



COLORADO SPRINGS

Fine Arts Center

at COLORADO COLLEGE

## Handbook for Tour Leaders

Fine Arts Center at Colorado College  
30 W Dale St. Colorado Springs, CO 80903  
719-364-5581  
<http://www.csfineartscenter.org/>

### Hours

Monday: closed to the public; workday for staff  
Tuesday–Saturday: 10:00 am–7:30 pm  
Sunday: 10:00 am–5:00 pm

### Free Days

Every second Saturday and third Friday of the month are free admission days for all patrons.

## **Background**

The Fine Arts Center of Colorado College is a unique institution aligned with and an integral part of Colorado College. The alliance was formed in 2016 with community support and input to create goals to increase attendance, expand community offerings and enrich student experiences at the FAC. The alliance of the two organizations supports the mission of both, while expanding innovative learning opportunities, arts programming, and cultural resources in each place. This makes the FAC an exciting place to volunteer for anyone interested in art and current trends in arts education.

The FAC is filled with the energy of public-school student tours, Colorado College students and patrons of all ages.

As an academic Art Museum, we embrace the following educational philosophy and core values:

- We believe that by fostering visitor engagement with art, museums can engender curiosity and build capacity for understanding ourselves and the world.

We value:

1. Interactivity – ways for people to concretely engage with ideas
2. Interdisciplinary – ideas, approaches, methods that cross disciplines
3. Dialogue – prioritizing discussion
4. Multiple modalities – using different approaches as access points for information
5. Inclusivity – includes all voices and needs
6. Inquiry – using questions to consider possibility and spark excitement
7. Critical thinking – the process of analyzing, synthesizing and evaluating information from many viewpoints

## **FAC Philosophy Connected with Tour Leaders**

This guide supports Tour Leaders (TLs) to better understand the connection of the position of a Tour Leader with the philosophy and goals of the FAC institution.

The primary role of the TLs is to conduct scheduled 90-minute student tours that align with the core principles of the museum. Tours are mainly for students in grades K-12, but opportunities to tour adults are available as well. No matter what the age of the touring group, the goals and values of the FAC Museum are a part of every tour. TLs receive training to conduct engaging and thematic 90-minute school tours using a variety of approaches including Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS), inter-actives to allow museum guests to concretely express ideas, and other methods that ensure all members of the group are included in the group discussions. In addition to the regular scheduled 90-minute tour, TLs will have opportunities to learn about and participate in specialty tours, such as the Poet's Muse and Exploring Southwest Art.

## **Tour Leader Requirements**

- Lead at least 25 tours a year
- Attend at a two-hour meeting each month for training and development
- Lead 90-minute school foundational tours with 8-12 students at a time
- Continue to improve on delivery of tour through feedback given by other Tour Leaders and Museum staff.

### **Tour Leader Expectations**

- Be a positive individual who enjoys learning and working with children and the community in a collaborative, innovative environment
- Embrace the touring model of active engagement, discussion, and inquiry
- Welcome feedback in the continuing quest for excellence
- Participate in workshops and other learning opportunities
- Practice touring strategies with others on own time
- Have a mindset that is inquisitive, self-motivated, and open to diverse perspectives
- Share commitment for active, intentional and ongoing engagement towards equity and inclusion.

### **Structure of Gallery Tour Program**

The Museum Education Director oversees the Gallery Tour Program. The Tours and Group Sales Coordinator acts as the primary liaison between Tour Leaders, schools, specialized tour groups and the Museum. The Tours and Group Sales Coordinator schedules tours and other Gallery Tour Program events. She is the main point of communication for this program. Tour Leaders will continuously learn from education sessions and each other. Collective thinking and creative problem solving will be the norm in the Gallery Tour Program. New program ideas will be considered by museum staff and final decisions regarding tours and programs will be made by the Museum Education Director.

### **Tour Leaders Training**

The formal training schedule begins with 5 three-hour sessions (dates and times differ based on the year). Since five sessions is not enough to learn everything, TLs are expected to spend their own time practicing techniques (such as VTS), shadowing tours, and pairing up to deliver tours. Reflection and feedback with other TLs and staff will occur after each tour. Each month, additional gatherings/workshops will take place for continuous learning on touring techniques and exhibitions. The twenty-five tours requirement begins to count when a Tour Leader has staff approval based on successful consistent attention to and delivery of all areas of the reflection table, with only minor “deltas” noted as things that need more comfort in delivery.

