



Creative Aging Calgary Symposium Program

- ~ Celebrating all forms of creativity in later life ~
 - ~ Bringing together the artists, healers, activity coordinators, and older adults ~
 - ~ Engaging ~ Creating ~ Enlightening ~
-

Friday, September 18, 2009
12:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Ross Glen Hall
Roderick Mah Centre *for* Continuous Learning
Mount Royal University
Calgary, AB



Creative Aging Calgary Symposium ~ Program At-A-Glance

12:00 – 12:30 p.m. Registration Check In ~ Ross Glen Hall Foyer <i>Please visit the display tables.</i>				
12:30 – 12:50 p.m. Welcome & Introduction: Gail Hinchliffe, United Active Living Inc. (Room: Ross Glen Hall)				
12:50 – 1:50 p.m. Keynote Address: Susan Perlstein, National Center for Creative Aging, Washington, DC (Room: Ross Glen Hall) Embrace the Moment! Why Creativity Matters in Later Life				
1:50 – 2:00 p.m. Break				
2:00 – 2:50 p.m. Snapshots on Creativity: Concurrent Sessions I				
<p><i>Rm EC1040</i></p> <p><i>Eldering Onstage: Theatre that Inspires Wisdom</i> Presenters: Mariette Sluyter, The Foundation Lab; Nicole Hergert, The Calgary Sexual Health Centre, Vera Kamakoff, Actor - Seniors A GOGO</p> <p><i>Using Drama to Illustrate Issues that Impact Immigrant Seniors</i> Presenters: Sybil Braganza, Seniors Division, City of Calgary and Swati Fernando, World Job and Food Bank</p>	<p><i>Rm EC1050</i></p> <p><i>Once Upon a Time Art Program</i> Presenter: Marcia Dupuis, City of Calgary, Community & Neighbourhood Services</p> <p><i>Art Heals: Imagine That!</i> Presenters: Straja Linder King, Strawberry Tree Art Studio and Nancy Lindquist</p>	<p><i>Rm EC1055</i></p> <p><i>Aging Artfully in Assisted Living</i> Presenter: Gail Hinchliffe, United Active Living Inc.</p> <p><i>A Creative Community</i> Presenter: Carter Bannister, Garrison Green Seniors Community</p>	<p><i>RM EC1060</i></p> <p><i>Creative Aging: Book Discussions</i> Presenter: Bill Fennell, Creative Senior</p> <p><i>Capturing Elder Wisdom on the Silver Screen</i> Presenter: Judy Steiert, Sage-ingÒ Facilitator</p>	<p><i>Rm EC1065</i></p> <p><i>Conversation Café</i> Presenter: Lois Faris, Life Transitions Associates</p> <p><i>Peer Group Learning</i> Presenters: Don Smith, Retired University of Calgary Professor, & Louis Koutis, Retired Newscaster</p>
2:50 – 3:00 p.m. Break				
3:00 – 3:50 p.m. Snapshots on Creativity: Concurrent Sessions II				
<p><i>Rm EC1040</i></p> <p><i>The Story-Telling Circle</i> Presenter: Mary Sheridan</p> <p><i>Stories of Home: Digital Story-Telling</i> Presenter: Kathleen Rhodes, Calgary Family Services</p>	<p><i>Rm EC1050</i></p> <p><i>GeriActors and Friends: Intergenerational Theatre</i> Presenter: David Barnet, University of Alberta</p>	<p><i>Rm EC1055</i></p> <p><i>Do Not Go Gently ~ A film presentation about the power of imagination in aging.</i></p>	<p><i>Rm EC1060</i></p> <p><i>Calligraphy for Seniors</i> Presenter: Peggy Robinson, Bow Valley Calligraphy Guild</p> <p><i>Holistic Integrity: Movement Inspired Creativity</i> Presenters: Terence Stone and Nancy Miller-Stone, Body Language Movement</p>	<p><i>Rm EC1065</i></p> <p><i>Memorable Music</i> Presenter: Jennifer Buchanan, JB Music Therapy</p> <p><i>Drum Circles</i> Presenter: Judy Atkinson, Circles of Rhythm</p>
3:50 – 4:00 p.m. Break				
4:00 – 4:30 p.m. From Here to There: Moving into the Creative Age. A group discussion led by Susan Perlstein (Rm: Ross Glen Hall)				
4:30 – 5:30 p.m. Reception (Ross Glen Hall Foyer) <i>Please visit the display tables</i>				

Creative Aging Calgary Symposium ~ Abstracts

Registration & Check In: **12:00 – 12:30 p.m. Ross Glen Hall Foyer**

Please visit the display tables.

