



**CULTURE CHANGE
in ACTION
WEBINARS**
Sharing the Vision

*Welcome
to today's webinar*

Innovative Intergenerational Arts
Programming in Response to the Pandemic:
Five Programs in Three Countries

Pioneer Network

While we're waiting to begin:

1. Introduce yourself in the chat. Where are you located?
What's your role in your organization?
2. Put away your distractions (like email) and get ready to actively participate!

**Innovative
Intergenerational Arts
Programming in
Response to the
Pandemic**



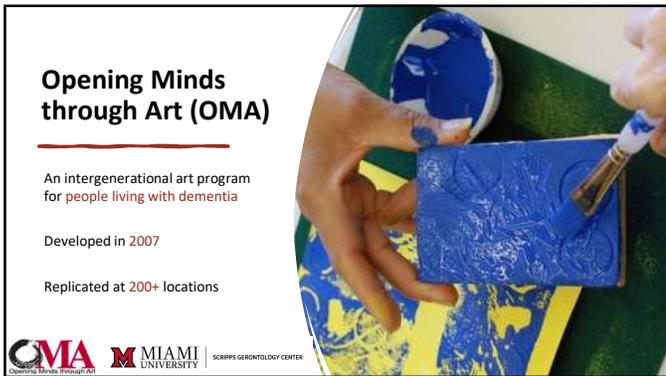
Five Programs in Three Countries
Pioneer Network Webinar
August 12, 2021

Overview

1. What is OMA?
2. Miami University in Oxford, OH, USA
3. Marian University College of Osteopathic Medicine in Indianapolis, IN, USA
4. Art for the Journey in Richmond, VA, USA
5. Trinity Village in Kitchener, ON, Canada
6. University of Exeter, UK











Overview of Research

8 published studies (2012- 2021)

- 3 on elders
- 5 on students

All show the benefits for everyone

RESEARCH

- Alzheimer's: Increasing college students' "liking" of older adults with dementia through arts-based intergenerational experiences.
- Using art in an intergenerational program to improve students' attitudes toward people with dementia.
- Activities in dementia care: A comparative assessment of activity types.
- "It makes me feel like myself": Person-centered versus traditional visual arts activities for people with dementia.

In their own words...

Virtual OMA

- **Platform:** Zoom
- **Art forms:** art-making, art-viewing, story-building, music, poetry
- **Participants:** Elders with and without dementia & undergraduate students
- **Group:** 1 elder, 2 students, 1 teaching assistant
- **Frequency:** 45 minutes, weekly for 14 weeks



Participants

58 older adults (living with and without dementia)

138 undergraduate students



Comments from Older Adult Participants

"There were smiles and enthusiastic responses all around. I knew it was going to be a great session and it was. I was amazed at the level of sharing and touched by everyone's authenticity. The students final project blew me away. We all exchanged phone numbers so we could keep in touch. What an amazing gift this group is."

"I am so grateful for the opportunity to interact with students and engage in enjoyable activities. The ability to meet through Zoom has been an excellent tether during the pandemic."

"I found both in form and content our much too brief time together fascinating, surprisingly challenging, and very well presented."



Comments from Student Participants

"I used to think older adults were not able to express creativity as well as younger adults. However, after a couple of sessions, I realized that older adults are just as capable of expressing creativity as anyone else, no matter their age."

"I think this class has taught me how I will always be working with older adults so I should learn how to listen well, be respectful, and create relationships."

"She loves to do the activities, and especially likes to tell us stories. Not only that, she likes to hear about our lives too. She is a joy to talk to and I am so glad she is our partner."



Creative Caregiving Lessons



Visual art:
Create beautiful paintings or discuss artwork by famous artists



Music:
Create activities around familiar songs



Dance & movement:
Create dance movements using familiar songs



Poetry & language:
Recite familiar poems and create original poems and stories



Thank you to our Creative Caregiving sponsors and supporters!



<https://caregiving.scrippsoma.org/>

ScrippsAVID Community Sharing About Us My Page Sign In



Scripps
AVID

Arts-based, Virtual, Intergenerational, Dementia-friendly

Connecting generations to share the arts

Get Started



OMA during COVID-19:
Indianapolis medical
students and elders
cope with COVID



Amy Skeels
Marian University College of
Osteopathic Medicine
askeels087@marian.edu

Restrictions

Shelter-in-place
Small gatherings
Social distancing

Barriers

Technology
Supplies
Hearing aids!



