OPENINGS COLLECTIVE
10 YEAR ANNIVERSARY: 2006-2016
Openings Artist Collective

Openings was founded in 2006 as a project of the Paulist Fathers to engage in dialogue with artists. This dialogue led to our vision statement:

Openings believes that the connections between creativity and transcendence foster critical conversations that have the potential to unite individuals across cultural divides.

Beginning with Pope Paul VI the church has seen the importance of dialogue with contemporary artists. In 1982 Pope John Paul II instituted the Pontifical Council for Culture, convinced that “the synthesis between culture and faith is a necessity not only for culture, but also for faith.” Pope Benedict XVI invited 250 artists to gather at the Sistine Chapel to, as he said: “renew friendship and dialogue between the church and artists and to spark new opportunities for collaboration.”

Pope Francis has said, “In every age the Church has called upon the arts to give expression to the beauty of her faith and to proclaim the Gospel message of the grandeur of God’s creation, the dignity of human beings made in his image and likeness, and the power of Christ’s death and resurrection to bring redemption and rebirth to a world touched by the tragedy of sin and death.”

Openings follows in the spirit of dialogue and collaboration between the church and contemporary artists. Since 2006 we have exhibited the work of over 200 artists, most of whom would not be considered “religious” but whose work creates a conversation that, if one is open to it, can open the spirit to deeper meaning and awareness.

A work of art can be a great symbol, a meaningful sign, a symbol which may perhaps enable us to perceive something of what “involves us unconditionally,” the still hidden, incomprehensible great mystery in us and around us: that is, the supra-sensible ground of meaning of all our reality in the midst of the world of sense.

-Hans Küng

Art enables us to find ourselves and lose ourselves at the same time.

-Thomas Merton

Fr. Frank Sabatté, CSP
Director
Openings

Art is like religion in that people come to it for transformative experience. The Paulist Fathers, for ten years, have made their church a place for Openings to create and participate in events of reorientation, challenge, and change. There is a form of self-dispossession in giving over to others their resources. It is a risk they take, letting artworks that express a wide range of ideas and beliefs, perhaps even in contradiction to each other, fill their nave for all to see. But it is their own belief, in transcendence, that grounds these opportunities for dynamic exchange.

Openings has now presented the work of over 200 artists in a venue that is apart from art institutional, academic, and commercial settings. The projects occupy a unique space that is at once historic—as the Catholic Church is—and relevant to contemporary needs: it is impervious to market forces, uninterested in academic conventions, and free from narrow interests of traditional grant-making foundations that seek returns on investments. For artists, it permits opportunity to exhibit their work without outside pressures and expectations imposed on it. There is no agenda here other than to see what is possible in a space of freedom. In this sense, Openings has within itself a form of activism that is self-energizing and exploratory. It is autopoietic.

The sacred space of St. Paul the Apostle’s interior becomes an otherworldly home for art to unfold with new and unexpected meanings. In contrast to the bare white rooms of the gallery or museum, which can give an impression that art is created out of thin air (or, perhaps, \textit{ex nihilo}), the church puts art in its proper, more interesting place, as responsive acts of creativity made within a historical continuum of humanity. This understanding is what allows for a recognition that we are all part of something greater than ourselves. This is the thinking MoMA curator Peter Selz had when asking theologian Paul Tillich to write the catalog preface for the historic \textit{New Images of Man} exhibition in 1959. Though Selz is an avowed atheist, he knew the German minister understood his curatorial project—of questioning through art who and what we are—required radically different perspectives. It is with this ecumenical spirit the participants of the Collective find in each other new insights and opportunities for reconsideration. Through this dynamic interaction, of art and its presentation, the boundaries of their experience are enlarged. When we visit the church to see their work in Openings—that word chosen precisely for its breadth of meaning—their experience becomes ours.

Rob Colvin
Painter and Writer

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Selected Reviews and Coverage of Openings Events

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<td>Catalogue for “Freedom and Beauty” in the library of the Museum of Modern Art</td>
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Catalogue for “Freedom and Beauty” in the library of the Museum of Modern Art
## Participating Members and Friends of the Collective

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<td>Bill Abdale</td>
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<td>Brian Wood</td>
<td>Buzz McCall</td>
<td>Caitlin McKee</td>
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<td>David Humphrey</td>
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The Openings Collective welcomes visual artists working in any medium. Requirements for membership include attendance at Collective meetings and contributing to the Collective by planning, hosting, or coordinating an event for the group (such as a studio visit, discussion, or artist talk). Members may propose and curate exhibitions in the Church of St. Paul the Apostle. Summer months are reserved for member work, but members may curate the work of outside artists at any time depending on church availability and scheduling by contacting the coordinating team with a proposal.

