

# CAROL PONDER

## **Performing Artist, Creativity Consultant, Planning Facilitator, Teaching Artist Expert Professional Development in Education through the Arts**

Carol Ponder began her career as a professional teaching artist in 1987 with the Wolf Trap Early Learning through the Arts program in East Tennessee and Nashville. Soon she also was involved with the Lincoln Center Institute model of Aesthetic Education through the Nashville Institute for the Arts, working in music, theatre, and movement. Today she continues working in education in and through the arts in many pedagogically different programs at home and nationally, with a trip to Northern Ireland and The Republic of Ireland to perform and teach in May/June 2010. She particularly enjoys those road trips that combine education with concert or theatre work, the best of both worlds.



*Carol Ponder is that rare artist with a musical talent as great as her educator's gift. Run, do not walk, RUN to hear her perform as powerfully as anyone in her genre could, and run to learn about the powerful ways she can blend learning and art and fun to change the way you think. It has been my privilege to work with her, to share her extraordinary combination of gifts, whenever I can.*

***In my view, this artist is a national treasure.***

Eric Booth – International Arts in Education Consultant,  
Senior Advisor for El Sistema USA

In her 25 years of experience in education through the arts, Carol has partnered with classroom teachers, administrators, and other artists to develop and carry out dynamic, original, effective learning-through-the-arts curricula, always keeping artistic excellence in focus. She has logged thousands of in-classroom hours and worked with many configurations of teachers, teaching artists, and administrators. Carol has designed professional development for numerous organizations, from one-on-one intensives to weeklong seminars for hundreds of participants. For the first VSA arts International Teaching Artist training, she designed and facilitated the creation of a 13-minute performance piece developed with over 160 participants over the four-day seminar. She continues to spend a significant amount of time in the PreK-12 classroom as her consulting and professional development clientele expand – so she can be sure that her theory never becomes disconnected from practice where “the rubber meet’s the road.” She also has used her impressive skills as a planning facilitator in non-education settings. As a researcher, she has worked individually, with teachers, and with administrators in many projects to design and execute assessment strategies and program evaluations.

### **What Carol Can Do for You**

#### **Keynotes – Information and Inspiration**

Carol Ponder brought a ray of light to Florida as keynote speaker for the Florida Alliance for Arts Education, Arts Integration Symposium in February 2012. Her mastery as a teaching artist illuminates the potential for integrating the arts into every corner of the curriculum. Not only does Carol demonstrate the arts as a powerful tool to deepen learning and understanding, she offers achievable examples that both experienced educators and less experienced teaching artists can emulate. Carol embodies inspiration and creativity; the very characteristics we strive to bring to every classroom.

*Susan Burke – Executive Director, Florida Alliance for Arts Education*

## What Carol Can Do for You (continued)

- **Creative expression workshops** fostering self-exploration through songwriting, slam poetry, essays, and monologue writing and performance. For groups and individuals.
- **Professional Development for teaching artists**, new and experienced, for diverse arts education programs. (theatre, music, movement)
- **Professional development for teachers** in education in and through the arts programs of all kinds.
- **Group facilitation**, and training facilitators to stabilize groups, reach consensus, and create short- and long-term strategic plans.
- Designing curriculum **for people of all abilities**.
- Creating arts-based, **arts-integrated curricula** (with classroom teachers, arts teachers, other teaching artists, arts organizations, parents, administrators, and other interested parties).
- Education through the arts **institutional and program development** (for cultural and educational organizations). **Developing networks and communication plans. Teaching artist Residencies** in theatre and music for Kindergarten through the most senior of citizens.
- Designing **assessment and evaluation** including reflective practice, documentation, and assessment: process-portfolio use and “making learning visible.”
- Developing **strong partnerships** among teaching artists, arts teachers, and classroom teachers, and among cultural and educational organizations and the community.
- Songwriting, singing, and becoming a part of **the folk music living tradition** for all ages.
- **Spoken Word Art and Storytelling** for participants of all ages – writing and performing.
- **Performance skills** in theatre, storytelling, voice, and guitar, autoharp, and spoons for all ages.

