

# CULTURE PUSH

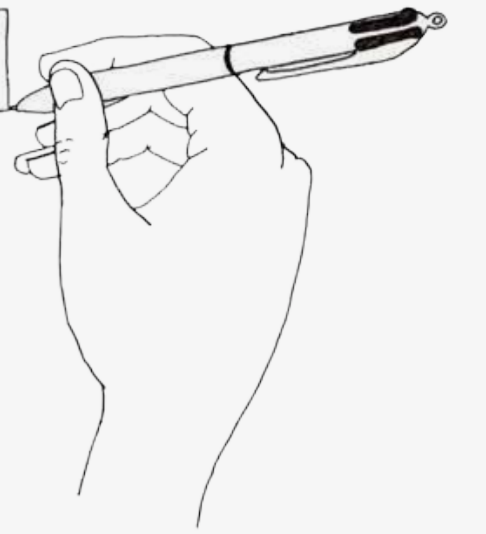


# ANNUAL REPORT

Culture Push  
is an arts  
organization  
that works  
with hands-on  
learning, group  
problem solving,  
serious play,  
and creating  
connections.

# CULTURE PUSH

2016 ANNUAL REPORT



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Olaronke Akinmowo at Artifacts and After Effects Exhibition  
Photo credit: Natalia Vilela

# YEAR IN REVIEW

OUR SUMMARY OF SUCCESSES

- Expanded our network of artists whose projects we support through the Fellowship for Utopian Practice
- Continued support for the seven Fellows from 2015 and added an additional seven new projects through Spring and Fall Open Calls.
- Fellows engaged communities across Brooklyn, Queens, Manhattan, and the Bronx, and employed a variety of artistic methods—dance, movement, storytelling, collaborative art-making—and confronted a diverse array of social and political issues: urban ecological relations, solitary confinement and incarceration, gender-based street harassment, and the effects of colonial history on current relations between Dominicans and Haitians:

## WINTER/SPRING

Continued support of **Olaronke Akinmowo** (The Free Black Women’s Library), **Aiesha Turman** (Black Girl Muse), **James Andrews** (Spatial Resistance), **aricoco** (PIPORNOT), **Sarah Dahnke** (Dances for Solidarity),

**Victoya Venise** (Protect the Art), **Lise Brenner** (Vox Populi); and held a Spring Open Call, supporting another four projects: **Noemí Segarra Ramírez** (PISO proyecto), **Corinne Cappelletti** and **Eva Perrotta** (roodərəl), **Stephano Espinoza** and **Cristobal Guerra Naranja** (Sacúdete), **Piper Anderson** (Mass Story Campaign)

## FALL

Held our Fall Open Call and awarded the Fellowship to: **Clarivel Ruiz** (Dominicans Love Haitians Movement), **Ranjani Chakraborty** and **Salvador Muñoz** (Say What?! Street Harassment Intervention Strategies) and **Yvonne Shortt** (Women Who Build - Artists Who Own)

- Released two issues of our online journal, Push/Pull in the Spring and Summer
- Presented Artifacts and After Effects, a group show of Fellowship projects at Westbeth Gallery in July.
- Began mentorship/partnership with NYFA Immigrant Artists Program

## From Our Fellows:

One of the best parts of being part of Culture Push is that the organization is itself an art project in process. Everything and everyone involved knows that harnessing the unexpected is what makes making art so amazing and so fun.

**Lise Brenner (Fellow 2015)**

I feel Culture Push understands the unique needs and sensitivities around social practice work and is willing to engage—and stay engaged—in the process.

**Barrie Cline (Fellow 2014)**

For the first time, we felt a part of a support system. We had a set of many insightful and critical eyes looking out for us with consistent and pertinent questioning. Culture Push offered practical resources and guiding questions as well as a springboard for us to discover our own way to organically develop our ideas and stretch beyond self-imposed limits. Like a dear mentor, the staff was always accessible - at our side in times of need - and encouraging deeper, more sophisticated and thoughtful exploration of our process and our outreach.

