



Depiction of Woodstock

Turning Points, Toy Theatre

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High Tech High Media Arts

The goal of this project was to recreate and interpret critical historical turning points from the last 150 years in the hopes that these creative stories would stimulate new dialogue about old stories. In order to tell the story with puppets, each student group picked their own topic to investigate, and each member of the group wrote a research paper investigating a unique aspect/angle of their turning point topic. Building on each individual student's knowledge, groups were able to create interpretive toy theatre shows with hand-crafted originally designed paper puppets. With help from the professional puppeteer company, Animal Cracker Conspiracy, students learned to manipulate their puppets in relationship to custom animations, sound, and video works (all produced by the students).

Teachers' Reflection

Experimental projects are the toughest to facilitate. It's impossible to predict what the outcomes will look like as different students create work in their own unique styles. Consequently, the work is very exciting because the students and teachers wander into unknown territories. During this project, students became more and more comfortable with the steady process of critique and revision over a period of eight weeks. By the end of the project, students asked for more rehearsal time and more critiques because they knew these processes strengthened their work. The greatest lesson seemed to be that students learned to trust in the process of experimentation and believe in their capacity to produce beautiful work.

Student Reflection

The take away message of our piece, based off the life of Harvey Milk was that anyone has the power to make or inspire social change. I've learned that while it's important to make change so that people's lives can be lived honestly, it's also important to make change in one's perspective so that new knowledge and ideas can be shared and appreciated.

—Spencer

To learn more go to:

<http://margaretnoble.net/educator/turning-points-toy-theater/>