Welcome & Introduction: 12:30 p.m. – 12:50 p.m. Ross Glen Hall

Gail Hinchliffe, United Active Living Inc.

Keynote Address: 12:50 – 1:50 p.m. Ross Glen Hall

Embrace the Moment! ~ Why Creativity Matters in Later Life

Susan Perlstein, National Center for Creative Aging, Washington, D.C.

In this presentation, Susan Perlstein will consider the significance of “creative aging” in relation to everyday life, and also summarize findings from a study she collaborated on with Dr. Gene Cohen from the Centre on Aging, Health and Humanities at George Washington University that has provided evidence of positive benefits associated with involvement in arts and cultural programs. She will discuss three developmental currents characterizing the field of arts and aging: arts and lifelong learning, arts and community engagement, and use of the arts in social service and health care settings. Susan will conclude with recommendations for moving the field of arts and aging forward in the coming decades.

Break: 1:50 – 2:00 p.m.

Snapshots on Creativity Concurrent Sessions I: 2:00 – 2:50 p.m.

Snapshot Stream 1 Room EC 1040

Eldering Onstage

Mariette Sluyter, The Foundation Lab; Nicole Hergert, The Calgary Sexual Health Centre; and Vera Kamakoff, Actor – Seniors A GOGO

This is an overview of theatre activities and approaches with seniors in Calgary with The Foundation Lab. From "The Divas", to Seniors Action Group (SAG) and beyond to the recent and exciting Seniors A GOGO (Growing Older Getting it On) a partnership with The Calgary Sexual Health Centre, using senior's stories on aging and sexuality. We will explore practices, pitfalls and performance. This workshop will inspire you to use theatre as a tool to rewrite the story of aging for generations to come.

Using Drama to Illustrate Issues that Impact Immigrant Seniors

Sybil Braganza, City of Calgary Seniors Division, and Swati Fernando, World Job and Food Bank

Using drama as a medium of expression and art, older adults create meaningful ways to share information; identify and solve problems and come together to discuss common issues affecting them. Based on real life issues that impact immigrant older adults, the plays are designed by them and then shared with other seniors and service providers to bring to life their current reality.

Snapshot Stream 2 Room EC 1050**Once Upon a Time Art Program**

Marcia Dupuis, City of Calgary, Community & Neighbourhood Services

'Once Upon A Time' is an art program for seniors developed in partnership between Community & Neighborhood Services and North Mount Pleasant Arts Centre. In this presentation, participants will learn about the creative processes used and the impacts that this program has had on both the seniors and the community

Art Heals: Imagine That!

Straja Linder King, Strawberry Tree Art Studio and Nancy Lindquist

Telling and expressing our stories authentically is vital to our health and well-being. Utilizing the expressive arts deeply engages older adults in a playful and productive manner. This presentation will highlight some of the works created in older adult day programming over the years, demonstrating beauty and grace as it unfolds in honoring unity in diversity.

Snapshot Stream 3 Room EC1040**Aging Artfully in Assisted Living**

Gail Hinchliffe, United Active Living Inc.

Assisted living facilities offer older people an opportunity to maintain control over their lives while receiving supports that serve to promote their health and well-being. Typically amenities such as meals, gathering spaces, libraries, activities, and social events are offered. Recognition of the positive relationship between creative expression and the quality of life of older adults has resulted in a trend toward the development of assisted living communities that encourage ongoing growth and fulfillment. Creative approaches to enriching life are part of the philosophy of United Active Living Communities. This presentation will address the integration of a philosophy and culture of creative expression into an assisted living environment.