**Corrine Cappelletti & Eva Perrotta (Fellows 2016)**



*Go! Push Pops Performance at Artifacts and After Effects Exhibition  
Photo credit: Natalia Vilela*

# THE FELLOWSHIP FOR UTOPIAN PRACTICE

ACTIVE FELLOWS IN 2016

## AWARDED IN 2015

### **Aiesha Turman, Black Girl Muse (BGMuseum)**

Black Girl Muse is a traveling museum, digital exhibition and pop-up space that utilizes art-making as a liberating and healing tool for Black women and girls dealing with issues of sex/uality, gender, identity, community, family, and place-making.

### **James Andrews, Spatial Resistance**

Spatial Resistance is an investigation into the spatial dimensions of civil resistance. The term spatial resistance implies not only physical space—a three dimensional field—but also the narrative and time-based dimensions. Spatial resistance can also mean examining and analyzing our own internalized blind-spots and forms of oppression, our untapped vision and skills, and the limits we impose on our movements.

### **aricoco, PIPORNOT (= Primus Inter Pares + OR NOT)**

PIPORNOT engaged the public in a workshop series that combined collective strategizing and inspiration from social insects and their maintenance of non-hierarchical self-organization to explore how to build temporary communities during emergency situations.

### **Sarah Dahnke, Dances for Solidarity**

Dances for Solidarity is an ongoing project that invites individuals in solitary confinement to perform a series of movements, correspond with individuals outside of prison, and contribute choreography to the series of movements.

### **Victoya Venise, Protect the Art**

Protect The Art is a hub and resource that provides artists in under-resourced communities with the tools to properly develop their craft, and in return, become community leaders for youth in need.

### **Lise Brenner, Vox Populi**

Vox Populi takes an intimate look at the gentrifying neighborhood of Dutch Kills in Long Island City by giving voice to and documenting the stories of those who have lived there for decades.

### **Olaronke Akinmowo, The Free Black Women's Library**

A challenge to the traditional literary canon, The Free Black Women's Library is an interactive, pop-up library containing books written exclusively by Black women that hosts readings, performances, and events in which the public is invited to bring books written by Black women to trade or donate to the library.

## AWARDED IN 2016

### **Noemí Segarra Ramírez, PISO proyecto**

PISO/proyecto is a platform for intervention, mobilization, and improvisation, that channels bodily movement as a political tool in order to explore ideas related to identity and personhood for Puerto Ricans in Puerto Rico and abroad.

### **Corinne Cappelletti and Eva Perrotta, roodərəl (of a plant) growing on waste land or among refuse**

roodərəl is a movement-based practice and information-sharing platform where Corinne Cappelletti and Eva Perrotta bring audiences onto the streets of New York to understand the role that wild medicinal and edible plants have on our well-being, our community relationships, and our understanding of reciprocity.

### **Stephano Espinoza and Cristobal Guerra Naranja, Sacúdete**

Sacúdete brings individuals in Corona, Queens together to experiment with various forms of performance, allowing for an unconventional exploration of one's body, and notions of power, accessibility, and privilege.

### **Piper Anderson, Mass Story Campaign**

Mass Story Campaign is a national participatory story exchange that will travel to more than twenty U.S. cities situating the stories of people directly impacted by incarceration as a transformative lens through which communities reimagine justice.

### **Clarivel Ruiz, Dominicans Love Haitians Movement**

Dominicans Love Haitians Movement is an series of workshops, events and performances that challenge and re-imagine the colonial legacy of the island Hispaniola that has shaped the power-relations between Dominicans and Haitians.

### **Ranjani Chakraborty and Salvador Muñoz, Say What?! Street Harassment Intervention Strategies**

Say What?! is a grassroots, multimedia-based project that aims to equip the NYC community with the skills necessary to respond to and intervene in gender-based street harassment when witnessing it.

