

POWER OF ART

Inspiring Community Healing After Gun Violence

REPORT ON EVALUATION ACTIVITIES & KEY FINDINGS

Author: Stacey M. Kesten, PhD
Collaborators Consulting Group
February 2021

Submitted to:
City of Coral Springs and City of Parkland



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	3-5
Background	6-11
Key Findings	12-18
Impact by Installation	19-31
Lasting Legacy	32-33
Recommendations	34

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On November 20th 2018, less than one year after the mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, Bloomberg Philanthropies awarded a \$1 million Public Art Challenge grant to the City of Coral Springs, in partnership with the City of Parkland. Equipped with funding and a vision for healing, the two cities embarked on an 18-month collaborative partnership to leverage the potential of art.

The Power of Art: Inspiring Community Healing After Gun Violence was a community-engaged public art project that involved a series of five curated temporary art installations alongside the expansion of an art therapy program based out of the Coral Springs Museum of Art. Through multiple engagement pathways, the project reached thousands of individuals and attracted national and international attention.

A descriptive case study approach using a diverse set of systematically gathered data was used to capture the story of the project as it unfolded and document individual and community-level outcomes. Findings from this evaluation effort are presented in this report as they relate to six key impact areas:

1. Individual Wellbeing
2. Artmaking as Valued Tool
3. Transformation of Space
4. Representation of Place
5. Community Recovery
6. Solidification of the Role of Public Art

Individual-Level Outcomes

Engagement with the Power of Art elicited a range of emotions, provided opportunities for individuals to give and receive support, and promoted engagement with art as a form of self-care and expression. Overall, participants found substantial value in the majority of project activities and it helped aid in their personal healing process. As a result of the project, many participants felt better equipped to cope with life's challenges, especially during these unprecedented times.

Community-Level Outcomes

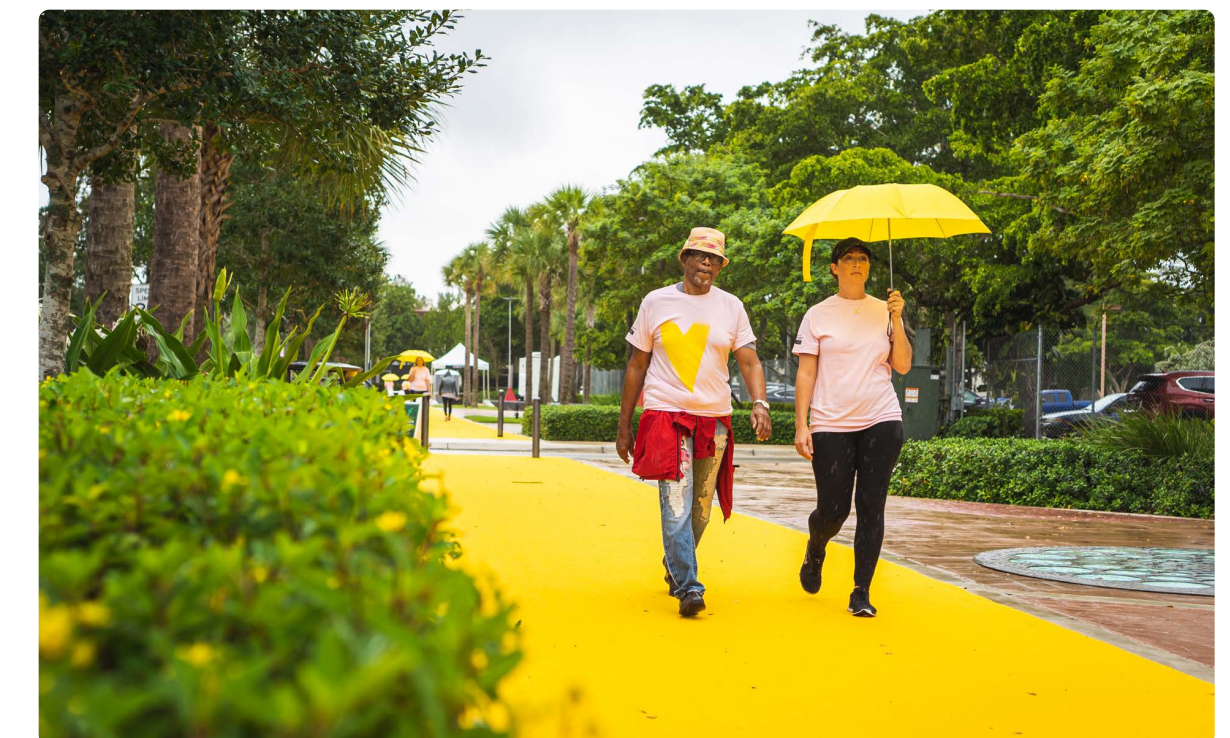
As a whole, the Power of Art fostered a deeper sense of community, togetherness, and being part of something larger than oneself. For many, it was a welcomed and much needed opportunity to make a meaningful contribution to the collective healing of the two cities. This shared experience and the camaraderie that resulted enabled people to feel closer to each other, despite a backdrop of division. The project inspired a new appreciation for the arts in some, and a reinforced valuing of the artmaking process in others. Taken together, the findings suggest that the project helped solidify the perceived value of community-engaged public art in the cities of Coral Springs and Parkland.



Temple of Time - Artist: David Best



Scrollathon - Artists: Steven Ladd & William Ladd



The Yellow Walk - Artist: Kate Gilmore

Executive Summary

Lasting Legacy

Three themes emerged from the data that provide insight into the lasting legacy of the Power of Art project.

- **Connectedness amidst division:** The project serves as an example of how communities can be both connected and divided during difficult times, and that fostering a sense of collective connectedness aides in the recovery process of communities that have experienced mass trauma.
- **Resilience:** As project participants grapple with continued life challenges, including the emergence of COVID-19, many have experienced sustained benefits from participation beyond the project itself via continued engagement with artmaking and self-expression and strengthened support systems.
- **Appreciation for the arts:** The project successfully engaged a wide range of individuals, the majority of whom were not active members of the arts community. The project inspired a new appreciation for the arts in some, and reinforced the value of the artmaking process in others. The data suggest the vast majority of participants believe in the power of art and would like to see continued investment in it.

While the data from this evaluation supports a dominantly positive, if not beneficial, impact at different scales, it is nonetheless important to note that there are dissenting opinions as well. A minority of participants found little value in project activities, thought the project was a distraction from pressing issues, and would have preferred to see direct, decisive action. Further, not every voice is captured or represented by the available data – community members that did not submit surveys or participate in interviews do not have their stories told here. And as such, projects that continue on with the insights gained from this study must be conscious of additional opportunities to learn beyond what is presented in this report.

If beauty is in the eye of the beholder, what we have learned from the evaluation of the Power of Art is that healing may very well reside in the heart of the beholder. As evaluators, we set out on this evaluation project with a lofty goal – to help answer an often posed yet under investigated question: Does community-engaged public art have the power to heal a traumatized community? Although we are unable to provide a definitive answer to this question, we believe that the findings presented in this report bring us one step closer.



The Big Picture: Resilience - Artist: Carl Juste



Peace & Love - Artists: Rosario Marquadt & Roberto Behar



Healing with Art - Art Therapist: Raquel Farell-Kirk

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The Power of Art garnered local, national, and international attention, drawing an estimated 28,500 installation visitors and engaging more than 3100 participants in the artistic process.
- There is ample evidence to support the assertion that the Power of Art project was relevant, resonant, and justified.
- Overall, Power of Art installations produced largely positive emotional responses from visitors. Of the five artworks, the Temple of Time and The Big Picture: Resilience elicited the most complex emotional responses from audience members.
- Direct participation in the co-creation of artworks and attendance at events made many participants feel comforted, supported, and empowered.
- The project successfully raised awareness about mental health resources but was slightly less successful in increasing help seeking via mental health professionals.
- Participation in creative processes led to strong individual benefits including self-expressing and resilience. As a result, participants were more inclined to turn to artmaking as a way to cope with difficult emotions and challenges.
- Overall, the Power of Art brought people together, bolstering unity and fostering a sense of community.
- Although installation sites did not become places of social connection, many of them did provide individuals with safe public spaces for processing grief and coping with difficult emotions, leading some to think differently about public spaces.
- The Power of Art may not have changed public perceptions of Parkland and Coral Springs, but it did reflect and project the ongoing transformation unfolding within and between these two communities.
- Overall, the Power of Art project helped solidify the value and role of community-engaged public art in the cities of Parkland and Coral Springs.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

On February 14th, 2018, in the span of seven minutes, the communities of Parkland and Coral Springs were forever changed. On that day a shooter entered Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, killed 17 people, severely wounded 17 more and tormented over 3,000 students and faculty. Once considered safe, desirable, and close-knit communities in South Florida, the devastation caused that day rendered both communities broken in many ways. Although the magnitude of the effects of this horrific event continue to emerge, community-wide connection and healing was quickly understood as a critical community need.

In an attempt to respond to this need, and in the midst of grief, confusion, and division, the cities of Coral Springs and Parkland joined forces to leverage the potential of art. Drawing upon the Coral Springs Museum of Art's art therapy program, the sister cities submitted a proposal to Bloomberg Philanthropies Public Art Challenge. On November 20th, 2018, Bloomberg Philanthropies announced a \$1 million award to support what would become known as Power of Art: Inspiring Community Healing After Gun Violence.

About the Project

The Power of Art was an 18-month community-engaged collaborative project that involved a curated series of five temporary public art installations alongside a previously established art therapy program. Each of the five installation projects was intentionally designed to provide opportunities for community members across the two cities to participate in socially-engaged public art programming and cathartic experiences. The artworks were intended to be visual manifestations of the community's healing process and to represent a hopeful vision of the future. The overarching goals of the project were to promote unity in the face of tragedy, redefine the narrative of these two communities, and ultimately help the communities become stronger together on their healing journey.

The Power of Art was designed and carried out by a large project team including numerous representatives from the City of Coral Springs and the City of Parkland, the Coral Springs Museum of Art, commissioned artists, private sector partners, and the Bloomberg Advisory Committee including representation from Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. Emily Blumenfeld and Aliza Schiff of Via Partnership were the curator and co-curator of the project.

