

# AATA and the Creative Arts Therapies Professions at #APA2018

*Donna Betts, PhD, ATR-BC, AATA Past President  
September 6, 2018*

This year's American Psychological Association convention took place August 9 – 12 in San Francisco, and creative arts therapies leaders proudly represented their respective professions! The AATA was represented by Immediate Past President Donna Betts, and art therapist presenters also included Gioia Chilton, Juliet King, Melissa Walker, and Rebecca Wilkinson.



*The Panel of Presenters for "Consulting, Collaboration, and Credentialing: Psychologists Partnering with Creative Arts Therapists,"  
APA Convention 2018, San Francisco, CA.*

With over 10,000 people in attendance, the APA convention provided an ideal opportunity to feature *Creative Arts and Psychology: Special Interest Convention Programming*, coordinated by Co-Chairs Mary Gregerson (President, [APA Division 10](#), Society for the Psychology of



*Art therapist presenters at #APA2018 from left:  
Rebecca Wilkinson, Melissa Walker, & Gioia Chilton.*

Aesthetics, Creativity, & the Arts) and Allyn Enderlyn (Treasurer), with Guest Co-Chair Bill O'Brien (National Endowment for the Arts). Dozens of sessions on this topic drew crowds, including a panel on *Psychologists Partnering with Creative Arts Therapists* that included (see inset photo, above, from left): Laura Wood, President, North American Drama Therapy Association; Gioia Chilton, art therapist; Jennifer Geiger, Immediate Past President, American Music Therapy Association; Ronna Kaplan, Chair, National Coalition of Creative Arts Therapies Associations; Donna Betts, Immediate Past President, AATA; Rebecca Wilkinson, art therapist; Jeffrey Smith, Co-Chair; Bill O'Brien; and Ilene Serlin, American Dance Therapy Association.

AATA members participated in several of the Special Interest sessions, including Juliet King, Associate Professor of Art Therapy, George Washington University, and Adjunct Associate Professor, Indiana University School of Medicine Department of Neurology, during her presentation on *Art Therapy and Neuroscience* (see inset photo), for a session on *Neuroscience of Creative Expression* co-chaired by Hod Orkibi, University of Haifa, and Susan Magsamen, Johns Hopkins University.



Art therapist and neuroscience researcher Juliet King, APA Convention 2018, San Francisco, CA.

Another engaging session was the *Crucial Creative Arts Town Hall and Innovative Blitz Talks—Arts for Art Versus Arts for Therapy*, which involved a series of short presentations that were evaluated by a panel of judges. Among the presenters was art therapist Rebecca Wilkinson of Creative WellBeing Workshops who addressed the topic, *Adult Coloring—If it Ain't Art and It Ain't Therapy, What Is It?*



From left: Bill O'Brien of the NEA, Donna Betts of the AATA, & Rosie Phillips Davis, APA President-Elect.

APA President-Elect [Rosie Phillips Davis](#), PhD, ABPP, former Vice President for Student Affairs and current Professor of Counseling Psychology at the University of Memphis, co-chaired the presentation, *Innovation Driving the Arts and Sciences toward the Horizon of Psychology*, co-sponsored by APA Division 18 Public Service and Div 10 Aesthetics, Creativity and the Arts; and co-listed by Div 1 General; Div 19 Military; and Div 32 Humanistic. Dr. Phillips Davis' primary practical and scholarly passions are: the power of inclusion; multicultural vocational psychology; ethics; and living well in a diverse society. Among her varied interests, she heads a [Presidential Deep Poverty Initiative](#) (DPI) within the APA, and has a sincere appreciation for the contributions of art therapy and the creative arts therapies to the mental health and well-being of all those helped through our collective efforts.