## OUTSIDE EDUCATION SETTINGS

**Carol can design and lead workshops in creative problem solving, team-building, and short- and long-range planning for organizations of all kinds – commercial, charitable, or religious.**

## WHAT OTHERS SAY ABOUT CAROL PONDER

Carol Ponder is an accomplished artist of unusual talent and a voice that transports the listener. She is a gifted teacher in the arts and education and capable of providing personalized, top-flight professional development for novices and veterans alike. As if this were not enough, Carol is a beautiful person with a generous spirit and one fine sense of humor. What a package!

*Jane Remer – Author and Consultant, Education through the Arts*

Carol Ponder is a dynamic performer who WOWed audiences at The Kennedy Center. Her skill extends to the classroom and her work with teachers and students. She is a gifted arts educator.

*Barbara Shepherd – Director, National Partnerships Education, The Kennedy Center*

Carol is an effective teacher in part because she is herself - born into a family of educators - a lifelong learner, continuously expanding her horizons...She is passionate, brilliant, uncompromising, always eager to take on new challenges, thorough in her planning and teaching, and dedicated beyond compare.

*Leigh Jones – ArtSmart Director, Tennessee Performing Arts Center*

Carol is a treasure of talent--exacting in her research, passionate about artistry and thoroughly approachable for audiences. We are delighted to present Appalachian Roots, her music and storytelling concert, in our Season for Young People. Thousands of school children and their teachers will have the opportunity to learn from her expertise and to marvel in the presence of Carol's powerful voice.

*Roberta Ciuffo – Sr. Vice President, Tennessee Performing Arts Center*

Carol Ponder is one of the finest teaching artists in Aesthetic Education history, with a depth of understanding and a sophistication of practice so remarkable that she can enhance any kind of arts program with her expertise."

*Eric Booth: International Education through the Arts Consultant*

Throughout her engagement with education through the arts, Ponder has worked professionally as an actress, singer, musician, concert and recording artist, and as a teacher of performance skills. She brings her perspectives and knowledge as a *working artist* to all her education endeavors.