To align with the strategic planning goal of establishing environments where people feel valued and comfortable to discuss and explore the arts, the TLs training is conducted to support discussion among Leaders. All topics explored follow a learning design where topics are modeled, discussed in small groups to clarify, practiced in small groups, then practiced together. Tour Leaders support each other and create an atmosphere where Leaders are comfortable learning together and evaluating issues and touring techniques together.

### **Benefits: Educational Opportunities and Free membership**

Along with the provided training for TLs, there are many supports for leaders to continue their art and museum knowledge. The FAC gallery exhibitions change frequently - TLs are included in Gallery Walks for each new exhibition. The curator of the exhibit, and often the artist, conduct the Gallery Walk. This provides Tour Leaders with a rare glimpse to the background and rationale regarding the art in the gallery.

Along with the Gallery Walks, the curators and education team provide TLs with Touring Packets and Object Sheets. These are only available to Tour Leaders and museum staff. Touring Packets and Object sheets provide the concept of the exhibition and begin with questions to guide discussions with museum visitors. TLs often find visitors want more information on artwork. Along with a deep understanding of the wall text and labels, Touring Packets and Object Sheets provide direction for TLs. Touring Packets are the basis for all adult tours.

Tour Leaders meet regularly to learn, discuss and practice 90-minute tour plans and techniques for discussion and interdisciplinary ideas allowing students to make solid connections to the art. This keeps the group of TLs close as they work together, sharing ideas with the goal of supporting each other to lead engaging tours.

Each year, when Tour Leaders complete 25 tours, their membership is automatically renewed for free. Before that time, TLs are encouraged to be members to participate in special events and programming at the Fine Arts Center, but a membership is not required to be a Tour Leader.

### **Commitment to Tours**

Tour Leaders must plan to lead at least two to three tours a month and can lead more if desired. Tour leaders will be able to sign up for tours through an email system (see next paragraph) for any day of the week as far out as a month in advance. Rarely, scheduling requests might be sent out with only a week's notice, but by no means are TLs expected to be available at short notice. We understand TLs have busy lives and never want our volunteers to feel obligated to lead a tour. Tour Leaders will communicate times when they are unavailable to tour; a Tour Leader does not need to give a reason their unavailability.

### **Scheduling**

Volunteers are scheduled for tours, meetings, and gallery walks using the online scheduling platform Sign-Up Genius (SUG.) The Tours and Group Sales Coordinator manages the Museum's SUG account and all tours requests.

Tour Leaders receive email from the website inviting them to lead a tour whenever a tour has been requested. To volunteer to tour, Tour Leaders must click the SUG link in their inbox to access the tour invitation online. Each invitation contains multiple volunteer categories: available tour pathways (based on the Standard Pathways posted on the Tour Leader WordPress website), pair touring, unable to tour, or tour waiting list. Every invitation will also include information about each tour, for example: tour type, number of students/adults, age of tour participants, specific tour focus, and the number of tour leaders needed. If a Tour Leader can tour, they may choose to sign up for one of the following: to tour on their own, to tour as a pair, or, if all available tour slots are filled, to join the waiting list. If Tour Leaders are unable to tour for any given tour, they must choose "Unable to Tour." After clicking the "submit" button, located at the bottom of every invitation page, Sign-Up Genius will generate an email confirming the sign up.

### **Tour Preparation and Time Frames**

The majority of school tours begin at 10:00 am and end at 11:30, Tuesday – Friday. Tours are seldomly scheduled on Free Fridays. Once a Tour Leader has signed up for a 90-minute tour,

they can begin to prepare and plan. TLs meet 15 minutes before a tour is scheduled to start (9:45 at the latest) in order to talk through pathways and other details with fellow TLs. TLs must plan to stay at least 15 minutes after a tour ends (11:45 at the earliest) to share feedback on the touring techniques that were successful and brainstorm how to refine aspects of the tour, based on the Reflection Table. Most tours will be the Foundational Tour, which leads visitors to understand the elements and principles as a way to find meaning in art.

