The Jewish Museum Receives a Grant Supporting Arts Programming for People with Dementia and Their Caregivers from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

New York, NY, March 16, 2022—The Jewish Museum has been awarded a grant of $150,000 from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in support of a wide range of arts programs, virtual and in-person, serving people with memory loss throughout the five boroughs of New York City, and beyond.

The Jewish Museum’s primary goals are to showcase works of art and highlight their relationship to Jewish culture and to ensure that diverse audiences are engaged. Key to this institutional vision are Access Programs offering tailored activities for people of all ages with a range of disabilities. One of the most popular of these offerings are Memory Loss Programs which serve visitors with Alzheimer’s Disease and related dementias and their care partners through discussion, art making, and multisensory activities facilitated by Museum educators. Although most programs will be located off-site, Museum staff and educators will also provide opportunities for people with dementia and memory loss and their care partners to visit the Museum and experience original works of art in the galleries.

A previous three-year grant was received from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation which allowed the Jewish Museum to expand this important initiative beyond Manhattan to the Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island, working with partner organizations in neighborhoods that closely mirror the diversity of New York City’s population. Memory Loss partner organizations include: Selfhelp Alzheimer’s Research Program (SHARP) in Queens, JCC of Staten Island, New York Memory Center in Brooklyn, and Riverdale Senior Services in the Bronx.

In addition to programs offered to partner organization constituents, the Jewish Museum presents a series of memory loss programs for the general public called JM Journeys. Upcoming JM Journeys programs (currently virtual due to the pandemic) will take place on Wednesday, April 13 at 2pm and Wednesday, May 11 at 2pm and are free of charge. For further information the public may call 212.423.3289 or email access@thejm.org.

“Studies have shown that memory loss programming in art museums is beneficial for people with dementia, as well as their care partners,” said Claudia Gould, Helen Goldsmith Menschel Director of the Jewish Museum. “This important and greatly appreciated
support from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation will enable us to deepen the partnerships we have established, while expanding our reach beyond New York City through virtual JM Journeys, reaching an extended global audience,” she added.

The new three-year grant will ensure that the Museum can meet the demand for more sessions, be responsive to the needs of its programming partners, and provide more opportunities for people unable to travel to the Jewish Museum to engage with its art collection and exhibitions from locations across New York City.

Additionally, in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Jewish Museum adapted Memory Loss Programs to a virtual format to continue supporting communities with memory loss, and their unexpected success demonstrates how critical this program is. Because older adults may face a range of mobility issues that make visiting a museum difficult, even when in-person programming resumes, the Museum plans to continue offering a virtual option for the Memory Loss Programs. This format is crucial for reaching audiences with memory loss outside of New York City, as well as those who have difficulty traveling. Expanding digital programming will also enable the Jewish Museum to reach an enlarged and diverse local and national audience.

**About the Jewish Museum**

Located on New York City’s famed Museum Mile, the Jewish Museum is a distinctive hub for art and Jewish culture for people of all backgrounds. Founded in 1904, the Museum was the first institution of its kind in the United States and is one of the oldest Jewish museums in the world. Devoted to exploring art and Jewish culture from ancient to contemporary, the Museum offers diverse exhibitions and programs, and maintains a unique collection of nearly 30,000 works of art, ceremonial objects, and media reflecting the global Jewish experience over more than 4,000 years. The public may call 212.423.3200 or visit TheJewishMuseum.org for more information.

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