### **Yvonne Shortt, Women Who Build - Artists Who Own**

Women Who Build - Artists Who Own brings together women and girls to learn construction and building skills that will result in the co-creation of a tiny house, which will travel within the boroughs as a structure to facilitate cross-community dialogue about the lack of spaces to create. The house will travel through the 5 boroughs, acting as a goad to cross-community dialogue about the lack of space for creative workers.

# FELLOWSHIP HIGHLIGHTS

A TIMELINE OF EVENTS

## Spring

- Sarah Dahnke held weekly Letter Writing Clinics at Brooklyn Studios for Dance from March to December.
- Olaronke Akinmowo brought her pop-up installations of the Free Black Women's Library to locations across Brooklyn, from the Weeksville Heritage Center and MoCADA Museum to the Center for Latin American & Caribbean Studies (CLACS) at NYU.
- Victoya Venise held Protect the Art events including youth workshops, performances, and evenings of live art making.

## Summer

- Eva Perrotta and Corinne Cappelletti held four Eco Dance Labs in Red Hook, Brooklyn as part of their project, *roodərəl* (of a plant) growing on waste land or among refuse. The Eco Dance Labs are exploratory walks centered around a specific medicinally valuable urban weed and its relationship to a particular body system that also include somatic exercises rooted in contemporary dance practice. The first, Detox with Dandelion, focused on the lymphatic system; the second, Unwired with Pineapple Weed, focused on the nervous system; the third, Intake/Outtake with Plantain, focused on the respiratory system; and the fourth, Opening Flow with Mugwort, focused on the circulatory system.

- **(Summer, cont.'d)** Piper Anderson, Fall 2016 Fellow, held the first event for Mass Story Campaign, a national participatory story exchange that brings together individuals directly impacted by incarceration as a way for communities to reimagine justice. The event was held at the New School in New York and focused on Rikers Island, bringing together many different types of people affected by or working on incarceration. The Campaign has since expanded to 6 other states.
- For the culmination of her Fellowship, Spring 2015 Fellow aricoco hosted an evening at Speyer Hall, at University Settlement on the Lower East Side. The event included presentations by entomologists, artists, and dancers, and included participatory games for the audience. The event was attended by over 80 people, ages 8-70, including local community members, scientists, visual artists, and dancers, among others.



## Fall & Winter

- Sarah Dahnke and Dances for Solidarity exhibited ephemera from her project Dances for Solidarity as a Partner in Residence at Brooklyn Studios for Dance, and held performances there with her collaborators.
- Olaronke Akinmowo was given a month-long residency at Wendy's Subway, a non-profit library and writing space located in Bushwick, Brooklyn. She installed the Free Black Women's Library and hosted a series of events and workshops.
- Mass Story Lab at UNC Greensboro: Students from UNCG brought Mass Story Lab to the International Civil Rights Center and Museum to promote empathy, healing, reform, and justice.
- Stephano Espinoza and Cristobal Guerra Naranjo held a series of movement-based workshops at Movimiento Inmigrante Internacional (Immigrant Movement International) in Corona, Queens as part of their project Sacúdete. The workshops were for members of the Latinx community in Corona with non-traditional art backgrounds. The goal of the workshops was to learn how to listen to one's body and use performance tools as a way to communicate and protest. In Summer 2017 there will be public performances by the individuals who have formed a collective through the series of workshops.

- Yvonne Shortt held monthly skill building workshops as part of her project, Women Who Build - Artists Who Own, which teaches women and girls basic construction and design skills. The workshops provide the participants with the opportunity to learn the use of new tools and get comfortable with different construction skills. Ultimately the participants will design and build a tiny house at the Knockdown Center in Ridgewood, Queens.
- James Andrews (Fellow 2015-2017) held a workshop on Urban Communes as part of his project Spatial Resistance. This was the first in a series of free workshops focusing on the spatial and architectural dimension of civil disobedience. This workshop featured guests from Point A, a project of the Federation of Egalitarian Communities that works to cultivate egalitarian, income-sharing communes in the cities of the East Coast.



