



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

Oversight Hearing: Where Are NYC's Artists-in-Residence?

March 28, 2024, 10:00AM – City Council Committee Room, City Hall

Testimony Presented by New York City Department of Cultural Affairs Deputy Commissioner Alton Murray

Good morning, Chair Rivera and members of the committee. I am Alton Murray, Deputy Commissioner at the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs, here to testify on today's topic: Where Are NYC's Artists-in-Residence? I am joined by several of my colleagues from the agency.

Artists are the lifeblood of New York City, and we are committed to making sure they can continue to live and work here. We gain so much from being a place where art isn't just presented, but is actually made. We attract artists from across the world, and our city is so much stronger for it.

We also recognize that the ongoing affordability crisis threatens our status as a global arts hub. That's why we're pushing for record levels of affordable housing - the Adams administration financed a record number of affordable homes last year - alongside other supports for working people - including artists - that will keep NYC at the forefront of the global arts community. These efforts include the Mayor's City of Yes for Housing Opportunity proposal which will help build a little bit of housing across the entire city, a big step toward addressing our housing and affordability crisis.

Working with groups like the Entertainment Community Fund, ArtBuilt, and EDC, we also support efforts to get artists into affordable housing, while creating affordable artist workspace. On top of this, DCLA remains the largest supporter of art and culture in America. Just last month we announced over \$52 million in grants for 1,031 cultural nonprofits. These groups put artists to work in communities across the five boroughs. This included nearly \$3 million in support for local arts councils that, in turn, provide funding to individual artists and collectives. In spite of the fiscal challenges we've faced as a city, we're proud of this ongoing investment in our artists and arts communities.

While we support artists in many ways, artist residencies are one particularly powerful way that organizations and institutions can enter into a mutually supportive relationship with artists. Artists need space and resources to do their work. And depending on the nature of the residency or fellowship, artists can also contribute their unique skills and ways of seeing the world.

DCLA's Public Artists in Residence program - or PAIR - is one great example of the latter. PAIR was established by DCLA in 2015, when we placed the inaugural public artist with the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs. There, artist Tania Bruguera explored ways of building trust for the then-new IDNYC program within immigrant and undocumented resident communities. The model and idea for PAIR, though, stretches back to 1977, when artist Mierle Ukeles began working as artist-in-residence with the New York City Sanitation Department. She would serve in that role for several decades. Some of the projects she created there remain landmarks of performance art. For example, in *Touch Sanitation*, Ukeles shook the hand of over 8,000 DSNY employees, telling each of them in the process: "Thank you for keeping New York City alive."

In the process, she radically re-framed the Sanitation workers' labor, and increased the visibility and dignity of their work in the eyes of their fellow residents.

In 2021, we placed the first PAIR artist with the Sanitation Department since Ukeles, when artist sTo Len began working there. Over the next two years, he built on Ukeles' work, diving into the department's archives and exploring the often underappreciated work it performs for our city. He reactivated a decades-old printshop and digitized decades-old archival videos, all under the banner of his "Office of (In)Visibility." Len is now engaged in an artist residency with the Queens Botanical Garden, showing how these creative collaborations can lead to great cross-pollination within our cultural community. Literally: Len's project at QBG is a durational exhibition that will grow and respond to the seasonal transformations occurring at the garden.

Since 2015, we've placed 24 artists in residence within 21 city agencies. Most recently, we had artists working with DDC, the Department of Homeless Services, and Health and Hospitals. I attended the unveiling of a permanent, new mural at Lincoln Hospital, created as part of our PAIR artist, Modesto Flako Jimenez's broader residency with the department of Health and Hospitals. Flako worked with H+H's "Guns Down, Life Up" program to give its youth participants creative outlets to express themselves. This was followed by a showcase at Carnegie Hall last year, which demonstrated the many disciplines and projects that Flako's young collaborators created.

Another Public Artist in Residence, Yazmany Arboleda, was embedded in the city's Civic Engagement Commission in 2020, shortly after the office was created. This meant that the CEC integrated an artist's perspective in the foundations of their work. And the results have been remarkable. They created The People's Bus, a former Department of Corrections bus that Arboleda transformed into a community center and arts hub on wheels. Artist-driven festivals and design are also at the center of their public engagement efforts. All thanks to an openness to integrating artists into their work from the ground floor.

The PAIR model is even being adopted by other cities. Los Angeles's Creative Strategist program, for instance, places artists, arts administrators, or other creative workers in local government agencies.

At Materials for the Arts – DCLA's beloved creative reuse program – artists in residence have become a powerful way that we give artists financial aid, materials, and free space. The MFTA Artist-in-Residence program was founded in 2012. Since its inception, the program has showcased the remarkable diversity of artwork that can be made through repurposed materials that might otherwise be thrown into landfills. Over the years, MFTA has welcomed 27 resident artists to share their innovative work, which is displayed prominently in the MFTA gallery at the end of their residency. These artworks serve as an inspiration to the thousands of organizations, teachers, students, and members of the public passing through, illustrating the transformative potential of MFTA's supplies.

Building on the success of the artist residency program, in 2023, MFTA proudly introduced the Designer-in-Residence program, which supports emerging designers by providing them with studio space, a stipend, and a platform to exhibit their work. This month, MFTA launched a call for a Virtual Designer-in-Residence, offering young designers unlimited access to MFTA supplies, a stipend, and an opportunity to show their work in partnership with the BK Style Foundation and Sustainable Fashion Week, US.

Through DCLA's Cultural Development Fund and Cultural Institutions Group, we also support artist residencies in all shapes and sizes across the city. 10 illustrative examples include:

- Established in 1976, Brooklyn's Dieu Donn e is the leading non-profit dedicated to artists using the process of hand papermaking. Their residency programs include the Workspace Residency, serving emerging artists, and the Lab Grant Residency, serving mid-career artists.

- The Apollo’s Master Artist-in-Residence Program engages artists for a three-year period to produce, present, and create new work and events to support emerging and established artists of color.
- The International Studio and Curatorial Program is a subsidized studio program developed specifically for emerging and early-career artists based in New York City. The program offers workspace and professional development for seven artists each year for one-year residencies, with the option to renew for a second year. The program takes place in tandem with ISCP’s acclaimed International Residency Program.
- Through La MaMa’s Residency Grants, Artist Residents are given time, space, and resources to make work using new creative tools and formats at the intersection of online and live theatre performance. These artists represent the past, present, and future of this pioneering organization.
- Residency Unlimited provides residencies for local artists from underserved communities via the 2023 Voices of Multiplicity and 2024 NYC Artist Residency programs.
- The Studio Museum in Harlem’s Artist-in-Residence program gives emerging artists of African and Afro-Latinx descent an opportunity to develop their practice in an eleven-month residency. This program has incubated some of the most acclaimed artists of our time, including Jordan Casteel, David Hammons, Simone Leigh, Kerry James Marshall, Mickalene Thomas, and Kehinde Wiley. While the Studio Museum’s new home is being built, they’ve continued their artist residency programs in partnership with MoMA and MoMA PS1, where you can currently see the latest cohort’s work on view in Long Island City.
- The Bronx Museum’s AIM Fellowship, established in 1980, is the museum’s flagship artist development program. It provides resources to guide emerging artists through the often challenging professional practices of the art world. Since its founding, the AIM Fellowship has provided pivotal career support to a diverse roster of over 1,200 of New York’s most promising artists.
- Snug Harbor on Staten Island has the Performing Arts Salon Saturdays (PASS) artist residency and performance program, which supports the creation and development of new works in dance, music, theater, and multi-disciplinary performance.
- Weeksville Heritage Center’s Artist-In-Residence program connects working artists from the African diaspora to the history and culture of Weeksville. It leverages the organization’s Hunterfly Road Houses as a site of inspiration, creation and exhibition for work that speaks to the present and helps make Weeksville’s history relevant and resonant.
- The Public Theater has a wide range of residencies, fellowships, and other programs that support writers, musicians, and multi-disciplinary performance artists in the creation of their work. These include a partnership with Brooklyn College that grants time, space, and resources to both professional artists and CUNY theater students; a social justice playwright in residence program that supports women, femme, and non-binary scholar-playwrights of the African Diaspora through a two-year engagement; and more.

Last year, the New York Times ran a story with the headline “The Changing Role of the Artist in Residence.” To back its claim that “art institutions are moving away from residency programs that support artists in seclusion, and toward those that engage with their communities,” they led with Queens Museum, where an artist was preparing for a show that was the culmination of two years of residency work, deeply rooted in the museum’s engagement in the neighborhood of Corona, Queens.

The residences we support across the city, and our own PAIR and MFTA residency programs, reflect this broader trend. Supporting artists does not mean giving them cloistered space away from society. Increasingly, it’s a way to get closer to your community.

