

THE BENEFITS OF PRISON ART: PROVIDING REHABILITATION AND POSITIVE
IMPLICATIONS

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Senior Project Proposal

This senior project will be focusing on the relation of art as a recreational activity for prison inmates and how it can benefit them. The reason for examining this relationship is to emphasize the power that recreational activities can have on inmates. There are two main goals for this project. The first goal is to reduce the stigma that exists towards inmates; to show that these individuals can be productive when given the opportunity to focus on a project. This is a demonstration of their potential to resist or escape the negative stereotypes that society puts upon them. If society can see their potential, then hopefully it would reduce the stigma surrounding prison inmates. The second goal is to help the inmates refine their interpersonal and professional skills. By having the inmates help arrange for the art exhibit, they have the opportunity to learn skills and processes that can prepare them for future jobs and reintegration into society.

The method that will be used to attain these goals is to host a public art exhibit at the Cal Poly Library. The art exhibit will run for the entire 2017 spring quarter (about 2.5 months) and feature artwork from the inmates at California Men's Colony (CMC). For organizing the exhibit, a committee will be composed of two Cal Poly seniors and a couple of inmates from CMC. The committee's main tasks include: arranging for the collection of artists, deciding an art theme, selecting art pieces, creating fliers and posters for advertisement, holding workshops to assist the inmates with creating artist biographies, designing the exhibit's layout, and showcasing the exhibit.

Along with the art exhibit, a paper will be written to highlight how participating in the arts in prison can be beneficial to the inmates. This will be a research paper with the data obtained from the artist inmates participating in the art exhibit. Data will be obtained from them through their written responses to questions in documents such as the artist application and artist statement. Through the research paper, there will be a focus on using the responses from the artist inmates to

prove that their participation in art has helped them with gaining skills for rehabilitation, coping with the stresses of being in a prison environment, and creating bonds with the outside community.

The significance of the project lies in the opportunity to break stigmas and re-humanize incarcerated individuals. Often, these individuals feel invisible and ignored by society due to the public only seeing them as inmates or convicts. We want to demonstrate that not all incarcerated individuals have to fall into the narrow confinements of the “criminal”, “convict”, or “felon” label. As seen in an art mural project done in collaboration with graduate students and prison inmates in Florida, the participating inmates benefitted immensely from the project. They gained feelings of accomplishment and pride in having the mural on display in their prison and along with that, they developed skills in teamwork (Argue et al. 2009). The inmates now had a great piece of work that exemplified how they were contributing positively to their environment. Their mural represents the idea of transformation and it serves as a constant reminder that they are not subjected to being constricted to just one label. No longer were they just a criminal or an inmate, but rather an artist, an individual seeking change, or a transformed individual with hope (Argue et al. 2009). Much like how these inmates felt important and valued for being a part of the mural project, we want to instill the same feelings of appreciation and respect from fellow inmates and surrounding communities to the inmates at CMC.

Organizing this art exhibit relates to sociology through our analyzation of society stereotyping and alienating these incarcerated individuals, and we are finding ways to challenge these limitations. One area in sociology is understanding how an individual or group’s position in society affects how will perceive and interpret same social phenomenon (Barkan 2012). For this project, the social phenomenon we are analyzing is the image of incarcerated inmates from the viewpoint of the inmates themselves and how it differs from popular belief. From learning the two

perspectives, we will search for ways to bring understanding to both parties and advocate for change in these negative preconceived notions.

The inmates are not the only ones who are getting new opportunities through this project; both Cal Poly students will be getting experience working with incarcerated individuals and the California prison system. This is beneficial, since we are considering pursuing a career in the fields of criminal justice, criminal restoration, or correctional facilities. As we become familiar with the practices and population in these facilities. Along with that, we will also learn communication skills with unfamiliar individuals. Having the skill to effectively communicate with individuals from diverse backgrounds will help in all future careers.

Annotated Bibliography

Baroody-Hart, C., & Farrell, M. P. (1987). The subculture of serious artists in a maximum security prison. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 15, 421-448.

This paper analyzes a niche of individuals at a prison that are referred to as the “serious artists”. It is believed that this niche develops from individuals wanting to withdraw and separate themselves from others in the facility; they are seeking to avoid threats from others and to find a way to make their sentence tolerable. All data was gathered at a maximum-security prison where interviews and observations of the serious artists were conducted. The study found that there are steps that need to be taken to attain “serious artist” status. Other patterns were that many serious artists withdrew from the general inmate population to avoid psychological and physical stress, one receives more resources and recognition from other inmates and correctional staff, and serious artists tend to be older, white, and serving long-term sentences. This relates to my senior project by showing that not all incarcerated individuals are looking to uphold their tough, criminal status; many of them are looking to find ways to better their lives and move beyond their criminal identity. It helps to show that art is an opportunity for these inmates to reinvent themselves. Opportunities for arts in prisons would help others in similar situations can achieve their goal of reformation. However, this article only looks at the niche of “serious artists”. There may be differences in feelings or status benefits if one is a “casual artist”; it would be important to note how these groups may differ and if it would influence their motivation to reform or their recidivism rates.

Brewster, L. (2014). The impact of prison arts programs on inmate attitudes and behavior: A quantitative evaluation. *Justice Policy Journal*, 11(2), 1-28.

This article wishes to expand on how fine arts in prisons can positively affect incarcerated individuals’ behavior, attitude, and identity. Their approach draws on previous literature that shows creative processes influence cognition and life skills. All the data was obtained by evaluating surveys and interviews administered to participants in arts programs at four different prisons. It was found that those who engage in art longer have more changes in their behavior and abilities, like time management, emotional competence, and more. However, those who do have practiced art for a shorter amount of time are still shown to have some positive changes in their behavior, attitudes, and identity. The arts also helped inmates obtain new ways to connect with their family and encouraged them to participate in other academic or vocational programs. This relates to my senior project by showing the deeper implications of the arts programs. Few other articles have compared those with arts education and those without arts education; comparing the results of behavior between these groups brings to light of the profound effects of the arts. It shows that doing art truly has benefits over time, that it is not the program shaping these changes in behavior. Through creative processes and thinking, these individuals have learned how to develop and hone their life skills. Throughout this article, references were made to inmates’ improved abilities in various life skills, but there were never any concrete examples. While this does not undermine the findings of this paper, providing concrete examples would have made a stronger demonstration of the effects the program.

Cohen, M. L. (2009). Choral singing and prison inmates: Influences of performing in a prison choir. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 60(1), 52-65.