Adaptation: Part 1



Adaptation: Part 2



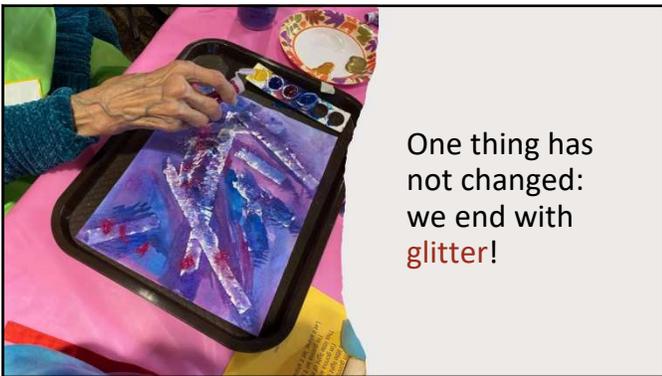


Final Result



What We Learned:

- *"'You are My Sunshine' and 'This Little Light of Mine' are jams! Even though we are off key, singing at different paces, and some of us are muted – **it was my favorite thing.**"*
- *"Every conversation you have with an elder is different. Some make you want to cry; some make you laugh, it's like **opening a new door** with each one."*
- *"If I ever needed a pick-me-up or some motivation to study, OMA always provided. So much tension, stress, and drama surround the world, but OMA was **an escape** from all of this."*
- *"It just **makes me so happy.** I came in feeling bad and now I am so happy."*



One thing has not changed:
we end with
glitter!

Cindy Paullin
Executive Director – Art for the Journey

- Artist
- Certified OMA Facilitator
- OMA Facilitator Trainer

The mission of Art for the Journey is to

transform lives through art and community.

www.artforthejourney.org

Art Heals

Art for the Journey provides art programs to children and adults ages 5 to 102 to promote well-being working with...

- At-risk school children
- Veterans living with PTSD
- Elders with dementia (OMA Program)
- Incarcerated women
- Third-year medical students
- The general public and...
- produce an Educational Public TV show for teachers and students across the USA on PBS.org.

...and more, with the help of hundreds of **volunteers!**

We deliver:
Person-centered, intergenerational programs
 because we believe...art heals.



- Assembled and Delivered Art Kits to marginalized children
- Created in-School special spacing and PPE and "Zoom adaptation"
- Shipped Watercolor sets to 400 incarcerated women
- Assembled and Delivered Art Kits to veterans living with PTSD
- Created Outside Art Bus events for all of our groups
- Created VIRTUAL Delivery of studio art classes
- Created a Public Television program



-Created VIRTUAL Delivery of the OMA Program by Zoom. This Image- "Virtual OMA":



COVID – 19 ADAPTATIONS

"The Creative Corner"
 is a public television program that was designed for home learning.

The arts and culture show, educates and engages children and adults!

Check out
<https://www.pbs.org/show/creative-corner/>

The show is both educational and entertaining and something to do together as a family!

Episodes still being made, find them on PBS.org learning media with SOLs and Vocabulary words listed for each segment and subject.





Art for the Journey has been facilitating OMA since 2015 and has engaged hundreds of student volunteers .




Through the OMA program

Art for the Journey has had first-hand witness of the powerful & positive impact of **intergenerational** and **person-centered** engagement.



OMA art partners become true friends

ART FOR THE JOURNEY

PARTICIPANTS OF THE OMA PROGRAM AT SAINT MARY'S WOODS IN RICHMOND, VA



ART THE JOURNEY OMA Facilitator Training

Since 2016 Art for the Journey has partnered with Dr. Lokon to assist with OMA Facilitator Certification in Richmond, VA as trainers.

We have certified more than 100 Facilitators across the USA and Canada



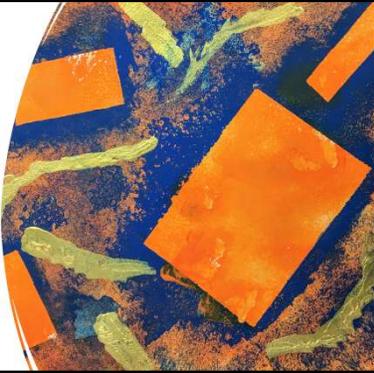
Our most Exciting news...

In partnership with LeadingAge Virginia, Art for the Journey we been awarded \$1,083,383.00 in grant funding...

for a State-Wide OMA Expansion project beginning July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2024.

