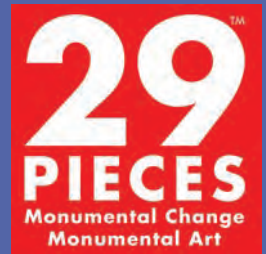


EVERY LOVING HEART
deserves to be educated.



PRODUCED BY



Art by Taegan Polston
Louisville, Kentucky

250,000 Student Participants
In 24 States and Washington DC.
More than 1,500 educators trained.



Our Story

The seeds of 29 Pieces were planted with a bullet, the bullet that murdered a man in front of Founder Karen Blessen's house.

A Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and artist, Karen reacted to the tragedy by using the tools of her profession.

The result was a piece titled ONE BULLET, which she wrote and illustrated for *The Dallas Morning News*. The article explored the act of violence and traced the path of its impact on the victim's family, the shooter's family, the law enforcement community as well as the community at large.

Karen soon realized that telling the story wasn't the end of her responsibility; it was the beginning. She had to act to help keep the narrative from repeating itself over and over.

Once again, she turned to a tool she knew: art, with a hope to use its power as a catalyst for expression, communication and peace. Engaging, involving and inspiring our community's youth to learn, share and live the lessons of peace became the unifying goal of the organization known as **29 Pieces**.

Since its inception in 2005, **29 Pieces** has grown in number and impact. Our workshops and classroom projects have helped more than 250,000 students and adults develop their creativity and their love of peace.

Our **Dallas LOVE Project** used art to turn the City-of-Hate perception upside down during the Kennedy assassination's 50th anniversary year. Our **Piece 24 Project** united a coalition of business and community leaders as well as local schools to help artists create a 21-foot sculpture — a monument to peace and respect that has a permanent place within the community.

What all **29 Pieces'** efforts have in common is the use of art as the power source for forging swords into plowshares and planting new seeds of peace. It's not easy — it takes a lot of volunteers and supporters to make it work. But it is working. And while nothing we do will right the wrong of the murder that started this process, we can change what happens next.

29 Pieces was founded by Karen Blessen and Dr. Barbara Miller as a non-profit organization in 2005, and developed a number of major outreach programs. Some are shown on the following pages.

29 Pieces Monumental Change Monumental Art



OUR MISSION

29 Pieces uses art to awaken, uplift and give voice to the creative human spirit to make genuine, positive social change.

ABOVE:

29 Pieces Founder Karen Blessen, in white, with (from left) Richard Rodriguez, Maria Patiño, Dolores Mendoza, Leticia Pompa, Hope Trevino and photographer David Kennerly.

BELOW:

29 Pieces Founder Dr. Barbara Miller with students at L.L. Hotchkiss Elementary





We started in 2007, going into classrooms to inspire and nurture students' social-emotional health with our **Artists Making a Kinder World** curriculum. Those seeds grew as we trained teachers to implement our curriculum in schools and district-wide. Now, **Artists Making a Kinder World** lessons and projects are in 24 states and Washington DC.

How is **29 Pieces** taking this popular program beyond the North Texas region and out to the wider world? **1.** Through our **ArtistsMakingaKinderWorld.org** website that gives free access to our original 20-lesson arts education curriculum; **2.** Through professional

Professional Development



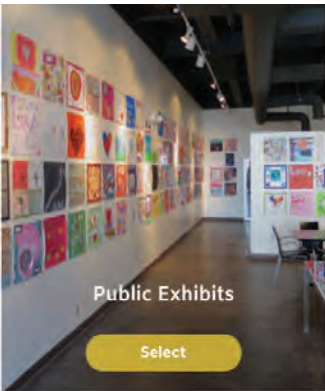
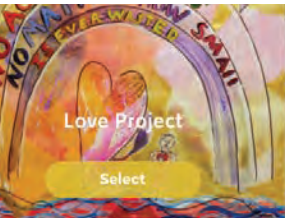
Artists Making A Kinder World Curriculum



development workshops; **3.** With a sustained marketing and outreach strategy including presence at educational conferences; **4.** By seeking partnerships with education leaders at universities.

The **ArtistsMakingaKinderWorld.org** website provides a home to our lessons in perpetuity and features ready-to-use lesson plans in English and Spanish, as well as interactive presentations, video, enrichment materials and downloadable art.

Please go to www.artistsmakingakinderworld.org to get started.



29 Pieces Education: Legacy Initiative



HEROES and HEROINES Lesson

ABOVE: Students discuss, name and claim the qualities that make someone heroic, then do a portrait of one of their personal HEROES.

