**Testimony**
**Amy Sananman, Executive Director**
**Groundswell**

Good afternoon.

My name is Amy Sananman, and I am the Executive Director of Groundswell.

As many of you know, Groundswell is a cultural organization with a 17-year track record of using art as a tool for social change.

Over our 17-year history, Groundswell has engaged thousands of youth, community members, and artists in the creation of upwards of 500 works of public art in neighborhoods throughout all five boroughs of New York.

It is a pleasure to join you here today to testify on behalf of this legislation, to amend the New York City charter.

As the cultural capital of the world, New York City should be the global leader in setting equitable and clear objectives that take into account the assets, needs, and resources of all its communities.

This legislation calls for New York City to create a transparent and comprehensive cultural plan.

This plan will support our shared efforts to increase cultural activity throughout New York City, with a goal of deepening access to and participation in the arts among New Yorkers from diverse neighborhoods, socio-economic backgrounds, and cultures.

Added to this legislation should be

1) an analysis of the impact on youth and families of having access to arts and culture within their own communities, and

2) an outline of how affordable housing can be used as a strategy, not just for artists, but for residents who risk displacement due to arts-related real estate development and gentrification.

I would be happy to answer any additional questions on how this legislation might positively impact community-based cultural organizations.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration today.

**Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations**
**Public Hearing on Comprehensive Cultural Plan**
November 19, 2013, 1:00PM
250 Broadway, NYC - Committee Rm, 16th Fl.

**Testimony by: Risa Shoup**
Associate Director, The Invisible Dog Art Center
Lead Organizer, The Brooklyn Commune Project

Good afternoon distinguished members of the New York City Council.

My name is Risa Shoup, and I am here with colleagues from the Invisible Dog Art Center, a multidisciplinary arts space housed in a former belt factory in Boerum Hill, and the Brooklyn Commune Project an artist-driven research project investigating the value of labor in the performing arts. This weekend Brooklyn Commune will commence a Global Congress at the Invisible Dog; our goal is to identify meaningful, actionable solutions to systemic challenges. I am also a Graduate Fellow in the Department of City Planning at the Pratt Institute. **Thank you for this opportunity to testify today on behalf of my colleagues.**

Council members, just as I play roles in several cultural institutions, I ask you to consider how you embody several roles with respect to the arts as sponsors of this plan, as well as family members/neighbors/or friends of artists, and hopefully, audience members at this great city's many cultural institutions. **We all have a critical role to play in making the city more affordable for artists and arts workers.**

My colleagues and I are excited by the prospect of a comprehensive cultural plan, but **a plan is merely a distraction if it isn't backed up by substantive reforms that lead to actual change.** We commend you for highlighting the need to "provide support to individual and emerging artists in the City," but no mechanisms for doing so are mentioned. **What version of NYC would we have if Ellen Stewart, Ruth Maleczech or Basquiat had not helped us to create our vision for it? It is imperative that artistic production and cultural infrastructure be granted more funding based on the needs of individual artists who know how to design creative projects and places to better the lives of all New Yorkers.**

Arts and culture are critical reasons why so many industries decide to locate in NYC. The City has leveraged innovative incentives and development s in order to attract tech and commercial design firms. Workers in those firms employ skills shared by artists and arts workers, **but if we don't create incentives and developments in response to their needs, then artists and arts workers will have no choice but to live and work elsewhere.**

Artists subsidize their own industry with free labor, donated resources, and otherwise uncompensated technical assistance. Brooklyn Commune's early research

shows that artists make too little from their practice, and spend considerable portions of their income to support it, which does NOT enable long-term stability. I want to take a moment now to highlight the excellent work already done by the Department of Cultural Affairs; particularly in light of their democratic reform of the public funding process in 2008. **We hope this reform mentality will continue to guide you as you construct this proposed plan. We wish to be your collaborators in reform. We also want to be firm: both the necessary research that will inform this plan, and any policy and programmatic changes that result, must be reflected in a funding mandate, and must not place further strain on DCLA's budget.**

We commend you for recognizing the need to consider the critical differences between neighborhoods - and we want to implore you to consult artists in performing this evaluation. **Artists can cut costs and increase production when they are able to live and work in close proximity.** Several important organizations help transform existing and unused real estate into subsidized workspace for artists, **but we believe that the City should also enable artist-entrepreneurs to create their own affordable developments by legitimizing and incentivizing live/work spaces and the purchase of real estate.**

In closing, I want to thank you again for the opportunity to testify. **Artists do not live precarious lives by choice; precarity is a lamentable effect of our choice to be artists – but together we are now in a position to help reverse this trend.**

TESTIMONY
for the New York City Council
Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries, and International
Intergroup Relations

By

Virginia P. Louloudes
Executive Director
Alliance of Resident Theatres/New York (A.R.T./New
York)

Good afternoon. My name is Ginny Louloudes and I am the Executive Director of the Alliance of Resident Theatres/New York (A.R.T./New York), the leadership and advocacy organization for New York City's 358 nonprofit theatres in all five boroughs. I want to thank Committee Chair Van Bramer for inviting me to testify on the Proposed Comprehensive Cultural Plan.

We applaud the Council for identifying what are probably the most critical issues facing the field right now. I would just like to cite a few challenges that were not addressed: the loss of corporate funding and programmatic shifts at several foundations that could seriously reduce funding to the field, and lack of affordable, appropriate, accessible spaces for our artists to perform - in the last decade we have lost 50 small performance spaces.

**As I read this legislation, I sense an underlying assumption that New York City does not have access to critical data about its arts and culture organizations. I would beg to differ.** While there is no central database that can answer all of the questions proposed in this legislation, the data already exists within various sources. The Cultural Data Project has a great deal of the information you are seeking: including a detailed breakdown of income and expenses. They also indicate how many audience members' each organization reaches through paid, discounted and free arts programs. CDP Data tracks which organizations' provide arts in the schools programs, as well as the amount of real estate they occupy for office, rehearsal, creation and performance space.

While the CDP may not include community based arts groups that do not apply to DCLA funding, a good deal of this data resides at the New York State Council on the Arts (which funds smaller groups,) organizations that either serve as fiscal sponsors for organizations (such as Fractured Atlas) or those who provide funding (such as A.R.T./New York).

**In Section 1. Legislative Intent,** it states: "There is no measure of what is considered an acceptable level of cultural resources." How does one define an "acceptable level of cultural resources?" Is that the Council's decision? Is it based on a per-capita basis? Furthermore, the plan attempts to "understand the scope of cultural services throughout the City, where the services are lacking and how they should be filled."

Perhaps I missed it, but I did not notice a definition of "cultural activity" in the body of the legislation. Will cultural activity include activities in current DCLA and Arts Council funded organizations? Will arts programs provided through the New York City Housing Authority be included? How about arts programs nonprofits provide in the schools and at senior centers? Arts provided in the Hospitals? What about church choirs, ethnic dancing classes like those taught at my church in Brooklyn, or for that matter, dance classes taught in gyms, cultural centers or dancing schools like Broadway Dance?

**Throughout the legislation certain words are used that are not defined. How would you define a "neighborhood"? What are each neighborhood's borders? What is a "community"? Are the residents of each neighborhood considered a single community or are there multiple communities within each neighborhood?** I would argue that New York City's neighborhood borders are porous. What is more, the vast majority of the City's cultural organizations' receive visitors from, and provide services

to, residents outside of the district where the cultural organization is physically located (as indicated in my arts and education attachment).