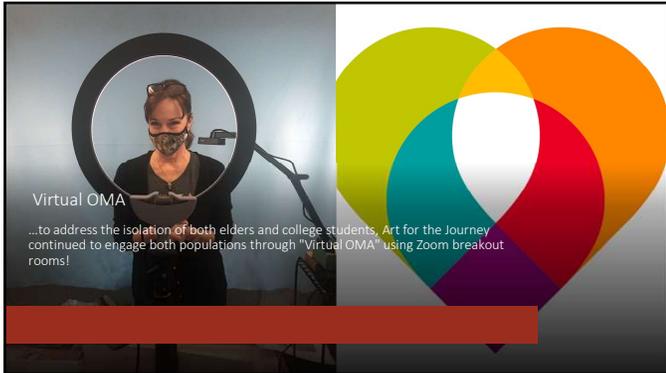
This funding will provide two training scholarships valued at \$750 each and \$2000 in start up art supplies for up to **102 nursing homes** around the State of Virginia.

Imagine this exponentially positive impact!



Virtual OMA

...to address the isolation of both elders and college students, Art for the Journey continued to engage both populations through "Virtual OMA" using Zoom breakout rooms!



Through break-out rooms...

Volunteers Participate from their homes or dorm rooms, and partner one-on-one with elders in assisted living.

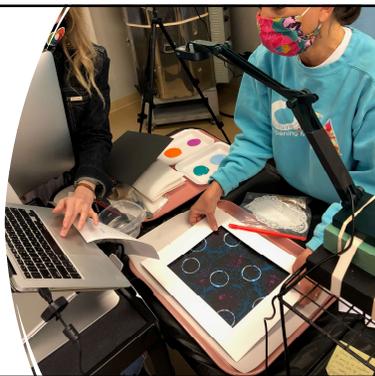
*Virtual Volunteers are from local universities.

This created new opportunities for volunteers!



A document camera makes the art demonstration (the "huddle") easy to conduct and watch on zoom.

(Pictured: AFJ's IPEVO doc cam)



Virtual OMA Huddle

Art Demonstration - "All HUDDLE" TOGETHER





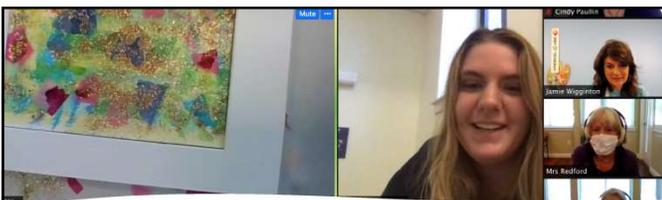
Activities Room set up for spacing and safety

- Monitors for each elder
- Elders wear headphones and PPE
- Art instructions are next to the monitors
- Onsite staff assists



Left: OMA, Pre-Pandemic

Right: Virtual OMA



The Virtual OMA program continues to ensure a stimulating artistic experience

- Provides fun, process-oriented multilayered projects that invite exploration and choices
- Uses adult/artist grade art supplies
- Provides person-centered connection

The OMA Volunteer Training is conducted by Zoom

Facilitator Training Resources and using the "Shared Screen" feature on Zoom for the PowerPoint and videos

Volunteers can receive training at home, by zoom and even by cell phone

This has widened the ability for our arts organization to provide volunteer training in many of our programs, especially OMA





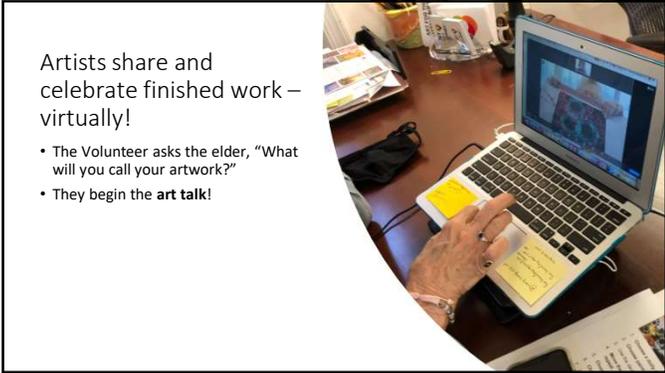
At every OMA session... Volunteers are supported and coached.

- To create a positive emotional environment.
- To slow their speech, use short clear sentences, avoid verbal distraction & use multiple senses for cuing.
- To foster artist decision-making and autonomy and to refer artists to the step-by-step directions.

