



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brian Kavanagh

Forwarding: Mayor De Blasio Announces Culmination of City Artist Corps with Over 700 Public Showcases and Events this Arts and Humanities Month

BRIAN KAVANAGH October 14, 2021

| ISSUE: **ARTS, PERFORMING ARTS, EDUCATION, ARTISTS, COVID-19**



NEW YORK—Mayor de Blasio today announced the culmination of the New York City Artist Corps program with several showcases and hundreds of individual events happening across the boroughs this October. Coinciding with National Arts and Humanities Month, the [City Artist Corps Showcases](#) are a citywide celebration driven by this once-in-a-generation investment in the city’s artists as a way of reconnecting residents to arts and culture and

fostering a fair, equitable, and vibrant recovery for all.

The New York City Artist Corps was **created by Mayor de Blasio** in spring 2021 as a way of providing relief to New York City's hard-hit arts community while bringing a diverse range of free cultural programming to all New Yorkers. Across the five boroughs, City Artist Corps members have been presenting workshops, exhibitions, performances, installations, murals, and much more—free and open to all.

“The arts are the heart and soul of New York City, and City Artist Corps takes a page from the WPA for how to support creative workers as a way of fostering a fair, equitable, creative recovery for all,” **said Mayor Bill de Blasio**. “All month long, City Artist Corps members have been fanning out across the five boroughs, connecting with their neighbors and fellow New Yorkers and reminding us all of the amazing community we can create when we come together and participate in our city's unrivaled cultural life.”

“The City's recovery depends on the recovery of our creative communities, and the City Artist Corps program has played a critical role in supporting New York City's artists,” **said Deputy Mayor Vicki Been**. “New Yorkers should be sure to visit the hundreds of thought-provoking City Artist Corps events taking place this month and support the arts, culture, and artists that are essential to our City.

“New York City is great because of the thoughtful, innovative artists who live and create here,” **said the City's Senior Advisor for Recovery Lorraine Grillo**. “In recognizing the value of artists and their contributions to New York, the City Artist Corps is helping to pave a strong and equitable recovery, and through its free and public programs held by artists, the program is increasing the ability of New Yorkers in every borough to access arts and culture.”

“City Artist Corps has been a shot in the arm for our hard hit artist community,” **said Cultural Affairs Commissioner Gonzalo Casals**. “We’ve been overjoyed to see artists connecting with New Yorkers around the city since the program kicked off this summer. The arts have the power to bring us together and lift up communities, and we look forward to seeing that happen in neighborhoods across New York this month for the culmination of this historic program.”

The New York City Artist Corps Showcases being held this October are:

Queens Theatre Showcase | October 16-17 and October 23-24

Queens Theatre is an organizing and venue partner for the New York City Artist Corps, working with over 30 artists as they present their projects to the public.

The Clemente Showcase | Through October 31

The Clemente will feature more than 30 events by City Artist Corps members in film, performance, dance, music, and pop-up exhibitions.

Street Lab Showcase | Multiple Locations Through October 29

Street Lab is creating opportunities for City Artist Corps members to exhibit, perform, and showcase their work outdoors in restaurant sheds in partnership with Chelsea Market, as well as in other public spaces across the city alongside Street Lab programs and with community partners.

National Sawdust Showcase | October 25-28

National Sawdust will host performance showcases for 12 recipients of the City Artist Corps grants.

LaGuardia Performing Arts Center Showcase | October 27-29

LPAC will present City Artist Corps Showcases in a festival format in their Little Theater.

OpenCultureWORKS Showcase | Multiple Locations Through October 30

OpenCultureWORKS Showcases are presented by NYC Department of Transportation and will feature City Artist Corps members.

"We're delighted to shine a light on the city's creative community as we celebrate National Arts and Humanities Month," said the **Commissioner of the Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment, Anne del Castillo**. "We are proud to have joined the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in supporting this program, and encourage New Yorkers to attend these events taking place throughout the five boroughs as a means to reconnect and rediscover the artistic offerings of New York City."

"Public spaces are where arts and culture not only thrive, but become available to all New Yorkers," said **Department of Transportation Commissioner Hank Gutman**. "We encourage everyone to head over to their nearest City Artist Corps Showcase, especially those in DOT plazas, before the end of October to enjoy these fantastic performances. This yet again highlights how our friends and neighbors are embracing changes to our streetscape, reclaiming space from cars and giving it back to communities."

"We are thrilled at the breadth and depth of the works presented as part of City Artist Corps, and are honored to administer the City Artist Corps Grants program," said **Michael L. Royce, Executive Director of the New York Foundation for the Arts (NYFA)**. "This program, from the partnerships it has forged to the public displays of creativity that it has generated, is a testament to New York as a center for arts and culture, and to the resilience of the artists who live, work, and create here."

"Artists are essential to the cultural spirit of our City and key contributors to New York's recovery," said **Taryn Sacramone, Executive Director of Queens Theatre**. "Through the City Artist Corps program, artists are able to re-engage with the public while receiving critical financial

support to mitigate the impact of the pandemic. Queens Theatre is proud of its role as the lead organizing partner for the initiative, and we hope the Showcases and other events happening throughout the City will remind all New Yorkers of the importance of the arts in keeping our City moving forward on a positive trajectory."