**How does this legislation plan to address Naturally Occurring Cultural Districts?** For example, the reason so many Off and Off Off Broadway theatres are located in Districts 2 and 3 is because the inventory of affordable space was available in the 1970's and 1980's. Furthermore, they wanted to be located near the service providers on whom they rely (the garment district for fabric, and the prop houses and specialty shoe stores in the vicinity of Broadway). It is only since the late 1980's that we've seen the growth of theatres in Brooklyn, Queens, the Bronx and Staten Island, and sadly some of these companies can no longer afford their theatre spaces as rents in certain neighborhoods like Williamsburg, the East Village and Bushwick have gone up exponentially.

Am I correct in interpreting that this legislation states a desire to have an arts or cultural organization located in each community? If so, I would advise that you proceed with caution; as there are a number of reasons why this may not be financially sustainable.

**What is the source of funding for the Comprehensive Cultural Plan?**

Right now, the field is facing a major loss of private funding, while fixed costs keep rising. In addition, DCLA, along with other City agencies, annually faces potential cuts to funding, due to the City's fiscal constraints.

If funding for the Comprehensive Cultural Plan comes out of the DCLA budget it will reduce the amount of funding for the very groups you hope to help. If you raise private funds, you will be competing with us at a time when many of our groups are hurting.

**Does the Council anticipate increasing the amount of money it will be providing to DCLA's budget to accomplish the very well meaning, and highly ambitious goals of this legislation?**

With respect to putting forth "A targeted approach to increase audience development – do you see this as an additional task for DCLA staff, or will you partner with established service organizations dedicated to this work, such as The Theatre Development Fund? If so, how do you see this work being conducted at DCLA while they are processing 2,500 – 3,000 grant requests per year?

For most of our members (with annual operating budgets below $750,000 a year) the funding they receive from DCLA through the Cultural Development Fund program represents their largest grant. Annually, A.R.T./New York and its member theaters face potential cuts to this funding due to DCLA's limited resources. Thanks to the Council and the Administration many of these cuts have been avoided.

According to a story that appeared in ***The New York Times*** on November 6th, Mayor-elect DeBlasio is facing a $2.1 billion budget gap. In addition, 152 bargaining units within the City's Municipal Unions have been working without a contract, and will try to negotiate for up to $6.3 billion in retroactive raises. Given the fact that only a portion of the City budget is non-mandated, I have concerns that this legislation, if adopted could further strain DCLA's already tight budget.

**Will the results of the Comprehensive Cultural Plan impact the distribution of funding to cultural organizations in New York City?** In section 1, 2 e. the legislation calls for "a community decision making process to focus on neighborhoods to engage and encourage community input and to support access to the arts and cultural programming in such neighborhoods". Because organizations like A.R.T./New York focus on the health and vitality of a sector of the arts, we are not known by the public but by our members. We have certainly made our building in Brooklyn, South Oxford Space, available to the public for community board meetings. Despite our good intentions in being a "good neighbor" I would think that residents of Fort Greene would be more likely to vote for an organization they frequent like MOCADA, BRIC or the Brooklyn Academy of Music. And what happens to those groups that are clustered in a neighborhood due to historic reasons, such as the more than 120 theatres in District 3?

With all I've said, I'd like to add on a positive note. This Committee is boldly attempting to address what we call a "Wicked Problem," by which I mean, the subject matter is much more layered and complex than we realize and initial answers will likely lead to more questions. I am proud that we have a Council willing to address these issues in such difficult times. But the pragmatist in me worries about the ability for DCLA to fulfill its basic function of distributing grants in a fair and timely manner. The inclusion of peer panel review has made this process much more transparent, thanks in part to the fact that Council members can assign someone to each panel.

**I would like to offer a modest proposal that the Council consider working with a local college or university to conduct the study. Furthermore, in order to save time and money, I urge you to gather and work with the data that already exists on the computers of many arts service organizations:** Fractured Atlas, The Theatre Development Fund, the Arts in Education Roundtable, AUDELCO (which provides awards for African American Productions) HOLA (the Hispanic Organization of Latino Actors) The Asian American Arts Alliance, The New York State Council on the Arts, the Municipal Arts Society, the Alliance of Resident Theatres/New York, Staten Island Arts, The Bronx Council on the Arts, The Queens Council on the Arts, the Brooklyn Arts Council, the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, Dance/NYC, the Field, Inclusion in the Arts, The New York City Arts Coalition, the Arts & Business Council, the Harlem Arts Alliance and (DCLA itself) (to name a few) are great sources for much of the data you are seeking, not to mention the CDP?

**By partnering with a university program that has the student manpower, the desire to help the Council and the Cultural Community, and the equipment necessary to merge existing data, I believe you can acquire** at least some of the information you are looking for. Much of the mapping can be done through the lists on these various databases (particularly the local arts councils that work with DCLA and the New York State Council on the Arts). Best of all, this can be done on a pro-bono basis, thereby eliminating the need for the Council to fundraise for this project, or take some of this money out of DCLA's budget.

Thank you again for addressing such a complex challenge and for letting me share my response.

**Cultural Institutions Group**

**Testimony to the Committee on**
**Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations**

**November 19, 2013**

Good Afternoon, Chairman Van Bramer, Council Member Levin and members of the Committee. I am Darcy Hector of Queens Botanical Garden, here today to represent the Cultural Institutions Group -- 33 institutions - zoos, botanic gardens, museums and performing arts spaces -- housed in city-owned properties or located on city land. As a group, it is our privilege to work every day with arts groups of all sizes and kinds and with residents from every community in the city.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify about proposed local law 1136 to amend the city charter in relation to a comprehensive cultural plan. The Committee has shown great vision and leadership in proposing such a Plan.

As a group, the CIG has analyzed the legislative intent of Intro 1136 and applaud this effort to extend cultural opportunities for all in the city. The prospect of a cohesive, encompassing cultural plan that endeavors to make arts opportunities available for every resident is enticing. However, the CIG is concerned that the the scope of research, information gathering, and public conversations outlined in 1136 is beyond the administrative capacities of the Department of Cultural Affairs in its current state, the agency which would be charged with these tasks under the proposed legislation. To create a Cultural Plan would require the active involvement of other agencies including the Department of City Planning and especially the Department of Education, the leading arts educator in the city, along with Youth Services, Aging, and others. The involvement of for-profit cultural players, whose role in many cases intersects with that of nonprofit arts organizations, would also be needed.

The cost of carrying out the needed research and consensus building among the many stakeholders would be considerable. For example, in 2001, the New York Foundation for the Arts, a service organization for individual artists, developed a report titled "Culture Counts: Strategies for a More Vibrant Cultural Life for New York City." It was the first in-depth study of the city's cultural life in nearly thirty years and was intended as a transition document for the incoming Bloomberg Administration.

The study's architects brought together arts groups large and small from all disciplines, individual artists, and the business community as represented by the New York City Partnership and the Chamber of Commerce with public forums held in each borough. The budget for this effort totaled $515,000, funds which were provided by nine private foundations. It was a massive undertaking requiring significant resources. Thus, additional funding over and above the adopted FY14 cultural budget would need to be identified to create a plan, or the process would hurt the very sector it is intended to help.

Unfortunately, the release of "Culture Counts" was overshadowed by the attacks of 9/11. The City's focus was on recovering from that devastating event and the recommendations contained in the report received scant attention. Twelve years later, as a major stakeholder in the cultural agenda of this city, the CIG looks forward to working with the Committee in strengthening Intro 1136, in order to create a viable and "living" Cultural Plan.

I submit this testimony with great thanks to the Committee and its members. Your commitment to the arts and leadership on behalf of the Cultural Community and New York City residents is heartening and deeply appreciated.