GREAT PEACEMAKERS Lesson

BELOW: What makes someone great? This lesson presents 12 great peacemakers from around the world and invites participants to consider the ways that their genius for nonviolence has inspired resolution of conflict. Students use found objects to create portraits of these beloved figures, realizing that just like them, we too can be great and a peacemaker.





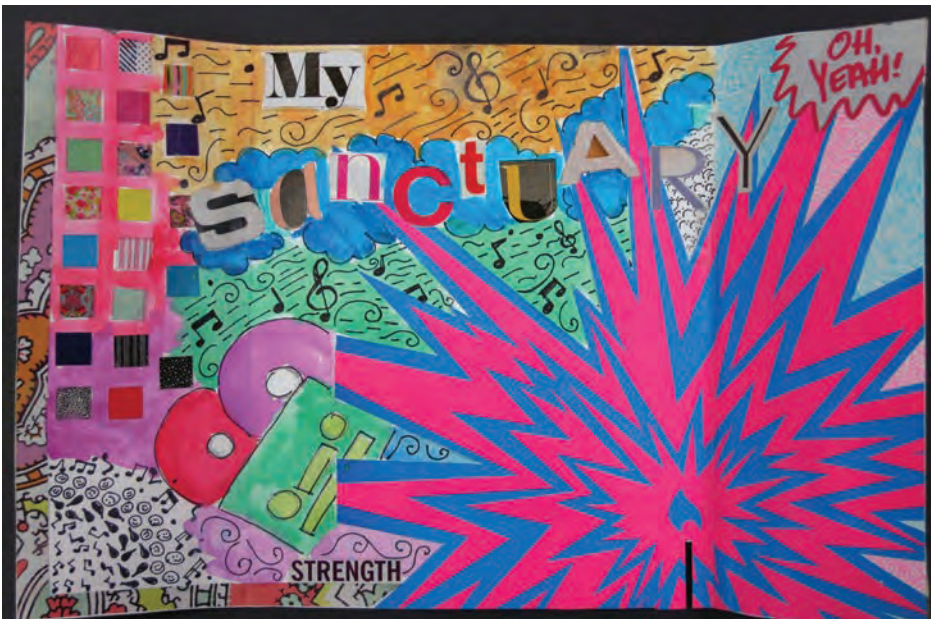
COMMITMENT Lesson

ABOVE: Participants consider a realistic COMMITMENT they can make to peacemaking and create art in which they write their COMMITMENT. Artists are encouraged to display their COMMITMENT art in a place where they see it daily.

SANCTUARY Lesson

BELOW: Participants consider the meanings and importance of having places of refuge and safety, places of protection, or sacred spaces. They make folded paper triptychs (or accordion fold books) depicting places where they go to find personal peace – and when and why they go there..

To see all lessons, go to www.artistsmakingakinderworld.org.



[illegible]

Dallas Teachers Speak



29 Pieces celebrates strong and resilient public educators. We showcased the brilliance of 159 Dallas ISD teachers in our 2019 city-wide campaign to honor the profession of teaching and to highlight what educators need to perform at peak capacity. In partnership with **UNT Dallas** and **Ashoka International**, **29 Pieces** created and exhibited 2,000 photo portraits of Dallas ISD teachers and their answers to: “**WHY DO I TEACH?**” and “**WHAT DO I NEED?**”

29 Pieces exhibited the poster collections in major Dallas venues including Dallas City Hall and The American Airlines Center, as well as at the State Capitol in Austin, sponsored by Senator Royce West.



29 Pieces Education: Dallas Students Speak



"Students and staff took a lot of selfies and pictures of the display."

- Ms. J Smith, E.J. Conrad Art Teacher

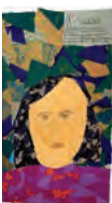
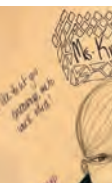
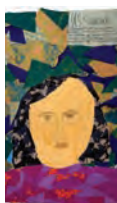


"An overwhelmingly positive experience for students and teachers."

- Mr. A Mayer, E.J. Conrad Art Teacher



29 Pieces lifted up the voices of students in a companion campaign to **Dallas Teachers Speak**. In **Dallas Students Speak**, 320 students from **Emmett J. Conrad** and **Irma Rangel Young Women's Leadership High Schools** created portraits of teachers who impacted them positively. Artists Riley Holloway and Karen Blessen led student workshops. **29 Pieces** exhibited the art at Dallas City Hall, Dallas Central Library, and respective schools concurrently with the **Dallas Teachers Speak** campaign. Exhibiting not only provides a platform for student pride, it also redoubles our celebration of great teachers.





29 Pieces and partner organizations empowered artists in North Texas to create thousands of pieces of **RESPECT** themed artwork, displayed all throughout the area in 2016 and 2017.

