

## Michael's PlatteForum Story Past Resident Artist

Professional, contemporary artist, Michael Gadlin came to PlatteForum in 2009. It was his first experience as a resident artist; and as all new experiences can be, it was a bit intimidating. He had already worked with galleries to exhibit his work and was fortunate enough to have collectors purchase some of his pieces. The relationships he built with galleries and patrons were certainly beneficial and much appreciated, but the relationships were based solely the end product, not the act of creating.



*Michael presenting an award to a workshop participant.*

Michael began to sense that perhaps the artistic process itself, the act of conceiving, planning and executing the vision was as worthy of acknowledgment as the finished product. When offered the residency at PlatteForum, his instincts told him to integrate this notion of recognizing and valuing the artistic process into his work with youth at PlatteForum. This approach helped him devise a methodology for working with students and created a sense of self-validation for his beliefs.

During the course of his eight-week PlatteForum residency, Michael worked two times a week with elementary-age youth from Colfax Community Network. Michael consistently shared his approach to the artistic process as he and the students prepared a large collage piece for the final exhibition. It was important to Michael that these young students feel appreciated and valued, not only for the finished collage, but also for the effort and learning that guided its creation. To that end, he created awards for each of them emphasizing something they learned or excelled at during the creative process. work and group effort.

Michael sums up his PlatteForum residency experience by noting, "Before the PlatteForum residency, I always worried about making each work my best. PlatteForum's founder, Judy Anderson, gave me some great advice. She encouraged me to stop worrying about the end piece and take some risks, now. The PF residency allowed me to take those risks, to stop playing it safe. It helped me grow as an artist. It taught me to listen."

Using his PlatteForum residency as an extraordinary artistic springboard, Michael gained access to more opportunities, including the prestigious La Napoule Art Foundation residency in the South of France. Michael's work has earned national and international praise and is part of multiple public and private collections.

*"When I found out I got the residency at PlatteForum, I thought, 'I'm really an artist now!' To be told someone is supporting your potential, not just your output, that's when you can really stretch!"*  
-Michael Gadlin



*Michael at his solo show, Refugees Welcome.*