

excerpts from

# Creative Minds in Medicine

a cleveland creative intersection

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# case study

cleveland clinic arts and medicine institute



At Cleveland Clinic, board-certified music therapists treat patients to improve symptoms and conditions associated with illness and injury. Music therapy has been shown to decrease pain and anxiety, and improve quality of life, mood, and speech.

Photo by Kulas Foundation & Taxel Image Group, 2008

## lifting the spirit

You expect to see and feel certain things when you go to the hospital: white coats; cold stethoscopes; hard, sterile, gleaming surfaces; worry. You don't generally expect to find musicians playing there or spaces filled with colorful art.

The surprise you get when you walk into the arts-filled Cleveland Clinic may be part of your treatment.

"It really can elevate the mood," says Iva Fattorini, MD, MSc, Chair, Global Arts and Medicine Institute at Cleveland Clinic.

The Arts and Medicine Institute was formed in 2008 to build on Cleveland Clinic's solid tradition of mixing art with health care, she says. Since its founding in 1921, Cleveland Clinic has been known for displays of fine art on its walls and of artistic talent from its employees. Its art collection contains more than 5,300 works.

With the Institute in place, arts of all kinds have become an official part of Cleveland Clinic's health mission and programming, explains Maria Jukic, executive director of Arts and Medicine. To the organization's original ends of featuring art in the medical facility so that patients' experiences there will be more pleasant, two more aims have been added: The Institute's purpose is also to engage in, and scientifically research, the use of arts in medical practice at the Clinic, especially art and music therapy, and to build community around arts, health, and medicine.

Those goals have allowed the Clinic's range of arts therapies and programs to expand and deepen: Jukic and her colleagues are making more art available on Clinic campuses, finding more ways of using it to heal, and identifying more people who need its good effects.

**91 % of patients reported visual art improved their mood...music made a difference to 94%**

Illness and medical treatment, whether for the patient or loved one, create "a lot of uncertainty, a lot of time in your head hashing out what's going to happen," says Jukic. And few things take you out of yourself or cheer you up faster than an unexpected delight: "People are surprised when they walk in the building, hear the music, and see a live performer."

Seeing or hearing the art reduces anxiety, as does talking about it or making some yourself. Jukic calls it "normalizing," a process art can create that helps people feel more in control, less fearful. The bottom line? Art is good medicine.

And not just for patients. True, the sick remain the Clinic's central concern and patients are measurably benefiting from the presence of art and musicians – a 2012 Clinic survey found 91 percent of patients responding reported that visual art improved their mood during hospital stays of two to three days. Another survey discovered that music made a difference to 94 percent.

But pictures, concerts, and arts therapies also soothe the stressed-out families of the sick, refresh the Clinic's hardworking staff members, and engage and enlighten the public.

"We have always felt that art was there for everyone to enjoy," observes Joanne Cohen, executive director of Cleveland Clinic's Art Program, part of the Arts and Medicine Institute.

That program, which focuses on visual art, manages Cleveland Clinic's existing art collection, and adds to that collection by commissioning and acquiring new pieces. The Art Program presents a wide range of programs including exhibitions and tours that are available to the public as well as to those working or recuperating inside Clinic buildings. Many of the programs and works of art have been subsidized by donations from grateful patients and visitors to Cleveland Clinic.

"It's a great service to be able to share the artwork in so many ways," Cohen says.

Committees of experts including curators select the pieces to be bought and/or displayed. The quality of the art selected must be high, says Cohen, because it needs to stand the test of time. Those who choose the art aim for eclectic media and subject matter, because Cleveland Clinic has a global reach, and staff and patients from all over the world. It wants to reflect those many different viewpoints, which is also "far more interesting and engaging to a diverse population" across Cleveland and other geographic areas, she adds.

Yet the something-for-everyone approach does contain one other qualification:

Cleveland Clinic art needs to have something positive to say about the human condition and spirit. Art that's collaborative and/or environmentally conscious, art that calms, comforts, amuses or uplifts – these are the kinds of images and objects that contribute to healing.

It makes sense that many of the pieces reflect nature or the outside world. Water, landscapes, sunlight – such subjects tend to mellow people's moods and brighten their outlooks. Cohen says that one of Cleveland Clinic's most successful pieces is a video by Jennifer Steinkamp of a tree that went through seasonal changes. Displayed in the cardiovascular

**This is not luxury.  
This is something  
people need.**



Jennifer Steinkamp's video installation, "Mike Kelley 1," 2007, evokes many reactions from patients, families and employees. Photo by Bellamy Printz

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building, it is “probably the most beloved piece at the Clinic,” Cohen recalls. Benches had to be installed so people could sit in front of it. Others danced in front of it, and the wall had to be repainted frequently because so many viewers tried to touch and hug it.

Dr. Fattorini stresses, “This is not luxury. This is something people need.” Medicine has been dehumanized as a result, in part, of technological advances, she notes. “I think it is a good time to remind ourselves that we are not just human bodies.”

The arts help patients heal faster, she said, potentially reducing the length of their hospital stays. They can also help decrease the amount of staff turnover by making the workplace less stressful. So there are economic benefits to having an arts program – but the value of the Arts and Medicine Institute is much greater than that, Fattorini says. “It is emotional support. It comes from the heart, not the business plan.”



Left: Art therapists facilitate the creation of art by patients to assist with the emotions, stress, and anxiety experienced in the hospital setting. Programs are offered bedside and in groups, for patients and families.

Photo by Cleveland Clinic Photography

Below: Docents lead tours of the Cleveland Clinic art collection several times per week. Patients suffering from memory loss and their caregivers enjoy a special tour program monthly.

Photo by Jim Lang



## About the Community Partnership for Arts and Culture

CPAC is a nonprofit with a mission to strengthen, unify and connect greater Cleveland's arts and culture. Research is a core component of our work, and one of many ways we support arts and culture. CPAC provides counsel related to public policy that benefits the sector and the broader community. It provides a number of tools through [cultureforward.org](http://cultureforward.org) and [mycreativecompass.org](http://mycreativecompass.org) for arts and culture professionals and those who would like to engage with them. CPAC also carries out a variety of programs and services that help build the sector's organizational and business practices to support a vibrant, thriving greater Cleveland. [www.cultureforward.org](http://www.cultureforward.org)

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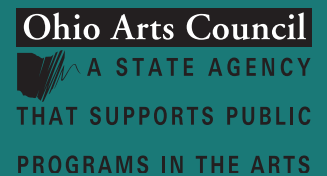


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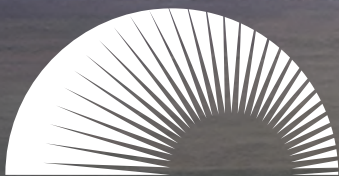


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