This article focuses on how choral singing can improve the well-being of inmates. They believe that the inmates can benefit immensely because of music's therapeutic qualities and having the ability to work cohesively with other individuals. All data was obtained through evaluating inmates' well-being scores per the Friedman Well-Being Scale and questionnaire responses. This study compared the well-being scores of those not in choir, those in an inmate-only choir, and those part of an inmate-community volunteer choir. There were no significant differences between those not in choir and those in an inmate-only choir. However, those part of the inmate-community choir had significant differences in sociability, joviality, emotional stability, and happiness. This suggests that being part of a group with outside community members improves well-being by providing an escape from the confines of the prison environment. This relates to my senior project because it is showing the worth of allowing incarcerated individuals to be able to connect to the outside community; they feel humanized because they are being treated as an ordinary person and not a criminal. This places the importance of having public art displays or performances, as it allows an opportunity for the inmate to overcome their negative label. While this study highlights the importance of social interaction outside the correctional institution, it does not delve into how the inmates and community members interacted. It would have been more effective to show how the inmates had positive interactions from their community choir members; it could have exemplified which interactions attributed to an increased well-being.

Dean, C., & Field, J. (2003). Building lives through an artistic community. *IFECSA Conference 2003*. Australasian Corrections Education Association Inc.

The focus of this article was to bring humanity back to incarcerated individuals through a public performance. There was a goal of wanting to bring control and responsibility back to inmates by having them publicly share written works. This approach was taken because the study believes that incarcerated individuals are full of potential and creative energy, they just have no outlet for it. They wanted to provide the inmates with an opportunity to embrace their creativity and culminate it into something greater. Data was collected through evaluating responses to questions; there was no formal survey conducted. The inmates that participated in the public performance found that they gained feelings in self-respect and self-reflection and skills in group cooperation, conflict resolution with self and others, understanding other perspectives, and more. It was found that all the skills that developed through participating in a public performance were skills that positively benefit their character, behavior, and lives. This relates to my senior project by also highlighting the impact of giving inmates a voice and allowing that voice a public appearance. The study found that there was positive public recognition, which serves to emphasize how public opportunities help to dismantle negative barriers between incarcerated individuals and their community. While this study primarily focused on giving inmates a voice rather than collecting qualitative or quantitative data, but analyzing the data in those ways would help promote the value of arts programs for prisons. Providing data analyses would assist in pushing the agenda for wider implementation of arts programs.

Ezell, M., & Levy, M. (2003). An evaluation of an arts program for incarcerated juvenile offenders. *Journal of Correctional Education*, 54(3), 108-114.

This article examines how an arts program at a juvenile correctional facility works to accomplish its goals of reducing recidivism in juvenile offenders through cultural and experiential art activities. To analyze the program's performance, three research questions were asked: Do students learn new academic and vocational skills from the art workshops? Does institutional behavior of program participants improve during their workshops? How does the recidivism rate of program participants compare to nonparticipants? The approach of this article sees that arts programs have potential to impact the behavior of the offender during incarceration and after. Data was collected over three years with various arts workshops taught by professional artists. Surveys were given to the juvenile offenders to record their own self-evaluation and surveys were also given to the professional artists and correctional staff to evaluate the juveniles. It was found that the juveniles do learn vocational skills, their behavior and demeanor positively changed, and their recidivism rates were relatively lower compared to nonparticipants. This relates to my senior project because it is showing that an arts program, even if it is short-term, can have beneficial effects in the long run. It encourages the juveniles to consider the ideas promoted in the workshop. A criticism of the program is that there is no required curriculum for the professional artists to follow, but an encourage curriculum. This may not be detrimental to the outcomes of the program, but it would be beneficial if there were at least a few set goals for each workshop. This would ensure that every set of students will be achieving the same goals.

Gussak, D. E., & Ploumis-Devick, E. (2004). Creating wellness in correctional populations through the arts: An interdisciplinary model. *Visual Arts Research*, 30(1), 35-43.

This article proposes a program that promotes wellness through arts education in prisons. This approach was taken because of the author's previous experiences with arts programs and arts therapies in prisons. The proposed program, Interdisciplinary Wellness Arts Education, is an alteration of the Florida Department of Correction's Multicultural Communication Bridge Program which used arts to enhance education and self-development. While the article does not show any results of the Interdisciplinary Wellness Arts Education, it does show the success of the Multicultural Communication Bridge Program. This program had positive implications for the inmates, as they learned relationship development and socialization skills. The inmates also learned self-discipline skills and the ability to perceive themselves as part of a greater group. This provides that arts programs benefit inmates by teaching them new skills they may not have learned otherwise. This relates to my senior project by supporting the results of other arts programs; these programs can enact change in "hardened" individuals and allow them to break away from the criminal image. A limitation of using this article is the fact that it is unknown if this program was carried out and if it was successful in achieving its goal. This would make the program seem less legitimate and more like an ideal practice which does not make for solid evidence or a reliable source.

Johnson, L. M. (2008). A place for art in prison: Art as a tool for rehabilitation and management. *Southwest Journal of Criminal Justice*, 5(2), 100-120.

The purpose of this article is to provide a collective literature analysis on art programs in prisons. Their perspective on art programs in prisons is that the programs can make offender rehabilitation successful. This would be achieved through the various benefits that prison art programs provide: therapeutic, educational, institutional, and societal. Through the art programs, inmates would learn skills in communication, coping mechanisms, self-analysis, self-development, and fine arts. Along with a variety of skills, inmates gain self-confidence, feel respected, and feel valued. All these new skills and feelings of appreciation from others help to change the inmates' perspectives of themselves and their life in general; they can work towards reformation and rehabilitation because they feel that their life is purposeful and valuable. Recidivism rates also decrease due to feeling less vulnerable and lost when reintegrating into society. All this relates to my senior project because it emphasizes the humanization of the incarcerated individual. Implementing programs that help reshape an individual's character and perspective contributes to fighting the stigma against current and former offenders. While there is importance in prison art programs, it is also important to note that it may not be practical for all prisons to implement them. This could result from a lack of funding or staff. Having a poorly supported and funded program will not benefit the inmates and may put more strain on the prison; in this case, it would be better for the prison to focus their resources to enhance current programs rather than creating a new one.

