

Invisibility

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Seniors from High Tech High Media Arts brought the invisible to light during a multimedia exhibition exposing hidden paradigms, underground cultures and unresolved issues. Through documentaries, photo/sound essays, and video installations, students critically explored topics such as graffiti, rave culture, youth activism, self-mutilation, and the media. Students developed their projects in HTHMA's sound lab, using technology to showcase information they gathered from expert interviews and in-depth investigations of local professional, cultural, and institutional communities. The exhibition took place at the Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) in downtown San Diego.

Teacher Reflection

Playfulness, curiosity, adventure, fun—must a vast abyss always divide these vital states of mind from academic achievement? Hopefully not! I re-learned a precious lesson from my students this year. Exploring intrinsic passion inspires success and cultivates joy! It is the art of effortless effort, a state of steady flow.

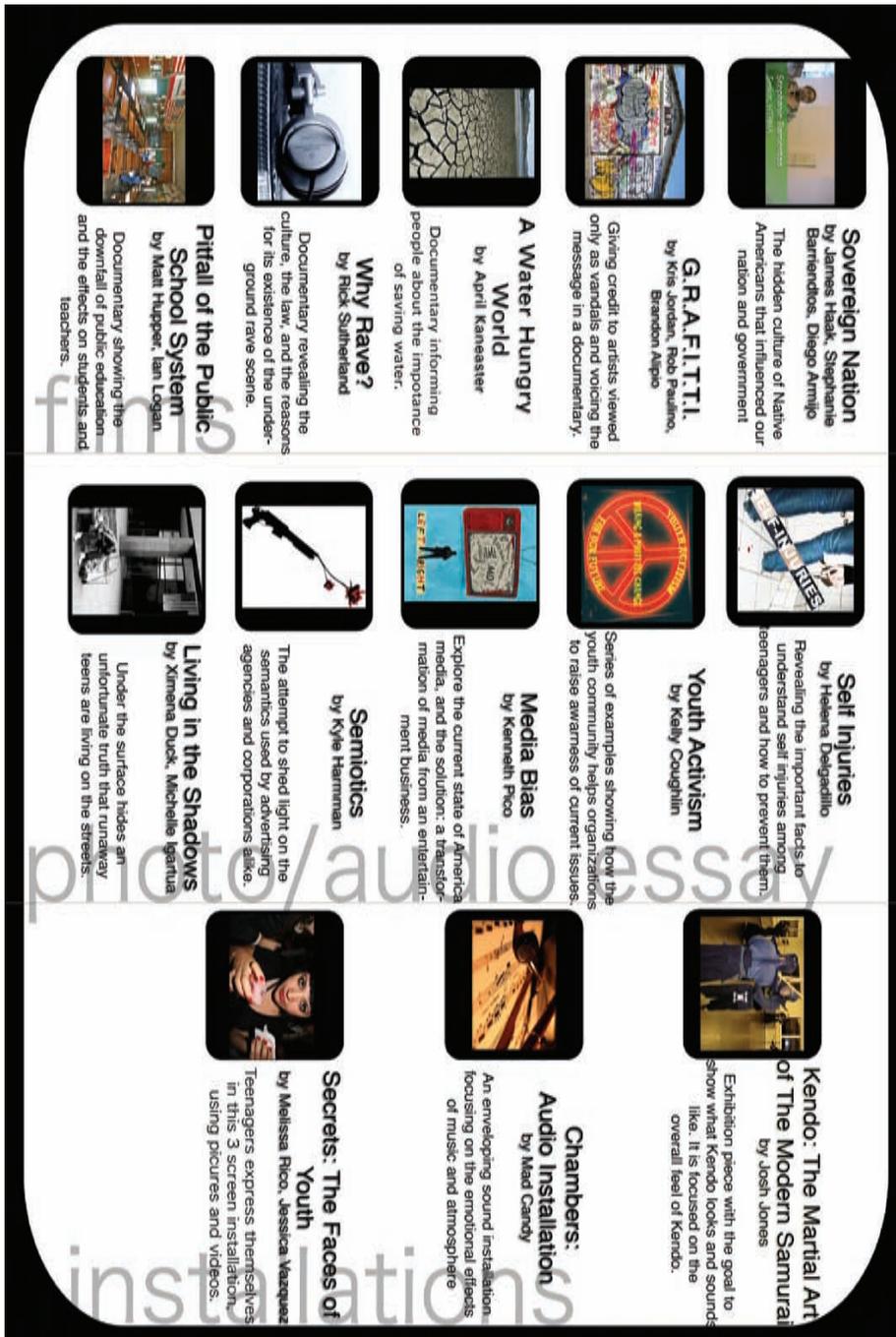
Behind every piece in this exhibition was a story of a student who undertook a personal, artistic, and intellectual exploration, and in doing faced many challenges. For John, a struggling student whose graduation hung in the balance, completing a successful project was of paramount importance. And yet, he could not find a topic to research. My colleague knew John well enough to tap into one of his passions with this question: Is graffiti art or vandalism? Thus, a successful documentary project was born, one that included interviews with police officers, tours of legal graffiti venues, and the creation of several art pieces.

An important element of any project is that student work be displayed for an authentic audience. To that end, my teaching partner and I wrote a proposal “pitching” our project to the MCA's Educational Curator. The result was one night and ample space to exhibit our students' work. After the magical exhibition evening, the museum staff were so impressed with the professionalism of the work, they invited our students back. Three months later, the MCA hosted our “Freedom” exhibition, extending its hours to display its permanent collection alongside our students' work.

—Lacey Segal

For more on this project and others visit

<http://www.hightechhigh.org/schools/HTHMA> and <http://www.hightechhigh.org/pbl>



 <p>Sovereign Nation by James Hawk, Stephanie Barrios, Diego Arriaga The hidden culture of Native Americans that influenced our nation and government</p>	 <p>GRA.F.I.T.T.I. by Kris Jordan, Rob Paulino, Brandon Alpo Giving credit to artists viewed only as vandals and voicing the message in a documentary.</p>	 <p>A Water Hungry World by April Kaneaster Documentary informing people about the importance of saving water.</p>	 <p>Why Rave? by Rick Sutherland Documentary revealing the culture, the law, and the reasons for its existence of the underground rave scene.</p>	 <p>Pitfall of the Public School System by Matt Happer, Ian Logan Documentary showing the downfall of public education and the effects on students and teachers.</p>
 <p>Self Injuries by Helena Delgado Revealing the important facts to understand self injuries among teenagers and how to prevent them.</p>	 <p>Youth Activism by Kelly Coughlin Series of examples showing how the youth community helps organizations to raise awareness of current issues.</p>	 <p>Media Bias by Kenneth Pico Explore the current state of America media, and the solution: a transformation of media from an entertainment business.</p>	 <p>Semiotics by Kyle Hamman The attempt to shed light on the semantics used by advertising agencies and corporations alike.</p>	 <p>Living in the Shadows by Armina Duck, Michelle Igaruta Under the surface hides an unfortunate truth that runaway teens are living on the streets.</p>
 <p>Kendo: The Martial Art of The Modern Samurai by Josh Jones Exhibition piece with the goal to show what Kendo looks and sounds like. It is focused on the overall feel of Kendo.</p>	 <p>Chambers: Audio Installation by Mad Candy An enveloping sound installation focusing on the emotional effects of music and atmosphere</p>	 <p>Secrets: The Faces of Youth by Melissa Pico, Jessica Vasquez Teenagers express themselves in this 3 screen installation, using pictures and videos.</p>		