ABOUT THE ART INSTALLATIONS



Temple of Time



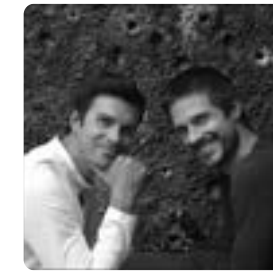
Artist: David Best,
California

David Best and a 20-member building crew, well known for

building large elaborate temples, worked with community members to design and construct a 30-foot-high temple that had no defined religious meaning but intended to hold the community's images and aspirations. The temple was installed in an empty lot in Coral Springs and unveiled February 14th, 2019, on the first anniversary of the MSD shooting. The temple remained open to the public for nearly three months. Visitors were invited to use the temple as a public gathering space and personalize their visit by writing thoughts and messages on the structure itself. Many left notes and items to memorialize lives lost and lives that continued to be devastated. With thousands in attendance, the temple was ignited on May 19th, 2019 by 34 members of the community representing families who lost loved ones, persons who were injured, hospital staff, first responders, and the special needs community.



Scrollathon // Growth + Strength



Artists: Steven Ladd &
William Ladd,
New York

Over the course of two weeks, artists Steven and William Ladd engaged a diverse group of community members in the Scrollathon experience. Participants made and titled a personalized work of art (scroll) and contributed to a collaborative artwork that would eventually form a scroll landscape made of thousands of scrolls - representing individuals and their experiences - coming together to strengthen the community. Participants also had the opportunity to engage one-on-one with the artists to be photographed and interviewed for the Scrollathon pamphlet featuring participants' portraits and the finished artwork. Participants were asked to share the story behind their scroll if they desired. The Scrollathon process culminated in the creation of an artwork and video that came to be titled, Growth & Strength, and was exhibited at the Parkland Recreation and Enrichment Center.



The Yellow Walk



Artist: Kate Gilmore,
New York

For three days, the Coral Springs Art Walk was transformed into *The Yellow Walk*, an interactive artwork created by performance artist and sculptor, Kate Gilmore and performed and experienced by members of the community. Through rain and sunshine, trained community volunteers (performers) walked silently and continuously up and down an 800-foot yellow carpet. Audience members (visitors and passers-by) were invited to join the 'walk.' A performer would match their pace and walk alongside them in silent companionship. Prior to the 26-hour performance, the artist and her team worked with community members to create silk-screened t-shirts that would be worn by performers and distributed to audience members to commemorate the project.

ABOUT THE ART INSTALLATIONS



The Big Picture: Resilience



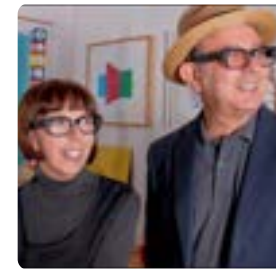
Artist: Carl Juste,
Miami

Photojournalist Carl Juste designed

and led a multi-faceted photo-documentary project exploring the ideas of healing, resilience, bearing witness, and capturing history. The project began with the selection of 15 community members that would participate in a series of photography workshops. Participants were given cameras to create images of their own. Following the workshop series, the artist and his team then selected five “fellows” to follow and photograph as a way of telling individual stories that exemplified resilience. The final collection of photographs was printed and displayed on 18, 4’x 8’ panels at Pine Trails Park, creating an outdoor temporary exhibition space. Each photograph had an accompanying QR code that allowed visitors to listen to the stories behind the images. The installation was unveiled during a community memorial event commemorating the second anniversary of the shooting. Viewing time of this installation was limited due to the emergence of Covid-19.



Peace & Love



Artists: Rosario Marquardt & Roberto Behar, Miami

As the final installment of the Power of Art project, Roberto Behar and

Rosario Marquardt of R&R Studios designed and created a large-scale social sculpture with 16’ letters that formed the words, Peace & Love. Each letter was decorated with hundreds of silk flowers placed with the assistance of community members taking part in workshops. The 130-foot-long and 30-foot-high super billboard was installed in a field adjacent to a Sportsplex in Coral Springs and close in proximity to a freeway entrance to the city. The installation was unveiled on February 14, 2020, the second anniversary of the MSD shooting and remained on display for four months. Viewing time was limited due to the emergence of Covid-19. The installation was meant to be a beacon of compassion and care for the community.



Healing with Art



Art Therapist:
Raquel Farrell-Kirk,
ATR-BC

The Healing with Art program was the inspiration for the Power of Art.

Based at the Coral Springs Museum of Art, a local art therapist provided art therapy services to community members. The program began in the immediate aftermath of the MSD shooting when the museum opened its doors with an all-day art therapy open studio. Although it was initially intended to be short term, in response to community need and with support from the Power of Art project, the open studio evolved into weekly offerings of art therapy sessions for teens and school personnel. The sessions were intended to be a safe place for community members to share, grieve, and receive support. An important aspect of the program was that it was held within the gallery space itself and provided an opportunity for participants to engage with museum spaces in new ways and make gallery spaces more approachable and accessible to community members.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

2018	2019	2020
<p>February 14, 2018 Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Shooting</p>	<p>January 2019 - May 2019 Temple of Time (Artist: David Best)</p>	<p>January -June 2020 Peace & Love (Artists: Rosario Marquadt & Roberto Behar)</p>
<p>February 15, 2018 Public Art Challenge Call for proposals</p>	<p>February 14, 2019 First anniversary of MSD shooting // Opening of the Temple of Time</p>	<p>February 14, 2020 Second anniversary of MSD shooting // Dedication of Peace & Love and The Big Picture: Resilience</p>
<p>February 2018 - present Healing with Art - Art therapy program begins at CSMoA</p>	<p>April 2019 - June 2020 Scrollathon // Growth & Strength (Artists: William & Stephen Ladd)</p>	<p>February - June 2020 Display of The Big Picture: Resilience</p>
<p>February-summer 2018 Proposal writing/planning</p>	<p>May 2019 - June 2020 The Big Picture: Resilience (Artist: Carl Juste)</p>	<p>March 2020 COVID-19 Pandemic emerges in the US</p>
<p>July 20, 2018 Selected as one of 14 finalists</p>	<p>June 2019 Evaluation team enters project</p>	<p>June 2020 End of project implementation</p>
<p>November 20, 2018 Bloomberg Philanthropies announces award to the City of Coral Springs</p>	<p>November 8-10, 2019 The Yellow Walk (Artist: Kate Gilmore)</p>	

Figure #



EVALUATION

At its most fundamental level, evaluation is about storytelling. Throughout our involvement with the project, the evaluation team aimed to capture the story of the Power of Art, from idea, to implementation, and ultimately impact. As such, the purpose of the evaluation was three-fold:

- Understand the ways in which the Power of Art facilitated community connectedness, healing, and resilience;
- Provide useful evaluation information about the power of socially-engaged public art as it relates to community recovery in the aftermath of a mass shooting;
- Identify successes, challenges, and lessons learned in order to inform future public arts programming and policy.

Upon entering the project, we worked closely and collaboratively with the project team and national evaluators to develop and refine the Power of Art Roadmap to Impact, a visual model outlining the project’s planned work and the changes it intended to create in the community. During that process, the project team identified six long-term areas of impact, which served as a guide for developing our evaluation work. The remainder of this report will focus on key evaluation findings that directly relate to progress along impact pathways.

As illustrated by the timeline of evaluation activities, it is important to note that the evaluation team entered the project mid-stream. As a result, we were unable to embed evaluation activities into the planning, design, or first phase of project implementation. This late entry, along with the emergence of COVID-19, drastically constrained the scope, design, and execution of the evaluation study. As a result, several limitations exist that may influence interpretation of the findings presented in this report.



Power Of Art Impact Areas








EVALUATION DESIGN

The evaluation utilized a case study design drawing on a diverse set of systematically gathered data to capture key aspects of the project’s design and document individual and community-level outcomes.

The case study is a highly descriptive approach to evaluation that involves in-depth collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data. We chose this approach because it is particularly useful for exploring and understanding the ways in which change occurs, and has the flexibility to withstand dynamic environments.

Multiple data collection methods leveraging both primary and secondary data sources were used in this study including a comprehensive post-project community survey, site visits, interviews and focus groups, media coverage and other artifacts resulting from the project. For more information about data sources, please refer to Table 1.

Table 1. Power Of Art Evaluation Data Sources

Data Type	Data Source	Description
Primary	 Power of Art Community Survey	A total of 251 individuals participated in the online survey between May 2020 and August 2020.
	 Field Notes	One or more members of the evaluation team conducted real time observations at 14 different Power of Art events/workshops/sites. Event footage was also viewed.
	 Interviews & Focus Groups	The evaluation team spoke with a diverse group of project participants and stakeholders throughout the course of the project. In total, 40 participated in individual or group interviews.
Secondary	 Media Coverage	The evaluation team coded and analyzed 148 pieces of media coverage.
	 Project Artifacts	A number of artifacts were produced over the course of the project. Some emanated from project activities while others were produced by project participants. Artifacts were reviewed and incorporated into the qualitative analysis when appropriate.
	 Administrative Records	A variety of project records and documents were reviewed by the evaluation team to better understand project development and implementation.
	 Web Analytics	Social media data including reach, impressions, engagement, and views were tracked by the project team and reported in this report.

KEY FINDINGS

**POWER OF ART
BY THE NUMBERS**

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

5 Art installations

Audience Members:

4,506,200 Views

28,538 Attendees

3,110 Artmaking Participants

56 Art Workshops

208 Art Therapy Sessions

42 City Officials Engaged

15 Community Events

9 Partnerships

8 Artists Commissioned

3 Businesses Engaged

SOCIAL MEDIA



Reach

137,875 people reached via social media



Impressions

Power of Art content was displayed **110,944** times.



Engagement

Content was liked, shared, or commented **8,312** times.



