

Summary report – Training Art therapists for social justice: A University of Johannesburg art therapy conference

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Summary report

The inaugural University of Johannesburg's Art Therapy in the Global South Conference was held on 13 and 14 July 2023 at the Faculty of Arts, Design and Architecture (UJ FADA) Building. The conference marked a pioneering event in the field. This hybrid conference witnessed diverse attendance, both in-person and online (Figure 1), with participants hailing from various professional backgrounds (Figure 2), including international guests. The two-day conference featured a robust programme (Figure 3), encompassing a keynote lecture, presentations by University of Johannesburg Master of Art Therapy students, four international panels, and a social dreaming workshop. The average number of attendees, both online and in-person for 13 July was 110 and for 14 July was 78.

Count of Country/Region

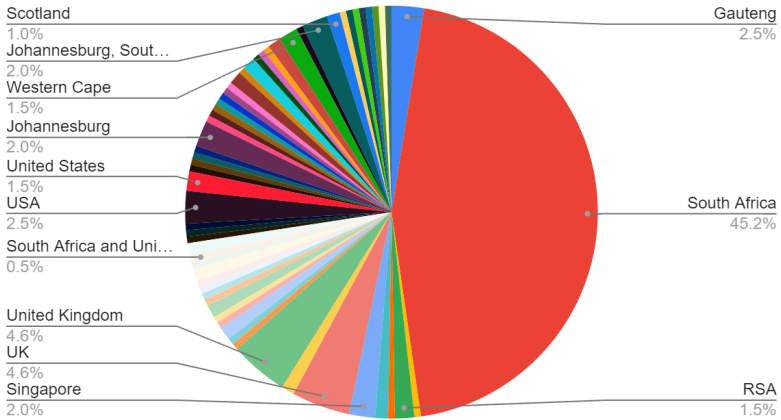


Figure 1. Geographical distribution of conference attendees by country and region

Count of Profession

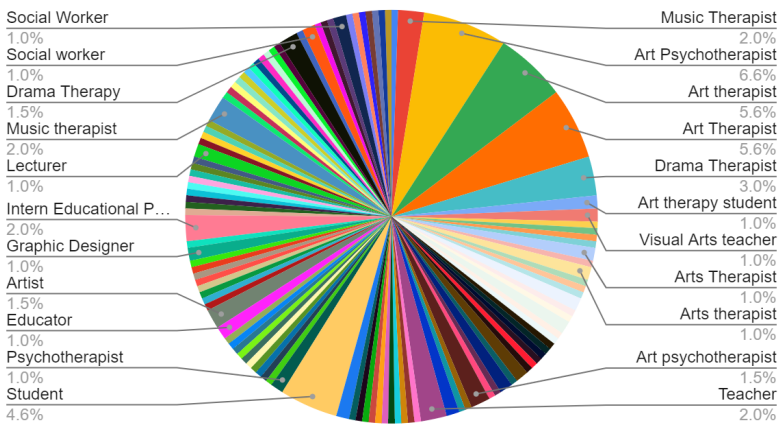


Figure 2. Diverse professional backgrounds of conference attendees

TRAINING ART THERAPISTS FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

University of Johannesburg Art Therapy Conference

THURSDAY 13 JULY

9:00 – 9:30 Welcome (Prof. Kim Berman) and **introduction** (Acting Dean of FADA, Desiree Smal)

Opening: Prof. Bettine van Vuuren (UJ Registrar (666 with Social Mood))

9:30 – 10:00 Overview of Conference Theme with Dr Nataly Woollett and Dr Hayley Berman (Senior lecturers UJ Honors and Masters Art Therapy)

10:00 – 10:45 Keynote Lecture: Dr Lireko Qhobela (Postdoctoral fellow with University of Cape Town, at the Centre for Theatre, Dance and Performance Studies)

Training and Research: Art Therapy for Social Justice

11:00 – 12:30 Panel 1 MA Art Therapy Research Poster presentations

moderated by Prof. Kim Berman

<p>Panelists: Leigh Anna Alexander Susan Kinnear Sandra Grooff Kamal Naran</p>	<p>Quigu Mwanza Elise-Helke Hesser Laurin Ross Kara Schoorman Kato Shand</p>	<p>Johanna Van Zyl Elise-Helke Hesser Masolelo Madhesho Vansosa Tsao Claire Woollett</p>
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12:30 – 1:30 Lunch

