

Symposium (A):  
**Impossible Creativity – Exploring the Far Reaches of Human Potential**

Co-sponsored by Div. 32 and Div. 10 of the American Psychological Association

**Thursday August 7, 8:00 - 9:50 AM**

Walter E. Washington Convention Center, room 152B  
801 Mt. Vernon Place NW, Washington, DC

**Chair**

Tobi Zausner, PhD

**Participants and Presentations**

Ilene Serlin, PhD	<i>Creativity Heals</i>
Oshin Vartanian, PhD	<i>Creativity and Aesthetic Appreciation in Architecture</i>
Steven R. Pritzker, PhD	<i>Ha Ha Ha – Who Has the Last Laugh Now: Comedians and Aging</i>
Darya Zabelina, MS	<i>Broad Attention and Leaky Sensory Filters: Creative Behavior and Neurophysiology</i>
Ruth Richards, MD, PhD	<i>Lucid Dreaming and Creativity: Opening New Worlds</i>
Tobi Zausner, PhD, LMSW	<i>Achieving the Impossible: Professional Visual Artists Who Are Blind</i>

**Discussant**

Stanley C. Krippner, PhD

This Collaborative Program on the theme of Psychology and the Public Good reveals new heights of human potential through investigations in creativity research, neuroscience, and clinical practice. As such, the symposium is relevant to Division 10: Society for the Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity and the Arts and Division 32: Society for Humanistic Psychology.

In her paper, *Creativity Heals*, Ilene Serlin, presents the resolution of previously inexpressible traumatic experiences through the creation of an aesthetic distance in drama therapy. Oshin Vartanian's investigation, *Creativity and Aesthetic Appreciation in Architecture* examines data for architects Eero Saarinen and Louis Kahn and also provides brain imaging on psychological and neural correlates of aesthetic appreciation. In his paper on creativity and longevity, *HaHaHa – Who Has the Last Laugh Now: Comedians and Aging*, Steven Pritzker finds that comedians are the longest lived creative individuals and presents research on Carl Reiner, George Burns, Groucho Marx, Lucile Ball, Johnny Carson and Bob Hope. Citing Thomas Carlyle, Richard Wagner, Marcel Proust, Charles Darwin, and Arthur Schopenhauer in her neuroscience presentation, *Broad Attention and Leaky Sensory Filters: Creative Behavior and Neurophysiology*, Darya Zabelina examines the attention dynamics of creative people, showing their capacity for wide focus is paired with difficulties in filtering out environmental sounds. Ruth Richards discusses creativity in the REM dream state in *Lucid Dreaming and Creativity: Opening New Worlds*, also demonstrating that hypnagogia and hypnopompia influenced creators such as Robert Louis Stevenson and Albert Einstein. Tobi Zausner's presentation: *Achieving the Impossible: Professional Visual Artists Who Are Blind* investigates the clinical, neuroscience, and physical aspects of artists such as Edgar Degas, Georgia O'Keeffe, and Claude Monet.

All of these papers demonstrate the central role of psychology in revealing the enormous capacity of human potential.