



Arts Immersion at Work During a Pandemic

The past school year has certainly presented many challenges for students, staff, school leadership and provincial leadership. Challenges that just a year and a half ago, we wouldn't have even dreamed of. And yet, here we are 15 months into the pandemic. While we have faced adversity, we have also managed to stay true to the mandate of our charter school - Arts Immersion.

Arts Immersion is a planning process unique to Calgary Arts Academy. Teams consisting of teachers, full time artists and visiting artists plan and deliver the Alberta curriculum through music, dance, literary arts, visual arts and dramatic arts. The art form is first and foremost in the planning process and Arts Immersion teaching and learning happens each and every day.

The purpose of this report is to highlight and celebrate some of the extraordinary work students and staff have accomplished together during the 2020-2021 school year. The theme for this year is The Art of Learning. Principal Stonehouse writes the following in the September newsletter.

“Our purpose is to provide experiences that foster curious, kind, empathetic and engaged students. Our program encourages individuals to be creative, to think differently, and to explore possibilities. Given the current reality of living with the pandemic, we have all had to learn new ways of living with uncertainty. ‘The Art of Learning’ requires us to tap into our resilience and our commitment to learn more about ourselves as human beings as we navigate provincial safety and security protocols.”

The following is snapshot of Arts Immersion highlights throughout the school year from Kindergarten to Year 10.



September Arts Immersion

- Kindergarten and Year 1 students spent time discussing the school pillars including the Circle of Courage, and creating artwork to help everyone learn how to be a good friend, how to be independent, and how to be resilient learners.
- Year 2/3 students created Circle of Courage superhero characters and love monsters. Year 6/7 students expanded their collective understanding of Calgary Arts Academy pillars with the artist team through activities such as sketching, improv, logo design, dance and theatre sports.



- Year 8/9 students designed and created a project to show the spirit of belonging to the elementary campus by imagining they were mission control at “Area 89.” They sent secret codes and scavenger hunt clues to the younger students to complete a superhero activity followed by creating more than 200 animal art cards as a thank you to the younger students for completing the mission.
- Year 10 students explored new ways of engaging with music focusing on teamwork, positive attitudes and unconventional instruments.



October Arts Immersion

- Kindergarten and Year 1 students built their own community out of boxes and other materials. They replicated urban and rural parts of the community, as well as different landmarks and their own homes.
- Year 2/3 students explored their lost and found art; expanded on their experiences as artists and connected to, and built community through, their artistic explorations using watercolour, oil pastels, fibre arts, dance, music, digital design, pointillism and photography.
- Year 4/5 students ‘adopted’ a small town in Alberta and created small town characters to explore and connect with through creative writing and performance.
- Year 6/7 students worked on a project around cultivating identity as well as created their own country.
- Year 8/9 students created an advertisement for a historical item culminating in a sharing day with a variety of video, print, radio and billboard ads.
- Year 10 students explored financial literacy through the use of CAA dollars and were required to ‘pay’ for their classes, as well as materials and technology usage.



November Arts Immersion

- Year 2/3 students wrote and published their own stories about how people live in Tunisia. They also explored how, by sharing artistic expressions, community can build, shape and grow connections to each other.
- Year 4/5 students created small town brochures exploring the art of advertising through assembling travel brochures demonstrating their geographical and demographical understanding of small towns in Alberta.
- Year 6/7 students participated in National Novel Writing Month where they delved into story writing and character development within a variety of genres. They also created and managed their fictional nations through their Civic Mirror project.
- Year 8/9 students participated in a Murder Mystery project as well as a drawing/design project where they embodied the spirit of DaVinci's workshop.
- Year 10 students visited *The Little Red Reading House*, a colourful heritage home devoted to promoting the love of reading and early literacy. They followed up with a school wide book drive. In addition, these students went on a 'virtual' field trip in dance class to the Royal Opera House in London, to watch and partake in World Ballet Day.



December Arts Immersion

This would have been our 10th anniversary of our annual performance at the Southern Alberta Jubilee Auditorium where we showcase our Arts Immersion learning to our community. Unfortunately, we were unable to perform on that magnificent stage but we did tap into our collective creativity and produce a video for our community. The theme this year is "The Art of Learning." The program is attached and outlines all the K - Year 10 performance pieces and how they relate to, and demonstrate, student Arts Immersion learning.

