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Discovering the Invisible Bay Street: Uncovering Emeryville's History and Understanding Our Own

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by Sara Stillman

Introduction

Is all that we know about those who came before us from what they leave behind? Are the artifacts that remain long after a group of people are gone enough to tell us their true narrative or is there more for us to uncover? People and the societies they formed find places in our history books and museums after archeologists and historians have made significant physical findings, drawn their conclusions, and present what they believe to be the true story. What happens when an artifact, the evidence of historical significance no longer exists or was not recognized for its significance before it disappeared? How do we know when something of such significance is about to disappear and become an invisible history?

We walk upon land that bears the hidden footsteps of those who came before us. Often that is a thread we forget exists. Whether we forget it out of ignorance or convenience it is a thread that we must learn to weave through out generations until we reach our own. Connecting our lives with the past can lead to uncomfortable truths and willful forgetting. This is our challenge if we choose to face the reality that we too will become a society that is examined and most likely judged by what we leave behind.

The city of Emeryville, where I teach high school Visual Arts, is a small town of approximately 10,000 residents¹ and 20,000 daily commuters located across the bay from San Francisco in what is known as the East Bay. Surrounded by the larger cities of Berkeley and Oakland, Emeryville's 1.2 square miles is uniquely positioned with a shoreline on the San Francisco Bay and major intersecting freeways that lead to the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge. Today beside these intersecting freeways is a popular shopping and entertainment center called Bay Street.

Beneath Bay Street at the corner of Shellmound Street and Ohlone Way lays a story of our nation's growth, decline, and rebirth. When examined closely, the Bay Street site tells the story of the Ohlone Native Americans, Gold Rush settlers, and the industrialization of our of a city and subsequent contamination of the land. This history is rich in beauty and uncomfortable truths that my students will explore as they question what they will leave behind to tell their story and how our society will be viewed by those who come after us.

Through this unit I will guide my 11th and 12th grade students on an investigation of the Bay Street site while focusing a historical lens on the growth of Emeryville and its reflection of our state and nation's narrative. By

beginning our inquiry at the present day and examining the role the Bay Street complex plays in their lives and our community, students will establish a frame to investigate the people who came before them and how our city was shaped into the Emeryville known as our own. When we look backward from the present, my students will discover the vast industrial growth of our city (1920s-1990s), life after the California Gold Rush (1870s-1920s), and the first known inhabitants of the area, the Ohlone Native Americans (Pre 1770). As they fill in the gaps of our historical narrative through an Art Based Research approach: students will create a timeline to visualize the scope of our investigation, map each period of history to track the city's evolution, visit locations that existed in the past to uncover what they have become, examine primary and secondary historical documents, and create a public art installations that gives voice to Emeryville's past, present, and future.

Demographics

Emery Secondary School (ESS) is a 9th -12th grade school serving 220 students in the small city of Emeryville, California. 84.95% of the school districts students live in poverty and 18.55% are English Language Learners. State redevelopment funding over the past decade that recently ceased brought several tech companies, big box stores, and luxury lofts to replace the abandoned industrial warehouses of Emeryville's past. The new commerce and housing have greatly improved serious economic and safety issues that plagued Emeryville for decades. However the new development in the city greatly contrasts with the experiences of my students and their families, many of which have lived in Emeryville and neighboring West Oakland for several generations. According to the 2010 US Census, the average household size in Emeryville is 1.68 persons. The shift in new luxury housing geared toward adults without children has forced many of our families to seek housing on the eastern, and older, edge of the city or in neighboring Oakland and Berkeley.

One City Many Intersecting Stories

Bay Street & Present Day Emeryville

Today the most visible center of physical culture and community in our city is Bay Street, a preplanned three block shopping, residential, and entertainment complex that gives the illusion of a traditional small town complete with a main street called Bay Street that is filled with national chain stores such as The Gap, Sephora, and the Apple Store. Systematically spaced moveable kiosks line the sidewalks selling smaller trinkets like cell phone cases and inexpensive sunglasses. At the north end of the mall, above the retail level is a gated parking garage for the residents that call the four floors above it home. These luxury apartments rent for \$2215-\$4625 a month and offer gourmet kitchens, washer/dryers, a fitness center, business center, swimming pool, and a free shuttle service to the BART station two miles away in Oakland.

At the south end of the complex Bay Street (the street) intersects with Ohlone Way and becomes closed to motor traffic as it loops through larger retail stores ends at Shellmound Street. Here a concrete plaza and neatly trimmed garden of succulents and native grasses gives way to a three story structure swathed with exterior escalators that houses a sixteen screen movie theatre and restaurants that offer everything from

Rubio's tacos to Fuddrucker's burgers for visitors to feast upon.

The names Ohlone and Shellmound that hang on brightly blue painted signs are the first indicators to visitors that this land once belonged to the Ohlone Native Americans from approximately 500 B.C. to 1700 A.D.. (See Figure 1) It was here, where the Temescal Creek once flowed into the San Francisco Bay, that the Ohlone people built their winter village. This optimal location was a point for meeting and trading goods among the numerous tribelets that were situated around the bay. The Emeryville Shellmound was the largest of an estimated four hundred shellmounds that dotted the San Francisco Bay, towering sixty feet high and layered with dark soil enriched with shellfish and animal remains yielded by generations of Ohlone meals.

The mound-building culture had gone by the time the Spanish arrived in the 18th century, however the Emeryville Shellmound remained undisturbed until 1876 when the top of the mound was removed to make way for a dance pavilion that stood at the top of Shellmound Park, an amusement park for Bay Area residents. Excavated twice by the University of California during the twentieth century, The Emeryville Shellmound told the story of the Ohlone people and what life in the Bay Area was like before European influence landed on its shores. The 1902 excavation documented the discovery of tools such as mortars and pestels that the Ohlone used to grind acorns and notched animal bones perhaps used to in net making or weaving. Archeologists also documented human burials found within the top layers of the shellmound. During the second excavation in the 1920s, Archeologists and removed more than six hundred remains that are still stored at the Hearst Anthropology Museum on the Berkeley campus.