# MASS STORY LAB



*Exhibition pamphlets for Artifacts and After Effects  
Photo credit: Natalia Vilela*

# EXHIBITIONS

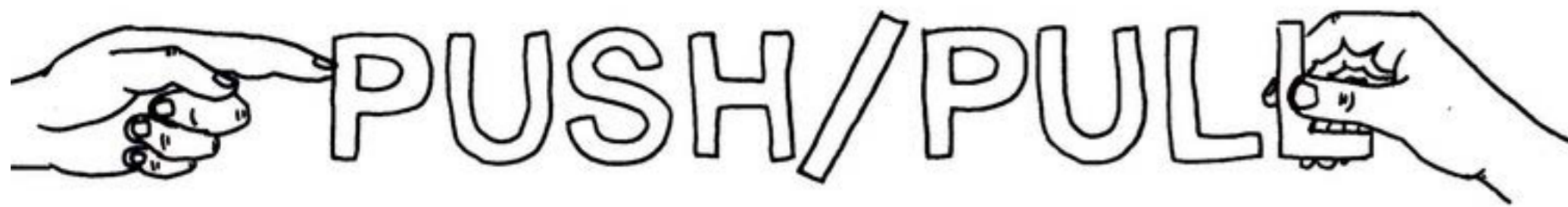
## ARTIFACTS & AFTER EFFECTS AT WESTBETH GALLERY

In July 2016 Artifacts & After Effects, an exhibition of Fellows' work curated by Culture Push staff was shown at the Westbeth

Gallery. The exhibition was accompanied by weekly public programs, including performances of choreography created by

individuals in solitary confinement, a workshop on climate change, and live painting events, among other events.





Every week we receive drawings I would hang on my wall, poetry I would expect to read in literary journals, and essays that could be published in the New York Times Sunday Review. What is impressive to me is that all of these artists were able to create despite their existence in a system that confines them to a 9' x 12' box for 23 hours per day. What I continue to be amazed by is that our tiny P.O. box is constantly overflowing with unsolicited creative expression.

**- Sarah Dahnke**  
ISSUE 2 // SPRING 2016

In 2014 I started exploring Dutch Kills as part of an iLAND mini-residency. The death of the Welch farmhouse was one of the first stories I was told about Dutch Kills when I started asking residents: tell me what you love in your neighborhood.

**- Lise Brenner**  
ISSUE 3 // SUMMER 2016

## PUSH/PULL

Our online journal continued, with a Spring Issue guest edited by Sarah Dahnke and Dances for Solidarity, including contributions from all incarcerated collaborators, and a Summer issue that coincided with an Artifacts & After Effects exhibition that included contributions from exhibition participants Go! Push Pops, Jen Kennedy & Liz Linden, Lise Brenner, and Sarah Dahnke.

Our collaboration is an ongoing effort to find ways to transmit feminism forward. Each instantiation of our project seeks to develop techniques to incorporate a more diverse set of voices and methodologies. From language games to our ever-evolving public library of feminist books to our renegade feminist press to polling station sculptures to experimental discussions, performances, and interactive installations, our art works function as platforms to describe and preserve our movement in a way that does not retroactively erase difference, but instead makes it visible for all to see.

**- Jen Kennedy & Liz Linden**  
ISSUE 3 // SUMMER 2016



Dinner Games Phase 1  
Photo credit: Natalia Vilela

# THE NEW YORK SUMMIT FOR PRACTICAL UTOPIAS

Culture Push is currently partnering with YKON, a Helsinki and Berlin-based collective that works on the potential for utopian fantasies to shape society to produce the New York Summit for Practical Utopias, a month-long alternative conference planned for June 2018. In December 2016 we hosted The Dinner Games as an initial gathering that will lead up to The Summit. The Dinner Games was an open-format game designed by YKON to alter interactions at the dinner table. Guests at the dinner were chosen to reflect the wide range of people and organizations who are creating practical utopias of their own, with an open-minded approach to social change.