Kornfeld, P. (1997). The penitentiary as art studio. In *Cellblock Visions* (9-24). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

This book is an overview of prison art, covering topics from the inmates to the types of prison artwork created. There is a desire for prison art to be viewed as a more legitimate and valuable form of art. The author has seen how the arts humanize the inmates and want for a greater appreciation of the inmates' efforts. All the interviews, quotes, artwork, and experiences documented in this book are primary data from the author. The author found that many inmates gravitate towards art because they are seeking a positive activity while they are incarcerated; art serves as a therapeutic activity, social status, and financial income. Creating art can be difficult in prison, due to inaccessibility to sources and various distractions and restrictions, but it does not dissuade the artists from pursuing art. Their art is an extension of their feelings or interests which provides them an escape from the mundane prison routine. This is relevant to my senior project because it demonstrates how art created in prison has a greater purpose and value; it is not art of poor caliber with ill intentions. It reflects the broader goal of the senior project, of breaking stereotypes and stigma on incarcerated individuals, by showing that those individuals can still contribute positively to society. While the goal of this book has positive intentions, it will be hard to have prison art seen more legitimately from the public. This is because it is hard for this kind of artwork to be publicly viewed. By staying hidden within correctional facilities, it is unintentionally ignored.

Lazzari, M. M., Amundson, K. A., & Jackson, R. L. (2005). "We are more than jailbirds": An arts program for incarcerated young women. *Affilia*, 20, 169-185.

This study aims to evaluate an arts project specifically catered towards juvenile females and see how much value the project had to them. It used relational-cultural perspective to analyze how the women developed pro-social behavior. Along with that, self-efficacy theory was used to analyze how the women were empowered per their behavioral and relational change. Data was obtained through interviewing incarcerated juvenile women that participated in an arts project. Through the project, the women developed relationally as they had a very positive experience; thus, they gained abilities in communication, trust, and perspective taking. In regards to self-efficacy, many felt empowered because they can better express themselves and they felt respected. This is relevant to my senior project because it once again showcases why incarcerated individuals pursue art. They are not simply creating art just to have it, but it is a way for them to feel valued; creating art gives them an opportunity to reflect on their life, interests, and the world around them. This allows them to reevaluate their character and try to be the best version of themselves. There is a slight critique on the ages of the sample; the ages ranged from 11-17 years old and while these ages are relatively close, there are vastly different developmental needs of those ages. While the study did acknowledge this, the age range will make some discrepancies in the desired goals. It is recommended to make the age groupings smaller, however, this is not always achievable in the context of a correctional facility.

Nugent, B., & Loucks, N. (2011). The arts and prisoners: Experiences of creative rehabilitation. *The Howard Journal of Crime and Justice*, 50, 356-370.

This article is an evaluation of an arts program with incarcerated females hosted by charity, Artlink Central. Their belief is that the arts can enhance one's life and should be available to all; they desire for the women to develop core life skills, increase self-esteem, and improve their well-being. All data was collected over one year through surveys and interviews done before and after. Through the program, the women felt more confident and proud, as they experienced self-discovery and received a tangible product at the end of the program. They felt the program also served to enlighten them to understanding others and the perceptions they form. This relates to my senior project as it reinforces that any form of art is beneficial to incarcerated individuals; it proves to themselves, and many others, that they do have individual value. They could see that they do not have to uphold a tough image and they were going through similar struggles as others. It made them feel humanized and allowed them to relate to part of a larger group. A limitation of this study is that this program was not conducted for longer than a year at that facility. This correctional facility does not have its own arts program, so it is hard to judge if any changes in behavior are temporary for the duration of the arts program or if the changes will be long lasting. It is worthwhile to extend the evaluation to see if the changed behavior was due to immersion in that environment, or if one-time participation in an arts program has a lasting effect.

Project Outline:
Prison Art: Rehabilitation and Reintegration Research Paper

1. INTRODUCTION
 - a. Brief overview of arts being beneficial
 - b. Art exhibit project introduced
 - c. Project approach explained
2. PROJECT GOALS
 - a. Decreasing stereotypes
 - b. Empowering artist inmates
3. ASSEMBLING THE ART EXHIBIT
 - a. Art committee introduced
 - b. Art submission collected
 - c. Promotional piece/artist statement assembly
 - d. Catalog and certificates for later creation and distribution
4. LITERATURE REVIEW
 - a. Criminal stigma
 - i. Multiple identities bring empowerment
 - ii. Criminal identity can be lessened by distancing self from it
 - b. Benefits of art
 - i. Skills are learned in self-reflection, self-discipline, and communication
5. METHODS
 - a. Data collection
 - i. Documents were created to have artist inmates describe themselves and their art
 - b. Data analysis
 - i. Patterns/trends were found in written statements and art pieces
6. FINDINGS
 - a. Coping
 - i. Art provides relief from their situation
 - ii. Artists regain some autonomy through their art
 - b. Self-expression
 - i. They have the ability to develop communication skills
 - ii. They are given a chance to express their feelings and stories
 - c. Self-improvement
 - i. Artists learned skills in art that translated to life skills aiding with their rehabilitation
 - d. Gift giving

- i. Artwork is donated or shared with others to bring joy, financial income, or help organizations receive resources and funds

7. CONCLUSION

- a. Creating art in prison has helped inmates through various ways which has helped them achieve rehabilitation

8. IMPLICATIONS

- a. Safer facilities
 - i. Artist inmates cooperate with rules and behavior guidelines to secure access to art programs and materials
- b. Possibly better suited for reentry and reintegration to society
 - i. They are motivated to engage in rehabilitative programs
 - ii. A community bond has formed which gives a sense of belonging

9. REFLECTION

10. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

11. REFERENCES

12. APPENDIX

- a. Artist application – “Call for Artists”
- b. Artist statement and biography

Project Outline:
Between the Bars Art Exhibit

1. COLLECT ART SUBMISSIONS FOR ART EXHIBIT
 - a. Establish California Men’s Colony & Cal Poly Art Committee
 - b. Distribute “Call for Artists”
 - c. Select artwork to display
 - d. Help artists create statements & biographies

2. CREATE PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS
 - a. Collaborate with Cal Poly Kennedy Library art student & CMC inmates
 - i. Incorporate inmate art into poster and postcards

3. INCORPORATE RESEARCH PAPER
 - a. Coordinate research paper between Cal Poly senior project students
 - b. Compile annotated bibliography
 - i. Relate paper topic to art exhibit
 1. Eliese: How arts programs are valuable to prison inmates and prison facilities
 2. Victoria: How inmates use art as a form of therapy

4. ORGANIZE GALLERY DESIGN
 - a. Establish panels for the exhibit reception
 - i. Show title panel - “Between the Bars”
 - ii. Introduce the exhibit
 - iii. Showcase student research
 1. Share student biographies (in context w/ topic and exhibit)
 2. Summarize Eliese’s thesis
 3. Summarize Victoria’s thesis
 - iv. Share artist statements/biographies
 - v. List acknowledgements
 1. Cal Poly library staff/students
 2. CMC inmates and staff
 3. Cuesta
 - b. Create gallery layout and design
 - i. Collaborate with Cal Poly Library curator and Art student
 - c. Organize captions/titles for artwork