The Artwork created during virtual sessions remains just as thought-provoking, and interesting as is the art from traditional OMA.

"Joy comes in many colors" ~ By Teresa











Debrief with Volunteers

Funding for Equipment and Supplies

- Art for the Journey raises funds throughout the year to support our programs. We seek funding from individuals and grants that align with our mission and we also hold a large end of the year fundraising event.
- Organizations who have supported our OMA program include: the **Virginia Commission for the Arts**, the **Alzheimers Foundation of America**, the **Nunnally Foundation**, local churches and more. We have also had the generous support of individuals who are passionate about helping elders and people living with dementia.
- **Saint Mary's Woods Retirement Community Center** also has had support of an individual who made a specific contribution for monitors for Virtual OMA.

Opening Minds *through Art*

Art for the Journey



Art Show at **St. Mary's Woods**
November 22 at 10:00am





The art show is an important part of the OMA program... and is a celebration showcasing the elders' art *and...* the genuine friendships formed during every session!

The Virtual Art Show

(conducted by zoom) allows artists and family members to celebrate the art and the friendships formed.

Virtual Art Show Options:

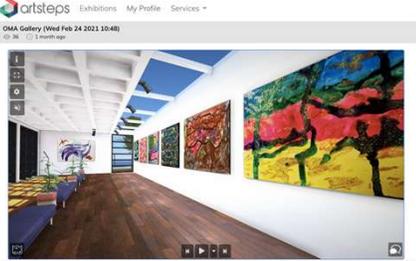
- PowerPoint
- Animoto
- ArtSteps

"Look Up"
~ by Christine



ArtSteps
a simulated walk-thru virtual gallery

www.artsteps.com





OMA's Impact on Families

"Thanks again for inviting me to the **OMA virtual art show**..... What an experience!!!!!! I loved the show and especially all the chatter in the background!!! **This made my day today!** I really appreciate all you do for not just my mom but also the other residents participating in OMA. It's a wonderful program and experience for them and the student volunteers. These students are outstanding people and I know my mom thinks the world of the students she's been partnered with. Thanks again for all you do and continue to do!"

- Chris
Z., Family Member





Poetic Art: Creating Poems with Artwork

Kathy Bender – Trinity Village Care Centre
 Kitchener, ON, Canada
 T 519-893-6320 ext 289
kathy@trinityvillage.com
www.trinityvillage.com



Trinity  Village 

Using artwork to create poems

1. High school art students created **paintings**
2. Residents created **poems** based on the paintings
3. Paintings and poems were collected to create poetic art **books**



Poetry is "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings."
—William Wordsworth



The Day of the Fox by Dennis S.

The chorus of the Red Fox
 out in the woods,
 Sings his song to all the creatures he sees.
 His song reminds me of the days
 in the woods.
 His song makes me feel
 that everything is right.
 When I hear his foxy noise,
 I feel content.

Sequential Collaborative Artwork

1. Residents created OMA **paintings** (abstract art)
2. HS art students painted on top of the residents' **paintings**
3. Residents created **poems** based on the new collaborative paintings
4. Paintings and poems are collected to create poetic art **books**



Painting by Wilma and Lex



Original abstract art by Wilma (resident)



Lex's addition to Wilma's painting

Poem Based on Wilma and Lex's painting

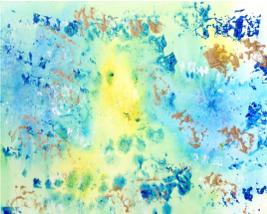
Close to Spring

By Wilma and Helen (Wilma's sister)

It's spring.
It's all right.
Yes, sure, no.
Changing over from the winter.
Birds, rain, sun.
Changing of the season.
Fresh air, not too hot.
Spring smells like the season.
Blue, Green, pink.
Yellow, WOW!
Your flowers are Spring!



Painting by John and Simona



Original abstract art by John (resident)



Simona's addition to John's painting



Final Thoughts

- Students and residents can **stay connected** during the pandemic
- Both sides can build on each other's **creativity**
- This can be done **without technology**
- Need **champions** on both sides (HS art teacher & rec. staff)
- Honor their work by creating **books** that communicate their collaboration and creativity; share books with families
- See additional **resources** in the handout