### **What are FAC Foundational Tours?**

Foundational Tours are created to provide tour leaders with current museum best practices and methods for delivering audience-centered tours across student grade levels. All 90-minute tours are based on an essential question and use the elements of art to begin conversations for visual analysis.

All tours consist of the same components:

- An essential question (EQ) to guide the tour that is revisited throughout the discussions.
- Student engagement methods that value the voice of the visitor
- Embedded inter-actives that encourage longer looking to reinforce concepts and connections
- Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS), a discussion method that supports students in finding meaning in images through visual evidence and personal association
- Vocabulary building to aid connections between art and visitors' lives

### **How are Foundational Tours Designed?**

The Foundational Tours are designed for consistency of delivery for all grades. The pathway through the FAC, with possible times noted, is flexible and not dependent on current gallery images. Tours build appropriate art and discussion skills across grade levels.

- The Primary (K-1) tour presents the Elements of Art: color, line and shape.
- Foundational Tour grade 2-3 presents the elements of color, line, shape/form and texture.
- Foundational Tour grade 4-5 builds on the elements to include principles of art.
- Foundational Tour grade 6-8 presents both the elements and principles of art, as well as possible topics that could include how art cultivates global perspectives, literacy skills, or personal and social learning.

### **What are the benefits of Foundational Tours?**

Touring with the Foundational Tours allows tour leaders to plan and share common experiences before and after a tour. They provide a consistent experience for museum visitors for debriefing when they return to school. Teachers begin to see the building of skills through the grades for return visits. The Foundational Tours allow TLs to use the same techniques and support each other as the art changes in the museum.

### **Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS)**

VTS is a strategy for object-based learning that encourages museum visitors to examine art, think about art as it relates to the visitor's life, contribute art observations and ideas to the group discussion and listen and build understandings as a group. VTS is used with tour groups of all ages. Training for TLs in VTS includes asking an opening question: "What's going on in this picture?" And responding to a visitor's inference by asking, "What do you see that makes you say ...?" Leaders will see this strategy modeled and have time to practice and provide feedback

to each other. With VTS there is training on listening carefully to museum guests, and Leaders learn to paraphrase comments. Paraphrasing in a concise, neutral manner is modeled, discussed and practiced with self-assessment and group feedback. VTS supports school tours students with 21<sup>st</sup> century skills of effective oral communication (listening, group discussion) and building vocabulary choices from Common Core and Colorado State Standards.

### **Inter-actives**

Inter-actives are hands-on materials and activities that engage visitors, lead to longer looking, and allow museum guests to interact with art to better understand and make connections to their own lives. The inter-actives, created by the museum education team, are provided for Tour Leaders. The use of these materials is included in training, with modeling, discussing, and practice in small groups in the galleries. TLs work together to learn 90-minute tours that include VTS and inter-actives for museum visitor engagement. The use of inter-actives supports inquiry strategies, as well as connections between the museum, classroom and life.

### **Commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**

Colorado College values all persons and seeks to learn from their diverse experiences and perspectives. Achieving diversity of origin and thought is critical to fulfilling the College's aim to provide a liberal arts education that is among the finest in the country. Students, faculty, and staff work together to instigate, coordinate, and support diversity issues among all members of the CC community.

To uphold this commitment, TL meetings will consistently address issues of diversity and anti-racism, intentionally interrogating our shared beliefs, practices, and systems toward inclusive and equitable outcomes at Colorado College.

### **Tour Leaders are Part of a Larger Team**

The Tour Leaders are part of a larger team of museum staff.

- Patron Experience Guides are there to safeguard the art collection (719.477.4304). Protection of the art is everyone's job. Emphasis on looking without touching is one of the first things you will tell students you are touring, as described during training. The Patron Experience Guides are the main providers of security and any security concerns should be brought to their attention. Place their phone number in your phone.
- Patron Services Associates sit at the front desk (719.364.5583). They greet visitors, charge admission and direct museum visitors as they enter the building. They encourage people to place their belongings in the coatroom. If you see someone with a backpack, they can be directed back to the coatroom, since turning around with a backpack could easily hit or damage art. No food or drink is allowed in the galleries, and tables are provided outside the main galleries for people to leave drinks. Reach out to the front desk since they are aware of who has entered the museum and if there might be any issues with a large group. They are your hub and can support you if you need someone.
- Student Guides are often on duty from 12:30-closing when the museum is open. Student Guides facilitate positive visitor experiences in the FAC museum as well as ensure protection of the artwork. Duties include welcoming visitors, making certain that artwork is kept safe, and sharing opportunities for visitors to experience the exhibits. Student

Guides connect visitors to resources throughout the museum, such as gallery guides, books, interactives in the galleries and museum activities.