Dear Cultural Planning Committee:

Good afternoon. My name is Anita Durst. I am the Artistic Director of chashama, an organization I founded 18 years ago. chashama helps keep artists in New York City by providing them with affordable live, work, and show space. We do this by transforming donated vacant properties.

Since 1995, chashama has presented more 3,000 shows, and given over 12,000 artists the space to create. In 2013, chashama programmed 21 spaces equaling 125 artist studios, 6 Galleries, 2 performance spaces, 5 Class A Building Lobbies, and a live/work residency. The newest and most exciting program we offer is subsidized housing in the Bronx for artists.

I urge the Cultural Planning Committee to look at the possibilities of collaborations between art service organizations and landowners, economic development organizations, BIDS, churches, libraries, as well as, looking at low income housing for artists. For example, we have placed artists in subsidized housing in the Bronx, where they contribute to the neighborhood and community by leading art classes for seniors and youth.

New York City has many opportunities for vacant space to be developed into affordable space for artists. These include development sites, unrented properties, and spaces in transition. These unused properties, instead of lying fallow, can support communities and promote economic growth.

chashama has secured space for artists through nontraditional collaborations with three different economic development organizations. With the New York City Economic Development Corporation, chashama has created 92 visual arts studios. Our work with the Greater Jamaica Development Corporation resulted in a youth program, artist studios, and gallery spaces. With the Mid Bronx Senior Citizen Council, we created affordable housing for artists. A comprehensive plan for culture would quantify the relationship between economic development and the arts. This could identify ways to promote collaboration that will result in projects that enliven the community, create economic stimulus and replace vacant space with positive activity.

Similarly, the Plan should explore collaborations between organizations that are already serving communities, and individual artists. These organizations include churches, libraries, and Business Improvements Districts, who are looking to utilize unused space and program for their constituents.

Most artists fit into the criteria of low income housing. I strongly urge the Committee to make a sector for artists living in low income housing. This could work much like what we are doing with the Mid Bronx Senior Citizen Council where we offer subsidized apartments in exchange for taking part in community projects aimed at revitalizing the neighborhood.

My recommendation for the City Council is to think outside the box and to look at groups other than cultural organizations such as real estate developers, economic development corporations, churches, libraries, BIDS, and subsidized housing.

Thank you for your consideration and the opportunity to be here today.

Sincerely,

Anita Durst

Anita Durst, Founder and Artistic Director

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NO LONGER EMPTY

**City Council Testimony on Comprehensive Cultural Plan**

**November 19, 2013**

Thank you to all the Council Members and your teams for inviting No Longer Empty to share testimony and support for crafting a comprehensive cultural plan.

No Longer Empty is a five year-old not-for-profit organization with the mandate to widen and deepen the audience for contemporary art. By repurposing vacancies, No Longer Empty takes a community liability and turns it into a shared cultural asset. No Longer Empty provides **artists** meaningful opportunities to create works, challenge their practice, gain visibility, advance their careers, and receive compensation for their contribution. No Longer Empty works with local **organizations**, both arts and non-arts organizations, to create programs that bolster the cultural landscape and build art constituencies.

No Longer Empty and the many small grass roots organization working in the city and supporting its artists and diverse communities believe that art matters, that it enriches lives, feeds the imagination and builds empathy and compassion.

We broadly support the proposal to create a comprehensive cultural plan for the following reasons:

1. A cultural plan will **communicate a central focus and vision** that unites and inspires the art community. A plan will pave the road for greater inclusivity, civic engagement and municipal accountability.
2. **Without a comprehensive cultural plan**, it undermines the agency's efforts, influence and respectability. Art needs to be accorded the same standards of thought, preparation and planning for a successful outcome as any other large economic enterprise. A cultural plan would ensure a more powerful legal, political and logistical development for the arts in NYC.
3. This holistic plan will strengthen the **ecology of the art world**- both small and large institutions as well as traditional and non-traditional institutions. (I'd like to emphasize) the plan should help organizations like No Longer Empty build capacity, attain stability and thrive thus sharing that success with its artists, educators, youth and collaborators.
4. A transparent plan will allow citizens to access open data, inform the field and innovate thus making organizations like No Longer Empty better prepared to **compete and deliver better services** that the city wishes to emphasize in particular neighborhoods.
5. A focused plan with **coordinated investment and processes** will help build interdisciplinary initiatives within the field, and with other sectors and agencies that help grow audience for the arts that organizations like No Longer Empty aim to do.

Yesterday we hosted a panel discussion at the Talking Transition tent on Canal Street about cultural access. It was apparent from the eager responses of the audience that a public platform to express the needs of artists, arts organizations, art students and consumers is much needed. Such platforms constitute democracy in action.

A democratic access to art is an essential element of an engaged citizenry both for now and for an ever more complex future that will depend on creative thinking and problem solving and will need a cultural plan for New York City to create that focus and vision.

Brooklyn Arts Council

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**Testimony for Hearing on Initiative No. 1136 – Comprehensive Cultural Plan for NYC**
**November 19, 2013**

I am Ella Weiss, President of the Brooklyn Arts Council. I am here today to speak in support of the City Council initiative to create a cultural plan for New York City. The arts and culture in New York City are woven into the fabric of our sense of place. The world knows us through our creativity and visionary artistic endeavors. These efforts range from the largest cultural organizations to the emerging artists and small collectives that are completing groundbreaking projects in all five boroughs.

There is much data about the economic impact of the arts on our city that is indisputable and of which you are well aware.

However, more comprehensive planning and strategic allocations could help make this economic engine more "fuel efficient," allowing us to take advantage of the city's full range of creative resources. In Brooklyn, when the combined funding from the Department of Cultural Affairs and the New York State Council on the Arts are compared, some districts get less than 50 cents per capita arts funding, while other districts receive over 3 dollars per capita arts funding, and in some cases substantially more. How can we leverage the potential of the whole city, including these underserved areas? Of course it is important to continue to support our established cultural icons that have helped make New York City a destination for artists and arts patrons. At the same time, we need to invest in emerging and vibrant artistic efforts as well, to build the icons of tomorrow.

A cultural plan that analyzes our diverse cultural landscape and provides guidance for addressing inequities and deficiencies is an imperative for NYC to remain the cultural capital of the world.

A commitment to the diversity of our cultural offerings, a commitment to the audiences that are served and a commitment to the innate talent of New Yorkers will go a long way in making our communities more cohesive.

It has been proven time and again that when artists move into neighborhoods that are considered unappealing, the communities are rejuvenated. At the same time, when we support the culture that already exists in under-recognized areas we are capitalizing on building the sense of community for a robust environment.

A healthy society relies on arts and culture to feed the soul and nourish the heart. As Ossie Davis said and I quote, "any form of art is a form of power; it has impact, it can affect change – it cannot only move us, it makes us move." End quote

A cultural plan will help us use this power responsibly.

**Testimony – Tamara Greenfield, Executive Director, Fourth Arts Block, and Co-director, NOCD-NY**

Oversight: In relation to a Comprehensive Cultural Plan, November 19, 2013

Chair Van Bramer and members of the City Council - thank you for this opportunity to testify about developing a comprehensive cultural plan for NYC.

I am Tamara Greenfield, Executive Director of Fourth Arts Block or FABnyc, a neighborhood wide coalition of 28 arts and community organizations in the East Village & Lower East Side. I am also co-director of Naturally Occurring Cultural Districts NY and a public member of the Community Board 3 Arts & Culture Task Force.

The development of a cultural plan for NYC could be an incredible opportunity to engage a wide range of artists, cultural leaders, and residents to develop a vision for how the arts could be part of the cultural vitality of every community in New York City.

