

# BU Arts Initiative Annual Report

August  
2017

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*The Boston University Arts Initiative works to deepen the presence and impact of the arts in the academic life of the university, ensuring that the arts are fundamental to the BU student experience.*

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## The Highlights

One of the biggest changes this academic year was moving into the *new office/work space*, suite 201 in the George Sherman Union. This location has been effective in raising our visibility with students and on campus visitors. It has also provided opportunities for us to advance our student arts council by providing programming and regular meeting space. This year, there were six exhibits of student work in the space curated and managed by two of our student arts council members. Three exhibits were sponsored by other BU organizations, including: Student Health, the Chinese Student Scholar Association, and the Undergraduate Architecture Association. The office space was also regularly (weekly and monthly) used by student organizations including the African Students Organization, Ballroom Dance, Black Artists Alliance, BU Comic Arts, BU Visual Arts Club, and Fusion Dance Troupe.



In November, in BU's first year of membership of *a2ru* (the Alliance for the Arts in Research Universities), four teams of faculty and graduate students presented at the national conference in Denver, CO, including faculty and students from the College of Fine Arts, College of Communication, and the School of Public Health. Also in November, we collaborated with the College of Fine Arts and the BUzz Lab in Questrom School of Business to present the symposium *Arts & Ideas in Action* exploring the role of arts and business in social impact. The event was a tremendous success with more than 60 students and 80 community members attending. Plans are in the works for a follow-up event for FY 18. As a result of that successful collaboration, Ty Furman has been asked to join the Faculty Innovation Network (FIN), providing input on programming and priorities for the new university initiative *Innovate@BU* and co-chair a sub-committee within FIN on arts and innovation with Jen Guillemain from the School of Visual Arts.



We increased our **collaborative programming** this year, working on events with the Law School, CGS, the Elie Wiesel Center for Jewish Studies, Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, and more. We also presented our third spring residency with AXIS Dance Company, an integrated dance company. The AXIS residency was co-sponsored

and planned with BU Dance, Sargent College, and BU Disability Services, and was launched by a half day symposium entitled **Performing Arts and Disability: Leadership, Inclusion, and Training** on March 13<sup>th</sup> co-sponsored by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, StageSource, Boston Dance Alliance, the New England Foundation for the Arts, VSA Massachusetts, Cultural Access New England, and live-streamed by HowlRound TV. The residency was featured in a segment on NBC 10 television, and included performances, workshops, master-classes, and class visits, including one event held on the medical campus.

## The Numbers

### Events and Participation– Sponsored or Co-sponsored

- 12 Programs, 25 different events
- \$110,000 +
- 2,000 + total attendees
- 807 unique students tracked from all 17 Colleges
- 6 art insider events attended by 88 unique students, 42% freshman
- Demographics – Black 4%, Asian 8%, Latino 11.5%, International 16%, Multi-Racial 4%, White 49%
- Collaborators: the Elie Wiesel Center for Jewish Studies, CGS, Law, Women's and Gender Studies, Sargent College, BU Dance, BU Disability Services, Howard Thurman Center, and Student Activities

### Programming Grants

- 21 total programming grants
- \$18,000 +
- 7 of the 21 were curriculum integration grants
- 1,200 + students engaged through programming grants
- Grants made to: African American Studies, Middle Eastern North Africa Studies, BU Art Galleries, CGS, World Languages and Literature, CAS English, Center for the study of Europe, Occupational Therapy, Latin American Studies, Center for the Study of Asia, Museum Studies, Dance

