

THE ART OF GOOD HEALTH AND WELLBEING

International Arts and Health Conference
exploring best practice policy, programs and research across primary
care, community health, health promotion / medical humanities

www.artsandhealth.org

10 – 13 November 2009 Port Macquarie NSW Australia
Pre-conference workshops / training program 7 – 10 November 2009

Pre Conference Half Day Workshop 3, 9am – 12pm

Making Art Accessible to People with Dementia in Museums and Art Galleries

Carrie McGee, Museum of Modern Art, New York

Adriane Boag, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

Margaret Allen, Alzheimer's Australia, NSW

The greatest risk factor to dementia is old age, and with an ageing population in western society, dementia and Alzheimer's disease are rapidly on the rise. There is still no pharmacological 'cure' to stop the progressive degeneration of brain cells associated with dementia, which has created a space for caregivers to explore the alternatives. For the Museum of Modern Art, New York, this inspired several questions:

- What can museums and art galleries provide for the mind afflicted with dementia?
- How can museum professionals prepare for that mind and meet its needs?
- Why should the cultural community care to assist?

Education and Public Programs personnel in galleries and museums are invited to this fascinating three-hour, MoMA-led professional workshop.

MoMA is among the world's first cultural institutions to develop programming specific to health needs, most notably, working with people living with dementia. In 2006, it launched *Meet Me at MoMA*, an educational program specifically designed for people with Alzheimer's disease, featuring interactive tours of modern art and special exhibitions for individuals in the early and middle stages of the disease, and their family members and caregivers.

Meet Me at MoMA gives those living with the degenerative disease an expressive outlet and forum for dialogue through guided tours and discussion in the Museum's galleries during non-public hours. Caregivers also enjoy the opportunity to see participants express themselves in the intimate and visually stimulating setting of museum galleries.

Ensuing success has led to the Museum initiating the nationwide MoMA Alzheimer's Project, providing a much-needed resource for other cultural institutions to implement the *Meet Me at ...* program. Government funding has granted each of these programs to be studied, feeding back to MoMA empirical research.

Workshop Objectives:

- Understand prevalence of Alzheimer's disease in Australia and the world, and the brain changes, symptoms and behaviors of persons afflicted with dementia
- Create your own mini program: preparation, artwork selection, in-gallery facilitation and interaction, audience dynamic and evaluation
- Garner international research that demonstrates the impact of art on those with chronic health conditions
- Discover training techniques for educators, museum volunteers and gallery guides

The course will be led by MoMA's Community and Access Programs educator, Carrie McGee, in concert with Adriane Boag from the National Gallery of Australia and Margaret Allen from Alzheimer's Australia (NSW).

Who should attend?

Gallery and museum personnel involved in education and public programs.

More visual arts and community access events:

- *The American Museum Perspective* keynote address by Carrie McGee, Community and Access Programs, Museum of Modern Art, New York
- *Heritage in Hospitals: exploring the potential of museum object handling as an enrichment activity for patients*, by Guy Noble, arts curator at University College London Hospitals and Chair of London Arts and Health Forum
- *Best practice models in arts and health programming and research in the USA* by Paula Terry, director, Office for AccessAbility, National Endowment for the Arts, Washington DC. Hear from one of the most influential arts bureaucrats in the USA, responsible for community access programs.
- *Community Health – A Social Tonic* by Mike White, British authority on art and community health, who oversaw the sculpture by Anthony Gormley, *Angel of the North*, in Newcastle Gateshead, England.