

# Creativity Matters: Arts and Aging in America



National Center for Creative Aging  
*Affiliated with The George Washington University*

# NCCA Mission

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- NCCA is dedicated to
  - fostering the vital relationship between creative expression and healthy aging; and
  - developing programs that build on this understanding.



# Big Picture

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- Aging in America
  - People are living longer and healthier lives
- Demographic shift by 2030
  - Over 70 million people will be over 65
  - The number of people over 85 will triple



# Good News!

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- ❑ Shift from seeing older people as a problem, to seeing older people for their potential
- ❑ Older people seeking meaning and purposeful engagement
- ❑ Quality of life matters
- ❑ New opportunities with the baby boomers on the scene

# Abundant Opportunities for the Arts

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- Cultivating Demand for the Arts
  - Arts Learning
  - Arts Engagement
  - Arts Policy



*Cultivating Demand for the Arts.* (2008) Laura Zakaras & Julia F. Lowell.  
RAND Research in the Arts.

# Research

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- Two New Studies:
  - The Center for Aging Health and Humanities, The George Washington University
  - The Research Center for Arts and Culture, Columbia University Teachers College

# Research: The Center for Aging Health and Humanities, GWU

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- *The Impact of Professionally Conducted Cultural Programs on Older Americans*
- Principal Investigator: Gene Cohen, M.D. Ph.D.
  - Research Sites:
    - Elders Share the Arts, Brooklyn
    - Center for Youth and Elders in the Arts, San Francisco
    - Levine School of Music, Washington, DC

# Creativity and Aging Research

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- Research Indicators:
  - Social engagement
  - Mastery



"One good thing about this class,  
and writing, is that it sharpens your memory."

- Edith, Writing from Life Experience (ESTA)  
Morningside Retirement Health Services



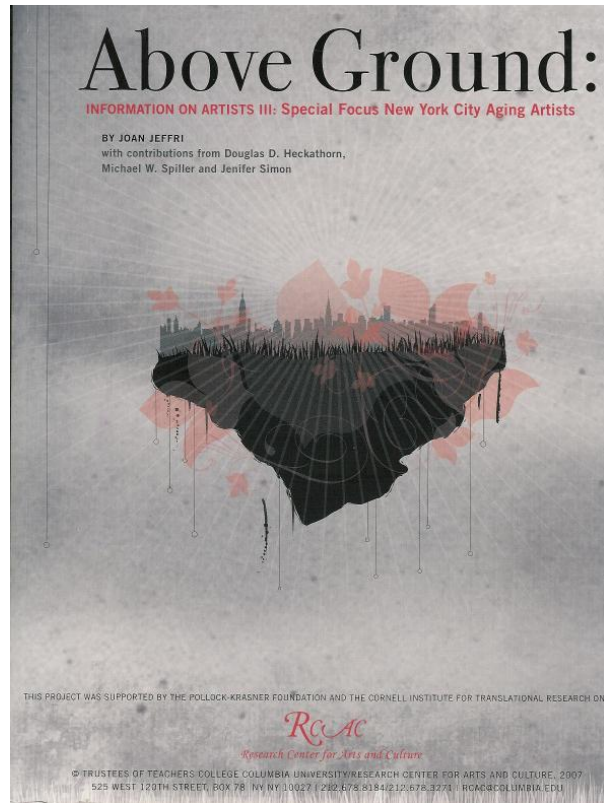
# Creativity and Aging: Research Findings

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- Better health
- Less doctor visits
- Less medication
- Increase in activities and social engagement
- Projected Health Care Costs Savings:  
\$.08/day = \$1 billion/year in Medicare D

# Research: The Research Center for Arts and Culture, Columbia Univ.

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## □ Sample Quotes from 146 Participating Visual Artists

- "For me to retire from painting would be to retire from life."

*--Robert Motherwell, age 71*

- "Art is what makes me live."

