

THE HUMANITIES AND HUMAN
FLOURISHING PROJECT PRESENTS

Visual Arts for Flourishing

Philadelphia

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Director's Welcome

Hello, and welcome to *Visual Arts for Flourishing: Philadelphia!*

On behalf of the entire Humanities and Human Flourishing Project (HHF) team, I would like to offer you a warm welcome to this unique gathering at the University of Pennsylvania. Over the next two days, we are excited to focus on connections between the visual arts and flourishing.

The visual arts play an important role in human flourishing across the lifespan and around the world. Because flourishing is such an important and wide-ranging endeavor, its study and cultivation must be interdisciplinary, inclusive, and cross-cultural, and the exploration of its connection to the visual arts must include individuals (both makers and appreciators of art), research and educational institutions, creative industries, cultural organizations, and governmental offices.

For this reason, we are pleased to feature presentations by

- researchers studying the well-being effects of creativity and engagement with the visual arts
- practitioners from art museums and arts organizations sharing case studies of their innovative efforts to integrate visual arts engagement and well-being
- public and private funders discussing the role of well-being in securing resources for the arts
- arts educators leading us in art-making experiences

This conference is organized by the Humanities and Human Flourishing Project (HHF) at the University of Pennsylvania. The mission of HHF is to understand, assess, and advance the well-being benefits of engagement in the visual arts, music, movies, literature, theater, history, religion, philosophy, and other cultural forms. Launched in 2014, HHF consists of a core team at the University of Pennsylvania and a growing, international network of arts and humanities scholars, scientific researchers, creative practitioners, educators, wellness officers, policy experts, members of government, and leaders of cultural organizations. Together, we seek to understand the nature of human flourishing more deeply, investigate its causes and correlates more broadly, and support its cultivation more effectively. You can find out more about our work at www.humanitiesandhumanflourishing.org.

I am grateful to my HHF colleagues Katherine Cotter, Christa Mahlobo, and Alina Spas for their diligent efforts to help plan this conference. Very special thanks go to Sarah Sidoti, who envisioned this meeting and led our entire team in its realization. We are all grateful to our museum-professional partners, who helped us with the conceptualization and planning, and who will be presenting so much of their excellent work over the next two days. We are also grateful for the support of our funders, including the National Endowment for the Arts, the Drue and H. J. Heinz II Charitable Trust, and the University of Pennsylvania, acknowledging that the information and perspectives shared at this conference do not necessarily represent their views.

Finally, we are grateful to you for joining us for the inaugural *Visual Arts for Flourishing: Philadelphia* conference! We thank you for the important work you do to promote flourishing through the visual

arts, and we hope you have a chance to connect, learn, and share in ways that inspire you, re-energize your work, and advance our collective efforts.

Sincerely,

James Pawelski
Professor of Practice and Director of Education, Positive Psychology Center
Founding Director, Humanities and Human Flourishing Project
University of Pennsylvania.

Conference Schedule

Located at Jon M. Huntsman Hall, 3730 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104

Friday, April 26, 2024

- 8:15am Registration
JMHH 240
- 9:00am Framing the Work: Welcome and Introduction to the Arts, Humanities, and Human Flourishing
James Pawelski, University of Pennsylvania
JMHH 240
- 10:00am Cultural Ecology and Social Wellbeing: The Social Value of Culture to Urban Neighborhoods
Mark Stern, University of Pennsylvania
JMHH 240
- 11:00am Painting a Path for Museums and other Visual Art Spaces on Becoming more Culturally Responsive and Trauma Informed
Tamarah Moss, Bryn Mawr College
JMHH 240
- 12:00pm Lunch (BYO) + Art-making
Olivia Edlund, Philadelphia's Magic Gardens
JMHH F80
- 1:30pm Impact of the Arts
Sunil Iyengar, National Endowment for the Arts
JMHH 240
- 1:45pm Case Studies from Philadelphia Arts Organizations
JMHH 240
- Created, Together.*
Joseph Iacona & Netanel Portier, Mural Arts
- The Value of Museums: Measuring the Impact of a Museum Visit on Well-Being and Associated Programming at the Barnes Foundation
Marie Edland, William Perthes, & Liza Herzog, The Barnes Foundation
- 2:30pm The Hospital Murals Evaluation (HoME)
Nisha Sajnani, New York University
JMHH 240

- 2:55pm Viewing Alone or Together: How Social Interaction Impacts the Art Experience
Zab Johnson, University of Pennsylvania
JMHH 240
- 3:30pm Resourcing the Arts and Well-Being | A Panel Discussion
Sunil Iyengar, National Endowment for the Arts
Chloe Reison, University of Pennsylvania
Nisha Sajani, New York University
Kelly Shindler, Pew Center for Arts & Heritage
JMHH 240

Saturday, April 27, 2024

- 8:15am Registration
JMHH 240
- 8:15am Mindfulness Meditation
Christa Mahlobo, University of Pennsylvania
JMHH 240
- 9:00am Visual Art and Flourishing: Understanding the Impact of Your Organization
Katherine Cotter, University of Pennsylvania
JMHH 240
- 10:00am Case Studies from Philadelphia Arts Organizations
JMHH 240
- Art is a Pathway to Fulfillment*
Bernard Collins & Maureen Duffy, Fleisher Art Memorial
- Artful Evolution: Navigating Change at the Institute of Contemporary Art
Rachell Morillo, Institute of Contemporary Art
- Museum Mindfulness at the Philadelphia Museum of Art: Can the practices of mindfulness and slow looking be mutually reinforcing, and promote well-being?
Linnea West & Julia Erdosy, Philadelphia Museum of Art
- 11:00am Everyday Creativity and Well-Being
Paul Silvia, University of North Carolina Greensboro
JMHH 240
- 12:00pm Lunch (BYO) + Art-making
Caitlin Deutsch, Fleisher Art Memorial
JMHH F80