In 1997, the clean up of contaminated ground water and soil from a former Sherwin Williams coatings factory that occupied the land after Shellmound Park closed was halted upon the discovery of more Ohlone remains buried deep underground. Completely leveled decades before, this discovery at the site of the former shellmound was a shock to mall developers who had invested in the costly the toxic clean up in order to build Bay Street. The chemicals in run off wastewater from years of industrial production left the formally nutrient rich soil so contaminated with acid, lead, and arsenic that it bubbled an orange and black goo that oozed from the inside of some of the bones uncovered. These bones had a rubbery texture when moved and could not be handled even with gloves. No one knows for sure how many remains were taken to landfills or incinerated at this time. Three hundred bodies were reburied in an unmarked grave at the mall site and it is estimated that hundreds more Ohlone ancestors lie underneath the mall's concrete foundation.

Following public pressure, the city of Emeryville mandated a memorial to the shellmound that once existed. Today a small artist's interpretation of the shellmound located at the corner of Ohlone Way and Shellmound Streets welcomes visitors to the shopping mall. (See Figures 2 and 3) A small mound with a wedge like chunk removed depicts layers of sediment that might have been found in a typical shellmound. At the bottom of the mound are shells. A few large rocks are positioned to create a fountain that flows into a pool lined with stones. Referencing the basket-making tradition of the Ohlone, a large metal basket is visible on the side of the cut-away. Placards outlining a walking tour of the memorial with facts about the Ohlone people and native wildlife available to visitors. The grassy replica mound is inviting to young children searching for places to climb and many of my adolescent students pose with friends for photos at the very top, often not knowing what the mound is a memorial to.

One cannot fault visitors for misunderstanding the memorial; it is completely out of context and misaligned given the usual reasons people visit a shopping mall. My students are very typical American adolescents who enjoy spending hours on the weekends at Bay Street popping in and out of stores, chasing each other up and down the escalators, and watching the latest action movie on the big screen. At Bay Street they feel part of

their community, my students mingle among couples walking hand in hand and parents pushing strollers. The thought of the burial ground beneath their feet is the furthest thing from their minds.

Industrial Emeryville and The Ghosts It Left Behind

There are many in Emeryville who feel strongly that Bay Street and the redevelopment that followed it saved Emeryville from desolation and decay and the truth is they are probably right. Before Bay Street the area was filled with ghosts of Emeryville's thriving industrial past. Uninhabited warehouses not only brought environmental contamination to the city, they left entire city blocks void of business, homes, and subsequently people to fill its sidewalks. Empty sidewalks and entire areas of the city without any socialized activity to take place led to an extremely high crime rate given the city's size.

The industry and factories that left an empty Emeryville are the same ones that fueled the city's growth and provided much needed jobs for its residents. In the 1920s all over our nation, cities began reinventing themselves as centers for industrial production in an effort to attract businesses and spawn economic growth. The city of Emeryville was no different. Up until the 1920s Emeryville was primarily an agricultural town. Farms, dairies, stockyards, dotted the city streets. A collection of slaughterhouses and animal by-product factories lined the waterfront. Canneries and even a can factory were processing and packaging Northern California's produce.

The marriage of Emeryville and industry began as well suited couple. Through its location, Emeryville provided unique offerings to companies looking to produce goods and services. A 1929 special edition of the Emeryville Herald, celebrating the city's "Thirty-Third Anniversary" listed over 100 companies that called Emeryville home including Del Monte, Fisher Body, Judson Pacific, Pacific Gas and Electric, Pennzoil, Santa Fe Railroad, Shell Oil, Sherwin-Williams Paints, Standard Electric, Union Oil, Western Electric, and Westinghouse. An artist's illustration on the cover of this special issue depicts the city's prosperous image with a large cargo ship, steam train, factory buildings, and numerous smoke stacks that disappear into the rays of the sun setting over the San Francisco Bay. The smoke stacks too numerous and layered to count were reflective of the city's economic prosperity and investment in its future. These smoke stacks were a symbol of pride.

Just like today, during this time of industrial growth, Emeryville's residential population was a small fraction of its workforce. However then, a majority of the land in Emeryville was dedicated to industrial production. Photographs taken in the factories during this era are full of bandana-clad women wearing coveralls and sporting bright smiling faces. Pride beams from the expressions of those workers. A pride that makes photographs like these look dated, because it's a pride that is difficult for us to understand today. The truth is those prideful smiles come from people who believed they were part of something bigger than themselves and that something bigger was building a great city. That kind of excitement is easy to absorb because deep down all people want to be part of creating something that is great, and something great was growing from the factories of Emeryville.

In between a mixture of factories, stores, bars, and houses at the corner of Park and San Pablo Avenues the Oakland Oaks built their ballpark. As part of the Pacific Coast League, the Oaks were the team to watch in the East Bay long before the A's called the Coliseum in Oakland home. In the 1950's when revenues and attendance dwindled, the Oaks were sold and moved to Vancouver, British Columbia. Several attempts to recreate the stadium as racing track for cars and motorcycles met with little success.

The greatness of Emeryville's industry grew and grew, until it became too big to sustain. Cheaper wages and production costs overseas, caused many companies to shut down factories and vacate the city they helped

build. In the decades that followed, when the pride-filled photographs had begun to yellow and fade, many factory workers were sickened with respiratory and blood related diseases due to ongoing exposure to chemicals in Emeryville factories. With no industry and very little residential population, Emeryville became a place that very few people wanted to spend time in. Boarded up storefronts and abandoned buildings lined the sidewalks that became home to the invisible and most vulnerable members of the community. Like many cities that have experienced an industrial collapse, Emeryville experienced a rise in crime, gang activity, homelessness, a decline in population. A few blocks to the north from Emeryville's border in Oakland the situation was much the same. City streets were not safe for children to travel to and from school and once at school, resources were limited. The growing Black Panther movement in the East Bay took note after several young school children, were struck by cars speeding through crosswalks as they traveled to the very building our school is currently housed in. Not willing to wait for a traffic light to be installed, the Black Panthers escorted children across the intersection in the morning and afternoon until a permanent light was installed.

