

**Visionary, Connoisseur, Collaborator**

**Thom Collins, Barnes Foundation's newest President and Executive Director is changing the way people experience, think, and feel about art. He is broadening the foundation's reach to engage a younger and wider audience in a place once originally off-limits to the average Joe.**

**ELR: What is the Barnes Foundation?**

TC: The Barnes Foundation is a unique educational institution dedicated to appreciation of the fine arts and horticulture. Its legendary art collection includes some of the world's finest examples of post-impressionist and early modern works, along with African and other non-western art, decorative arts, the historic 12-acre arboretum and a 10,000 specimen herbarium.

The mission of the Barnes Foundation is to promote the advancement of education and the appreciation of fine arts.

**ELR: How big is the organization?**

TC: 130 employees

**ELR: How long has the Barnes Foundation been around?**

TC: The Barnes Foundation Philadelphia opened on May 19, 2012.

**ELR: What drew you to the Foundation?**

TC: When my brother and I were in school, my parents took turns going to graduate school. When my father was solo he'd distract us by taking us to museums like the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and the Barnes Foundation.

**ELR: What did Mom and Dad do for work?**

TC: My Father was history teacher slash football coach and my Mother was a hospital administrator.

**ELR: What did you learn from those experiences that has shaped what you do at Barnes today?**

TC: Beyond aesthetics, art tells the story of history, culture and society at a given moment in time.

We want to teach people how to unpack these stories which are still relevant to the issues we face as a society today; the advent of the structure of the middle-

class, the changing relationship between genders, and race and ethnicity.

**ELR: What you see as your single most important task as the Foundation's new leader?**

TC: To build a forum, both online and in the museum, that fosters collective collaboration for the arts, ideas, and history represented by the pictures and objects housed in our museum.



**ELR: Love the new campaign #Meet your Masterpiece. Great idea**

TC: Thanks, the #Meet Your Masterpiece campaign was instant success. We had more than 1000 comments the first day we launched on our Facebook page.

**ELR: That's awesome, clearly it's working. So what's next?**

TC: Growing the mission and reputation and expanding our social outreach.

**ELR: What causes are you involved with or most interested in?**

TC: Organizations that support returning vets suffering from PTSD and organizations that help the ex-offenders.

**ELR: It's been a pleasure talking with Thom Collins, President and Executive Director of the Barnes Foundation here in Philadelphia.**

**For more information about the Barnes Foundation, please visit their website at [www.barnesfoundation.org](http://www.barnesfoundation.org)**



*About Michael:*

*Michael is a Certified Business Performance Advisor with Insperity, a trusted advisor to America's best businesses. Michael works with CEOs and Owners to help align their workforce with organizational goals leveraging Insperity's array of HR and business performance solutions to deliver administrative relief, better benefits, reduced liabilities and a more systematic way approach to improving productivity through its premier Workforce Optimization solution.*

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