1:30 – 3:00 Workshop: Deep Diving Towards a Vision for Social Justice: A Visual Dream Matrix with Dr Neo Pule (PhD counselling psychologist) and Dr Hayley Berman (PhD art psychotherapist) (only for in-person participants)

3:00 – 3:30 Tea Break

3:30 – 5:00 Panel 2 Research as Storytelling: Sharing Wisdom with the Profession

introduced by Dr Nataly Woollett

<p>Presenters: Prof. Jordan Potokh – PhD, Art-4C, LAMT, Associate Professor in Art Therapy at The George Washington University in Alexandria, Virginia USA, current Editor in Chief of Art Therapy and former Editor in Chief of Art Therapy</p>	<p>Prof. Lynn Kaplan – PhD, Art-4C, LAMT, Professor Emerita in Art Therapy at MA, Albany University in Massachusetts, USA, current of introduction to Art Therapy Research (Routledge) and former Editor in Chief of Art Therapy</p>
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5:00 – 7:00 Cocktail reception and launch for the UJ South African Arts Therapists Journal

FRIDAY 14 JULY

9:00 – 10:00 Welcome and Reflection (Dr Hayley Berman and Dr Nataly Woollett)

10:00 – 12:00 Panel 3 Art Therapy and Social Activism in Community-based Projects

moderated by Rozanne Myburgh (Executive director of Letika to Phobos, UJ Art Therapy post-1996 lecture)

Panelists:
 Mafalola Kayana – co-director of Letika to Phobos
 Creative Development Project
 Charissa Janson – Art Centre coordinator, Community Art facilitator, trainee mentor and team leader of Letika to Phobos
 Angela Blackstone – Head Nurse, Children's Hospital and the COMMUNITY ARTS IN EDUCATION (CAHE) programme
 Kamal Naran – Senior Community Art Counsellor at Letika to Phobos
 Numbou Tsengzi / Ziyanda Magadla – Senior Community Art Counsellor at Letika to Phobos

12:00 – 1:00 Lunch

1:00 – 3:00 Panel 4 Art Therapy in the Global South

co-moderated by Dr Hayley Berman and Prof. Cathy Hyland Moon (Professor Emerita, School of the Art Institute of Chicago)

Panelists:
 Paola Luzzatto, Isaac Loma, Alex Ndabagwabo, Letitia Rubulana and Geoffrey Kimbithy – Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's, Canada
 Joannina Papatou – Zurich University of Applied Sciences, Switzerland
 Kesteven Lyambol – Zurich University of Applied Sciences, Switzerland
 Head of Department at University of Zambia, School of Nursing, Zambia
 Emma Mills – Southern Borough Council and Adult Social Work, Arts and Heritage, Colchester College UK
 Michelle Hogg – National Health Service, Newcastle mental health charity UK
 Pamela Ripstein-Hartman – Director of the Master's in Arts in Health and Art Therapy, Arts Faculty, Pennsylvania State University
 Nelly Adhiambo – Nurse of Mental Care, Psychiatry, University of Nairobi, Kenya
 Dr (Mrs) Mavis Osei – Insurance National University of Science and Technology (UNIST), Ghana

3:00 – 3:30 Tea Break

3:30 – 5:00 Panel 5 Using the Arts to Work with Refugees and Displaced Persons in Times of Crisis and War

international webinar moderated by Prof. Vivien Spieser and Dr Philip Spieser

Panelists:
 Dr Raymond Soreff – University of Basel / Openway Therapeutic Services
 Dr Lichia Sarraf-Yu – Centre for Social-Action Development, Geneva
 Nathalie Robardet-Timothée – ASB, first Art of the Soul, USA
 Dr Joanna Wroblewska – ASB, first Art of the Soul, Belgium
 Dr Diabra Kahanowicz – Super Academic College, Israel
 Bobby Lloyd – Art Bridges London

5:00 – 5:30 Reflections from the Conference and Closing (Dr Hayley Berman and Dr Nataly Woollett)

Venue: FADA Auditorium UJ Bunting Road Campus

Scan for the Registration RSVP link:



Figure 3. Full conference programme

Day 1 (13 July 2023)

The conference commenced with opening remarks from Prof Kim Berman (Convenor of the AT programme) and Desiree Smal (acting Dean of FADA), followed by an address by Prof Bettine van Vuuren (Registrar of UJ). Dr Hayley Berman and Dr Nataly Woollett (senior lecturers at the UJ honours and master's art therapy programme) provided an insightful overview of the conference objectives.