Early Emeryville & Shellmound Park

After the Spanish arrived and before the city's incorporation, the land known today as Emeryville, was a vast cattle land with large slaughtering corrals that covered the grasslands. The land became part of Vincente Peralta's Spanish land grant and his hides-and-tallow trade thrived here until the California Gold Rush changed everything along the west coast for the Californios. The migration of newcomers to the west felt entitled to take up residence wherever they saw fit and Peralta's land was taken over by squatters who appropriated his cattle and farmland. Real estate speculators acquired much of Peralta's land and began selling tracts of the land in 1856. This abrupt takeover and entitlement by the Gold Rush settlers uprooted Peralta, like the Spanish Missionaries had done to the Ohlone before him.

Joseph S. Emery came to west during the Gold Rush and found a lucrative career as a stonecutter that led to over seeing the quarrying of rocks to build some of San Francisco's first buildings in the financial district. With his fortune, he moved to the East Bay in 1859 and purchased 200 acres land that would later become the city of Emeryville for \$8,000. Emery continued his business as a stone contractor while developing his land with an entrepreneurial eye on the future as he built up the areas surrounding his land. He built the Telegraph Avenue and San Pablo street car lines and Mountain View Cemetery, where he selected a prime location for his own final resting place. Emery was one of the organizers of the company that built the California and Nevada Rail Road and one of the incorporators of the Oakland Home Insurance Company. Emery saw that the area surrounding his land was prime for development and had the power and financial means to influence its development. Much of the growth along what was then known as the Oakland Harbor grew out of Emery's work. The Harbor was shallow and needed deepening in order for ferry boats to travel to and from the harbor during high tide and maintain scheduled trips for visitors and commuters. Emery saw that maintaining accessible ferry transportation as essential to the city's growth

In Emeryville, the 1870s were a time of great transformation along the shoreline of the Bay. Gold Rush prosperity had built up San Francisco and Oakland, Berkeley, and Emeryville were right behind it in the East Bay. A rifle range, trotting park, beer garden, band shell, and a shady thicket of trees that drew picnickers all resided beside what remained of the towering Emeryville Shellmound. Emeryville had become a place where Bay Area residents would come to relax and play, so it seemed only natural to complete the experience with a dance pavilion on the very top of the shellmound. The notion of dancing on an Indian burial ground was considered as a thrill that would attract visitors. Although almost 30 years before the University of California would conduct their first excavation, it was either common knowledge or perhaps myth that the Emeryville Shellmound was a resting place for the Ohlone dead. This is how Shellmound Park, an amusement and

recreation park was born in 1879.

The 16-acre park was open seasonally from March 1 through November 1. Social clubs and workers unions often held rallies and events at the park that was accessible from the East Bay by trolley and train to Shellmound station. The ferry brought well-dressed San Franciscans who spent the day attending, orchestra concerts, boxing matches, in addition foot and bicycle races. In the late afternoon the dance pavilion would open its doors, where couples would dance until the moon lit the sky. Excursions to Shellmound Park were an all day event for Bay Area families

In addition to the attraction of Shellmound Park, the Northern Railway put early Emeryville on the map as an industrial intersection, where trains ran along the shoreline from Oakland to California's wheat shipping center in Port Costa on the Carquinez Strait. Inexpensive land and numerous transportation options primed the area for industry. Slaughterhouses lined the path of the railroad to the northern shoreline in an area known as Butchertown. Property along the shoreline also attracted heavy manufacturing. Residents in neighboring regions found the industry in early Emeryville to be unacceptable and noxious and fought to impose change upon the industries that thrived in the area.

In 1896 those who resided on the 200 acres north of Oakland originally purchased by Joseph S. Emery united to protect their assets and began the first steps toward the incorporation of a city of their own by filing a petition with the Alameda County Board of Supervisors. These early landowners drew and redrew the boundaries of the city to exclude the bulk of adjacent residential neighborhoods and to exclude every church in the area. This redistricting is still reflected in the Emeryville of today, with extensive areas dedicated to commercial activity and very little reserved for residential use. Landowners and investors cited frustration with the county board of supervisors and a failure to provide municipal improvements that they felt they were entitled to because of the high taxes they paid. Those who came to the East Bay from San Francisco with pockets full of Gold Rush industry profits felt strongly that the money they were investing should stay in Emeryville. With support from the owners of the racetrack, that paid a bulk of the taxes in town, Emeryville's powerful won their battle and the city of Emeryville was established on November 2, 1896. Not surprisingly many of the vocal residents pushing for incorporation were elected to the Emeryville Board of Supervisors a month after the city was established. Emeryville's elected officials worked to establish a civic infrastructure needed to support the tiny city's growth. They quickly created a school board, with one school that rapidly grew to two, established police and fire departments, built a stately city hall, and set up a structure within the office of the city engineer to oversee further construction and development of the growing city. Some of Emeryville's early leaders, W.H. Christie, J.T. Doyle, and Ralph S. Hawley are still present today in the names of the city streets and municipal buildings. Emeryville residents had gotten what they invested in and fought for a city they could build and develop on their own terms. The city cultivated industries that others shunned, stockyards, gambling, and steel mills all had homes in the city that forced its residents to travel to Oakland on Sundays to worship.

With the dawn of Prohibition, the closure of Shellmound Park seemed eminent. The amusement park closed in 1924. The land was purchased by the C.K. Williams Company and converted into an industrial plant. Emeryville's future growth, as its leaders saw it was no longer in agriculture and food production, so the city reinvented itself as hub for industry on the Pacific Coast. As civic leaders worked to attract business, the city began to diversify and evolve, both ethnically and ethically. During this time the faces, names, and languages that filled Emeryville began to change. African Americans and Chinese Americans joined residents of French, Portuguese, and British descent. Card clubs, saloons, bordellos, and horse racing had thrived in Emeryville after the Gold Rush, however during the years of prohibition these vice industries flourished under a

government and police department that conveniently turned a blind eye to speakeasies and illegal gambling clubs in exchange for financial kickbacks and bribes. County officials tried curtail Emeryville's activities through numerous Prohibition-era raids. Alameda County District Attorney, Earl Warren once referred to Emeryville as "the rottenest city on the Pacific Coast." He later described the city's negligence, "Vice is flourishing in Emeryville under the encouragement of the city and police officials, who are getting their cut," he said. Within a block of the police of Emeryville are 12 houses of prostitution and 20 bootlegging joints." ² Looking back, Emeryville distinguished itself as a city that wrote its own rules, bent them when it suited them, and faced the consequences.

