

CO-ATA Summer Newsletter 2020



Art Therapy Community Letter

Dear Colorado Art Therapy Community,

The current board wanted to write a statement to address Colorado community concerns in regards to art therapy representation. The Colorado Art Therapy Association was established to represent the integrity and voices of Colorado's chapter members. We want to uphold the values and stand up for the Colorado community of working and growing art therapy professionals.

Our mission statement encompasses a universal language to embrace all people through engagement, education, and uniting with art therapy. As members of the association and the Colorado community, we are using creativity to promote and facilitate social change.

We believe in social justice and we plan to continue focusing on social action as it aligns with our ethical codes. The foundation of doing therapy is beneficence and non maleficence; to take action for the benefit of all clients and to abide by the principle of not doing harm. Having a commitment to inclusivity, integrating advocacy, promoting awareness, and upholding social justice are essential values to practicing art therapists in Colorado.

Collaborating and connecting together is the power of the Colorado art therapy community which is why it is imperative for our association to uphold a foundation for art therapists to stand on. We want to accurately represent and be the threshold in ways that strengthen to unite the Colorado community. In order to do so, to be a member of your Colorado chapter, you do not have to be a member of the Art Therapy Association of America. Community collaboration and unity are a goal to connect with to move forward using art therapy in ways that promote healing as well as social change.

Thank you for continuing to share your insights to help create a solid foundation for the Colorado Art Therapy Association. It's important to hear your voice! We certainly cannot pursue change without the strength of our united community.

Sincerely,
Jacenta Irlanda - PR- Community Chair

What Did I Miss?

To catch you up to speed and give you a break, you can access our previous Constant Contact Email Updates relating to Current Events and Social Justice here in PDF format.

[Honoring George Floyd PDF](#)

[Social Justice and Anti-Racism Resources PDF](#)

[Honoring Black Voices and Supporting Mental Health PDF](#)

[Celebrating Pride Month and Identities PDF](#)

**May 2020 - Art
Awareness Month**

CO-ATA received quite unexpected -yet very exciting news! Given how the current coronavirus situation continues to strain and complicate the daily lives of so many of us, the public, and policy makers, it was quite the wonderful surprise to get word from the Governor's office. They have released an official proclamation that May 2020 shall be is Art Therapy Awareness Month.

See the proclamation here.



WHEREAS, art therapy is an established mental health profession that uses the creative processes of art making to improve and enhance the physical, mental and emotional well-being of individuals of all ages. It is founded in the theory and knowledge that the creative process helps people resolve internal and external conflicts, develop interpersonal skills, manage behavior, reduce stress, increase self-esteem and self-awareness, heal traumas, and achieve insights; and

WHEREAS, credentialed master's degree graduate art therapists assess and treat children, adolescents, adults, and seniors; and

WHEREAS, art therapists design art therapy sessions for individuals, couples, families, and groups based on client needs; and

WHEREAS, art therapists in Colorado serve the diverse needs of Coloradans receiving care in hospitals, mental health facilities, community agencies, non-profits, homeless shelters, elder care facilities, hospice centers, art studios, schools and colleges, correctional facilities, and private practices; and

WHEREAS, please join the Art Therapy Association of Colorado and the state of Colorado to celebrate Art Therapy Awareness Month in May 2020.

THEREFORE, I, Jared Polis, Governor of the State of Colorado do hereby proclaim the month of May, 2020 as,

ART THERAPY AWARENESS MONTH

in the State of Colorado.



GIVEN under my hand and the Executive Seal of the State of Colorado, this first day of May, 2020

Jared Polis
Jared Polis
Governor

US Art Therapist Data

As the PR Community Chair, I did some research in an attempt to find black art therapists working in Colorado. I found myself running into many dead ends and had to ask myself more questions about marginalized populations and the art therapy world. According to **Data USA on Art Therapy**, in 2017 females made up 96.3% of art therapists and over 75% of art therapists in the US are white.

