

“Accessible Art” at the Broad: Hands-On Exhibit Combines Literature, Painting, and Braille

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EAST LANSING, Mich. — A one-day interactive exhibit at the Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum will feature student-generated art that bridges painting and literature. This event, titled “Sense of Self,” unites students and faculty from across Michigan State University to reimagine the art museum as an inclusive space. Focusing on art accessibility across the visual ability spectrum, this day-long exhibition incorporates both academic theory and hands-on, creative engagement. Guests are invited to experience the artwork with their eyes and their hands, as each art piece contains tactile elements inspired by excerpts of literature and poetry.

The event is hosted by [Exceptions](#), an MSU-based journal that features interviews and creative works by individuals in the visually impaired community, as well as by the MSU Digital Humanities & Literary Cognition Lab ([DHLC](#)).

“We are incredibly excited to be collaborating with the Broad Museum, the RCPD (Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities), and the College of Arts and Letters to share this remarkable student artwork with the local community,” said Craig Pearson, founder and chief consultant of *Exceptions*.

The project is the result of a university-wide cooperation. Made possible by a grant from the College of Arts and Letters and matched funding from the Broad Museum, Pearson and the dedicated team at the DHLC commissioned literature selections from students enrolled in English courses with Prof. Natalie Phillips. These selections include excerpts from novels, short stories, poems, and even some original works — all united by the presence of multi-sensory imagery. In honor of Veteran’s Day, a number of the literary works illustrate experiences of war including war poetry and short stories by Wilfred Owen, Brian Turner, and Tim O’Brien, as well as original student poetry and soundscapes inspired by war memoir. These writings have served as inspiration for students enrolled in Prof. Alisa Henriquez’s studio art course. The resulting works display a wide range of interpretations and appeal to visitors both sighted and blind.

The event will include a morning symposium that brings together two national leaders in accessible art, museum outreach, and disability studies, Dr. Georgina Kleege (UC Berkeley) and Lucas Livingston (Art Institute of Chicago), to share critical insights and expertise. The evening exhibition showcases creative work by students in literature and art with remarks from Michael Hudson, the director of MSU’s Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD).

“Michigan State University is committed to fully including people with a range of disabilities, and we are excited to see this forward student-driven momentum in accessible art,” said Hudson.

The symposium will be held from 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Friday, November 10, 2017. The exhibition will be open from 5–8 p.m. with programming beginning at 6:00 p.m. Members of the

university, local community and beyond are invited to attend and engage with these dynamic works of art.