

## OCTOBER Art Beyond Sight Awareness Month 2012

Working with Us on  
Equal Access & Inclusion

# The Fourth Multimodal Approaches to Learning International Conference organized by Art Beyond Sight and The Metropolitan Museum of Art is right around the corner!

The Multimodal Approaches to Learning International Conference is the cornerstone of Art Beyond Sight's Awareness Month, a time when museums, performing arts centers, galleries, libraries, arts organizations, schools and service groups join together to call attention to the benefits of making the arts and art-making activities accessible to all. The conference addresses inclusive and multisensory learning environments and strategies, particularly in relation to the arts and museums. Our discussions will focus on experiences that involve sound, touch, movement, drama, olfactory and modes of proprioceptive learning. Multimodal learning and creative experiences are meaningful to all audiences including people with disabilities and people with different learning preferences.

This year, in addition to an impressive roster of speakers and artists who will be joining us for the conference we are also very excited to announce that Peter Sellars, the renowned theater, opera and festival director will be our keynote speaker. The conference will be held at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, October 26-27, 2012. Follow the link to our blog for a calendar of scheduled events, registration form, and speaker biographies.

<http://artbeyondsightconference.blogspot.com/>



CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF PARTNERSHIPS AMONG  
CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS AROUND THE WORLD

*A few of our speakers...*



Emilie  
Baltz



Koan Jeff  
Baysa



Jennifer  
Rubell  
(pictured with  
wax figure of  
Prince Charles)



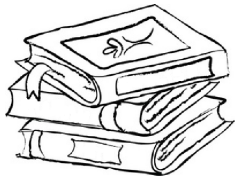
Francesca  
Rosenberg



Peter  
Sellars

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### BOOKSTORE

#### ***Art Beyond Sight: A Resource Guide to Art, Creativity, and Visual Impairment***

Elisabeth Salzhauer Axel and Nina Sobol Levent, Editors

The American Foundation for the Blind and Art Education for the Blind have joined together to co-publish this one-of-a-kind resource that provides vital information on all aspects of exploring art and creativity by people who are blind or visually impaired. Developed by Art Education for the Blind, this beautiful, fully illustrated manual is the result of a decade-long international collaboration among researchers, art educators, teachers of visually impaired students, psychologists, museum professionals, and blind and sighted art enthusiasts. Includes a section of reproducible pages for classroom or workshop activities. Available in paperback or ASCII CD.

Special Sale Price: \$49.95 (Originally \$79.95)

Phone: 1-800-232-3044, Fax: 412-741-1398

Online bookstore: <http://www.afb.org/store/product.asp?sku=978%2D0%2D89128%2D850%2D3&mscssid>

International Phone: 412-741-1398; Fax: 412-741-0609; In the UK: [www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk)

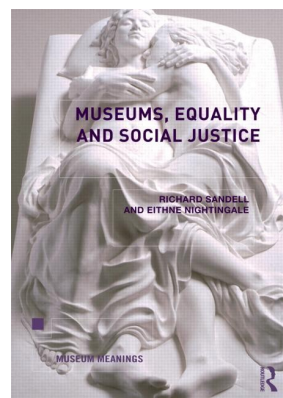


#### ***Museums, Equality and Social Justice***

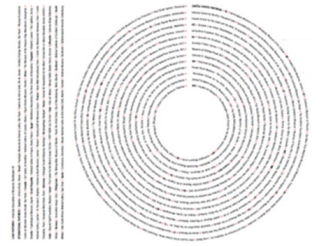
Richard Sandell and Eithne Nightingale

The last two decades have seen concerns for equality, diversity, social justice and human rights move from the margins of museum thinking and practice, to the core. The arguments – both moral and pragmatic – for engaging diverse audiences, creating the conditions for more equitable access to museum resources, and opening up opportunities for participation, now enjoy considerable consensus in many parts of the world. A growing number of institutions are concerned to construct new narratives that represent a plurality of lived experiences, histories and identities which aim to nurture support for more progressive, ethically-informed ways of seeing and to actively inform contemporary public debates on often contested rights-related issues. At the same time it would be misleading to suggest an even and uncontested transition from the museum as an organization that has been widely understood to marginalize, exclude and oppress to one which is wholly inclusive. Moreover, there are signs that momentum towards making museums more inclusive and equitable is slowing down or, in some contexts, reversing.

*Museums, Equality and Social Justice* aims to reflect on and, crucially, to inform debates in museum research, policy and practice at this critical time. It brings together new research from academics and practitioners and insights from artists, activists, and commentators to explore the ways in which museums, galleries and heritage organizations are engaging with the fast-changing equalities terrain and the shifting politics of identity at global, national and local levels and to investigate their potential to contribute to more equitable, fair and just societies. ([www.routledge.com](http://www.routledge.com))



For more information: <http://www.routledge.com/books/details/9780415504690>



## *Interview with a museum access program attendee...*

*Lisa Saunders*

**Art Beyond Sight:** What disability do you have? How does it affect your vision?

**Lisa Saunders:** I am visually impaired. I have to look close and it takes time for me to focus. I have a very sharp eye for color. It is not part of my problem, and I have been trained since I was a small child.