1,152

YouTube Views



61,281

Webpage Views

MEDIA COVERAGE

148 Pieces

3%

Installation Background

47%

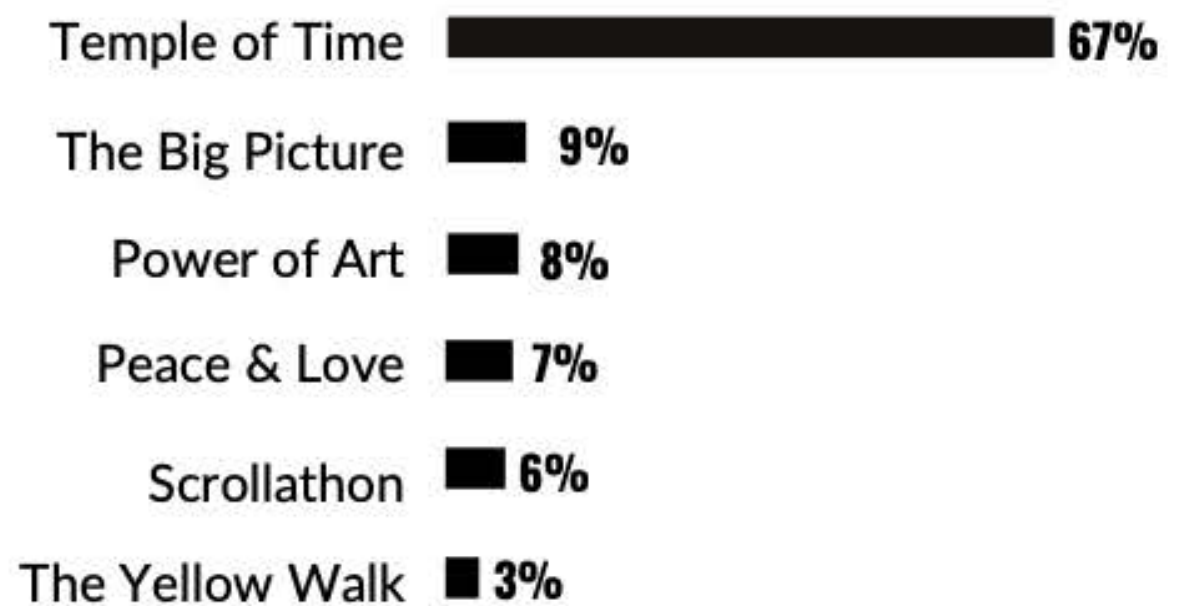
Event Coverage

38%

Promotional



Media Coverage by Installation:



Power of Art in Context

Community Portraits

The communities of Parkland and Coral Springs have changed considerably since the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. To capture a sense of these transformations, and to provide a contextual foundation for the evaluation, we asked community members to reflect on the ways in which they perceived or experienced their community at three pivotal points in time:

- **Time-Point 1:** Before the shooting
- **Time-Point 2:** After the shooting but prior to the beginning of the Power of Art project
- **Time-Point 3:** Following the Power of Art project

As illustrated by Figure 1, community descriptors changed over the course of these three time points – from safety to sadness and ultimately connected. Figure 2 shows changes in survey respondents’ perception of their community before and after the Power of Art project, as measured by agreement with various statements. The pre-post data indicate small but noteworthy changes in several areas. For example, in the time period following the project, respondents felt they had more power to influence important decisions that would impact their community; however, they also reported being more divided than before on important issues and having less dialogue about issues facing their community. This juxtaposition is also evident with the terms “divided” and “connected” being the two most frequently used community descriptors after the Power of Art concluded (see Fig. 1).



Figure 1. Most Frequently Cited Community Descriptors At Three Key Time-Points

Figure 2. Changes In Respondents’ Perceptions Of Their Community

Pre-PoA		Post-PoA	
Statement	Mean	Mean	Statement
My community came together to support one another	3.6	3.4	My community comes together when it matters
My community was divided on what to do	2.6	2.9	My community is divided on important issues
My community responded to my needs and the needs of my family	3.2	3.1	My community responds to my needs and the needs of my family
My community overlooked me in some ways	1.8	2.1	My community overlooks me in some ways
My community was overlooked in some ways	1.9	2.2	My community is overlooked in some ways
My community saw a path forward to heal	3.2	3.3	My community has come a long way in healing
My community supported our neighboring communities	3.4	3.3	My community supports its neighboring communities
Neighboring communities supported my community	3.5	3.2	Neighboring communities support my community
Community members were able to speak openly about pressing issues	3.2	3.0	There is open dialogue about important issues facing my community
There was trust among community members	3.0	3.0	There is trust among community members
I felt like I had the power to influence decisions affecting my community	2.4	2.8	I have the power to influence important decisions that will impact my community

Reach & Rationale

Another objective of the evaluation was to ascertain whether the project was needed and wanted by the communities of Coral Springs and Parkland – the target population. The project’s initial rationale, funding justification, and intention for promoting healing and community connectedness was reflected in numerous ways in the data. For instance, even though the majority (72%) of respondents reported not feeling alone in the weeks and months following the shooting, they nonetheless believed that the community as a whole needed something to bring people together, and that the Power of Art had the potential to serve that purpose. Further, 83% of survey respondents reported that upon learning about the project, they believed that they would personally benefit from it. Taken together, these findings demonstrate close alignment between the project and the needs and desires of the target population.

As a whole, the project garnered tremendous attention, drawing more than 28,500 installation visitors and more than 3,100 direct participants. This result was achieved in large part because the project was designed to attract and engage a wide range of the community, regardless of their connection to the arts, and thus broaden its potential reach and impact. This reach was revealed in survey data where more than half of all respondents (51%) did not consider themselves active members of the arts community.

There is ample evidence to support the assertion that the Power of Art was relevant, resonant, and justified.

Figure 3. Frequency Of Visitation By Installation

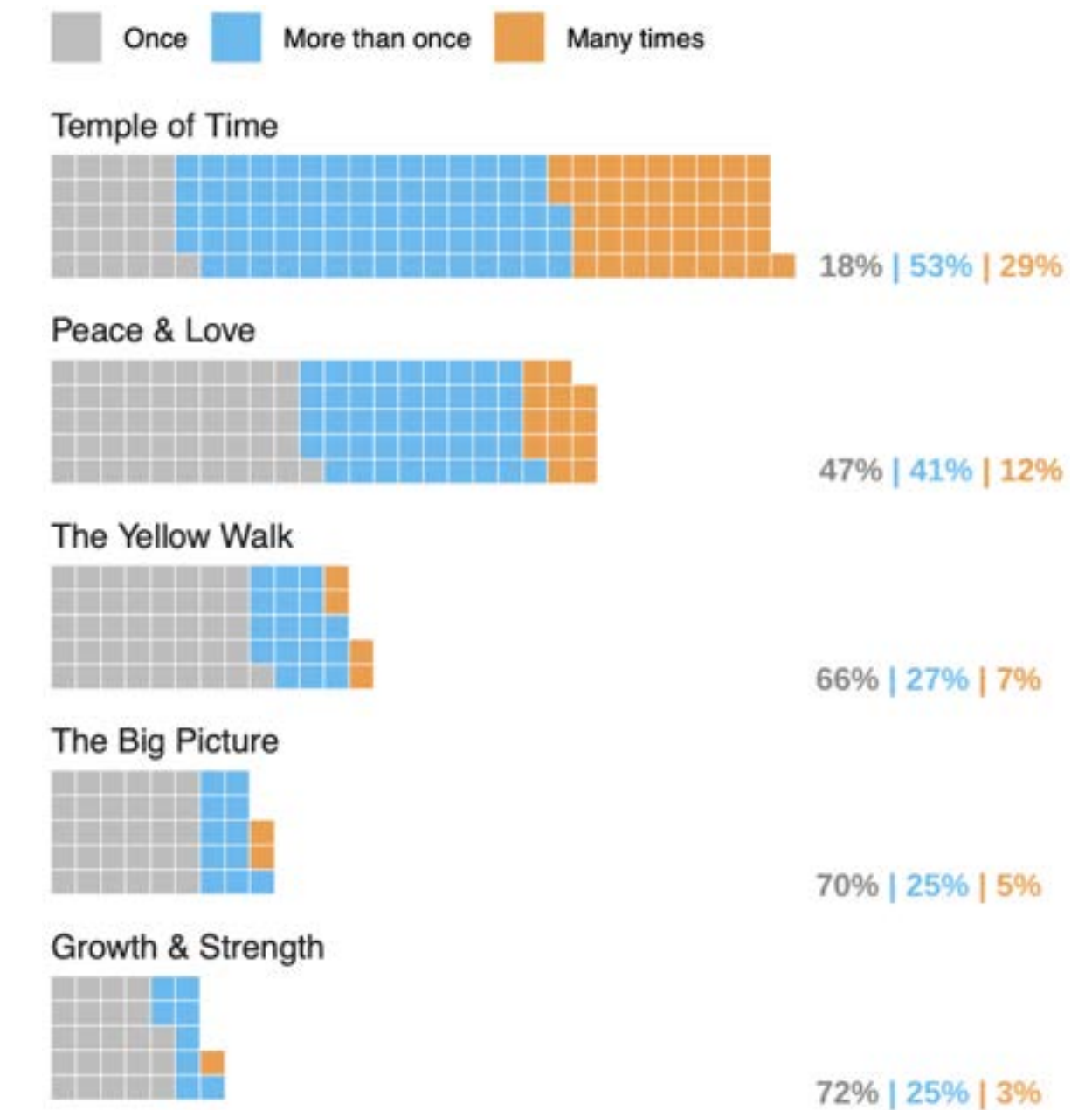
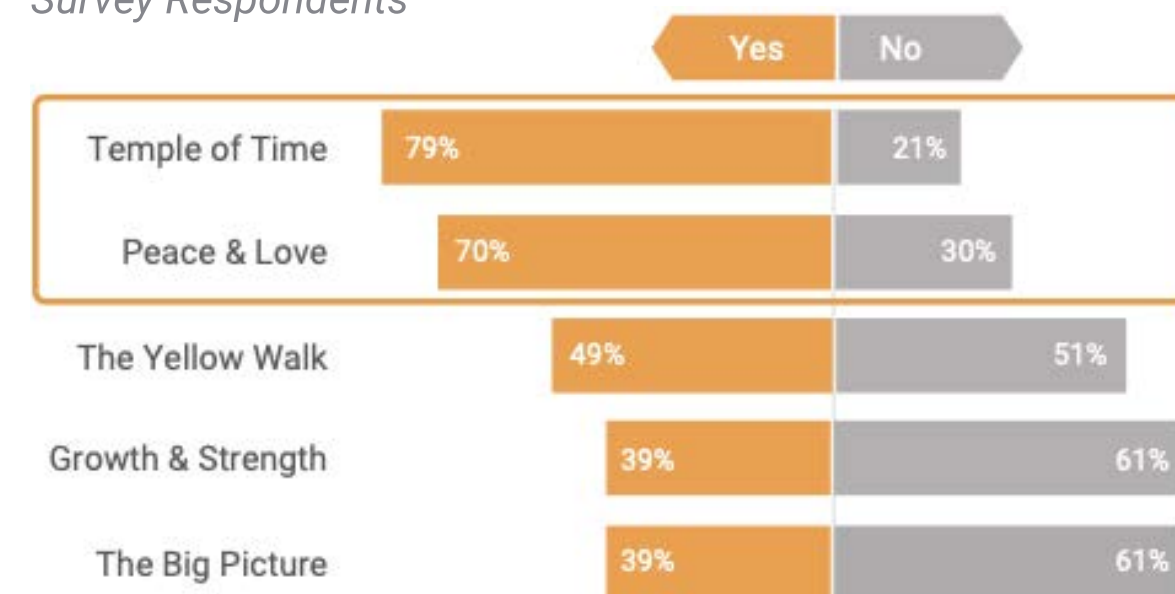


