



TEACHING ARTIST PROFILE

Artist Name: Amy O’Neill Houck
Address: 3251 Douglas Hwy
Juneau, AK 99801
Phone Number: 907-988-8000
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1. I am available to work/teach (check all that apply):

_____ in 1-2 week residency period only

X I am flexible and could work different times

_____ I can work 1 day per week for a month or more

_____ I could work part days, different times

2. Please describe your arts education and/or arts background.

I have an MFA in creative writing, and an undergraduate degree in theatre and linguistics with a concentration in International Studies. I am a fiber artist and knitwear designer. I have published three books and numerous articles on knitting and crochet. I maintain a blog, The Hook and I, where I write about fiber art, food, and life in Alaska. I have taught fiber arts classes since 2004 to students of all ages in schools, shops, libraries, and art and community centers.

3. Which Art Forms are you interested in teaching, and how will you incorporate them into the classroom? Please list all, and indicate preferences if any. Also indicate what age children you prefer to work with.

Fiber Art: Knitting, Crochet, Felt-work, Spinning, Weaving, Embroidery, lace. and knot work. I teach creative writing, and I can incorporate writing into other arts residencies. I also teach foraging and cooking classes, and I am interested in teaching students of all ages.

4. What themes, concepts, and experiences do you want to share with students?

Concepts of color, art and design, the history and culture of textiles and fiber art, the mathematical applications of creating fabric from yarn, the science of wool, and the experience of turning wool into yarn, and yarn into fabric all inform my fiber arts teaching.

In creative writing I seek to stimulate students’ creativity and inspire them to tell engaging stories. In teaching foraging and working with wild foods, I look to share a connection with our natural world and an awareness of the daily changes that happen throughout the seasons.

Using and preserving what bounty Southeast Alaska offers allows students to develop a reverence and an appreciation for where they live now and wherever they might live in the future.

5. Please list or describe any prior teaching experiences you may have had (apart from residencies)

I have taught knitting, crochet, and fiber crafts since 2004. I've taught in middle school after school programs, city community-center programs for children, library programs for children and adults, community art centers, and yarn shops. I have taught professional designers and yarn manufacturers, store owners, and retailers. I have taught children from the ages of 4 and up. I have taught in New Jersey, Maryland, Cordova, Alaska, California, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Juneau. I teach online and in person. I lead foraging and cooking walks and workshops through the Juneau cooperative extension. I teach creative writing workshops through the 49 Writers Writing Center in Anchorage

6. Why do you want to teach the arts in Juneau schools?

I enjoy teaching students of all ages. I'm fascinated by their various learning styles. I love showing them how fiber art, writing, and foraging fit in with the rest of the curriculum. I have two children in the Juneau schools, and I enjoy being a part of the education process.

7. Past Experience with Artist in the Schools residencies: (list all)

Harborview Elementary School, Juneau, Alaska, December 2013. Wet felting with approx. 200 students, grades 1-5. Students created wet-felted landscapes and studied wool science while learning basic art concepts needed to create landscape. Finished pieces were embellished with embroidery and beads and displayed in school commons. Teacher workshop offered in conjunction with residency.

Montessori Borealis, Juneau, Alaska, October - December 2014. AMP (Grade 7-8) classroom. A quarter-long survey of fiber arts. Students met weekly to explore wet felting, needle felting, and spinning.

Juneau Douglas High School, Juneau, Alaska, January 2015. "Fire and Fiber Break the Ice." This residency with 3 high school ceramics classes explored communication and relationships using fiber and ceramic as metaphor. Students created wet-felted wearables with hand-made ceramic beads, and wrote reflections on their work. Residency culminated in a student art show at the Juneau Arts and Culture Center. Teacher workshop offered in conjunction with residency.

Glacier Valley Elementary School, Juneau, Alaska, October-November 2015. "Straw into Gold. The Science and Art of Spinning a Yarn." 185 Students grades 3-5. Students built turkish-style spindles, and learned the basics of spinning yarn by hand. Students studied quantitative, scientific, literary, and historical tie-ins to spinning and wool. Teacher workshop offered in December 2015.

Juneau Youth Services, Montana Creek, January - March 2016. "The Hook and I - Crochet for Busy Minds and Eager Hands." Fiber artists have learned through research and experience that rather than being a distraction, having something to do with your hands--like crochet--can make you a better, more attentive listener. Fiber arts engage the left and right hemispheres of the brain in exciting ways: Students think geometrically as they measure and calculate how much yarn it takes to make a finished item--they can get creative with design incorporating color, shape, and texture. In Amy's residency at Montana creek, she helped students develop a service project wherein they can donate finished items to those in need.

8. Have you participated in the **Juneau Teaching Artist Academy series**?

I have completed the series I participated in some of the series No, not yet

9. Please list three references who could be contacted about your work and teaching experience. Include name, phone number and email address for each.

Shannon Okey, shannon.okey@gmail.com 216-569-4398
Heather Ridgeway, heather.ridgeway@juneauschools.org, 907-523-1547
Melissa Highfill, seasideyarns@gmail.com, 907-723-9227

10. Provide any additional comments or additions that might help illuminate your work or life as an artist.\

I have always thought of myself as a “teaching artist;” when I create a new project or work, even for myself, it is always with a student in mind--what skills will the students gain from creating this project, how can they use it to express their own creativity?

Photos of my recent residency work: <https://goo.gl/photos/opA4i46L2aLQmMEv8>

