

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
CONTACT: Diane Velletri
T: 718.447.3329 x 1006
E: dvellettri@statenilandarts.org



STATEN ISLAND ARTS AND DESIGN TRUST FOR PUBLIC SPACE ANNOUNCE TWO PUBLIC ART PILOTS MADE POSSIBLE BY CITY GRANT FUNDING: SONIC GATES AND COURT YARD FRIDAYS

A series of sound installations and weekend concerts will re-imagine and activate underutilized public spaces in the North Shore, as part of Future Culture.



July 13, 2017, Staten Island, NY – Staten Island Arts, the local arts council for Richmond County, along with its Future Culture partner Design Trust for Public Space, is excited to announce the two pilot projects selected as part of Future Culture: Connecting Staten Island's Waterfront. These projects are the outcome of a collaboration that has, for the past two years, examined how cultural activities can enrich the publicly and privately held open spaces of Staten Island's North Shore. The Future Culture project recently released a set of initial recommendations for long-term strategies for neighborhood revitalization, sustainability and equitable economic development.

Following a competitive application process, the two pilot projects were chosen for their connection to the Future Culture Initial Recommendations, visionary concepts, artistic merit, and prominent roles given to local artists and residents. Both projects are made possible by City grant funding awarded to Staten Island Arts by the NYC Department of Small Business Services (SBS). Earlier this year, the NYC SBS's Neighborhood 360° Grant program invested \$1.54 million to support commerce in Downtown Staten Island through partnerships with local businesses and city agencies.

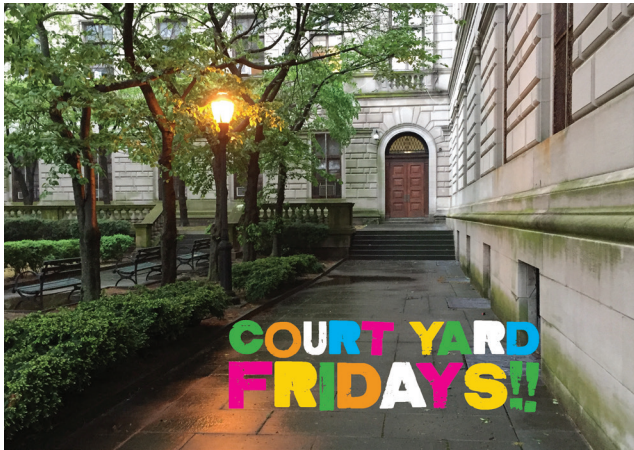


Sonic Gates

A team led by Staten Island-based composer/touring performer/media artist **Volker Goetze** will construct a series of sound sculptures at various sites along the waterfront, on Bay Street, and in Tappen Park, from St. George to Stapleton. This project brings together SI MakerSpace—with sculptors **DB Lampman** and **Alassane Drabo**—and other cultural groups to fabricate these sculptures. Additionally, school groups will help construct the

sonic sculptures through a cooperative educational experience. An inaugural day festivities will feature a progressive parade in which local cultural groups will perform at each location in the summer of 2018. Sonic Gates will advance Future Culture’s recommendations to promote exploration of the Staten Island North Shore and re-imagine underused “in-between” spaces.

“My idea for Sonic Gates came from a desire to create something playful, beautiful, and inviting for everyone. It will be an adventure that is educational and fun for families, art and music lovers, and tourists alike.”
– Volker Goetze



Court Yard Fridays

Kevin Washington (a Staten Island native, retired NYC Firefighter, and community organizer)—with **Homer Jackson**, Director of the Philadelphia Jazz Project, and **Lynn Washington**, an experienced graphic designer—will host a series of weekend concerts in the summer of 2018 in the courtyard between Borough Hall and the old Supreme Court building to exhibit world-class performers with connections to Staten Island alongside local arts groups. In addition to the performance, food trucks and restaurants will offer food to complement the musical styles on show. This project will bring together various community groups and members to enjoy this series of celebrations. Court Yard Fridays will

pilot Future Culture’s recommendations to organize unique events of scale and regularity, and to activate existing, underutilized public space.

“I shaped my proposal to address two recommendations – Activate underused public space and Amplify local culture. The Court Yard Gardens, tucked between Borough Hall and the old Supreme Court building, is an ideal concert environment - a park setting where Staten Island residents, ferry commuters and tourists can relax and enjoy music, conversation and local food.” – Kevin Washington



Homer Jackson, Lynn Washington, Kevin Washington

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ) SELECTION PROCESS

A request for qualifications was released to the public on April 17th and resulted in 50 submissions: 74.4% from Staten Island; 11.7% from Brooklyn; 3.9% from Manhattan; others from Queens, California, Poland, France and Turkey. 43% of the proposals presented projects that featured more than one artistic discipline and 92.2% proposals chose more than one Future Culture recommendation to which their projects were connected. A series of reviews and deliberation delivered six finalists who prepared final proposals for a jury of five distinguished interdisciplinary professionals who made the final decision on June 20th. Each of these projects will be granted an artist fee of \$15,000 and a scalable implementation budget of \$30,000-\$45,000.