Figure 4. Sentimentality Of Installation As Reported By Survey Respondents



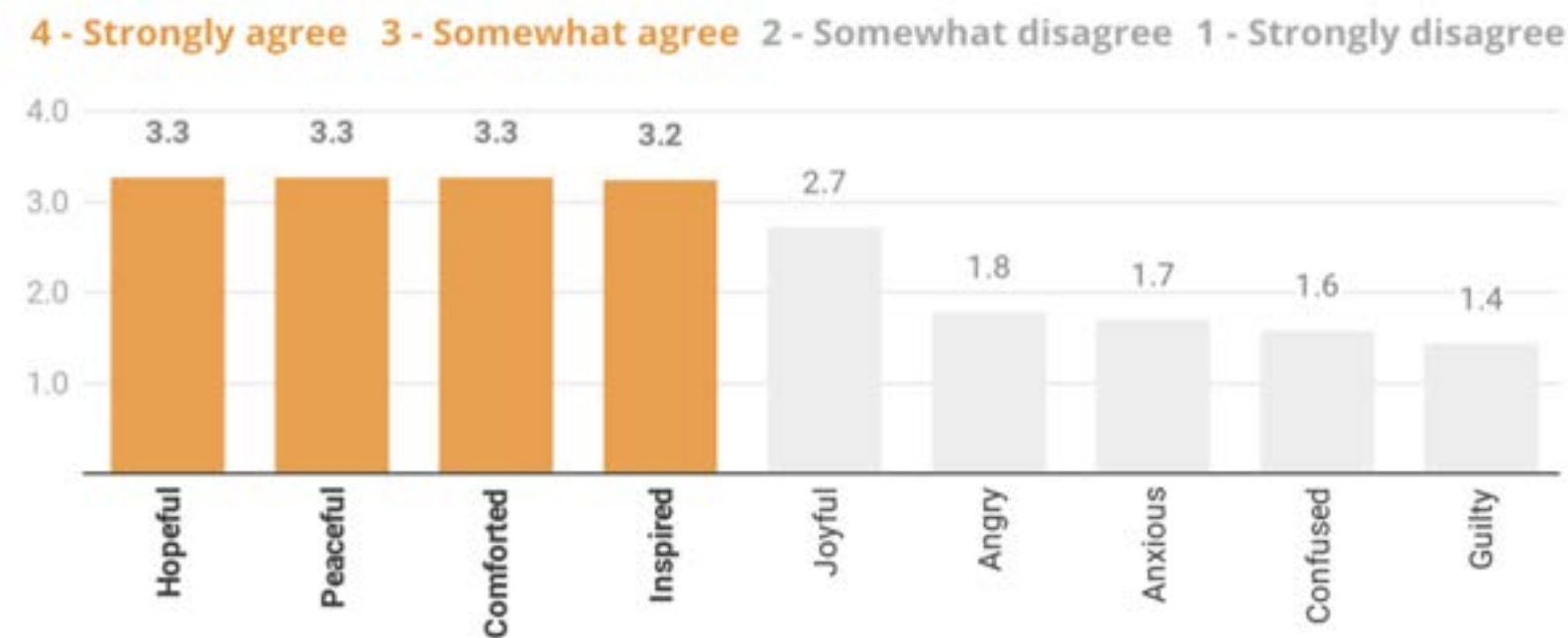
By all accounts and metrics, the Temple of Time produced the most buzz and community engagement among the five art projects. According to survey data, it ranked as the most ‘heard about’ and visited installation, drew the highest attendance at community events, and had the highest level of community participation in the creation of the installation. Further, as illustrated by figure 3, survey respondents that visited the Temple of Time reported coming back to it many more times than those that visited the other art installations. It should be noted that although contextual factors like the emergence of COVID-19 may have played a role in visitation, the Temple of Time was also rated as having the highest level of sentimentality and meaning for community members which likely explains some of the repeat visitation (see Flg. 4).

Individual-Level Outcomes

Individual Wellbeing

The data indicate that, in aggregate, Power of Art exhibitions elicited mostly positive emotional responses from those that visited/viewed the installations. As shown in Figure 5, the majority of audience members reported feeling hopeful, peaceful, comforted and inspired during their visit. To gauge longer-lasting emotional benefits, survey respondents were asked to indicate which, if any, of the art installations had become sentimental or meaningful to them over time. As demonstrated by figure 4 on the previous page, data suggest that the Temple of Time and Peace & Love were the most likely installations to produce longer lasting emotional benefits.

Figure 5. Aggregated Immediate Emotional Response To Power Of Art Installations



The data also reveal that active participation in project activities and events led to additional benefits for many. For example, individuals that were part of an artistic process, such as assisting in the creation of an art installation or participating in art therapy sessions, reported that the experience led to self-expression and feeling empowered. This finding echoes a strong recurring theme from interviews and focus groups about the benefits of giving back.


For many participants, they used the project as a way to show support and contribute to the community recovery process in a tangible, meaningful way. This connection was particularly strong for individuals that identified as being on the periphery of trauma caused by the shooting, as opposed to those that were directly impacted by it.


Art Making & Wellbeing

According to survey data, the Power of Art project, as a whole, only slightly encouraged people to reach out for help when needed. It showed that help seeking among survey respondents was dominantly found via connecting with friends and family versus accessing for mental health services or reaching out to mental health professionals. However, the project was successful in raising awareness about mental health resources available to the public and helping people feel comforted, supported, and less alone in their healing journey.


Data revealed that although many participants did not see improvements in their artistic skills, participation in the artistic process enabled them to express themselves more fully, cope with their feelings in a healthy way, and make progress toward personal healing. In fact, after participating, 97% of survey respondents indicated that they believe that artmaking and creative expression is an important part of a healing process.

Additionally, 90% indicated that they are now more inclined to seek creative opportunities as a means of self-care. Survey data also show that 42% of respondents reported attending more arts and cultural events than the previous year and 48% engage in creative projects at least monthly.

	Agree		Disagree
 Help Seeking & Support	78%	Learned about mental health resources	22%
	71%	Reach out for help when needed	29%
	91%	Supported by community	9%

	Agree		Disagree
 Artmaking & Healing	60%	Improved artistic skills	40%
	77%	Better able to use art to cope with feelings	23%
	76%	Important part of healing process	24%

	Agree		Disagree
 Personal Healing	78%	Comfortable sharing experiences, opinions, and feelings with others	22%
	74%	Feel safe in community	26%
	90%	Contributed to healing journey	10%
	90%	Empowered by the experience	10%
	85%	Self-expression	15%
	97%	Being part of something bigger than myself	3%
97%	Opportunity to give back	3%	

	Agree		Disagree
 Individual Interests and Insights	70%	Think differently about an issue or topic	30%
	88%	Interested in something new or different	12%

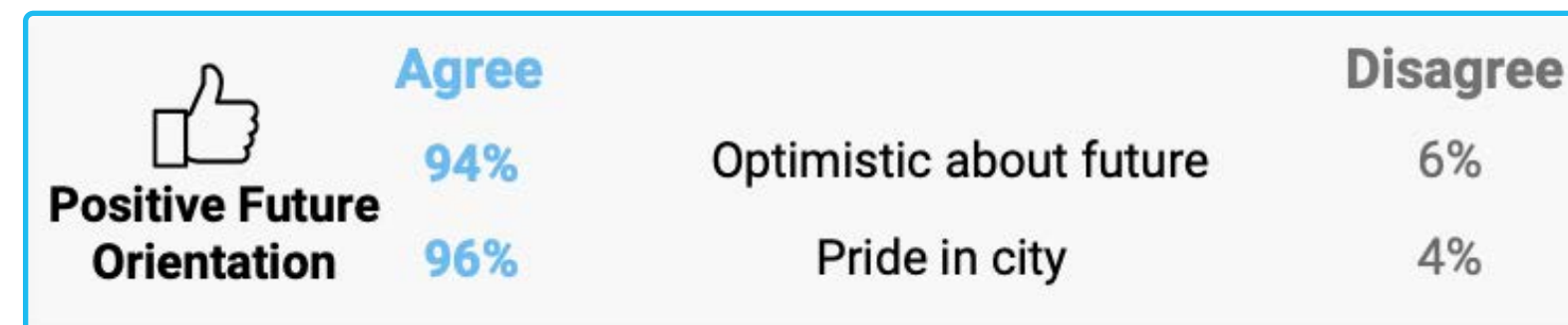
Community-Level Outcomes

Community Connectedness

For many, the Power of Art provided opportunities to build and strengthen social connections, fostering a sense of unity and community. The majority (74%) of survey respondents believe that the project, as a whole, helped their community come together, however, only 68% thought it was successful in bringing the cities of Coral Springs and Parkland closer together. The data also suggest that the project moderately increased community engagement beyond project-specific activities. For example, 64% of survey respondents reported that since being involved with the Power of Art, they've spent more time connecting with people in their community, 58% have spent more time attending social events and gatherings (pre-COVID-19), and 40% reported spending more time volunteering in their community.

The data revealed that participation in the artistic process, via assisting with the creation of an installation or participation in the art therapy program, was particularly impactful in promoting a sense of community. The mechanism through which this connectedness resulted appears to be linked to the action of 'giving back' and the feeling of being part of something bigger than oneself. This finding emerged across multiple data sources including survey data, interviews and focus groups, and media coverage.

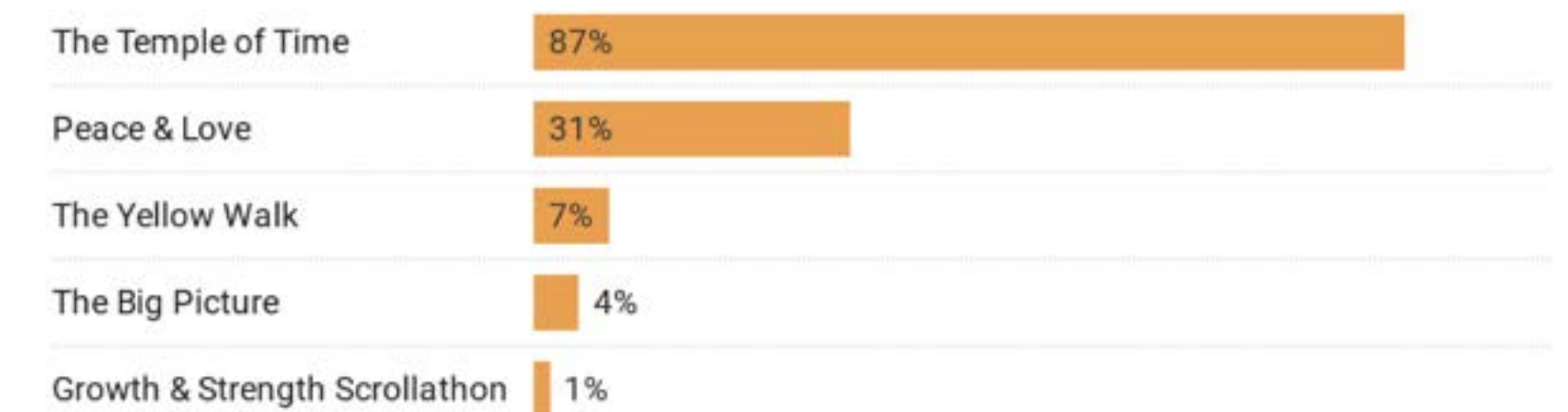
Data also suggest that the project helped promote dialogue among community members. In fact, the majority of survey respondents said that the project helped them feel more comfortable sharing personal experiences, opinions, and feelings and 66% of survey respondents reported that the project helped them talk about important community issues. Of the survey respondents with children, 73% believed that the project opened up new lines of communication within their families.