This would have been our 10th year performing at the Southern Alberta Jubilee Auditorium. Despite our excitement and keen desire to perform on the magnificent Jubilee stage, it was not meant to be this year. Our theme this year is The Art of Learning, a broad over-arching theme of what learning looks like at Calgary Arts Academy. Each cohort group has produced a video to showcase Arts Immersion learning. So break out the hot chocolate, cozy blankets and sit back and enjoy!

Land Acknowledgement

Kindergarten/Year 1

Calgary Stampede 2021 Poster Competition Winner

~passing of the storm and recognizing resiliency and optimism~

Lexi Hilderman, CAA alumna

Greetings and Welcome

Todd Hirsch, Board Chair

Dale Erickson, Superintendent

Michelle Stonehouse, Principal

Kim Hoey and Rhonda Morrison, Knob Hill Administrators

Year 4/5 Team: *Spectacle*

We've Been Everywhere

Mr. Thomas, Mr. Thorson

Due to some unforeseen Covid related challenges, the students have switched gears to present Part 1 "We've Been Everywhere." Imagine being the only class at the Education Centre! Watch for Part 2 "I've Been Everywhere" coming soon as students explore all the towns, cities, villages, hamlets and communities in Alberta. Students imagined what it must have been like to be a part of a travelling circus one hundred years ago. Lyrics were reimaged to this classic Hank Snow song.

Cirque du CAA

At-Home Learners, Ms. Moore

Students have been exploring procedural writing, history and geography through their creation of mini circus performances. Each student has selected a common circus skill to learn, rehearse and present. They have also written 'how-to' guides to assist aspiring circus performers in learning these skills at home. We are excited to share our accomplishments in this video compilation.

The Dark History of the Circus

Ms. Connolly

Students have been exploring the evolution of the circus. They have specifically been focusing on the history, the culture and people, the exploitation of different people, the treatment of animals, expression focusing on clowns and mime, and how the ability to travel in different ways has affected the evolution of the circus.

Things Could Always Be Worse

Mr. Matt

Students walk us through their reflections on resiliency during a time of adversity. They mindfully express gratitude as a way to cope, and declare, "things could always be worse!" This video is at times, crazily silly. However, the underlying message is of cooperation, vigilance and an optimistic, positive outlook as key to our collective well being during the pandemic and beyond.

Year 10 Dance Option

Halfway There

Ms. Hailey Mcleod

Students have been working steadily on ballet technique for the first half of their term. This video is an overview of the many skills they have developed in class, including barre work, centre and across the floor exercises.

Year 6/7 Team: *Times Like These*

Mr. Lewis, Mr. McCafferty, Mr. Rasporich, Mr. Tukkimaki, Mr. Lukas

This school year has already been one filled with firsts. Everything we do is through a new lens, with new experiences coming everyday. Through all of this, as we face many new challenges and obstacles, one thing we have learned is that in times like these, we are stronger as a community. Enjoy *Times Like These* as the Year 6/7 students skillfully navigate the art of learning.

K/1 Team: *Connecting Through the Ages*

Mrs. Maye, Ms. Rizzuti, Ms. Turner, Mrs. Hunter

Oki, bonjour and salutations, CAA community! This year we have been challenged with learning how to connect with others from a distance. Through song, dance and physical movement our Kindergarten and Year 1 students examined how we have connected through the ages by exploring Canada's unique past and showcase how greetings have evolved into what we know today!



Year 6-9 Arts Immersion Dance

Bow and Arrow

Ms. Hailey McLeod, Ms. Sarah Murdoch

All Year 6-9 students have been working on ballet inspired choreography to the song, Bow and Arrow, by local band Reuben and the Dark. The song speaks of going 'over the mountains and under the stars' and is reminiscent of the Alberta landscape, along with the metaphor of going through challenging times and overcoming obstacles together. Students were given a blank canvas, one paint colour plus white, and encouraged to interpret the dance visually with no parameters. Students also had the chance to speak with songwriter and band leader Reuben Bullock about the creative process, the meaning of the song and lyrics and life in general as a professional musician. He is thrilled we are using his work to use in dance and visual art!