In order to do this effectively, here are a few recommendations:

1. **Engage every agency in developing cultural policy.** Integrate arts and culture into safe streets and transportation, education, immigration, sustainability, zoning, and community development. Look at examples like DOT's Urban Art Program and the SPARC program.

2. **Include community based cultural organizations in the development of the plan so New York City's cultural policy truly reflects the diversity of our City's people and neighborhoods.** Can new participants, audiences and generations be engaged to make this vision one that we can all share?

3. **Provide funding to support the development of the cultural plan, as well as the implementation of key priorities of the cultural policy.** We want a policy that is acted upon, not one that sits on a shelf.

4. **In addition to direct funding support for the cultural sector, explore creative policy approaches to support neighborhood-based culture.** Ideas could range from publicly funded marketing and promotion (i.e. NYC & Co, MTA maps), to reduction in bureaucratic barriers (i.e. SAPO) and enforcement of illegal conversions of manufacturing space, to information sharing, to more radical approaches like community land trusts, tax credits,

We look forward to working with you to build a just, equitable and creative City. Thank you for your time.

# FRACTURED ATLAS

November 18, 2013

**Testimony before the New York City Council Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations**

by Alexandra Farkas, Vice Chairman

**Adam Huttler**
Executive Director

**Board of Directors**

Alanna Weifenbach
Chairman

Alexandra Farkas
Vice Chairman

Rodney Christopher
Treasurer

Adam Huttler
Secretary

Joshua Lindland

Christopher Mackie

Robert Middleton

Larry Searcy

Amy Wrzesniewski

Good afternoon. My name is Alexandra Farkas and I am the Vice Chairman of the Fractured Atlas Board of Directors. I'd like to thank the committee for inviting Fractured Atlas to testify, and I'd especially like to thank Council Members Van Bramer and Levin for introducing this important piece of legislation.

For 20 years or more, New York City has taken what might be characterized as a laissez-faire approach to cultural policy. That's not to suggest that the city hasn't been supportive of its arts organizations. On the contrary, the extent to which New York subsidizes its cultural institutions through DCA funding is admirable. The City Council in particular is to be commended for its ongoing commitment on this front, and for valiantly defending the DCA through a long stretch of challenging budget cycles. Likewise, there is no question that our cultural institutions do excellent, important work with the public funds they receive. But funding alone, no matter how generous, is insufficient to safeguard New York's position as the arts and culture capital of the world.

That's because there are two critical factors that public funding fails to address. First, there is a tremendous amount of grassroots arts and cultural activity that receives little or no support through the DCA, despite being an essential engine of our creative economy. When neighborhoods like Williamsburg or Long Island City undergo dramatic

# FRACTURED ATLAS

**Adam Huttler**
Executive Director

**Board of Directors**

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transformations, both culturally and economically, it isn't because they're packed with marble-columned tourist destinations. The bedrock of New York's cultural sector is a dense and vibrant population of individual artists, along with a diverse array of community-based arts organizations. This is what gives the city its unique character and makes New York such a thrilling place to live and work.

The second problem with a cultural policy that begins and ends with DCA grants is that public funding is essentially a blunt instrument. Valuable as it is, it largely fails to address the underlying social and economic contexts in which art is made and consumed. The DCA's budget could be tripled and we'd still see young artists leaving New York in favor of cities where they can actually afford a studio apartment. Meanwhile, what frameworks do we have for understanding the process of artist-driven gentrification and its effects on neighborhood character and economic sustainability? Looking beyond affordability, what kind of infrastructure is necessary to ensure a robust, productive, and sustainable creative economy?

A thoughtful and comprehensive cultural planning process would explore challenging questions like these. The first step is to assemble robust and nuanced data on the cultural sector as it exists today. This goes far beyond assembling a roster of the DCA's grantees, and requires looking deep into the outer boroughs to get below the radar of broad, mainstream awareness. There must also be a transparent process of community engagement aimed at getting meaningful input on current challenges and future opportunities.

# FRACTURED ATLAS

**Adam Huttler**
Executive Director

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Amy Wrzesniewski

An effective cultural plan would take a sober and honest look at how New York can reassert itself as the most vibrant and exciting place in the world to make and experience art. Yes, it would consider levels of funding, but it would also look at housing, production facilities, consumption facilities, zoning, public education, permitting rules, audience development, interagency cooperation, and all of the other elements that together form the context in which the arts happen in New York.

All of this is to say: a cultural plan is vitally important, but it's also a huge project! The City Council must not simply pass this bill without also ensuring that the DCA is adequately resourced to do this right. That means new dollars that do not cannibalize the agency's existing budget for grantmaking or operations. It also means accepting the likelihood that a project of this magnitude, in a city as large and complex as New York, is probably at least a one-million-dollar undertaking.

Those caveats aside, Fractured Atlas is an enthusiastic supporter of the proposed legislation. All of us on the staff and Board stand ready to assist in whatever ways might be helpful to its passage or in the execution of the plan itself.

Thank you again for your time, for inviting our testimony, and most importantly, for everything you do to support the arts in this great city.

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**Cultural Plan – FY14**

To Council Members Levin, Van Bramer, Comrie, Dickens, Eugene, James, Koo, Mendez, Palma, Rodriguez, Arroyo, Lander, Mark-Viverito, Brewer and Barron.

All of you should be commended for introducing this local law to amend the NYC charter, in relation to a comprehensive cultural plan – the first of its kind in City history.

As the Executive Director of Circuit Productions, Inc. – an organization that for the past 25 year has bridged diverse cultures and communities using tap, jazz and world music and dance - has given me, our staff and the artists we represent unique opportunities to meet and perform for the constituents living in the five boroughs. Below are a few key points we feel are relevant in devising this Plan:

1) To identify NYC's current scope of cultural services including arts education and individual artists' contributions;

2) To include council districts, neighborhoods and borough-wide input to determine what cultural services/activities are currently available and what is not available;

3) To determine what, if any, is the cultural infrastructure in each borough and how an infracture could help identify future cultural needs;

4) To measure the economic impact that cultural institutions, performing arts organizations and individual artists have on the City;

5) To recommend using strategic planning – including convening "cultural partners" and "arts partners" – which may provide future policies, resources and opportunities as well as the means of increasing the participation of neighborhood groups including youth and senior populations;

Thank you for this opportunity! I wish you good luck in the process and I am available to assist, in this endeavor, when and wherever possible.

Sincerely,

Susan Goldbetter, Exec. Dir.
Roslyn Smith, Education Director
Circuit Productions, Inc.
susangoldbetter@gmail.com
www.circuitproductions.org

**Testimony by Mark Rossier, Deputy Director, New York Foundation for the Arts (NYFA)**
**November 19, 2013**

Thank you to Chairman Van Bramer and members of the committee for the opportunity to participate in this discussion.

The New York Foundation for the Arts has, since 1971, served the needs of individual artists throughout the city. In talking about "the arts," people often forget that art is actually made by artists who have to find ways to live and survive and create in this city. Therefore we were heartened to see that a portion of this legislation calls for examination of the needs of this sometimes overlooked constituency. It is particularly appropriate that real estate is referenced. Last weekend, NYFA was invited to present a panel on the challenges facing artists at the Talking Transitions tent in Durate Park. As you can imagine, real estate figured prominently in the conversation.