- 1:30pm Search for Meaning and Understanding in the Museum: A Multiple Methods Approach
Pablo Tinio, Montclair State University
JMHH 240
- 2:30pm Case Studies from Philadelphia Arts Organizations
JMHH 240
- Artmaking with Horizon House's PEACE Program
Olivia Edlund, Philadelphia's Magic Garden
- A Reflection on Color Me Back, the Nation's First Art-Based Same Day Work Program
Nadia Malik, Mural Arts
- Fostering Resilience through Art and Medical Education (FRAME and re-FRAME)
Suzannah Niepold, Philadelphia Museum of Art
- 3:30pm Exploring Barriers and Engagement in Black American Arts Through Survey Insights
Christa Mahlobo, University of Pennsylvania
JMHH 240
- 4:30pm Closing Remarks
James Pawelski, University of Pennsylvania
JMHH 240
- 5:00pm Happy Hour Reception
Location TBA

Research Presentation Abstracts

Visual Art and Flourishing: Understanding the Impact of Your Organization

Katherine N. Cotter

University of Pennsylvania

Research shows that engaging with visual art in a variety of ways is beneficial to flourishing. But in order to effectively understand the experiences of your audiences, it is important to conduct organization-specific research and evaluation to enhance and further the mission of arts organizations. In this session, I will provide a brief overview of the research on this topic but focus most of the session on workshopping how to measure flourishing in arts organizations.

Viewing Alone or Together: How Social Interaction Impacts the Art Experience

Elizabeth (Zab) Johnson

University of Pennsylvania

The research we conducted is grounded in the belief that art can be more than just a personal source of joy; it's a powerful conduit for shared experiences and psychological development. We explored the effects of an extended visual art viewing exercise in both individual and group contexts, comparing these experiences in both a museum environment and a controlled laboratory setting. We studied 188 participants and observed changes in their arousal, emotions, sense of social connectedness, appreciation of aesthetics, knowledge acquisition, and stress levels. I will discuss how our results reveal the unique influence of viewing art in specific group settings compared to individual ones, where there are notable increases in social connectedness, aesthetic appreciation, and knowledge acquisition. These results emphasize the capacity of visual arts to not only enhance personal well-being but also to strengthen communal bonds and social cohesion. By illuminating the intricate dynamics of social interaction in relation to engagement with the visual arts, our study adds to the broader understanding of art's role in promoting both personal and collective flourishing.

Exploring Barriers and Engagement in Black American Arts Through Survey Insights

Christa Mahlobo

University of Pennsylvania

Despite a number of sociopolitical advances in the United States, differences still remain between the lived experiences of Black and White Americans. These differences can manifest in a variety of cultural arenas, including how both groups engage in the arts and humanities (A&H). Furthermore, it is important to understand how engagement with A&H may differ by culture in light of growing evidence to suggest that engagement in A&H can have positive impacts on human flourishing. To create a clearer picture of the flourishing impact of A&H in Black Americans, we administered a survey to n = 600 Black Americans to explore administer a survey to 1) explore A&H modalities that Black Americans participate in and the motivations behind this engagement; and 2) to explore

systemic and cultural barriers to engagement in A&H among Black Americans. The findings from this survey help art educators and program coordinators design more culturally tailored programming that reduces barriers to equitable access to arts within the Black community.

Painting a Path for Museums and other Visual Art Spaces on Becoming more Culturally Responsive and Trauma Informed

Tamarah Moss

Bryn Mawr College

As communities continue to experience traumatic events related to violence, adverse childhood experiences, health and mental health disparities, climate change, systemic racism and historical trauma, the time for museums and other visual art spaces becoming more culturally responsive and trauma informed is now. Research indicates the possibilities and value of museums and other visual art space's ability to serve as enabling environments for community engagement as well as social care and well-being. Given the function of visual art exhibits, collections, education and research, demonstrating more culturally responsive and trauma informed approaches are critical for community flourishing.

This interactive presentation is designed to provide a brief overview of cultural responsiveness, six principles of being trauma informed, starting points for organizational self-assessment, and the development of action steps for application of trauma informed approaches.

Emphasis will be placed on the Missouri Model, whose framework focuses on the importance of process and outcomes, that includes a continuum ranging from *trauma aware, sensitive, responsive and informed*. Attendee participation will be encouraged.

Framing the Work: Welcome and Introduction to the Arts, Humanities, and Human Flourishing

James O. Pawelski

University of Pennsylvania

This presentation will include an interactive welcome to the conference and provide a theoretical and historical setting for the work we hope to accomplish together. Our aim will be to co-create an inclusive space where makers and museum professionals, researchers and students, funders and policy experts can connect with each other to learn and share ideas and innovations for exploring and advancing connections between the visual arts and flourishing in Philadelphia and beyond. We will discuss the Positive Humanities and the broader work of the Humanities and Human Flourishing Project, with the goal of developing an inclusive and capacious understanding of flourishing that respects individuals and groups, humans and the environment, and the past, present, and future.

The Hospital Murals Evaluation (HoME)

Nisha Sajnani

New York University

What can a hospital look like? This is the question at the heart of the Hospital Murals Evaluation (HoME), a study led by the Jameel Arts & Health Lab, which aims to better understand the impact of murals in hospital and care settings and to delineate ways in which these visual artworks can be systematically evaluated across different cultural contexts. As the first study of its kind, HoME involves collaboration between researchers in Slovenia, Nigeria, the UK, and the US and will lay the groundwork for future efforts to measure possible correlations between murals and workplace belonging for healthcare workers, perceived quality of care among patients, and the experience of healthcare facilities for caregivers and visitors.

Everyday Creativity and Well-Being

Paul Silvia

University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Although the famous ideas and creators get most of the attention, nearly all human creativity is mundane: the countless hobbies, projects, and passions that allow people to spend time doing something creative in everyday life, be it knitting scarves, writing poems, making jewelry, or decorating cupcakes. This talk explores this ordinary "everyday creativity" using daily-life methods (experience sampling and daily diaries) that measure people's creative ideas and actions where and when they happen. Our research on creativity in everyday life shows that creative activity in daily life is broad and pervasive, that working on creative activities is a source of positive emotions, and that creativity furthers well-being, in part, because it is a way for people to build satisfying skills, strengthen social connectedness, and express themselves.