A Creative Community

Carter Bannister, Garrison Greens Seniors Community

Through the meaning and value of creative expression we build a "Creative Community". Creative expression focuses on outcome goals which are interrelated and include social engagement, health, attitude, mastery, and exercise. Learning occurs within each individual as a continual process throughout life. This presentation will address how to develop and plan an activity program for seniors that promotes the goals of creative expression.

Snapshot Stream 4 Room EC 1060**Creative Aging: Book Discussions**

Bill Fennell, Creative Senior

Following attendance at a Positive Aging Conference in November 2008, a number of individuals have been meeting monthly to discuss recent publications that speak to creative aging. Early on, we considered conference recommendations such as *Something to Live For: Finding your way in the second half of life* by R.J. Leider. More recently, we have been discussing books

which promote the attributes of the right side of the brain. At Garrison Green Seniors Community, we have found many friends willing to examine how *My Stroke of Insight* (J.B. Taylor, neuroanatomist) and *A Whole New Mind* (D.H. Pink, lawyer) might lead us to *A New Earth* (E. Tolle, philosopher). Though our group largely includes teachers, we have participants ranging from a geophysicist to an organist.

Capturing Elder Wisdom on the Silver Screen

Judy Steiert, Sage-ingÒ Facilitator

Wisdom of elders appears everywhere throughout our lives. With the poem “Autumn Wisdom” and several video clips, you will have a reflective experience related to the second half of life. This creative presentation evolved from a two-part movie study by the same name.

Snapshot Stream 5 Room EC 1065

Conversation Café

Lois Faris, Life Transitions Associates

Research indicates that people with strong connections to family and friends live healthier happier lives. In our fast-paced, changing and technologically oriented society, people often feel isolated and alone. Conversation Cafés provide an opportunity for strangers to feel valued and empowered. The “conversations” embrace diversity and aim to deepen understanding as a basis for solving local or global problems. Participants leave knowing that they have a unique and important contribution to make to any conversation and that listening to others is important. This presentation is a “Talk Show” where there is no audience—everyone participates.

Peer Group Learning

Don Smith, Retired University of Calgary Professor and Louie Koutis, Retired Newscaster

Across Canada a number of universities and other organizations have begun peer-group learning programs for retired or semi-retired individuals. The Kerby Centre for Excellence has sponsored five peer group study groups over the last year. Membership is entirely open for these non-credit study groups, in which there are no pre-requisites, no exams and no grades. The programs recognize the vast store of accumulated knowledge among the community of older adults. According to the peer learning concept individuals share their knowledge and experience with each other in daytime study groups, over say a ten-week term (two hours per week per subject). The maximum enrolment would be twenty, with a minimum membership of ten. The study group's cornerstones are peer learning and active participation. All members participate fully and equally. Members must be prepared for some form of active participation. Members volunteer to act as moderators and plan the study programs.

Break: 2:50 to 3:00 p.m.

Snapshots on Creativity Concurrent Sessions II: 3:00 – 3:50 p.m.

Snapshot Stream 6 Room EC 1040

The Story-Telling Circle

Mary Sheridan and Claire Evans, Creative Seniors

This presentation is a story of how we facilitated a story-telling circle at Parkdale United Church in the Fall of 2008. This narrative offers a few insights into the challenges of working as a collaborative team. A description of the place where we met and the small group process is offered together with a few details about the composition of the group itself. We then move on to explain the surprises and learnings that emerged for us and the changes we would make in future groups. Finally we provide highlights from the stories themselves ensuring that the identity of each story-teller is kept confidential as some of the themes and personalities are revealed.

Stories of Home: Digital Story-Telling*Kathleen Rhodes, Calgary Family Services*

In the Stories of Home project, older Calgarians use modern tools to practice the ancient art of storytelling. With trained people as technical supporters, storytellers narrate their stories in 2-3 minute movies that may include photographs, video, music and sound effects. These digital stories are meaningful memories connected to the storyteller's perception of "home". In this presentation, we will detail our logistic and creative processes; and profess the breakthroughs and confess the bloopers of our experiences as pioneers in creative aging. We will conclude with a showing of some digital stories and a discussion with the storytellers.