The Ohlone (Huchiun) Village

The Ohlone Native Americans are often referred to as the first residents of the San Francisco and Monterey Bay Areas. Within this 180 miles of Pacific coastline and surrounding inland areas were 24 known Ohlone tribelets. Each tribelet had its own customs, dialect, and tradable resources. For the most part the Ohlone tribelets lived independently from one another, only meeting from time to time to trade goods or on occasion to intermarry. The Temescal Creek that ran from what is known today as the Oakland Hills to the mouth San Francisco Bay in Emeryville provided an optimal spot for the Huchiun tribelet to establish their winter village and welcome traders from around the Bay. For the Ohlones, trade was an extension of their value of sharing and not necessarily for the purpose of making a profit. If a tribelet lived along a creek rich with salmon and steelhead, as the Huchiun did, they did not keep it for just themselves, they shared it with others. When visitors from neighboring tribelets arrived in the village it was customary that they were welcomed with the gifts that were plentiful within the region of that village. For the Ohlones that lived along the mouth of the Temescal Creek we can imagine that the gifts that were offered for trade were shellfish, salmon, and steelhead. In years when the catch was plentiful the Ohlone would entertain with lavish feasts for their guests and in lean years or in between salmon runs, a salmon-fishing tribelet might visit a neighboring tribelet with the expectation that the entertaining custom would be reciprocated.

The bones and shellfish from the elaborate feasts that could not be carved into tools or shaped into jewelry were discarded into piles similar to our modern day landfills that became known as shellmounds. The Emeryville Shellmound was most likely the waste disposal spot for the Huchiun tribelet and their prime trading spot along the San Francisco Bay is the same location where today we trade money for clothing, home goods, and food at Bay Street.

Our current location for commerce and trade in Emeryville echoes that of the Ohlones, and while much of the landscape has changed there are glimpses of what life was like for the Ohlone people when we look up to the hills that surround Oakland and Berkeley. It was in these hills, during the warm days near the end of spring that the Ohlone women would gather seeds and roots to roast and feed their families. In the summer, the Ohlone would migrate and live up in the hills where the grasses were dry and grapes, currents, and berries that we still see today were plentiful. When the autumn leaves began to fall the Ohlone women would fill their tightly woven baskets with acorns to grind into a powder and boil into the Ohlone staple food; acorn porridge. Today the oak leaves still fall around the East Bay. The acorns that fall beside them now fall upon our city sidewalks. We are reminded of their abundance as they crunch under our feet and are ground into a the same type of powder the Ohlone made into porridge. This powder dusts the sidewalks, then the bottoms of our shoes, and ultimately we track it into our homes and onto the floor mats of our cars without considering the nutritional significance it once had to the people who once lived where we live today. The Ohlone had a rich seasonal diet that offered them a variety to harvest without ever planting a seed or plowing a field. The diet that nourished the Ohlone people on is much different than the imported produce and processed foods

that fill our grocery stores and pantry shelves, however Berkeley foodies like Alice Waters and Michael Pollan who champion Slow Food, farm to table, and seasonal eating movements often reference the diets of Native Americans as way for us to eat more sustainably and more healthfully.

While we may look to the Ohlone diet as a way to rediscover food practices, there are aspects of our daily lives that vary greatly from the Ohlone people. The Ohlone people valued oneness and a sense of unity. Young children were taught from an early age the customs and behaviors that were expected of them by the adults in the tribe. All members of the tribe were expected to look out for one and other. This meant that if a child's behavior was not as expected, and their parent was not around, another member of the community's stern gaze and watchful eye was an equal substitute. In the Ohlone culture if a man returned from the hunt with a deer, the meat from his kill was shared among the entire village not just his family. The Ohlones did not value individualism, children were not raised to become independent, rather everyone was bound to their families and each family to the tribelet. This oneness was really a sense of belonging not only for how Ohlones cared for one another, it also manifested in their appearance. The Ohlone all dressed in the hides of deer and rabbits, wore adornments of the shells and seedpods that were remnants of the food they harvested, had the same ritual tattoos, and had the same facial features. The features of the Ohlone were not passed on through genetics, rather they were sculpted through a mother's gentle touch as she ritually massaged the pliant bones of her baby's forehead into the desired shape. Knowing that one was part of this culture of oneness was a sense of strength for the Ohlone and to tear these bonds or to seek freedom as we often do within our society, was considered a weakness. The Ohlone people valued the traditional ways and the words of their elders, to improve upon or innovate was never a goal of the Ohlone.

The spiritual world of the Ohlone people, like their beliefs in community was strongly rooted in tradition and not to be challenged or altered. The Ohlone saw spirituality and magic in rituals such as hunting and basket making. Before a man would leave the village to hunt elk or deer, he would fast, abstain from sexual intercourse, and cleanse himself in the sweat-house during the days before his hunt began. Preparing his mind and his body would make his aim agile and guide him throughout his journey. Upon returning to the village with his slain animal, he would return to the sweat-house again to cleanse himself.

The spirit world and the ritual world were inextricably intertwined in the life and death of the Ohlone people. Ohlone traditions around death and the dead shaped some of what we know and do not know about them. The Ohlone did not speak of their dead, for the spirit around the dead was very powerful and should not be mentioned. For this reason, when Spanish missionaries asked the Ohlone about their history, where they came from, they were silent. By not discussing the dead, the Ohlone did not know the history of their people; this puzzled the missionaries.

