



HARVARD GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

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PRESS RELEASE



Shari Tishman named Director of Project Zero

The Steering Committee of Project Zero (PZ) is pleased to announce the appointment of Shari Tishman as its new director. Project Zero is a research group at the Harvard Graduate School of Education that investigates the development of learning processes in children, adults, and organizations. Founded by the philosopher Nelson Goodman in 1967, Project Zero began with a focus on learning in and through the arts. Today, while the arts remain a central concern at Project Zero, the 11 senior researchers lead studies on a range of topics in learning and teaching, including complex causality, interdisciplinarity, ethics in the digital age, educating for the unknown, knowledge development in organizations, and the assessment of group learning.

Tishman has been with Project Zero for more than two decades. Her research has focused on the development of thinking and understanding, learning in and through the arts, and learning in museums. She is currently a senior research associate at Project Zero and a member of the faculty of Harvard Graduate School of Education, teaching courses on learning in museums and object-based learning. She recently completed studies on quality in arts education and learning in the Harvard University Art Museums.

Tishman replaces Steve Seidel, who has served as Director of Project Zero since 2000. Seidel, the Patricia Bauman and John Landrum Bryant Lecturer in Arts in Education at HGSE, will continue at Project Zero as a senior researcher and a member of the organization's steering committee. He also continues at HGSE as director of the Arts in Education Program. "Shari Tishman is a terrific choice for the new director of Project Zero. Her long history with PZ and her deep knowledge of the full range of our research gives her a perfect foundation for both building on our strengths and taking the organization in new directions. For many years, Shari has led the 'Artful Thinking' project at PZ. Her thinking is truly artful and I know she will engage the entire organization in 'artful thinking' about its future. I think this is a very exciting moment and a great opportunity for Project Zero," said Seidel.

In the early 1970s, Goodman handed the leadership of Project Zero over to two of his colleagues, Professors David Perkins and Howard Gardner, who remained codirectors until 2000. Both Perkins and Gardner have been at Project Zero since the earliest days, each conducting landmark research on high-end cognition in the arts and other areas. Perkins, current senior codirector of Project Zero, offered this reflection: “These days, turnover seems to be the rule in many organizations. Not so at Project Zero. Steve and Shari with many others have found renewal right here at home through richly evolving roles and lines of inquiry over many years. I’m enormously grateful to Steve for his period of leadership, and thrilled that Shari has stepped forward to guide and energize our community.”

Gardner, the other current senior codirector of Project Zero, commented: “I feel privileged that, with David Perkins, I’ve had the opportunity to work at Project Zero since its beginnings and to witness three smooth changes of leadership. While also serving as the director of the Arts and Education Program, Steve Seidel led Project Zero through a difficult time at the university. He did so with skill, steadiness, and a spirit of generosity which was appreciated not only by the dozens of individuals who work at Project Zero, but also by many hundred educators from all over the world, whose lives he has touched. Now Shari Tishman, trained in philosophy, steeped in arts education, and knowledgeable about our various local, national, and international constituencies, is our leader. I share the excitement of all who have learned of this appointment: Shari draws on the foundational ideas of the organization and is poised to meet the challenges and opportunities of our time.”

Today, Project Zero with dozens of past projects, hundreds of publications, and numerous research studies currently underway, has international, as well as extensive national, reach. Over the past 13 years, the Project Zero Classroom, an annual summer institute, coproduced with HGSE’s Programs in Professional Education, has drawn more than 3,000 educators from across the U.S. and many other countries. This summer, PZ is offering a new institute, The Future of Learning, drawing faculty from PZ, HGSE, and other higher education institutions, as well as PZ associates who work in schools around the world.

More information on Project Zero’s institutes, research, and other activities is available at: www.pz.harvard.edu.