The artwork aimed to spread **RESPECT** like a positive virus — changing the conversation and turning this into a **Time of Respect**.



TOP: The RESPECT Project was kicked off at City Hall. Mayor Mike Rawlings and Council Members join 29 Pieces students and Founder Karen Blessen.

ABOVE: A student from Irma Rangel Young Women's Leadership School in Dallas ISD shows her RESPECT Project creation.

Piece
24
PROJECT

Let's my hands respect the things you've made





Piece 24 Project team with artist and filmmaker Jorge Gutierrez (center, holding sign).

Piece 24: Built by Student and Adult Artists

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES and SCHOLARSHIPS for HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Piece 24 is a 21 ft. mosaic sculpture titled "Make my hands respect the things you have made," inspired by the Native American passage "Let Me Walk in Beauty." **29 Pieces** unveiled the final art from this 2 year project in December 2016 on Jefferson Blvd. in Dallas. Students from Adamson HS, Sunset HS, Booker T. Washington HS, Dallas CAN Academy and Irma Rangel YWLS learned to build public art and earned more than \$22,000 in scholarships while being mentored by professionals.



The Piece 24 Project on Jefferson Blvd. in Dallas.

LAUNCHED

with the hope of gathering messages of LOVE. The American LOVE Project received more than 4000 submissions of art. We successfully curated an online gallery of 3,791 of these artworks. While the online gallery proved to be stunning, we also installed art exhibits in the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex. Participating schools coast to coast mounted exhibits locally.

The American LOVE Project was a success because of those who participated and uploaded artwork. We are eternally grateful to them — for showing so much LOVE energy and faith in this nationwide project.

3,791 Artworks 24 States & Washington DC

THEMES

We reviewed every piece of art submitted to The American LOVE Project. During this process we discovered themes and messages emerging. Some of these themes are:

- Brave Voices, Patriotism, Mother Nature & Earth,
- Rainbows, Characters & Superheroes, Cityscapes,
- Valentines Day, Caring Hands and Storytelling. Enjoy at: theamericanloveproject.com

Our nation's founding ideals

- + the power of art
- + words that inspire love
- + the creativity of educators, students, and artists
- = AMERICAN HEALING

The American LOVE Project.
A 29 Pieces special project, engaged schools, organizations, and artists in the United States of America and beyond, in the 29 Pieces LOVE Lesson as a positive grassroots response to the January 6, 2021 insurrection at the United States Capitol.





Northwest Arkansas LOVE Project



Love Is all around us. In August of 2023, The Rogers Lowell, Arkansas Chamber of Commerce, the Rogers Experimental House, Art on the Bricks and the Walmart Foundation sponsored **29 Pieces** to come to beautiful Northwest Arkansas and introduce the **29 Pieces LOVE Project** to schools and community members. The NW Arkansas sponsors will exhibit artwork community wide. When the project is completed in Arkansas, artwork will be sent to people in Ukraine, through the organization **Hugs From Friends**. Resources for the **NW Arkansas LOVE Project** are available for download at: <https://artonthebricks.com/nw-arkansas-love-project/>

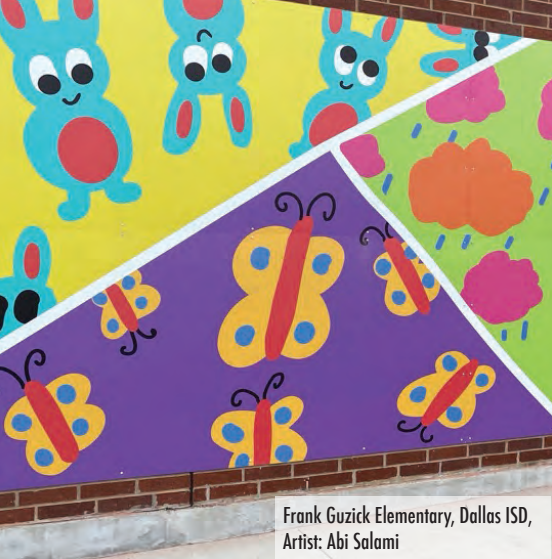


Grand Prairie LOVE Project



Spread the love! With our 2013 Dallas LOVE Project, 29 Pieces forged a replicable model for mounting city-wide art campaigns. In 2018, the teachers, counselors and students of **Grand Prairie ISD** mounted the **Grand Prairie LOVE Project**, exhibiting 3,000 pieces of **LOVE** art throughout the community. In 2019, **Lubbock ISD** extended the **LOVE Project** to West Texas. Following tragic mass shootings in El Paso and Midland/Odessa, they sent their art to those communities to express their love and support. Now we encourage you to mount a **LOVE Project** in your community! Go to www.artistsmakingakinderworld.com to download project resources to get started.

