

Boston Children's Hospital Creative Arts Program

A Mapping and Analysis of Community Engagement and Access to the Arts

HISTORY
The Boston Children's Hospital (BCH) was founded in 1869 by Dr. Francis Henry Brown to serve as a research, teaching and medical institution that specializes in the care of children. BCH's mission is to provide excellent healthcare with the help of new research, encourage healing both physically and psychologically through its family and childcare programs, and to integrate medical education and practice, specifically in its partnership with Harvard Medical School.

At the time it was founded in 1869 the hospital was located at 9 Rutland Street in the Boston South End. The following year it relocated to another building on the same street. In 1892, it moved to Huntington Avenue near Symphony Hall, a location where other medical care centers such as Brigham and Women's and Beth Israel were also developing. By 1914, the hospital outgrew its location with an increase in staff and need for specialty care units, it made its final move to a new building designed by Boston firm Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge (now known today as Shepley Bulfinch) at 300 Longwood Avenue where it is located today. The Fenway/Longwood location is the main campus for a network of Boston Children's Hospitals that consists of statewide campuses, affiliated physicians' offices, and community hospitals across Massachusetts.

OVERVIEW
Besides from medical care and research, a focus of the hospital is patient experience. As part of this initiative, the Creative Arts Program was founded in 1996 in partnership with Child Life Services to serve the children who are being treated at the hospital. The Child Life Services allows patients to adjust to the hospital setting and provide emotional and social support, especially for long-term treatment. The mission of the Creative Arts Program is to use art and music to encourage healing and better the experiences of children during their stay. It is led by art managers at the hospital, and various programs are put on by visual artists, music therapists, and/or life specialists. The arts program is divided into two segments:

The Arts Collection

- Architecture**
The Longwood campus is designed as a space not only for medical treatment, but also healing. Various renovations and master plans have brought community spaces, gardens, and creativity to the forefront of hospital design.
- Installations**
Interactive installations utilize the surfaces of the hospital building from walls to stairs to bring a unique artistic and stimulating experience to patients and visitors.
- Fine Arts**
From pairings to sculptures, the arts collection displays artwork by local and renowned artists along hospital walls, office spaces, and even inside renovated or newly designed buildings.
- Art Gallery**
A collaboration between the art programs and child collection fills the hospital corridors with patient and commissioned art work. Places ranging from portraits to music, are displayed in the food court, main lobby, volunteer services, and care units.

The Art Programs

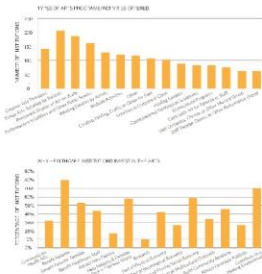
- Artist-in-Residence**
Founded in 2011, artists from throughout the nation are housed in various locations and master plans have brought community spaces, gardens, and creativity to the forefront of hospital design.
- Art Cart**
A rotating cart brings crafts to patients' beds in a variety of units including ICU, outpatient care, and the Martha Eliot Heart Center. The cart also rotates between more public spaces like the main lobby hallway, and the food court.
- Music Therapy**
As part of an educational degree provided by the Berklee College of Music and Harvard Medical School, music therapy integrates music into medical treatment using the in-house Seaver Studio facility.

ART AND HEALING

Art in hospital settings can be traced back to the Middle Ages when hospitals operated by churches served as both infirmaries and places to showcase religious artwork. In time, it has become not only an accompaniment to hospital care, but a tool for recovery. The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) recognizes the health benefits of art programs for patients suffering from chronic, mental, and neurological illnesses. Creating art becomes a tool for communication between patients and medical professionals. One art program saw that asthma symptoms, and other diagnosis and recovery information, can be revealed in one's drawing. Art and architectural references to nature can have a calming effect, while three-dimensional and immersive displays have been linked to increase attention, decrease distractions, and possibly reduce physical pain caused by stress.

Art as a display contrasts the sterile, white walls of hospitals. Galleries and museums have become a way to bring a form of patient experience to spaces where patients often come to be unwell. Art programs connect the activity inside hospitals to the greater community of artists and medical practitioners. These programs also address community health by promoting prevention and proactive wellness in the nearby neighborhoods of hospitals, whether through the extension of the program itself or community outreach initiatives.

In 2007, the NEA conducted a report of art programs and exhibitions in healthcare, finding that 43% of the 7,233 surveyed institutions offered an arts program. The following highlights key findings:



* Online-based organizations
* Affiliated Boston Children's locations with some form of the Art Program

BOSTON CHILDREN'S NETWORK

- Campus Location**
Longwood
Peabody
Waltham
North Dartmouth
- Physicians' Offices**
Brookline
Milton
Norwood
Weymouth
- Community Hospitals**
Beverly
Brookside
Martha Eliot
New Bedford
South Weymouth
Winchester

ARTISTS-IN-RESIDENCE

Current Artist:
Lara Vaccaro is a visual artist who focuses on digital storytelling of both Boston Children's and her own experiences at the Whitney Museum and the Venice Biennale.

Current Artist:
Ginny Lewis is a writer, educator, and child life specialist. She focuses on program development and storytelling. She is the founder of Whimsy Inc., a writing and publishing program for hospitalized children.

Current Artist:
Tim Carter is a musician (pianist and vocalist) who resides at Boston Children's hospital. He is the founder of Whimsy Inc., a writing and publishing program for hospitalized children.

