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PHL Kicks Off Arts in the Airport Workshop

PHILADELPHIA – As Philadelphia International Airport’s acclaimed Art and Exhibitions Program celebrates its 20th anniversary this year, PHL is hosting the American Association of Airport Executives (AAAE) 16th annual Arts in the Airport Workshop this week.

Some 50 individuals representing airports across North America are attending the 3-day conference, which kicks off today at the Courtyard Hotel in Center City. The robust agenda features presentations from airports on their innovative arts programs and local arts organizations such as the Queens Arts Council and International Sculpture Center as well as tours of various arts studios, Philadelphia’s famous public art, and fascinating rotating and permanent exhibits at the Airport.

Attendees will be taken on a “Art Safari Tour” including visits to Chinatown’s Fleisher-Ollman Gallery, one of the city’s long-time commercial galleries; the nationally recognized Clay Studio in Old City; and Crane Arts, a former warehouse in Kensington converted to galleries and artists’ studios. These excursions plus a reception at renowned mosaic artist Isaiah Zagar’s studio in South Philadelphia will offer attendees a chance to experience Philly’s amazing arts and culture first-hand.

In addition to the airport presenters, WHYY’s Peter Crimmins will give an overview of the region’s arts scene. Philly street art photographer Conrad Benner will present about the city’s street art; and one session will feature three Philly Public Art Programs - Percent for Art Program presented by Jacque Liu, Mural Arts by Jane Golden, and Association for Public Art by Laura Griffith.

“This is the second time PHL is hosting this wonderful conference, which brings together the creative teams at airports across North America,” said Airport CEO Chellie Cameron. “Our city boasts a vibrant arts community and culture. Not only will airport colleagues have the opportunity to share ideas and success stories, they’ll be treated to tours of some of the most beloved creative arts institutions Philadelphia offers.”

Earlier this year, Philadelphia City Council recognized the 20th anniversary of PHL’s Exhibitions Program with a Resolution. In 2013, *USA Today* voted PHL as one of the Top 3 Best Airport Art Programs in the United States. In 2014, PHL was the recipient of the Arts & Business Partnership Award: Large Business with an Arts Organization awarded by the Arts and Business Council of Greater Philadelphia.

Philadelphia International Airport is owned and operated by the City of Philadelphia. The Airport is a self-sustaining entity that operates without the use of local tax dollars. It is one of the largest economic engines in Pennsylvania, generating an estimated \$14.4 billion in spending to the regional economy and accounting for more than 141,000 jobs.