## **History of the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center at CC**

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### **Overview**

- **1919:** Founding of Broadmoor Art Academy (BAA) by *Julie* and *Spencer Penrose*
  - Vision of new art school of national stature in the Pikes Peak landscape
- **1928** Taylor purchases the *Santos* collection from artist Frank Applegate
- **1929-31:** BAA expands in to a fine art museum, an art education institution and a theatre
  - One of the first multidisciplinary arts center
  - *Julie Penrose* donates the land; *Alice Bemis Taylor* donates her large Southwestern art collection and library; *Elizabeth Sage Hare* was the first President
  - Taylor collected art from Native American and Hispanic Southwest and Rocky Mountain Regions with an emphasis on pueblo and Navajo crafts, in particular Navajo weaving and other textiles,
  - In the next decades, the ‘Taylor museum’ grows with other gifts and purchases from funds and extends to the larger Southwest, incl. New Mexico, Mexico and Guatemala with a very broad range and diversity in artworks
- **1931:** muralist, cartoonist and illustrator *Boardman Robinson* becomes the new director
- **1934:** Architect *John Gaw Meem* designs a cutting-edge arts center woven with elements of Pueblo structures and Native American iconography with Art Deco style
- **1935** Taylor purchases Frank Applegate’s Pueblo pottery collection
- **1936:** FAC opening week, more than 5000 spectators to enjoy world-class entertainment
  - performances and exhibition of pieces from the Taylor museum, as well as by Cezanne, Renoir, Matisse, Picasso, Van Gogh and many others
  - along with a shocking performance of a barefoot interpretation of esoteric modern dance by Martha Graham
- **1937** Taylor purchased several Pueblo, Navajo, Nuevomexicano and Mexican textiles from the collection of Arthur Seligman
- **1937-50** Harry Garnett, a Colorado Springs journalist and a collector of Southwest arts and crafts, worked for the museum and managed to acquire Nuevomexicano material with large importance, the majority of objects were santos, including the content of three chapels and an altar screen and bultos by Jose Rafael Aragon
- **1941** museum begins its long-standing commitment to the tribal and folk arts of Mexico
- **1976** acquisition of Indigenous Art as American Art
- **1979-82** with substantial aid of the National Endowment for the Arts, the museum publishes three significant volumes, including ‘The chapel of our Lady Talpa’ and ‘Christian images in Hispanic New Mexico’
- **1983-85** a series of gifts including 200 well-documented figural folk ceramics from Mexico made between 1930-80 and more than 450 examples of Navajo and Pueblo Indian jewelry made between 1930-75
- **1980s** - the annual gift of purchase funded by the Debutante Ball Committee has enabled the museum to selectively acquire significant pieces in its areas of interest, for example a sketchbook by the Kiowa Indian Zotom

- **1986:** The FAC is placed on the National Register of Historic Places.
- **2007:** Large renovation to building, which added a new Tactile Gallery
- **2017:** The FAC enters into an historic alliance with Colorado College

### **The Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center**

The story of the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center begins with the founding of the Broadmoor Art Academy by Julie and Spencer Penrose in 1919. The Penrose family donated their home to create an art colony for artists from around the country and support the arts and culture in Colorado Springs. The unique landscape of the American West attracted prominent artists such as John F. Carlson, Robert Reed, and Ernest Lawson. Beginning in 1926, the academy served as the Department of Art for Colorado College. The Broadmoor Art Academy quickly became the cultural center of Colorado Springs with the Colorado Springs Chapter of the Drama League holding performances there and regular art exhibits installed in the former Penrose home.