5. HOLD EXHIBIT RECEPTION
 - a. Host reception during Open House (lasting through spring quarter)

6. ORGANIZE ART CATALOG

- a. Search for best way to make catalog (accounting for cost, binding style, overall organization)
 - b. Send photos of artwork to the team creating the catalog
 - c. Distribute catalog
 - i. CMC & Cal Poly Art Committee
 - ii. CMC East Library
 - iii. Cal Poly Kennedy Library
7. DISTRIBUTE CERTIFICATES OF PARTICIPATION FOR CMC ARTISTS
- a. Design certificate with library staff
 - b. Arrange meeting with CMC inmates for distribution

The Benefits of Prison Art: Providing Rehabilitation and Positive Implications

Introduction

The arts are often recognized as recreational activities that allow an individual to embrace their creativity, analyze their character and passions, and express their emotions. All individuals in a society, from elementary children to incarcerated individuals, can participate in the arts, challenge themselves, and undergo various attitudinal and behavioral changes. This process holds especially true for prison inmates, many of whom never had the opportunity or encouragement to comfortably express and display their feelings. It is believed that inmates can use the arts to transform their identities and attitudes.

To exemplify and showcase this belief, that the arts can have positive impacts on prison inmates, an art exhibit will be organized to display the artwork of currently incarcerated individuals. This exhibit will be a collaboration between Cal Poly Kennedy Library and California Men's Colony (CMC). All the art displayed in the art exhibit will be pieces created by CMC inmates and chosen by an art committee consisting of Cal Poly and CMC individuals. There is a common goal between the collaborators from Cal Poly and CMC to highlight the artist inmate's efforts at rehabilitation and to re-humanize the artist inmates. It is important to recognize that incarcerated individuals also have hopes and dreams; for some, their dreams are to try to better their lives and to change their behavior to live a more desirable life. The art exhibit features many of these individuals with grand hopes of a better life.

Accompanying the art exhibit will be a research paper that explores the implications of the relationship between prison art and the artist inmate. A literature review will be conducted to analyze the criminal identity and the benefits that arts give to artist inmates. Going from those ideas, data will be collected through the artist inmates in the art exhibit to evaluate how their

experiences and responses align with previous research. From the analyses of the impact of art in the artist inmate responses, there will be an evaluation of how the benefits extend broadly in greater societal and community means.

This art exhibit approach was carried out because research on arts in prison and their effects have shown that those who participate in arts tend to have positive character growth and receive positive feedback from peers, correctional staff, and those outside the prison setting. Inmate artists positively benefit because they feel humanized by having the ability to freely express their emotions (Dean & Field 2003; Lazzari et al. 2005) and by feeling valued by outside community members (Johnson 2008; Cohen 2009; Nugent & Loucks 2011). These individuals desire to pursue art; to engage in the arts, a lot of effort and time is devoted to securing materials, creating art, maintaining an artist identity, and acting appropriately in their facility. It is suggested that artist inmates do not only receive benefits, but they also give benefits back to their prison facility and the community they reenter. To have the opportunity to produce art, inmates must comply with the expected behavior conduct and avoid infractions; in turn, this could result in safer prison facilities because there are less individuals who are involved in problematic activities (Ezell & Levy 2003; Gussak & Ploumis-Devick 2004; Johnson 2008). Their involvement in art also prepares them for reentering society because they are creating bonds with broader community and society. If their artwork is displayed publicly, then they may have received positive feedback by public viewers; this gives the inmate a sense of belonging because it has been demonstrated to them that they can still be seen with a pro-social identity and that they are capable of shedding their criminal identity (Johnson 2007b).

Project Goals

The *Between the Bars* art exhibit is a collaborative effort trying to lessen the prejudices and stereotypes that are associated with incarcerated individuals. Incarcerated individuals are an extremely stigmatized population in society. Resulting from incarceration, they are constantly denied jobs and perceived warily by other citizens. To dispel the stereotypes surrounding incarcerated individuals, this art exhibit showcases them in an entirely different light. It wants to shift the attention to their talents and skills. By showing it through art, incarcerated individuals suddenly become more relatable because art is a medium that most individuals can relate to; everyone sees paintings and images every day and they evoke feelings from these images. It is hoped that the connection that can be drawn from art aids in bridging a gap between incarcerated individuals and the public. Even if this emotional connection is not formed between the public individual and the incarcerated individual, it is still hoped that the exhibit serves as a learning opportunity. With all the personal testimonies from the inmate artists, one is able to expand their knowledge on incarcerated individuals and the experiences of living through incarceration. By being more educated, the public would be able to form new, nonstereotyped beliefs.

Besides just dismantling stereotypes, there is also another goal of empowering the incarcerated individuals to improve their interpersonal and professional skills. This goal is closely connected with the goal of reducing stereotypes and prejudice. There is a focus on inmates being empowered because this art exhibit is a chance for them to reclaim an identity and some autonomy. These individuals are deprived of so independence and free-will while incarcerated, so by creating art, that is one of the few ways they can still retain some control in life. This humanizes the inmate to an ordinary citizen; this allows the inmate to be viewed as something more than a criminal. It provides a safe opportunity for the artist inmate to be visible to the public and to be recognized as an individual.

Assembling the Art Exhibit

All the goals and visions for the art exhibit will be managed by an art committee composed of Cal Poly Sociology students, Sociology faculty, Kennedy Library staff and CMC inmates and East Library staff. The committee uses the opinions and statements from CMC inmates, the research gathered by the Sociology students, and the design skills from the Kennedy Library to show the rehabilitative qualities of art throughout the art exhibit. A majority of the time, the entire committee would work together to discuss and agree on criteria for the art exhibit and to review materials. However, there were times that the Cal Poly team and CMC team had tasks independent of each other. The major tasks that the committee has undergone together is coordinating for the collection of artists and artwork, collaborating for promotional pieces, and organizing the overall exhibit.

The initial steps were to gather artist inmates that were willing to submit art pieces to be displayed in the exhibit. First, the Cal Poly team collectively produced an artist application for the CMC inmates to distribute to recruit artists. This application was created to allow the inmates to record basic information about their art and for them to record responses to questions, which will be addressed later. Then the CMC team had about 2-3 months to gather artists, their artworks, and their applications. Each inmate was able to submit up to 4 pieces of art. There were frequent meetings to check the progress the CMC team was making and to ensure that any questions or problems that occurred could be resolved swiftly. Once everything had been collected, the art committee went through the entire collection of artwork together and agreed on a selection of art to be displayed in the exhibit. The artist applications were also electronically transcribed for easy access, storage, and analyzation for research.