One of the participants made an especially cogent point, noting that those artists who have been able to last in this city for 10 or 20 or 30 years generally fall into two camps, those with trust funds and those with low overhead, meaning those who found low-cost or rent controlled space in a rundown, undesirable neighborhoods before they became fashionable and have managed to stay and continue making work. But these days there are fewer and fewer unfashionable neighborhoods and it takes a much shorter period of time for them to be discovered – and when they are discovered it is frequently because they have become artist hubs. This applies not only to living space, but studio space for visual artists and rehearsal space for performing artists.

The impact is more than personal; real estate can also dictate the kind of work people make. If there is limited room to make art, the work gets smaller. If a playwright can only rehearse in their living room - and they live in a small studio, you'll end up with a small show. The same goes for visual artists - forget the triptychs and think 8 x 10. Of course, small work can be amazing, but only when artists deliberately chose to make small work, not when that is their only option.

Unfortunately, another way artists choose to deal with this situation is to leave - to go to New Orleans or Detroit or Philadelphia or Chicago or any number of other places that are far more affordable and very friendly to artists. If artists who want to keep being an artist but can't afford to do it here leave, we will be losing an incredible resource. This is especially true of those in mid-career, who are the very people who work as teaching artists in schools and mentors and are active participants in their communities.

I hope the thinking about individual artists will not be limited strictly to real estate because they may well play a role in achieving other elements of the proposed plan, especially with regard creating greater access for various underserved neighborhoods. Opening new facilities in these communities is not always the answer because such buildings often drive up real estate values, driving out the very people they are meant to serve. Alternative solutions may be having artists

in residence in affordable housing facilities or having a portion of such facilities created as live/work studios for artists or having curators, directors or teaching artists work with residents in neighborhoods and then have exhibitions or performances in public spaces, so communities feel pride and ownership of the artists in their midst.

Finally, I would ask that consideration be made to be see that DCA has the necessary financial and human resources to take on a study of this scope. NYFA oversaw a similar initiative 2001 and it cost in excess of $500,000 and had a project team of 8, not including NYFA staff. Therefore, I hope that DCA would be given funding above and beyond its current budget to take this on because its current funds are desperately needed by the grantees. For example, NYFA uses our DCA funding to provide cash grants to individual artists throughout the city, professional development training which allow artists to take control of their careers, rather than waiting passively for opportunities to come their way, and on-line resources which help artists find employment, grant, residency and other opportunities. All these are things artists tell us are critical to their ability to remain and make a life in New York City and all are dependent on DCA funding. I know that other organizations use these valuable funds in equally effective ways, so I hope that additional, much needed funds will be allocated to DCA to complete this extremely important and timely study.

Thank you.

Arts&Business Council OF NEW YORK
A Division of Americans for the Arts

**TESTIMONY TO THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK**
**Int. No. 1136 - In relation to a comprehensive cultural plan.**
**November 19, 2013**
**Arts & Business Council of New York**

My name is Karen Zornow Leiding and I am the Director of Arts & Business Council of New York Programs. I am testifying on behalf of my organization and on behalf of Americans for the Arts, a national arts service and research organization with offices here in New York City. I testify today in support of establishing a comprehensive cultural plan for New York. While other speakers will testify to the merits of and methods for establishing a cultural plan, my testimony will focus on providing a national perspective on this issue, and on the impact of the arts sector on the business sector.

NYC remains the cultural capital of the world, and the Office of the Mayor, the Department of Cultural Affairs, and the City Council deserve congratulations and thanks for their ongoing support of the arts. But, in accordance with the principle of *kaizen* ("always improving"), more can be done, and one of the best ways to do more is to have a comprehensive plan to sustain this vital sector of our city's economy and quality of life.

A quick survey of the top ten municipalities in the U.S.[1] shows that NYC is the only one of those that does not have some sort of cultural plan. Highlights from other cities in the top ten that do have cultural plans are:

Chicago: Chicago updated its 1986 cultural plan in 2012. This plan creates a framework to guide the city's future cultural and economic growth. The Chicago Cultural Plan is very detailed and contains a set of 10 priorities, 36 recommendations and 200+ ideas for making them a reality, within four categories: People, Places, Policies and Planning Culturally. Chicago's proposed 2014 City budget includes a $1.25 million investment to support initiatives of the Chicago Cultural Plan.

Since Chicago's cultural plan[2] was enacted in 2012, half of its 241 Initiatives have been addressed to date. These initiatives have helped make Chicago even more tempting to tourists and improve the city livability of its residents. A few examples:

- 487 Chicago Public School (CPS) staff have been designated as Arts Liaisons, with 77% coverage in schools in the program's first year, and 60% of CPS schools (376) have completed the Creative Schools Certification.
- An inventory of Chicago's cultural assets[3] revealed over 220 dance companies, over 200 theatre companies, over 200 presenting stages, and over 225 music venues. The next phases of this project will focus on determining which visitor segments to target; and developing and testing cultural tourism promotional tactics. The study also revealed that while Chicago was highly rated in general for its arts & cultural attributes, unaided awareness of Chicago's specific arts & culture attractions is low.

As evidence of the arts sector's impact on a wide variety of other sectors, the 2012 Chicago Cultural Plan has been incorporated into other Chicago City plans: Chicago Technology Plan, Healthy Chicago (Public Health), and Chicago Pedestrian Plan (Transportation).

Philadelphia: In 2011, the Mayor's Cultural Advisory Council (MCAC) created a plan[4] that establishes a clear set of goals, objectives and strategies to realize Philadelphia's vision for a thriving artistic and creative community. A few of their accomplishments so far are:

- Launching the Creative Philadelphia Initiative to support creative economy efforts and create opportunities for cross-networking of artists, cultural organizations and creative businesses.
- Funding eight creative facility projects through a $500,000 Creative Industry Workforce Grant program with funding from the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA).
- Securing $250,000 in funds from the NEA to preserve arts jobs.
- Producing the city's first temporary public art project, Soil Kitchen, in conjunction with the Environmental Protection Agency's Brownfields Conference.

In New York, as in other cities, a cultural plan can assess and improve not just community *support for* the arts, but also community *benefits from* the arts. The arts strengthen sectors from education to healthcare, veterans' assistance, social services, and, of course, business, jobs, and the local economy. A cultural plan can increase both the visibility of artists and arts organizations and the larger civic community's awareness of the potential of arts and culture to contribute to community and economic development. New York's creative industries have not only contributed to the City's economic bottom line, but have also been the first footprint for economic development and neighborhood revitalization.

**The arts are good for business. Nonprofit arts and culture organizations of all sizes, in all boroughs, are proud and active members of the business community—employing people locally, purchasing goods and services within the community and creating mutually beneficial partnerships with other businesses to help them build market share, enhance their brands, reach new customers and provide valuable employee benefits.**

The economic impact of nonprofit arts organizations in New York City in 2010[5] was more than $3 billion in direct spending, with over 100,000 people employed on a full-time, part-time or consultant basis (the equivalent of just under 34,000 full-time employees). Over 98.6 million people attended performances, exhibitions, classes and workshops throughout the five boroughs. Ancillary spending by these attendees on such things as drinks, meals, parking, and shopping generated additional income for local businesses.

The arts are integral to the ongoing vitality of the city. Our goal is to sustain and strengthen the arts citywide, since the arts create and support jobs, spur urban renewal, attract new businesses, draw tourism dollars, generate tax dollars, and enhance community development.

A cultural plan for New York City will chart a roadmap for continued cultural and economic growth and will become the centerpiece for sustaining NYC's reputation as a global destination for creativity, innovation and excellence in the arts. And after all, you can't score if you don't know where the goal is.

Thank you.