Past Artist (2014-15):
Sheila Lopez Chavez is a multi-media artist and educator who resides at Boston Children's hospital. She is the founder of Whimsy Inc., a writing and publishing program for hospitalized children.

INTERVIEW



On art in hospital settings:

"I'm trying to use art in all the ways we can use it to make a more comfortable, interesting, stimulating environment for patients and staff. We have a sculptor, who works with patients to tell their own stories... they can have something that they have power and control over, because a lot of times when patients are in the hospital, they feel like they're really out of control."

"The art program that I oversee is embedded in the facilities department, so anytime there's a building project or a renovation project, there is a component of art that goes along with anything that we do. In buildings like Martha Eliot, Waltham, Peabody, Lexington, there's always an art component to each of those facilities. And partly it's a branding opportunity, we want to have a consistent look across the organization. We have a certain style, so characteristically it's minimal and playful, but not childish."

"Artwork in the hospital setting is becoming much more interactive. There's a lot more technology involved in artwork, which is where the intersection of art and technology happens because you're in these spaces and [art] activates this space. The challenge is that when you have technology things break and they need to be updated... we're constantly upgrading."

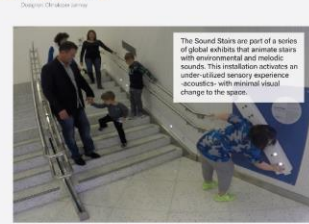
"On community involvement:
We're trying to bring in a lot of artists from the area, and we also try to reflect the demographics of the community. So we might choose different works to Martha Eliot than we would choose in Peabody. We're building a new building in Brookline, and for floors of it we're treating people on the autism behavioral spectrum, so we're pulling art in from those artists who are on the spectrum or have the same diagnosis as some of the patients. The patients can really relate to the artwork."

"To make way for this new building, we had to demolish a garden and a historic building that was beloved by the community. We involved a lot of people to figure out how to honor the garden and the building. We also built the new gardens, and invited community members to be a part of that process. Even if they're not patients, they might have visited friends in this space... they might be visiting patients."

"I've been wanting to involve more students, bringing in MassArt students to do some projects. Some of my future goals is to have a changing art mural, that would be an opportunity to bring in the community and use it as a platform for the artists."



SOUND STAIRS



The Sound Stairs are part of a series of global exhibits that animate stairs with environmental and medical sounds. This installation activates an under-utilized sensory experience acoustically with minimal visual change to the space.

"Sound stairs is art, but also architecture because they play the stairs as they go up. He [Janney] sees it as an enervating architecture."

Elisabeth Gordon, Art Program Manager

INTERACTIVE ART WALL



Made up of 19 microLED kinetic sensors, 18 computers, and 7 optical sensors, the Interactive Wall allows patients and visitors to immerse with characters, sounds, and spaces on screen.

"The idea was to empower emotionally and physically challenged children to take control of something in their life at a time when things were spinning out of control."

Tim Hunter, UConn Design Professor

HALE FAMILY BUILDING ADDITION



The Hale Building addition will bring a new health center unit to the hospital, alongside patient care spaces like gardens and galleries.

"We are going to have a dedicated art gallery space. It will be two walls, and we're also going to have nice museum-quality cases that will be lit and we will be able to put 3D work in as well. That will allow us to invite people to have exhibitions."

Elisabeth Gordon, Art Program Manager



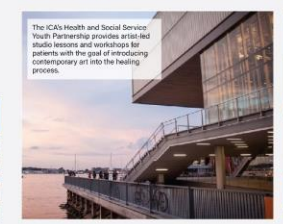
Architect: Colorado is commissioned to design 40-foot thematic walls by the elevator shafts with illustrations of science, nature, and the universe. A similar vocabulary of nature, flora, and fauna is used for landscaping throughout the Hale Family Building.



The garden is the legacy of Olive Prouty who funded two hospital wards in the memory of her deceased children. When the buildings were torn down, she funded a garden in its place as a space for healing and expression. The garden has been demolished to construct the Hale Family Building, but the hospital will provide a public space open to the public in the new building.

Elisabeth Gordon, Art Program Manager

INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART



The ICAs Health and Social Service Youth Partnership provides artist-led studio lessons and workshops for patients with the goal of introducing contemporary art into the healing process.

Silvia Lopez Chavez, Former Artist-in-Residence

MFA ARTFUL HEALING



Art workshops provided by the Museum of Fine Arts help children and their families find a creative way to relieve stress and practice positive communication.

Joe McKendry, Brookline artists and founder of We Are Boston

WE ART BOSTON



This fundraising campaign followed the Boston Marathon bombing with the goal to honor victims and celebrate the soul of Boston. The collection was used to fund the Emergency and Trauma Fund at Boston Children's.

Joe McKendry, Brookline artists and founder of We Are Boston

URBAN CULTURE INSTITUTE



The Institute managed the selection of artwork to be displayed at the Longwood and Brookline campus. This is a part of the Children's Dream Data Challenge campaign to highlight wayfinding, planning, and donor recognition through art.

Joe McKendry, Brookline artists and founder of We Are Boston

"Some days were so hard... that shuttle ride from the hospital to the train station was ten minutes where you just sit and think about all the things that happened throughout the day."

"I wanted to focus specifically on kids and on the healing power of art."

Joe McKendry, Brookline artists and founder of We Are Boston