

REVIVING THE HEART OF THE ARTS

The arts are essential, but too often artists and members of our creative class feel left behind in a city that is too expensive and too bureaucratic to make their works come to life. We felt how important our cultural community is during this pandemic, as children were cut off from arts education and our museums, studios, and theaters all went dark. The arts are truly healing, with research showing the positive impact on coping, reduced levels of depression and anxiety, and higher levels of self-esteem. For our aging population, it is a helpful aid in the fight against loneliness, strengthening social connections. For our young people, the arts help diversify their perspective and develop their full personhood, encouraging them to break out of their siloes and comfort zones.

The arts suffered as much as any sector of our society due to COVID-19, and as performances and gallery openings return we have a responsibility to not only assist freelancers and organizations struggling to make ends meet, but also to fully tap into the power of our creative class and invest in it. We know that when we have a thriving local arts scene, our small businesses thrive and new jobs are created. We know that when our major cultural institutions shine, people come from all over the world to experience the arts like only New York City can deliver it. We know that when we are intentional in bringing art into the physical spaces of our communities, there is a positive impact on quality of life and an overall feeling of a safe, healthy, inclusive environment. And we know when our artists feel welcome and supported, their work soars to new heights.

Eric Adams

WITH OUR “REVIVING THE HEART OF THE ARTS” PLAN, WE WILL:

- Provide free space for artists to create by repurposing vacant storefronts to create free co-working and studio spaces for creatives and collaborators
- Turn our open spaces into spaces for art by tasking the Department of Cultural Affairs (DCLA) to greenlight more open spaces to be utilized as stages and for art installations.
- Invest in green art by commissioning artists to paint murals with paint that turns pollutants and harmful compounds into harmless nitrates and carbonates in the atmosphere, beautifying our city as we rejuvenate it.
- Create a public/private partnership to create murals on blighted properties.
- Develop, fund and implement a marketing plan for our city to the rest of the world unlike any ad campaign we have ever undertaken, rooted deeply in the city's arts and cultural attractions
- Provide small arts and cultural community-based organizations with greater access to the use of school facilities, without incurring the costs of space usage
- Conduct a citywide audit of City infrastructure and properties – including cultural institutions and other groups that lease City property – to determine where accessibility needs are not being met, and then turn that into a plan for action.
- Issue City and State cash grants to help studios upgrade their systems (e.g., air filtration) and pay rent
- Build partnerships through DCLA and other organizations for a listing/ecosystem of facilities for subsidized rehearsal rental rates
- Work with DCLA and the Department of Transportation (DOT) to best monetize the recently launched “Open Culture” program and share resources with non- DCLA funded groups, including how best to monetize regular programming and classes versus one-off performances
- Enlist the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (NYC Parks) to ease permitting and give greater support to small cultural events
- Extend the eviction and mortgage moratorium for cultural and arts institutions
- Create a City/State-level mortgage subsidy for landlords of arts institutions
- Invest in performing arts audience development through a subsidized ticket program, targeted to essential workers and youth in underserved communities
- Engage in more marketing for small arts organizations with social media campaigns that involve all City agencies and platforms
- Create a professional development program for educators to ensure they are culturally responsive to those students, which will also include arts education from these cultures to share
- Ensure schools are delivering the high-quality arts education that students and families deserve, including connections with local cultural organizations to support programming
- Help diversify the arts top-to-bottom through robust pipelines like an expanded, year-round Summer Youth Employment Program and efforts to bring new voices to boards of cultural institutions