsor. An accomplished professional musician, Karen enjoys an active performing schedule with the Windsor Symphony and in chamber music recitals. In addition to frequent symphonic broadcasts, in 2006 and 2007 Karen performed in faculty recitals for Windsor's Canadian Music Festival, recorded for national broadcast on CBC Radio 2. In 1999, Karen joined LTTA as a music artist in Windsor, one of the first LTTA sites in Canada. Popular with students and teachers alike, Karen and her cello have delivered hundreds of music-infused LTTA sessions over the years. An LTTA manager since 2006, Karen now spends much of her time mentoring artists, facilitating artist training, and developing and presenting teacher workshops. In March 2009 Karen was invited to LTTA Germany to facilitate an intensive two weeks of artist and teacher training and classroom demonstrations. Karen is dedicated to making the arts accessible to young people. Her many years with LTTA have allowed her to combine her enthusiasm for music and education in a dynamic and engaging atmosphere.

Cathy Miyata (Lead Facilitator – Niagara Region)

Currently an instructor at Brock University, Cathy teaches Language, Children's Literature and guides teacher-candidates through the complex yet exciting world of education as a Faculty Advisor. She is also an award winning author, professional storyteller, dramatist and Learning Through the Arts mentor artist. In these various roles she has performed, lectured and taught courses in Sweden, Greece, Mexico, the United States, Japan, Malaysia, Portugal, Serbia and across Canada. She has worked with the National Film Board, CBC Radio, the Art Gallery of Ontario and the Royal Ontario Museum; and hosted and produced an award winning cable television program for

children. Her published works include *The Reading Edge* (Pembroke), *Speaking Rules!* (Pembroke), *Starring Me!* (Scholastic) and *Journey Into Storytelling* (Tree House Press). Her first Young Adult novel, *Two Large to Go*, will be released in 2009.

Crystal Nielsen (Lead Facilitator – Thunder Bay)

Crystal Nielsen comes to Learning Through the Arts with an expertise in Visual Arts. Her creations possess a flair for bright bold colors, combining unique materials such as metal, glass, paint and found natural treasures. Nature has always been her muse for creative inspiration. Science, Mathematics, History, Geography and the art of Language are in mother nature's textbook. Explore the pages of her resources and discover that all learning is connected. Crystal believes that each person is naturally an artist. Art is a language, one that we all communicate with, through and to long before we learned to read and write. Art is the process of discovery!

Louise Paquette (Facilitator – Windsor)

Louise Paquette, dance artist and instructor, began her dance training in her home town of Windsor, Ontario. Early in her career she had the opportunity to perform in both Italy and Japan as a member of Windsor City Ballet. She graduated with a BFA from York University, and acquired a position as a lead dancer with Gina Lori Riley Dance Enterprises, where she was featured in the role of "Columbina" in an independent multi-arts film entitled *Commedia Fantasia*. The film was well received at many independent film festivals. As a member of Gina Lori Riley Dance Enterprises, Louise performed for Prime Minister Jean Chrétien in September, 2000. She also had the pleasure of dancing and training with Denise Szykula as a member of Dance Nonce. Since 1997 Louise has been a member of the HNM Dance Company directed by Anh Nguyen, enjoying several trips to Toronto to perform in the Fringe Festival of Independent Dance Artists, and performing locally with the Windsor Symphony Orchestra. HNM has performed a modern interpretation of the Nutcracker with both the Windsor Symphony Orchestra and South Dakota Symphony Orchestra. Louise submitted her own choreography, *3 Items Only*, to the Fringe Festival of Independent Dance Artists where it was well received. In 2001 she choreographed both *Radio Gals* and *The Fantastics* for the Windsor Theatre Festival, and the University Players' productions of *Company*, *Three Sisters*, and *Pride and Prejudice*. Louise has instructed Music Theatre Dance and is currently teaching the Dance for the Theatre course at the University of Windsor. Louise has also been teaching creative movement, ballet, jazz, and modern dance at The Dance Studio of the Academie Ste Cecile since 1996. She has directed a children's Dance Ensemble in many productions, including *Mulan*, *Pocahontas* and *The Little Mermaid*. Louise continues to share her love of dance with others as both a performer and instructor.