Our Collective relies on its members to initiate projects, opportunities, studio visits, and whatever else might benefit the membership. If you would like more information, please contact us through mail@openingsny.com.
...And Dancers with Jessamy Murray, Director - Who, What, Where, When, Why is God?, 2007


Luigi Cicala - Naked Measures, 2010

Morgan Hughes - Naked Measures, 2010

Kinda Barazi - God Doesn’t Like Ugly, 2009

Various Artists - Art of Iraqi Refugees, 2009
Araceli Cruz - Naked Measures, 2010

Yoon Cho - Naked Measures, 2010

Debra Friedkin - Naked Measures, 2010

Laura Resheske - Naked Measures, 2010
Emily Adams - Rumble Above the Clouds, 2011
Keena Gonzalez - Rumble Above the Clouds, 2011

Baris Gokturk - Rumble Above the Clouds, 2011
Tim Webster - Rumble Above the Clouds, 2011

Johanna Bartelt - *Frenzy Into Folly*, 2012

Mark Brennan - *Frenzy Into Folly*, 2012

Anthony Santella - *Frenzy Into Folly*, 2012
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Sandra Mack-Valencia - Frenzy Into Folly, 2012
Meg Graham - Frenzy Into Folly, 2012
Iliyan Ivanov - Frenzy Into Folly, 2012
Chris Leib - 1.) All of the Above, 2013

Janna Dyk - 1.) All of the Above, 2013

Ariel Zakarison - 1.) All of the Above, 2013

Timothy Collins - 1.) All of the Above, 2013
Reiner Hansen - 1.) All of the Above, 2013
Joyce Yamada - 1.) All of the Above, 2013
Visakh Menon - 1.) All of the Above, 2013
Joachim Marx - 1.) All of the Above, 2013
Alan Richards - 1.) All of the Above, 2013

Eric Jiaju Lee - 1.) All of the Above, 2013
OPENINGS ARTIST COLLECTIVE

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Cecilia Charlton - #occupycommonground, 2014

Wei Xiaoguang (Left) and Idan Bitton (Right) - #occupycommonground, 2014

Timm Mettler - #occupycommonground, 2014

Mark Attebery - #occupycommonground, 2014
Alessandro Keegan - On the Inner and Outer Self, 2015
Robert Aitchison - On the Inner and Outer Self, 2015
Lori Merhige - On the Inner and Outer Self, 2015
Ellie Krakow - On the Inner and Outer Self, 2015

Ibrahim Ahmed - On the Inner and Outer Self, 2015

Michael Berube - On the Inner and Outer Self, 2015
Guy Ben-Ari - On the Inner and Outer Self, 2015

Peter Hoffmeister - On the Inner and Outer Self, 2015
Alfonse Borysewicz - Eastertide, 2011

Leigh Davis - Everything That Ought To Have Remained, 2011

Guillermo Esparza - Aranum Angelorum, 2010
Leigh Davis - Everything That Ought To Have Remained, 2011

Joel Carreiro - Fierce Bliss, 2013

Frank Sabatté - Life Threads, 2013
Tom Weaver - Squibs and Elixirs, 2014

Joe Smith - Monument with Wheels, 2015

Joseph Cavalieri - Deliver Us From Our Addictions, 2014

Brian Wood - Enceinte, 2014
Jason Saager - Scenes from the Time Collapse, 2015

Jason Saager - Scenes from the Time Collapse, 2015
Openings Summer Residency - Lake George, New York

Robert Aitchison - Lake George, New York, 2015
Openings Residency Participants - Lake George, New York, 2015

Michael Berube - Lake George, New York, 2015
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Nancy Gesimondo - Lake George, New York, 2015

Eric Jiaju Lee - Lake George, New York, 2015

Frank Sabatté - Lake George, New York, 2015
A Special Thank You to the following Benefactors

Ms. Barbara Boyle
Mr. Thomas Cahill
Rev. Tom Hall
Mr. William Derrough

...and a very special thanks to

The Church of St. Paul the Apostle
Rev. Gilbert Martinez, CSP - pastor
for his tremendous support
and encouragement

Kathy Zirnhelt
Director of the Welcome Center
at the Church of St. Paul the Apostle

and especially to
The Paulist Fathers
for initiating this project
We would like to thank all the Openings members and friends of the collective who have devoted their time and talents to ensuring the success of our organization over these past ten years.

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