I appreciate the opportunity to testify on today’s topic. I am happy to answer any questions you have.

TESTIMONY OF JESSICA BAKER VODOOR
PRESIDENT & CEO
SNUG HARBOR CULTURAL CENTER & BOTANICAL GARDEN

NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL FY24
Oversight Hearing of the Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries
and International Intergroup Relations
Where Are NYC's Artists-in-Residence?
March 28, 2024

Good morning Chair Rivera and distinguished members of the Committee. My name is Jessica Baker Vodoor, and I am the President & CEO of Snug Harbor Cultural Center & Botanical Garden, located in Council District 49 on Staten Island. I am pleased to be with you today to discuss artist residency programs in our City, and Snug Harbor's unique and historic role as an incubator of artist expression in our community for emerging and established artists.

Founded in 1977, Snug Harbor is an expansive culture park where arts, nature, education and history unite to bring dynamic programming, events and festivals to our diverse community. Snug Harbor offers a blend of what is artful, human and cultural with nature, space, beauty and community for the naturally curious from our Staten Island home and beyond. We are a member of the Cultural Institutions Group and Staten Island's only Smithsonian Affiliate.

Snug Harbor welcomes 500,000 annual visitors yet Staten Island has the lowest rate of arts participation in the five boroughs. Our North Shore location hosts a plurality of residents with no one dominant ethnic or cultural background, and is economically diverse. Over the past five years, 64% of the artists we serve have self-identified with one or more historically marginalized communities, including communities of color, low-income, disabled, and/or LGBTQ+. Snug Harbor is dedicated to fostering a more culturally connected, thriving community.

City Council funding has been instrumental in our efforts to do so. We first received SU-CASA funding in FY18 from Council Member Borelli of CD51; we have since expanded the program to all three Staten Island Council Districts. We have directly engaged 423 seniors and 1,239 members of facility staff, participant friends and families, fostering creativity, building community and reducing isolation among our seniors. Snug Harbor first received CASA funding in FY20 to work with students at IS 51 in CD 50, subsequently adding PS 21 from CD 49. Through CASA, we have served 247 public school students in grades 4-8, and 3,882 members of the school community and student families in a STEAM program that unites art, creativity and environmental awareness in creating sustainable school gardens. We are grateful to Majority

Leader Borelli and Members Carr and Hanks for recognizing the value of these programs to our community.

Together, Snug Harbor's CASA and SU-CASA allocations have paid out \$103,398 to seven different teaching artists, an average of \$20,680 per artist. This funding is crucial not only for Snug Harbor's ability to serve Staten Island students and seniors, but for the financial stability of our artists. These programs are eminently replicable, and Snug Harbor welcomes the opportunity to expand into additional communities.

In addition to Council-funded programs, Snug Harbor provides subsidized studio space to visual and performing artists. Today, we are home to 13 individual performing artists and companies, including the Staten Island Music Conservatory and Staten Island Children's Theatre Association, and 16 individual visual artists as well as ArtLab School of Fine & Applied Arts. Resident artists participate in annual Open House New York activities and exhibit in the Newhouse Center for Contemporary Art at Snug Harbor. Subsidized rental for these artists is made possible by our annual allocation from DCLA as a member of the CIG.

Snug Harbor is also home to an artist residency program that is unique in New York City. Our PASS Performing Arts Residency is a competitive, open call program focused on the creation and development of original work in dance, music, theatre, and multi-disciplinary performance. We offer six residencies per year. Artists live in one of our historic cottages, with studio space available in the Snug Harbor Dance Center for the creation and development of new work. At the end of each residency, artists share their work in public work-in-progress performances across the campus. PASS is funded through NYSCA and the Howard Gilman Foundation; our DCLA allocation covers staff salaries.

Residencies give artists time and space to think, create, take risks, fail, and find their voice. By immersing themselves in a new environment, artists can develop new skills, discover new approaches to their work, and gain a new perspective on their art. Often, artists return from an art residency feeling rejuvenated and inspired, with a renewed sense of purpose and direction.

This hearing asks, "Where Are New York City's Artists-in-Residence?" They are at Snug Harbor. They are at our fellow CIG organizations. They are working across the cultural sector with organizations large and small in every borough. Snug Harbor, like our CIG peers and cultural organizations throughout the five boroughs, is an economic driver for our community and a lifeline to the artists, families and young people we serve every day.

Snug Harbor's role in building and advancing the cultural ecosystem of Staten Island would not be possible without the investment of the City Council and the Department of Cultural Affairs. The unprecedented disinvestment in arts and culture will ravage the sector, and by extension New York's economy and standing as a world cultural leader. We need more funding for culture, not less. Given that the Department of Cultural Affairs' budget is only .02% of the City budget, we must ask ourselves, "are these cuts really worth it?"

I join my colleagues in the Cultural Institutions Group and the entire cultural sector to ask that DCLA and City Council initiative funding be spared from the Administration's proposed cuts so that we can continue to serve New Yorkers with innovative and unique artist residencies. The future of our City depends on it.

Thank you for your time.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jessica Baker Vodoor". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jessica Baker Vodoor

President & CEO

Snug Harbor Cultural Center & Botanical Garden

718.425.3501 / jvodoor@snug-harbor.org



ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

AILEY II | THE AILEY SCHOOL | AILEY ARTS IN EDUCATION & COMMUNITY PROGRAMS | AILEY EXTENSION
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Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations

TO: Councilwoman Carlina Rivera, Chair

FROM: Ayanna Ingraham, Alvin Ailey Dance Foundation, Inc. **DATE:** March 28, 2024

Dear Councilwoman Rivera,

The mission of Alvin Ailey Dance Foundation is to further the pioneering vision of the choreographer, dancer, and cultural leader Alvin Ailey by building an extended cultural community which provides dance performances, training and education, and community programs for all people. This performing arts community plays a crucial social role, using the beauty and humanity of the African-American heritage and other cultures to unite people of all races, ages and backgrounds.

As you are aware, funding for arts and cultural institutions has been in jeopardy since COVID-19 as many major funders have and continue to shift focus to different priorities while simultaneously mitigating their own fiscal crises. Additionally, arts education for public school students is limited and even non-existent for some of New York City's most high-risk populations. Since 1992, the Ailey organization's Arts In Education & Community Programs department has mitigated this disparity by giving over 100,000 young people from diverse backgrounds the opportunity to explore their creative potential while also imparting life skills such as teamwork and self-discipline. In fulfillment of Alvin Ailey's belief that "dance is for everybody," AileyDance Kids residencies serve grades PreK-12 with a variety of dance activities and residency options to meet the arts in education needs and goals of schools and community organizations. Residencies are linked to students' existing curriculum and tailored to serve the academic needs and cultural profile of each participating institution.

Due in part to City Council funding including your own designations and CASA funding for the afterschool iteration of the program, AileyDance Kids serves an annual average of over 5,000 students in the NYC-area. These numbers include students in New York City's District 75 schools serviced specifically by AileyDance Kids SOAR (Success. Opportunities. Artistry. Respect.), our signature Arts In Education residency program with a focus on children ages 11-18 with special needs and developmental disabilities. All of us at Ailey are grateful for your longstanding advocacy. We ask that you continue to maximize your support for this transformative program and remain an ally to arts and cultural institutions throughout the City. Let us remember that countless NYC youth discover a passion for theatre, music, visual art, dance, writing, or media arts, and build important life skills that help them in the future through our members' work. These young people represent the future cultural and economic vitality of our city. Thank you for your support and for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Sincerely,

Ayanna S. Ingraham

Institutional Giving Officer, Alvin Ailey Dance Foundation

Hello,

Our daughter Laura attends the very capable Institute for Collaborative Education (ICE), in Manhattan, NY. We are active in supporting our daughter's school, a rare gem of an institution in a sea of ineptitude.

ICE is an exceptional school. That school has helped our child and our family navigate the Covid years, and continues to work assiduously in collaboration with parents, to ensure our children receive the education they deserve, despite many added challenges that test teachers' fortitude and students' ability to cope.

- At a time when children's education continues to suffer from the lingering effects of the Covid epidemic which has seen our children locked up in their rooms month after month, dealing with the inevitable depression, while schools try to figure out how to transition to remote schooling,

- At a time when educators are dealing with so many added issues, from the universal mental distress experienced by our children as they watch children their age being treated like pests, to the embarrassment of incompetent political leadership that erodes our children's trust in leadership and freaks them out about their future,

- At a time when our children are forced to deal with so many **added**, confusing, ideological issues, which increases their responsibility without increasing their capacity, and to find their path – and the time and clarity of mind to do their work – amid a blur of passionate, decidedly adult discussions and arguments that strike at the heart of the culture of many of our children,

It is unconscionable that you're threatening to end the contract that enables a model of learning that works so well for our family and so many others.

