



The Exhibition

Pick Up Your Pencils, Begin brings attention to the impact of standardized testing in our educational system. Constructed by Harriete Estel Berman, **Pick Up Your Pencils, Begin** hangs like a curtain from the ceiling or wall. Bell curve dimensions: 12' 3" height x 28' wide x ¼" depth (the thickness of a pencil)

Thousands and thousands of used pencils arrived from people all over the United States, and as far away as Japan, Belgium, France and Italy. Each pencil was drilled, threaded onto monofilament fishing line and meticulously assembled within specific sections. While in progress, this work visited many schools encouraging students and teachers to participate with the threading of the pencils.

The entire sculpture is divided into nine sections called stanines; it is the same groupings that a bell curve measuring student performance is divided. Standardized tests are designed so that most of the students fall within the center three stanines. Therefore standard #2 yellow pencils dominate the center three yellow stanines and represent the national norm of student performance.

Students that deviate from the norm fit into the outer three stanines indicating significantly higher and lower performance. The sculpture represents these stanines on either end with colors other than yellow #2 pencils.

The social and economic impact of standardized testing is enormous. Huge financial investments are rationalized based solely on test results and drive students, teachers, school districts, and the content of the curriculum to narrow their focus. The "education industry" of book publishers and testing companies certainly benefit. But of greater concern is the long term consequence that standardized tests only evaluate a small spectrum of student ability while excluding non-quantifiable skills in the arts, athletic and theatrical performance, creativity, and more. The mantra "to bring everyone up to standard" is sacrificing development of the range of talents that can keep our society vibrant.

Website page includes images of publicity, four years assembly process and more.
<http://www.harriete-estel-berman.info/sculpt/pencilPage.html>

Pick Up Your Pencils, Begin

© 2011 Harriete Estel Berman

Pencils, monofilament fishing line, yardsticks, aluminum, nylon screws, post consumer recycled plastic, brass crimp beads.

Installation

Installation is simple. Each of the nine sections hangs from identical support bars. The center stanine is the heaviest at about 26 lbs. (the others weigh less).

INSTALLATION Details for Pick Up Your Pencils, Begin (YouTube presentation with audio)

<http://youtu.be/9zHmfXbg2X0>

Estimated time to install pencils is four hours. You will need a hydraulic lift for a person at the top.

Exhibition hangs from the ceiling or the wall. It is most effectively displayed in the middle of the room as it has been constructed to be viewed from both sides. The aluminum suspension bar at the top of each stanine has two eye-hooks and requires 2 hooks and 2 lengths of rope or chain to hang from the ceiling. Installation dimensions (including suspension bars) 15' height x 28' wide and ¼" depth (the thickness of a pencil)

De-Installation (two YouTube presentations)

De-installation (4 hours in four minutes) for Pick Up Your Pencils, Begin

<http://youtu.be/mDAuvlOwO58>

De-Installation (Behind the Scenes) Rolling Up the artwork Pick Up Your Pencils, Begin

<http://youtu.be/VbMjFOMCsKI>

Rental Fee

A modest rental fee of \$350 covers the secretarial time, preparation and handling for each exhibition.

Shipping

The artwork ships in 5 boxes. Interior shipping box dimensions are 40" ht. x 12" x 12". Exterior shipping box dimensions are 48"h x 15" x 15". The weight for packed shipping boxes varies from 30 – 38 lbs.

Insurance

Insurance Value: \$45,000 Retail Price: \$90,000

Insurance during shipping and exhibition should be covered by the exhibition space wall to wall coverage.

Publicity

Image (right) of the recent article in [American Craft Magazine](#) Dec/Jan 2012 written by editor **Julie K. Hanus!** Quoting from the article: "*Pick Up Your Pencils, Begin*" is a 12-foot-tall, 28-foot-wide shimmering curtain of pencils, hanging in the shape of a bell curve - the statistical "normal distribution" used to design standardized tests."



“Pencil this in” to your Exhibition Schedule

Contact me anytime about possible exhibitions. There are no commitments at this time.

Children and Art

The exhibition planning includes several art projects for children. The art projects engage ages 3 to adult and foster creative inspiration. With the exception of the youngest age group, pencils will be used in the construction process of their art work. My goal is to break the boundaries that pencils are only used for filling in the bubbles by encouraging thinking outside the bubble!

Video

Funding is needed to complete the video for **Pick Up Your Pencils, Begin**. There is raw video footage taken during the California Art Education Association (CAEC) Conference in 2008 where the pencil assembly process was started. A significant quantity of photo documentation of the construction process is available including drilling the pencils and threading the monofilament fishing line through the pencils individually. Video documentation of the completed installed exhibition is also available.

Artist

Harriete Estel Berman is a nationally recognized artist who has exhibited work throughout the United States and Europe. Her work is in 15 museum collections and in over 35 books. Resume can be found online at:

<http://www.harriete-estel-berman.info/resume/resume.html>

Also availability for exhibition:

Measuring Compliance

© 2006 Harriete Estel Berman

Measuring Compliance addresses my parental frustration with the current educational system. Facing into the corner, the third grade chair sits quietly at the desk. A straitjacket covers the chair symbolizing the necessity for students to conform for success in school.

“Sit down and be quiet” and “follow the rules” are more important than creativity and independent thinking. The floor of rulers, yardsticks and recycled wood is inscribed with quotes relating to academic achievement. The rulers recall an earlier era when students’ knuckles were rapped for disobedience or inattention. GPA’s and standardized test scores are today’s rulers for measuring performance of students, teachers and schools. Teaching towards testing constructs a bell curve of conformity.

The ultimate irony is that rulers and yardsticks can be used by artists in creativity; scientists measure to expand the limits of our knowledge. When will our educational system expand the potential of our students rather than measure compliance?

7.5’ ht. x 10’ w. x 7’ d
Installation is simple.

Find more information and images at:

<http://www.harriete-estel-berman.info/sculpt/MC.html>

SHIPPING: The artwork ships in 3 boxes: Floor, banners, straitjacket (the 3rd grade desk and chair can be shipped but you have the option of borrowing them from a local elementary school)

- Banners – Box dimensions 52” ht. x 7” w x 7” d (9 lbs)
- Floor – Box dimensions 48” ht. x 33” w x 5”d. The yardsticks fit like a puzzle on the floor.
- Straitjacket - Box dimensions (approx) 24” ht. x 12” w x 5” d

Installation takes 3 hours or less.

Measuring Compliance

© 2006 Harriete Estel Berman

Recycled materials including: wood floor, yardsticks, rulers, tin cans, canvas, buckles, desk and chair. 10k. gold rivets. Printed banner and graphic.

7.5’ ht. x 10’ w. x 7’ d.

Insurance Value: \$20,000 Retail Price: \$40,000

For more information, please call or write:

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