### Career Highlights

- July, 2013: Faculty for the Tennessee Performing Arts Center's Summer Arts Integration Institute.
- June, 2013: Tennessee Art Commission's Create 2013. Taught two workshops (Slam Poetry and Visual Learning Strategies) and participated in the juried performing/residency artist Showcase.
- June, 2013: **Big Thought, Dallas**. On faculty for professional development for arts specialists and teaching artists, part of a new arts-based summer school design (part of a five-city, two-year research project sponsored by the Wallace Foundation). As part of duties, designed opening and closing plenary sessions that included demonstration read-alouds and lesson demos, as well as a whole-group (350 people) song-writing/singing closing event.
- May, 2013: Big Thought, Dallas. Helped Teaching Artist Fellows to reflect on their own and institutional learning and to develop proposals to continue in the Fellows program.
- 2011-2013: Date TBA in 2013, Carol will take up the final two weeks of a **nomination-only Fellowship for artistic excellence at The Hermitage in Florida**. Her contributions to the community have included the premier performance of her original theatre piece titled, *Ponder Anew: A WWII Warrior's Story*, a new work based on her father's WWII memoir; professional development in education through the arts for two area school districts; and a way cool beach concert.
- December, 2012, **The Dallas Police Department** and Big Thought, Dallas, TX: Facilitated the first meeting between these two organizations to design the arts and culture component of a youth outreach initiative. The conversation resulted in a concept-grouping of resources, process, and goals with a timeline for beginning the process of creating the new program. As a member of their national faculty, Carol also designed and led two days of professional development with the ten Big Thought Teaching Artist Fellows, including facilitating their design and leadership of a PD opportunity for all Big Thought Teaching Artists.
- June and September through November, 2012, **The Webb School** in Bell Buckle, TN: Researched and wrote, with authentic student input, a play with music telling the story of Sawney Webb (*The Schoolmaker*) and the evolution of the Webb School. Also acting coach. Performances the third week in November.
- July/Aug: **Lincoln Center Institute** and **Delta Arts** in West Memphis: New Educators Workshop in Crowley's Ridge, Arkansas, theatre teaching artist (also responsible for contributing to overall design of three-day event).
- July: Create 2012, the second annual "creativity in education" three-day conference, sponsored jointly by the **Tennessee Arts Commission and Middle Tennessee State University**. Leading six different workshops.
- June 2012: **Big Thought** in Dallas, TX: Co-designed three-day professional development event for in-school arts specialists and Teaching Artists (all disciplines); designed process and planning documents; contributed to plenary sessions and led one full section of participants.
- June 2012: Lincoln Center Institute and Delta Arts in West Memphis, Arkansas: New Educators Workshop, music teaching artist workshop leader (also responsible for contributing to overall design of the five-day event).
- June 2012: Summer Institute with the **Tennessee Performing Arts Center (TPAC)** – responsible for helping to design the four-day event, keeping the group on track with Lincoln Center-style Aesthetic Education, and teaching to a multi-media performance grounded in Irish music, storytelling, and history.
- February, 2012: **Keynote** and workshops for the **Florida Alliance for Arts Education** one-day conference in arts integration.
- June 2011: **Lincoln Center Institute and Delta Arts in West Memphis**, New Educators Workshop (NEW), music teaching artist workshop leader.
- June 2011: TPAC Education's Arts-Integration Summer Institute, in charge of Aesthetic Education pedagogy.
- The rest of 2011 was spent largely in caring for ill family members, while also accomplishing residencies and Teaching Artist professional development with TPAC.
- June, 2010 (beginning August 2009): **Middle Tennessee State University** – Consultant, teaching artist, music director, and actor/singer/musician with *Appalachian Roots*, an Irish-Appalachian play developed with Dr. Jette Halladay and 11 of her students in the Theatre for Young Audiences program. The play included songs, stories,

and values from the Southern Appalachian Mountains, set in East Tennessee Coal Country. Performed in Middle Tennessee in spring of 2010 and in **Northern Ireland** for three weeks in May/June, with a series of student performances and workshops including a week at the Ulster American Folk Park in Omagh.

