



ArtLab

CMCA's ArtLab

Creating community through creating art.



"When you make things it's good for your brain!"
ArtLab participant, age 8

In the fall of 2011, with an initial grant of \$5,000 from the Milton & Sally Avery Arts Foundation, the Center for Maine Contemporary Art launched a new arts education program called **ArtLab for All Ages**. The concept was simple, provide a space stocked with supplies for a creative arts project and invite people of all ages to drop in once a month on a Saturday afternoon to make art together. There would be no parent and child requirement, no fee, and no registration in advance. It would be **open to all, without barriers**.

From the start, Artlab for All Ages was just that. People of all ages really did show up. There were eighty-year-olds and little kids still on their mother's laps. And because there was no registration fee, there was a wide demographic representation. Everyone made art side-by-side, family members, neighbors, strangers, and friends—sharing materials and ideas, **creating community through creating art**.



Since its launch, **thousands of participants have engaged in CMCA's ArtLab.** In addition to the original ArtLab for All Ages Saturday workshops, the program now includes:

- After school classes
- Summer art camps
- February and April school vacation workshops
- School workshops for elementary to college level

Through the continued support of the Milton & Sally Avery Arts Foundation, Camden National Bank and individual donors, CMCA has provided **scholarships for all children with financial need** to attend ArtLab after school classes and summer camp programs at no charge.*

*CMCA determines financial need based on the student's demonstrated qualification for the school free lunch program.



Wayfinder school students participate in an ArtLab program in conjunction with Dunk the Junk, a local non-profit educating youth on health and nutrition through the arts.

In addition to bringing new audiences and fresh energy to CMCA, **ArtLab serves as a conduit for bringing CMCA out into the community.** Over the past four years, ArtLab has collaborated with:

- Wayfinder schools (alternative high school for at-risk teens)
- Watershed school (local arts-based school)
- Midcoast Mini Makers Faire
- Maine Boats, Homes, and Harbors show
- Rockport's Holiday on the Harbor
- Camden/Rockport Elementary School Summer Activities Fair
- Quarry Hill retirement community
- Dunk the Junk (local non-profit combating childhood obesity through the arts)
- Five Hills school system (ARTicipation community arts celebration)



Merging the words “art” and “lab,” CMCA’s ArtLab education program emphasizes the experimental aspect of art making. The program encourages the concept of hands-on creating using a variety of materials and with minimal instructions, allowing participants to find their own voice and **experience the deep satisfaction of discovering their own creativity.**

CMCA strongly believes that educating through the arts raises an awareness of the visual world, and consequently, a greater appreciation for the stewardship of the environment. It routinely includes “an awareness of place” in ArtLab activities, acknowledging **the connection between the arts and the natural world**, particularly here in Maine.

The arts have long played an important role in Maine’s history. Now they are playing an increasingly vital role in the state’s economy as well. In the mid-coast, **the arts are critical to attracting young people to our communities**, where the population is largely rural and aging. CMCA’s ArtLab offers exposure to the arts and fosters creativity and innovative thinking, essential traits for success in today’s culture—and for the next generation.



ArtLab at CMCA / Rockland

CMCA's relocation to a newly constructed building in downtown Rockland offers the opportunity to **greatly expand the reach and impact of the ArtLab education program.**

Located in the heart of Rockland's art district, across from the Farnsworth Art Museum and adjacent to the historic Strand Theatre, the new facility will allow CMCA to operate on a year-round basis—providing **additional opportunities for collaboration** with schools, the local and statewide arts community, and other community and non-profit organizations.

CMCA believes passionately in what it does, in **the power of the arts to enhance and change lives**, and that with additional support, it can help create an even more engaged community and a brighter future for all Maine people.