

CEPAGALLERY

CONTEMPORARY PHOTOGRAPHY & VISUAL ARTS CENTER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Véronique Côté, Executive Director
CEPA • Center for Exploratory & Perceptual Arts • cepagallery.org
617 Main Street, Suite 201, Buffalo, NY 14203

Phone: 215.779.4371
Email: veronique@cepagallery.org
Date: January 11, 2022

CEPA Receives Signature Grant from Doug Flutie Jr. Foundation for Autism for \$7,500

Funds will help expand the gallery's work with individuals on the autism spectrum.

Buffalo, Erie – January 11, 2022 – [The Center for Exploratory & Perceptual Arts](#) is pleased to announce that they have received \$7,500 from the Doug Flutie Jr. Foundation for Autism. These funds will be dedicated to enhancing and expanding CEPA's work with individuals on the autism spectrum. This work will build on the already existing community partnerships that CEPA has, including with Autism Services, People Inc., Starlight Studios, and the Summit Center.

"As someone on the Autism Spectrum, I am extremely proud of CEPA's services for neurodivergent people. They are meaningful to my personal mission in the art world but also quintessential to CEPA's continued commitment to championing diverse voices in the creative industry" says Véronique Côté, CEPA's Executive Director & Chief Curator.

These funds will be used to support CEPA's photography workshops and hands-on training for individuals on the spectrum. CEPA's photography workshops will be headed by talented artist instructors. One of these instructors is Joseph Poloncarz, a former CEPA student, now instructor. The workshops and training will serve around 40 individuals with autism and will provide students the opportunity to envision, create, and publicly exhibit a collection of photographs.

CEPA's educational programming helps develop new artists and build passion for photography as a medium. The Doug Flutie Jr. Foundation grant will help CEPA to continue its essential work in the autism community.

###

CEPA • 617 MAIN STREET, #201, BUFFALO, NY 14203 • 716-856-2717 • WWW.CEPAGALLERY.ORG



Joseph with first paycheck



Joseph with his first class at CEPA Gallery

Joseph Poloncarz

Joseph Poloncarz first came to CEPA in 2012 for a photography program through Autism Services. He became quite interested in the darkroom and experimented with different films and developers over the years, continuing to visit CEPA's darkroom. Having developed expertise, he was soon helping others. In 2018, he became an assistant teacher for our summer camps. Assisting Sabrina Marazzo (also a former CEPA student), he helped in the darkroom. In 2019, while interning at CEPA through City Honors, he taught his first photography class to young students from his alma mater, Autism Services. He created powerpoints and lesson plans and was thoughtful and encouraging to the students as they explored Main Street with digital cameras and experimented with Photoshop. As a paid teacher, he also taught a class to a group of adults from Autism Services. A few remembered him from when he was a student and were thrilled to be in a learning environment with him again, but this time as a role model. CEPA is honored to have Joseph as one of our teaching artists! Joseph continued to use the CEPA darkroom throughout the pandemic, experimenting with developing slide films, including Kodachrome. He is excited for CEPA to reopen so he can welcome and teach more students. See Joseph's online exhibit created during the pandemic.

<https://www.cepagallery.org/2020/10/joseph-poloncarz-eclipse/>