- 1997- 2009: **The Empire State Partnerships Project (ESP)** – 11 years (including the last) on the Senior Faculty for the Summer Seminar intensive of one of the largest networks of partnerships between cultural and educational organizations in the USA, with international faculty and attendees. Designed and led workshops in arts integration, reflection, and teaching artist professional development. Co-designed and led protocol training for facilitators when the **peer review** element was added to ESP. Also served as resident **Folk Diva**.
- July 2006-May 2009: **VSA arts Tennessee** – Co-designed and directed a three-year arts-in-education pilot project in which teaching artists facilitated **partnerships between special education teachers and arts specialists**. The project was funded by the Tennessee Department of Education. Carol's work included documentation guidance for participant Teaching Artists (forms and processes); enacting several residencies in Middle Tennessee; and writing the final report. She was also lead writer on a featured article about the project in the January 2009 edition of Teaching Artist Journal (**TAJ**).
- **Fall Semester, 2007: Montalvo Center for the Arts – The very first National Teaching Artist Fellowship, awarded from a field of over 100 applicants (USA). Theatre, music, movement.** A four-month arts integration residency that culminated in a multi-media concert at Montalvo that included student-driven spoken word, music, and dance performances – all facilitated by Carol, who also served as MC and occasional performance partner.
- Spring 2008 (as well as October 2005 and October 2006): three-week Traditional Southern Mountain **Music residency, with oral history component, at Coker Creek School**, near Tellico Plains, Tennessee.
- Winter 2008: **Indiana University's International Vocal Ensemble**, a week of teaching and rehearsing in the Southern Mountain music traditions with a public concert at the end of the week, students and Carol performing as a whole-group and in smaller ensembles.
- March 2006 and February 2002: Presented for the **John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts**, teacher workshops for integrating music into the general curriculum classroom.
- January 2004 – June 2006: **International Association of Institutes of Aesthetic Education (AE)** at Lincoln Center Institute (LCI). Member of the *national 12-person Teaching Artists Mentoring Project* team, which explored the pedagogy, goals, and implications for growth of the Aesthetic Education program in all AE Institutes. Six members came from LCI and the other six from AE Institutes around the rest of the country.
- Feb 2002: **VSA arts International**, faculty, first artist-in-residence training Institute, hosted in Atlanta, GA. Carol led a four-day sequential plenary songwriting and performance project that culminated in a **13-minute performance piece actively involving 160 people (faculty and study groups)**.
- 1993-1996. **The Leonard Bernstein Center for Education through the Arts**: One of three original Artistic Directors and Portfolio and Assessment Consultant to all ten Bernstein Pilot Model Schools (year-long teacher/TA partnership residencies).
- Ongoing since 1988: **Tennessee Performing Arts Center Education Department**. Mentor and designer for Teaching Artist Training. Professional Development for teachers, artists, administrators, and other stakeholders. Consulting in assessment. Regular Teaching Artist residencies. Directed several research projects before 2006.

**Upcoming Engagements include continuing work with TPAC, Delta Arts, and Big Thought; and performances, with workshops, of *Ponder Anew: A WWII Warrior's Story* and *Appalachian Roots*.**

#### **Additional Representative Engagements (excluding scores of PreK-12 residencies)**

- October 2009: School concerts for the **Crittenden Arts Council (West Memphis Arkansas)** and Artist in Residence for the **Counseling Services of Eastern Arkansas** in partnership with Delta Arts: Carol worked with adult clients during the day and with students in after-care, singing and writing in the folksong tradition.
- July 2009: Crittenden Arts Council/Delta Arts **Lincoln Center New Educators Workshop**, teaching artist workshop leader. She also performed her concert as a focus work of art (*Appalachian Roots*, her one-person concert comprising old and new songs and stories grounded in her Appalachian heritage).

- June 2009: Fourth year workshop on Southern Appalachian ballad singing and storytelling for the **Global Education Center** in Nashville.
- April 2009: The **Penland Craft School**, three-day professional development for upper Western North Carolina Teaching Artists; designing residencies to fit different education approaches and process-portfolio use in documentation, reflection, and assessment.
- November 2008: For the **Philadelphia School System**, a day-long workshop introducing the music and arts integration curriculum, *Music from the Inside Out* (Carol was lead author) for area teachers and invited upper education guests. The participating 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade teachers taught a similar workshop on a school district professional development day two weeks later, with great positive feedback.
- October 2008: **Gateway to the Arts in Pittsburgh, PA**, a Lincoln Center-style Institute, two days of professional development for Teaching Artists, including basic processes, focusing on Gateway's goals in particular, and beginning process-portfolio use.
- May and July 2008: **ArtsTeach in Charlotte, NC**: Designed and led professional development for Teaching Artists in May and a July professional development for Teaching Artists and teachers – creating an arc of learning that linked participants' creative curriculum endeavors from May 2008 through the 2008/2009 school year.
- Fall 2006 – spring 2008: VSA arts Tennessee. Director and Teaching Artist for pilot project partnering **Special Education teachers and Arts Specialists**.
- August 9, 2006: **Broward County Schools, FL** Third Annual Literacy Conference, two sections of workshop "Songwriting for Enhanced Literacy". First developed with the Kennedy Center Education Department.
- Fall, 2006: Lincoln Center Institute for the Delta Aesthetic Education Institute: Teaching Artist and consultant in the *Rural Projects Teaching Artist Training* workshop, with teaching artists from all over the USA.
- September 13, 2006: Tennessee Arts Commission, orientation leader for Teaching Artists in the six **Value Plus** (arts integration) Pilot schools in Tennessee (project's first year).
- 1993 – Ongoing: Various Aesthetic Education Institutes including **TPAC** and **Memphis in Tennessee, Delta Arts in Arkansas, Gateway to the Arts in Pittsburg, PA, and institutes in Utica, Syracuse, Rochester, Greene, and Buffalo in New York**: concerts, professional development, program consulting, and teaching artist.
- 1987 to 1999: Residency Artist and, after four years, also trainer for teaching artists in the **Wolf Trap Early Learning through the Arts** program, primarily in Nashville, Crossville, and Memphis, TN. (theatre, music, movement)