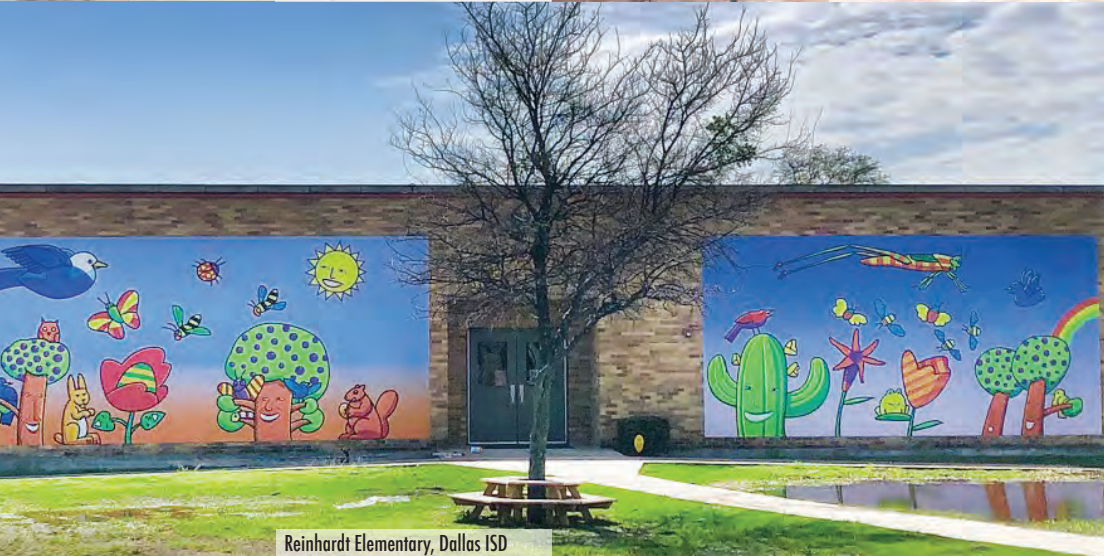




Frank Guzik Elementary, Dallas ISD,
Artist: Abi Salami



Sam Houston Elementary, Dallas ISD,
Artists: Peter Wood and Viola Delgado



Reinhardt Elementary, Dallas ISD



Salazar Elementary, Dallas ISD

Cool Schools Community Schoolyards Project



David G. Burnet Elementary, Dallas ISD
Artist: Alejandra Camargo



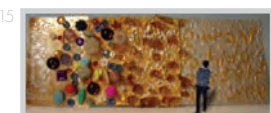
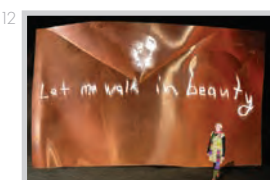
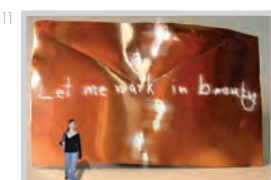
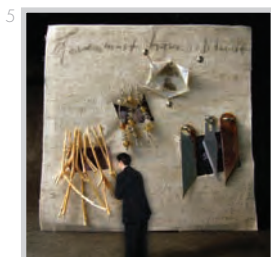
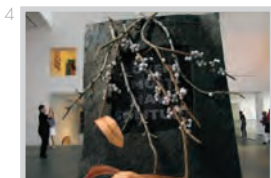
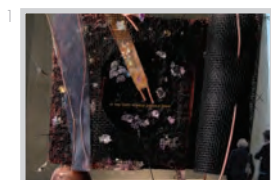
John Ireland Elementary, Dallas ISD,
Artist: Billy Hassell

One of **29 Pieces'** primary focuses in 2020-2021 was the design, production and installation of mural art for six public parks located on six **Dallas ISD** elementary school campuses. This project was in partnership with the **Trust for Public Land, Dallas ISD, Texas Trees Foundation and Dallas Parks and Recreation** – part of a mission to make green space available within a 10 minute walk for all Dallas citizens. **29 Pieces** paired professional artists with teachers, students and administrators at each of the campuses in our **THRIVE lesson**, which imagines a “garden of peace.” Students' art offered specifics of inspiration that the professional artists drew upon in designing a large custom mural for each school.