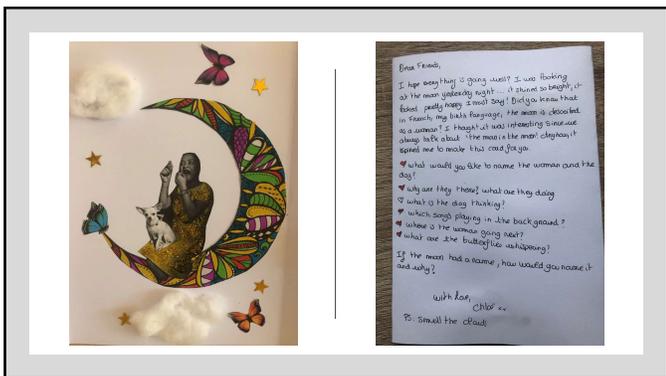
"Poetry is when an emotion has found its thought and the thought has words."
~Robert Frost

Mini Theatres

Chloé Bradwell (UK)
University of Exeter, PhD Student
Entelechy Arts, Artist Associate
chloesbradwell@gmail.com















Thank you!

Contact Info for Speakers

Elizabeth "Like" Lokon
 Meghan Young
 Scripps OMA, Miami University
ScrippsOMA@MiamiOH.edu
 (513) 529 - 2914
www.ScrippsOMA.org

Cindy Paullin
 Executive Director
 Art for the Journey
cindy@artforthejourney.org

Kathy Bender
 Trinity Village Care Centre
 Kitchener, ON, Canada
 T 519-893-6320 ext 289
kbender@trinityvillage.com
www.trinityvillage.com

Amy Skeels
 Marian University College of
 Osteopathic Medicine
askeels087@marian.edu

Chloé Bradwell
 University of Exeter, UK, PhD Student
 Entelechy Arts, Artist Associate
chloesbradwell@gmail.com

Trinity Village

OMA
 Scripps OMA

MIAMI UNIVERSITY
 SCRIPPS GASTROENTEROLOGY CENTER

MARIAN UNIVERSITY
 Indianapolis

entelechy arts
 UNIVERSITY OF EXETER

ART FOR THE JOURNEY

LISTEN LEARN EXPLORE
 A PODCAST + A VIRTUAL LEARNING CIRCLE

Episode 10: Happily Ever Older: Revolutionary Approaches to Long-Term Care
 Moira Welsh, author of *Happily Ever Older: Revolutionary Approaches to Long-Term Care*

Episode 11: Food for Thought
 Toni Fisk, author of *#Dine with Dignity: Unlocking the Mystery of Dementia & Dining*

Podcast Available on
 Pioneer Network Website
 Anchor
 Spotify
 Apple Podcasts
 Google Podcast

To register go to www.pioneernetwork.net

Empowering Elders with Technology

August 26, 2021
3 p.m. ET






Can People Living with Dementia Read?

Speaker: Susan Ostrowski

Tuesday, August 31, 2021
2:00 PM – 3:00 PM EDT







Save the Date





Envisioning the Future
Finding Meaning & Purpose

A VIRTUAL SYMPOSIUM SURE TO INSPIRE AND ENGAGE
Registration is Open! **WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22**

Innovative Intergenerational Arts Programming in Response to the Pandemic: Five Programs in Three Countries

Elizabeth “Like” Lokon

Meghan Young

Scripps OMA, Miami University

ScrippsOMA@MiamiOH.edu

(513) 529 - 2914

Website: www.ScrippsOMA.org

Cindy Paullin

Executive Director

Art for the Journey

cindy@artforthejourney.org

<https://artforthejourney.org/>

Kathy Bender

Trinity Village Care Centre

Kitchener, ON, Canada

T 519-893-6320 ext 289

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Marian University College of Osteopathic Medicine

askeels087@marian.edu

Chloé Bradwell

University of Exeter, UK, PhD Student

Entelechy Arts, Artist Associate

chloesbradwell@gmail.com

Websites / Resources

Finding Funding webinar

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ukTIUF261Y0>

Creative Caregiving Lessons

<https://caregiving.scrippsoma.org/>

Scripps AVID

<https://avid.csi.miamioh.edu/>

The Creative Corner

<https://www.pbs.org/show/creative-corner/>

ArtSteps – a simulated walk-thru virtual gallery

www.artsteps.com

Poetic Art: Creating Poems with Artwork

By Kathy Bender, Trinity Village

2021



Artwork by Jamie Armstrong
Forest Heights Collegiate Institute Student

The Day of the Fox

by Dennis S.

The chorus of the Red Fox
out in the woods,

Sings his song to all the creatures he sees.

His song reminds me of the days
in the woods.

His song makes me feel
that everything is right.