Cultural Ecology and Social Wellbeing: The Social Value of Culture to Urban Neighborhoods

Mark J Stern

University of Pennsylvania

This session uses the University of Pennsylvania Social Impact of the Arts Project's research over the past two decades—with particular focus on its projects in New York City, Philadelphia, and Los Angeles—to explain a conceptual model centered on *neighborhood cultural ecology* and to present findings on the relationship of cultural engagement to community wellbeing.

Search for Meaning and Understanding in the Museum: A Multiple Methods Approach

Pablo P.L. Tinio

Montclair State University

Although researchers have long sought to understand visitor experiences in museums, they have yet to fully capture the more profound and meaningful aesthetic experiences. This presentation describes a research program that examined such experiences at the Whitney Museum of American Art. The first study used a think-aloud protocol to capture visitors' experiences of art that they identified as personally meaningful. The second study involved an experimental design to examine

the potential impact of meaningful art engagement on creativity. The presentation will highlight the advantages of using multiple yet complementary methods for examining visitor experiences.

Case Study Abstracts

Art is a Pathway to Fulfillment

Bernard Collins and Maureen Duffy

Fleisher Art Memorial

Fleisher is a community art school with a longstanding mission to provide high-quality, but low-cost art instruction for over 125 years. Artists of all backgrounds share in the commonality of the creative experience while studying with a distinguished faculty of working artists. Bernard Collins and Maureen Duffy are two of the school's longstanding faculty members. Collins teaches primarily painting and drawing while Duffy was instrumental in creating the school's jewelry programming. They work with students across demographics, with students able to access Fleisher classes through tuition free offerings and need blind tuition assistance. Flourishing is a primary objective of what the organization does and why faculty are drawn to teaching, especially teaching at Fleisher. Our students come through our doors by choosing to connect with studio practices for the first time or return to making after an extended time away. One of our three core values is *Art is a Pathway to Fulfillment* — An individual's ability to use art is a vital means for emotional and intellectual exploration and growth. The classroom setting, within a community art school, is uniquely positioned for personal transformation and flourishing. As faculty, Collins and Duffy both understand that success is more than the work student's make, but the process of facilitating a space where adult learners can create.

The Value of Museums: Measuring the Impact of a Museum Visit on Well-Being and Associated Programming at the Barnes Foundation

Marie Edland, William Perthes, & Liza Herzog

Barnes Foundation

[RESEARCH] Measuring the Impact of a Museum Visit on Well-being

In 2022, the Barnes joined a study cohort of 11 mid-large art museums across the U.S., guided by lead research partner Institute for Learning Innovation in a Value of Museums study to test the hypothesis: *through core, public-facing activities, art museums provide measurable societal value.*

A rigorous experimental study design (with nearly 2,000 participants) confirmed our hypothesis that museums inspire feelings of well-being for visitors that can be quantified along the dimensions of time duration and monetary value. For this case study, we focus on the findings that illustrate the time duration of well-being indicators. The study found that following a single museum visit, on average, visitors experienced well-being benefits for anywhere between 2-3 days to a full week. These well-being-related feelings were nearly evenly distributed across four well-being dimensions: *personal, intellectual, social, and physical well-being.*

To further contextualize these findings, the study draws on a framework built through several decades of research (Falk) that traces the connection between the meaningfulness of memorable experiences (i.e., a museum visit) and the utility of 'meaningfulness' as an indicator for individual well-being. Research findings confirm that a museum visit has a tangible impact on well-being

(through creating meaningful, memorable experiences) and, in turn, that art museums provide an explicit societal value.

[PRACTICE] Launching a ‘Close-Looking Immersion’ Series of Classes

The Barnes Foundation’s founder Dr. Albert Barnes and close friend, philosopher and educational reformer John Dewey, shared the belief that a work of art is far ‘more than the object itself, and that the process of discovering it—or experiencing it—brings to light personal meaning.’ Barnes classes embed this philosophy through pedagogy that advances social construction and experiential learning. Centering this instructional approach promotes feelings of *intellectual well-being* (as defined in our Value of Museums research, built on Falk’s prior work) in students, core components of which include:

- Discovering new things about oneself and the world
- Satisfying one’s curiosity
- Actively using new perspectives

Beginning in March 2024, as a complement to Barnes standard form four-week, two-hour/week lecture-based classes, the Barnes launched single-session 90-minute ‘Close Looking Immersion’ classes that invite students to spend extended time with a single work of art. Our inaugural Close Looking Immersion class featured Barnes’ Director of Adult Education Bill Perthes leading over 60 students through a 90-minute close-looking exercise of Paul Cezanne’s *Ginger Jar* (1895), below. Student feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with students reporting an enhanced sense of focus, increased well-being, and rising appreciation for other perspectives (n=20 students). The success and impact of this workshop has inspired continued experimentation with approaches to close-looking, with new Close Looking Immersion classes planned for monthly release.

Artmaking with Horizon House’s PEACE Program

Olivia Edlund

Philadelphia’s Magic Gardens

Philadelphia’s Magic Gardens (PMG) is an immersive mixed media art environment that is completely covered with mosaics. The creator, Isaiah Zagar, used handmade tiles, bottles, bicycle wheels, mirror, and international folk art to chronicle his life and influences. Isaiah began mosaicking as a form of therapy after a mental health crisis and subsequent suicide attempt when he was 29. The power of art has been transformative for him and his mental health throughout his life.

PMG aims to inspire others by providing access to the museum, which is a monument to the power of art and self-expression. PMG serves as a journal of Isaiah’s life, documenting his relationships, ideas, and experiences. Many PMG programs present opportunities for visitors to make art in the hopes of contributing positively to their own wellness. In early 2022 PMG actively sought partners who worked in the mental health space to invite participants to use the museum for programming.

In May 2022 PMG began working with Horizon House, a nonprofit serving those with mental and/or developmental disabilities across the Philadelphia region for over 70 years, and its PEACE program. The partnership gives PEACE program participants a place to explore, conceptualize, and make art as a means of creating a welcoming space for mental health treatment and recovery. PEACE is a program designed to assist youth aged 15-30 in the early stages of psychosis to learn how to

manage their symptoms, meet their life's goals, and engage in meaningful activities in their community.

