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MIT Program

Prompt A

Academic Preparation to Begin Teaching Art

“Art is a harmony parallel with nature.” This quote from post-impressionist painter Paul Cézanne serves as a personal beacon in my study and practice of artmaking. My coursework, outstanding mentors and curiosity have served as similar guiding forces in my preparation for becoming an arts educator. In my undergraduate studies my primary focus was on studio arts (printmaking, painting and mixed media) and art history.

This coursework helped me develop a deeper understanding of the elemental design building blocks of art such as: line, shape, value, color, texture, form, and space. Then through the study of specific art movements and influential figures from art history I discovered an even larger library of concepts from which to draw inspiration. As I continued to build upon my foundation in art making skills, techniques, and concepts, my growth as an artist progressed in parallel.

Transferring from Montana State University to Evergreen to complete my undergraduate degree further deepened my commitment to social and environmental justice. I worked

with and supported the work of brilliant college activists and gained a new understanding of the importance of diversity, equity and inclusion in our society. In addition, the community oriented environment at Evergreen allowed me to gain a greater sense for the role that art plays in building new positive cultural foundations.

Finally, I must praise my professor for truly opening up my worldview in countless ways. I've been fortunate to have excellent academic mentors that have been a significant influence on my preparation to become an educator. By observing the dedication with which my professors taught their subjects, led their classrooms and crafted their own work I gained a deep appreciation for their personal approaches to teaching. I respected how their passion for their profession encompassed the technical aspects of artistic creation while also embracing the emotional. Additionally, their own empathy and respect for their students and their student's work demonstrated what a healthy learning environment looks like in practice.

In emulation of their strong example I seek to grow in my own knowledge of the planning, mentoring, and subject expertise that it takes to not just run a classroom successfully, but to connect meaningfully and impact fully with my future students. In my graduate studies it's also my hope to be influenced by a diverse group of peers and to learn from their life experiences and unique pedagogical approaches.

My current plans are to complete my Masters in Teaching from Evergreen and to begin my journey as an art teacher within my community. I hope to positively impact all of my students through the development of their design, problem-solving, and collaborative skills. Art making has been a gift that has brought me rich experiences, self-awareness, and a deeper understanding of the world. By giving back to my community as an educator, I can assist students to discover this gift inside themselves.