The keynote lecture titled 'Training and Research: Art Therapy for Social Justice' was delivered by Dr Lireko Qhobela (postdoctoral fellow at the University of Cape Town at the Centre for Theatre, Dance and Performance Studies).

Following the keynote lecture, the first panel was moderated by Prof Kim Berman and showcased research posters by the inaugural and second master's in art therapy cohorts. Dr Neo Pule (counselling psychologist) and Dr Hayley Berman (art psychotherapist and group analyst) conducted a workshop

with the theme *Deep Diving Towards a Vision for Social Justice: A Visual Dream Matrix*. This interactive session engaged in-person participants in the dream matrix experience.

The second panel on Research as Storytelling: Sharing Wisdom with the Profession was moderated by Dr Nataly Woollett (lecturer in art therapy at UJ) and featured esteemed international panellists:

- Prof Jordan Potash (associate professor in art therapy at The George Washington University in Alexandria, Virginia, United States, current editor in Chief of *Art Therapy*) and
- Prof Lynn Kapitan (professor emerit in art therapy at Mt. Mary University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, United States, author of *Introduction to Art Therapy Research* (Routledge) and former editor in chief of *Art Therapy*)

The panellist shared their insight into writing research papers and articles for publishing in the art therapy field.

At the end of this day, the University of Johannesburg's *South African Journal of Arts Therapies* was launched, the first of its kind in South Africa. This first issue was dedicated to the first Master of Art Therapy cohort, who contributed articles from their final dissertations.

Day 2 (14 July 2023):

The second day began with the second Master of Art Therapy cohort presenting their research posters, followed by the third panel on Art Therapy and Social Activism in Community-Based Projects moderated by Rozanne Myburgh (drama therapist, senior lecturer of the UJ art therapy honours programme, Executive director at Lefika la Phodiso – Community Art Counselling & Training Institute). This panel delved into the intersection of social activism and art therapy in South African community-based projects.

The panel featured panellists with extensive experience in the field:

- Angela Rackstraw (lecturer in the UJ art therapy programme, Red Cross Children's Hospital and the COMMUNITY ARTS THERAPY (CATH) programme)
- Charles Jansen (coordinator of the Art Centre, trainer Community Art facilitator, and mentor and team leader at the Butterfly Art Project)

- Humbu Nsenga (founding member of the Creative Mentorship Hub and senior community art counsellor at Lefika la Phodiso)
- Ziyanda Magadla (senior community art counsellor at Lefika la Phodiso)
- Kamal Naran (Master of Art Therapy student and senior community art counsellor at Lefika la Phodiso)
- Nomphelo Dumke (higher level community arts facilitator and a founder member at Intlantsi Creative Development Project, first cohort of the Train-the-Trainer programme)
- Sinovuyo Ngcolomba (higher level community arts facilitator and founder member Intlantsi Creative Development Project, first cohort of the Train-the-Trainer programme).

The fourth panel on Art Therapy in the Global South was moderated by Prof Catherine Moon (professor emerit School of the Art Institute of Chicago) and co-moderated by Dr Hayley Berman (art therapy practitioner and a founding member of Lefika La Phodiso). The panel introduced art therapy initiatives and training from various Global South regions, offering valuable insights into diverse practices.

The distinguished panellists included:

- Paola Luzzatto, Isaac Lema, Alex Ndagabewe, Letisia Ruzibuka, Muhimbili, and Godfrey Kimathy (University of Health and Allied Sciences (MUHAS), Tanzania)
- Joanna Pearce (University of Zambia, Zambia)
- Kestone Lyambai (head of department at the University of Zambia, School of Nursing Sciences, Zambia)
- Emma Mills (Southend Borough Council and Metal, Basildon Women's Aid Refuge, Goldsmiths College, United Kingdom)
- Michelle Hope (UK National Health Service, Place2Be mental health charity, United Kingdom)
- Pamela Reyes Herrera – (Universidad Finis Terrae, Chile)
- Nelly Adhiambo (Token of Mercy CBO, Bar Andingo Primary School, Kenya)
- Mavis Osei (Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), Ghana).

