

Arts Access Disability Workshop



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Written by Dr. Melvin Carver, retired Art Educator

When a panel of artists with disabilities were questioned at the *Deeping Access and Disabilities Workshop*, relating to the importance of the arts in their daily lives, their responses were deliberate and personal. In particular, George Mitchell pointed out, "Art is life for me." Several artists and individuals with various disabilities including George participated in the workshop/panel discussion at the Duke Nasher Museum. Arts Access of Raleigh, NC.; Betsy Ludwig Director, hosted the workshop. The Monday, September 25th workshop, provided valuable information on how museums and visual art centers can implement best practices in accommodating visitors with disabilities. Professionals such as museum directors, and library staff from all over NC and including Richmond VA. attended the workshop to get a better understanding to more effectively serve all people. Disability advocates, cultural arts administrators such as college arts faculty were in the audience, too.

Betsy Ludwig questioned the panelists; "Why does art matter?" Mitchell revealed, he uses his creativity to stay connected to people and it keeps him engaged in a meaningful life experience. Another panelist, Judge Craig Brown responded "smell, sound, and touch," has given me a greater sense of appreciation for sound. Kim Grout, a writer and photographer explained that art "balances her existence." Grout is empowered by her disability and is moving beyond to express herself as a strong and capable person.

These five artists/individuals with various disabilities were present for the panel:
Judge Craig Brown; throughout his career as judge in NC, he battled an auto-immune disease that left him blind.

* George Mitchell; a local artist is known for his sculptures and paintings. After the misfortunes of a tragic accident in 2003, George was left bed-ridden and paralyzed from the chest down. George revealed he can now only use his mind to create and hands to draw.

* Kim Grout; a writer, photographer, is also considered an entrepreneur in Durham. Grout's leg was amputated at age 18, after a very long saga with a congenial vascular syndrome called Klippel-Trenaunay.

* King Godwin; a fine art's painter is autistic. He does not consider his autism as a disability but an ability when it comes to producing art. Godwin stated, "he creates art to sell to supplement his income." His mother sat with him on the panel to help with communications.

* Ronnie Marshall; a Raleigh man with cerebral palsy, is an advocate for people with disabilities. According to social media, he is active in church, various groups and is looking to talk to some folks about his disability.

All panelists were out spoken when addressing questions from the host. These artists felt it necessary that museum directors and others should understand the challenges they encounter visiting public spaces such as museums, community centers and etc. Although these spaces are considered ADA Compliance, disabled people continue to see needs for improvement. Ludwig, who joined the organization in 2009,

and has been instrumental in its recent growth, expressed her excitement about the expanding programs that are in the works for Arts Access. By bridging arts and disability, Arts Access programs and services work to educate arts providers and promote inclusive spaces and accessible opportunities for North Carolinians with disabilities.

For more information about disabilities go to Arts Access, Inc., www.artsaccessinc.org

Supercomputer Predicts

Optical Properties

Of Complex Hybrid

Materials

Materials scientists at Duke University computationally predicted the electrical and optical properties of semiconductors made from extended organic molecules sandwiched by inorganic structures.

These types of so-called layered "hybrid organic-inorganic perovskites" -- or HOIPs -- are popular targets for light-based devices such as solar cells and light-emitting diodes (LEDs). The ability to build accurate models of these materials atom-by-atom will allow researchers to explore new material designs for next-generation devices.

The results appeared online on October 4 in *Physical Review Letters*.

"Ideally we would like to be able to manipulate the organic and inorganic components of these types of materials independently and create semiconductors with new, predictable properties," said David Mitzi, the Simon Family Professor of Mechanical Engineering and Materials Science at Duke. "This study shows that we are able to match and explain the experimental properties of these materials through complex supercomputer simulations, which is quite exciting."

HOIPs are a promising class of materials because of the combined strengths of their constituent organic and inorganic pieces. Organic materials have more desirable optical properties and may be bendable, but can be ineffective at transporting electrical charge. Inorganic structures, on the other hand, are typically good at conducting electricity and offer more robust mechanical strength.

Combining the two can affect their individual properties while creating hybrid materials with the best of both worlds. Understanding the electronic and atomic-scale consequences of their interaction, however, is challenging at best, since the resulting crystals or films can be structurally complex. But because these particular HOIPs have their organic and inorganic components in well-ordered layers, their structures are somewhat easier to model, and researchers are now beginning to have success at computationally predicting their behaviors on an atomic level.

"The computational approach we used has rarely been applied to structures of this size," said Volker Blum, associate professor of mechanical engineering and materials science and of chemistry at Duke. "We couldn't have done it even just 10 years ago. Even today, this work would not have been possible without access to one of the fastest supercomputers in the world."

That supercomputer -- dubbed Theta -- is currently the 21st fastest in the world and resides at Argonne National Laboratory. The group was able to gain time on the behemoth through Blum securing one of only a dozen Theta Early Science Projects, aimed at paving the way for other applications to run on the system first launched in late 2017. They are now co-investigators on one of Department of Energy's prestigious "Innovative and Novel Computational Impact on Theory and Experiment" (INCITE) awards, enabling them to continue their work.

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