PEACE participants, their family members, and therapists are invited to PMG once a month for a hands-on artmaking program. Attendees have free reign to explore the museum and then are led by a PMG Educator in a different workshop each month. These activities are designed to allow participants to explore their creativity while using the PMG site as inspiration. Projects have included mosaic-making, working with clay, wet felting, painting, collaging, and more. The program is offered completely free.

Created, Together.

Joseph Iacona & Netanel Portier

Mural Arts Institute

Created, Together. was a national assembly for creatives who work *with* communities to make art in public spaces. Organized by the Mural Arts Institute in Philadelphia during October 2023, the symposium welcomed over 200 participants including artists, administrators, community members, policymakers, students, and writers; amplifying the voices of various contributors to art in public spaces. Through a national Call for Creatives, emerging artists and changemakers were awarded travel grants to support their access to participate in the event. Recipients represented a diverse range of communities from across the United States and Puerto Rico. There were multiple goals for the symposium that included:

1. Strengthening a shared vision between a national network of socially-engaged artists;
2. Supporting the critical exploration of questions relevant to the public art field;
3. Nurturing a communal space for ideation through an emergent approach to convening.

Six guiding themes shaped the design of the breakout workshops, site visits, and discussions that took place. Playing cards were distributed with thematic questions, including blank cards for participants to contribute their own questions, adding to the collaborative dialogue that was unfolding. An emergent strategy was utilized in the design of the convening, allowing participants to direct the flow and form of the event spaces and outcomes; choice and autonomy were paramount in supporting both individual and collective experiences. One set of thematic questions investigated the importance of wellness in a public art project. Centered on how to sustain healthy relationships between stakeholders, artists recognized that care for one another (and for ourselves) is an intentional choice in both the design and implementation of community-engaged public art projects.

Guiding Question: *"How can well-being guide our practice? Where do we prioritize care for our communities?"*

Created, Together. represents the Mural Arts Institutes' & Mural Arts Philadelphia's ongoing commitment to create connections, develop resources, and support the field of socially engaged public art practitioners. This convening aimed to construct an environment for reflection and ideation on how to consider a collective future for public art that centers on equity, inclusivity, and power-sharing through the lens of restorative practices. Video interviews and post-event surveys

provide qualitative data to support that, while not an explicit goal at the outset of the *Created, Together.*, the convening also nurtured a collective sense of wellness; a shared understanding and connectivity between artists who often feel marginalized or isolated through their individual challenges and independent localities.

A Reflection on Color Me Back, the Nation's First Art-Based Same Day Work Program

Nadia Malik

Mural Arts Philadelphia

Color Me Back is the first arts-based same day work program in the country with the aim to provide work opportunities for housing and economically insecure participants. Mural Arts Philadelphia received grant funding to launch a pilot program in 2019. Five years later, Color Me Back has grown to two sites (in Kensington and in Suburban Station) and serves on average 30 people a week.

The design of the program is simple: People can sign up and be added to a waiting list. Staff call in up to 30 people a week to work four days, Monday through Thursday between 8 am and noon. They are paid \$50 for each day of work, and they participate in making murals that go up around the city. The original program began in Suburban Station in a continuing partnership with SEPTA, and participants paint murals that go up around Suburban Station. In 2020, the program expanded in a pilot program to an underpass in the Kensington neighborhood of Philadelphia, and the city provided funding this past year to establish a second site. The murals in Kensington are offered for free to residents and partner organizations.

The goal of Color Me Back is to provide a pathway to break down barriers to employment. Most of the participants we work with have been unemployed and unhoused for several years, and we recognize that it takes long-term engagement to provide a pathway to employment. Staff on site conduct surveys with participants to garner their needs for employment, whether that's accessing an ID, procuring their social security number, housing, mental health support, etc. On site, the Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services, which has a long-term partnership with the Porch Light Department at Mural Arts, provides peer supports. These peers with lived experience provide access to mental health resources, substance use resources and, most importantly, a helping hand with someone who has experienced many of the same situations as participants. Career Link also provides support on site, helping participants create resumes and prepare for interviews.

Beyond using art as an avenue for employment, the program also utilizes the therapeutic aspects of art to create a safe and inviting space for participants.

Artful Evolution: Navigating Change at the Institute of Contemporary Art

Rachell Morillo

Institute of Contemporary Art

Now in our 60th year as an organization, the Institute of Contemporary Art has been undergoing a steady transformation — specifically, through a Recovery Grant funded by Pew Center for Arts &

Heritage, we have devised a new mission, vision, and values that will guide us into our future work. At the center of these shifts has been an aim to realign as a staff so that the experimentation, collaboration, and expansive sense of learning that are so core to our public work is reflected in how we work together as staff. Through this process, we have centered mindfulness, trauma-informed practices, and a commitment to radical accessibility for ourselves and our audiences. It has therefore served as a case study for how visual arts and creativity can cultivate flourishing amongst staff at our organization so that we can then more authentically create environments for transformational encounters with art for our audiences.

Fostering Resilience through Art and Medical Education (FRAME and re-FRAME)

Suzannah Niepold

The Philadelphia Museum of Art

The re-FRAME workshop for internal medicine interns was launched in 2020 as the result of an ongoing partnership between the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Perelman School of Medicine. It was a modified version of FRAME, which stands for Fostering Resiliency through Art in Medical Education, a previous iteration of the program. The three-hour workshop was designed to address provider burnout, a serious problem facing medical training programs. Recent studies report low levels of job satisfaction and high levels of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization in this population. The medical humanities offer potential to promote engagement, resilience, and restoration of meaning in intern's daily lives.