During the Great Depression, three dedicated philanthropists — Julie Penrose, Alice Bemis Taylor, and Elizabeth Sage Hare — envisioned expanding the Broadmoor Art Academy into an entire arts district under one roof. The Penrose family donated the land; Taylor donated her Southwestern art collection, her art library, and the resources to build a grand arts center; and Hare served as the first board president and connection to the art world in New York and Europe. They enlisted acclaimed architect John Gaw Meem to design a building that blended elements of Pueblo structures, Native American iconography, and Art Deco into the design.

The center changed its name and opened as the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center in 1936 with a weeklong gala. Frank Lloyd Wright lectured on the architecture of the building, a performance of Erik Satie’s “Socrates” was presented with a set designed by Alexander Calder, and the museum’s first exhibition featured Pablo Picasso and Henri Matisse — contemporary artists at the time — accompanied by works by Renoir, Cezanne, and Van Gogh.

Martha Graham performed on the new stage in one of her first appearances outside New York, and her dance company returned for the center’s 50th and 75th anniversaries. Another founder of American modern dance, Hanya Holm, started the dance program at Colorado College. Beginning with the first summer dance festival in 1941, Holm returned each year to teach talented dancers from across the United States.

Winning international awards for its architecture, the center was one of the first in the country to combine arts and cultural activities in one structure, inspiring other similar arts centers in communities across the country. While the center provided cultural opportunities in the arts, the founders saw the added benefit of offering jobs to Colorado Springs citizens during the Great Depression. Their vision not only created the center, but also encouraged the collaborative spirit among the Colorado Springs community and local, regional, and national artists that thrives today. The generosity of Julie and Spencer Penrose has continued through their El Pomar Foundation, making them the single-largest donor to the center and the college.

In 2007, a \$30 million renovation and addition to the center was completed, designed by local son and nationally recognized architect David Owen Tryba. The addition enhances the original structure and features world-class galleries for the permanent collections and special exhibitions

and a unique Tactile Gallery where visitors — especially the visually impaired, children, and wheelchair users — can experience art both visually and with their hands. Now the center includes a museum, a theatre, and Bemis, and enjoys a 132,286 square-foot facility committed to innovative, educational, and multidisciplinary arts experiences.

### **Colorado College History**

In 1874 — two years before Colorado became a state — General William J. Palmer set aside land for a college at the base of Pikes Peak, establishing Colorado College (referred to as *the college* in this document). The first building, Cutler Hall, was occupied in 1880; the first bachelor's degrees were conferred in 1882. In the 1950s the college reached academic maturity, due in part to expanding the library and attracting leading scholars to the faculty. In 1970, the college adopted the Block Plan, which allows students and faculty to focus on one subject at a time for three and a half weeks. Today the college is ranked among the top colleges and universities in the U.S. Attracting students from all 50 states and 58 other countries, Colorado College includes a community of over 2,000 students and 200 full-time faculty members. The 10:1 student-to-faculty ratio ensures face-to-face interaction in class and out of class.

With the combination of the Block Plan and its unique setting in the heart of the Rocky Mountain West, the college has set itself apart as a rigorous, intensive liberal arts learning environment ideally suited to students who are dedicated to innovation and learning — and adventurous about how they learn.

Jill Tiefenthaler became Colorado College's 13th president in 2011. Under her leadership, the college is implementing a strategic plan with three areas of focus that build on current strengths and distinctiveness — continuing the development of the innovative Block Plan, underscoring the college's sense of place in the Rocky Mountain West, and investing in the innovative and creative people who make up the community. The specific initiatives that make up the plan are increasing excellence while encouraging an organization that is nimbler and more responsive to its mission to provide the finest liberal arts education in the country.

### **Opportunity for Alliance**

For nearly 100 years, the center and college have enjoyed many productive relationships. For example, the center served as the de facto Department of Art for the college from the 1920s to the 1940s. In the 1930s, the center and the college co-hosted an annual conference. The same person led the CC Department of Art and Bemis in the 1960s, and the center and the college shared expertise in the “Devotional Cultures” exhibition in 2013. In 2015, the center's art publication archives became a gift to Tutt Library at the college.

