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Children's Museum of Pittsburgh and *New York Times* Best-Selling Author/Illustrator Mo Willems Announce a New Exhibit Based on Opposites

*The “Opposites Abstract” Exhibit Will Premiere in February 2023 at MuseumLab
on the Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh Campus*

PITTSBURGH (May 16, 2022) – Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh (CMP) is proud to expand our collaboration with worldwide bestselling and award-winning author and illustrator Mo Willems to create a new interactive exhibit based on his latest all-ages book, *Opposites Abstract*.

The exhibition will focus on the topic of opposites, taking inspiration from the eye-popping, emotive and highly-accessible words and images of Mo Willems. It will explore this complicated concept and its many nuances using art-making activities, artist-led performances and programs, and original artwork. Is this dark? Is this light? Is this broken? Is this fixed? Interactive, multi-sensory activities geared to children and former children of all ages will inspire visitors to create and respond to art in different ways.

“This exhibit is the opposite of what you might expect from me,” said Mo Willems, creator of The Pigeon, Elephant & Piggie, and a host of other iconic children’s book characters. “And that’s the point. We all encompass so many different facets of ourselves that we can discover and explore through art. I’m excited to see the opposites and the abstractions within you!”

The *Opposites Abstract* exhibition will premiere at MuseumLab in February 2023 and begin its tour to museums and libraries across the country in September 2023. MuseumLab is Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh’s newest space for youth and teens to explore art, tech and making, located right next door to Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh.

“It’s exciting to explore the concept of opposites that blends so many artistic media and viewpoints,” said Anne Fullenkamp, Senior Director of Creative Experiences at Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh. “We’re thrilled to work with Mo and his team again to create hands-on experiences that inspire kids and families to not only recognize and blur opposites, but explore many differences and similarities.”

Mo Willems’ idea for a book and exhibit about abstract opposites began when he was Education Artist-in-Residence with the John F. Kennedy Center in 2020. As part of his residency, he created a series of abstract paintings—inspired by Beethoven’s music—for the celebration of Beethoven’s 250th birthday. As one project often leads to another, the idea took shape and the *Opposites Abstract* book was published in 2021. The book features 18 beautiful, abstract images that prompt readers to explore opposites in a nontraditional, artistic way, and is currently widely available in stores and online.

In 2018, Mo Willems, Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh and The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art collaborated to create the exhibit *The Pigeon Comes to Pittsburgh! A Mo Willems Exhibit*, where visitors are invited into the imagination,

whimsy and humor of the author/illustrator. Many familiar characters are featured, including best friend duo Elephant and Piggie, faithful companion Knuffle Bunny, and The Pigeon, the wily city bird best known for his antics in *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!* Activities give children the opportunity to make art that is inspired by Mo Willems and to learn about the rich social and emotional lives of his characters. The exhibit also features prints of Mo Willems illustrations. This exhibit has traveled to many museums and cultural institutions since its debut and inspired hundreds of thousands of kids and families.

For information on renting this and other Children's Museum's traveling exhibits, please contact the Museum's Exhibits department at (412) 322-5058, ext. 229, or exhibits@pittsburghkids.org.

ELEPHANT & PIGGIE is a trademark of The Mo Willems Studio, Inc.

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About Children's Museum of Pittsburgh

Children's Museum of Pittsburgh provides innovative and inclusive museum experiences that inspire kindness, joy, creativity and curiosity for all learners. We forge connections with artists, community partners and neighbors to work on behalf of children, youth and families. Permanent hands-on, interactive exhibit areas include The Studio, Theater, Waterplay, Kindness Gallery, Backyard and MAKESHOP®. The Museum was voted one of the nation's 10Best Museums for Families in USA Today's Reader's Choice Contest in 2022. The Children's Museum is open daily from 10:00 am – 5:00 pm. Admission is \$18 for adults, \$16 for children 2-18 and senior citizens. Children under two are free. The Museum is located on Pittsburgh's historic North Side at 10 Children's Way, Pittsburgh, PA 15212. For more information, please call (412) 322-5058 or visit the Museum website, www.pittsburghkids.org. Follow us on [Facebook.com/pittsburghkids](https://www.facebook.com/pittsburghkids) / [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/pittsburghkids) and [Twitter @pghkids](https://twitter.com/pghkids)

About Mo Willems

Mo Willems is an author, illustrator, animator, and playwright. He was the inaugural Kennedy Center Education Artist-in-Residence (2019-2022), and he continues to collaborate in creating fun new stuff involving classical music, opera, comedy concerts, dance, painting, and digital works with the National Symphony Orchestra, Washington National Opera, Ben Folds, Yo-Yo Ma, and others.

Willems is best known for his #1 *New York Times* bestselling picture books, which have been awarded three Caldecott Honors (*Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!*, *Knuffle Bunny*, *Knuffle Bunny Too*), two Theodor Geisel Medals, and five Geisel Honors (The *Elephant & Piggie* series).

Mo's art has been exhibited around the world, including major solo retrospectives at the High Museum (Atlanta) and the New-York Historical Society (NYC). Over the last decade, Willems has become the most produced playwright of Theater for Young Audiences in America, having written or co-written four musicals based on his books.

He began his career as a writer and animator on PBS' *Sesame Street*, where he garnered six Emmy Awards (writing). Other television work includes two series on Cartoon Network: *Sheep in the Big City* (creator + head writer) and *Codename: Kids Next Door* (head writer). Mo is creating new TV projects for HBO Max, where his live action-comedy special *Don't Let the Pigeon Do Storytime!* currently streams. Upcoming projects include an animated rock opera special based on *Naked Mole Rat Gets Dressed* and a series based on his *Unlimited Squirrels* books.

His papers reside at Yale University's Beinecke Library.