What normal person would aim to end such a model? Why is it so difficult to get you to adequately support the education of the children who will have to take over responsibility for the country, as you and I age? This is clearly a continuation of inept leadership.

Should you choose to continue the madness and proceed with ending this essential contract, we will do everything in our power to organize parents and friends to ensure accountability.

Sincerely,

Amir Elivert



www.insecttalent.org



Good morning. My name is Jaimee Todd and I am a multidisciplinary artist based in Sunnyside, Queens.

Like many aspiring artists, I moved to New York City 20 years ago with the dream of a thriving art career. Through persistence and hard work, I managed to show my art in various non profits and cultural institutions throughout the city.

In spite of these opportunities, I still felt like I needed the support that would advance my art career. I felt especially challenged as a Black woman artist because I felt like I was often competing in spaces where I didn't feel represented or even welcomed. I knew I needed to find community among other artists who looked like me.

In 2023, I was chosen alongside four other minority artists to be a part of the ARTworks residency program through the Jamaica Center for Arts & Learning, or JCAL. The goal of the residency was to empower BIPOC artists with the resources and skills to navigate the complexities of the art world. For 10 months, we attended curated seminars with art professionals who shared their expertise in areas that included marketing, intellectual property, legacy planning, and contract negotiation. I was so grateful for the wealth of knowledge that our mentors shared with us because I recognized how access to the right information can really make the difference in one's art career. This is especially important for underrepresented artists. In fact, one of my residency mentors recognized my potential and invited me to participate in the Harlem Fine Arts Show. Even though it was the first time I ever exhibited at a fine arts fair, I sold over \$2000 worth of art and made valuable networking contacts.

Because JCAL recognizes that artists are the economic and cultural backbone of New York City, they consistently pay them for showcasing their artwork. The grant funding from my residency allowed me to cover

numerous art expenses, which included my very first art studio. Having my own studio has been an absolute game changer in my creative development; now I can sell more work through open studio visits and expand the scale of my artwork.

Our residency recently had our opening reception for our group show entitled, *Evolution*. Our theme centered around our personal and creative growth as artists which we were excited to share with the surrounding communities of Jamaica. The visitors not only praised the presentation of the work, but they were so excited to see artists who looked like them showcasing their talents. (And just to plug—our show will be on view until May 3 with an artist talk taking place on April 13).

Programs like ARTWorks are now endangered by the deep and harmful budget cuts ordered by Mayor Adams to DCLA this year. They are especially harmful to communities of color who will disproportionately suffer from loss of jobs, which are critical drivers of our economy. I urge Mayor Adams to reverse the \$20 million in cuts from this year, and I ask all City Council members to refuse to vote on any budget with \$15.5 million in cuts for next year. ARTWorks—and I—need your support. Thank you for your time.

March 28, 2024

Dear City Council Members,

My name is Kendra J. Bostock and I am a dancer, choreographer, and Founder/Director of STooPS Art & Community, through which I do community organizations, curations, and event production in the arts. As a small arts organization, I am emphasizing the need for City Council to at least maintain and at best increase the City funding for Arts and Culture. Our organization relies on grant funding through Brooklyn Arts Council, which is funded with city money to survive and be able to make the huge impact on our community. I would like to amplify the recommendations present by Dance/NYC which requests:

1. Reverse the November and Preliminary Budget Cuts to Culture –
 - That's \$20 million in FY24 and \$15.5M in FY25.
2. At minimum restore and baseline last year's one-time addition of \$45 million. However, our goal is to increase the Arts and Culture allotment to match 1% of the city's budget by 2030. Currently, that is equivalent to \$1.1 billion.
3. Fully fund City Council initiatives including CASA for school children, Su Casa for seniors, Cultural Immigrant Initiative, and the Coalition of Theaters of Color.
4. Ensure the implementation of transparency law 1184 to ensure accessibility and usable data from DCLA so our sector can continue to partner with the agency to support equitable distribution of the CDF Fund.

Why the Dance Sector Matters

The dance industry alone contributes an estimated \$300 million¹ annually to the city's economy. This does not include fiscally sponsored organizations, for profit enterprises, sole proprietorships, and individual dance workers. Dance is a key component of our entertainment industry, a major contributor to the vibrancy and diversity of our culture, and an important factor in both individual and community well-being. When we have cultural assets, we can expect improved outcomes in health, schooling, and personal security.² However, the dance sector continues to grapple with systemic inequities and insufficient access to resources, funding, and advancement.

Besides dance, 28% of our workers work in education, 23% in healthcare + wellness, and 19% in hospitality, increasing the essential nature of their work and the contributions they are making to our communities. About 64% of producing dance

workers are shouldering the cost of producing programs to their detriment with funds out of their own pockets. The individuals and organizations in the dance community are keeping our sector alive on their own backs and we need the city's continued investment.

The arts and culture industry more broadly are at the core of New York City's economic development and are essential to its overall economic health. In addition to being the number one driver of tourism to the city, the arts and cultural sector generates \$143.8B in economic activity and accounts for nearly 13% of New York City's total economic output.³ In 2019, New York City's arts, entertainment, and recreation sector employed 93,500 people in 6,250 establishments amounting to \$7.4 billion in wages.⁴

The dynamic economic activities of the creative industry have generated an estimated \$1.6 billion in additional revenues⁵ and have a multiplier effect that benefits adjacent industries such as: real estate, business and professional services, wholesale and retail trade, eating and drinking establishments, hotels and personal services, utilities, transportation, medical and educational services, finance and insurance.

What the Dance Sector Experiences

Dance organizations and workers in NYC are still navigating the effects of the pandemic with fragility. Based on Dance/NYC's most recent 2023 report, 40% of dance organizations are classifying their financial health as weak or very weak, an increased number of organizations are relying on contributed income and more than half of organizations don't have access to reserves.⁶ On average, dance workers earn about 15% below NYC's living wage, while dancers and choreographers earn about \$23K. We need strong support at the city level to ensure our workers and organizations can survive this economic climate.

Dance/NYC's COVID-19 Covid Brief⁷ also reveals the disproportionate impact that the pandemic has had on small-budget groups and individual dance makers, which make up the majority of the dance-making sector but have historically lacked access to resources and support. Additionally, these impacts are felt most acutely by arts workers who identify as BIPOC, immigrants, and disabled among communities with less access to capital reserves. As of October 2023, total employment in the arts, entertainment, and recreation sector remains 13.1% below pre-pandemic levels.⁸

Dance organizations and individual dance workers are earning less money. Our research indicates that dance organizations are increasingly relying on donated income, up by 22% nationwide and by at least 8% in NYC.⁹ Additionally, earned revenue in the dance sector has notably decreased across the nation, standing at 69%.¹⁰ In NYC, 40% of dance organizations rate their financial health as weak. Individual dance workers face

significant challenges, with nearly half holding up to four jobs to make ends meet. Many of them lack access to sufficient care or social safety nets.

The Impact of Current Funding

Sudden budget cuts to arts and culture hurt all New Yorkers. In the fall, Mayor Adams announced a 15% budget cut to all agencies without informing nonprofits until November and January of this year. Furthermore, the current CDF reforms and the extreme delays in FY24 awards further compounded the harm and precarity that organizations face, especially groups with budgets under \$250K and those from BIPOC, disabled, and immigrant communities. The city must reverse the November and other preliminary budget cuts including \$20M in FY24 and \$15.5M in FY25.

As New York City's primary agency dedicated to supporting arts and culture, the Department of Cultural Affairs (DCLA) plays a critical role in ensuring the sector not only survives but thrives. We are requesting \$45 million in baseline funding with the goal of increasing the Arts and Culture allotment to match 1% of the city's budget. That is the equivalent of \$1.1 billion, and would allow DLCA to provide longer-term and more consistent support for cultural organizations.

In addition, DCLA programs, such as the Cultural Development Fund, Coalition of Theatres of Color Initiative, Cultural Immigrant Initiative, CASA, and SU-CASA, have helped arts and cultural organizations and creative workers sustain their work and deepen their engagement with communities. It is crucial that these City Council initiatives are fully funded.

Lastly, our sector requires transparency and inclusion in the City's budget. The arts and culture community wants to be a part of the solutions to our City's fiscal challenges, but this is not possible when decisions are made without us. Implementing transparency law 1184 is crucial for our sector to effectively collaborate with DCLA and ensure the equitable distribution of CDF grants. While the CDF program has provided increased funding opportunities for some, including many smaller organizations receiving their first grants, it has also precipitated detrimental cuts for many others.

We insist on meaningful partnership with the nonprofit sector, greater transparency in the budgeting process, and the resolution of long-standing contract delays.