When I hear his foxy noise,
I feel content.

Poetry is “the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings.”

~Williams Wordsworth

What is poetic art?

Poetic art is a collaboration between older adults living with dementia and high school art students, an intergenerational program. Students and older adults living with dementia collaboratively created art and poetry in a multiple exchange system described below. The collected art work and poems are bound together into a book.

What are the goals of creating a book of poems with artwork?

- To maintain relationships between residents at Trinity Village Care Centre and high school students who had been working together in the Opening Minds through Art (OMA) program prior to pandemic.
- To validate the older adults' creativity by creating a book that records their thoughts, feelings, artwork, and words.
- To address loneliness and isolation experienced by older adults in long term care communities during the pandemic.
- To provide both the older adults and the students with outreach opportunities during the COVID 19 pandemic.

1. Using artwork to create poems

Preparation:

Visual props: Gather pictures of artwork (original or photos), magazine pictures, famous artworks (remember to check for publishing rights), family photographs or even just using inspirational words.

- Research different types of poems and create a template with questions. These questions will facilitate the collaborative exploration of the artwork (this can be done in a group setting too.)

Example Questions:

- What is one word to describe this artwork?
 - Is this artwork familiar to you?
 - How does the artwork make you feel?
 - If you own this artwork where would you put it in your home?
- Different styles of simple poems: "I am"- poem, "Colour poem" using the five senses (see resources)
 - Use of supportive devices: google translate, pocket talker for hearing impaired, magnifying glass for low vision, paper and maker for those who are aphasic for communication.
 - Create a power point to catalogue the artwork and poems together. Font-Ariel, size- 14 or larger for easy reading.
 - Remember to have signed consent to use any names and check copy rights of images used.

Creating poems with older adults: "MATCH-TIME-CREATE"

MATCH- Select the artwork/photos/words that are likely to appeal to each individual. The older adult needs to feel intrigued and moved to express their thoughts/feelings about the image.

TIME- Have the outline of the poem you would like to create and the questions ready. When asking questions allow TIME for them to respond, some may need more time to respond than others. WRITE IT ALL DOWN (or record using your phone)! Keep questions simple and clear, allow time for their responses and rephrase the question as needed for those living with dementia.

CREATE- Depending on which poem format you use, CREATE the poem with their words/story in a calm and quiet environment. Keep it simple! Everyone sees art in their own way. There is not right or wrong when it comes to thoughts and feelings about art. Once the poem is created, have the older adult repeat the poem after you, allow them to comment throughout the process. It is after all, their poem.

Resources

- Find artwork/images in local schools, art galleries, newspaper, various websites
- What existing programs do you have with volunteers that you can reinvent into a creative poetry program?
- Reach out to families for input and resources for support. They want to help.
- Creating books: Power point, Vista print, Blurb, Costco, research local printing companies.
- Poetry ideas on the web:
 - <https://www.familyfriendpoems.com/poem/article-write-a-structured-poem>
 - Gary Glazner- <http://www.alzpoetry.com/>

What can you do with the book?

This book becomes a tangible validation of both the older adults' and the student's creative work. It is a concrete evidence that older adults in long-term care communities are being heard even through this COVID 19 pandemic. It is a reminder that their voices are not forgotten.

- Share with family and friends: The older adults love to read their poem to their loved ones during virtual visits. Send a copy to their families to share with others.
- Using the book for other programs: Use it in one-on-one conversation and in small group reading programs. Display pages of the book throughout the community for others to see.
- Use the book as a fundraiser. "Poetic Art" can be purchased at www.trinityvillage.com
- Contact: Kathy Bender at kbender@trinityvillage.com

"Poetry is when an emotion has found its thought and the thought has words."

~Robert Frost

Template for creating a poem

Title:

The chorus of _____ (Artist, entertainer, soulsters, voices, interests, participates, role, views, opinion, character, act, job, game, mission, calling, pleasure, journey, excursion, pathway, walk, passage, navigation....) **in the** _____ (adjective, living space, habitat, city, place.....)

Sings their songs (words, creative expression....) **to the** _____.

(something/someone that complements)

Their song reminds me of _____.

(what memory do you have).

Their song makes me feel _____.

(an emotion, how does this artwork make you feel, what do you like about the artwork...)

When I _____ (hear, see, feel, touch...)

Their _____ (sound, expression, voice...)

I want to _____ (action phrase.)

Source: activityconnection.com- Leaping into Frog Poetry- Creative Writing activity.