The structure of the workshop consisted of three sections. We opened with a facilitated discussion on emotional processing techniques led by medical faculty from the Well-being Interventions for Trainees in the Department of Medicine program. Next, museum educators led a gallery activity known as the Elaboration Game (Harvard's Project Zero Artful Thinking Routine), a slow looking activity that helps participants move from a reactive way of thinking to a more reflective way of thinking. This routine helps participants separate their objective observations from their subjective interpretations and work together as a group to interpret a work of art. By slowing down and exploring multiple possibilities in interpreting a work of art, the Elaboration Game was an important stepping stone to the final section of the workshop, the Personal Responses Tour, originally developed by Elizabeth Gauferg and Ray Williams. This provides an opportunity for participants to reflect on a work of art as it relates to given prompts. "Find a work of art that reminds you of a particularly challenging patient encounter," is one example of a prompt. The prompts were designed collaboratively between educators at the PMA and faculty at the Perelman School of Medicine. Once participants have chosen a prompt and are given time to write their reflections down, participants lead a "tour" through the galleries sharing their reflections with their colleagues and reflecting together. One of the more common things shared during this activity is that clinicians aren't provided the space or time to reflect in this manner at the hospital and that they leave feeling more connected to their cohort than when they arrived.

Evaluation of the workshop was based on HHF's [Conceptual Model for the Arts, Humanities, and Human Flourishing](#). Analysis of open-ended survey data demonstrated four categories for supporting well-being among participants: becoming emotionally aware/expressive through art,

pausing for reflection, practicing nonjudgmental observation, and normalizing experiences through socialization. Many interns felt validated in discovering they were not alone in their experience of intern year: “Hearing peers talk about similar experiences of intern year is always rewarding. Art gave us a good avenue to discuss feelings/thoughts related to work and medicine.”

Based on our results, the re-FRAME workshop has become a recurring component of the intern year curriculum. In response to feedback, another gallery-based activity has replaced the introductory, classroom-based discussion. Future evaluation will include artist and museum educator perspectives as outcome data, as well as well-being outcomes themselves (now that mechanisms for supporting well-being have been investigated).

More details can be found in these articles: “The Fostering Resilience through Art in Medical Education (FRAME) workshop: a partnership with the Philadelphia Museum of Art,” (Dove Press, *Advances in Medical Education*, 2019:10) and “Extending Arts-Based Interventions in Graduate Medical Education through the Positive Humanities: the Re-FRAME Workshop,” (Springer, *Journal of General Internal Medicine*, July 2023).

Museum Mindfulness at the Philadelphia Museum of Art: Can the practices of mindfulness and slow looking be mutually reinforcing, and promote well-being?

Linnea West & Julia Erdosy
Philadelphia Museum of Art

In October of 2020, the Philadelphia Museum of Art launched its Museum Mindfulness program—a virtual offer designed to reach audiences in their homes during the initial phase of the pandemic. The goals of this program were to stay connected to our audiences and to create a potential respite from the stressors of daily life. Encouraging slow looking is a common tool in art education, but our team hadn’t integrated mindfulness practices into our programs before. A guiding question was: can the practices of mindfulness and slow looking be mutually reinforcing? Initiated as an experiment, we sent participants a survey after each early session of the program. We used that feedback to inform how we developed the program, and it has continued to evolve. In 2022, as we resumed in-person programming at the Museum, we launched a version of Museum Mindfulness in our galleries, gathering for a similar combination of meditative practices and slow looking.

Museum Mindfulness, whether virtual or on site, uses art as a tool to build focus, awareness of the senses, and the ability to be present. We have seen that this program facilitates moments of insight and joy. While much of the program focuses on paintings, we have also used works in other mediums - including sculpture and textile - for slow looking exercises. A particular benefit of the program is that it creates an environment in which people flourish together by practicing mindfulness as a group, sharing observations about artworks with others, and learning from community collaborators who work on specific sessions. Collaborators have instilled a sense that mindfulness can be practiced in many ways, including art-making, dancing, and listening.

We have asked ourselves, and we continue to ask ourselves, how to make the program welcoming and accessible. The program is designed to welcome people with any level of experience with art

history and mindfulness. The virtual sessions are accessible for people who cannot visit the Museum; it was crucial to continue offering virtual sessions after on-site sessions started.

Presenter Bios



Bernard Collins' paintings are a reflection of his desire to understand the human body and soul. As an African American artist, he has had to balance his educational background, which has been firmly grounded in European (traditional) techniques such as glazing, under-painting etc, and his desire to capture the liveliness and innovativeness that is present in African American culture. The painted faces that have become important to his body of work represent the raw creative energy that pulses within all people of color. His models have always been his fellow artists, writers, poets, rappers, singers etc. In the future, he wants to expand this body of work to include some very young and elderly subjects. Their life experience will be reflected in the way he applies the paints to their faces and bodies.



Dr. Katherine N. Cotter is Associate Director of Research with the Humanities and Human Flourishing Project at the University of Pennsylvania. In her research, she seeks to understand the ways in which engagement with the arts helps to cultivate flourishing in individuals. In her most recent work, she has focused on viewing visual art--both in the museum and digitally--can help improve well-being. She received her PhD in psychology from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro in 2020.



Caitlin Deutsch is an arts educator and administrator based in Philadelphia. She is currently the Director of Education at Fleisher Art Memorial where she oversees programming for learners of all ages. Before her current role, she worked in museum learning for ten years, holding positions at the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Art Institute of Chicago. In these roles, she co-created participatory activations with teens, artists, and community partners for intergenerational audiences. She received her BA in History from Grinnell College and her MA in Arts Administration from the School of the Art Institute.



Maureen Duffy has been a member of the Fleisher faculty since 2017. She is a jewelry designer and artist living and working in the heart of South Philadelphia. She graduated from Moore College of Art and Design in 2005 with a degree in 3D fine arts with a concentration in the studio of metals. She earned her graduate degree at SUNY at New Paltz, NY. In addition to Fleisher, Maureen has taught jewelry classes at Moore College of Art and Design, Millersville University, and Tyler School of Art. Since finishing graduate school in 2007, Maureen have been actively showing and selling her work at galleries, boutiques and craft shows.



Marie Edland is Strategic Research Analyst at the Barnes Foundation. She brings several years of strategic data analysis, data visualization, and research design expertise, with a background in market research and branding strategy agencies. She is passionate about promoting evaluation and impact practices, frameworks, and approaches that uplift audience perspectives and deepen audience connections to the Barnes.