Of the process and its outcome, Staten Island Arts Executive Director **Elizabeth Bennett** noted, “We are thrilled by the selection of these two very different public art projects that will activate a variety of spaces along the North Shore waterfront and on Bay Street. The process through which Sonic Gates and Court Yard Fridays were chosen was a highly competitive one through which we read about many highly creative responses to the Future Culture recommendations. Choosing six finalists and then two final selections was difficult because there were so many

visionary projects proposed. We hope to work with the finalists to help them realize their projects through other means, including our annual regrant program, which opens again in early September.”

“We’re proud to see that Future Culture is moving full steam ahead as the North Shore waterfront is rapidly developing. Thanks to our indefatigable partner Staten Island Arts, we’ll test and explore some of Future Culture’s Recommendations through these public art pilots, in collaboration with local artists, cultural practitioners, business owners, area developers, and city agencies. It’s an opportune moment to highlight the borough’s rich and diverse cultural life while connecting the North Shore’s public space,” said Design Trust for Public Space Executive Director **Susan Chin**, FAIA, Hon. ASLA.

SBS’ Neighborhood 360° Grant program helps community-based organizations boost economic development and revitalization in local commercial corridors. In 2016, SBS conducted a Commercial District Needs Assessment (CDNA) as part of the Neighborhood 360° program to determine specific areas of challenge and opportunity along the corridor. Staten Island Arts was selected through a competitive grant process focused on strengthening the vibrancy of the Bay Street commercial corridor. Awards were also made to the Staten Island Chamber of Commerce and 100 Gates.

“Strong neighborhoods are the backbone of our city, and the \$1.54 million in investments to Staten Island is going a long way towards revitalizing key commercial corridors,” said **Gregg Bishop**, Commissioner of the NYC Department of Small Business Services. “By working with Staten Island Arts, we are responding to local needs to support small business growth and build more vibrant neighborhoods for all New Yorkers.”

FUTURE CULTURE BACKGROUND

In 2014, the Design Trust for Public Space conducted an open Request for Proposals called The Energetic City with the goal of giving life to the city by connecting people through innovative design informed by the needs and aspirations of community users. An independent jury selected Future Culture, a proposal by Staten Island Arts to create a replicable model of inclusive development using public art to link the cultural assets of Staten Island neighborhoods.

Through Future Culture, Staten Island Arts has collaborated with Design Trust For Public Space to experiment with ways for developers and artists to engage in planning their community together to inform strategies for neighborhood revitalization, sustainability, and equitable economic development along Staten Island’s waterfront and the North Shore neighborhoods, including St. George, Tompkinsville and Stapleton.

In August 2016, Staten Island Arts and Design Trust for Public Space announced a team of Future Culture Fellows who comprise expertise in participatory art, urban design, policy, and graphic design. Together the partners conducted brainstorming and feedback sessions with the local community – including artists, cultural producers, civic activists, and small business owners – elected officials and developers to build a cultural plan and public art pilots for connecting and activating public space along Staten Island’s North Shore waterfront.

To read the Future Culture Initial Recommendations go to: <http://designtrust.org/projects/future-culture/activities-and-outputs/>

To provide feedback on the recommendations go to: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9VLN3R3>

About Neighborhood 360°

The Neighborhood 360° initiative also funds a fellowship program for full-time community development professionals to work with CBOs in these targeted commercial corridors. The fellows help coordinate and implement commercial district improvements, including those recommended in last year’s CDNAs. Earlier this year SBS announced that the fellowship program will soon launch a second cohort of participants.

For more information on Neighborhood 360°, please visit www.nyc.gov/neighborhood360 .

About the NYC Department of Small Business Services (SBS):

SBS helps unlock economic potential and create economic security for all New Yorkers by connecting New Yorkers to good jobs, creating stronger businesses, and building vibrant neighborhoods across the five boroughs. For more information, visit nyc.gov/sbs, call 311, and follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

About Design Trust for Public Space:

The Design Trust for Public Space is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the future of public space in New York City. Our projects bring together city agencies, community groups and private sector experts to make a lasting impact—through design—on how New Yorkers live, work and play. Our work can be seen, felt and experienced throughout all five boroughs—from parks and plazas to streets and public buildings. The Design Trust saved the High Line structure, jumpstarted NYC's first custom-built Taxi of Tomorrow, developed the Community Design School for Flushing Meadows Corona Park, and created the city's first comprehensive sustainability guidelines that became the precursor to Local Law 86 and PlaNYC, now OneNYC. <http://designtrust.org>.

About Staten Island Arts:

The mission of Staten Island Arts is to cultivate a sustainable and diverse cultural community for the people of Staten Island by: 1) making the arts accessible to every member of the community; 2) supporting and building recognition for artistic achievement; 3) providing artists and organizations technical, financial, and social resources to encourage the creation of new work. Staten Island Arts does extensive outreach to communities that are underserved geographically, ethnically, and economically. The organization works hard to impact the arts across all borders.

For more information on Staten Island Arts visit www.statenislandarts.org.

###