## Research Grants

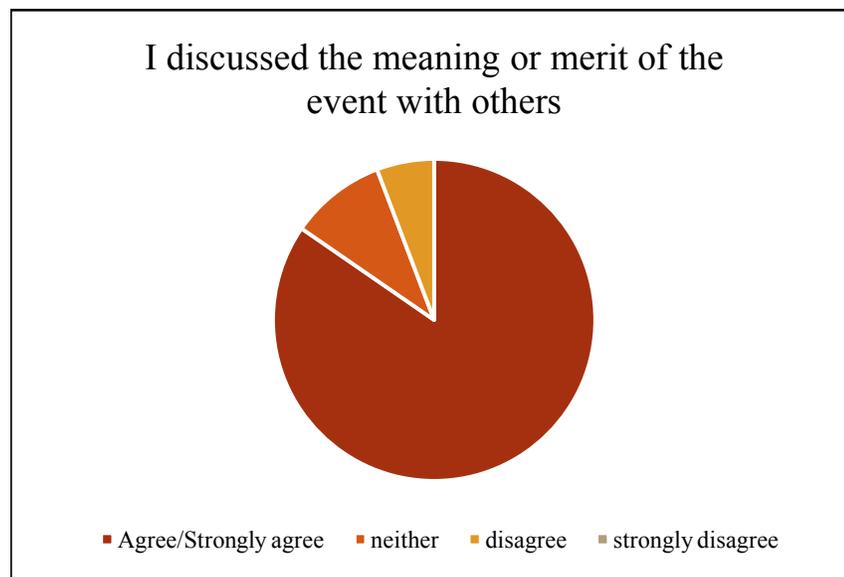
- 11 total grants
- \$30,000 + with support from the Associate Provost for Graduate Affairs
- 2 through Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program
- 9 Graduate students from: Theatre Education, History of Art & Architecture, Organizational Behavior, Musicology & Ethno Musicology (2), Cinema & Media Production, Music Composition, and Music Education.

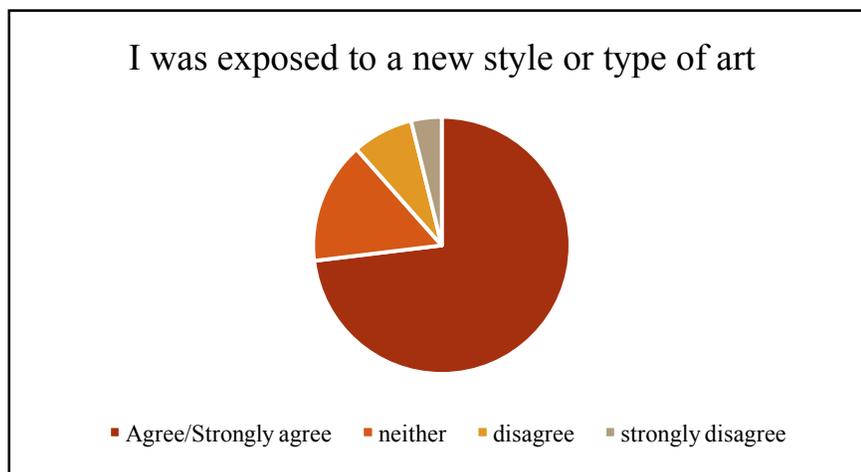
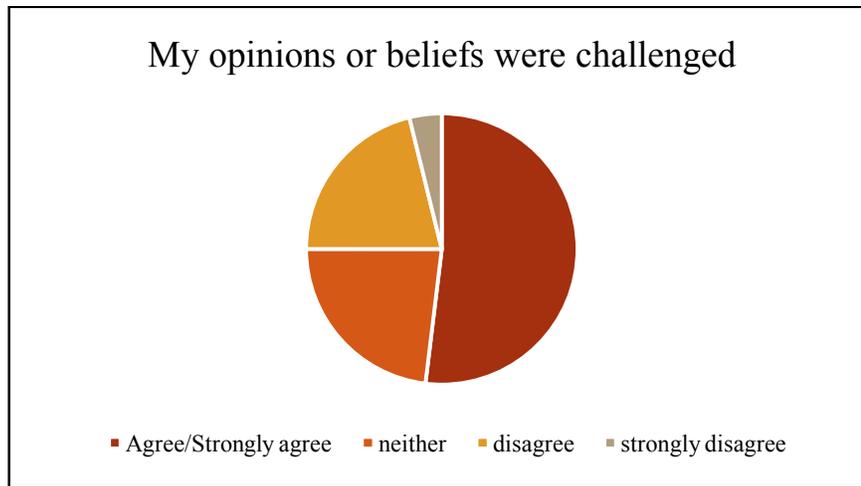
## Museums and BSO Participation