*Exhibition pamphlets for Artifacts and After Effects  
Photo credit: Natalia Vilela*

# BENEFIT

## ANNUAL BENEFIT

Lucky Number 7 was hosted by Casa Mezcal and aimed to raise funds for our Fellowship for Utopian Practice. In honor of

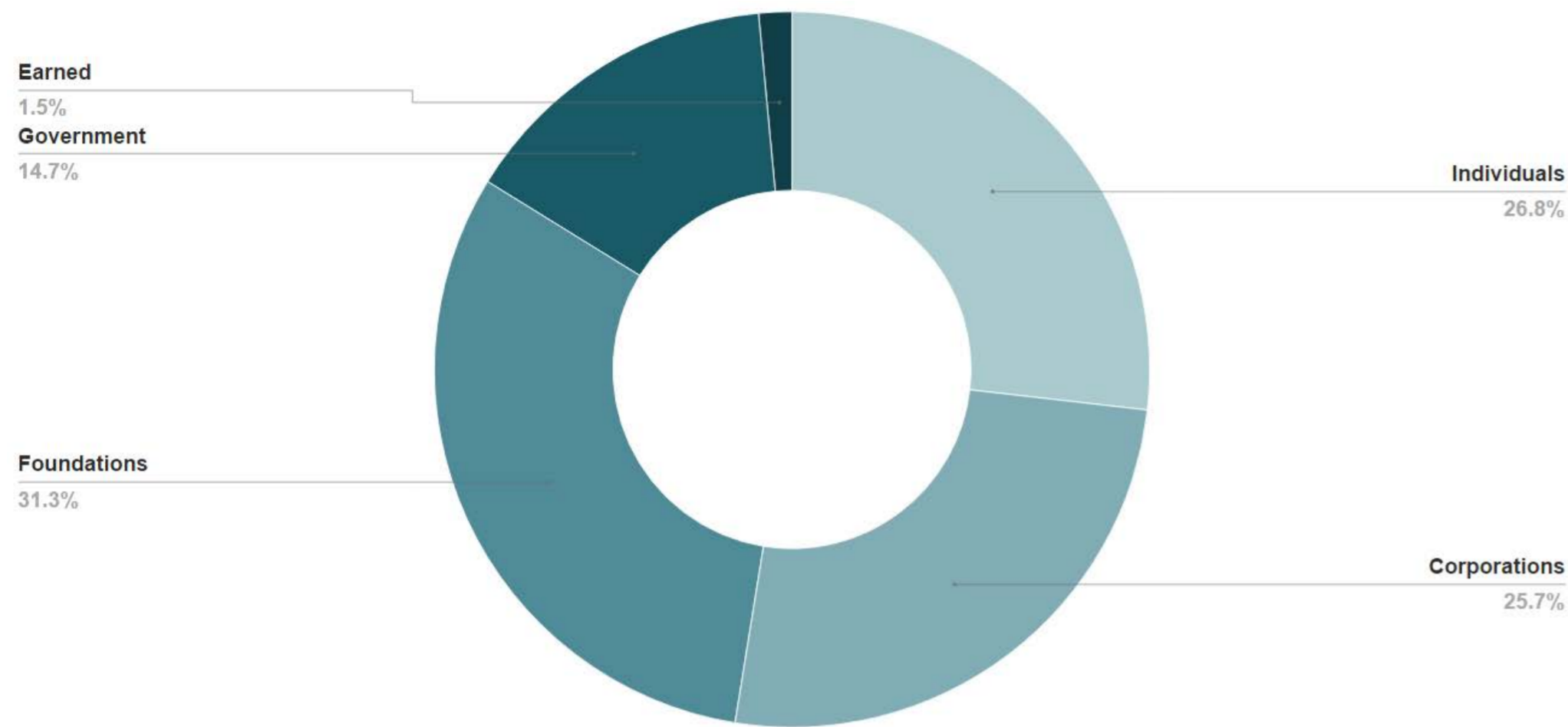
Culture Push's co-founder Aki Sasamoto and her DOING concept, artists and professionals Michael DiPietro, Sarah Eichner, Carolyn Hall, Lilly Lam

and Josh Martin led hands-on workshops for attendees—from flute-making and found object drawing to fish stories in historical marine ecology.