Snapshot Stream 7 Room EC 1050**GerActors and Friends: Intergenerational Theatre***David Bernet, University of Alberta*

This session will present the work of GerActors and Friends, an Edmonton-based intergenerational theatre company, now in its eighth season. Based at **SAGE** (Seniors Association of Greater Edmonton) and supported by the University of Alberta, Department of Drama, the company performs its original plays to seniors, health care professionals and intergenerational audiences. Also addressed will be **FEST**, the **Festival of Edmonton Seniors Theatre** (June 2009), which included seniors' performances, an intergenerational theatre party, and professional workshops for seniors in Clown, Stand Up Comedy, Shakespeare and Musical Theatre. The session will conclude with a conversation about seniors' theatre in Calgary.

Snapshot Stream 8 Room EC 1055**Do Not Go Gently ~ A Film About the Power of Imagination in Aging**

Narrated by Walter Cronkite at age 90, *Do Not Go Gently* is an hour-long documentary about the power of imagination in aging. At the center are three extraordinary artists in their 80s, 90s and 100s who, in their youth, fundamentally influenced American culture; and now in old age, continue to contribute. Portraits include the godfather of modern music Leo Ornstein, 109 (filmed two weeks before his death); premiere danseur Frederic Franklin, 90; and Arlonzia Pettway, 82, one of the eldest quilters in Gee's Bend, Alabama. At primary importance, we explore the work and personalities of these creative icons in old age. The results? They have

secrets for a resilient approach to aging.

The science of creativity and aging is uncovered little by little in the film by Dr. Gene Cohen, author of *The Creative Age: Awakening Human Potential in the Second Half of Life* (Avon Books, 2000) and *The Mature Mind: The Positive Power of the Aging Brain* (Basic Books, 2006). As we follow a day in the life of Dr. Cohen and his work at the Creativity Discovery Corps in Washington, D.C., his insight reveals progressively deeper levels of brain science and psychology.

Finally, we witness the principles of creativity applied to people with Alzheimer's disease and other disabilities of old age at day care centers and nursing homes in Washington D.C. In the most pure documentary vérité, the innovative work of the non-profit organization, Arts for the Aging, reveals the healing power of imagination for populations suffering the common disabilities of age: frailty, dementia and depression.

Snapshot Stream 9 Room EC 1060

Calligraphy for Seniors

Peggy Robinson, Bow Valley Calligraphy Guild

Italic? Old English? Celtic? Decorated capitals? Are you interested in calligraphy? There are several fun, reasonably-priced classes for Calgary seniors who want to learn different hand-lettered alphabets. Come and watch one of the Bow Valley Calligraphy Guild instructors demonstrate several lettering styles and show how calligraphy pens work.

Holistic Integrity: Movement Inspired Creativity

Terence Stone and Nancy Miller-Stone, Body Language Movement

Supported by poetry, video and anecdotes, this presentation asserts the holistic sense of wellbeing available to participants through movement-centred integrative arts, regardless of age or ability. We begin with a call to attend to the fundamental rhythms—breath and heartbeat—and rarely attended to experiences of gravity and other ambient sensations of the body as a foundation for (re)discovering the innate body-wisdom that will be each participant's guide to safe, creative expression with no pre-determined, specific steps or movement. Supported by guided imagery and eclectic music, the experience of dance then becomes the medium through which self-discovery, integration, or re-integration of body, mind and spirit may be achieved. Practiced in each session, this becomes an available resource in personal relationships and the wider community.

Snapshot Stream 10 Room EC 1065

Memorable Music

Jennifer Buchanan, JB Music Therapy

Music occupies more of our brain than language. It can help us go to sleep, find inspiration, concentrate and de-stress. For the senior, music can quite simply be a lifeline into the past. It's a medium that brings back positive memories, celebrating a life that has contributed greatly to family and community. This presentation is an inspirational and reflective journey that weaves stories and songs together, leaving the participant with information about how music benefits health, improves communication, and brings hope.