Since Naropa University is the only art therapy certified school in Colorado, I also looked at **Data USA on Naropa University** statistics. As it turns out the enrolled student population at Naropa University is 66.5% White, 10.8% Hispanic or Latino, 6.52% "two or more races," and 1.97% Black or African American, 1.76% Asian, and .621% American Indian or Alaska Native, and 0.207% Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islanders. "This includes both full-time and part-time students as well as graduate and undergraduates. By comparison, enrollment for all **Masters Colleges and Universities** is 54.4% White, 15% Hispanic or Latino, and 13.2% Black or African American."

After looking at Colorado, I took a bigger look and in the United States, according to the American Psychology Association (2005-2013) active psychologists made up of: 83.6% White, 4.3 % Asian, 5.3% Black, 5% Hispanic and 1.5% other racial groups. By 2015, 86% of psychologists in the US were white.

Certificates and Degrees Conferred by Race/ Ethnicity takes a more detailed look at what percentage of each race were awarded associates degrees, bachelor's degrees, master's and/or doctorate degrees from 2004-2015 in the United States. Between 2004-2015, 54% white earned certificates and 59% earned an associate's degree while black people made up 14% of associate's degrees and 18% of certificates (from 2004-2005, 70% white earned associate's degrees), 67% of white and 11% black earned bachelor's degrees from 2014-2015, 68% white and 14% black earned master's degrees and 69% white and 8% black earned doctor's degrees from 2014-2015. You can take a look at the bar graphs and statistics here:

Statistics and Bar Graphs

So what does this mean and what can we do about it? **Melanin and Mental Health** gives some guidance that non-Black therapists need to "pull up" and help dismantle racism that exists in the therapy world today. As of right now not everyone who wants to connect with a Black Therapist during these times will be able to do so and we have to acknowledge that there is racism in the field of therapy. Many therapists have consciously and unconsciously displayed bias on their clients of color. Although not all inclusive, this list provides a start. Here are some of the ways non-Black therapists can do their part:

- Get educated on the history of racism in therapy.
- Learn to de-colonize your practice.
- Educate yourself on micro-aggressions.
- Don't expect your Black clients to educate you.
- Don't gaslight, minimize, invalidate the racist experiences your Black clients share with you.
- Seek supervision from a Black supervisor as a way to check your privilege & biases.
- Call out colleagues when they're being racist.
- Write diversity statements, letters and emails to your graduate school.

- When holding conferences/workshops on diversity include Black & Indigenous people on the panel.
- Seek consultations from Black colleagues—pay them for their time.
- Commit to making long-term change & not hopping on the bandwagon like Black Lives Matter is some kind of trend.
- When you're at trainings/conferences with little to no Black people ask "why". What efforts has the organization done to include more diversity?
- Pledge to get really uncomfortable & stick with it. Your Black colleagues have felt like this their whole lives, through grad school & into their profession.
- Don't stop pulling up. This is a lifestyle not a moment in time.

If you're feeling overwhelmed, take it one day at a time. Create a social justice calendar where you take just 5 minutes a day or a couple days a week to incorporate new learning. We are in a revolution. Create a space for yourself to take breaks and give yourself permission to tackle small goals.

The Therapy That Liberates Community Facebook Group

6 Crucial Steps to Decolonize Your Therapy Practice by Shawna Murray-Browne

First CO-ATA Art Challenge 2020

CO-ATA's first online art challenge called the May Art Thrive Challenge. For each day in May we provided a one word prompt to create art to that related to art therapy and mental health. The post on Facebook alone reached 6,920 people and had 69 shares. A few participants gave us permission to share their art submissions with you which you can find on our Facebook at the link below:

[May Art Thrive Challenge Art Album](#)



Art image by Abby Hansen May Art Thrive Challenge Day 2- Healing

A woman, Kennedy Mitchum, got Merriam-Webster to update their definition of racism

Merriam-Webster's **first definition of racism** is "a belief that race is the primary determinant of human traits and capacities and that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race."