I and Dance/NYC thanks you again for your leadership and as stated above urges you to:

1. Reverse the November and Preliminary Budget Cuts to Culture –
 - That's \$20 million in FY24 and \$15.5M in FY25.

2. At minimum restore and baseline last year's one-time addition of \$45 million. However, our goal is to increase the Arts and Culture allotment to match 1% of the city's budget by 2030. Currently, that is equivalent to \$1.1 billion.
3. Fully fund City Council initiatives including CASA for school children, Su Casa for seniors, Cultural Immigrant Initiative, and the Coalition of Theaters of Color.
4. Ensure the implementation of transparency law 1184 to ensure accessibility and usable data from DCLA so our sector can continue to partner with the agency to support equitable distribution of the CDF Fund.

Dance/NYC calls on the city government to ensure that dance workers can thrive in NYC, maintain a competitive edge in arts and entertainment, boost tourism dollars and keep our communities safe. Please consider this as you champion our sector.

Artfully yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kendra J. Bortock". The signature is written in a light grey or blue ink.

Founder/Director, STooPS Art & Community

Independent Dancer/Choreographer

Kindling, Pipelines, Catalysts and Seeds: Lively Metaphors for Artists' Residencies

Testimony from Susan Hapgood, Executive Director, International Studio & Curatorial Program

Hearing: March 28, 2024, 10am

Subject of Hearing: Where are NYC's Artists-in-Residence?

Thank you for providing the opportunity to testify about artists' residencies, a topic at the heart of everything that I do, as Executive Director of the International Studio & Curatorial Program, better known as ISCP.

Located in an old printing factory in East Williamsburg, Brooklyn, ISCP offers space and time and professional assistance to artists in residence from New York City in its Ground Floor Program, as well as other parts of the country and world. We work hard to serve everyone both in terms of who our residents are, and who comes to our free programs. We have Vision Fund residencies for artists of color supported by the National Endowment of the Arts. We are catalysing community involvement with the recent formation of the North Brooklyn Cultural Syndicate.

In answer to the question posed by this hearing, "Where Are NYC's Artists-in-Residence?" There are a lot of them in East Williamsburg, and throughout this city! ISCP is one of the founders of an alliance of arts residency programs called Rethinking Residencies, which is a working group of 15 awesome non-profit arts residency programs spread throughout New York City. We meet together, we share best practices, we help one another. With state funding awarded to the group in 2021, Rethinking Residencies produced the first anthology on artists residencies published in the United States, that I am happy to share with you today. It is a huge group effort, a labor of love from all of our organizations.

Artists' residency programs are the kindling for NYC's diverse and thriving arts and cultural sector. While major museums and other completely public-facing institutions are the most visible section of the arts economy, it is the city's residency programs that nurture the creative kernels of new ideas that go on to receive broader recognition at larger, well-resourced institutions. We are pipelines for a more diverse creative ecosystem, and these pipelines need consistent and substantial funding.

The best way to make progress on diversity and accessibility goals is to invest at the ground level—in the small institutions that directly provide critical resources for visionary work—time, space, and professional and material resources for artists and curators. That is what we do.

There are few opportunities for international diversity and local diversity to meaningfully coexist, but they do at ISCP. Our Ground Floor & International Programs promote deep, long-term dialogue and exchange that in some cases even can help de-escalate racial and political tension, promote cross-cultural understanding, empathy and awareness for both local residents and international visitors.

So yes – these metaphors are all apt and important ways to describe what artists' residencies are to the broader cultural wellbeing of the city: kindling, pipelines, catalysts and seeds. You can't have culture without artists, who flourish when they are nurtured and supported.

Testimony

March 28, 2024, 10am

New York City Council Hearing: Where are NYC's Artists-in-Residence?

Susan Hapgood, Executive Director, International Studio & Curatorial Program

“Kindling, Pipelines, Catalysts and Seeds:
Lively Metaphors for Artists' Residencies”



Thank you for providing the opportunity to testify about artists' residencies, a topic at the heart of everything that I do, as Executive Director of the International Studio & Curatorial Program.

Located in an old printing factory in Brooklyn, ISCP is the largest international arts residency program in the country, and 4th largest in the world. We welcome 100 artists every year. Our public programs bring over 10,000 visitors annually, mostly New Yorkers. ISCP offers space and time and professional assistance to artists in residence from New York City in its Ground Floor Program, as well as other parts of the country and world. The Ground Floor program offers studios to New York City artists, for less than $\frac{1}{3}$ of market rate. We work hard to serve

everyone both in terms of who our residents are, and who comes to our free programs. We have Vision Fund residencies for artists of color supported by the National Endowment of the Arts. We are catalyzing community involvement with the recent formation of the North Brooklyn Cultural Syndicate.

To answer your question, “Where Are NYC’s Artists-in-Residence?” There are a whole lot of them at ISCP in East Williamsburg!

ISCP is one of the founders of an alliance of arts residency programs called Rethinking Residencies, which is a working group of 15 non-profit arts residency programs throughout New York City. We meet together, we share best practices, we help one another. With state funding awarded to the group in 2021, Rethinking Residencies produced the first anthology on artists residencies published in the United States, “Bringing Worlds Together,” that I share with you today. As Nova Benway wrote, “In a culture where art sales command high prices, yet artists are notoriously undervalued, residencies stand for the importance of supporting not just art but the people who make it.”

Residency programs are the kindling for NYC’s diverse and thriving arts and cultural sector. While galleries and museums are the most visible parts of the arts economy, the residencies nurture the creative kernels of new ideas that go on to receive broader recognition. The best way to make progress on diversity and accessibility goals is to invest at the ground level—in the small institutions that directly provide critical resources for visionary work—time, space, and professional and material resources for artists and curators. That is what we do. We deserve more support and recognition.

Kindling, pipelines, catalysts and seeds: these are all apt metaphors to describe what artists’ residencies are to the broader cultural wellbeing of the city. You can’t have culture without artists, who flourish when they are nurtured and supported. We kindly implore the Department of Cultural Affairs and the City Council to invest in our programs. Thank you.



Bringing Worlds Together



A RETHINKING RESIDENCIES READER



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The impetus to share resources and document best practices exemplifies the spirit of generosity that is ideally part of communal institutions such as arts residency programs.

What makes them work?

***What are the challenges and benefits of these programs?
What is their impact on the world?***



Introduction

KARI CONTE and **SUSAN HAPGOOD**

After seven years working together as a collective of New York–based residency programs, members of the Rethinking Residencies group saw a need to openly offer their combined knowledge about the critical role that residency programs play as sites of production in the field of visual arts. We invited a range of innovative practitioners in the field to discuss their work, to capture clear impressions and discourses, so that others can adopt and borrow, or perhaps even start their own residencies with enough gumption. The more arts residencies there are in this world, the better, as far as we are concerned.

Our Rethinking Residencies Symposium took place in 2021, engaging speakers from divergent backgrounds and reaching thousands of audience members from equally far-flung places. Over three days, more than 20 international speakers shared their insights on residencies with us. While the symposium was originally intended to take place in physical space, the shift to online allowed us to invite speakers beyond the United States, from Colombia, Ecuador, Finland, Israel, Morocco, the Netherlands, Palestine, and Taiwan. It is important to note here that all Rethinking Residencies member institutions are based in New York, and thus we have geographic blind spots, as does this book, which does not address all existing residencies or all their structures and aims.

Growing and branching out from the symposium, this book began with transcriptions of some of the discussions, condensed and edited for readability, and adding from there.

The eleven essays and three conversations in *Bringing Worlds Together* reflect on art residencies at present—at a time when residencies play a critical role in art’s ecosystem despite continuing uncertainties as the COVID pandemic subsides. While the essays follow the 2021 Rethinking Residencies Symposium in spirit, they are not all direct outcomes of this gathering. They address a cross section of ideas about residency programs, bound together by a deep concern for the care and ethics that go into shaping residency programs and hosting artists and curators.

The publication begins with two histories: of the Rethinking Residencies group in New York and, more broadly, residencies in 19th- and 20th-century Europe and the United States. Mutual aid practices sustain Rethinking Residencies, a working group founded in 2014. Kari Conte and Nicholas Weist write about this group; the programs, initiatives, and events it has convened; and the nonhierarchical, self-organized structure of this, the first New York residency network. Irmeli Kokko provides a foundational history of residencies as they relate to globalization and in light of her long-term engagement in the field. She maps how residency formats have evolved into what we know today, follows how they developed in tandem with art movements, and details how they have become increasingly significant for artists. And in looking forward, her text connects early rural artist colonies to the current demand for residencies located in nature.