Drum Circles*Judy Atkinson, Circles of Rhythm*

As we grow into our quiet years, life can sometimes get a bit dull or meaningless. Come let the rhythms of the drum and percussion tubes called boom whackers 'jolt you with joy', and inspire you to continue to live a meaningful life, no matter what age you are. In this brief introduction you will learn to play simple rhythms using "boom whackers". With some base drums for grounding, the rhythms we create together will lift your spirits, energize your body and un-clutter your mind. Each time you strike the boom whacker or drum you will be sending a wave of energy through you and everyone there, waking you up to your natural state of joy and bliss.

Break: 3:50 to 4:00 p.m.

4:00 – 4:30 p.m. **Endnote**

From Here to There: Moving into the Creative Age

A group discussion led by Susan Perlstein.

Susan will conclude with a discussion about moving the field of arts and aging forward in the coming decades.

Reception ~ Ross Glen Hall Foyer ~ All Welcome

4:30 – 5:30 p.m.

Please visit the display tables.

Symposium Sponsors

We are greatly appreciative of our sponsors who are providing generous financial and in-kind support.



United Active Living

www.unitedactiveliving.com



Brenda Strafford Foundation

www.brendastraffordfoundation.org



Mount Royal University

www.mtroyal.ca

Peak Business Elements

www.peakbiz.ca

Community Partners

We are grateful to our community partners who supported this inaugural symposium and promoted awareness of it to their members and others throughout the Calgary region and beyond.



City of Calgary Seniors Services

www.calgary.ca

Government of Alberta ■

Seniors and Community Supports

Alberta Seniors and Community Supports

www.seniors.gov.ab.ca



Alberta Association on Gerontology

www.aagweb.ca



Calgary Arts Development Corporation

www.calgaryartsdevelopment.com

Government of Alberta ■

Alberta Culture and Community Spirit

www.culture.alberta.ca

Creative Aging Calgary Organizing Committee

Gail Hinchliffe, President & Chief Operating Officer, United Active Living Inc.

Dianne McDermid, Retired Mount Royal University Faculty

Elaine Danelesko, Director, Integrative Health Institute, Mount Royal University

Ralph Hubele, Government of Alberta, Seniors & Community Supports

Steve Sabjan, Vice President Finance, Brenda Strafford Foundation

Suzanne Brett Welsh, Virtual Business Consultant, Peak Business Elements

Carter Bannister, Creative Expression Coordinator, Garrison Greens Seniors Community

Symposium Consultant

Pamela Brett-MacLean, Co-Director, Arts & Humanities in Health & Medicine Program, University of Alberta Faculty of Medicine

Resource List

The following organizations and initiatives offer interesting examples of recognizing and promoting engagement in the arts in later in later life.

Canada

Creative Age Festival, Edmonton, AB

Mapping the Arts & Health in Alberta

Halifax Seniors Art & Photography (Ongoing) Exhibit

Society for the Arts in Dementia Care

Vancouver Arts and Health Project

Vancouver Seniors Week 2008

Victoria Senior Celebration Festival 2008

Ryerson University's Silver Screens Arts Festival: Aging Creatively, Creativity in Aging

Learning through the Arts @ SERC (Oakville, ON)

Western Gold Theatre (Vancouver)

Performing Arts Lodge Canada Foundation

Performing Arts Lodge (Toronto)

Performing Arts Lodge (Vancouver)

Performing Arts Lodge (Calgary)

Performing Arts Lodge (Halifax)

Raging Grannies

Canadian Organization of Senior Artists and Performers (COSAP)

Chartwell's National "Senior Star Competition"

US

National Centre on Creative Aging
The Center on Aging, Health & Humanities
Westchester Center for Creative Aging
ESTA – Elders Share the Arts (NYC)
Stagebridge Seniors Theatre Company
Kairos Dance Company – The Dancing Heart
Society for Creative Aging - Colorado

UK

Age Exchange
Capital Age Festival
Bealtaine Festival
Gwanwyn - Celebrating Creativity in Older Age

Resource list courtesy of Pamela Brett-MacLean and the Creative Age Festival (Edmonton).

Notes

Cover artwork courtesy of
Alberta artist Sylvia Dubrule

www.sylviadubrule.ca

www.creativeagingcalgary.ca