Year 8/9 Team: *Whose Voice is it Anyway*

Ms. Severson-Baker, Ms. Leung, Mr. Girgis, Ms. Den Hoed

Behind the Voice Scene

In-School Learners

Students have created a documentary to show the audience what happens behind the scenes as they learn how to script and record their voices to dub their own science education videos. Directors learned how to manage small groups while script writers worked together to create a cohesive story from beginning to end. Sound engineers and voice actors worked together to bring animated characters to life through dubbing and editing with the support of the directors and script writers.

Exploding the Canon! Poetry Through the Ages

At-Home Learners

Listen to the voices of Year 8/9 students as they share poetry from the English literary canon from the 1600s, to contemporary Canada and then their own works!

Year 2/3 Team: *How to Art!*

How can sharing our artistic explorations, expressions and processes build community? How does art help us stay connected when we are apart? How does sharing our art build community? These are some of the questions we explored as we engaged in different artistic processes in our classrooms; a behind-the-scenes look at what it takes to create art.

How to Music Video

Ms. Christiansen

How to Puppet Show

Ms. Katie

How to Jubilee

Ms. Lothbrook

How to Twist a Story

Ms. Beedle/Mrs. Dolen

How to Tell a Story

Ms. Amanda

Year 10

We Didn't Start the Virus

Ms. Billington, Mr. Thorson, Ms. Nigh

Students wanted to create a video that encapsulated the strange and curious times of starting their first year of high school during a pandemic. They cleverly changed the lyrics for "We Didn't Start the Fire" by Billy Joel to take us through a day in the life of a Year 10. They also transcribed the notes to play the song using Boom Whackers. The students reference the topics they studied in their core subjects and include a plea for the listeners to abide by the COVID-19 restrictions so we may all do our part to keep each other safe!

CBC Music Challenge

Mr. Garrett Thorson, Ms. Susanna Walker

In a year of uncertainty, the Education Centre students and staff have looked at this year's Canadian Music Class Challenge as an opportunity to hold onto a sense of what 'normal' has looked like in previous years. Though we were unable to approach this year's challenge with our usual strategy of performing one song together in the gym, we are excited to present a new cohort-based representation of what our Covid-sensitive music program looks like. Please enjoy our virtual performances of the following songs by Canadian artists.

Crabucket by k-os

Everything You've Done Wrong by Sloan

Robots by Dan Mangan

We're All in This Together by Sam Roberts

Our team of artists were also involved in many aspects of this project. They include Lori Kearney, Edward Mitchell and Steven Morton at Knob Hill, and Hailey McLeod, Hudson Munshaw, Sarah Murdoch and Shannon Murphy at the Education Centre. We are fortunate to have such a supportive team of people who all make valuable contributions to the teaching and learning at CAA. In addition to those already listed in the program, our staff includes: Sarah Birch, Cathy Braun, Charlye Caldwell, Allan Doell, Gord Donovan, Cindy Fortin, Abi Gallardo-Gomez, Lisa Grothman, Cole Jordan, Christian Lapointe, Kevin Loftus, Julie Luu, Melissa Mayzes, Margaret Osborne, Carli Plante, Silvana Poissant, Janniel Saville, JoAnn Schiffner, Britt vanGroningen and Megan Vergo.

Special thanks to Joe Girgis for reviewing, editing, and compiling the videos into our presentation - The Art of Learning.

From all of us at Calgary Arts Academy,
we wish you all the best this Holiday Season!

"May your walls know joy, may every room hold laughter, and every window open to great possibility."

Mary Anne Radmacher



Please note: During the creation of this video, AHS guidelines were followed at the time of filming. In addition, this video is intended for the personal viewing of Calgary Arts Academy community. It is not intended for public display of any kind. Enjoy!



January Arts Immersion

- Kindergarten and Year 1 students explored recycling and waste, endangered animals and personal responsibility. They enjoyed developing their writing skills by writing 'how-to' books.
- Inspired by the book *Where the Wild Things Are*, Year 2/3 students created their own artistic learning habitat. They researched small crawling and flying creatures, constructed trees, learned about the food and animal adaptations as well as classifications.
- Year 4/5 students focused on how to relate to each other, how to communicate well, and how to reflect honestly as part of their Winter Wellness contract. They made connections between themselves and the world around them as they applied mindfulness and philosophical thinking to all of their learning.
- Year 6/7 learned all about flight and aerodynamics through experiencing flight simulators. They also enjoyed experimenting with dry ice and creating their own thermoses. Year 7 students completed their own games they created through text adventures, Minecraft, RPG boss and plain old fashioned board game design.
- Students in Year 8/9 happily worked on their "Whose Voice is it Anyway" voice over Arts Immersion project by taking on their roles of sound engineer, director and voice actor to bring the script writers' work to life. The completed project featured their own re-voiced animated stories about the immune system which they shared with the younger students.