**ABS:** How and when did you become interested in art? What artist or works of art inspired you to pursue an interest in art?

**LS:** My father is a fine artist and I have been interested in art since I was about two years old. I have been visiting museums, galleries, and craft shows ever since I can remember. I love Matisse, Picasso, Soutine, Chagall, Toulouse-Lautrec and other post impressionists/abstractionists and modern artists.

**ABS:** How long have you been attending museum accessibility programs? How have they

changed over time?

**LS:** I have been attending the programs for about four years. The programs are very different and presented with different styles. There has been no "change" in the programs, only new topics and projects.

**ABS:** Which programs do you find most effective/most enjoyable?

**LS:** I enjoy all of them. Some are workshops and some are tours.

**ABS:** What suggestions do you have to improve some of these programs?

**LS:** More time for the programs. Maybe an extra thirty minutes.

**ABS:** What memorable experience while attending one of these tours can you share with us?

**LS:** I was able to touch, with gloves, the Matisse relief in the MoMA garden. I was able to put my hands on something

Matisse created with his hands. I was also able to touch an ancient Greek sculpture, a Roman bath tub, and an Egyptian lion and crypt. It was like time travel! ♦

**Art Beyond Sight asked  
Lisa Saunders, a regular  
museum access  
program attendee with  
vision impairment, about  
her love of art and  
memorable  
experience with  
museum programs.**

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### This Week's Spotlight: The Chicago History Museum's *Imagining Lincoln and Juarez*

In 2006, the Chicago History Museum's *Sensing Chicago* received honorable mention in the Excellence in Exhibition competition. This program continues to invite children to use their five senses in whole-body experiences. Children of all ages explore the sights, sounds, and smells of the city. Listening to the Great Chicago Fire, catching a fly ball at Comiskey Park, and discovering the city's history through one's nose with the Smell Map are just a few exhibits that activate the senses. More recently, the museum's *Imagining Lincoln and Juarez* audio guide received the 2010 Gold MUSE Award for Audio and Visual Tours. In making the award the judges stated, "This outstanding project combines a traditional format with new technologies, with good audio quality and good sound effects that add context."

Producers describe the exhibit: "*Imagining Lincoln and Juarez* audio tour at the Chicago History Museum engaged middle and high school students through immersive soundscapes for companion exhibitions on Abraham Lincoln and Benito Juarez. Moving away from traditional didactic approaches to teaching history, the museum's School Programs Team worked with independent producer Ed Hermann to use the affective qualities of sound. In contrast to the usual format of narrated tour, this experience featured sound effects, music, and sparse use of spoken word to create a sense of historical time and place; the goal was to provoke students' imaginations and create an impressionistic, emotional basis for viewing the two exhibitions, making the museum visit more vivid and memorable. Using pre-programmed iPods and an accompanying worksheet, students were immersed in the exhibition space through sounds that created a mood, affectively engaging them with the content and collection, and in turn, connecting them to history. The program comprises six individual tracks with a total running time of 24 minutes, acknowledging the target audience's desire to be independent learners by exploring, making choices, and sharing their perspectives. Tracking and timing studies demonstrated significant increase in student time spent in the exhibitions, and deeper engagement with the themes."



Learn more: <http://www.chicagohs.org/education/resources/lincoln/audio-experience-visit>

#### Would you like more brochures?

Send an email to Marie Clapot at [aeb@artbeyondsight.org](mailto:aeb@artbeyondsight.org). Be sure to indicate the number of brochures needed and your mailing address.

#### Need to get press coverage?

If you haven't contacted your local press about Art Beyond Sight Awareness Month, DO SO TODAY, and if you need any help, feel free to contact Art Beyond Sight for direct quotes from its staff to include in your press release – or give Art Beyond Sight's phone number (212-334-8723) to reporters. Also, feel free to print and include our fact sheets in your press kits. Here's a link to them: <http://www.artbeyondsight.org/change/aw-pressroom.shtml>

#### Want to publicize your Awareness Month events?

This is our final call for entries for the Art Beyond Sight Calendar. Send details to [aeb@artbeyondsight.org](mailto:aeb@artbeyondsight.org). Be sure to include your organization's name and the event date, time, location, and contact if pre-registration is required. The calendar is found on the Art Beyond Sight website; click on "calendar" at the bottom of the home page or click on this direct link to it: <http://www.artbeyondsight.org/change/aw-calendar.shtml>

#### Have a success story to share in a future Email Alert?

Send information and a digital photo or two to [aeb@artbeyondsight.org](mailto:aeb@artbeyondsight.org).

Email Alert written and designed by  
Laurie Horesta, Summer Intern