Transformation of Space

Each of the five temporary art installations was exhibited in public spaces in and around the cities of Coral Springs and Parkland. All but one of the installations were erected outdoors in spaces that could serve as gathering spots for the community. Despite this potential, data suggest that installation sites did not become meaningful gathering places for social connections, with the Temple of Time as an exception. However, some of the sites did become places and spaces used by individuals for personal, solitary purposes. For example, 57% of survey respondents reported that they had re-visited installations for emotional benefit, and that 99% of these repeat visits were helpful in coping with a challenging mood, emotional state, or stressful situation. Figure 6 shows the breakdown of repeat visitation for emotional benefit by installation.

Figure 6: Repeat Visitations For Personal Benefit



In the end, the project did result in changing peoples' perceptions of community spaces, even if the spaces themselves did not become vectors of social connection. In fact, nearly 60% of survey respondents reported that the Power of Art made them think about public space in new ways.

Several themes emerged related to these changes in perception including:

- (i) turning unused or empty public spaces into art displays,
- (ii) art in communal spaces spark unity,
- (iii) the importance of art in community spaces,
- (iv) having art in community spaces is fun and inspiring,
- (v) art has the ability to transform communities by making them more beautiful.

Community-Level Outcomes

Representation of Place

Although the majority (56%) of survey respondents did not believe that the project changed their perception of Parkland or Coral Springs, qualitative analysis revealed an evolving community narrative – from grief to unity and hope. Media coverage of the project portrayed a community actively working toward healing and unity, even though it continued to experience a deep and pervasive grief. The Power of Art project, and the Temple of Time in particular, fostered community-building and working together, which appears to have provided a degree of solace and camaraderie that has aided in progress toward healing. The vast majority of evaluation informants report being optimistic about the future and taking pride in their respective city. There is ample evidence to suggest that the Power of Art project played a role in both of these outcomes.

Value of Public Art

As a whole, the Power of Art project had a clear impact on the ways in which people think about public art and its role in both individual and community wellbeing. From their experience with the project, the vast majority of evaluation informants felt that public art brings value to their city and has discernible benefits. In fact, 91% of survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their city should invest in community-engaged public arts programs and projects.

Agree		Disagree
92%	Living in a community that has a thriving arts community.	8%
93%	Having access to arts institutions such as museums, art galleries, and theatres.	7%
95%	Living in a city that invests in community-engaged public arts programs.	5%
92%	Using art to help build and strengthen communities.	8%
89%	Using art to help community members talk about tough topics.	11%

Agree		Disagree
91%	Public art makes me feel comforted and more connected to my city	9%
93%	Artists make important contributions to my city	7%
80%	Public art has changed the way people outside of my city our community	20%



IMPACT BY INSTALLATION

TEMPLE OF TIME

David Best



Temple of Time



“...at that time the community was really divided...but no matter what side you were on, people still came together.”

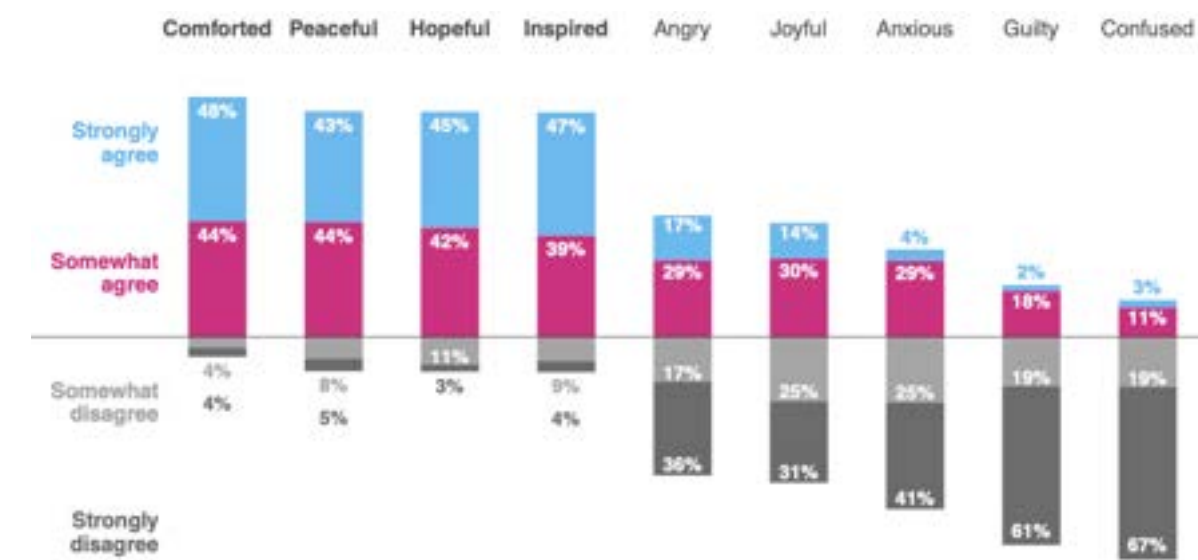
Audience Perceptions & Experience

The Temple of Time was the first of five temporary public art installations in the Power of Art series. By all accounts, it attracted the most visitors and engaged the widest range of community members in its creation. In fact, 64% of survey respondents participated in building the temple, 96% visited the temple at least once, and 78% attended the ceremonial burn on May 19th, 2019. The vast majority of temple visitors (82%) reported coming back to the temple, and more than half of survey respondents felt that it had become a gathering place for friends, family, and the community at large.

The temple was described as a beautiful, meaningful, and peaceful place. For some, it became a place and space for personal healing, reflection, and even closure. As one visitor explained, “It is the place where I finally sat down and deleted text messages from my phone from the day of the shooting”.

Of all the installations, the Temple of Time stirred the most complex emotional response in audience members, as illustrated by Figure 7. While the temple brought comfort and peace to many, some visitors also experienced more difficult emotions such as feelings of anger, anxiety, and guilt. The data reveal that this mixture of emotion carried over into the ceremonial burn. While the burning of the temple promoted a sense of collective connectedness, it was also a nuanced experience for many attendees because it was difficult to let go of a symbol of their emotions.

Figure 7: Emotional Response To The Temple Of Time



Nearly all survey respondents (98%) that visited the temple reported that they understood the meaning behind the art, that it was a ‘good ‘fit’ with the city and that it reflected the mood of the city at the time (94%). Although the majority of audience members understood the artist’s intentions behind the burn, this element of the artwork remained somewhat controversial. For many, the burn was perceived as symbolic closure and felt therapeutic. However, for others, it was problematic and triggering. Some audience members described the burn as “unfinished”, and this left them feeling uneasy.

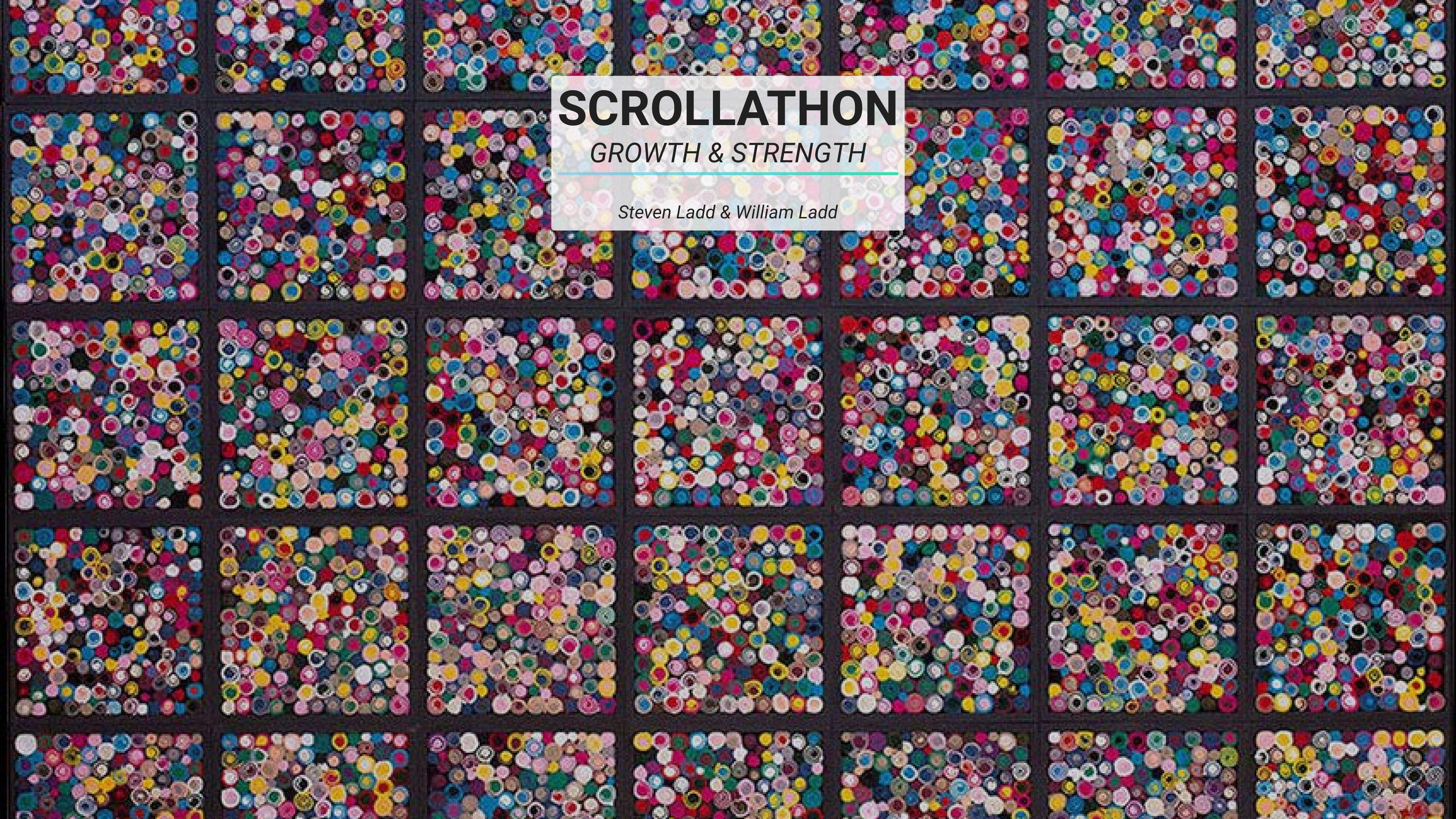
“Everyone was so kind and had tasks ready and people to guide you to jump in for however long you had time for.”