Weaving for Wellness in Year 4/5

February Arts Immersion



Knob Hill Elementary Campus

Black History Month was recognized and celebrated at our Elementary Campus by reading stories about Black Canadians and Black Artists followed by a discussion of the themes and issues in each book. These stories resonated deeply and many children immediately identified the themes of race identity, kindness, fairness, belonging and inclusion.



The entire school participated in a Covid-friendly performance video! Pink Shirt Day provided an opportunity to discuss how and why Pink Shirt Day began and how to keep the spirit going today. Students watched an old flash mob video and talked about using art forms to spread messages. We all dream of the day when we can do a true flash mob dance, but in the meantime, students and staff came together as a community in their cohorts to learn a bit of movement to accommodate a Bruno Mars song about friendship, 'Count on Me'. Through this experience, students spread community spirit and kindness, shared the message

about Pink Shirt Day and were reminded about the importance of standing up for each other. This activity was also an important Circle of Courage project as students were showing belonging, and practicing generosity with sharing their time and efforts in learning something new. They also mastered the moves and their performance skills (eyes up and confident, starting and ending strong) and practiced independence by keeping to themselves in the performance space and committed to their spot and blocking.



Education Centre Middle School Campus

With the pandemic restricting our usual annual performance showcase, students focused on what it takes to put on a show - character design, set design, lighting, sound design, costumes, and make-up. They put all these skills into practice while exploring several curriculum outcomes. In Year 8/9, students chose significant historical figures and created portraits through the art form of their choice including dramatic monologues, poetry, dance and stunning visual art portraits.

March Arts Immersion



- Kindergarten and Year 1 students participated in projects involving making paper, reusing classroom materials, and creating collaborative recycled art murals. They displayed their work for the rest of the school to see.
- “The Art of Adventure” was the theme for Year 2/3 students as they created maps and experimented with materials. They built boats to sail over to Ukraine and learned Ukrainian dancing and culture. Students also created their own dragon and wrote detailed paragraphs on how to take care of them!



- Year 4/5 students used colour theory, drawing and body proportions, natural dye chemistry and textiles, storytelling, book making, pop art and sculpture to learn about Louis Riel's legacy, societal reform and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.



- Year 6/7 students fully immersed themselves in the study of the *Phantom of the Opera*. They explored various themes and narrative approaches and dissected the characters. Character analysis included make up design and costume design which involved looking at 19th century apparel.
- Through their unit of study “Welcome to my World,” Year 8/9 students created maps, cities and cultures of a world of their own imagining including costuming. Character monologues and make up design were also included.
- Year 10 students continued with their pure art form instruction in their chosen art form. In visual arts, students are working on the Elements of Art and Design Concepts. They studied a different artist from history or present day and created an inspired art piece.

April Arts Immersion

Knob Hill Elementary Campus



Year 2/3

**Thunder Bird on
the
Prairies**

in the style of
Norval Morrisseau,
The Picasso of the
North



Education Centre Middle/High School Campus



This was a busy month at the Education Centre as they participated in community activities.

Year 8/9/10 students submitted their science projects to the MSA Virtual Science Fair. Year 9 students created projects related to Biological Diversity, and Year 10 students created projects related to Physics. Using their strengths in skills learned through their Arts Immersion work, the submissions were creative and inspiring. Students received valuable feedback from current medical students

at the

University of Alberta. As an added bonus to this creative critical thinking project, CAA students received five awards including Best Study, Best Experiment, Best Presentation, Best Medical Study, and Best Water Related Project.