Olivia Edlund is the Education and Outreach Manager at Philadelphia's Magic Gardens (PMG). She began working at PMG in 2009 and has held her current position since 2012. Edlund directs PMG's guided tour programs, workshops, community partnerships, and interpretation throughout the museum. She believes art should be accessible to all and strives to provide opportunities for inspiration and introspection in all of PMG's programs. Edlund earned her MA in Museum Education from the University of the Arts where her thesis, "Using Biography in Interpretive Practices in Single-Artist Museums", included research about Philadelphia's Magic Gardens. She is the author of the chapter "Everything But the Education," which focuses on creating a positive, welcoming environment for K-12 field trips, in the book *Creating Meaningful Museum Experiences for K-12 Audiences*, 2021. Edlund is also a graduate of the Bartol Foundation's Trauma-Informed Practice for Arts Education Administrators course.



Julia Erdosy currently works at the Philadelphia Museum of Art as a Coordinator of Adult Public Programs and Museum Educator. She runs the PMA’s Museum Mindfulness program, which offers both on-site and virtual sessions. Previously, she has worked at two other museums: the Franklin Institute and the Barnes Foundation. She has taught at the University of York in the UK. At Haverford College, she earned her BA in English with a minor in Psychology. At the University of York, she earned her MA in Film and Literature and her PhD in English and Related Literature. She is from Philadelphia.



Liza Herzog, JD, PhD is Director of Evaluation & Impact at the Barnes Foundation. She has more than two decades of experience with a focus on evaluation, impact, program design, research-to-practice, and strategic partnerships. She helps set and advance institutional strategy through systematic, integrated, and timely data-first practices—outcomes-setting, analytics and performance tracking, and interpretation and reflection to promote and sustain organizational learning and continuous improvement.



Joseph Iacona (he/him) is a visual artist, educator, and community-centered thinker who has practiced their work in Philadelphia for over 15 years. Joseph strives to amplify community voices in his collaborative process and values participatory art-making experiences. Iacona has activated creative exploration with intergenerational populations in schools, libraries, museums, prisons, shelters, behavioral health facilities, and other community service centers. He has exhibited his paintings and public projects at museums, galleries, and cultural institutions throughout the East Coast. As a Senior Program Manager for the Mural Arts Institute, Joseph supports artists and community leaders in socially engaged participatory art practices, locally, nationally, and globally. Joseph has held previous roles with Mural Arts since 2009, as both a muralist and as a teaching artist, with an emphasis on work in Restorative Justice programs and Trauma-informed curriculum development. Outside of Mural Arts, Joseph organized more than 50 community engaged artist residencies with public schools through the Philadelphia Museum of Art, has written for Art21 Magazine on integrating contemporary art into classrooms, and presented at conferences and colleges on creative placekeeping practices.



Sunil Iyengar directs the Office of Research & Analysis at the National Endowment for the Arts. Under his leadership, the office has produced dozens of research reports, hosted events and webinars, and established research partnerships with the U.S. Census Bureau, the Bureau of Economic Analysis, the National Center for Education Statistics, and the National Science Foundation. His office also leads agency strategic planning, program evaluations, and performance measurement. Iyengar and his team have designed and implemented three long-term research agendas, founded a national data repository for the arts, and launched two award programs for arts researchers, including the NEA Research Labs initiative. He chaired a federal Interagency Task Force on the Arts and Human Development from 2011 to 2023, and his office provides research support to Creative Forces: NEA Military Arts Healing Network. Iyengar oversees a research funding partnership with the National Institutes of Health as part of Sound Health, an initiative of the Kennedy Center and NIH in association with the Arts Endowment. Guided by that initiative, Iyengar's office supports the Sound Health Network, in partnership with the University of California San Francisco. Iyengar formerly was an editor and reporter covering the biomedical research, medical device, and pharmaceutical industries.



Elizabeth (Zab) Johnson is the executive director and senior fellow of the Wharton Neuroscience Initiative at the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania. Her research focuses on vision and visual behavior, investigating how humans look and navigate through the world, how these processes unfold over time and with experience, and the role of visual processes on social cognition and decision-making. Dr. Johnson received her PhD in neural science at New York University and an AB in psychobiology from Mount Holyoke College. She is passionate about how neuroscience can impact and improve many aspects of how we make choices, lead organizations, and live our lives. Her research and practice strive to push applications of neuroscience outside of the traditional laboratory to find new solutions for real-world challenges that impact individuals, businesses, and society. She co-constructs Visual Marketing with Barbara Kahn, a class they designed for undergraduate and MBA students. Zab has a long-time interest in how our perception of visual art informs how we see.



Dr. Christa Mahlobo is a Provost's Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the Positive Psychology Center as part of the Humanities and Human Flourishing Project (HHF). In HHF, Christa's work focuses on the intersection of race, ethnicity, and culture with flourishing through mindfulness and engagement in the arts and humanities. Before arriving at Penn, Christa earned her PhD at The Pennsylvania State University where her doctoral work focused on examining adolescent precursors to early adult flourishing in African Americans. Her interest in the work of HHF stems from her belief that the arts and humanities can be transformative, and she desires to expand the reach of programs that utilize the arts and humanities and mindfulness as tools for flourishing in communities of color.



Nadia Malik is the director of the Porch Light Program, a partnership with the city's Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services, at Mural Arts Philadelphia. She completed master's degrees in social work and Nonprofit Leadership from the University of Pennsylvania. Previously, she worked as a journalist in the suburbs of Chicago and in the development department of several nonprofits. The Porch Light Program offers Nadia an opportunity to combine her love of art and writing with her passion for community work, particularly in the arena of mental health. Through Mural Arts, Nadia has also had an opportunity to speak about the innovative programs and partnerships in Porch Light at SXSW and in a TedX talk. The department's work focuses on refugee and immigrant communities, unhoused participants, those affected by substance use and others impacted by trauma, offering opportunities to use artistic outlets to find creative solutions to systemic concerns.