For a culture that emphasized such strong ties to community, the death of one of its own was an immense loss and one that was followed with great attention to detail so as not to disturb the soul of the departed and challenge the power of the spirit. We can tell a great deal about the Ohlone burial and mourning rituals by looking back to the Emeryville Shellmound and what was found within the ground beneath it. During the early excavation of the shellmound at the beginning of the last century, partially charred bones were discovered, suggesting that the Ohlone practiced a form of cremation. During the early excavation in the one in late 1990's some bodies were methodically positioned with legs bent up near the torso, with arms wrapped around the head. In preparation for burial, the body was positioned as knees tucked beneath the chin and arms bent and placed beside the cheeks. The body was tied into this position and wrapped with blankets and skins before it was placed on the funeral pyre. The deceased's belongings were destroyed and burned beside the body. After the cremation and burial those who prepared the body practiced ritual cleansing, fasting, and chanting. During

this time the spouse of the deceased singed their hair, scratched their face and chest, and put ashes on their body so that the ghost of the dead would not recognize them. Relatives in mourning often left the village to live in solitary. It was believed that a widowed spouse was in danger from the ghost of the dead and most people wanted to avoid contact with a person who was so vulnerable.

When the Spanish missionaries arrived in the late 1700s the Ohlone were amazed and confused to see people who looked nothing like them and spoke a language they did not understand. At first the Ohlones feared that the Spanish were spiritually a threat and initially ran and threw themselves on the ground when they first met the missionaries. The Ohlone should have listened to their first instincts, but that was not their way. Instead they welcome the Spanish missionaries who were curious about their way of life into their villages and shared they world with them. The Spanish interest in the Ohlone way of life is well documented in letters and journals and some of what we have learned about he Ohlone has come from their documentation. However the missionaries and their vision of a Catholic utopia in California meant the end of Ohlone life as they knew it. Soon missions were established and the Ohlones were transformed from hunters and gatherers to farmers and harvesters. Instead of the skins of deer and rabbits, women wove threads into cloth and transformed the cloth into the more modest clothing that the missionaries approved of. The Ohlones were forced into baptisms, often the missionaries would baptize a child hoping to lure in the parents to the mission. Ohlone men and women were frequently separated to promote a less promiscuous way of life, that coupled with a desire not to raise Ohlone children in the church led to low Ohlone birthrates. A thousand Ohlone might have lived within the walls of a mission like Mission Delores in San Francisco. The crowded conditions, lacking fresh air, became a breeding ground for European diseases such as measles, smallpox, and influenza. Diseases the Ohlones had no immunity from. These diseases decimated the Ohlone population.

By the mid 1800s, the remaining Ohlone of the Bay Area gathered together in small villages. No longer the vast people of 24 tribelets, they picked up what pieces they could of their traditional practices and began to live their lives again. The growth of the Bay Area during this time and the absence of protected reservation status could not prevent the modern world from swallowing up what remained of the traditional Ohlone culture.

Objectives

Although I am known as a Visual Arts teacher, I feel strongly that the most important lessons I can teach my students involve critical thinking, problem solving, and communication skills. So I try to focus most of my curriculum and instruction on these three strategies taught through art making. The Art Based Research approach allows me to expand upon the notion that art is a lens for which all of our learning can take place and through out this unit Art Based Research will enable my students to blend note taking and qualitative research through an aesthetic process that encourages use art making to collect data and conduct analysis. By looking at the historical narrative of Emeryville through art making, each student will make their own meaning of our city's story and use that meaning to exchange ideas with each other.

Guiding Questions

What can we learn about the people who came before us based upon what they left behind and what will others say about us based upon what we leave behind?

How is the story of Emeryville a reflection of the historical narrative of California and our nation?

What is the common thread between us, and those who lived in Emeryville in prior generations?

How does our Art Based Research help us investigate the story of Emeryville?

What is our role as artists and social commentators to tell the story of Emeryville?

Classroom Activities

Mapping Our Lives: Where we live, where we spend our time, and the activities we engage in.

To help students understand the geographic area of Emeryville and to provide a lens that they will use to uncover the layers of our city's history, students will use paper maps of the city and surrounding areas to mark their homes, our school, places they visit after school and on weekends. Together we will mark on a larger map locations such as community services, places for shopping, and areas for recreational activities. In addition we will mark bus routes and bike paths to gain a better understanding of traffic and how we move around our city. These markings are significant because they will be a reference point for students as they compare their lives with the lives of those who came before them.

As we explore different time periods in Emeryville's history. Students will place transparency film or tracing paper over their paper map as they mark how the city looked differently through each era we study. By creating a new layer for each time period we study, students will visualize how the city and its use of land evolved while predicting how the city might look 100 years from now.

KWL Chart: What is Bay Street to our community and us?

A Know, Want to know, Learned chart will help launch our investigation into the Bay Street site. On individual pieces of paper divided into three columns, one for each area (know, want to know, learned) students will work in small groups to compile a list of things they already know about Bay Street and things they want to know about Bay Street. Using large chart paper we will compile a KWL Chart based upon each group's lists. The class KWL chart will become the basis for our initial inquiry about Bay Street and contemporary Emeryville. As students learn more about the site, we will return to the KWL Chart and fill in what we have learned based upon our observations, readings, and interviews.

Visit Bay Street: Observations and creating a Mind Map to share

Together as a class we will visit Bay Street, spreading out in different areas to observe people, spaces, sounds, and smells. Students will create lists and sketches of things they see, hear, smell at Bay Street and

then organize those observations into Mind Maps (a diagram to visually organize information). Each student's Mind Map will inherently reflect their viewpoint of the space while incorporating words and images that reflect what they saw during our class visit. Upon completing their Mind Maps, students will use the Thinking Routine: See Think Wonder to discuss the Mind Maps in small groups then share out with the class and discuss their observations of Bay Street.

View the Film "Shellmound": Take notes in sketchbooks and discussion

The documentary "Shellmound" by Andres Cediel examines the journey of the Bay Street site from toxic clean up through construction of the mall and explores the decisions that were made. This film will provide an introduction to our larger exploration of the narrative of Emeryville by giving students a short history of the site from the perspective of the city of Emeryville, the developer, the archeologists, and members of the Ohlone tribe who were witnesses to this history and transformation. Cediel is a local filmmaker and connected to the school community, upon viewing and discussing the film we hope he will join us to share more about how he created the film.