Karen Zornow Leiding
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[1] *Top ten U.S. cities by population in 2012: NYC, LA, Chicago, Houston, Philadelphia, Phoenix, San Antonio, San Diego, Dallas, and San Jose. (http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0763098.html)*

[2] *https://www.cityofchicago.org/content/dam/city/depts/dca/Cultural%20Plan/CCP2012FinalExecSumm.pdf*

[3] *http://www.choosechicago.com/articles/view/Cultural-Tourism-Newsletter-September-2013/1025/, Choose Chicago Cultural Tourism Benchmark Study Executive Summary*

[4] *http://bit.ly/uhy0j5, Creative Philadelphia Vision Plan Executive Summary*

[5] *"The State of the Arts: A Summary Overview of New York City's Nonprofit Cultural Organizations, Their Strengths and Challenges," issued in June 2011 by the Alliance for the Arts. The figures were pulled from the Cultural Data Project reports of the 1,100 incorporated arts nonprofits who submitted them with their funding applications to the Department of Cultural Affairs. We know that statistic undercounts the number of arts organizations in NYC, as we know not all of them have filled out Cultural Data Project reports.*

Caron Atlas
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New York City Council, Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations Int. No. 1136 - In relation to a comprehensive cultural plan, November 19, 2013 Testimony

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in response to the comprehensive cultural plan and for your valuing the importance of arts and culture in our city.

I support the idea of having a cultural planning process in New York City to help shape our cultural policy and make it transparent and accountable.

Cultural policy, and the planning that shapes it, are both a product and a process – a framework for making rules and decisions informed by social relationships and values.

These are my recommendations for an inclusive cultural planning process:

- Recognize that New York City has a diverse and continually changing cultural ecosystem and engage its full range in the planning. This includes many forms of cultural assets, and approaches to creation, presentation, and participation in arts and culture.

- Also recognize that honoring diversity isn't enough in a city whose inequities extend to the arts. Addressing issues of cultural equity and support for historically disenfranchised communities should be a critical part of the planning.

- The people most impacted by the planning should play a key role in shaping it and carrying it out. This includes artists and cultural organizations of all sizes.

- It is also important that the planning includes others to integrate arts and culture into the rest of our lives. So there should be opportunities for other community members to participate. Community based cultural organizations could host these conversations, and should be compensated for this.

- The cultural planning should also intersect with other forms of planning – for example resilience planning, community development, libraries, parks, and education. The cultural plan will be comprehensive if it considers how arts and culture connects with other sectors, as in the case of affordable housing and space or the needs of freelancers.

- The plan should also go beyond just funding for the arts or the work of the Department of Cultural Affairs but address how arts and culture can also be part of

all policymaking. This includes access to public spaces, and the cultural impacts of other policies.

- The planning process should be a public private partnership – drawing on the knowledge of the field and connecting it to public policymaking. Involve private foundations to help increase resources available and use the planning process to leverage opportunities.

- Identify what is currently working well, understand why it's working, and what is needed to further this success.

- Some of this knowledge is the learnings of past cultural planning processes including the 2001 Cultural Blueprint for New York City, which I participated in, and the two cultural plans carried out by the city of Chicago.

- If possible, include research in the planning process, such as demographic research to identify which communities are being underserved.

- The plan should not just be aspirational but should have funding to be carried out.

- Make the planning process, in and of itself useful for its participants, many of whom are stretched thin, doing more work with fewer resources. The process should build relationships and leverage opportunities for those who are participating.

Thank you,

Caron Atlas

BRONX COUNCIL ON THE ARTS
.bronxarts.org
50 Years and Moving Forward

**NYC Council meeting**
**Tuesday November 19, 2013 1PM**
**Cultural Plan session**

Good Afternoon Council members and thank you for this opportunity to testify. My name is Ellen Pollan, I am the Deputy Director of the Bronx Council on the Arts which is celebrating its fiftieth year of service to the Bronx creative community. A pioneering advocate for cultural equity, BCA nurtures the development of a diverse array of artists and arts organizations, and builds strong cultural connections in and beyond The Bronx. BCA administers grants to artists and to community based organizations. Similar to our many colleagues, BCA is committed to supporting our grantees through community, learning and professional support. In line with its mission, BCA is home to more than twenty free programs that increase engagement in the arts. Most are open to the general public, although a few target specific groups such as senior citizens and incarcerated youth.

There is obviously strong consensus for a collaborative, community driven, authentic, artist-centered, asset-based, NYC Cultural Plan going forward. Boasting of hundreds of museums, arts galleries, professional and non-profit theaters, dance companies, orchestras and more... all generating more than $400 million to artists, our New York City which includes the rest of the City known as the Bronx, Staten Island, Queens, and Brooklyn are equipped to meet the challenge. It does seem appropriate to harness the power and be intentional in creating strategies that will improve community access and participation, provide an opportunity for transparent discussion of critical issues, devise enhanced capacity building and leadership development opportunities (with a focus on the young) that extend beyond support of real estate development and trendsetting.

Therefore, similar to creating a Thanksgiving Survival Guide for a successful meal may I suggest some tips to ensure a successful Cultural Plan.

**Game Plan** - Pull together a City-wide cultural assets inventory, create and implement a citywide arts and cultural census. Only then can we complete a shopping list of goals and objectives that will be simple and quick to use.

**Add Variety** – Include artists and culturals with from all the boroughs, in all budget sizes with diverse viewpoints, backgrounds, and community textures. This will add visual appeal and authentic cultural richness.

**Take Stock** - Understand that every arts and cultural organization cannot be jammed together into one category, or demographic, or analysis. Do the work to understand the different methods and approaches that exist. Use all the methods of outreach. Harvest all the energy. It may get messy that is where the heart of the arts is located.

**Make Advance Plans** – Invest in infrastructure. Community dialogue will save valuable time going forward, know what you are going to try to accomplish in the first, second and fifth years out. Stay flexible, different courses of action will arise in reaction to accidents, emergencies and new technologies. Miraculous things can happen along the pathway but to take advantage of them one needs to know where we are going, how we will get there, who will be with us and what is expected.

**Keep Arts and Culture HOT** – Infiltrate every sector with creative planning, using arts to identify and solve problems. Care for us. Tap our resources, knowledge and abilities... you already know that those arts are integral to the future.

Ideally,

- Strengthen cultural institutions, through increased cultural collaborations which could ideally reduce costs. Convene cultural organizations to explore educational programming, grants, sales and importantly technology and websites as avenues for collaboration and sharing best practices.
- Create economic conditions for artists that are directed toward growth. Our City can look at the creative economy as a force to alter and develop. Promote Creative Entrepreneurial Activity and Development by increasing access to capital, professional development and business incubation with an eye on youth.

- Enhance NYC's Cultural product(s) through marketing and promotion initiatives that tap into the reserve of our business community and could help redirect flow of cultural products and create consortiums to build – audiences, affordable spaces and more. Do not allow the Media culture to commercialize the arts.
- Build new Leadership models that value teamwork and open communication and plan to go green.

Remember to please make sure that arts is invited to the table with educators, housing and employment specialists, healthcare, social service providers - let's align our vision with policy makers and investors for a cultural plan that works for the NYC of the future.

Happy Thanksgiving.

Intro 1136-2013 Hearing Testimony
by Heather Woodfield of One Percent for Culture

On behalf of One Percent for Culture and our more than 550 coalition partners throughout the city, I would like to commend Council Members Levin and Van Bramer along with all the Council Members currently sponsoring Intro 1136 on their collective vision and leadership in introducing and supporting legislation to amend the New York City charter to create a comprehensive cultural plan. We believe that, with some additional clarification and enhancements, this amendment will benefit the New York nonprofit cultural sector, artists of every discipline, and most importantly, New Yorkers throughout the city.