Rachell Morillo is Black feminist artist, writer, educator, and arts worker. She is currently DAJ Director of Public Engagement and Research at the Institute of Contemporary Art where she is responsible for spearheading the development of innovative, community-led programs and projects that foster critical dialogue, promote quality of life, and cultivate civic engagement. To the role, Morillo brings a wealth of experience in arts education and community engagement, having previously served as Assistant Educator for Community & Access programs and later Associate Educator of Civic Engagement at the Museum of Modern Art as well as Senior Coordinator of Public Programs & Community Engagement at the Studio Museum in Harlem. Morillo received her degree in Sociology and Anthropology from Swarthmore College.



Tamarah Moss, PhD, MPH, MSW originally from The Bahamas, is currently an assistant professor at the Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research (GSSWSR) with Bryn Mawr College, USA. She is a public health social work trained, community-engaged scholar and consultant in health and mental health services, community practice, evaluation and social work education. In her faculty role, she teaches graduate level course work in foundation practice, research informed practice and advancing skills in evaluation for clinical and macro practitioners. Tamarah centers community perspectives and values community-campus partnerships that incorporate a culturally responsive and trauma informed approaches to education, training, research, and practice across the U.S. and international settings. Tamarah holds leadership positions with the American Evaluation Association, the Caribbean Journal of Social Work and the Council for Social Work Education's Council on Global Learning and Practice.



Suzannah Niepold is the Associate Director for Student and Educator Engagement at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. She works with learners of all ages, from K-12 students and teachers to medical students and other pre-professional audiences, fostering learning and building personal connections through art objects. After researching how art museum programming improved clinical observation skills and comfort with ambiguity, her team developed an equivalent program for middle school students. This program, known as Sherlock, builds critical and creative thinking skills at a critical stage in the development of students' abstract thinking. Before joining the team at the PMA, she worked at the Smithsonian American Art Museum and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. She has an MAT in Museum Education from The George Washington University and a BA in the History of Art from Bryn Mawr College.



James O. Pawelski, Ph.D., is professor of practice and director of education in the Positive Psychology Center at the University of Pennsylvania, where he has also been appointed adjunct professor of Religious Studies. Having won a Fulbright Scholarship and earned a doctorate in philosophy, he is the founding director of the Humanities and Human Flourishing Project, which has been designated a National Endowment for the Arts Research Lab. He has published five books, including *The Oxford Handbook of the Positive Humanities*, and is the editor of the Humanities and Human Flourishing book series with Oxford University Press. He is an award-winning teacher and the founding director of Penn's Master of Applied Positive Psychology Program. Additionally, he

has served as the founding executive director of the International Positive Psychology Association, as a member of the Steering Committee of the International Positive Education Network, and as the president of the William James Society.



William Perthes is the Bernard C. Watson Director of Adult Education at the Barnes. He has taught courses at the Barnes as well as the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and West Chester and Villanova Universities. His scholarship focuses on American modernism and the abstract expressionist painter Robert Motherwell.



Netanel Portier (she/her), Senior Director of Learning and Practice, started with Mural Arts in 2009 and joined the Executive Team in 2023. Portier launched the Mural Arts Institute in 2017, sharing Mural Arts' learnings with other change-making leaders across the globe. Netanel has 20 years of experience bringing diverse artists and communities together for transformative public projects and programs as a project manager, artist, teacher, curator, and médiatrice culturelle. She is devoted to promoting social engagement and meaningful action and has designed and managed diverse and complex public art projects rooted in social practice. As Director of the Project Management Office, a role she held before launching the Institute, Portier led the creation and implementation of project management processes and tools for the Mural Arts program and model while leading consulting opportunities. Netanel continues to lead and design learning initiatives and engagements with individual artists, administrators, institutions, and cultural and civic organizations with a focus on participatory public art projects and programs. A first generation American and mother of two multicultural children, Netanel is devoted to peer learning, cultural exchange, and community-centered cultural practices. She is a graduate of the École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs de Paris, and serves on the board of PhilaFLAM.



Chloe Reison is the Associate Director of The Sachs Program for Arts Innovation at the University of Pennsylvania. The Sachs Program for Arts Innovation’s mission is to support and inspire creative practice and practitioners across the university – in all twelve schools, in the university’s artistic and cultural centers, and through the many partnerships and collaborations that connect Penn to the world at large. We support a vibrant creative community and wish to ensure that our community members are valued and supported in the ways necessary to thrive. Diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism are central to our goals as a program, as well as to our priorities for grantmaking. Chloe joined The Sachs Program in 2017 to establish its grantmaking initiative, and prior to that worked for the Pew Center for Arts and Heritage supporting arts and culture across the five-county region of Southeastern Pennsylvania. She has an MFA from Penn’s Weitzman School of Design (’12) and a BS from Skidmore College (’08).



Nisha Sajjani, PhD is an Associate Professor and Co-Director of the [Jameel Arts & Health Lab](#), established as a collaboration between the World Health Organization (WHO), New York University (NYU) Steinhardt, Culturunners, and Community Jameel, which has a mission to measurably improve lives through the arts and accelerate the implementation of evidence-based interventions across 193 UN Member States. In her capacity as co-director of the lab, Dr Sajjani oversees research and leads the [Lancet global series](#) on the health benefits of the arts. Nisha is the founder of Arts & Health @ NYU, director of the Graduate Program in Drama Therapy and chair of the NYU Creative Arts Therapies Consortium. She is also on faculty in the Harvard Program in Refugee Trauma where she lectures on the role of the arts in the context of displacement and at NYU Abu Dhabi where she designed a course entitled ‘*Can Art Save Lives?*’ which unites current evidence for the health benefits of the arts with practice and policy. An award winning author, educator, and advocate, her body of work explores the unique ways in which the arts and aesthetic experience can inspire equity, care, and collective human flourishing across the lifespan.



Kelly Shindler directs the Exhibitions & Public Interpretation funding program at the Pew Center for Arts Heritage and supports a broad range of Philadelphia organizations—from museums and libraries to historic sites and neighborhood arts presenters—with project grants and capacity building awards that enrich and amplify the region’s vibrant cultural community. Prior to joining the Pew Center, Kelly was a curator at the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, where she organized over thirty exhibitions with artists at all stages of their careers. She also worked for many years at Art21 and developed its educational programming and resources on contemporary art. She holds dual MAs in art history and arts administration from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.