Participant Perceptions & Experience

Overall, helping to build the temple with the artist and his crew was an overwhelmingly positive experience for participants. In fact, 97% of survey respondents indicated that it met or exceeded their expectations. Participants gained a number of noteworthy benefits from the collaboration, such as feeling empowered, being able to express their emotions, and receiving support. Additionally, participants believed it was a good opportunity to give back and made them feel part of something bigger than themselves. These outcomes support the assertion that direct participation in the creation of the temple promoted wellbeing and a sense of community among participants.

Agree		Disagree
97%	I felt empowered by the experience	3%
97%	It helped me express my feelings	3%
100%	I felt supported	0%
85%	I met new people from my community	15%
100%	I felt like I was part of something bigger than myself	0%
100%	Good opportunity to give back	0%

“I wish we still had something like the temple. Something permanent.”



SCROLLATHON

GROWTH & STRENGTH

Steven Ladd & William Ladd

Scrollathon // Growth & Strength



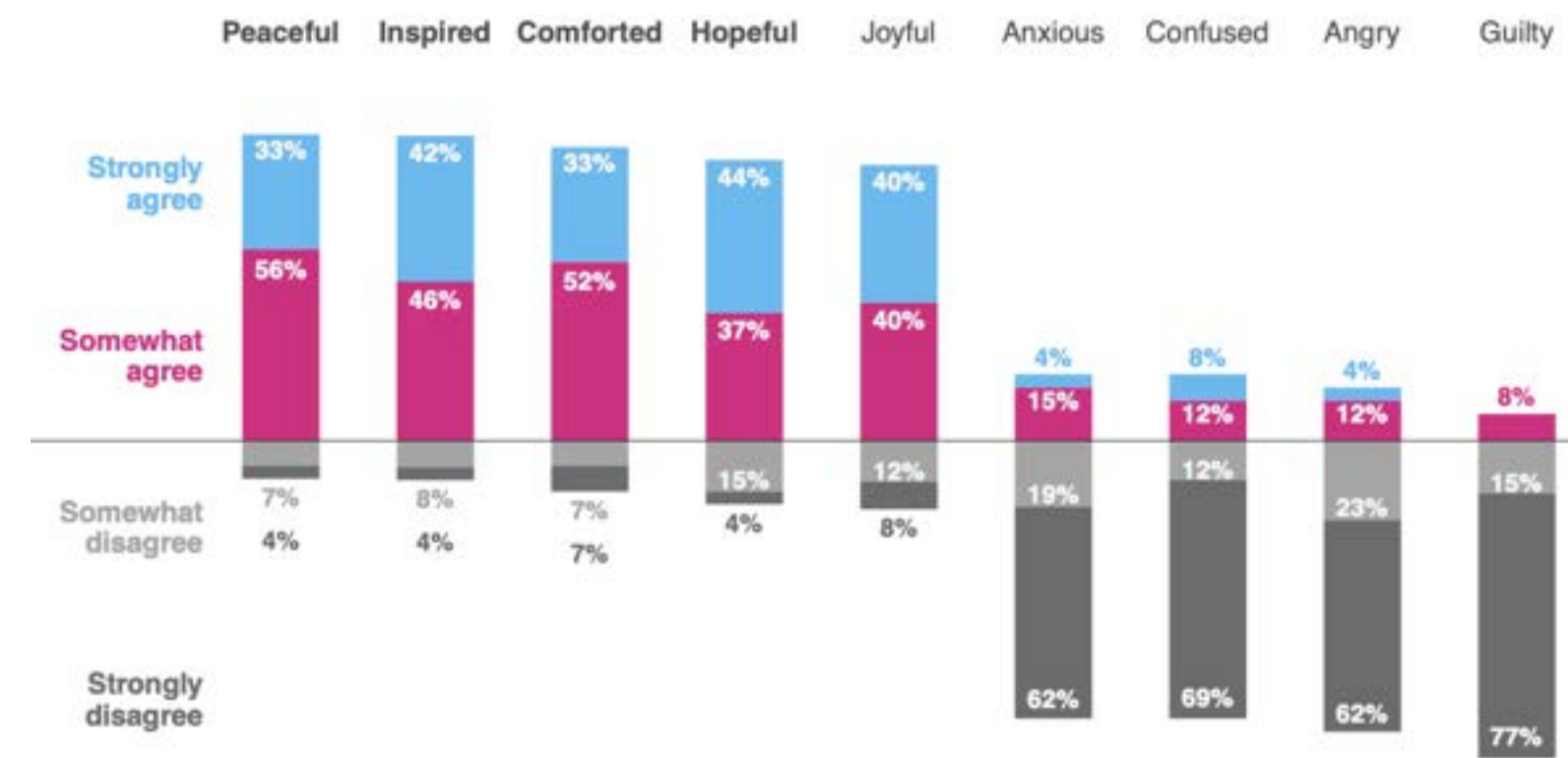
“My daughter, her Girl Scout troop and I helped create it, so it has a piece of us in it.”

Audience Perceptions & Experience

Overall, the Scrollathon experience and resulting Growth & Strength installation received a moderate share of attention, with 22% of survey respondents reporting visiting it. Visitor’s perceptions of the installation were largely very positive – they agreed the installation was a ‘good fit’ for the city (93%) and that it reflected the mood of the city at the time (81%). Also, visitors dominantly agreed (86%) that they understood the meaning behind the art, an indicator of clear purpose and reception.

Those that visited Growth & Strength benefited by experiencing strong feelings of peace, inspiration, comfort, and hope – which suggest an overall positive sense of wellbeing after visiting the installation (Figure 8). And for 39% of those visitors, they felt the installation had become meaningful and sentimental to them, supporting possible longer-term emotional benefits for this group.

Figure 8: Emotional Response To Growth & Strength



Participant Perceptions & Experience

Those that participated in the creation of this installation gained a number of benefits from this collaboration. The experience largely met their expectations (95%), and some noted that creating the scrolls was joyful and collaborative, with one participant saying “My daughter, her Girl Scout troop and I helped create it, so it has a piece of us in it.” This sentiment was echoed by media coverage, which expressed that it was an uplifting opportunity to bring everyone together.

Agree		Disagree
85%	I felt empowered by the experience	15%
95%	It helped me express my feelings	5%
85%	It helped me cope with my feelings	15%
90%	I met new people from my community	10%
100%	I felt like I was part of something bigger than myself	0%
100%	I thought of it as a good opportunity to give back to my community	0%

Participants experienced several other benefits from working collaboratively on the piece, such as feeling empowered, gaining coping skills, and feeling connected to others and a larger purpose. These outcomes support an overall sense of individual wellbeing through emotional support and coping, participants finding value in the artmaking process, and collective movement towards a sense of community.



THE YELLOW WALK

Kate Gilmore

The Yellow Walk



“I guess I didn't really understand the walk very much. I didn't really honestly know what it was going to do for anybody...I thought that it was going to be more for show and people weren't going to get it, but it did change once I was part of the walk...I think for the community that came out and participated, we all got something from it.”



Audience Perceptions & Experience

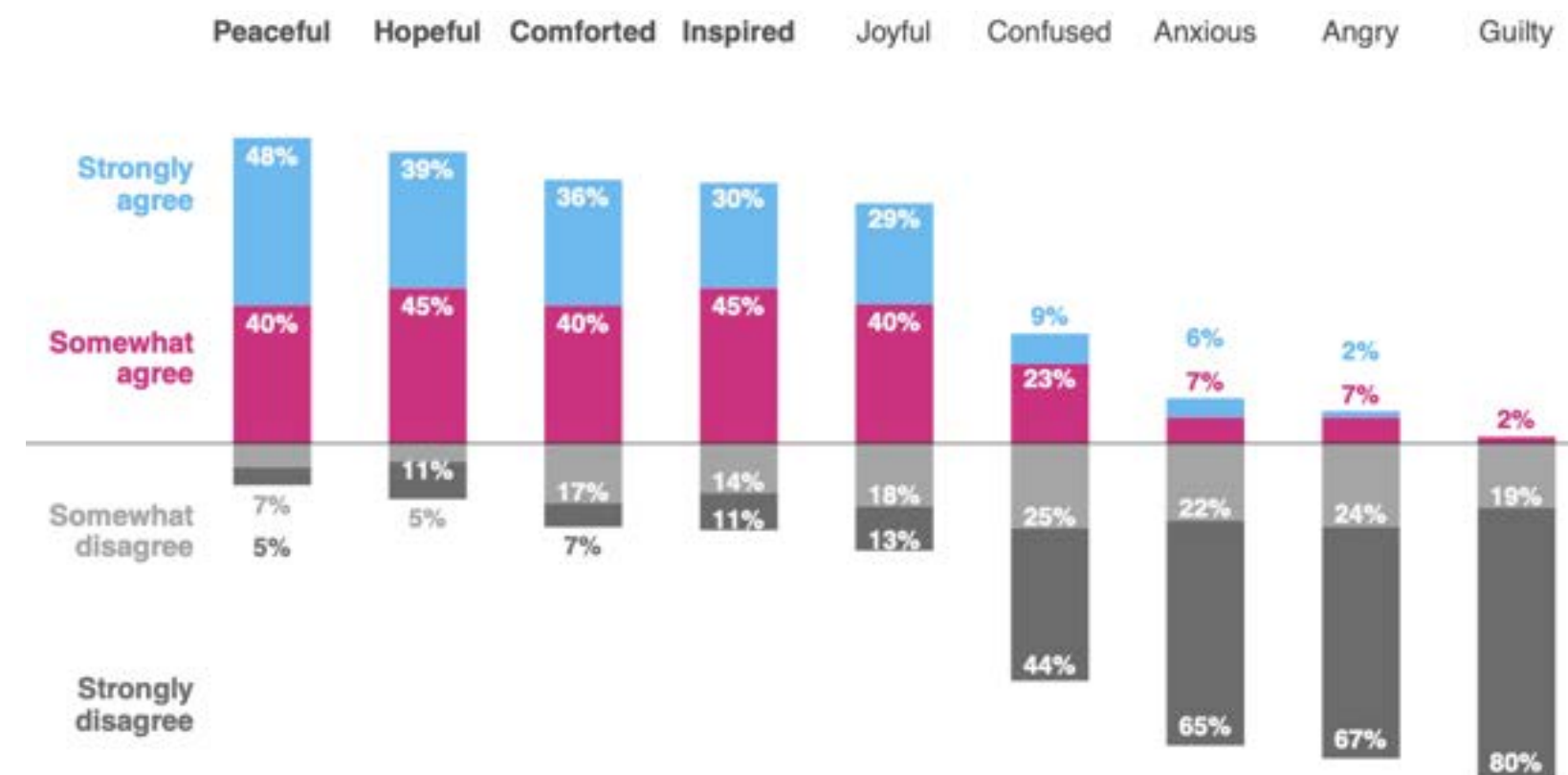
The Yellow Walk was the third installation, and the only interactive artwork, in the Power of Art series. Despite rainy weather, the healing performance attracted several hundred audience members, many of whom returned to re-experience the “walk” during its run.

