

NSU ART MUSEUM FORT LAUDERDALE

Creativity Exploration

Virtual Mindfulness Module
History of Your Hands

Works from NSU Art Museum Fort Lauderdale's permanent collection inspire this series of independent mindfulness experiences and art prompts for creating in the comfort of your own home. Learn about art and connect to your own creativity and wellness through inspiring ideas that promote personal discovery.

#NSUMindfulModules

NSU Art Museum's Creativity Exploration workshops promote the benefits of creative exploration and the mind-to-body experience. Studies have shown that just 45 minutes of creative activity a day can reduce stress and improve mental clarity and well-being. Expand your perceptions of forms as you increase brain connectivity through visual and cognitive stimulation in this virtual workshop designed by educator Lark Keeler, a specialist in mindfulness education.



Luis Mallo, 8 Images from series *Passengers*, 1994-95. NSU Art Museum Fort Lauderdale; promised gift of the artist

History of Your Hands

In this mindfulness exercise, we will reflect upon the story that we can find when looking deeply and lovingly at our hands.

- Find a comfortable and alert way of sitting.
- Take a cleansing deep breath and feel gravity holding you in place. Be comforted in your space. Feel safe and calm.
- Inhale... and relax your face, neck, and shoulders when you exhale. Let your hands be still and relaxed. Trust your breath. Notice the natural rhythm your breathing makes.
- Gaze at the palms of your hands. What do you notice? Let your eyes trace the lines and wrinkles made by the folds of your hands like roads on a map.
- Breathe deeply. Take a closer look at your fingerprints. Spend time with each fingertip thinking about how their patterns and designs belong uniquely to you.
- Notice the hills and valleys that make up the surface of your palms. Allow your eyes to travel the landscape of your hands. Breathe deeply.
- Turn your hands over thoughtfully and take a cleansing inhalation and exhalation.
- While keeping your hands relaxed, notice the details that are unique to the backs of your hands. Look judgement free and lovingly at your hands. Look deeply at your nails, knuckles, and any jewelry that may be decorating your hands.
- Consider the work that your hands have done in this life. Think about any scars or callused areas that show the efforts of your work. Breathe in gratitude for the work your hands have accomplished.
- Take a moment to reflect upon the loving touches that your hands have given to others. Imagine holding hands, caresses, wiping away tears, high-fives, and handshakes.
- Think about how your hands have made creations that were baked, planted, sewn, woven, painted, sculpted, cut, or glued. Think of the letters, poems, notes, messages, lists, and cards written by your hands.
- Think about moments your hands put things together and have taken things apart. Breathe in gratitude for all of the history your hands have been a part of.
- Imagine for a moment the unfinished work that your hands may be a part of in the future. Stay with this thought as you press your hands together and feel love for their talents. Take a big, cleansing breath, bringing yourself back to your space and to the rhythm of your natural, relaxed breathing.

Artist Luis Mallo

In the tradition of other photographers before him, Luis Mallo seeks to document the everyday traveler on the subway in New York. Focused solely on the passengers' hands, Mallo invites us to ponder the story of the subject in each photo. His *Passenger* series teases us with hints of gender, race, or perhaps age, mingled with clues that may reveal more of each anonymous traveler's story. The placement and posturing of the hands further create a narrative within the body language, communicating subtle states of various emotions.

Born in Havana, Cuba, Luis Mallo came to New York when he was twelve years old. He first was introduced to photography while attending the Fashion Institute of Technology. Mallo's photographic work invites the viewer to "look deeper and unearth" what is "waiting to be discovered." He invites the viewer to help tell the story found in his photographs that range in subject matter from New York subway passengers and Brooklyn construction sites, to behind-the-scenes places where valuable objects are hidden away and preserved. Pushing and pulling to reveal and conceal, Luis Mallo masterfully tells a story that the viewer is eager to complete.

Artmaking Ideas

Inspired by the work of Luis Mallo's *Passengers* and the reflective mindfulness exercise that invites us to reflect upon the history and life's work of our hands, create a series of portraits that tell the story of you and your loved ones.

- Using your cell phone camera, take some photographs of your hands throughout the day while performing your daily routines. Consider the story that the images tell about your life. Set a reminder alarm if you wish to remember to document yourself throughout the day.
- Try experimenting with the filters in your cell phone to adjust the photos. Experiment with the images in black and white also. What do the images look like grouped or in a grid together? Are there patterns that become clear? How might things change in ten years if you were to participate in this exercise again?
- If you are able to photograph others, see if you are able to just photograph their hands in candid moments. What do the photos reveal about the person? What do the photos conceal?

We'd love to see your experience! Take a photo and tag @nsuartmuseum



Creativity Exploration is sponsored by the Charles P. Ferro Foundation.



Lark Keeler is a museum educator at NSU Art Museum and a visual arts teacher at Saint Andrew's Lower School. Over the past 20 years she has taught visual arts in schools and museums, working with students of all ages and abilities throughout South Florida. Keeler was awarded the Florida Art Education Association's Museum Educator of the Year in 2010 and since has participated in the National Guild for Community Arts Education Leadership Institute and the National Art Education Association's School for Art Leaders. She has received a certification in Mindfulness Fundamentals and is a certified MindUP educator. She now serves as a board member for the Florida Alliance for Arts Education, Florida Art Education Association's Past-President, Secretary for the National Caucus on the Spiritual in Art Education, and as a member of the Delray Beach Public Art Advisory Board.



NSU Art Museum Fort Lauderdale

   **@nsuartmuseum**

nsuartmuseum.org | 954-525-5500

One East Las Olas Blvd. Fort Lauderdale 33301

Exhibitions and programs at NSU Art Museum Fort Lauderdale are made possible in part by a challenge grant from the David and Francie Horvitz Family Foundation. Funding is also provided by the City of Fort Lauderdale, Wege Foundation, AutoNation, Community Foundation of Broward, Paddock Family Foundation, Funding Arts Broward, Broward County Board of County Commissioners as recommended by the Broward Cultural Council and Greater Fort Lauderdale Convention & Visitors Bureau, the Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs the Florida Council on Arts and the State of Florida. NSU Art Museum Fort Lauderdale is accredited by the American Association of Museums.