The fifth and final panel of the conference was an international panel moderated by Prof Vivien Speiser (professor emerit and co-director of the Institute for Arts and Health in the Graduate School of Arts and Social Sciences, Lesley University, University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa) and Dr Philip Speiser (director of Parkside Arts and Health Associates Haymarket, Virginia University of Johannesburg, University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa).

The panel included:

- Dr Raymond Saner (University of Basel/Diplomacy Dialogue, Switzerland)
- Dr Lichia Saner-Yiu (president, Centre for Socio-Eco-Nomic Development, Switzerland)
- Nathalie Robelot-Timtchenko (founder and executive director, First Aid of the Soul, Cambridge, United States)
- Dr Joanna Wroblewska (therapeutic coordinator, First Aid of the Soul, Belgium)
- Dr Debra Kalmanowitz (head of the art therapy programme, Sapir Academic College, Israel)
- Bobby Lloyd (visual artist, art therapist, educator, and CEO at the refugee charity Art Refuge, United Kingdom).

This international panel explored how the arts can contribute towards restoring common humanity and dignity to those in crisis.

The conference culminated with a reflective session guided by Dr Hayley Berman and Dr Nataly Woollett.

Post-conference feedback

Following the conference, an evaluation form was emailed to attendees to provide feedback on the conference.

Post-conference feedback indicated mostly positive experiences and found that the presentations were beneficial to increasing their knowledge and their professional development (Figure 4 and Figure 5). The fourth panel that explored art therapy and social activism in community-based projects proved to be the most insightful for most attendees, followed closely by the keynote lecture by Dr Lireko Qhobela titled 'Training and Research: Art therapy for Social Justice' and the second panel on Research as Storytelling: Sharing Wisdom with the Profession (Figure 6). Furthermore, the hybrid

nature of the conference was met with positivity (Figure 7). The attendees found the presenters to be knowledgeable, relevant, and engaging (Figure 8).

Some of the feedback received from the attendees included:

- Quality and expertise of the presenters were exceptional, well organised and executed, a brilliant opportunity to present one's own work.
- Insightful, helpful, and meaningful.
- What a positive start to this well-awaited social action conference. The keynote speaker Dr Lireko Qhobela was excellent, and all the participants and speakers added value to the field of art therapy in South Africa.
- I appreciated the experiences shared by the speakers. Networking was made available. The students' work was celebrated with presentations and a journal launch. Very impressive.
- Vast breadth of knowledge from presenters.
- Glad to have the inclusion of arts therapists and integrate the modalities.
- Extremely meaningful and rich conference.

Comments regarding areas of improvement primarily centred around technical and online issues:

- Sometimes, the sound was a challenge.
- Definitely a tech team next time.
- The online part could have had a person dedicated to working to make sure any trouble was addressed.
- If you attended in person, you could not engage with or interact with those online.
- More breakout sessions and opportunities to meet others in the field please.
- More movement and practical workshops like the social dream matrix (SDM) please.

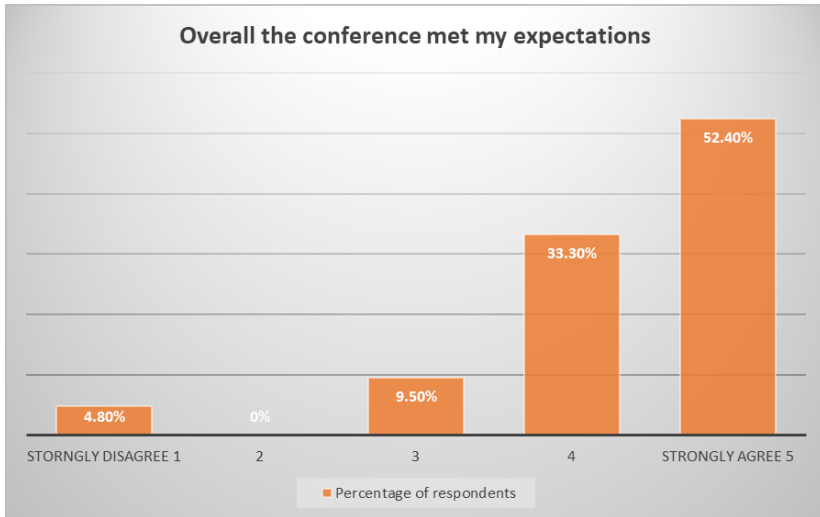


Figure 4. Feedback from conference attendees about their overall experience of the conference