The Yellow Walk was described by audience members as an experience that enabled personal reflection, helped people share their stories, and promoted a sense of community and connectedness. One visitor explained, “It reminded me that I am part of a community even though I am invisible to most.”

Visitor's perceptions of the performance were mixed – 79% of survey respondents felt that it was a ‘good fit’ but 25% did not believe it accurately reflected the mood of the city. Further, 20% of respondents reported that they did not understand the meaning behind the art, an indication that its purpose and intention was not clearly received by some audience members. Despite these findings, many visitors reported that they ultimately found their experience with The Yellow Walk to be positive, and that it provided a degree of comfort and support and elicited a sense of peace and hope.

Agree		Disagree
86%	It made me feel more connected to my community	14%
83%	It made me feel like I was part of something bigger than myself	17%
72%	It made me feel comforted and supported	28%
85%	It was a positive experience for me	15%

Figure 9: Emotional Response To The Yellow Walk



Performer Perceptions & Experience

The Yellow Walk was performed by a group of community members, many of whom volunteered because of prior engagement with the Power of Art project, but had no past experience with performance art. Most of the performers were motivated to participate by their desire to contribute to the community's road to recovery. One performer explained, “I'm trying to fit in as much as I can to support the kids...I just feel like I have to do something, so anytime there's something I can do, I do it.”. Other performers described participation as a way of “paying respect” to the families affected by the shooting.

Agree		Disagree
78%	I felt empowered by the experience	22%
90%	I felt like I was part of something bigger than myself	10%
95%	I thought it was a good opportunity to give back to my community	5%
95%	I met new people from my community	5%
90%	I felt like I was part of the artistic process	10%
75%	I felt supported during the experience	25%

Overall, the majority of performers reported that their experience with The Yellow Walk met or exceeded their expectations (59%), but for 41%, the experience fell short. They explained that this was in large part due to unfavorable weather conditions and what they perceived as a low level of community participation.

“Attendance makes a big difference in the visual impact of a performance piece like this. If the message is that we don't walk alone and hardly anyone is there the message rings hollow.”

THE BIG PICTURE: RESILIENCE

Carl Juste



The Big Picture: Resilience

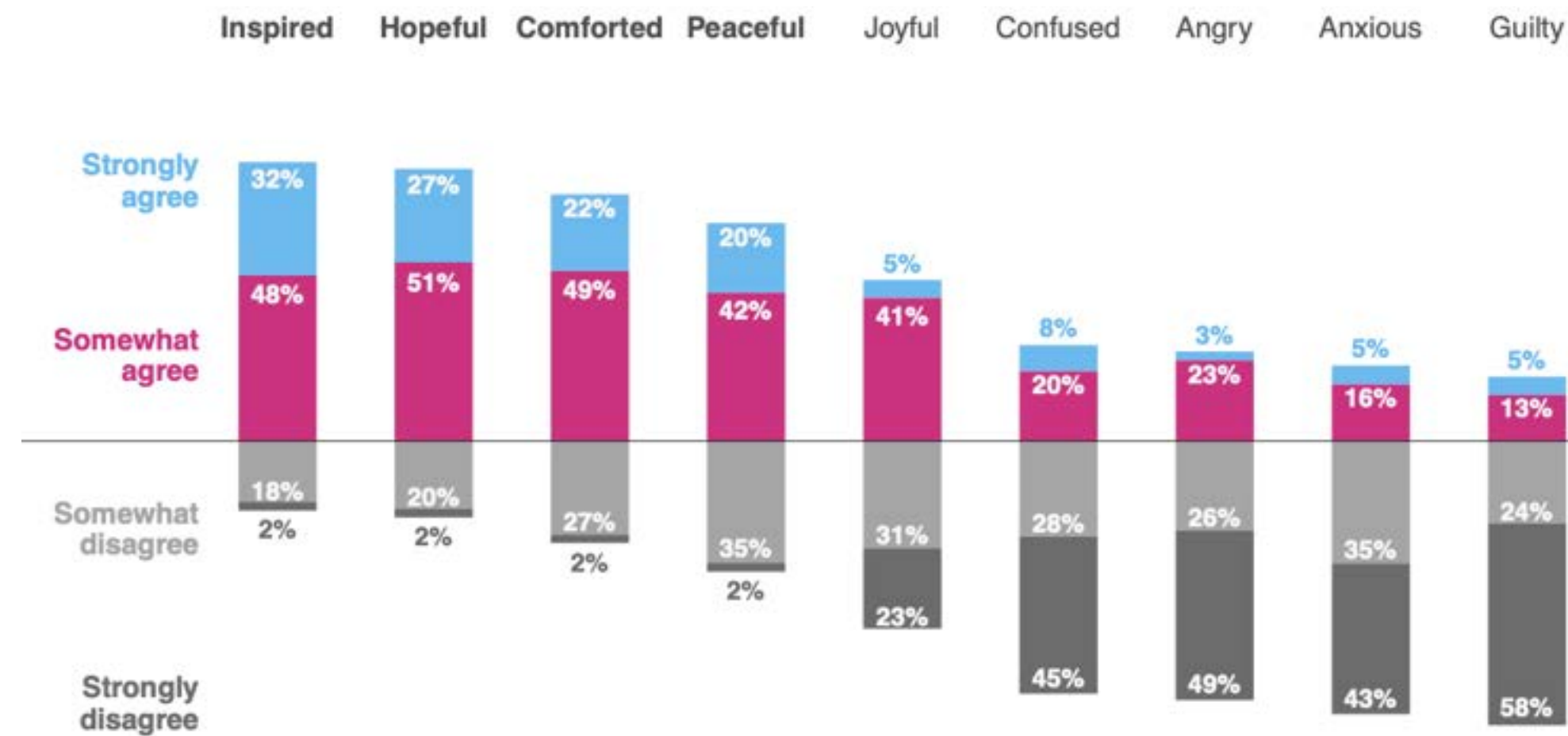


Audience Perceptions & Experience

The Big Picture was a multi-faceted photo-documentary project spanning nearly eight months of the Power of Art project. The final collection of photographs resulting from this initiative was unveiled on the second anniversary of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shooting during a multi-faith commemorative event at Pine Trails Park in Parkland.

The data reveal that visitors' perceptions of and experiences with the installation were mixed. As shown in figure 10, the installation produced a complex emotional response. For many, it elicited feelings of inspiration, hope, and comfort but also confusion, anger, and anxiety. Although visitors dominantly agreed (85%) that they understood the meaning behind the art, some expressed that the installation lacked focus and a direct connection with the commemorative event.

Figure 10: Emotional Response To The Big Picture



“It taught me to be more open-minded with people, more empathetic while listening to other people’s issues and problems and how they resolve them...seeing how other people were seeing things, so it helped me as a person.”

“We learned some technical aspects. But more importantly it brought us together...it got us out there in such a way that it got us looking at our surroundings with different eyes. At least I did, and that was important to me. I would have never gotten to know my community...and now they all know me, and they speak to me about the images that I took.”

“The people I have met [through the workshops] have changed my life.”

“We built a community, a photographer’s community if you will, and it’s taking a life of its own. It’s continuing.”

Participant Perceptions & Experience

As part of the project, fifteen community members were invited to participate in a series of photojournalism workshops with the artist and his team. The majority of participants described a largely positive experience, in fact, it met or exceeded the expectations of 75%. Further, participants gained a number of noteworthy benefits including self-expression, becoming better able to use art as a tool for self-care, and a broadened support network. Participants also expressed that the experience and the community it created helped build empathy and resilience between and among members of the group.

Agree		Disagree
87%	I felt empowered by the experience	13%
87%	It helped me express my feelings	13%
87%	It helped me cope with my feelings	13%
75%	My artistic skills improved	25%
100%	I am better able to use art to cope	0%
100%	I met new people from my community	0%
100%	I developed new friendships	0%
87%	I felt like I was part of something bigger than myself	13%

With respect to the final exhibition, some workshop participants expressed concern, disappointment, and confusion. The majority did not feel that it was appropriate to unveil the exhibition during the commemorative event given the tenuous link between the artwork and the shooting. As one participant explained, “It was sort of out of context...it felt out of place.” Other participants described being uncomfortable with the final selection of images: “I was feeling uncomfortable because I was the subject, and I’m not very comfortable being the focus and feeling super conflicted about the date. The date felt a little controversial, and I didn’t know how people would take it.”