"National Sawdust is thrilled to welcome artists and audiences back into our home by celebrating the vision and creativity of New York City's artists through the City Artist Corps showcases. As an artist-founded and artist-run performance space, we can think of no better way to emerge from the pandemic isolation than to feature our city's artists in performance for our fellow New Yorkers," **said Paola Prestini, Composer, Artistic Founder, and Artistic Director at National Sawdust.**

"Street Lab has been focused on helping artists exhibit and engage the public in public spaces where we don't often see art—places like curbside dining sheds, Open Streets, and more," **said Leslie Davol, Executive Director of Street Lab.** "I've loved watching these artists share their work in these nontraditional spaces and speak with passersby; they are bringing something important to the street, and they, too, are transformed by the experience. It makes me optimistic about art, public space, and New York City."

"Cultural workers are essential to the identity of New York City; the overwhelming majority of them are working class people trying to make ends meet, with rents to pay and loan obligations. Still, they make their living making our collective lives more beautiful, more insightful, creating magic," **said Libertad Guerra, Executive Director of The Clemente.** "The Clemente is truly proud to be a partner to this epic effort by the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs to support the vast ecosystem of cultural workers that are the narrative engine of our city. The diversity of the artists and the vitality of the work we are hosting is inspiring proof of our indomitable energy as a city and of how truly essential these workers are. We are honored to be part of this moment."

“Recognizing the importance of the arts, and the individual artists at its heart, to engineering the recovery of a city, LaGuardia Performing Arts Center at LaGuardia Community College/CUNY in Long Island City Queens is proud to present showcases of City Artist Corps artists in our theaters during this crucial time as we restore NYC to the most important center of culture,” **said Steven R. Hitt, Artistic Producing Director at LPAC.**

“We were honored to be the official material sponsor for City Artist Corps and welcome hundreds of artists to our creative reuse facility to pick up free supplies in support of their public programming,” **said Tara Sansone, Managing Director at Materials for the Arts.** “It has been incredible to see the tremendous diversity of artists and their sheer excitement as they prepare extraordinary cultural engagements across every corner of New York City.”

Beyond these showcase events, City Artist Corps members are putting on public engagements in parks, plazas, cafes, community venues, and other local, non-traditional art spaces across the city. [See the full list of City Artist Corps members' events](#) happening through the end of October. View more information about all City Artist Corps programs at nyc.gov/cityartistcorps.

Follow [#CityArtistCorps](#) on Instagram to learn more about our artist members and about events happening across the five boroughs.

“As Chair of the Senate Committee on Cultural Affairs, I have seen firsthand the challenges faced by the arts and culture community in New York during the COVID-19 crisis. City Artist Corps grants made it possible for artists who may not have been eligible for other aid to continue to work and deliver arts programming to neighborhoods across the city,” **said State Senator José Serrano.** “The arts are playing a key role in our economic and emotional recovery, and I encourage all New Yorkers to get out and experience the upcoming showcases and exhibitions as the program culminates in the coming weeks. Many thanks to Mayor Bill de

Blasio for his commitment to the arts and culture in New York City.”

“I’m very happy to join Mayor Bill de Blasio and Commissioner Gonzalo Casals in celebrating one of the most important facets of our great city—the arts,” **said State Senator Brian Kavanagh**. “When people think of the arts in New York, they often think of Broadway, Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center and our great, iconic museums and world-renowned institutions. But the New York art scene is far more comprehensive and far more diverse—and it is built on local, organic artistic production that springs from artists and communities across the city. It includes street performances and exhibitions, murals and workshops, schools and local theaters. And of course the arts -- online and in person when we could—have been an inspiration in getting us through the pandemic and are playing a vital role in our recovery. The Mayor and the Commissioner deserve enormous credit for creating the City Artist Corps to support artists of all kinds and help New York reclaim our title as the arts capital of the world. I am especially pleased that two of the five Showcases are happening in the communities I represent -- at the Clemente Center on the Lower East Side and National Sawdust in Williamsburg. The Showcases and other events are free and open to all and I encourage New Yorkers and visitors alike to join us in celebrating the lifeblood of our city.”

"The City Artist Corps has been a beacon of hope and creativity to New Yorkers and visitors as our city undertakes a recovery from the global public health crisis of coronavirus," **said Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer**. "I encourage all New Yorkers to take advantage of the world-class cultural offerings in Manhattan and our fellow boroughs. From musicals and theater to film, visual and literary arts and more, art enthusiasts and new audiences will find something fun and free to experience and enjoy while also revitalizing and supporting our city's precious creative sector."

“Funding artists directly through the City Artists Corp was a needed lifeline for New York’s cultural community and a vital part of our cultural recovery. This program has highlighted just how impactful it is when we invest in the arts and engage every neighborhood with culture,” **said City Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer.**

The City Artist Corps is made possible with funding from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs and the Mayor's Office of Media and Entertainment and administered by lead partner New York Foundation for the Arts. Queens Theatre serves as the organizing partner for City Artist Corps and is leading a coalition of partners to present City Artist Corp Showcases this month.

City Artist Corps Grants provide vital support to artists who were hard hit by the pandemic and often left out of other local and federal relief opportunities. The grants were administered to 3,000 New York City-based working artists in partnership with re-grant and arts service organizations to support outreach, provide technical assistance for prospective applicants, and inform the grantee selection process in service of the city’s diverse cultural communities. Partners include: Asian American Arts Alliance, A.R.T./New York, Black Public Media, Brooklyn Arts Council, Bronx Council on the Arts, Bronx Documentary Center, Dance/NYC, Firelight Media, Flushing Town Hall, Indie Theater Fund, Lower Manhattan Cultural Council (LMCC), MakerSpace NYC, New Music USA, Poets & Writers, and Staten Island Arts.

#