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The DreamWorks Animation Academy at Inner-City Arts

Inner-City Arts' innovative animation program, created in 1995, is now ***The DreamWorks Animation Academy at Inner-City Arts***, in recognition of a generous grant from the DreamWorks Animation Charitable Foundation.

An important component of the program is its collaboration with the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts) Community Arts Partnership (CAP) program. Each year more than 1,300 children in grades 3-12 come to Inner-City Arts for hands-on instruction in animation, working with professional teaching artists in a state-of-the-art animation studio fully outfitted with digital equipment, light tables and work stations. A 3-D studio for clay animation and new multi-media approaches to animation is expected to be completed in August of 2008.

Participants in *The DreamWorks Animation Academy at Inner-City Arts* explore the elements and principles of animation and learn basic animation techniques. Like all programs at Inner-City Arts, *The DreamWorks Animation Academy at Inner-City Arts* strengthens literacy skills and supports student achievement across academic disciplines. In addition, animation has the unique ability to help children develop a particular skill set--collaboration, problem-solving and critical thinking skills--of significant value in today's world.

Through instruction and experimentation, students who come to *The DreamWorks Animation Academy at Inner-City Arts* will:

- gain an understanding of animation techniques and principles
- learn storytelling (drama), hand-drawn animation (visual art) and pixilation (physical movement)
- work in teams with fellow classmates
- develop the self-confidence to pursue their own ideas
- create their own personal animation projects and films
- experience the satisfaction of presenting their work to an audience

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CORE CURRICULUM PROGRAMS

Students participating in the Inner-City Arts core curriculum study animation twice a week for seven weeks. Taught by Inner-City Arts artists, students are introduced to basic animation techniques while receiving support for their own creative exploration. Students create their own films, collaboratively and independently.

A special semester-long program for 5th graders is taught by instructors from both Inner-City Arts and from the Community Arts Partnership of CalArts. Students in this program make a zoetrope strip, draw on film, learn about morphing, flip books, story-boarding, cut-out puppetry and backgrounds, using both hand held cameras and “Lunchbox” capturing motion. By the end of each 12-week semester, the group of 35 students and their classroom teacher will have collaboratively produced a 3- to 5-minute animated film with a story-line, characters and backdrops.

When students complete the animation program, their films are screened for an invited audience, and each student receives a DVD of their work.

HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM

This unique program, a collaboration between Inner-City Arts and the CalArts Community Arts Partnership (CAP) program, introduces high school students to the art of animation, as well as to further education in college, and the possibility of animation as a career.

High School students from throughout Los Angeles come to the Inner-City Arts campus each Saturday for a full academic year (24 weeks) to study animation with instructors from CalArts. Through mentoring by CAP students and faculty, participants develop relationships with working artists, learn about college admissions practices and receive information about potential scholarships. Many of these students are the first in their families to have the opportunity to pursue higher education.

In an intensive workshop environment, students are introduced to basic animation techniques and quickly move on to more sophisticated animation forms. A blank sketchpad is handed out at the first session of the course and students are encouraged to keep a visual diary of their week, at home, at school and en route, material that will inspire the student's work throughout the year. Each student will develop an independent film and contribute to a group project. . Expectations are high for completed, crafted and creative works.

Each 24-week course culminates in screenings of original student work. These public events are held at community venues throughout Los Angeles County, including the REDCAT Theater at Disney Hall, Inner-City Arts, local public schools, and Cal Arts. All students participating in the program receive tapes of their work.