This publication’s second section features short texts and longer essays by members of Rethinking Residencies. Eileen Jeng Lynch recounts how new communities are formed through residencies both in real life and virtually. Nat Roe’s short historical account of mixed-use buildings in New York City illuminates how architecture shapes residencies. He argues that the breaking down of architectural boundaries dissolves the borders between art and life and engenders art-making. Residencies are sometimes conceived so that the public has direct day-to-day contact with artists-in-residence, as described by Christina Daniels. Writing about guest and host complexities, Dylan Gauthier contemplates the malleability and reversal of such fixed categories in residency programs. Galen Joseph-Hunter reflects on the delicate balance for artists between production and public programming in residencies.

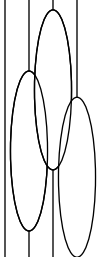
In the extended essays, Nova Benway and Susan Hapgood address the often-overlooked care issues in residency programs through the lenses of ethical frameworks and curatorial residencies. Benway calls for residencies to reconsider their caretaking practices, drawing on novel connections between medical ethics and residencies. Surveying current curatorial residencies globally, Hapgood articulates how critical they can be for curatorial practice.

Three conversations form the third part of this publication. Two are condensed transcripts from the 2021 symposium and include a diverse range of viewpoints and positions from international speakers on residency programming and artist support. They delve into some of the most pressing issues for residencies today: ecological responsibility, developing meaningful relationships between local communities and residents, accessibility, and the value of process. The conversations underline that residencies are not neutral spaces and that they should be mindful of gatekeeping while working toward full transparency. A conversation between artists Mierle Laderman Ukeles and Dylan Gauthier links Ukeles' unprecedented 40-year residency with the City of New York Department of Sanitation to her work and to other residency structures.

Finally, in "Residencies Epistemologies" Viviana Checchia draws on her personal experience as both a resident and a residency curator to outline what art research centers and residencies have in common, and the profound potential for both to support artistic research. The publication ends with artist Tania Candiani's poetic text that captures the newness, rhythms, and realities of residencies, offering artists wisdom on how to make a residency one's own.

The impetus to share resources and document best practices exemplifies the spirit of generosity that is ideally part of communal institutions such as arts residency programs. What makes them work? What are the challenges and benefits of these programs? What is their impact on the world? Given our close proximity to artists' fertile thinking as well to their vulnerability, we are dedicated to finding ways to champion not only their art, but the importance of providing safe and generative spaces where they can thrive.

How can we work together to support one another's programs and residents? How can we address the lack of critical writing about residency programs? How can we make residencies more equitable? Can residencies (and art institutions) adapt in real time as artistic practice and artists' needs change? How can community engagement and artist residency programs successfully intersect? What are the outcomes of residency programs—both tangible and intangible? What is the role of public programming in residencies?



Rethinking Residencies

KARI CONTE and NICHOLAS WEIST

In March 2014, the first meeting of the Rethinking Residencies working group was convened by Kari Conte, then Director of Programs and Exhibitions at the International Studio & Curatorial Program (ISCP), and Laurel Ptak, then Executive Director of the Triangle Arts Association. The group was initiated to bring together leaders of residencies in New York, share knowledge and resources, and cultivate critical thinking and discourse about the field. Although the representatives of the ten organizations who attended knew of each other's programs, when we began the discussion by each describing our activities, it became clear that in fact we didn't know each other's work in depth—and that we had a tremendous amount to learn from one another. A throughline in all our early conversations was the invisibility of residencies, resulting from so much of our work emphasizing process, support, and research rather than production or presentation. Our first meeting was held at ISCP, and subsequent meetings were hosted by different member organizations on a rotating basis.

Residencies have been part and parcel of contemporary art's ecosystem since their proliferation in the 1990s, a history that

Irmeli Kokko articulates in the next essay. However, despite three decades of rapid developments in the field, a lexicon of residencies does not yet exist. Although the body of shared knowledge on art residencies has expanded, scholarly, practical, and historical texts are still few and far between—a lacuna in our field that this book and our work aim to fill.

Rethinking Residencies' first meeting included staff members with various responsibilities representing programs that spanned diverse institutional models and approaches—residencies as young as two years old and those that had been founded more than three decades prior sat together at the table. All the invited programs had offices in New York City, with residencies in Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, and farther afield in Upstate New York and Long Island.¹ Each also faced similar questions: about what artists need from residencies, how to grow responsibly and sustainably, how to make the best use of institutional capacities, and how to engage audiences, to name a few.

Since then, we have continued to ask: How can we work together to support one another's programs and residents? How can we address the lack of critical writing about residency programs? How can we make residencies more equitable? Can residencies (and art institutions) adapt in real time as artistic practice and artists' needs change? How can community engagement and artist residency programs successfully intersect? What are the outcomes of residency programs—both tangible and intangible? What is the role of public programming in residencies?

We met five more times that first year as a whole group and in smaller groups that convened to think together about “what we are.” It was clear from the beginning that we aimed to be an intentionally small, geographically focused group, unlike larger (and equally vital) national and international networks such as the Artist Communities Alliance or Res Artis. This enabled Rethinking

1 New York has nearly a hundred residencies—from small, site-focused programs like Green-Wood Cemetery's in Brooklyn, to long-established programs like Yaddo. Some are stand-alone organizations, while others, such as the residencies offered by Manhattan's New Museum or the Studio Museum in Harlem, are part of programming within a larger institution.

Residencies to respond to local conditions and function smoothly. Through several conversations, we decided that the term “working group” most closely aligned with the values and undertakings of Rethinking Residencies—a group of specialists coming together for discussion and activities to achieve specific goals. Over the years, the group has met every few months, remaining informal, flexible, and mobile, with a nonhierarchical organizational structure. Rethinking Residencies functions somewhat like a co-op, a para-institution, or, as one member remarked, an “organism.”

And here we are, nearly a decade later. While most working groups generally have shorter lifespans, the critical outcomes and collegiality inherent in Rethinking Residencies keep all member institutions engaged. The consistency and longevity of the group is also a testament to the need for more knowledge and resources for residency staff, and the importance of our goals. Nine of the ten organizations at the table for our first meeting have remained active participants.

Rethinking Residencies’ culture is rooted in the desire to collaborate instead of compete, and our methods are modeled on mutual aid practices. We aim for transparency at every level, prioritize process over product, and encourage all participating individuals to assume a leadership stance. We recognize that a decentralized exchange of knowledge tends to uplift cultural actors working in parallel, while top-down circulation of best practices tends to narrow the field of possibility for our work by relying more and more on professionalization.

Participation in Rethinking Residencies is free and always has been. Production budgets for our public programs are fulfilled through grant writing and passing a hat. Constituent organizations may send whichever staff member(s) they choose to meetings, generally one or two people. These individuals are not compensated for their work on behalf of the group. Nominations are held biannually for new member organizations—we limit the group’s size using the “two pizza” theory of management (in other words, the size is right when two pizzas will satisfy one meeting, roughly speaking). To maintain membership, organizations must send a representative to at least 75 percent of our whole-group meetings, typically held bimonthly, but other participation is voluntary. We favor consensus decision-making, relying on Black

Mountain College’s discursive system of finding a “sense of the meeting” to arrive at actionable plans on which we vote. We have found that electing a rotating steering committee from a pool of volunteers, usually two people serving as co-chairs, helps the group to stay focused and accomplish goals. We maintain a communal, cloud-based file database and a strict confidentiality policy regarding any conversations or information shared in a group setting. Rethinking Residencies is not legally incorporated—in fact, the working group doesn’t technically exist, except, as Andrea Fraser described in a talk we presented in 2018, as “[an idea] produced and reproduced intersubjectively and systemically.” We embrace her description of institutions being constituted within the minds of their participants and audiences and from their engagements with their fields.

Is working with a mutual aid mentality easier than doing it other ways? Of course not! In fact, it’s generally harder for a group of accomplished professionals to employ intentionally less streamlined methods. But we could not achieve our goals without these principles as the foundation for our work.

If we didn’t have a bedrock of deep trust cultivated through voluntary commitments to horizontal relationships, we couldn’t share sensitive information or feel safe enough to admit that we don’t know the answers to professional questions. One of the most rewarding opportunities of participating in the group is seeing other organizations’ crucial internal documents, like jury instructions, community care contracts, or exit interview questions. Sharing is opt-in but once shared, documents are available to all. We also maintain a very active listserv so that group members can seek informed, impartial advice on any residency-related subject.

Starting in 2015, Rethinking Residencies began offering private events for our residents as well as public programs. We visited art institutions, held workshops, and even attended baseball games with our local and international residents. We also organized free discussions on organizational practice, publics, counter-publics, partnerships in residencies, and hospitality—events conceived as forums to widen our discussions and publicly address the questions we were asking ourselves internally as a group. The topics on which we have engaged our brilliant interlocutors in public programs, and the ways we have hosted our artist networks

at events, have emerged from a mutual aid perspective that prioritizes self-cultivation over professional development.