Both the college and the center are deeply rooted in the legacy of Alice Bemis Taylor. The center was created through her bold vision, passion for the arts, and dedication to Colorado Springs. The college has thrived in part due to the continued support of Mrs. Taylor and the Bemis family. Now the center and the college honor her legacy and innovative spirit by aligning to provide innovative, educational, and multidisciplinary arts experiences that elevate the individual spirit and inspire community vitality, building on the center's history as a unique cultural pillar of the Rocky Mountain region.

In many respects the center has done well in recent years. It undertook a \$30 million expansion

and renovation in 2007. In the last two years, it increased earned revenue by more than 50 percent, and in 2016 it announced a \$1 million gift. Nonetheless, without regular public funding or a large endowment, the center relies heavily on annual donations from the community. This arrangement has rendered the center financially vulnerable for years. The alliance emerged as a viable opportunity to provide a solid and secure financial future for the center while honoring its mission to “provide innovative, educational, and multidisciplinary, multidimensional arts experiences, building upon its history as a unique cultural pillar of the Rocky Mountain region.”

The boards of each institution approved the alliance on August 24, 2016, and the college assumed management responsibilities on September 1. Designed to go beyond simply merging the two organizations, the alliance seeks to create a new, forward-looking structure that honors the commitment of both institutions to sustainable fine arts programming. Outcomes will include a notable increase in attendance, expanded community offerings, and enriched student experiences.

### **Themes to Guide Progress**

To inform the plan, members of the subcommittees learned much more about our community’s deep engagement with art and its commitment to celebrating the ways in which art enriches understanding, inspires those who engage, and expands their worlds. The themes that mark this strategic plan – excellence, access, and collaboration and connectivity – recognize this spirit of engagement and innovation as defining features of the FAC.

*Excellence* in supporting ever-increasing quality and distinctiveness honors both the center’s historic vision for innovative, culturally diverse, collaborative arts programs and the college’s commitment to providing the finest liberal arts education to its students. Individually and together, the center is joining with the college to support a thriving city, region, and campus; share resources for maximum impact; promote debate in ways that lead to tolerance and respect for different perspectives; and create powerful arts experiences for the college and the community. To act on this theme, the college will draw on the strength of the FAC to achieve its mission of excellence in the liberal arts and, in turn, each FAC program will draw on the strength of the college to achieve the highest quality among its peers. In addition, the FAC and the college will bring exhibitions, classes, performances, and other events of the highest quality to the college and the community and infuse them with learning opportunities for all.

*Access*, or increasing and broadening engagement and interaction among a wide range of constituents and programs, opens the door to performances, exhibits, classes, and other cultural and learning experiences for people of all ages, interests, and circumstances at the college, in the larger community and around the region, nation, and world. To underscore this theme, the FAC will provide multi-faceted experiences for people of all ages and skill levels to explore a broad approach to learning in the arts. Inclusive points of view will attract participants from all groups, locations, and circumstances, as will programs and facilities that accommodate the special and physical needs of visitors. On campus, the alliance will foster a more inclusive liberal arts education, helping faculty guide students who engage with cultural shifts, incorporating nontraditional voices into academic programs, and fostering multidisciplinary approaches to academic subjects; help the college boost recruitment and retention of students, especially those who are interested in participating or majoring in the arts; and promote diversity among students and faculty by connecting important cultural heritages to our core academic mission. The alliance will also enhance our capacity to engage with visiting artists, scholars, and community members to explore the dynamic continuity of cultural

expression and cultural production in our region. (The term *artist* refers to both visual and performing artists in this document.)

*Collaboration and connectivity* are historical cornerstones of the center. They are also cornerstones of progressive higher education institutions and Colorado College is no exception. Through their creative support of collaborative interaction, the center and the college are breaking the mold of an institution as the single transmitter of knowledge. To achieve this aim, the alliance will link and leverage all the assets of the new alliance — venues, staff, communications, funding, and other resources — to create maximum impact on the FAC and Colorado Springs community. The FAC will also develop a creativity lab to encourage the mindset that taking risks, failing, and trying again is a positive and necessary part of the creative process. Internships will immerse students in a formal program of study and enable them to work with fellows, curators, museum educators, CC faculty, and the FAC registrar to research objects in the collection, participate in the continual stewardship and care of those objects, and design museum exhibits. Marking exciting advances in the arts *and* in higher education, this theme honors who we are and who we are trying to be.