2. Sequential Collaborative Artwork

What is sequential collaborative artwork?

This is a process that begins with the older adults living with dementia taking the first step. Using OMA techniques, our residents create abstract artwork. These paintings are then embellished by the students and sent back to the older adults who then create poetry using the process described above.

The process:

1. Because the students are still not allowed into the building due to the pandemic, a staff person worked one-on-one with the residents living with dementia to create abstract artwork using the OMA process.
2. The finished paintings are sent to the art teacher at a nearby high school.
3. Along with the paintings, we included a resident profile to introduce our residents to the students.
4. The paintings were scanned and printed (or may be color copied) and distributed to the art students.
5. The students paint on top of the abstract paintings created by the residents.
6. The new collaborative paintings are sent back to our residents.
7. Our residents create poems in response to the collaborative paintings.
8. The poems and paintings are combined into a memory book and shared with the students, as well as families and community members.



Original abstract art by Wilma



Collaborative art: Wilma's art embellished by Lex

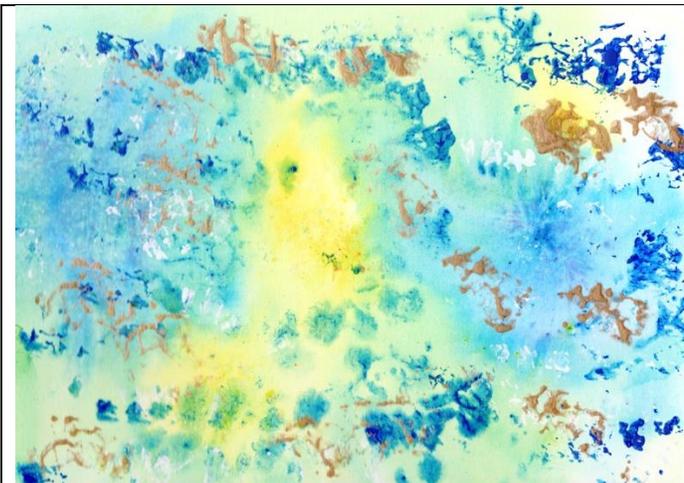
Close to Spring

By Wilma and Helen (Wilma's sister)

It's spring,
It's all right.
Yes, sure, no.
Changing over from the winter.
Birds, rain, sun.
Changing of the season.
Fresh air, not too hot.
Spring smells like the season.
Blue, Green, pink.
Yellow, WOW!
Your flowers are Spring!



Note from Lex to Wilma



Original art by John



Collaborative art: John's artwork embellished by Simona

'Mini-Theatre' sensory cards
Guideline for Students

By Chloe Bradwell - chloesbradwell@gmail.com



What's the purpose of the cards?

- To provide a tool of communication between isolated care home residents and people from their local community
- To serve as a prompt for care home residents and care staff to engage in discussions and creative storytelling

What should they look like?

- Fun and engaging
- Suggestive rather than realistic
- Beautiful
- Crafty (they don't need to be perfect to be beautiful!)
- Personal – they're a representation of YOUR imagination
- Sensorial – they should be designed to be touched and smelled

You will need: *(This list is indicative so feel free to add to it or modify it)*

- A computer and printer and/or magazines, old cards etc. any pictures that have people in them and interesting items that you can cut out
- 220gsm (or thicker) white or coloured paper A4
- Scissors
- Glue (strong PVA to stick the sensory fabric and normal glue for the paper)
- Sensory material such as cotton balls, dry flowers, old pieces of fabrics, card paper, tissue paper, ribbons etc. – anything that has an interesting texture
- Coloured felt paper sheet to make the curtains
- Colouring pens
- Scented essential oils
- Glitter pots

To make it into a pop-up mini theatre:

Below is a simple technique to make your theatre three dimensional. Follow the instructions below, except do it vertically, at the two folds that open the theatre doors:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hBGLyjaKbs>

How to design your card:

- 1. Make your 'mini-theatre' template.** Take your A4 sheet of paper ((ideally 220gsm or thicker) and hold it in landscape format. Fold each side of your sheet towards the middle. Try to make the fold equal for each curtain, for example you could fold 5cm on each side of the sheet. Each folded side will help holding your curtains at the end (see step 9).
- 2. Choose your character(s).** This could be a picture of a stranger that is free of rights on the internet or a model in a magazine. Try and find pictures of people in a pose that inspires you to create a story. Cut it, carefully following the edges, and leave it aside.
- 3. Choose a background.** Think about *where* your characters are located. It can be anywhere, so don't hesitate to be creative. It can be somewhere familiar like a forest, a street, a house or a boat, or somewhere surreal like on the moon, in another galaxy etc. Let your imagination run free! You can print an already made background or make it yourself through drawing, painting and/or collage.
- 4. Pick some fun elements.** Think surrealistic, magical and funny rather than realistic. Find your own artistic tone. Make it colourful but not overwhelming – try to keep it neat and focus on selected elements rather than making the card too busy.
- 5. Arrange the elements.** Arrange and glue all your elements on the A4 card template.
- 6. Add the sensory material.** Think about which elements could be in relief or stand out. Try to have a variety of textures. For example, something soft, fuzzy, rough etc. but try not to overcrowd it (3 textures are usually good).
- 7. Add glitter.** Pick an element that could be highlighted with glitter.
- 8. Add a scented oil.** This can be on a particular part of the card, for example in a cloud etc. Or if you can't find anywhere suitable you could just sprinkle some drops on the curtains
- 9. Make the curtains.** Take your felt paper and pick a colour that you think looks harmonious with the colour scheme of your card. Cut out two curtains that are slightly longer than your folded sides (I like to make mine about 7/8cm long). Glue the felt curtain to each folded side to make the curtains. Feel free to decorate them as you'd like, I like to make scallops forms at the end of mine or stick nice ribbons on them!

How to write your letter

1. **Turn your card** over so that you can write a short letter on the back.
2. **Make it personal.** You don't need to write a long letter but make sure that you are saying hello and asking the person or group how they are doing. You can say something about yourself too, if you'd like.
3. **Transition** into the theme of the card before to ask questions.
4. **Ask some open questions.** Here are some examples that work for almost every card but feel free to add to it or make up your own:
 - How shall we name the character(s)?
 - Who are they?
 - What are they thinking?
 - Where are they?
 - What sounds can we hear?
 - What happens next?
5. **Finish with a 'beautiful question'** that relates to the theme of your card and doesn't have any right or wrong answer. You can look at the TimeSlips website for inspiration: <https://www.timeslips.org/resources/creativity-center/ask-a-beautiful-question>

Here are some additional examples that I have used in the past:

- If a magical balloon could take you anywhere, where would you go?
 - What would be your superhero name?
 - What do you think clouds taste like?
6. **Conclude** with a personal message and signature.
 7. **Pop into an envelope** and send to the care home! You can include a pre-paid envelope with your address to make it easier if the person wants to write back to you.

NB: You can also include small props in your cards. For example, I once included a pair of pink paper glasses and wrote on the card 'Try these magical glasses, they'll allow you to see the world exactly how you wish it would be'

'Mini-Theatre' sensory cards Guideline for Care Homes

By Chloe Bradwell - chloesbradwell@gmail.com

What's the purpose of the cards?

- To provide a tool of communication between isolated care home residents and people from their local community
- To serve as a prompt for care home residents and care staff to engage in discussions and creative storytelling

How to make the most of the cards?

If you want (and have the time) I'd suggest bringing a pen and notepad with you to record people's answers to the questions found in the cards. You can send these back to us so that we can keep an archive of all the wonderful stories you've created.

The cards can be read 1:1 or in a small group.

Sit somewhere comfortably. Make a favourite drink, bring some treats. Make an event of it and open the card together.

Encourage the resident(s) to look, touch and smell the card.

Start reading the letter at the back and take the time to ask each question. Don't rush and give the person or group the time to give their answer.

Forget about memory, or what's 'right or wrong', and accept every answer given by the residents. If several answers are provided to the same question, accept and write them all down. For example, a character can absolutely be named 'Mister John Sam Rose Mickey Mouse'.

If the card features famous people try not to focus on this but rather let the resident make up names. Don't hesitate to rename the celebrity – it's all about imagination.

Look out for non-verbal responses too. Sometimes a facial expression, a gesture, a humming noise etc. could all be the beginning of an answer. Echo these and build on them. For example, if a resident taps their fingers on their chair this could be acknowledged as a response and be built into the story by saying 'this is Mister John Sam Rose Mickey Mouse, he's on the moon and he can hear a ---tap, tap, tap--- (repeat the noise).

Don't hesitate to pause and deviate to include songs, dancing etc. It's all about having fun. For example, if a resident suggests that the character is listening to jazz music, why not play some jazz on your phone or simply try to hum some jazz songs together.