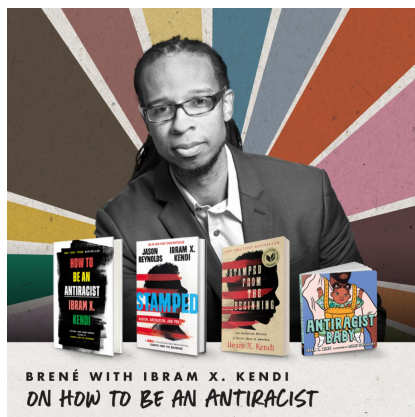
Peter Sokolowski, an editor at large at Merriam-Webster, stated their **entry also defines racism** as "a doctrine or political program based on the assumption of racism and designed to execute its principles" and "a political or social system founded on racism," which would cover systematic racism and oppression.

[Read Here](#)

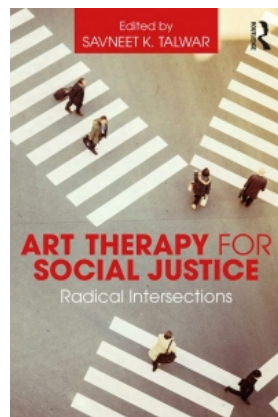


[Denver Colorado BLM Mural by Adrienne Norris](#)

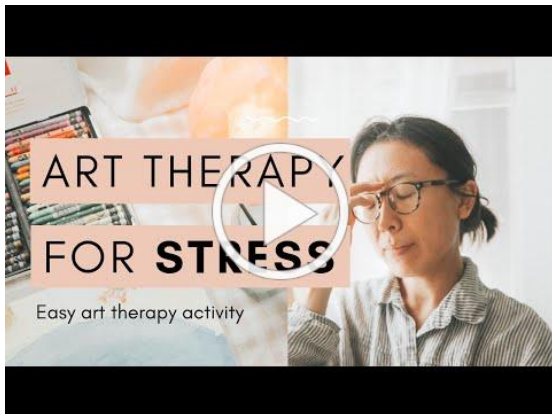
Highlighted Art Therapy Resources



Podcast: [Brene Brown with Ibram X. Kendi on How to Be An Antiracist](#)



Book: [Art Therapy for Social Justice: Radical Intersections](#) by Savneet K. Talwar



Art Therapist: Youhjung Son
Youtube Series: [Thirsty for Art](#)

Other Resources

- [Therapy For Black Girls Podcast](#)
- [Between Sessions Podcast](#)
- [A guide to how you can support marginalized communities](#)
- [The emotional impact of watching white people wake up to racism in real-time](#)

From the American Psychological Association

- [Bias, Discrimination, and Equity Resources](#)
- [Racial Trauma and Healing](#)

Art Intervention Highlight



Create Your Own Inner Parts Cards

Goal: Create a card for each of your inner parts: core self, child part, protector part, inner critic/manager/judge part, worry part, depressed part, personality based parts, caregiver, distractor part etc. OR cards based on the 12 archetypes.

Materials: Paper or designed/colorful (on one side) card stock cut 3" x 6", markers, pencils, pens, color pencils.

Directive: Create a card for each part, starting with your core self. Your core is the conductor and your parts are the instruments to the orchestra.

Once cards are created you can utilize the cards as a tool to help clients understand what is happening for them.

Guided question examples: Which part do you think is over active right now? What parts are needed to help that part? Which part needs to be put away? Which part wants to come forward?

How to Use the Inner Active Cards in Therapy

Tom and Lauri Holmes
Source: [Inner Active Cards](#)

ART SHOWCASE



Stolen Series Aiyana Stanley-Jones
7 years old / 7 minutes of color
[Artist: Adrian Brandon](#)

Stolen by Adrian Brandon

"This series is dedicated to the many black people that were robbed of their lives at the hands of the police. In addition to using markers and pencil, **I use time as a medium to define how long each portrait is colored in. 1 year of life = 1 minute of color.** Tamir Rice was 12 when he was murdered, so I colored his portrait for 12 minutes. As a person of color, I know that my future can be stolen from me if I'm driving with a broken taillight, or playing my music too loud, or reaching for my phone at the wrong time. So for each of these portraits I played with the harsh relationship between time and death. I want the viewer to see how much empty space is left in these lives, stories that will never be told, space that can never be filled. This emptiness represents holes in their families and our community, who will be forever stuck with the question, "who were they becoming?" This series touches on grief and the unknown."