*--93 year old artist*

# Above Ground: Research Findings

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- Promotes High Level of Community Life & Social Engagement
- Retains Social Networks
- Continues to Work Professionally
- Maintains Personal Income & Healthcare
- Rates Highly on Life Satisfaction Scale as a Person and as an Artist

# Building Community & Leaving a Legacy

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- Erik Erikson
  - Theory of Life Cycle (8 Stages)
  - Final Stage: “Integrity vs. Despair”
- Robert Butler
  - “Why Survive? Growing Old in America” (1975)
  - Linking Life Cycle & Aging Process
  - Importance of Reminiscence: Coming to terms with loss and celebrating life’s successes
- Gene Cohen
  - “The Mature Mind” (2005)
  - 3 Life Phases: Looking Forward as 3<sup>rd</sup> Phase
  - Focus on: Liberation, Exploration, Importance of Creativity
  - “Chocolate for the Brain”

# Best Practice: Guiding Principals

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- ❑ Follow Older Adult Learning Principles (Andragogy)
- ❑ Develop Sequential Programming
- ❑ Use Professional Artists as Educators
- ❑ Evaluate Programs
- ❑ Create and Maintain Sustainable Practices

# Key Concerns for Programming

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- ❑ Older People as Stereotype
- ❑ Cultural Sensitivity
- ❑ Cross Generational Development
- ❑ Accessibility
  - Cognitive
  - Physical
  - Transportation
  - Economics



# Program Development: 3 Protocols

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- Educational Programs: Lifelong Learning through the Arts
- Healthcare Programs: Clinical & Caring for the Caregiver (Professional & Family)
- Civic Engagement: Building Social Capital



# Best Practices: Educational Programs

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- National Guild of Community Schools of the Arts
  - Levine School of Music, Washington D.C.
- New Horizons Bands
- Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes



# Best Practices: Healthcare Programs

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- Society for Arts & Healthcare
- TimeSlips
- Kairos Dance Theater, Minneapolis, MN
- Meet Me at MoMA, Museum of Modern Art, New York City

# Best Practices: Community Engagement

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- Elders Share the Arts, New York City, NY
- Liz Lerman Dance Exchange, Takoma Park, MD
- Stagebridge Senior Theater Company, Oakland, CA
- Arts for the Aging, Washington D.C.

















# Program Funding 101

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- ❑ 2008 National Endowment for the Arts – Creativity & Aging in America Grants Program
- ❑ 2008 New York City Department for the Aging designates \$1 million to the Department of Cultural Affairs funding 57 Arts Organizations and 150 Senior Centers
- ❑ 2008 Leadership Summit Council on Foundations – Arts & Aging one of three key topics

# Program Funding 101: Funding Resources

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- Government Sources
  - Federal Administration on Aging
  - Local Area Offices on Aging
  - Local School Boards (Intergenerational Programs)
- Foundations
  - Atlantic Philanthropies
  - Weinberg Foundation
  - MetLife Foundation
- Corporate
  - Johnson & Johnson
  - Pfizer
  - GlaxoSmith Kline
  - CVS Caremark
  - Wal-Mart

# The Time is Now!

## Join the Longevity Revolution

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- ❑ Research shows that arts create healthy aging through mastery and social engagement.
- ❑ People are living longer and healthier lives with meaning and purpose.
- ❑ Untapped demographic to increase demand for engagement in the arts.

# NCCA Services:

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- Information and Resources
  - Arts and Aging: Creativity Matters Toolkit
  - Arts and Aging Directory
  - Clearinghouse for best practice programs
- Education
  - Onsite and distance learning
- Research and development
  - Evidence based research studies
- Advocacy and Policy
  - Leadership symposia
  - News briefs

# Arts and Aging: Creativity Matters Toolkit

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- Available free online in English and Spanish [www.artsandaging.org](http://www.artsandaging.org)
- Hard Copy      \$35

Examples for this presentation were taken from the Toolkit

# National Center for Creative Aging Information and Resources

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- National Center for Creative Aging
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