I would like to take a moment to highlight some of the points in the text which demonstrate this vision and which would benefit our great city. First, increasing participation in cultural activities will enrich the lives our citizens, including those who aren't always aware of the cultural and educational opportunities the sector provides them. Second, creating a measurement and review process that outlines the benefits that the cultural sector provides can aid nonprofit cultural organizations in advocating for funding and in-kind support from both government and private resources. Third, focusing on community access to cultural programs will help to maximize the benefits culture brings to our neighborhoods. Finally, addressing the needs of artists will help support a key sector of the creative economy and ensure the retention of our human cultural capital.

While the proposed amendment offers many benefits, we have heard some concerns from some of our Coalition Partners about a few of the points included and some that may be missing. Many of our partners have expressed a concern that the cost of the plan itself could take away much needed resources from cultural organizations throughout the city. The research and planning process will require a significant expenditure. Without increased funding for the Department of Cultural Affairs for this planning process, this cost could put an undue burden on our already under-resourced nonprofit cultural sector. While we feel that a comprehensive cultural plan would greatly benefit the sector, any reduction in funding could do serious damage and must be avoided.

We are pleased to see the emphasis Intro 1136 places on neighborhoods as our nonprofit cultural sector is geographically diverse with organizations throughout all five-boroughs. Creating a city where cultural programming and organizations are accessible to residents in all neighborhoods is a worthwhile long-term goal. However, we have some concerns about how this will be defined and assessed. We believe that there may be instances where having cultural programming in an adjacent and easily accessible neighborhood may fill the needs of a community. Furthermore, we know that basing such assessments on physical addresses could

create an incomplete picture as many organizations with citywide reach operate in neighborhoods other than where they are headquartered. We also recognize that in New York City the term neighborhood is highly subjective. We hope that the language in the introduction can be amended so that a strong emphasis on local communities is still present while acknowledging some of these realities.

As this committee is well aware, cultural expense funding has declined and stagnated in recent years and has been one of the victims of the so called budget dance, subject to cuts and restorations, making increases almost impossible. A comprehensive cultural plan for New York City must, at a minimum, assess the funding needs of the sector. We would proposed that it go a step further and identify funding solutions that would create a sustainable funding model for culture that ensures the long-term vitality of the sector. It follows that a comprehensive plan would also need to identify new funding sources required to implement any of recommendations of the plan rather than reallocating the current limited resources.

A comprehensive cultural plan for New York City should address the area of education to the extent that it is possible. Many of our city's cultural organization provide educational programs either in school, after school, or out of school. Nonprofit cultural organization offer more 7,500 programs in school and host visits from more than 120,000 school groups. These organizations not only offer vital arts education programs, but also programs in others subject areas including science, math, history, humanities, and literacy. Many of our cultural organizations also offer learning opportunities for all-ages and promote life-long learning. A comprehensive cultural plan should seek to enhance and expand these learning opportunities offered by cultural organizations, should acknowledge the need for comprehensive arts education in our schools, and should examine whether we are retaining graduates from our arts programs at city based colleges and universities.

Finally, it is our hope that a comprehensive cultural plan will identify avenues for interagency participation so that all New Yorkers may benefit from the economic impact, educational opportunities, and improved quality of life that the cultural sector provides. By calling for interagency participation in a comprehensive cultural plan, this committee, the Council, and the Department of Culture Affairs can help build a model for stronger interagency cooperation and planning throughout city government.

Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce

Tuesday, November 19th, 2013

**Written testimony respectfully submitted to the Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations by Melissa Chapman, VP for Government & Community Relations at the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce in support of Int. No. 1136**

Hon. James G. Van Bramer, Chair
Hon. Leroy G. Comrie, Jr., Member
Hon. Elizabeth S. Crowley, Member
Hon. Inez E. Dickens, Member
Hon. Daniel Dromm, Member
Hon, Andy King, Member
Hon. Domenic M. Recchia, Jr., Member

Good Afternoon Chair Van Bramer, members of the Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations , and guests.

My name is Melissa Chapman and I am the Vice President for Government and Community Relations, at the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce, in Brooklyn, New York. Today, I will be delivering testimony on behalf of Brooklyn Chamber President & CEO Carlo A. Scissura, Esq.

The Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce is a membership based business assistance organization, which represents the interests of over 1,400 member businesses, as well as businesses across the borough of Brooklyn. The Brooklyn Alliance is the not-for-profit economic development organization of the Chamber, which works to address the needs of businesses through direct business assistance programs.

We commend the committee on introducing legislation to amend the New York City charter, in relation to a comprehensive cultural plan. Cultural organizations are vital to our communities, as they positively impact many businesses and organizations in the communities in which they operate.

According to a report from One Percent for Culture, a non-partisan, grassroots, five-borough campaign whose mission is to demonstrate the value of culture to New York City, our cultural institutions have made significant contributions to our economy. The report states that 23.8 million tourists visited the city in 2011, which generated $7.6 billion in economic activities, which in turn created over 100,000 jobs, even during an ongoing recession.

A later report released by NYC & Company in July of this year reported that in 2012 a record 24.5 million people attended the city's cultural institutions, up by 30 percent in the same time period. All of these visitors resulted in $9.3 billion in taxes, including $3.3 billion city taxes

Yet, as the NYC Council has established, there is no comprehensive cultural plan for the city. The domino effect of this being that there is no clear pattern as to what are established levels of cultural

resources and how funding for the operation of these entities should be allocated.

All sectors benefit when the arts and culture are sufficiently funded. According to One Percent for Culture, despite this high return on fiscal investment, less than one-fourth of one percent (0.22%) of the overall city budget supports nonprofit organizations.

This unfortunately leaves nonprofit cultural organizations scrambling for corporate funding, which takes away valuable human and financial resources, which could be used more efficiently in growth and expansion of the services they offer to their various communities. It also increases their operating cost so much so that they are unable to hire qualified staff to help in the expansion of their existing programs and services.

We therefore strongly support the amendment of Chapter 67 of the charter of the city of New York by adding section 2506, where it specifically recommends that on or before July 1, 2015, the commissioner shall produce and post on its website a comprehensive cultural plan for New York city to be submitted to the Mayor and Council.

In so doing, strategic and strong support can be given to our struggling cultural institutions, which will enable them to expand their programs, hire additional employees and make an even bigger contribution to our economy.

Additionally, we urge full support of Int. No. 1136, as many new cultural organizations are all going to need recognition.

dance/NYC

IN ALLIANCE WITH DANCE/USA

**Testimony on a Comprehensive Cultural Plan for NYC**

*Submitted to the New York City Council Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries, and International Intergroup Relations on November 19, 2013*

*By Lane Harwell, Executive Director of Dance/NYC*

I submit this testimony on behalf of the service entity Dance/NYC and more than 1,200+ local dance makers and companies. From this professional perspective, I advocate for the centrality of dance to any cultural planning for the City of New York, which has earned its reputation as a global dance capital. American ballet, modern dance, tap, and hip-hop, among other forms, have their roots here, there is more dance activity here than anywhere else, and dance is an economic engine for the people of New York (Recent *State of NYC Dance 2013* findings indicate a sample of 501(c)(3) dance organizations expend $251 M annually in the aggregate). At the same time, I offer that all of us in arts and culture are stronger when we are working together and with all New Yorkers.