The next task was to start creating the promotional pieces for the art exhibit. These promotional pieces include a postcard and poster that would be displayed and distributed across different institutions, like Cal Poly campus, both CMC facilities, Cuesta College, and more. A design student employed at the Cal Poly Kennedy Library joined the team to help assemble the promotional piece and assist the Kennedy Library curator with the exhibit layout. The CMC team created original pieces of art that would be displayed on the promotional pieces. At the same time, the Cal Poly team created a template for the artists to use in writing their artist statements and biographies. The Cal Poly team trained the CMC team on how to fill out the template, and subsequently the CMC team worked to guide the artist inmates in completing the artist statements and biographies. It was then up to the CMC team to contact the participating artists and assist them with writing their artist statements and biographies.

The design student and Kennedy Library curator worked to design the physical layout of the art exhibit; the progress of the exhibit would be intermittently shared with the Sociology students and CMC inmates. The Sociology students also helped in writing small pieces for the exhibit, like informative panels about themselves and the CMC facility, and in assisting in the physical setup. The exhibit is planned to run for the duration of Cal Poly's 2017 spring quarter, which spans across the months of April to June.

A catalog of the exhibit is also planned for release once the exhibit is live to the public. The catalog will feature the artist inmates and their artwork; it would be arranged by the Kennedy Library staff and distributed to the respective institutions and individuals that helped in organizing the exhibit. There will also be certificates of participation awarded to all the artists, which will be drafted by the Cal Poly team.

Throughout the entire process of organizing the art exhibit, the Cal Poly Sociology students were also gathering data to write a research paper. The data came directly from the responses of the artist inmates. Both students were required to relate their paper topic to art in prison. One student focused on art therapy in prison while the other focused on creating arts in prison as a broad concept; this paper reflects the latter topic. While this paper will mainly discuss the benefits and implications of creating art in prison, such as art used for coping, reaching rehabilitation, and building community bonds. It will also briefly discuss how adopting a new non-criminal identity also has positive benefits and implications for the artist inmates in terms of safety and reentry to society.

Literature Review

Criminal stigma. In research on stigmas and criminal social identity, it was found that there is importance on having multiple identities and using these identities as a source of empowerment to overcome stigma. Everyone has multiple identities but they all vary in degree of salience. These identities also vary in their visible display; different identities are displayed depending on the social context and the perceived stigma in that context. Thus, it is seen that those who have multiple identities can use them to their advantage. Identities are used to be advantageous by specifically displaying identities that are valued and less-stigmatized to a certain group (Shih 2004). With this strategy to overcome stigma and protect their own identity, there are beneficial implications in terms of empowering the inmates. It is suggested that despite the stigma, those who are empowered tend to be thriving in their environment; this is exactly how artist inmates engage with their environment. They turn to emphasizing their individuality and artist identity as a mean to gain some freedom from authority (Clements 2004). In the prison setting, their freedom is having control of their art despite being controlled by correctional staff. Being empowered to

overcome their stigma signifies that the individual is actively seeking to understand their social world and create situations with positive results outcomes (Shih 2004).

Following the idea of developing multiple identities to help overcome stigma, another concept that can accompany it is becoming distant from the criminal identity. The criminal social identity theory explains that criminal identities are formed because of negative social comparisons, lack of pro-social acceptance, and peers being criminals; the individual seeks a pro-social identity and happens to find it with criminals also acting in anti-social ways (Boduszek & Hyland 2011). One way to try to combat this is by gaining self-esteem and pro-social identity in a group. By associating with another group that is not criminal, then these individuals would become motivated and empowered to fit in with the group and maintain the new identity (Boduszek & Hyland 2011; Boduszek et al. 2012). This is very important during the transition process to acquiring a new identity, like an artist. Some individuals become so integrated into the social structure of prison facilities that it becomes hard for them to decrease feelings of stigmatization and criminality (Paterline & Petersen 1999). With that, it emphasizes that when one seeks individuals that share a common goal like them, being an artist, then it becomes easier for them to form a new identity and become distant from undesirable ones.

Benefits of art. Through their participation in arts, inmates can receive and develop a variety of skills and social approval that helps to motivate their rehabilitation and to re-humanize them. Some of the new skills that artist inmates learn are self-reflection, self-discipline, and communication. Artist inmates learn how to self-reflect because many times they are expressing their own emotions with their artwork; to do this, they first need to understand where these emotions come from and how they can regulate those emotions (Kornfeld 1997; Brewster 2014). By given the chance to express their stories, they come to analyze their previous behavior and see

the changes that must be made to be a more desirable person (Cohen 2009; Brewster 2014). It is important that they learn how to self-reflect because this serves as one of their biggest drives to rehabilitation; one can only start rehabilitating once they yearn for it and believe they can achieve it (Clements 2004). Alongside the self-reflection, many learn self-discipline because art skills must be cultivated, they cannot be artificially made. They must learn ways how to encourage and motivate themselves to become a better artist, and these skills can also be applied to learning how to motivate and encourage themselves to be a better individual (Dean & Field 2003; Johnson 2008).

Briefly expressed when addressing self-reflection, art also helps artist inmates communicate and express themselves better. This is a result of learning how to verbalize their emotions, how to artistically convey their emotions and thoughts, how to connect to others, and how to work on a team. Many learn how to see the world in new perspectives because of their studies of art, skills in portraying messages through art (Lazzari et al. 2005; Johnson 2008) and growth in intellectual flexibility (Brewster 2014). Skills were also built in learning how to connect to others by using art as a common ground for conversations; they were able to reestablish and/or strengthen bonds with their loved ones by talking about and sharing art (Lazzari et al. 2005; Brewster 2014; Turner 2016). They learn how to work as a team through learning how to give construction criticism and encouragement (Baroody-Hart 1987; Argue et al. 2009) and learning how to work cooperatively with others (Dean & Field 2003; Argue et al. 2009; Nugent & Loucks 2011). All of these show how art helps the artist inmate hone their communication skills by engaging in skills they may have previously lacked. It could be suggested that by participating in arts programs, where artists come in to teach the class, the art teacher models pro-social communication and behavior, thus the artist inmates pick up and reflect the same kind of actions. Through Lazzari et al. (2005), it was seen that the artist helping the incarcerated juveniles was

“trustworthy, caring, polite, stable, kind, nice, patient, and respectful”, thus with the juveniles feeling respected, they return the behavior in return. Eventually this behavior could become habit and have long-term effects on the artist inmates’ communication and behavior.