For more information about Carol's scores of school residencies (public and private), professional development events, project facilitation, and life-changing work as a consultant and teaching artist, please email [ponderanew@aol.com](mailto:ponderanew@aol.com) or call 615-227-3876. On request, Carol will also provide performance resumes and requirements for *Ponder Anew: A WWII Warrior's Story* – a two-person readers theatre piece with music, drawn from her father's WWII memoir as a fighter pilot in the European Theatre – and her one-person concert, *Appalachian Roots*, comprised of traditional and contemporary folk songs and stories.

### Publishing

- Co-Author with husband, Robert Kiefer, and director of the script and score for *Ponder Anew: A WWII Warrior's Story*, based on her father's World War II memoir as a fighter pilot in the European Theatre. Ponder Anew Theatre Company, 2012.
- Co-Author with husband, Robert Kiefer, of a workbook titled *How to Write Your Own Wedding Vows and Toasts: A Workbook for Brides and the Men Who Love Them*. Relevant because the processes in the book are straight out of teaching artist practice. It is garnering rave reviews from the field. PK Enterprise, 2009.
- Regular contributor to **Teaching Artist Journal (TAJ)** with both articles and reviews of resources for Teaching Artists. Carol is also a peer reviewer/editor for submitted articles.
- For **Tennessee Performing Arts Center** – author of many curriculum guidebooks, short essays, and research papers including, in 2012, a guidebook to be used by the **Fisk Jubilee Singers** in upcoming years and a guidebook for **Eileen Ivers** and her band, *Immigrant Soul*, to be used by the artist in upcoming years.

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- A featured article, “Shaken and Stirred” in the winter 2009 issue of the Teaching Artist Journal, describing the first two years of the **VSA arts Tennessee Arts in Ed residency project**.
- Curriculum Guidebook for ***Music from the Inside Out* (Alfred Publishing, 2008)**, an Anker Productions documentary of the Philadelphia Orchestra released nationally in theatres and aired as part of the PBS *Independent Lens* series in 2006. With Danny Anker and Donna Santmaan.
- A featured article in the inaugural issue of the **Teaching Artist Journal**, reprinted in **TYA Today** (Theatre for Young Audiences), winter 2004.
- One of three essays in *Creating Capacity: A Framework for Providing Professional Development Opportunities for Teaching Artists* prepared by **THE NATIONAL CONVERSATION ON ARTIST PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING at the Kennedy Center**, Autumn 2001
- A chapter in **Jane Remer's** book, *Beyond Enrichment: Building Effective Arts Partnerships with Schools and Your Community*, 1996
- Great track record with **grants**: for more information, please contact ponderanew@aol.com

## EDUCATION

AB English, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 1975

MA Communication Arts, Austin Peay State University, 1995

Trained and mentored by Eric Booth, International Consultant in El Sistema, Education through the Arts, and Corporate Facilitator in creative problem solving and planning.

## REFERENCES

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Additional references available on request.