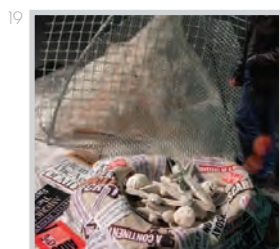
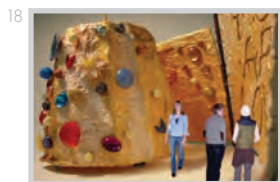


Sam Houston Elementary, Dallas ISD,
Artists: Viola Delgado and Peter Wood

Origins and Vision

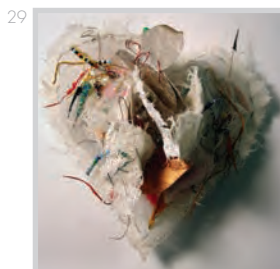


29 Pieces Sculptures



In 2005, artist and 29 Pieces Founder Karen Blessen began to practice passage meditation, a form of meditation that incorporates sacred texts from major faith traditions. As she slowly and silently repeated memorized passages, Blessen felt certain phrases explode with meaning. She began to devote time each morning to contemplating the passages. Soon, the 29 Pieces of sculpture evolved. When built at full scale, the 29 pieces of sculpture will be as large as 60 feet tall and bring to life the inspired messages and sacred words from Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Native American and Muslim passages from throughout history.

See more about the 29 Pieces at 29Pieces.org.





29 Pieces celebrates the completion of our second public sculpture, **Piece 10: Souls Hidden**. **29 Pieces** worked with the **South Dallas Cultural Center**, bringing together a team of 12 Southeast Dallas middle and high school students and six local artists to produce a human-scale glass sculpture inspired by Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook's poem, **"Radiant is the World Soul."** Students contemplated the cultural legacies of Harlem Renaissance artists and South Dallas Cultural Center luminaries – how their souls may be hidden but their legacies remain very much alive. **Piece 10** is in the **South Dallas Cultural Center** lobby.



The Piece 10 Project



Artists Making a Kinder World Teacher Trainings



29 PIECES EDUCATION:

Artists Making a Kinder World Teacher Trainings.

Some life-changing journeys begin without even opening a suitcase.

We offer in person and online training opportunities. Contact info@29Pieces.org with inquiries.

"WORKING WITH KAREN BLESSEN AND 29 PIECES HAS BEEN ONE OF THE BEST EXPERIENCES I'VE HAD AS AN EDUCATOR! THANK YOU 29 PIECES!"
— DR. MEREDITH CLARK, LOTE & FINE ARTS, REGION 10 EDUCATION SERVICE CENTER



DID YOU KNOW?*

Young people who participate in the arts for at least three hours on three days each week through at least one full year are:

4 times more likely to be recognized for academic achievement

3 times more likely to be elected to class office within their schools

4 times more likely to participate in a math and science fair

3 times more likely to win an award for school attendance

4 times more likely to win awards for creative writing

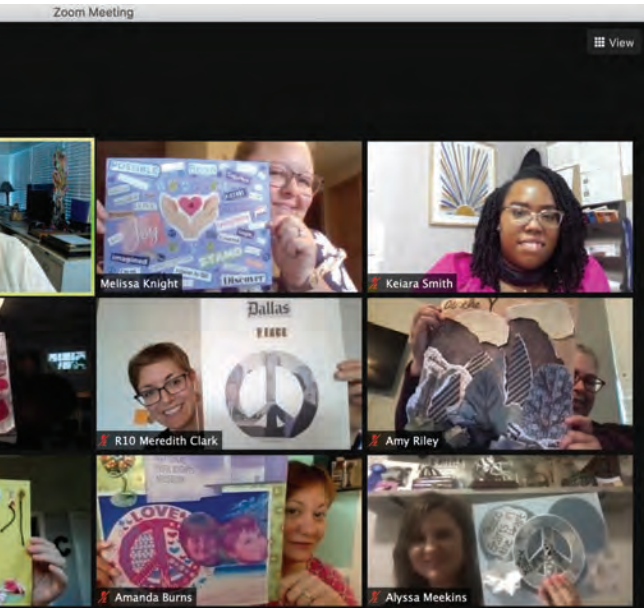


Now you know, please go to — www.29pieces.org

CLICK "DONATE NOW."

Or send a check to: 29 Pieces, PO Box 140962,
Dallas, TX 75214

Get Involved



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Dylan Hollingsworth
Elmer Rivas
Hope Trevino
John Katz
Karen Blessen
Maria Patiño
Wheeler Sparks

**National Arts
Education
Public Awareness
Campaign*

LOVE IS THE ANSWER.
ART IS HOW WE GET
THERE.

Art by Camryn S. Grand Prairie, Texas

**Thank you to the supporters who make our work possible,
the 29 Pieces Board of Directors, individual donors,
and the artists and educators.**



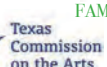
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