In developing new skills, attitudes, behaviors, and communication styles, these all contribute to giving the artist inmate feelings of humanization. Their humanization comes from having autonomy in the art they produce and having potential to share stories, feelings, and art to the outside community (Kornfeld 1997; Dean & Field 2003; Lazzari et al. 2005; Cohen 2009; Nugent & Loucks 2011; Turner 2016). With the public giving them a chance to express themselves, they feel valued (Johnson 2008; Cohen 2009; Nugent & Loucks 2011) because they are being seen in a new light. Through public displays of their art, the viewer is able to learn about the incarcerated individual. They learn about incarcerated individuals’ struggles and how they may be facing the same common struggles as others. With the idea that the public will be able to learn about incarcerated individuals, that can serve as motivation for the artist inmate to start reformation and rehabilitation (Lazzari et al. 2005). Once the artist inmate sees that they can be perceived as more than a criminal, then they will start to believe it too and want to regain the label as a “human being” versus a “monster”.

Methods

Data collection. Briefly reiterating, all the data comes from 34 male artist inmates at California Men’s Colony. These artists were sought out by the CMC team. It is unknown to the Cal Poly team all the ages or races of the artists, but it is known that there is a range of ages and races. From estimates, the age ranges from about 30 years old to 65 years old and some of the ethnicities included were White, Black, Asian, Hispanic, Native American/Alaskan, and Pacific Islander. Each inmate that participated in the show had to complete an artist application to join.

This application had purposes of: tracking the individuals who chose to participate, gathering preliminary information on the type of artwork each engages in, discovering the reasoning for creating the art piece, and exploring how art has influenced them. The artist application also posed questions about the individual. These questions were:

- What does art mean to you and how has it impacted your life?
- How has art helped you to rehabilitate?
- How can you help others through art?
- How has art changed your self-perception?

Along with the artist application, the artist statements and biographies written by the inmate artists were also used to gauge the impact of art. The artist statements and biographies served as an elaboration of the artist application; it encouraged responses that highlighted who they are as an individual. These responses were more informative than the artist application because some inmates did not fully complete the artist application in fear of their criminal background being released. However, when they learned that the artist statements and biographies were not looking for that information, they were much more willing to participate and write responses. Content in the artist statements varied from personal stories to discussing their rehabilitation. The questions included in this document are:

- Identify yourself – How would you describe your background, and how has it influenced you? Where do you come from? Community, geography, ethnicity, family, peers, mentors, hobbies?
- Describe the medium you work in while incarcerated and why?
- Has art helped you rehabilitate and if so in what ways, and if not were there barriers?
- In what ways has art benefitted you while incarcerated?

Data analysis. All the major sources of data were the artist applications, statements, and biographies. These sources were primary because they provide concrete stories, examples, feelings, and thoughts of their experiences and changes from creating art while incarcerated. Other minor sources of data were the actual art piece; these sources were not primary because not all the pieces

reflect the transformation or character growth that an individual has received from art. For analyzing the sets of data, all written responses and art pieces were evaluated for trends and patterns that demonstrated the impact of art.

Findings

From the inmates' written documents and art pieces, it is evident that art has meaningful impacts and influences on their lives and incarceration experiences. Almost all the men use art as a way to find relief or solace. Along with that, a significant portion of the men also use art to help with their rehabilitation and reformation. Across all the responses, the patterns that emerged were in regards to how art is used to influence their lives. These patterns include: coping, self-expression, self-reflection, and gift giving.

Coping. The inmates expressed the hardships of living in prison, whether it be for a couple of years or the rest of their life, and how art has helped them overcome those hardships through providing escape and freedom. Due to the amount of concentration necessary to produce art, many men stated that it is during these times where they are able to temporarily forget their situation and stress. As some inmates explained:

“Art is a sense of release for me. Art allows me to leave these prison walls for as long as I want to stay on my paper.”

“Art creates a different space I can inhabit. Self-preservation can take the form of escapism, but sometimes it's more than that. It isn't about being lost in a feeling (à la ambient music), but it's more about occupying a space that you've created.”

Many others have also described that art allows their mind to be free while their physical body is confined and controlled. With this, art has the ability to curb their negative, depressive thoughts and keep them focused on positive, healthy thoughts. Besides relieving them from their situation, many have found art as a way to cope with boredom. Prison life easily becomes routine-like and

after years of incarceration, some men desire ways to keep themselves entertained. Art fulfills this role because there are always ways to challenge oneself and improve artistic abilities.

Art was also described in ways that go beyond simply distracting the inmates from their environment; art allows them autonomy in their life. Prison facilities formally restrict inmates from living an independent life because of all the regulations that are set to make all the inmates behave the same.

“Prison is designed to dictate every aspect of your life. To cut you off from the world, and destroy any vestige of a life that you did have. To control what you think, how you act, and who you talk to. To conform you to a life of complacency, by destroying your ambitions and dreams. Art, to me, is a unique and powerful tool for freedom, hope, and a path that you can drive down to help you reach your full potential as a human being.”

While the artist inmates are confined to act in accordance with prison facility’s regulations to avoid infractions, they have full reign to dictate what they want to do with their art. They can choose their medium, art style, image, tone, colors, etc. By having some independence, they are able to retain to the thought that they are a unique individual with a place in the world.

Self-expression. Many men found art as a way for them to express their feelings and thoughts in ways that they might not have done before. It is widely acknowledged that art is an appropriate vehicle for self-expression which eventually helps the men be comfortable with sharing their thoughts. Some see that art has allowed them self-expression and a voice for it, because their self-expression will be appreciated when others view their artwork. Art has also helped their communication skills because it taught them the ability to have alternative perspectives and understand where their feelings are coming from. One inmate artist wrote, “Art has helped me rehabilitate because it made me think of my audience feelings. In other words, I never realized how important or how often I think of other people’s feelings.” Through art, they are able to understand other individuals better and understand the value in perspective taking.

For others, the voice they are given does not solely express their feelings, but it also allows them a platform to share stories and advice. Many artist inmates expressed that from art pieces of their personal and prison life, they hope others will come to realize the reality of their situation. Some make a point to create art to show that “prison is not what TV portrays it as” and to “[...] present questions, give warnings, share my knowledge.” They hope that individuals involved in criminal activity will consider their advice. They do not want to see other individuals, especially younger ones, to fall into the same situation as them. Lastly, by sharing their stories, they hope that individuals outside prison can understand the story behind their incarceration. It is important to the artist inmates that the community understand their stories because not all of them chose the criminal life; due to other factors in their life, be it relationships, economic or others, they were pushed into the criminal life.