For a cultural plan to be comprehensive, it would take as its starting point arts and culture as a whole and consider the evolving roles of all allied disciplines and forms. Certainly, it would consider the 501(c)(3) organizations—in all City Council districts, and of varying shapes and sizes—currently eligible for funding by the Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA). But it would also embrace those contributing to arts and culture outside this legal structure, including individual artists. It would acknowledge that creative lives exist on a continuum and take seriously arts education, arts careers, institutional advancement, and, concomitantly, audience and constituent access and engagement.

Such a plan would NOT look at arts and culture in isolation but as being reciprocally linked to society; the arts and New York are one.

For a cultural plan to be effective, it must be data driven. The New York State Cultural Data Project is a useful source of financial, activity, and workforce information, but small groups; those lacking a 501(c)(3) designation; and those with non-Manhattan headquarters are as yet underrepresented. I advocate the generation and analysis of more inclusive data, listening to the arts community and all New Yorkers, and mapping cultural assets neighborhood by neighborhood. For the plan to be effective, it must also be adaptive, so that the City can respond nimbly to needs and opportunities as they arise.

There are inevitably budgetary considerations. I invite the City hold out the possibility of increased investment through DCA and of improved alignment between this allocation and growth in overall City expenditures. This is not a statement of need. Rather, as data already tell us, and as a comprehensive cultural plan would, too, investment in the arts drives healthy returns, including neighborhood vibrancy

and economic development. It is also the case that for DCA to include new groups in its portfolio, and to help currently funded groups to scale their delivery of public value, it would need additional funds.

Critically, however, I believe a comprehensive cultural plan would look beyond City arts dollars and DCA. City funding is but one critical lever in advancing the health of arts and culture. A comprehensive cultural plan could, ideally, stimulate revenue growth from Board members and individuals (which are down, according to recent Dance/NYC research), institutions, corporations, and earned sources. It could catalyze public/private partnerships and harness the creative potential of our City's artists to lift up neglected, established, and startup industries, perhaps especially the booming tech sector. And it could consider an array of in-kind offerings.

I advocate interagency strategy. We have seen this approach evolve nationally, through recent leadership (from New York) of the National Endowment for the Arts, and at the State level, with a new commitment to the arts through the Regional Economic Development Councils (REDC). There are, of course, many examples of interagency collaboration in our City, but there remain untapped opportunities for arts leadership at critical agencies, for increased access, and for bridge building that puts artists and arts organizations at the table in critical policy and program discussions.

The arts have a role to play in creating solutions for the issues facing all New Yorkers. Take, for example, some of those detailed in Mayor-elect de Blasio's vision for New York and his framework for addressing inequity, *One New York, Rising Together*: jobs and economic development, education, safety, affordability, transit, sustainability, resilience, and equality for all New Yorkers, including immigrants, LGBT, and women. In each of these issue areas, opportunities for arts and culture abound. De Blasio also describes government reform that increases transparency and engages New Yorkers more greatly in setting priorities for our communities. As arts and culture are priorities for New Yorkers, they will also be priorities in the future of our great City.

Finally, I thank the City Council and Administration for what it has done and continues to do for arts and culture and for inviting a hearing on the urgent and forward thinking topic of a comprehensive cultural plan. As a New Yorker working in dance and culture, I am optimistic and looking forward to continuing my work with you and all New Yorkers.

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November 19, 2013
HUFFPOST ARTS & CULTURE

# Opportunities for the Arts in Our New Mayor's One New York

Posted: 11/12/2013 5:10 pm

Like 352 people like this.

It is official: we have elected new leadership for the City of New York.

I write to welcome Mayor-elect Bill de Blasio and state my enthusiasm for working with the new Administration and City Council. I also call on New Yorkers who make and support the arts to act on opportunities at the core of De Blasio's vision for New York and framework for addressing inequity, One New York, Rising Together.

I believe the advancement of the arts and culture sector, now and always, depends on oneness, by which I mean both our united advocacy for the work we do and our continued alignment with the issues at the table citywide; the arts and culture and the City are one. One New York, Rising Together invites our consideration of this alignment and commits to embracing input. It is time for our community, our industry, to engage.

Opportunities for the arts and culture abound. Here are some:

"Ensure Every Child Receives Arts Education" (One New York, Rising Together, page 19)

One New York, Rising Together responds to recent National Endowment for the Arts research on the correlation of arts and achievement in at-risk youth by setting a four-year goal of ensuring that every child in every school receives arts education. Thank you, Mayor-elect de Blasio. Yes to arts education, and yes to the arts for every New Yorker.

"Jobs for All New Yorkers, Growth for All Neighborhoods" (pages 4-10)

There is a lot in the outlined economic development policy that fits with the arts. For instance, a neighborhood-by-neighborhood approach, including the mapping and creation of economic hubs, may foster entrepreneurship and the application of principles of creative placemaking. I see opportunity for expanded arts activity, increased collaboration among community stakeholders, and yes, economic and technical support. Also, proposed attention to workers rights and employment practices could serve many with arts jobs we know are struggling. (See, for instance, Dance Workforce Census: Earnings Among Individuals, 21-35.)

Affordability (various chapters, e.g., Housing, pages 26-30, and Health Care, pages 47-51)
Underpinning the Mayor-elect's vision for New York is a welcome commitment to affordability, an urgent priority for those of us working in and trying to access the arts (See my recent blog entry for testimony). In particular, there may be an opportunity to increase affordable housing options for arts workers as part of a plan to build or preserve nearly 200,000 affordable units. And the described expansion of affordable health care may serve many in the arts currently lacking benefits. (Attention dance workers: One New York, Rising Together also advocates healthy lifestyles -- perhaps, dancing for every New Yorker!)

"Better Transit for New York City" (pages 31-35)

The de Blasio vision for transportation emphasizes speed, reliability and affordability, and includes investment outside of Manhattan. Such investment could serve the lion's share of arts workers, who, as data tell us, live outside Manhattan and commute to work, often to multiple boroughs -- as well as increase access and drive development at underused arts venues. The arts can be at the table in discussions about transportation.

"A Framework for a Sustainable City" (pages 52-56)
The framework put forward for a sustainable City may incentivize the arts and culture to consider infrastructure improvements and practices that advance sustainability, including the retrofitting and greening of arts spaces and investments to improve our resilience and ability to respond to an emergency such as Hurricane Sandy. Not only is it incumbent upon us to align with this framework, I also believe we can lead.

Immigrants (pages 36-40), LGBT (pages 57-59), Women (pages 60-63), and Seniors (pages 64-66)
Several populations of unique value to the arts and culture are spotlighted in de Blasio's vision. He envisions a safer, more accessible City for all immigrants, a key to the fabric of our creative lives; protections for the rising population of seniors; and equality for all New Yorkers, including the unlocked "entrepreneurial potential of women and minority-owned businesses." The paper may -- and I would be very glad for this -- invite us to consider anew the role of these populations in the arts and culture workforce and audiences and identify ways to expand the public value we create for all. (As just one reference point from the Dance Workforce Census, 84 percent of dance workers under 35 identify as female.)

"A Government as Great as Our City" (pages 40-42)
De Blasio plans government reform that increases transparency and engages New Yorkers more greatly in setting priorities for our communities. Throughout this section of One New York, Rising Together -- from a discussion of unlocking public

information to expanding participatory budgeting -- I see opportunity for us to speak up, make our case, and be heard. I have, in this blog, only called out some of the opportunities for the arts and culture in de Blasio's vision for the future; there are and there will be more. As they are priorities for New Yorkers, they will be priorities for the government of our great City.

I am enormously grateful to the current Administration for all it does for the arts and culture. At the same time I, for one, look forward to advancing the arts over the coming four years with the new Administration, City Council, and of course all of you. We are strongest when working together as one.

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