# FUNDING AND FINANCES



## FOUNDATIONS

Rubin Foundation  
Lezak Family Foundation  
Ringold-Brown Family Foundation

## CORPORATE

Scopia Management Inc.

## CITY GOVERNMENT

The New York City Department of Cultural Affairs – Cultural Development Fund

## INDIVIDUAL DONORS 2016

Marion Appel, Linda Austin, Chloë Bass, Paul Benney & Lila Babb, Reid Bingham, Sean Bronzell, Elissa Brown, David Brown, Korenet Brown, Sarah Cameron Sunde, Laurel Chen, Alyssa Chen, Janet D. Clancy, Maureen Connor, Jill Dearman, Lynne Desilva-Johnson, Michael DiPietro, Annie Dorsen, Allison Foley, Laurel George, Charles P. Goldman, Elinor Gollay, Carolyn Hall, David Hamilton Thomson, Anne L. Hammel, James Hannaham, Geoffrey Hendricks, Craig Hensala, Felicity Hogan, Emi Iijima, Janusz Jaworski, Rafael Jose, Andrea Kleine, Tom Kreuger, Aaron Landsman, Stephanie Lawal, Abigail

Levine, Michelle Levy, Anne Lezak & Harry Chen, Iris Lezak, Tania Liberta-Klosterman, Wendy Lobel, Maja Lorkovic, Chris Lotspeich, Mordecai-Mark Mac Low, Elliot Maltby, David Martin, Edward McAdams, Oksana Mironova, Gregory Musselman, Alec Niedenthal, Matthew Nishi-Broach, Lorie Novak, Nancy Nowacek, Shelagh Patterson, Jessica Paul, Georgia Philips-Amos, Walter Polkosnik, Dianne Pulte, Stan and Laura Ringold, Christopher Robbins, Sur Rodney Sur, Jessica Roseman, Jesse Ruddock, David Ruder, Akiko Sasamoto, Shawn Shafner, Karen Sherman, Risa Shoup, Adam Simon and Michele Araujo, Matt Sirovich and Meredith Elson Charitable Fund, Kenneth W. Smith, Linda Stein & Paul Vidich, A.L. Steiner, Annelise D. Strom Henriksen, Stephanie Vevers, Alex Wagner, Kathy Westwater, Guy Yarden, Tal Yarden, Anna Young

## FISCAL SPONSORSHIP

At Culture Push, once you're a Fellow, you're a Fellow forever. As part of our effort to create an ongoing dialogue and system of support for all Fellows – currently active and no longer

active – we offer Fiscal Sponsorship to artists even after completion of their Fellowship Term. In 2016 Culture Push raised a total of \$20,800 for past and present Fellows through our fiscal sponsorship program: Through Culture Push sponsorship, Barrie Cline (Fellow 2014) and The Worker's Art Coalition were awarded a grant of \$17,500 from the Archie Green Fellowship for "Illuminating History," an oral history project documenting contemporary electrical workers in New York City, who, through manufacture, installation, and maintenance, make critical contributions to the fabric of daily life in New York. Part of their work on this peer-to-peer ethnography was displayed in The Archive of Affect, an exhibition of Fellows' work, held at NURTUREart Gallery in Bushwick, Brooklyn. Culture Push also fiscally sponsored OlaRonke Akinmowo (Fellow 2014-16) for an award of \$2000 from the Citizens Committee for New York City (<http://www.citizensnyc.org/>). Finally, Culture Push fiscal sponsorship also allowed Sarah Dahnke (Fellow 2015) to raise \$1300 for Dances for Solidarity through an e-mail campaign and community outreach.

REVENUE	FY14*	FY15	FY16	FY17 (in progress)
Individuals	\$2,860	\$4,418	\$7,290	\$7,871
Corporations	\$5,750	\$5,750	\$7,000	\$6,000
Foundations	N/A	\$1,500	\$8,500	\$16,880
Government	N/A	N/A	\$4,000	\$5,700
Earned	\$110	\$110	\$406	\$1,805
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$8,720</b>	<b>\$11,778</b>	<b>\$27,196</b>	<b>\$38,256</b>

\*Our Fiscal years begin on June 1 and end on May 31 of the following year. FY14 = June 1, 2013 - May 31, 2014.