Dr. Ann Patteson (Facilitator – Toronto)

Dr. Ann Patteson, PhD (Arts Education and Research), is Director of Academic Research for Learning Through the Arts and The Royal Conservatory. She is also an adjunct Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Education, Queen's University, Kingston. Ann has been an educator for over 26 years, working primarily in adult education at the college and university levels, and with all age groups as a private music instructor. She has also acted as independent evaluation consultant to a number of other community-based arts education programs including *Teacher As Artists*, *Creative Arts Learning Partnership*, *ArtsSmarts*, and the *Kentucky Teacher Institute* at the Kentucky Centre for the Arts.

Under Ann's leadership, the Academic Research Division of The Royal Conservatory has been awarded a five year contract from the National Arts Centre to track the effectiveness of the organization's arts education outreach programming. Ann is a vocal artist with an extensive background in performance.

Laurie Pye (Lead Facilitator – Niagara Region)

Laurie Pye is a multimedia artist who brings many forms of artistic expression to her students both in the classroom and adult workshops. Although formally educated at Mohawk College in fine plastics, she combines her love of clay with many other interests such as writing, painting, carving pumpkins, sewing, cartooning and gardening to name a few. Her pottery studio, located on a working 75-acre farm, helps bring her love of nature to her art. As a former resident artist with Centre des Arts and the current manager of the Royal Conservatory's South Central / Niagara Learning Through the Arts, her interest in sharing her love of art and inspiring teachers to use the Arts to engage students in learning Core Curriculum has evolved into a perfect partnership between creating and sharing her passions both here in Canada and internationally.

Sheena Robertson (Lead Facilitator – Toronto)

Sheena Robertson has a Bachelor of Arts in drama from the University of Toronto. She also has a teaching degree, a Masters in Education, and teaches drama for teachers through Ontario Institute for Studies in Education / University of Toronto and York University. She is in much demand as a workshop facilitator – working at the school board, university and community levels, as well as through institutions such as the Royal Conservatory and Equity Showcase Theatre. She was a teacher in Regent Park for many years, and has been involved as a consultant with *Pathways to Education* since its inception. She is a specialist in the use of the arts to teach literacy skills, and explore issues of social justice – and since leaving classroom teaching, has focused much of her *art making* on giving 'voice' to the stories of the inner city. Through her company Whimsical Productions, she has recently directed a series of experimental 'shorts' focusing on the concept of 'self' – including a recent project with a group of Muslim girls, a documentary about *Pathways to Education*, and has co-directed, translated and produced a new theatrical play entitled *Lizardboy* (with Victor Gomez). She had a recent photographic exhibit at Metro Hall. Sheena also recently produced *MacBeth's Kitchen* – one of the Toronto Fringe Festival's "*Best of the Fringe*". She has a number of other exciting theatre and photography projects in development – including a short film, and a children's play.

Matthew Romain (Lead Facilitator – Windsor)

Since 1980 Matthew Romain has been creating imaginative stories and amazing puppets to go with them. His work in puppetry with The Join Hands Puppeteers Inc. is known across Canada, and with over 1500 live performances to his credit. Matthew's audience sensitivity and rapport make him a welcome guest in any community. He also teaches the art of puppeteering on elementary school, high school, and University levels. His keen sense of fun is appreciated by children and adults, and he is called upon often to tutor educators, performers, and public speakers who want to spice up their message by using puppetry skills. He is in high demand for theatre productions involving any puppetry aspects. From *Joseph's Technicolour Dream-coat*, and *Little Shop of Horrors*, to *Peter Pan*, and *Into the Woods*, his work consistently receives the highest praise and Matthew

is rewarded with the adulation of his audiences and the respect of his peers and presenters. In 2002 Matthew received an award from Mme. Chretien in Ottawa for his mentorship, along with five other outstanding Learning Through the Arts mentor artists, and locally, the 2002 Mayors Award for Artistic Excellence. In 2006 he received the Heritage Canada Award for Collaboration in Education, and in 2007 the Royal Conservatory's Aiko Suzuki Award.