Self-improvement. Along with learning effective self-expression, artist inmates also learned skills in improving their character and behavior. These skills include self-discipline, patience, open-mindedness, perseverance, organization, goal attainment, and self-reflection. Learning these life skills provides a boost to their self-confidence and self-worth by showing to them that they have creative talent and can produce positive content. Many have expressed that art, not their prison sentence, led them to rehabilitation while incarcerated because it provoked them to discover ways to be a better person.

“Art has allowed me to do my time in a more constructive way. I will walk out of prison a better person, not because of prison, but rather because I used all this time to become a better artist. More importantly, I will not be bitter but grateful for the opportunity to spend more than a decade locked in a tiny space, at times with only a pencil and a scrap of paper.”

“I looked up ‘rehabilitative’ in the dictionary recently and one of its definitions state: To teach (a criminal in prison) to live a normal and productive life. Art has helped me to live a more productive life. But a normal one? I can’t say it’s a normal life being incarcerated. But what I can say is that art, in its abnormality, taught me that living shouldn’t meet a standard such as normal; it should exceed it.”

“Art has helped me to rehabilitate because producing a work that is enjoyed and will carry on has become important to me. The sense of accomplishment truly bolsters one’s self-image. That reinforcement encourages me to pursue other goals; spiritual, educational, and physical.”

As seen through the quotes, art seemed to pave the way for rehabilitation. They were able to take the skills they learned while creating art, and translate those skills to their everyday life and behaviors. Art proves to them they can still make good contributions to society despite previously creating trouble; they have obtained skills that extend beyond the role of a criminal.

Gift-giving. Artist inmates did not see art as an activity that only benefits them, but rather it can also benefit others. They like to give their art to others for a variety of reasons, some of these include comforting others, sharing with friends and family, and donating their art for organizational or public use. When it comes to giving art for comforting or sharing purposes, the artist inmates wishes to spread “joy” and “smiles” to others because they know that art has that impact. Specifically stated by an artist inmate, “I really love the smiles and the joy I bring to people when they look at my art. For the first time in my life, I felt proud because I brought joy and happiness instead of pain and suffering.” This also develops a closer bond between them and the other individual because there are mutual jovial feelings; they no longer have to focus on the negative in the situation.

Other reasons for gift-giving is for financial gains. It is common for inmates to self-create and distribute greeting cards. These greeting cards are used to send letters to loved ones. An inmate creates greeting cards either for their personal use or for selling to others. Many inmates started their artist careers by creating and selling greeting cards. It provides a way to get quick money, build their artist reputation, and provide them with economic independence. This allows them to not solely rely on the prison for their income and instill feelings of self-sufficiency.

Others also donate or create art for outside organizations and individuals to help provide resources and benefits. One artist inmate mentioned how they donate to charity organizations “as a way to be pro-active, pro-social, and achieve as a small form of indirect amends.” Some create art pieces for crisis centers with the purpose of being sold for funds for the center. One artist inmate creates pictures that reflect the prison environment and gives them to inmates when they leave prison; the purpose behind is to “remind the inmates leaving what awaits them should they return to prison.” These artist inmates who choose to give back are demonstrating their desire to positively contribute to society. They no longer desire to produce fear and harm.

Conclusion

Art provides benefits for prison inmates that stretches across different areas of their life. The participation of the artist inmates in the art exhibit demonstrate that art in prison helped them better their lives. They show that art has directly contributed to their rehabilitation and reformation because they learned how to better understand themselves and others through developing techniques they learned as an artist (Kornfeld 1997; Dean & Field 2003; Johnson 2008; Cohen 2009; Brewster 2014). This translates to their rehabilitation because it highlights their character, through striving to be a positive role model or through acknowledging their previous behavior and wanting to digress from it. Regardless of the duration they have engaged with art, even the briefest opportunity to exercise new skills and thought processes have proven beneficial in character improvement (Dean & Field 2003; Gussak & Ploumis-Devick 2004; Brewster 2014).

Implications

While it has been stated that many behavioral and attitudinal changes arise from creating art, changes can also stem from their own desire to create art. Artist inmates are primarily responsible for acquiring their own art materials but they still have a certain level of dependence

on prison staff for their materials. In many facilities, one must behave appropriately and avoid infractions or undesirable behavior to participate in art programs. For them to be able to carry out their artwork, they must comply with correctional staff for respect and trust (Baroody-Hart & Farrell 1987; Kornfeld 1997); this creates a subculture of well-behaved inmates. The well-behaved inmates seek distance from the unruly or undesirable inmates because they do not want to be involved in trouble and because those individuals no longer appeal to them. They stay within the artist subgroup to engage with those who are mutually seeking well-behaved individuals (Baroody-Hart & Farrell 1987; Johnson 2008; Boduszek et al. 2012). This suggests that their desire to create and retain access to art can be a key contributing and motivating factor in working towards rehabilitation.

In turn, this group of well-behaved individuals can bring benefits to the correctional facilities because they increase the number of individuals complying with rules. As a result of artist inmates wanting to produce art, they have increased self-confidence and found alternative outlets for frustration, boredom, and aggression; in essence, they exhibit less problematic behavior. Through this, facilities can be safer because there are less individuals posing a threat to other inmates and staff (Ezell & Levy 2003; Gussak & Ploumis-Devick 2004; Johnson 2008). The facilities also become safer because the inmates and correctional staff in arts programs create a bond. Resulting from the bond, the two parties interact differently when compared to their interactions before the arts programs. The inmates can see the correctional staff in a new light, as individuals supporting them rather than individuals against them (Nugent & Loucks 2011) and the correctional staff support the programs because they see the profound effects it has on the inmates (Brewster 1986). When the inmates feel that they earned the respect of the correctional staff, then they gain more motivation to behave well. With this, and less perceived threats from other inmates,

feelings of comfort and belonging is facilitated for the artist inmate, which allows for them to drop their tough personas. Thus, facilities can be safer because there is a new environment of trust, support, and respect.

Lastly, art as a pathway for rehabilitation can signify that artist inmates wish to reintegrate into society since they seek non-criminal identities. Delving into this idea of wishing reintegration, it is seen that those who engage in arts and arts programs have lower recidivism rates than those who do not participate (Ezell & Levy 2003; Johnson 2008). It is suggested that individuals want creative expression and freedom, by providing this, they will have increased engagement and motivation in various rehabilitative programs that also attempt to lower recidivism rates (Johnson 2007a). Besides just working harder in rehabilitative programs, the inmates are also tied to the community by creating art. They engage in the same artistic activities that non-inmates engage in and produce art of the same concepts or ideas; they are paying attention to and aligning themselves with mainstream topics and society (Johnson 2007b).