\*\* Printing, postage, meeting costs, website maintenance, insurance.

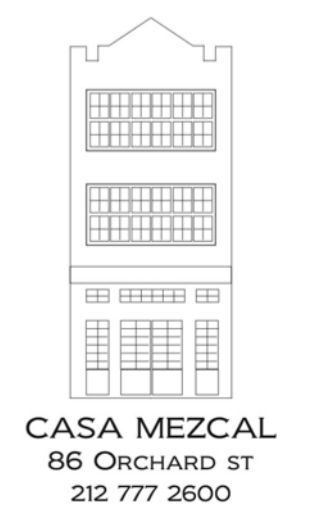
EXPENSES	FY14*	FY15	FY16	FY17 (in progress --projected)
Personnel	\$4,396	\$6,530	\$11,998	\$24,561
Fellowship Program	\$1,000	\$2,050	\$3,650	\$4,995
Other Programs	N/A	N/A	\$1,175	\$4,508
Fundraising	\$560	\$161	\$435	\$711
Misc. Administrative**	\$362	\$1,126	\$2,382	\$2,667
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$6,318</b>	<b>\$9,867</b>	<b>\$19,640</b>	<b>\$37,442</b>

\*Our Fiscal years begin on June 1 and end on May 31 of the following year. FY14 = June 1, 2013 - May 31, 2014.

\*\* Printing, postage, meeting costs, website maintenance, insurance.



TRADER JOE'S





*Dances for Solidarity Performance at Opening Reception for The Archive of Affect Exhibition  
Photo credit: Natalia Vilela*



*Dinner Games Set-Up  
Photo credit: Natalia Vilela*

## NEWS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

### STAFF AND BOARD EXPANSION

To match our growing ambitions and projects, we hired one new part-time employee in 2016, Administrative Assistant Linnea Ryshke, and created a full-time Assistant Director position for Madelyn Ringold-Brown, who has been with Culture Push for almost 3 years. We also created the role of Social Media Director for Natalia Vilela, our Social Media intern. Risa Shoup, Executive Director of Spaceworks, joined our Board of Directors. We have also been

continuing to realize our ambition of creating a Board that reflects the people we serve, and brought on Chlöe Bass, Artist and Public Practitioner, and Culture Push Fellow (2013) and Alicia Grullon, another socially engaged artist and Culture Push Fellow (2013).

### LOOKING AHEAD

- From March 17-April 16, 2017 we presented a group exhibition of Fellow's projects at NURTUREart, a nonprofit

gallery and educational space in Bushwick, Brooklyn. The show centered on projects that seek to augment voices of those who have been written out of mainstream historical narratives.

- We were awarded a Creative Engagement Grant from the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council to develop The Summit for Practical Utopias, with a week-long event taking place in October 2017.

## STAFF AND BOARD

### STAFF

**Clarinda Mac Low**  
Executive Director

**Madelyn Ringold Brown**  
Assistant Director

**Natalia Vilela**  
Social Media Director

**Linnea Ryshke**  
Administrative Director

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Nancy Nowacek**, Artist, educator and Culture Push Fellow 2012

**Mark Bradford**, Intellectual Property Attorney

**Janusz Jaworski**, Programs Director at Chashama

**Chlöe Bass**, Artist, Culture Push Fellow 2013 and Faculty at Queens College-CUNY Social Practice Program

**Risa Shoup**, Executive Director of Spaceworks

**Reza Keshavarz**, Director of Asia Operations at Scopio Capital

### ADVISORY BOARD

**Stephen Greco**

**Geoffrey Hendricks**

**Ishmael Houston-Jones**

**Felicity Hogan**

**Michael DiPietro**

**Sur Rodney Sur**



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**Culture Push, Inc.**



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