Black Love Mural Festival will showcase art
by Black Denver artists at Civic Center Park



Artists will be paid with
help from the Denver Parks and Recreation
Department.

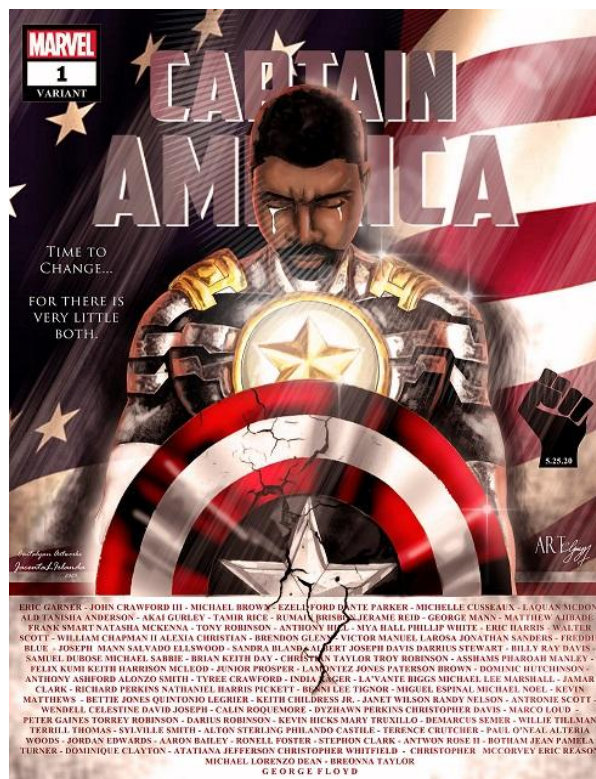
Artist Kierre Dawkins works on a mural
depicting the experience of young Black men in
the United States, in Civic Center Park on
Thursday, June 11, 2020

[Information Here](#)

Captain America Variant Cover 1 by Gerry Mulowayi and Jacenta Irlanda

Sam Wilson's Captain America for BLM

In 2014, Sam Wilson (aka Falcon) succeeded Steve Rogers in the role of Captain America. "Hardcore Fans" quickly rejected to the idea. When we run out of words, we use art to speak and shatter the silence. This art piece is called Captain America Variant Cover 1. It is a Variant because it is focusing on a lot of issues that are plaguing the country. Captain America is bringing the shield forward because this is the America he has to carry, but America is fractured. No matter what people of color do, America remains fractured and this is the sadness. There is a significant date stamped on the image. The date represents a carbon date of a point in time, when George Floyd was murdered and another uprising began. The names on the bottom are all the black lives lost to uphold the colonial flag. Colonialism is built on the lives that are lost.



Captain America Variant Cover 1
Art Collaboration for Black Lives Matter:
[Gerry Mulowayi](#) and [Jacenta Irlanda](#)



[Kadir Nelson's](#)
[Inspiration for the July](#)
[Cover of Rolling Stone](#)
by [Kimberly Aleah and Angie](#)
[Martoccio](#)

“I want everyone in this painting — particularly the African American women and children — to know that they matter,” artist says.

In a new video, artist Kadir Nelson explains how he illustrated the July 2020 cover of Rolling Stone, which arrived on Tuesday accompanied by Jamil Smith’s **cover story**. The painter, illustrator, and author describes his inspiration behind the cover, and what he hopes it contributes to the **Black Lives Matter** movement.

"American Uprising" by [Arist: Kadir Nelson](#)
as seen on the cover of Rolling Stone

[Read and See Video Here](#)

Colorado Art Therapy Association | www.arttherapycolorado.org



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