Revisit Bay Street: Make more observations and another Mind Map to share what's changed now that students know more about the Bay Street Site

Possibly as a homework assignment, students will revisit the Bay Street site and document their observations again through what they see, hear, and smell. During this visit, they will have with them the perspectives of those who were there while the site was cleaned, excavated, and rebuilt as a shopping mall. The voices and stories that students heard in the film "Shellmound" may change what they notice during this second visit to the mall. Perhaps during this second visit students may notice areas like the memorial or the names of the streets differently than they had before. With these comparisons and new observations in mind, they will create a second mind map of Bay Street to bring back to class and discuss.

Timeline: Charting our past, present, and future

At this point in the historical exploration students are very aware of the present and have a hint of what has happened in Emeryville's past. As a class we will create two large timelines using register paper that will wrap around our studio space. One timeline will reflect what we are learning about Emeryville's history beginning with the present and working backwards to the time when the Ohlone were the only inhabitants of this area. The second timeline will rest right below the first and serve as a place for personal connections representing the history of students and their lives. The second timeline encourages students to mark significant events in their narrative while comparing these events to the narrative of the city of Emeryville. For example a student might mark a their birth, when they moved to a new home, or when they experienced a loss in their family. These personal connections will help students recognize the events in their lives and understand how events are layered throughout time, but also connect them with the people they will read who shaped Emeryville.

Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS): "Images of America: Emeryville"

Using the three VTS questions: What's happening in this picture? What makes you say that? What more can we find? Students will draw out information from historic photos of Emeryville's industrial era. These questions take the emphasis off of a dissemination of facts and focuses on a student directed conversation that encourages observation, and inference. During VTS discussion, teachers only ask the three stated questions, leaving opportunities for quiet observation and debate among students. As a classroom routine, this practice deepens student critical thinking, vocabulary, and communication skills. In class we will look at two to five

images that depict Emeryville's factories and industrial work force. By examining these images students will understand how the factories looked, who worked in them, and what they produced.

Read Aloud from "Images of America: Emeryville": Highlight and define new vocabulary

As part a Common Core Standards strategy, teachers are encouraged to choose challenging texts to read aloud to students, providing students with examples of how text is suppose to sound while encouraging students to develop more complex vocabulary and sentence structure in their own writing. Passages from "Images of America: Emeryville" will be read aloud by the teacher with students following along. When students hear a word they don't recognize, they will highlight it. Upon the end of the reading, the teacher will prompt students to go back over their highlighted words and place each word on an individual note card. All of the note cards will be placed in a fish bowl and students will randomly draw one or two cards with words that they will have to look up the definitions to, create a sentence using the work properly, then create an illustration visualizes the definition of the word on the back of the note card for homework. During the next class session, students will rotate around the room sharing their vocabulary word, definition, sentence, and illustration. The note cards will then be displayed in class and referred to as needed during the unit.

Site Visit Black Panther Party Stoplight: Discussion about why the Black Panthers drew their guns as children were walking to school?

During the late1960s the East Bay played a large role in the developing Black Panther Party and many programs involving school children in the area today resulted from their work. Our school is a few blocks from a crosswalk and traffic light that the Black Panthers worked to establish on August 1 1967. As a class we will visit this site, observe what we see, and hear, then read the plaque that describes the events that led up to the installation of the traffic light. We will then come back to the studio to discuss our observations and envision what the neighborhood looked like in the late 1960s. Students will then sketch or make a Mind Map of what they think the neighborhood looked like in 1967 when children walked to the same school we are sitting in.

Examine the 33rd Anniversary of the City of Emeryville Edition of the Emeryville Herald & historical maps of Emeryville and Oakland: Discuss how our narrative of Emeryville is changing

A copy of the Emeryville Herald originally published in 1929 to commemorate the 33rd anniversary of the city's founding contains short articles that reflect on the government, businesses, schools, recreational activities, and people who shaped the city. This document helps to paint a picture of what life in Emeryville was like during this period of time. Profiles of men who led civic and political lives are going to be of particular interest to students, because many of our city's streets and public buildings are named after these men, yet the stories of their lives are unknown. Articles about the racetracks, farms, and dairies that once filled the city and photos of street scenes that tell the story of life in Emeryville will help bring my students to this place in history. Students will recognize some of the buildings and street corners that are featured in the photographs, helping them embrace the history that surrounds their daily lives.

Site Visit: A business or civic building that no longer exists

Several advertisements fill the special edition of the Emeryville Herald. The business names and some of the services they provided are completely unknown to my students. Examining them carefully will give my students another glimpse into the lives of Emeryville residents during this time period. As a homework assignment

Students will select a site of a former business or civic building mentioned in the Emeryville Herald and create two Mind Maps, first a map of what is imagined about the place based on what they know from reading this historical document and a second based on what the student observes when they visit that location today. Students will then compare the two drawings and discuss similarities and differences in what they envisioned and what they observed. From this visualization students will understand that some of Emeryville's history is still visible if we look closely and other parts of the city's history are only visible to those who read about it.

Read Aloud Excerpts from "The Emeryville Shellmound" and "The Emeryville Shellmound Final Report": Highlight and define new vocabulary and discussion about how the narrative of Emeryville is changing.

The University of California at Berkeley excavated the Emeryville Shellmound site twice once in 1902 and a second time in 1920. These original excavation reports are challenging texts for my students however as primary sources of the time period, they will be very powerful for students to examine and draw conclusions from. These texts contain diagrams of tools and human remains that were found at the site. These two texts suggest of the artifacts that were found at the site were used in Ohlone life. The texts differ in their interpretation of the burials that were found at the site the later publication suggests that the Ohlone did not simply bury their dead, but practiced cremation prior to burial. In examining these texts, students will first engage in a prior activity to help make meaning from new vocabulary. When students hear a word they don't recognize, they will highlight it. Upon the end of the reading, the teacher will prompt students to go back over their highlighted words and place each word on an individual note card. All of the note cards will be placed in a fish bowl and students will randomly draw one or two cards with words that they will have to look up the definitions to, create a sentence using the work properly, then create an illustration visualizes the definition of the word on the back of the note card for homework. During the next class session, students will rotate around the room sharing their vocabulary word, definition, sentence, and illustration. The note cards will then be displayed in class and referred to as needed during the unit.

