

Bringing Art and Technology into the Spanish Classes at Acalanes

By Diane Claytor



One of the 35 replica paintings by Spanish-speaking artists, along with its QR codes, recently on display at the Acalanes High School library

Photo Diane Claytor

The library at Acalanes High School turned into a mini art gallery for several weeks recently, thanks to the work of the Spanish 3 students and their innovative teachers. A walk around the library gave visitors the opportunity to view replicas of 35 paintings by world-renowned Spanish-speaking artists such as Picasso, Dali, Diego Rivera, Diego Velazquez and Frida Kahlo. "We wanted to reinvigorate the art unit we typically do in Spanish 3 and teach the material in a new way," explained Spanish teacher Heidi Skvarna.

She and her colleagues, Elizabeth Gough and Monika Voellm, came up with the idea of incorporating technology to create an art gallery. "There's really no one place we could see an entire collection of Spanish artists like this," Skvarna continued, "so we developed the

idea of using technology to learn more about specific painters and their works. In the old days, before the surge of technology, this research would have been done using the encyclopedia," she laughingly noted.

The students were assigned specific artists and paintings to research and given certain websites to visit for their information. Once the students gathered their data, they wrote a paragraph, which was graded by their teacher. The students recorded their paragraph, in Spanish, of course, using an app on their iPads. The recording was then uploaded to YouTube. Using another app, students were able to insert an image of the painting, create a website and generate a QR (quick response) code – a square barcode that is readable by imaging devices, such as a camera, using a QR code reader app. Other students, teachers or visitors

could walk around the library, using their smart phone or iPad with a QR reader app, and focus it on the QR code that would take them to each student's website, where they could hear the student talking about the artist and painting being viewed, as if they were in a real museum being guided by a docent.

According to Skvarna, the students loved this assignment. "It was super fun, super successful," she stated. "It was an out-of-the-box assignment that allowed students to delve into the curriculum in a richer, real way. It was a team effort and it's projects like these that excite both the teachers and our students."

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Sharing the Dream They Dreamed

Authors of an oral history of the Grateful Dead speak at LLLC

By Lou Fancher



**THIS IS ALL A DREAM
WE DREAMED**

*An Oral History of the
Grateful Dead*

BLAIR JACKSON & DAVID GANS

It takes a virtual orchestra of voices to tell the epic, 50-year history of the Grateful Dead. Stories about the legendary band have been told in books, autobiographies, anthologies, documentaries, television specials, fanzines and periodicals, by word-of-mouth and are once again delivered by this anniversary year's spate of authors and books tackling the hefty beast – David Browne's "So Many Roads;" drummer Bill Kreutzmann's memoir, "Deal;" and "The Complete Annotated Grateful Dead Lyrics" are just three

recommended among them.

So it's a distinct pleasure to discover fresh territory to explore and the perfect, comprehensive, near-3D-like coverage provided by "This is All a Dream We Dreamed: An Oral history of the Grateful Dead" (Flatiron Books), by Bay Area archivists and authors Blair Jackson and David Gans.

The authors will discuss and read from their new book at 7 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 7 at the Lafayette Library and Learning Center.

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