Pandora Topp (Lead Facilitator – Sudbury and Ottawa)

Described as a 'rare and courageous talent', Pandora Topp is a consummate performer, constantly seeking opportunities to learn and collaborate with others. Her collaborations have been featured at the 2004 Cannes Film Festival, the National Arts Centre in Ottawa, on CBC Television (*Shania*), CBC Radio and Radio-Canada, and have been nominated for the Governor General's Award for Theatre (*Sahel* by Franco Catanzariti). In 2008 she shared the stage with Michael Bubl  and in November she read a brand new monologue by Aboriginal playwright and composer Tomson Highway for Margaret Atwood herself! Pandora has successfully produced many of her own touring acts and currently performs with *The Giselles*, an 8-piece bilingual pop act with full horn section and her brand new show *Slag Heap Love*, a hot, northern, multilingual girl group featuring Patricia Cano, Sarah Craig and herself. She is perhaps best known for her flagship production *Caf  Piau with Pandora Topp*, a stirring homage to the late Parisian singer  dith Piaf. 2009 marks the 10th anniversary of *Caf  Piau with Pandora Topp*, featuring 1962 World Champion accordionist Iona Reed. She has been an artist in the schools with the Royal Conservatory's *Learning Through the Arts* since 2002 and is Regional Manager for *Learning Through the Arts* Ontario Northeast. Pandora has facilitated training sessions for artists and teachers in Ontario, Manitoba and New Brunswick and has been recently named National Coordinator of Francophone Affairs.

Peggy Ward (Lead Facilitator – Mississauga)

Peggy Ward is a singer-songwriter/recording artist in her 15th year of working with teachers and students in classrooms across Canada and around the world. Peggy began this work with Calgary Arts Partners in Education Society in 1995 and joined Learning Through the Arts -Toronto in 1999. Having worked with teachers, kindergarten through grade 12, across all curriculum areas, Peggy has written and delivered custom-made lesson plans using standard singing and songwriting methods as well as new media/technology. Where possible, she incorporates her love of photography and drama. She has designed and presented curriculum for teachers and artists in professional development workshops and international education conferences in both face to face and video conference settings. Peggy has been part of the teams that have created and facilitated award winning First Nations student projects and the media literacy program for the national student jury of the Shaw Rocket Prize. Most recently she has collaborated with American and Cambodian university professors, their students and various Cambodian NGO staff in creating and delivering innovative curriculum for under-serviced children in Phnom Penh. In 2006, Peggy was honoured with the RCM Aiko Suzuki Award for artist excellence in leadership. In 2007, Peggy was a member of the first graduating class to receive the RCM Certificate of Mentor - Artist Educator.

Paula Wing (Facilitator – Ottawa, Sudbury, Thunder Bay)

Paula Wing is an internationally produced, Chalmers Award winning playwright. Her adaptation of Ben Rice's novella *POBBY* and *DINGAN* will be produced by the Lorraine Kimsa Theatre for Young People (LKTYP) this spring. LKTYP has also produced her adaptation of Margaret Mahy's *The Man Whose Mother Was a Pirate* (2006) and her original play *NUMBER ONE AND JAMIE* (2004). Paula's play *VOX LUMINA* will be developed at the Atelier this April at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa. She also works extensively in schools in the metro Toronto area and across the country as both a teacher and artist. She has been the playwright-in-residence at Applewood High School in Mississauga for more than ten years. She is an Associate Artist at Soulpepper Theatre Company and the Director of their Summer Youth Mentorship Program.