A second classroom activity will be a discussion of the ethics behind excavating a site like the Emeryville Shellmound. To begin this conversation students will use the Thinking Routine I used to think... But Now I think... To identify how their perceptions of the Emeryville Shellmound and excavation has changed. These prompts encourage students to share their thinking while citing facts that impacted their opinions.

Map: The Emeryville Shellmound

To gain a deeper understanding of the scale of the Emeryville Shellmound, students will use string and tent stakes to mark the footprint of the Emeryville Shellmound to gain a greater sense of its scale. Upon marking the entire perimeter of the shellmound students will sit in the center and discuss how their understanding of the shellmound has changed.

Read Independently and Read Aloud: "The Ohlone Way", Create Mind Maps of Ohlone life the missionaries arrived

Malcolm Margolin's book "The Ohlone Way" is a rich narrative description of what Ohlone life in the Bay Area was like prior to the arrival of the Spanish missionaries. His text is well known and viewed as an authentic interpretation of Ohlone life based upon archeological research and the letters and journals written by missionaries who lived among and observed the Ohlone. Margolin's text is rich in descriptions of the Ohlone villages, homes, food preparations, hunting techniques, and religious rituals. The text is easily digestible for my students and they will read sections of the book independently and together aloud in class. As we are reading these texts students will periodically create sketches and Mind Maps to visualize portions of the text

they are reading. Students will then use these drawings to launch discussions about their interpretations of Ohlone life.

Panel Discussion

I am hoping to put together a panel of local experts with connections to the Emeryville Shellmound to field questions and engage in discussion with my students. The human remains collected from the Emeryville Shellmound are still currently housed at the Phoebe Hearst Anthropology Museum at the University of California in Berkeley. The museum is closed during until the fall of 2014 for renovations. My hope is to invite a representative from the museum staff with knowledge of the museum's collections. The Muwekma Ohlone Tribe of the San Francisco Bay Area are the modern day descendants of the Ohlone people who inhabited the Emeryville area. Many of these descendants were brought in when the Ohlone burials were found prior to the construction of Bay Street. I anticipate that a member of the tribe will join us for this discussion. In addition to these two speakers, I am looking forward to having an Emeryville Historian participate as well.

Create A Podcast

Students will use the classroom timeline as well as their notes to determine places and events that they feel are significant to the Emeryville narrative. In pairs they will write a short description of the event or place to be read and recorded for a podcast walking tour for younger students in Emeryville. As a class we will create a map and walking route for the tour and organize the podcast with the support of guest teaching artist Taro Hattori. This podcast will be available through our school website and possibly other venues to help share the story of the City of Emeryville.

Create an Excavation of the Bay Street site in 2113

Students will transform a display space at the Emeryville City Hall for March IS Education month that reflects what they think an excavation of the Bay Street site could yield. Items such as shopping bags, cell phones, foam cups could be displayed beside museum style placards explaining how the item was possibly used by the people of 2013 and the significance of each item found. Students will envision how the items from their lives might be interpreted or misinterpreted by future generations. Like the early Emeryville Shellmound Excavations, the items "left behind" will be subjected to interpretation and possibly misidentified. This perspective taking exercise will encourage students to see their lives within the same lens that we've examined the Emeryville residents who came before us.

Create Tricksters: Human forms representing Emeryville residents from the past

In conjunction with the exhibit at the Emeryville City Hall students will create life size human forms that represent the people who came before them to help tell the Emeryville narrative. The human forms will be cast from their students' bodies using plastic wrap and packing tape, then filled with paper to give them weight. Each human form will be dressed in attire to reflect a particular time period in Emeryville History. Students will use photographs and descriptive texts to research the clothing of each time period. The completed human forms will be installed in public places around Emeryville and students will document public reaction to the forms through photographs and videos. The individual photographs and videos will be put together in a class video with the support of guest teaching artist Taro Hattori.

Teaching Strategies

Art Based Research

By blending note taking and qualitative research through an aesthetic process students use art making to collect data and conduct analysis

Gallery Walk

Students post work on tables or walls then walk around the room observing each other's work. Students will later use those observations to discuss the work in a small group or as a whole class.

Graphic Organizers

Visual representations of knowledge, concepts, and ideas to help students organize their information.

Headlines

This routine helps students capture the core or heart of the matter being studied or discussed. It also can involve them in summing things up and coming to some tentative conclusions.

This routine draws on the idea of newspaper-type headlines as a vehicle for summing up and capturing the essence of an event, idea, concept, topic, etc. The routine asks one core question: *1. If you were to write a headline for this topic or issue right now that captured the most important aspect that should be remembered, what would that headline be?* A second question involves probing how students' ideas of what is most important and central to the topic being explored have changed over time: *2. How has your headline changed based on today's discussion? How does it differ from what you would have said yesterday?*

I Used to Think... But Now I Think...

This routine helps students to reflect on their thinking about a topic or issue and explore how and why that thinking has changed. It can be useful in consolidating new learning as students identify their new understandings, opinions, and beliefs. By examining and explaining how and why their thinking has changed, students are developing their reasoning abilities and recognizing cause and effect relationships.

Remind students of the topic you want them to consider. It could be the ideal itself—fairness, truth, understanding, or creativity—or it could be the unit you are studying. Have students write a response using each of the sentence stems: *I used to think...But now, I think...*

Learning Wall

Wall space within the classroom to post student observations, questions, notes, photos, sketches, and newly discovered information about a learning topic that is ongoing. This visual representation of student learning expands as student knowledge grows.