May/June Arts Immersion

- Kindergarten/Year 1 students explored the world of fairy tales and how these stories have characters, a problem, a solution and an element of magic. With that in mind, they crafted their own fairytale stories focusing on common themes of classic tales as well as a more uncommon theme involving aliens and unknown planets in the far reaches of outer space.
- Year 2/3 students explored all things graphic novels and focused on their ABC countdown, where each day was dedicated to a letter and an Arts Immersion exploration based on that letter - 26 days of fun!
- Year 4/5 students ‘time-travelled’ between the Golden Age of silent film and radio plays in the early and mid 20th century, to the contemporary era where art forms such as podcasts, gifs, and other digital animations are more prevalent. They investigated how the senses are used to convey meaning and create experiences for an audience.
- “Marble Olympics” is a keen area of focus for the Year 6/7 team. With a heavy emphasis on collaboration, creative thinking, and problem solving, students applied their knowledge of structures and forces, simple machines, mathematics and budgeting, as well as world nations and cultures. Teams chose names, team flags and designed test tracks to gather data about their marbles. An exciting way to end the year!
- Year 8/9 students reflected on the challenges of the year and how they overcame them together. They discovered that flexibility, creativity, and kindness go a long way to thriving even in the most difficult of times. Students designed hopeful and encouraging stickers as part of their project “Art from the Heart.” The stickers were distributed to doctors, nurses, food service workers, first-responders, anti-racism advocates and more!
- Year 10 students had the opportunity to ‘visit’ with a professional artist in a field of their choosing. Calgary artists volunteered their time to ‘Zoom’ one on one with a student sharing their personal experiences in the arts. We were very appreciative to have so many artists working in the community graciously donate their time and share their passion.

Spotlight on Calgary Arts Academy Arts Immersion from the Artist Perspective

Calgary Arts Academy hires artists to work with teachers to deliver the curriculum. Each artist has provided a special Arts highlight of the year.

Garrett Thorson, BMus, MA, BED; Music Director Education Centre

In a year full of uncertainty, isolation, and anxiety, the students and staff at Calgary Arts Academy looked at this year's CBC Canadian Music Class Challenge as an opportunity to hold onto a sense of what "normal" has looked like for our school in previous years. Though we were unable to approach this year's challenge with our usual strategy of performing one song all together in the gym, we were excited to present a new cohort-based representation of what our



Covid-adaptive music program looks like. Through the magic of multi-track recording, video editing and a little improvisation, creating virtual performances of "Crabbuckit", "Robots", "Everything You've Done Wrong", and "We're All In This Together" was certainly a musical highlight of CAA's 2020/2021 school year.

Steven Morton, BMus; Elementary Campus Music Specialist

A highlight was with Year 2/3 outer space activities with a focus on "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star." Students learned the song "My Very Educated Mother Just Sat Upon Nine Pizzas" (from the musical *Awesome Allie; First Kid Astronaut*) which is a mnemonic device to remember the order of the planets. Students were given papers with the words from the song and the names of the planet. They then had to stand and hold up their word at the right time. Students learned that "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star" repeats the same rhythm throughout (ti-ti ti-ti ta). Students learned to play "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star" on the xylophones. Students worked together to write new lyrics to