Museum of Fine Arts	13,604
Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum	6,300
Institute for Contemporary Art	2,003
Harvard Art Museums	565
Boston Symphony Orchestra	1,765
<b>Total</b>	<b>24,237</b>

## The Assessment

Our annual assessment survey received just under 200 responses representing all undergraduate years from all colleges except theology. While we know that we need a better response rate, the responses we did receive affirmed things we knew about barriers to arts engagement and ways they receive information. More than 30 respondents did not attend any arts events at BU, and the top reasons were, “*I had no time,*” “*I didn’t know about the events,*” and “*no one invited me.*” Of the students who did attend arts events, more than 40 attended events not sponsored by the BU Arts Initiative. Of those who attended any arts event, 63% attended something at least once a month. Overwhelmingly, students found out about arts events via the BU Arts Initiative weekly email or word of mouth, with BU Today being the third most noted source. We continue to do well toward meeting our learning outcomes (see below). Of the 52 students who attended one or more of our events, the results show that overall, students are effectively engaging with the content and style of art they are experiencing, with 50% or more positive responses to all but one outcome.





For more data see Appendix A

## The Five-Year Review

In April, the Provost Arts Council reviewed the original goals of the Arts Initiative and laid out some general expectations for the future. There were many successes acknowledged, including: the past three spring residencies, the web site, the new office location, the grants programs, a stronger community awareness of and support for the arts at BU, and a strong focus on diversity and inclusion. At the same time, we acknowledged there remains a great deal of work to be done in the next five years. That work will be shaped by the following priorities:

- Improving visibility, awareness, and engagement with key university decision makers
- Supporting the work of the General Education Task Force
- Expanding our resources to advance the work
- Increasing connections with the greater Boston arts community
- Ensuring that BU students are a priority audience for signature events

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## Appendix A – Learning Outcomes Focused Survey Responses

Field	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I met people I would likely not have met otherwise	30.77% 16	32.69% 17	17.31% 9	13.46% 7	5.77% 3
I made new friends	9.62% 5	21.15% 11	25.00% 13	28.85% 15	15.38% 8
I did research on the artist or topic	9.62% 5	40.38% 21	19.23% 10	19.23% 10	11.54% 6
I have actively sought out other arts events to attend	28.85% 15	36.54% 19	15.38% 8	17.31% 9	1.92% 1
I discussed the meaning or merit of the event with others	36.54% 19	48.08% 25	9.62% 5	5.77% 3	0.00% 0
I reflected privately on the meaning or merit of the event	44.23% 23	48.08% 25	5.77% 3	1.92% 1	0.00% 0
I am more inclined to attend future arts events	48.08% 25	36.54% 19	13.46% 7	1.92% 1	0.00% 0
I enjoyed the event	67.31% 35	25.00% 13	5.77% 3	1.92% 1	0.00% 0
I learned something new	51.92% 27	36.54% 19	7.69% 4	3.85% 2	0.00% 0
I learned about people unlike myself	48.08% 25	34.62% 18	13.46% 7	3.85% 2	0.00% 0
I have a better understanding of the human condition	34.62% 18	38.46% 20	19.23% 10	3.85% 2	3.85% 2
I was exposed to a new culture or social issue outside of my own experience	34.62% 18	34.62% 18	15.38% 8	13.46% 7	1.92% 1
My opinions or beliefs were challenged	17.31% 9	34.62% 18	23.08% 12	21.15% 11	3.85% 2
I was exposed to a new style or type of art	32.69% 17	40.38% 21	15.38% 8	7.69% 4	3.85% 2