

May 8, 2006

Dear Summit County Arts Council:

Local photographer, David Weihnacht, visited my two upper-level photography classes April 25-26th to conduct a Polaroid manipulation activity. He began each session by sharing his portfolio while discussing his philosophy on creating art and his approach to producing images. The students were immediately intrigued and excited by his work and creative process. David's laidback approach combined with his ease of interaction with the kids enabled them to create freely and enjoy a new photographic experience. The visit has had a lasting impact on the students and they are still talking about it.

When classes were asked what particularly made an impression on them, or what they would like to say to David, they had very focused responses. Some of the students' comments were:

"He was a guiding person; he really seemed to really connect with us very quickly."

"David has a way of working with students. He's clear with his explanations, but has no intention of making us change our artwork."

"What stood out to me was how he goes about creating art. He takes a day with his camera and goes out to look for pictures...I found this interesting because for me it's when I'm not looking (for an image) that I get the best shots."

"...the purity of photographs and how he commented on the diminishing purity of photos. I agree with him."

"Through Polaroid manipulation, he literally shows that even the most innate object possesses energy and is constantly moving around."

"...seeing, feeling and expressing the energy in everything."

"My experience with David was very positive and his artwork was incredible. Using the cameras gave me a different perspective on letting go of control and working with what you have to create something you are happy with."

"You can fight what happens in life, or you can accept it and try to use it to your advantage."

As you can see, the students connected not only with the process, but with the person as well. I particularly am thankful to the SCAC for the funding of this workshop and to David Weihnacht for giving his time and sharing his equipment, expertise and insight. After 13 years of teaching at Summit High School and many guest speakers I can honestly say this is one of the most positively energized and lasting experiences that my kids and I have had with a visiting artist.

Respectfully,
Kim R. Giese
Photography Teacher