PEACE & LOVE

Rosario Marquadt & Roberto Behar



Peace & Love



Audience Perceptions & Experience

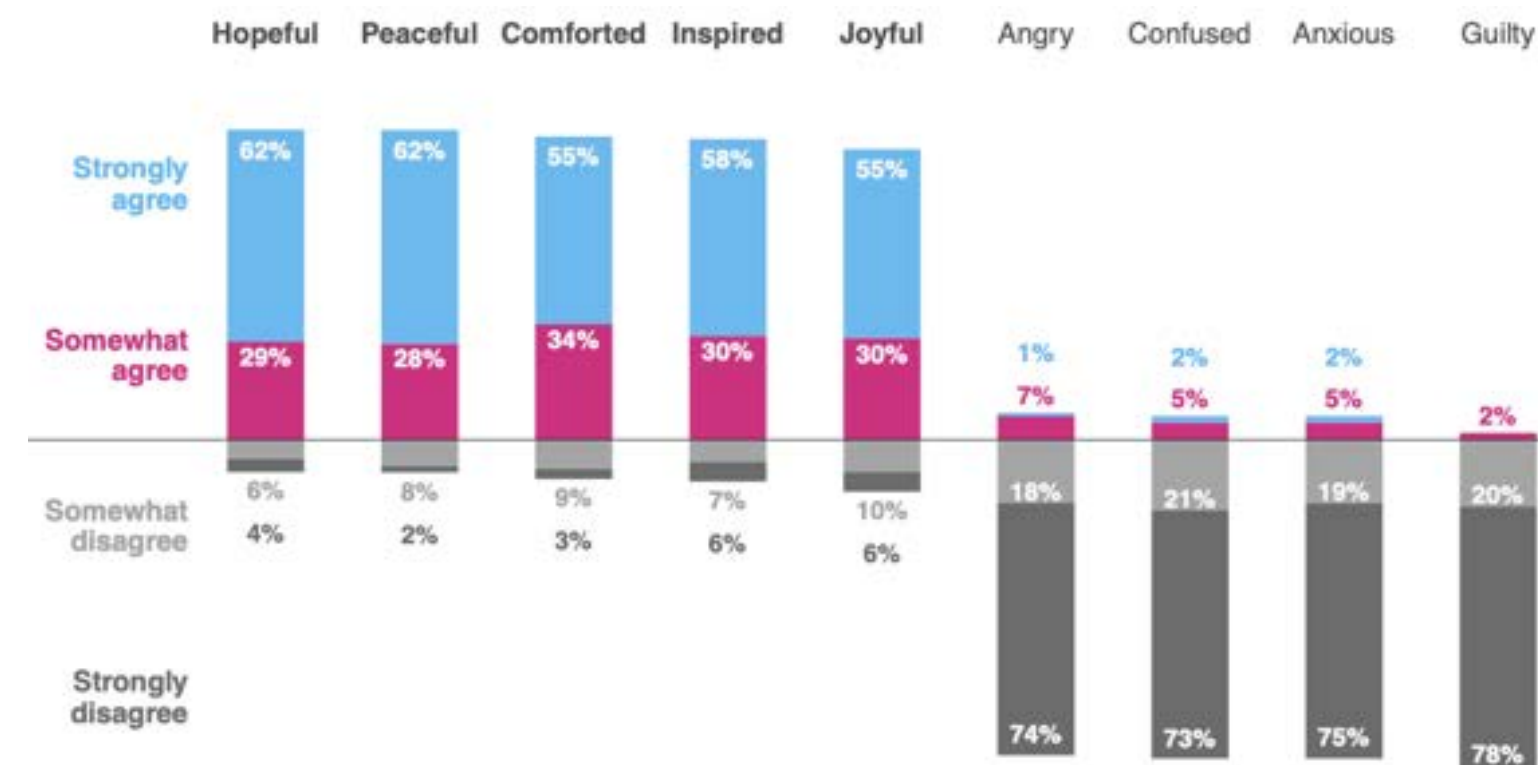
Peace & Love was the fifth and final temporary public art installation in the Power of Art series. Although the emergence of COVID-19 intersected with its time on display, data indicate that it was the second most visited installation with 74% of survey respondents visiting it. And further, 53% of visitors returned for at least one other visit.

The social sculpture was described by audience members as big, beautiful, colorful, cheerful, and powerful. For many, it served as a reminder of friendship and was often described as welcoming. It also gave the city hope and a positive message without calling attention to the trauma experienced by the communities or associating it with grief.

Visitors' perceptions of the installation were largely positive – they agreed it was a 'good fit' for the city (93%) and that it reflected the mood of the city at the time it was on display (90%). The vast majority (94%) reported that they understood the meaning behind the art, an indicator of clear purpose and reception. Although the majority of feedback was positive, some visitors shared that they found the sculpture unsurprising and that the statement it made was cliché. There was also discontent with the location of the installation and the site itself. Some visitors thought that it should be more centrally located and on physical grounds that were better suited for visitors.

Those who visited Peace & Love benefited by experiencing strong feelings of hopefulness, peace, and inspiration, which suggest an overall positive sense of wellbeing after visiting the installation (Fig. 11).

And for 70% of those visitors, they felt the installation had become meaningful and sentimental to them, supporting possible longer-term emotional benefits for this group.



“This is a bigger message than just for MSD. It’s a message to the world.”



Participant Perceptions & Experience

Participating in the creative process for Peace & Love largely met participants' expectations (92%), and the data suggest that it provided benefits to those who were engaged. The most dominant theme that emerged was that the experience provided much needed opportunity for connection and giving back. Participants expressed that they desired to connect with other community members and feel as though they were connected to something bigger than themselves, and the opportunity enabled them to give and receive the support they needed at the time. Participants also spoke about how the artists and their message resonated with them – “She [the artist] spoke, and it just got right to me as if I have to be there and hear what she said because it actually helped me to move forward. Because that’s pretty much what I’m doing...things to help me move forward.”

“We had food; we laughed, we met new people, we talked, we shared...”



HEALING WITH ART

Raquel Farell-Kirk

HEALING WITH ART



Healing with Art participants overwhelmingly found art therapy sessions to be meaningful and impactful, as seen in numerous survey data points. As a whole, the art therapy program met or exceeded every respondent's expectations, and subsequently all respondents felt it was extremely important for the program to continue in their community.

Survey respondents universally gained substantial individual benefits from the program, including emotional and communal support, relaxation and stress relief, and tools and skills for building resilience. Beyond individual impacts, respondents found particular value in the art-making process itself as a vital component of their healing. The data further suggests that these benefits carry beyond immediate impact as 90% of respondents felt the skills they learned have helped them cope with other life challenges.



Agree		Disagree
100%	I felt emotionally safe	0%
100%	I felt supported	0%
100%	It has strengthened/broadened my support network	0%
100%	It relieved stress	0%
100%	It helped me feel more relaxed	0%
100%	It proved me with useful tools to reduce my anxiety	0%
100%	I learned coping skills and techniques to manage stress	0%



POWER OF ART

Lasting Legacy

Power of Art

Lasting Legacy

Community Connectedness Amidst Division



The Power of Art serves as an example of how communities can be simultaneously connected and divided during troubling times, and that fostering a sense of collective connectedness aides in both personal healing and community recovery in communities that have experienced mass trauma.

Bolstering Resilience



As project participants grapple with continued life challenges, including the emergence of COVID-19, many have experienced sustained benefits from participation beyond the life of the project.

For instance, 84% survey respondents reported that their experience with the Power of Art has helped them through the pandemic, 54% reported increased artmaking during COVID-19, and 56% report that they've used art to cope with the pandemic. Taken together, the findings from this evaluation suggest that the project has fostered longer term individual resilience for some participants.



Appreciation for the Arts

The Power of Art successfully engaged a wide range of individuals, the majority of whom reported that they were not active members of the arts community.

The project inspired a new appreciation for the arts in some, and reinforced the value of the artmaking process in others. Further, more than half (52%) of survey respondents reported that the project made them think differently about the role of museums and arts organizations and 91% believe their city should invest in community-engaged public art.

An additional, but less dominant, theme that emerged from the data regarding lasting legacy is, in fact, no legacy at all. Although it is not the majority perspective, it is nonetheless crucial for understanding the full scope and impact of the project. While the data supports a dominantly positive, if not beneficial, impact at different scales, it is important to note that there are dissenting opinions as well. A minority of participants found little value in project activities, thought the project was a distraction, and would have preferred to see direct, decisive action taken to address pressing civic issues. That this dissenting view emerged highlights that, for some participants, the Power of Art did not hold the impact that it intended, whether through logistical issues, presentation, or purpose itself. These critiques have the potential to help future projects improve their role in the community perhaps even more than positive reviews.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Continuation of Investment in Community-Engaged Public Art:** Taken together, the evaluation findings make a compelling argument for continuation of investment in community-engaged public art programming and highlight the importance of co-creation. As such, future projects would benefit from ensuring that as many people as possible are included in the design, implementation, and evaluation phases, are authentically engaged in the creative process, and feel part of something bigger than themselves.
- **Continuation of Investment in Art Therapy:** Regularly scheduled art therapy was an integral part of the Power of Art project and played an important role the healing journey for many participants. The findings from this evaluation support the continuation of accessible, regularly scheduled art therapy for all who could benefit from it.
- **Clarity in Purpose, Intentions, and Connection to Community Trauma:** The findings from the evaluation suggest that when incorporating public art into community recovery efforts, clear explanations about the purpose, intention, and connection to the community should be made.
- **Aligning Installation Sites with the Goals of the Project:** The goals, objectives, and outcomes of the project should be clearly outlined as part of the designing phase of future projects. These goals and objectives should be used to help determine location sites for optimal benefit.
- **Inclusion of Critical Voices:** The designing, planning, implementation, and evaluation of community-engaged public art projects should be inclusive of critical voices.
- **Evaluation Planning as an Integral Piece of Project Development:** To maximize learning and continuous quality improvement efforts both within and beyond future arts projects, evaluation planning should coincide with project development and design.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This evaluation project would not have been possible without the support of the City of Coral Springs, the City of Parkland, and Bloomberg Philanthropies. We'd like to take this opportunity to thank Susan Hess Krisman (Program Manager), Judy Butler (Executive Assistant), Lynne Martzall (Director of Communications & Marketing), Emily Blumenfeld (Curator), Raquel Farrell-Kirk (Art therapist), and the entire Power of Art project team. We'd also like to acknowledge and thank the many community members and artists that participated in evaluation activities despite hectic schedules and a global pandemic. And finally, we graciously thank the communities of Parkland and Coral Springs for welcoming us into their healing journey.

The Evaluation Team

Dr. Stacey M. Kesten, Lead Evaluator

Dr. Miryam Haarlammert, Evaluation Assistant

Greg Burbidge & Emiko Muraki, Public Art Specialists

Dr. Susie Paterson, Survey Development

Bishara Randolph, Data Collection Assistant

Dr. Katie Beem, Data Analyst

Eliana Tirado, Data Visualization Specialist

Dr. Abbe Edelson, Literature Review

Harper Atlas, Visual Designer

For more information about program evaluation or the Collaborators Consulting Group, please visit us at www.collaboratorsconsultinggroup.com.

To contact Dr. Kesten, Lead Evaluator, please email her directly stacey@collaboratorsconsultinggroup.com.

POWER OF ART

The text "POWER OF ART" is rendered in a bold, white, sans-serif font. The word "OF" is smaller and positioned between "POWER" and "ART". The text is overlaid on a series of vibrant, multi-colored brushstrokes in shades of orange, red, purple, and blue. These strokes are layered and curved, creating a sense of movement and energy behind the text.