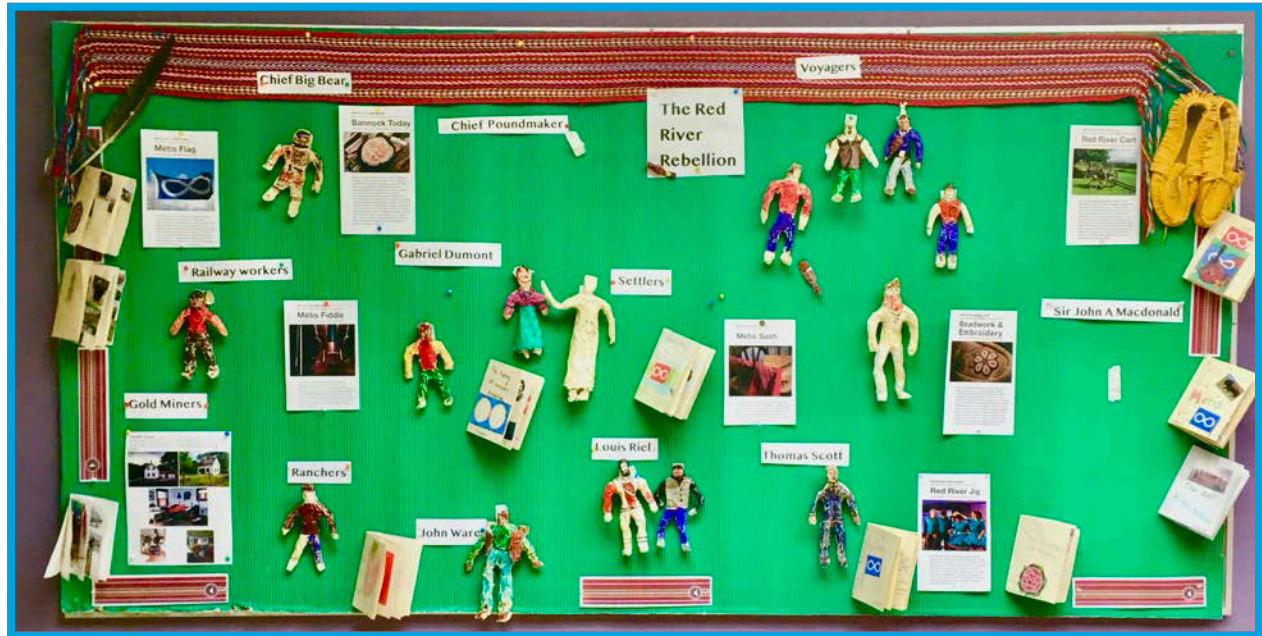


"Twinkle Twinkle Little Star." They were encouraged to be silly if they wanted. To kick start the process, we looked at how the pattern in the first line is "Verb Verb Adjective Noun." In writing, they had to match the syllables to the previously established rhythm and match the rhyming scheme of AABB(AA). Students watched two different videos of concert pianists playing "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star" with several variations. They were then asked to discuss in what ways the song changed.

Students also watched the music video of Chris Hadfield playing his guitar and singing *Space Oddity* in outer space.

Lori Kearney, BFA, Visual Arts Immersion Specialist, Elementary Campus

Working with the Year 4/5 students on the “Rise Up” learning contract was a definite highlight this year. Students covered Louis Riel and the Red River Rebellion from top to bottom and it was especially meaningful to the artist as she was born and raised in the Red River settlement area.



Edward Mitchell, BA Dance, Arts Immersion Specialist, Elementary Campus

“It’s a Wonderful Community” contract was inspired by our students’ own questions and queries about their world. Students in Kindergarten and Year 1 have been posing their ‘wonderings’ daily and have shown interest in buildings and their community. This led us to learn about urban and rural communities, how buildings are made and how we experience our own communities through colour and our senses.



Shannon Murphy, BA in Kinesiology, Drama Specialist, Education Centre

One of the highlights for the students was the Stage Combat Unit. Students went through all the safety and basic techniques for hand to hand combat (learning kicks, punches, hooks, jabs and falls) and then went into sword. In sword they used the foam light sabre swords to practice the French fencing technique. They learned terminology and how to create proper distance from your partner. Another highlight would be taking in some of the 21 Black Futures plays from CBC Gem. The students watched "Special" by Keeshia Cheesman and reflected on how black history is taught in Alberta. They talked about how the production was staged and who we thought the target audience was. Year 9 students especially found "Notice" by Luke Reece impactful.

Hudson Munsham, Concept Art and Design Diploma, Media Arts Specialist, Education Centre

This year in Media Arts, the highlight of the year was working on the end of term project with the Year 10 students. We spent several weeks developing a historically accurate, industrial style city in Minecraft together. When we moved to online we were able to take this project with us. During our time both in-school and at-home learning, the students developed a very impressive final project requiring collaboration, critical thinking and problem solving.

Hailey McLeod, BS in Kinesiology, MSc, and Sarah Murdoch, BFA Photography, Education Centre

Students in the dance option learned ballet inspired choreography to the song Bow and Arrow as an entire group and then were given creative freedom to create their own endings in small groups. We worked on this for several weeks and it culminated in the Jubilee film before winter break. The amount of growth was immense, from learning basic ballet technique to be able to learn and create choreography in only a short amount of time. There were slight variations for the different grade levels but it was amazing to see all the students learning something similar—they were apart but still together, as that seems to be the theme during this unusual school year!

Ms Sarah, in Visual Art, then took the inspiration from the size of the canvas and they could only use one colour plus white. The students were encouraged to be inspired by the song melody, notes or words but they could essentially interpret the song however they wanted. The final step was to photograph a “group” photo of all the students with their paintings. This photo was taken as a composite with all covid procedures adhered to. The highlight of the whole project was a Zoom chat with singer songwriter Reuben Bullock. The collaborative aspect between artists, in a covid world, was really exciting as this was as close as we could get to our usual style of teaching and learning at CAA.