This positive alignment indicates that the inmates are trying to extend beyond the prison community and desire to connect with the outer community. By trying to reintegrate into society through their artist identities, they feel humanized by no longer being recognized merely by their crime (Kornfeld 1997; Cohen 2009; Nugent & Loucks 2011). By having ties to the community, their reintegration and reentry to society will be smoother since they exhibited involvement in pro-social activities (Johnson 2007b). This helps them feel accepted by society because they had a higher possibility to have positive interactions with their community; the more positive reactions and interactions the released artist has, then the more successful their reintegration will be (Moore 2011). This creates feeling of inclusion and gives them opportunities to reach out to others (Bain & Parkinson 2010) which is important because they need to reestablish connections and resources

back in their communities. Without this, it would be much harder for them to live a life without crime involvement. Lastly, Turner (2016) described that transitioning of prison is like a do-it-yourself project, one needs to toun their own flawed traits and characters, that are necessary for reformation, to increase their chances of reintegration. With art, artist inmates already have the abilities and skills to identify traits that need transformation and they have already started on that process as compared to other inmates.

Inmates who create art exemplify that they receive benefits beyond immediate behavioral change; their changes follow them to their reintegration into society. They have highlighted the value of creating art in prison because they have a positive bond with the community. They do not feel alienated or shunned because the community can see their positive contributions; they have publicly demonstrated that inmates who create art want to be a productive member of the community, not one who wants to produce more crime. While it is important to acknowledge that these individuals are not guaranteed for successful reintegration, it is equally as important to stress that they have the potential for reintegration. Hopefully, through this senior project it has exhibited the benefits for prisons and correctional facilities to provide art programs and resources for their inmates. These inmates truly appreciate the opportunity to learn new skills and present them; they have learned how to be proud of themselves and how to apply their positivity to be productive. As one artist inmate described in their artist statement, “The ability to find peace of mind through art in such a vile place will help me navigate through a very loud world during my re-entry phase back into society.”

Reflection

Going through this project, my opinion of incarcerated individuals has significantly changed. I have always known that some inmates want to rehabilitate but I never thought about

the process towards rehabilitation. After interacting with the men at CMC, I greatly admire them. They pour so much energy, time, and effort in striving towards rehabilitation and character reformation. Nothing about their incarceration experience is easy and it takes so much courage for them to challenge themselves. I commend all inmates who strive towards any form of rehabilitation, reformation, or transformation. It truly shows that they have shifted their beliefs and desire more out of their life. I hope that other inmates can eventually reach and attain these goals too because they will truly benefit and love themselves better.

I appreciate all the opportunities this project offered to me. I have learned so much in terms of arts in prison, rehabilitation and its hardships, inmates and their internal struggles, and in being a researcher. This was my first experience as a social science researcher in a project context. Being able to work directly with CMC men has truly shown me that these individuals are the experts of prison and arts in prison. While I can learn as much as possible through academic text, it cannot supplement firsthand experiences. This is something I will take with me if I pursue other positions in research; that it is just as important to learn about a topic through personal testimonies as it is with academic text.

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Appendix

Artist Application

CALL FOR ARTISTS

Between the Bars

Between the Bars features artwork created in prison by men currently incarcerated at the California Men’s Colony (CMC) to provide a way to undo negative stereotypes about “prisoners” through demonstrating their unique abilities to create despite being incarcerated. This exhibit will also demonstrate that rehabilitation *does* occur in prison and show that art has the power to transcend all social differences and divisions. CMC artists will have the opportunity to learn how to work with professional art organizations to display their artwork.

ARTIST PARTICIPATION

All artists are encouraged to participate.

Name of Artist

(as you would like it to appear publicly)

CDCR #

(optional)

Do you want your biography displayed with your artwork?

(circle one) Yes No

Title of Piece #1: _____

Medium: _____

Size/ Dimensions: _____

Year piece was created: _____

Describe the concept / inspiration behind your piece:

Title of Piece #2: _____

Medium: _____

Size/ Dimensions: _____

Year piece was created: _____

Describe the concept / inspiration behind your piece:

Title of Piece #3: _____

Medium: _____

Size/ Dimensions: _____

Year piece was created: _____

Describe the concept / inspiration behind your piece:

Title of Piece #4: _____

Medium: _____

Size/ Dimensions: _____

Year piece was created: _____

Describe the concept / inspiration behind your piece:

QUESTIONNAIRE

(use additional paper if needed)

What does art mean to you and how has it impacted your life?

How has art helped you to rehabilitate?

How can you help others through art?

How has art changed your self-perception?

SUBMISSION

- Artists are encouraged to submit original artwork. For pieces that are modeled after other known artists, publications, or organizations, credit show be noted as follows: “Inspired by [name of artist, publication, or organization].”
- Artwork and themes may not contain nudity, obscenities, drug references, gang affiliation references, or any other depictions deemed to incite violence, including weapons.
- Artwork must be submitted for review by **December 31, 2016**.
- Upon completion of the display, all artwork will be returned to the respective artists, pending inspection by the CMC Investigative Services Unit (ISU), unless unforeseeable events prevent the return of the artwork.

SELECTION

Submissions will be reviewed by a selection committee, consisting of Cal Poly faculty, curator, and students as well as members comprised from the CMC population.

If accepted, by submitting your entry you give California Polytechnic State University and the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) permission to publish your name, biography, and images of your artwork for promotional purposes. All credits to artist will be attributed as follows:

[Title of artwork], [artist name], [CDCR number]. Courtesy of Robert E. Kennedy Library and California Men’s Colony.

DISCLAIMER

Due to possible unforeseeable events, Cal Poly and CMC cannot guarantee against any damages or theft which may be incurred during transport and display of the artwork.

Artist’s Signature

Date

Artist Biography & Statement

Between the Bars Artist Statement and Bio WORKSHEET

Check here if you would like your submission to be copy edited (grammar, spelling, etc.,)

CDCR and Cal Poly reserve the right to edit your final submissions to comply with rules and criteria set forth for the exhibition as outlined in your application.

Name: _____ **Prison Number:** _____
(as you wish to appear within exhibit)

Signature

(As you wish to appear within exhibit. Use the space below. We will use this in the title card for your art.)

Bio: *(140 words or less)*

Third-person: *(He/She or other pronouns)*

Artist Statement: (Please use only this one-side in the boxes provided.)

1. Identify yourself

- a. How would you describe your background, and how has it influenced you? Where do you come from? Community, geography, ethnicity, family, peers, mentors, hobbies?

2. Describe the medium you work in while incarcerated and why?

3. Has art helped you to rehabilitate and if so in what ways, and if not were there barriers?

4. In what ways has art benefitted you while incarcerated?

5. Close with:

- a. I can be contacted about my art by
- or
- b. If you do not want to be contacted leave line “a” empty.