Figure 5. Attendees' feedback on whether the conference expanded their understanding of training art therapists for social justice

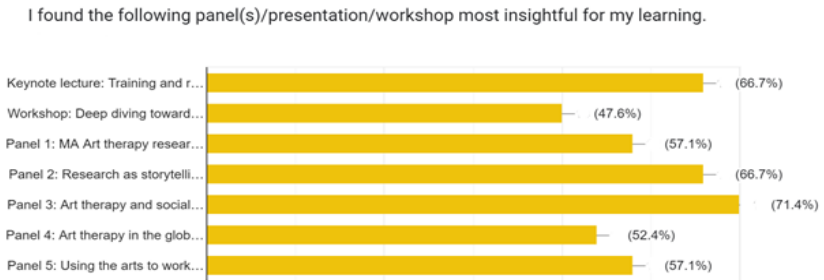


Figure 6. Presentations the attendees found to be the most insightful for learning

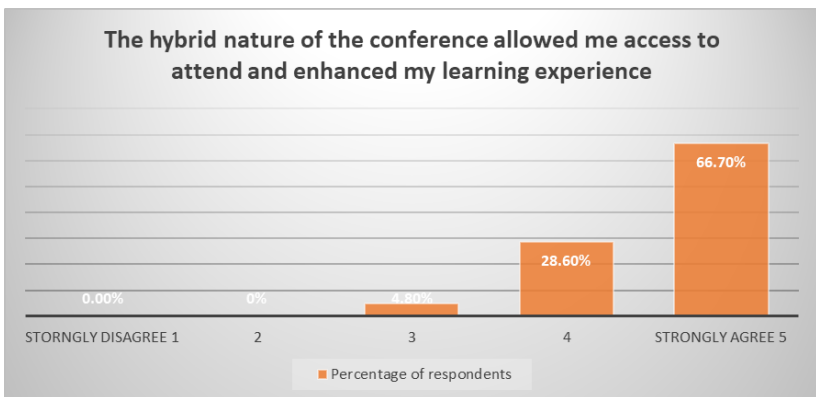


Figure 7. Perceived benefits of the conference's hybrid format on attendees' learning experience and access to the event

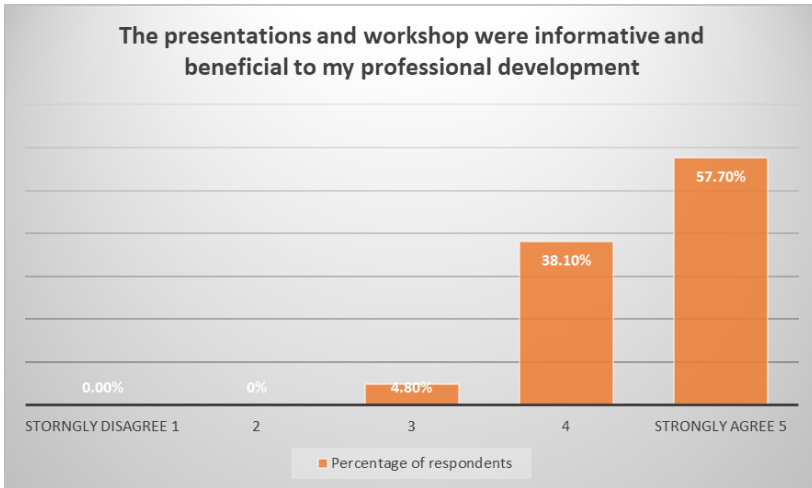


Figure 8. Effectiveness of conference presentations and workshops in enhancing attendees' professional development

Conclusion

Overall, the University of Johannesburg's Art Therapy in the Global South Conference with the theme *Training Art Therapists for Social Justice* successfully advanced discourse and knowledge in the field, setting a promising precedent for future engagements in the intersection of art therapy and social justice. Through a hybrid format that combined in-person and online participation, the conference successfully facilitated knowledge-sharing, collaboration, and engagement on a global scale. The conference featured a diverse range of presentations and highlighted the multifaceted nature of art therapy and its potential to address complex social issues. One of the conference's notable achievements was the launch of the University of Johannesburg's *South African Journal of Arts Therapies*. The journal represents a significant step forward in advancing arts therapies scholarship in South Africa. This groundbreaking event, the first of its kind, brought professionals, scholars, and students in the field of arts therapies together and particularly highlighted art therapy in the Global South.