When COVID-19 struck New York in early 2020, our six years of work together was the foundation on which we built new forms of collective action to survive. In the first phase of the pandemic, art nonprofits everywhere were in crisis—especially those focused on bringing people together, as most residencies do. Postponed programs, deferred galas, and unfulfilled grant contracts left many organizations wondering if they could stay afloat until something like normalcy returned.

Rethinking Residencies participants offered each other critical forms of support during this time, including information-sharing about complicated government relief systems and opportunities to compare and revise language about cancellations, as well as shared feelings of togetherness despite a sudden shift from offices to “work from home.” Bimonthly meetings turned into weekly video conferencing, with many subgroups forming as staff with similar responsibilities or from organizations with similar approaches discussed topics of discrete interest among themselves.

In early May 2020, Rethinking Residencies collectivized to fundraise as a group. We discussed many strategies to apportion any funding that we received, eventually landing on a formula to divide grants among two scale-groups (as defined by total spending on program staff and occupancy expenses in response to grantmaker funding priorities) in proportion to their relative scale, and then further divide funds evenly among the organizations comprising each scale-group. With generous support from the Willem de Kooning Foundation, Stavros Niarchos Foundation, and Teiger Foundation, Rethinking Residencies collectively raised \$900,000 during this time. The funds were a crucial lifeline for our organizations and a remarkable proof of concept for the power of our working methods. By helping one another, we also helped ourselves.

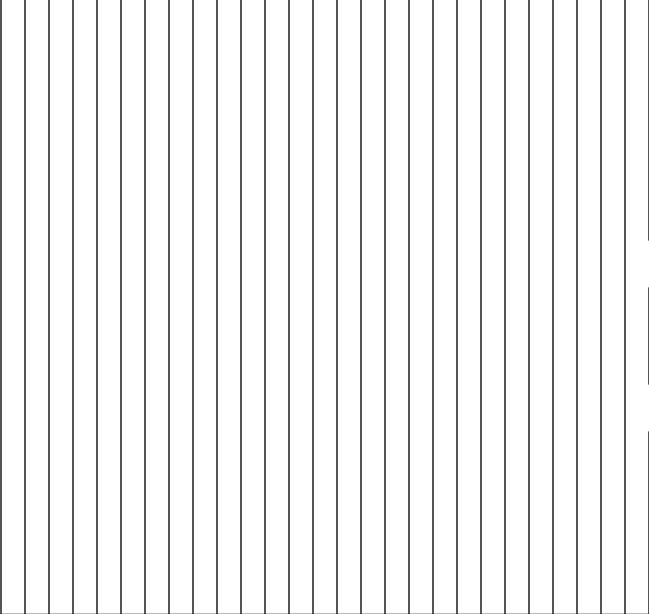
Sharing material resources with one another was an important development for Rethinking Residencies, but sharing ideas has remained at the heart of what we do. In 2021, with support and encouragement from the New York State Council on the Arts, we organized the three-day symposium on residencies that became

the foundation for this publication. The symposium addressed pressing issues in the residency field—such as community partnerships, the environmental impact of residencies, accessibility, how residencies can learn from social and political movements, how to best support artists and curators, and the decolonization of residency institutions—and was a crucial moment for us to connect with colleagues globally.

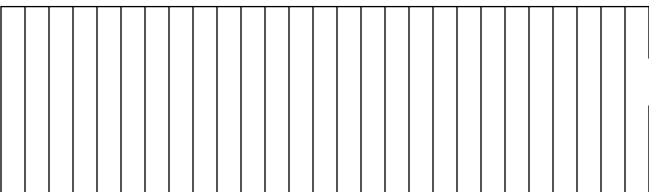
The symposium and this publication are important contributions to the discourse of residencies worldwide and the largest public offering *Rethinking Residencies* has produced. After these accomplishments, what is on the horizon for our working group? As Shandaken Projects' alumnus Dean Spade writes in his book *Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity During This Crisis (and the Next)*, “Scaling up our mutual aid work means building more and more mutual aid groups, copying each other’s best [ideas] and adapting them to work for particular neighborhoods, subcultures, and enclaves. It means intergroup coordination, the sharing of resources and information, having each other’s backs, and coming together in coalition.”²

Whether you are reading this in our printed book or on the website we set up to freely circulate the newly public body of knowledge highlighted in our symposium, we hope you will consider applying some of the lessons we’ve learned from working together to your own unique context. We’re looking forward to hearing about it if you do.

2 Dean Spade, *Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity During This Crisis (and the Next)* (New York and London: Verso, 2020), 40–41.



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On Curatorial Residencies

SUSAN HAPGOOD

Curators don't have quite as many approaches to their practices as artists do. Still, there are ever-multiplying ways to curate a project or exhibition or to organize programming for museums and other art institutions, biennials, and communities. Curatorial residencies worldwide offer differing services and benefits depending on their contexts and institutional missions. Curators are some of the world's most important cultural leaders. Perhaps their most important roles are to amplify artists' voices, to connect artists' work to audiences, and to generate new cultural models of presentation.

To provide an overview of curatorial residencies, I surveyed more than 50 program descriptions on websites and digital platforms to see what is out there.¹ I looked for recent changes to the field, given that curators are embedded in museums, themselves a Western construct predicated on exclusionary legacies of connoisseurship, colonialist plunder, and, at least in the United States,

1 This research was undertaken by Sarah Mills and Minji Lee, who worked as interns at the International Studio & Curatorial Program in 2022 and 2023.

historical collecting practices skewed toward white men.² Among the transformations mentioned most often were a commitment to increased diversity and accessibility, and an intention to develop more collaborative and equitable curatorial methodologies.

How does a curator's residency differ from an artist's? At the organization where I work, the International Studio & Curatorial Program (ISCP) in Brooklyn, New York, there is much overlap in terms of benefits, but there also are some distinctions. Curatorial residencies provide time for reflection on one's professional body of work, and the positioning of one's practices within broader discourses. Most residencies for curators are shorter than residencies for artists, lasting from a few weeks to a few months. Allowing the curator to step away from their daily pressures and responsibilities, a curatorial residency can be like a mini-sabbatical that prompts new awareness relative to other contexts. In the words of one curatorial resident at ISCP, Bárbara Perea Legorreta, "The artists and art professionals I have met during this period will continue to inform my practice, potentially for years to come. I think of this moment as a bridge to new directions and possibilities."

Some programs encourage research, which may entail accessing local resources, archives, artistic communities, or specific collections. For a curator working on a forthcoming exhibition or publication, this can be a period of intensive study away from home. Nearly all curatorial residencies stress immersion in differing cultures and in local artistic communities, emphasizing the opportunity to establish new relationships with arts professionals. Whether this activity is characterized as networking or as cultural discourse and exchange, the host institution is often motivated to encourage new collaboration, to foster recognition and potential opportunity for local artists to present their work in differing contexts and places. In many cases, studio visits and professional meetings are arranged by the institution hosting the residency. In the most supportive programs, benefits include significant financial honoraria and related support, mentorship, and

2 Mellon Foundation, *Art Museum Staff Demographic Survey 2022*, American Alliance of Museums website, accessed April 6, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.18665/sr.317927>

museum resources.³ Some programs impose restrictions on who can apply—for example, the Berlin TURN2 residencies for curators from Johannesburg, Lagos, or Nairobi; Cincinnati’s Wave Pool residencies for curators who are women-identifying people of color; and ISCP’s Jane Farver Curatorial Residencies for curators from the Global South.

Emerging curators are often identified as ideal applicants, with the opportunity to gain professional experience cited as the chief benefit. Residents are invited or required to organize exhibitions, give lectures, develop digital or video projects, or write articles. Living costs, remuneration for curatorial work, project budgets, and logistical support—all these vary widely and should be carefully considered in light of the applicant’s expectations. Intellectual labor deserves adequate compensation, especially in a profession that historically employed individuals from financially privileged backgrounds but is now working hard to level the playing field.

Several curatorial residency programs address specific needs. For example, at the Centre for Contemporary Art Ujazdowski Castle in Warsaw, participants are encouraged to focus their research on themes of hospitality and the establishment of creative communities. They also work to facilitate alternative models for transnational collaboration between art initiatives that, due to geopolitical conditions, have less opportunity for cooperation. At Onassis AiR in Athens, the emphasis is on developing less product-obsessed arts policies. At the Luminary in St. Louis, Missouri, participants are encouraged to build more equitable systems and take apart failing structures. The institution wants curators to foster better modes of engagement that enact care, equity, and responsibility for the people, objects, and forms of knowledge that are part of arts infrastructures and institutions.

