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**Children's Museum of Pittsburgh and New York Times Best-Selling  
Author / Illustrator Mo Willems Announce  
Opening Weekend for the Opposites Abstract Exhibit**

*Tickets are now available for Saturday, February 4, 2023  
for the exhibit as well as live events with Mo Willems*

PITTSBURGH, PA (December 7, 2022) – Children's Museum of Pittsburgh and worldwide bestselling and award-winning author and illustrator Mo Willems are launching a new interactive exhibit, Opposites Abstract. The exhibit will have its grand opening at MuseumLab on Saturday, February 4, 2023, at noon.

The opening weekend will feature additional events, including a reading by Willems at 11 am on Saturday, February 4, that will take place at the New Hazlett Theater. There will also be an evening in conversation with Willems and Children's Museum of Pittsburgh Executive Director Jane Werner on Sunday, February 5, at 5:00 pm. Both activities are at the New Hazlett Theater, which is adjacent to MuseumLab.

Tickets to both opening weekend events are limited and expected to sell out quickly.

[For tickets to the book reading, click here.](#)

[For tickets to the evening in conversation, click here.](#)

This interactive exhibition invites its audience to view and play by exploring the complicated yet simple concept of opposites through hands-on experiences, art making activities, and artist-led performances. Geared to both children and former children of all ages, the exhibition will inspire every visitor to create and respond to art in their own unique ways.

Opposites Abstract will be open to the public on Saturdays and Sundays from noon until 5:00 pm. Admission to the exhibit, and MuseumLab, can be purchased through the Children's Museum website.

The opening weekend will include additional programs from local artists and performers, that will take place at the New Hazlett Theater Saturday and Sunday. Admission to these activities will be included with a ticket to see the exhibit. Admission for the reading and evening in conversation must be purchased separately. For the latest schedule of all activities, please visit: <https://newhazletttheater.org/events/>

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 250<sup>th</sup> 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.

"Opposites Abstract has been a great journey for me to think about ideas in different ways. And my goal with Opposites Abstract is for you to go out and find your own opposites and create them yourself to ask these questions," said Willems. "Maybe the oldest member of your family and the youngest member of your family can create their own opposites and see how their art styles mix and are different."

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 opened in 2019, and the expansion

created the largest cultural campus for kids in the nation. While exhibits and programs at the Children's Museum focus on younger kids, MuseumLab is designed for growing children, in middle school, high school and beyond.

“We are so grateful to partner together again with Mo Willems in creating a hands-on learning experience that will premiere in Pittsburgh, and then reach families and children at museums around the country,” said Jane Werner, Executive Director of Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh and MuseumLab. “This exhibit explores similarities and differences in a way that is perfectly aligned with the curiosity we believe in, and with the experimental spirit of MuseumLab, our newest space for growing kids.”

This is the second major collaboration between Willems and the museum.

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 more information about the exhibit please visit [pittsburghkids.org/exhibit/oppositesabstract](http://pittsburghkids.org/exhibit/oppositesabstract) or email [hi@pittsburghkids.org](mailto:hi@pittsburghkids.org).

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### **About Children's Museum of Pittsburgh**

Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh is a place that provides innovative and inclusive museum experiences that inspire kindness, joy, creativity and curiosity for all learners. Our imaginative, open-ended exhibits and programs give families the opportunity to explore topics like art, making and social-emotional learning in ways that are authentic, meaningful, and most of all, fun! The museum is open every day, from 10:00 am – 5:00 pm.

### **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: A Cautionary Tale*; *Knuffle Bunny Too: A Case of Mistaken Identity*), and his celebrated Elephant and Piggie early reader series, which has been awarded two Theodor Geisel Medals and five Geisel Honors.

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’s recent TV projects include the live action comedy special *Don’t Let the Pigeon Do Storytime!* and an animated rock opera special based on *Naked Mole Rat Gets Dressed*, which premiered on HBO Max. In April 2023, Mo will celebrate the 20th anniversary of *Don’t Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!* with the publication of *Be the Bus: The Lost & Profound Wisdom of The Pigeon* (Union Square Kids, April 4, 2023), a humor book for adults, and *Don’t Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus! 20th Anniversary Edition (Hyperion Books for Children, April 4, 2023) including an exclusive board game*. His papers reside at Yale University’s Beinecke Library.