Mind Maps

From silent observations of places, people, and events students draw and write a visual interpretation of what

they experienced. Conversations rooted within the mind maps allow students to share their thinking verbally and visually

Pecha Kucha

Pecha Kucha is a slide presentation format where the presenter shares 20 slides that are timed to advance after 20 seconds. The presenter shares their work and ideas within this time frame followed by an opportunity for questions and group discussion. This format encourages both presenters to be concise when sharing their ideas and an audience to think about the whole presentation before giving input.

See Think Wonder

This routine encourages students to make careful observations and thoughtful interpretations. It helps stimulate curiosity and sets the stage for inquiry.

The routine works best when a student responds by using the three stems together at the same time, i.e., "I see..., I think..., I wonder...." However, you may find that students begin by using one stem at a time, and that you need to scaffold each response with a follow up question for the next stem.

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Appendix

Photographs



Figure 1: Entrance to Bay Street at the corner of Shellmound Street and Ohlone Way



Figure 2: Ohlone Shellmound Memorial at Bay Street



Figure 3: The Ohlone Shellmound memorial with Shellmound Street behind it

Teaching Standards

Although this unit will be delivered within a Visual Arts context, it will be at the beginning of my district's exploration with the new Common Core Standards and I am very interested in finding ways to integrate these new teaching standards into my practice. As a Studio Thinking Framework Classroom, my students are very familiar with the eight Studio Habits of Mind and incorporate them into their daily studio practice. The Studio Habits of Mind are: Develop Craft, Engage and Persist, Envision, Express, Observe, Reflect, Stretch and Explore, and Understanding the Art World. Much of what the Studio Habits of Mind bring to my classroom is a language for us to communicate about our individual and collaborative learning experiences about art and through art making. The Studio Habits of Mind are a critical part of my classroom structure, however I often struggle to integrate them with the California State Standards for Visual Arts that are very focused on artistic technique. For this unit I am integrating both California Standards for Visual Arts and Common Core College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening that integrate well into several of the Studio Habits of Mind.

California Standards for Visual Arts

Through an investigation of the social justice art movement in the Bay Area, students will interpret and derive

meaning from the street art in the neighborhood of our school and identify how this work and the issues it raises connects to their own lives. *3.4 Discuss the purposes of art in selected contemporary cultures.* While learning about the contemporary artist Mark Jenkins, students will deepen their understanding and scope of street and guerilla art and the impact Jenkins' work has on the public. Students will interpret photographs documenting his work in public spaces and discuss how his work draws viewers in to confront an issue. *1.3 Research and analyze the work of an artist and write about the artist's distinctive style and its contribution to the meaning of the work.* Taking inspiration from Jenkins human sculptures, students will create gesture drawings and then packing tape molds of their bodies that reflect the impact of carrying the burden of a particular social issue personally on one's bones and muscles. *2.6 Create a two- or three-dimensional work of art that addresses a social issue.* During and after working on their sculptures, students will need to examine closely the appropriate public space to install their work. As they do this they will have to consider the physical needs of their sculpture, who will view it, in what context, and what they anticipate the public reaction to their work. This process will help students become clear and aware of the message they are putting forth to their viewer and what they would like their viewer to take away from the work. *4.1 Articulate how personal beliefs, cultural traditions, and current social, economic, and political contexts influence the interpretation of the meaning or message in a work of art.*

Common Core English Language Arts Standards: College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Speaking and Listening

Through partner chats, group discussions, and oral presentations, students will engage in a variety of conversations to stimulate their thinking and exchange ideas. *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.1 Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.* By examining primary and secondary sources and conducting their own investigations to understand the history of Emeryville, students will use expand upon their repertoire of interpretative strategies. *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.* While collecting data and information about their historical investigations, students will synthesize text and share their discoveries through partner chats and group discussions. *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.SL.4 Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.*

Studio Habits of Mind

As students create cast molds of their bodies using plastic wrap and packing tape, they will learn to apply the tape so that it captures the body's form and understand how to remove that form from their model without destroying that form. *Develop craft: Learning to use and care for tools (e.g., viewfinders, brushes), materials (e.g., charcoal, paint). Learning artistic conventions (e.g., perspective, color mixing).* When putting each body part together I anticipate that there will be times when body parts might not fit together or the impact of gravity on their sculptures will ask students to think flexibly to solve a problem. *Engage and Persist: Learning to embrace problems of relevance within the art world and/or of personal importance, to develop focus and other mental states conducive to working and persevering at art tasks.* Through out this unit students will need to imagine what a place might have looked, sounded, or smelled like to make sense of the different periods of time to do this they will often have to rely upon what they see in their mind to guide them to a better understanding. *Envision: Learning to picture mentally what cannot be directly observed and imagine possible next steps in making a piece.* While maintaining a sketchbook to document their Art Based Research, students will collect information, but also have to interpret to create new information visually. When students

visit locations to create mind maps of their observations they are not simply copying what they see, rather they are interpreting what they have experienced and visually expressing it to communicate with others. *Express: Learning to create works that convey an idea, a feeling, or a personal meaning.* As artist researchers, students will consume information through observation of images, video, text, and site visits. By taking in information and looking more carefully that they had before or more thoroughly than others ever will students will noticed things they have never seen before and might very well have missed had they not observed carefully. *Observe: Learning to attend to visual contexts more closely than ordinary "looking" requires, and thereby to see things that otherwise might not be seen.* The journey of historical investigation and art making begs for personal reflection, through "in progress" critiques, checking for understanding activities, and written reflections students will become mindful of their work process and their personal growth through it. *Reflect: Question & Explain: Learning to think and talk with others about an aspect of one's work or working process.* *Evaluate: Learning to judge one's own work and working process and the work of others in relation to standards of the field.* Inevitably the art making process lends it self to experiences of the unknown, when the art making practice leads a student to a place they had never been or never thought existed. This path of exploration often leads one to great discoveries and as a teacher it is important to leave time within the class structure for this habit to thrive and help students embrace and acknowledge these moments. *Stretch and Explore: Learning to reach beyond one's capacities, to explore playfully without a preconceived plan, and to embrace the opportunity to learn from mistakes and accidents.*

Notes

1. United States Census Bureau. "State and County QuickFacts"
2. Emeryville, Calif. *Emeryville*, 59

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