3 See the Whitechapel/Delfina Asymmetry Curatorial Residency, for example.

A 2011 study conducted in Europe showed that curators choose to participate in residencies for a range of reasons, which likely still hold true today:⁴

- dedicated time for research and writing in order to prepare or finish one's own curatorial project
- getting to know the local art world and expanding one's network
- having studio visits for a specific curatorial project
- the residency's specific theme, which matches the curator's interest
- being peer-reviewed by fellow curators and learning from experienced curators
- being able to collaborate on the spot with artists-in-residence
- being able to realize a curatorial project while in residence

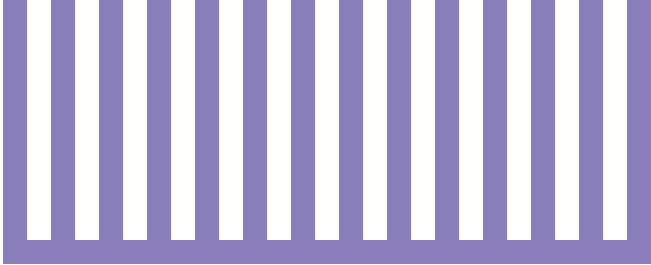
Although reasons to participate in a curatorial residency may remain constant, radical shifts are taking place within the curatorial departments of museums. Urgent topics of discussion include how to decolonize institutions throughout the West, where our museum models developed in tandem with colonialism, and how to fight racism and ableism within power structures that white elites have controlled for centuries.

In museums with historical collections, curators are grappling with the restitution, reparation, and repatriation of plundered artifacts—as seen with the ongoing repatriation of the Benin bronzes to Nigeria from at least six countries (Australia, Germany, New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States), the return of a dancing Shiva statue to India from Australia, and the ongoing controversy over the Elgin Marbles in London's British Museum, to name just a few prominent examples.

4 Transartists, Johann Lundh, Anna Ptak, and students, "Curator-in-residence Opportunities" (findings, ON-AiR workshop organized by Artservis and SCCA, Ljubljana, December 6, 2011). Accessed April 9, 2023, <https://www.transartists.org/en/curator-residence-opportunities>

Curators serve artists and the communities and institutions they work within while modeling cultural leadership in its many permutations. Residency programs throughout the world provide frameworks and platforms for them to rethink and retool how they want to change their roles and responsibilities. The word “curator” stems from the Latin *curare*, meaning “to take care of.” Following this line of thought, let us consider the American writer Saidiya Hartman’s observation, in a 2017 panel discussion, that “Care is the antidote to violence.”⁵

5 Quote attributed to Saidiya Hartman from “In the Wake: A Salon in Honor of Christina Sharpe,” colloquium at Barnard Center for Research on Women, New York, accessed April 7, 2023, <https://bcrw.barnard.edu/videos/in-the-wake-a-salon-in-honor-of-christina-sharpe>



Founded in 2014, Rethinking Residencies is the first network of New York–based artist and curator residency programs. The group generates knowledge and resources, anchored together in cooperation and collaboration. This publication is a companion to the first Rethinking Residencies Symposium, which invited artists, curators, scholars, and residency organizations to address residency programs as critical sites of production within the visual arts. The book considers existing scholarship and cultivates new thinking about the history, institutional structures, and conditions of art residencies.



Rethinking Residencies



Oversight - Where Are NYC's Artists-in-Residence?

TESTIMONY BY YAZMANY ARBOLEDA

ABRIDGED TESTIMONY

Thank you, Chair Rivera and esteemed Committee members, for allowing me to testify today.

My name is Yazmany Arboleda, and I'm a queer, Colombian-American artist, who builds community by inviting people to imagine impossible futures together.

In 2020 I was selected as the Public Artist in Residence for the Civic Engagement Commission. The residency is meant to last a year. In the fall of 2021, the CEC and I decided that our work together was so valuable that we needed to continue it. I became the inaugural People's Artist for NYC in 2022. I continue my work with the CEC to this day.

I come before you to testify on the impact that the PAIR program has on the wellbeing of our NYC communities.

In only four years the CEC and I have developed numerous projects and initiatives that have engaged hundreds of thousands of NYC residents. I will name three of the most significant for you today.

The People's Bus is a retired NYC Corrections vehicle that has been transformed into a beautiful community center on wheels. The People's Bus has spent the last three years traveling across the city in a series of events we have often called "The People's Festival." In our first summer, we engaged over 10,000 residents across all five boroughs. We employed 148 artists and more than 50 community members. We also created a youth program titled The People's Fellowship that had 27 young people between the ages of 14 and 21. All of these participants were paid 18 to 20 dollars per hour for their labor.

In the summer of 2023, we turned The People's Bus into Tippy, The Tender People's Money Monster, a large scale puppet - *The People's Bus in drag* - that teaches New Yorkers, young and old, about our citywide Participatory Budgeting program. We engaged over 100,000 residents, who voted on what kinds of projects they felt would most benefit their communities. These 46 projects are being implemented now.

While the numbers only give you an idea of the scale of the impact in engagement and employment, the outcomes of these projects are: restoring dignity, unlearning harmful practices, and co-creating meaningful belonging.

However nothing paints the full picture more than a story, this year we are launching the Sunnies. They are making a public appearance for the first time today. Hundreds of these heart-full creatures will begin to appear all over our city on May 1st. They represent New Yorkers from the future that are modeling for us how to take care of each other. They are optimistic yellow and they are heart-forward. That's why we're calling them "Sunnies.- NYC's Sunshine Sentinels." They are inviting us to vote on the People's Money and engage in participatory Democracy through our city-wide process.

Here is what makes the work so powerful: the sculptures are being crafted by head-of-household immigrant mothers. The idea is to provide economic empowerment to families who should be adapting to our city with dignity and not shame.

Thank you for your time and for recognizing the importance of Artist in Residence programs in building a more inclusive and vibrant New York. I strongly urge a continued investment in these programs which I believe meaningfully enrich the lives of New Yorker City residents.

Sincerely,
Yazmany Arboleda

COMPLETE TESTIMONY

Thank you, Chair Rivera and esteemed Committee members, for allowing me to testify today.

My name is Yazmany Arboleda. I am grateful to speak about the critical role of Artist in Residence programs in government, based on my experience as the inaugural Public Artist in Residence for the Civic Engagement Commission (CEC) in NYC. When I was brought on in the summer of 2020, the CEC was new and needed to define itself. Dr. Sarah Sayeed and Wendy Trull, two leaders at the Commission, took a risk and let me into things from the ground up. We developed a working formula that has resulted in tremendous and joyful civic participation over many programs and initiatives. Programs that integrate art into public life.

We have spearheaded groundbreaking projects showcasing the power of art to connect, inspire, and reimagine public spaces for all New Yorkers. Three key programs have emerged from our work: The People's Bus, The People's Festival, and The People's Money, each enhancing meaningful civic engagement focused on participatory democracy where NYC residents prioritize taking care of each other.

For my first PAIR project, in partnership with DCLA and DCAS, we created "The People's Bus," transforming a retired NYC Corrections vehicle into a vibrant mobile hub celebrating our diverse communities across all boroughs. Adorned with 8.8 million recycled beads, it symbolizes unity and sparks joyful interactions, fostering trust in governance. This work could not have been achieved without the leadership of Zarith Pineda, leader of Territorial Empathy, a nonprofit design collective that believes in the power of empathy to create positive change.

The People's Bus traveled to all five boroughs over the course of the summer of 2021, bringing The People's Festival to communities across the city. The People's Festival celebrated artistic expression and community dialogue, funding 148 artists and engaging over 10,000 individuals, highlighting a hunger for shared experiences and connections. The festival brought to life The Ice Cream Truck of Rights, where we invited residents to taste delicious treats while learning about their environmental, housing, and immigrant rights. Stop-Rum-Raisin' the Rent was a particularly popular flavor that summer. This artwork was co-created and co-led with artist and immigration lawyer Carolina Rubio McWright, the founder of Touching Land.

The transformation of the People's Bus and the creation of the People's Festival happened in partnership with Veronica Ramirez and Mujeres en Movimiento - a group of immigrant women from Queens, who were integral in the transformation of the bus from a retired Corrections vehicle into a beautiful mobile community center and equally integral in the implementation of the festival. The PAIR program made these partnerships possible. It brought the city and government closer to immigrants and others who make our city what it is.

Randy Plemel from Expedition Works was also essential in the strategic planning and design of these initiatives co-orchestrating our approach to engaging as many New Yorkers as possible.

The People's Fellowship, another integral arm of the People's Bus and People's Festival, empowered 27 youth leaders to shape civic life, showcasing the potential of artist-led initiatives in cultivating engaged citizens. These efforts fostered participatory governance, evidenced by 832 New Yorkers signing up for commission updates, reflecting growing ownership in civic affairs. The Artist in Residence program as manifested at the CEC integrates art and culture into governance, fostering trust, creating opportunities, and amplifying voices for a more inclusive city.