Paul Silvia is the Lucy Spinks Keker Excellence Professor in the Department of Psychology at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. He is a past-president of APA Division 10, the Society for the Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts, and he has received several awards from that society for his research. He has written books on the psychology of writing (*How to Write A Lot*), interest and curiosity (*Exploring the Psychology of Interest*), and, with Katherine Cotter, on research methods for daily-life research (*Researching Daily Life*). He has an unusual number of quirky hobbies.



Mark J. Stern is professor of social policy and history at the University of Pennsylvania. An historian by training, Stern has authored seven books focused on US social history and social welfare policy. Stern and his collaborator, Susan Seifert, have conducted studies of the community impact of cultural engagement in Philadelphia, New York, Los Angeles and other cities over the past 25 years.



Dr. Pablo P.L. Tinio is a Professor at Montclair State University where he also heads the Creativity and Aesthetics Lab. His work is focused on the psychology of aesthetics, creativity, and the arts; arts and aesthetics in education; and learning and engagement in cultural institutions. He has conducted research in, and published scholarly works with, schools as well as museums such as the Whitney Museum of American Art, Art Institute of Chicago, Queens Museum, Contemporary Art Centre Andratx Spain, and Belvedere Museum of Vienna, among other institutions. He co-edited the *Cambridge Handbook of the Psychology of Aesthetics and the Arts* and was past Editor of the APA journal *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts*. Dr. Tinio has been awarded the Frank X. Barron Award and the Daniel E. Berlyne Award for Outstanding Early Career Achievement in Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts by the APA and the Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten Award for Outstanding Contributions to the Field by an Early Career Scientist from the International Association of Empirical Aesthetics. Dr. Tinio is also Fellow of the APA. The public impact of his work may be seen through coverage in popular media such as *The New Yorker*, *Psychology Today*, and *Scientific American Mind*.



Linnea West is the Manager of Adult Public Programs at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, where, for the past five years, she has organized public programs. The Public Programs team develops a variety of programs with the goal of engaging audiences in meaningful experiences with the art in the collection. This work includes talk-based programs, from artist talks and art history lecture to Museum Mindfulness, as well as a range of performance and artmaking experiences. Prior to this, she coordinated a global art history research initiative, Contemporary & Modern Art Perspectives (C-MAP) for three years at the Museum of Modern Art, New York. In 2015, she earned a master's degree in art history with distinction from The University of Georgia. In her research, she focuses on the art of post-Socialist Central and Eastern Europe. Her thesis compares two sites of urban public art, Memento Park in Budapest and Skopje 2015 in Macedonia, in terms of monuments and memory. This project is informed by the work she did at the Ludwig Museum of Contemporary in Budapest while on a Fulbright research grant.

About the Humanities and Human Flourishing Project

Innately, many of us have experienced firsthand the power of the arts and humanities: music, the visual arts, literature, film, theater, history, philosophy, and religion have been central to human flourishing for the extent of human existence. These domains make our lives richer and more meaningful, offer insights into perspectives beyond our own, and help us forge connections and cultivate thoughtful, engaged, and civically-minded communities.

Recent advances in the social sciences are making possible the empirical study of human flourishing and the specific ways arts and culture can support it. The field of positive psychology is at the forefront of the scientific study of human flourishing. Established in 1998, positive psychology aims to complement mainstream psychology's focus on the treatment and cure of psychopathology by studying thriving individuals and flourishing communities. A few years later, in 2003, the Positive Psychology Center was founded at the University of Pennsylvania. The first of its kind worldwide and a prolific innovator in cutting-edge research on positive psychology, the Positive Psychology Center remains the historic epicenter of the field. Positive psychology has had a tremendous impact on a wide range of fields, fostering an empirical focus on human flourishing in domains as varied as medicine, economics, and education. To this point, however, there has been surprisingly little scientific work investigating the effects engagement in the arts and humanities may have on individual and communal well-being.

The Humanities and Human Flourishing (HHF) Project aims to change that by bridging these fields and asking: How can we unlock more of the flourishing benefits of the humanities for individuals and communities around the world? HHF was founded in 2014 by Dr. James O. Pawelski, who has since served as its Director. With a core team of researchers based in Penn's Positive Psychology Center, our mission is to explore how engaging in arts and culture—which we refer to broadly as the humanities—can bring well-being to individuals and communities.

Since its inception, HHF has spearheaded the development of the Positive Humanities, an emerging field that integrates the science of positive psychology with the wisdom of arts and culture. We seek to understand the nature of human flourishing more deeply, investigate its causes and correlates more broadly, and support its cultivation more effectively. We are interested in how fields like the visual arts, music, literature, theater, and film can promote flourishing outcomes (such as empathy, mindfulness, subjective well-being, and social connection) and mitigate against languishing outcomes (such as anxiety, depression, and social isolation) that are increasingly common today. Likewise, HHF is dedicated to well-being for everyone and strives for equitable access to arts and culture.

In 2020, we launched our current major research initiative on visual art—*Art Museums: Institutions for Well-Being*. In recent years, visiting an art museum has been recognized as a unique way for visitors to cultivate well-being. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) contends that a central role of art museums should be the promotion of visitor health and well-being. Medical professionals in countries around the world are beginning to recommend visits to art museums to treat mental health conditions like anxiety, depression, and chronic stress. Our work on art museums as institutions for well-being has been made possible by partnerships nation-

wide, with arts organizations like the Carnegie Museum of Art, the Andy Warhol Museum, the Westmoreland Museum of American Art, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Fine Arts Boston, and the Barnes Foundation. HHF has also been designated as a National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Research Lab in recognition and support of our endeavors. To learn more about our specific research projects, please visit our website:

- Journal articles: <https://www.humanitiesandhumanflourishing.org/journal-articles>
- Research summaries: <https://www.humanitiesandhumanflourishing.org/research-summaries>

Conference Resources



[Nearby food and beverages](#)



[Visual Arts for Flourishing Research Toolkit: Resources for Application and Advocacy](#)



[Humanities and Human Flourishing Website](#)