PAIR is usually a one-year partnership between an artist and a government organization. Because of the success of the summer of 2021, I have continued to serve as the Artist-in-Residence for the CEC as NYC's People's Artist. Our relationship was too valuable for us to part ways.

In our second year of the program, as we moved into the vote phase of Cycle 1 of The People's Money we hired 5 artists to create the People's Money Artist Collective. One artist per borough created our communication materials - from palm cards to advertisements on bus shelters - to tell the story of our first-ever city-wide Participatory Budgeting process and introduced the Optimistic Yellow People, more on them in a minute.

We also introduced "Tippy: The Tender People's Money Monster" (TPMM), turning the People's Bus into a way to educate New Yorkers about Participatory Budgeting. This initiative rebranded The People's Money, the CEC's first citywide participatory budget process using art to make civic engagement accessible and engaging. Tippy, the endearing People's Bus puppet, invited New Yorkers to vote on \$5 million of the city's budget, empowering underserved communities in decision-making in

their communities. Collaborating with city partners like the Department of Cultural Affairs, the DOE, Material for the Arts, and over 100 community-based organizations, Tippy was part of a strategy that engaged over 100,000 residents, showcasing a desire for participatory decision-making.

This innovative approach resulted in New Yorkers casting their vote on how to shape the city's future, resulting in 46 projects, voted for by New Yorkers, being brought to life right now, all driven by the collective voice of the city's residents. Tippy and The People's Money initiative demonstrate the transformative potential of artist-led initiatives, inspiring public trust and democratic participation.

Building upon last year's People's Money campaign designed by the CEC Artist Collective, the two-dimensional optimistic yellow people are now becoming three-dimensional.

Hundreds of these heart-full creatures will begin to appear all over our city on May 1st. They represent New Yorkers from the future that are modeling for us how to take care of each other. They are optimistic yellow and they are heart-forward. We're calling them "Sunnies." They are inviting us to vote on the People's Money and engage in participatory Democracy through our city-wide process. Here is what makes the work so powerful: the sculptures are being crafted by head-of-household immigrant mothers. The idea is to provide economic empowerment to families who should be adapting to our city with dignity and not shame.

And so, for the first time, the Sunnies are making a public appearance today to testify with me about the power of artists in society and the power of artist in each of us.

The DCLA PAIR Program has transformed my life, my art practice and much of the work the CEC is mandated to do. Through color and imagination, we continue to transform the systems that are meant to improve the lives of all NYC residents.

Thank you for recognizing the importance of Artist in Residence programs in building a more inclusive and vibrant New York.

Sincerely,
Yazmany Arboleda

Cultural Affairs Council Committee,

Dear Speaker, Council Finance Chair, Committee Chair & staff. I am submitting written testimony for public record. I support a #PeoplesBudget, and urge the Council to hold the line on #CareNotCuts.

I am demanding that the Mayor fully fund the following programs in his budget proposal – and if he does not, I demand that my council member, Speaker Adrienne Adams and Finance Chair Justin Brannan use all of their charter-appointed powers to ensure that a budget will not pass unless it reflects these priorities.

Mayor Adams has proposed more than \$2.55 billion of budget cuts that could have devastating consequences on essential services such as libraries (\$36M), early educational 3-K programs (\$567M), CUNY (\$60M), education (\$1B), adult literacy (\$24M) and more. Meanwhile, NYPD and DOC budgets go up. NYPD is slated to spend 2x its overtime budget at \$740M. DOC budget is going up by \$35M, and spending \$138M a year on staff mismanagement.

As we all know, education, social services, and housing programs create real safety for our communities. City services and workforces that provide critical support to individuals and families who are struggling to make ends meet. Mayor Adams' cuts means slower housing vouchers and food stamps processing, more hungry and unhoused New Yorkers, fewer after-school and youth programs, and a general degradation of city services.

New Yorkers need #CareNotCuts at a minimum so they can continue to have access to the crucial city services they rely on. #CareNotCuts means:

*No cuts to school budgets. Restore funding and staff lost due to Mayor Adams' prior budget cuts. Invest in student mental health, community schools, and restorative justice programs.

*No cuts to CUNY. Restore funding, faculty, and staff lost due to Mayor Adams' prior budget cuts. Increase funding for advisors, ASAP, and MetroCard access for student support and retention.

*No cuts to libraries. Restore funding cut by Mayor Adams' prior budget cuts.

*No cuts to adult literacy programs. Restore and baseline funding to keep programs whole and invest in greater resources, services, and supports for adult literacy students.

*No cuts to 3K. Recommit to universal 3K. Fulfill salary parity for the early childhood workforce.

*No cuts to the provision of social services, such as housing services and health or mental health services. Invest in social safety net and housing solutions for low-income New Yorkers.

*Reduce the NYPD's bloated budget. Cut vacant school police positions. Remove police from mental health, drug use, and homelessness response. Invest in community safety solutions.

*Reduce DOC's bloated budget. Invest in supportive housing and alternatives to incarceration.

By taking these steps, we can create a safer, more equitable city that works for ALL of its residents. I urge you, City Council, to consider the well-being of all residents: reject proposed cuts to care-based programs and cut NYPD and DOC bloat instead. Thank you.

Kali Palmer

kalipalmer9991@gmail.com

Yonkers, New York 10701

Cultural Affairs Council Committee,

Dear Speaker, Council Finance Chair, Committee Chair & staff. I am submitting written testimony for public record. I support a #PeoplesBudget that is built on #CareNotCuts.

I believe all New Yorkers deserve access to housing, livelihood, and resources to thrive. And I am OUTRAGED that Mayor Eric Adams continues to slash the budgets of and underinvest in programs my neighbors and I depend on.

Mayor Adams says he is concerned about crime but any qualified public official knows that when people receive what they need to thrive crime decreases. Spending money to overpolice (in a system he was brutalized in) people when they cannot afford food and housing is ineffective and immoral.

I demand that the Mayor fully fund the following programs in his budget proposal. If he does not, I demand that my council member and Speaker Adrienne Adams use all of their charter-appointed powers to ensure that any budget that passes reflects key People's Budget priorities.

This includes:

- Investing in capital infrastructure for public and affordable housing, schools, and CUNY colleges
- Investing in and protecting public education, CUNY, childcare, libraries, social safety nets, and housing from budget cuts and restoring previous cuts
- Divesting from wasteful spending at the NYPD and DOC, and directing funds to community safety, supportive housing, mental health, and alternatives to incarceration

Our full list of People's Budget demands are here: <https://peoplesplan.nyc/2024-peoples-budget-campaign/>

As we all know, education, social services, and housing programs create real safety for our communities. City services and workforces that provide critical support to individuals and families who are struggling to make ends meet. Mayor Adams' previous and proposed cuts means slower housing vouchers and food stamps processing, more

hungry and unhoused New Yorkers, less parents with the childcare support they need to stay in the city, fewer after-school and youth programs, and a general degradation of city services.

Stand with me and my neighbors to defend our budget and services against Mayor Adams, and deliver a People's Budget that has #CareNotCuts. Thank you.

Zakiyah Sayyed

zakiyah.sayyed@gmail.com

New York, New York 10459

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Yelena Keller

Address: 533A MACON ST. 3RD FLOOR BROOKLYN NY 11238

I represent: STUDIO MUSEUM IN HARLEM

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Tiva [REDACTED] Baloi

Address: _____

I represent: Green-Wood Cemetery

Address: Brooklyn

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Susan Hapgood

Address: _____

I represent: ISCP

Address: Brooklyn

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Regina Bean

Address: _____

I represent: Louis Armstrong House

Address: 34-56 107th St Corona, Queens

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 3/28/24

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jessica Vodoor

Address: 1000 Richmond Terrace Staten Island, NY

I represent: Snug Harbor Cultural Center & Botanical Garden

Address: 1000 Richmond Terrace Building P

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Lance Poliva

Address: 31 Chambers St

I represent: Dept of Cultural Affairs

Address: 31 Chambers St

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Alton Murray

Address: 31 Chambers

I represent: Dept of cultural Affairs

Address: "

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: JAMIE TARD

Address: _____

I represent: JAMAICA CENTER ARTS LEARNING

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: George Scheer

Address: 323 W. 39th Street

I represent: Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: MARCH 28

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: YAZMANY ARBOLEDA

Address: 1 ESSEX STREET 3B

I represent: CIVIC ENGAGEMENT COMMISSION

Address: 22 READE STREET

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: GONZALO CASALS

Address: AND

I represent: CULTURE & ARTS POLICY INSTITUTE

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms