



Gallery

FOR & ABOUT:

Art & Reactions to Superstorm Sandy

LIMITED EDITION
COMMEMORATIVE ZINE

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THOUGHTS, OBSERVATIONS, STORIES & POEMS

This commemorative zine is a visceral collection of thoughts, artwork, observations, poems and stories of remembrance for those in Brooklyn who were hit hardest by Superstorm Sandy and about those who reached out a helping hand to them.

It is one part of the project **For and About: Art and Reactions to Hurricane Sandy** curated for BAC Gallery by Michele Jaslow and Spring Hofeldt of the Brooklyn based curatorial team **Radar Curatorial** (radarcuratorial.com).

For & About also includes a group exhibition of visual artworks in BAC Gallery on view from September 27, 2013 through February 14, 2014; a *Scene: Brooklyn* film screening at BAC Gallery; and a media installation, *Documenting Sandy*, by Josh Raab.

To learn more about these related events, visit brooklynartscouncil.org/bacgallery.

An *asterisk indicates stories provided by *Sandy Storyline*, a participatory documentary that collects and shares stories about the impact of Hurricane Sandy on our neighborhoods, our communities and our lives (Sandystoryline.com).



Nathaniel Kassel, *at some point the storm surge of froth and rolling waves entered my friend's house and those of his neighbors and turned them all into shipwrecks*, 2012, embroidery with home sewing machine on organic cotton fabric, 6.5 x 9.5 inches.

The visual artists in the BAC Gallery exhibition

For and About: Art and Reactions to Superstorm Sandy:

Asya Dodina & Slava Polishchuk
Emile Hyperion Dubuisson
Miguel Garcia
Cassandra Giraldo
Sheila Goloborotko
Kim Hoeckele

Nathaniel Kassel
Ilias Koen
Jason A. Maas
André Malerba
Brock Mills
Josh Raab

ABOUT BAC GALLERY

Brooklyn Arts Council's BAC Gallery exclusively showcases the work of emerging and mid-career Brooklyn artists. Visual arts exhibitions include installations as well as group shows by independent curators.

Courtney J. Wendroff, Visual Arts Director

“If I learned one thing from the storm, it was that the memories... are the things that deserve your focus, deserve your time... because everything else can be replaced, but those can’t.”

- Derek Prince, Coney Island Storyteller*



Gaia Squarci, *Untitled*, 2012, digital archival pigment print, 11 x 17 inches.



Jason A. Maas, *Three Volunteers*, 2013, graphite, panel, salvaged Rockaway materials, fabric, dimensions variable.

For Sale **by Asad Chishti***

Hemingway once won a bet, they say, by writing a story in under 10 words:
For Sale: Baby shoes. Never worn.

He considered it his best work.

As we labeled and sorted the boxes.
I remembered it.



Derek

by Matt Richter*

Derek Prince kisses one of his nieces while celebrating Thanksgiving in Coney Island.

“It felt so good to know that I didn’t have to go look for food. To know that I had a place to stay. It was like a vacation. To spend it with good people, family and friends...it was something I won’t soon forget. ”

Derek lost all of his belongings after his home was flooded and looted. Since Sandy struck the region, he has been sleeping on friends' couches as his apartment is uninhabitable.”



The Center

by Rachel Falcone*

Deedra Cheatham, a resident of Gowanus Houses and a member of the community-based organization Families United for Racial and Economic Equality, is hard to keep up with. 10 days after the storm, she is helping to lead hurricane relief efforts in the Gowanus Community Center. There is a flurry of donations pouring through the door, gloved hands spooning food into care packages, and volunteers waiting with headlamps in anticipation of taking supplies to stranded residents in buildings still without power, water, and/or heat. The Center has not seen this much activity in years.

“I’ve been in apartments where there are children, and they’re sick.” she says. “They have broken elevators. They’re on high floors. How are their parents going to get them down the stairs? I’ve been running around giving people insulin and doing first aid care just to make sure people are healthy.” Like many residents, she is searching for answers and wondering why there isn’t more help from the New York City Housing Authority. She pauses when the lights outside the Center, some of the only lights on in the community, go out and the walkway outside again becomes dark.



Cassandra Giraldo, *Welcome to Rockaway*, 2012, digital archival pigment print, 11 x 17 inches.



André Malerba, *Untitled*, 2012, digital archival pigment print, 11 x 17 inches.



Gaia Squarci, *Untitled*, 2012, digital archival pigment print, 11 x 17 inches.



Josh Raab, *Last Legs*, 2013, digital archival pigment print, 11 x 17 inches.

Cecil

by Matt Richter*

Cecil Lander stood outside of his flooded home in Coney Island.

“After you accomplish whatever you did for 30 years working, and then everything is gone, how would you feel?” he said, watching his neighbors wait in line for donations outside of the local church.

“We will leave eventually, we won’t stay here. You don’t want memories to come back like this. Your mind is not the same as before.”



The Kindness of Strangers #1

by Carolina Kroon*

A few days after Hurricane Sandy an ad hoc group of Park Slope Food Coop members set up a table to collect and deliver food and supplies for the hardest hit areas of the hurricane. Members contributed, collected and delivered over 170 cars and vans full of donations in 10 days.





Miguel Garcia, *Red Hook (detail)*, 2011, mixed media on canvas, 48 x 60 inches.

Sandy Baby, a poem for the people, part 2

by Mariette A. Papic

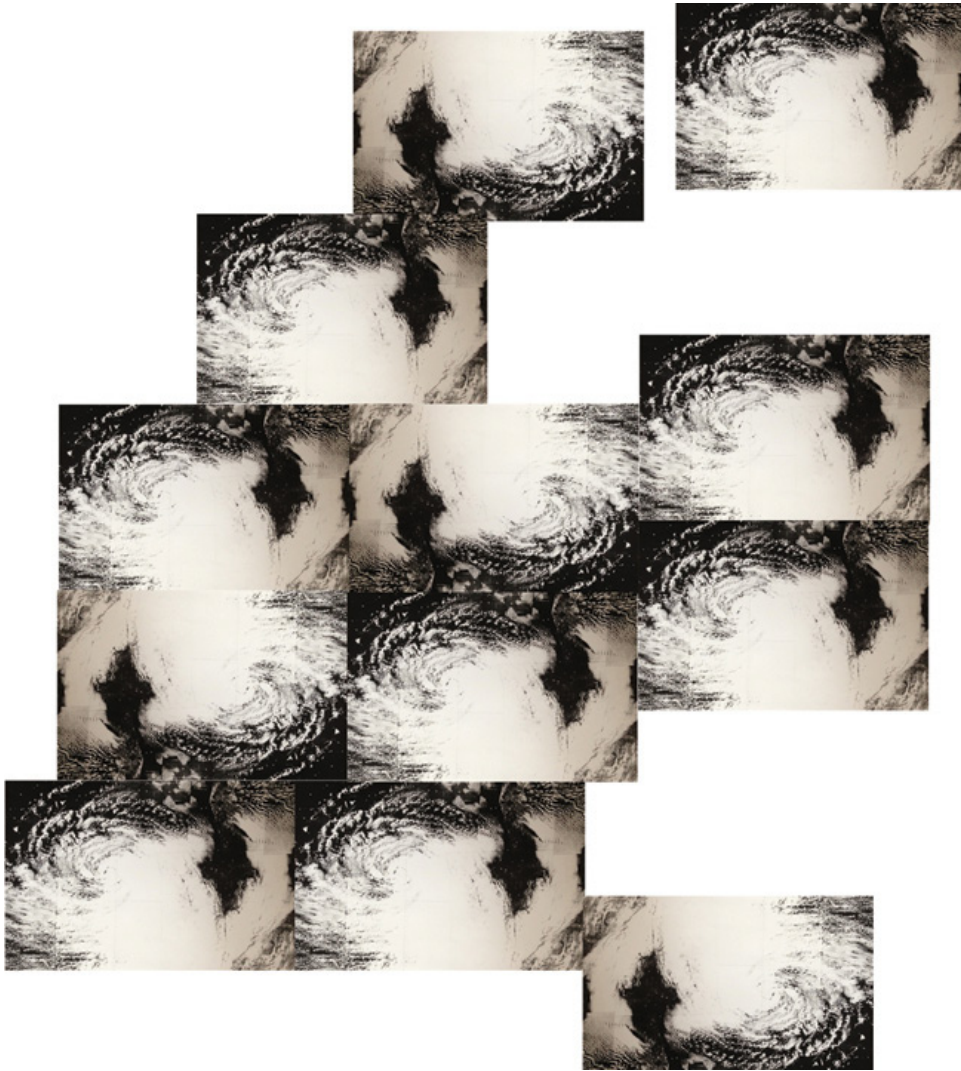
My sister is in a hotel
My house will not get insurance

Happy Immigrant, now a citizen,
Shakes in his morning coffee at the word "rationing"
"Your papers, please" memories

Absurdities
Panic

Truth
All of it
Springsteen on the radio
Sandy we're stranded

Maps are redrawn
Life carries on



Sheila Goloborotko, *Anachronic Patterns*, 2013, installation of lithographs, dimensions variable.

Sounds of the Studio

by Ara Osterweil

October 28, 2012, the eve of Hurricane Sandy

High above the treeline
the wind howls like Yoko Ono
through a crack in the window
while below there is barely a shudder
save for the melancholy of yellow leaves
slightly shimmying.

Desperate to paint its majesty
I'm waiting out the storm
listening to the weather
but even before the surge
i'm longing
for the return of hard edges
angular planes
minimalism's forms faintly shattering
a tune from Satie-

19 mute sisters
nine floors below
walled up in a Carmelitan nunnery
Vivian and I spy their quiet revolution,
and consider asking to tend their garden
in exchange for moving in
of course they can't answer
but we are
prepared to take their silence
in the affirmative.

We Drove On

by *Nick Kolakowski*

After we spent the afternoon helping clean up the Rockaways in the aftermath of Sandy—joining the hundreds of volunteers, not to mention enough National Guard troops to retake Baghdad—my friend Olivia said she'd give me a ride back to my apartment in Park Slope.

Her car was a rattling deathtrap of a Toyota but clean inside, with a Hello Kitty sticker plastered on the dashboard and a pair of fuzzy dice swinging from the rearview mirror. “Like the testicles of some mythical beast,” I said, poking the furry balls.

“Excuse me?”

“Nothing. That’s the exhaustion talking.”

“Okay then.”

We motored over the bridge that connected the Rockaways with Broad Channel, the only inhabited island in Jamaica Bay. The main road was sprinkled with bits of broken glass and bright trash, the sidewalks piled with soaked mattresses and sand-crusting furniture. City inspectors went door-to-door, eyeing shredded walls and broken doors, the parked cars already rusting around the hubcaps from saltwater. Traffic was slow and after a few blocks we saw the reason: a gleaming white sailboat upright in the left lane, its mast snapped clean off. Olivia whistled as she steered the car around its massive bulk, in the process winning a game of slow-motion chicken with an oncoming fire truck.

A few minutes later, we motored past a garage with a large wooden crucifix nailed to its side. On the wall above, someone had spray-painted in red: Looters will be crucified. I reached over and flicked on the radio and twisted the tuning dial like my worst enemy’s thumb, desperate to hear something cheerful. The speakers hissed static. “That radio’s never worked,” Olivia said. “You have an iPhone with music on it? I can’t imagine you don’t.”

“What’s that supposed to mean?” I said, digging my iPhone-with-music out of my pocket.

“Nothing, you hipster, just joking. Plug it into that cord in the dash.”

I did as ordered—the speakers coughing as electronics talked to one another—and flicked through my playlists. “Looking for something really peppy,” I said.

“Sounds good. What you got?”

“Johnny Cash, Tom Waits, Nick Cave...”

“Um, maybe we should just enjoy silence, instead.”

“What’s wrong with songs about death and despair?”

“You’re morbid.”

“I always like playing Johnny Cash’s cover of ‘Hurt’ for small children. Really gets them in a happy mood, you know?”

We passed through marshland and over another bridge, arriving on the commercial drag of Howard Beach. The storefronts were dark, the traffic lights dead. Cops stood at each intersection directing cars. “I drove through here the other night, after my first day volunteering,” Olivia said. “Pitch black, freaky like you wouldn’t believe.”

“I can picture it.”

The city had restored power a few blocks further along. A red light stopped us behind a convoy of trucks stuffed with supplies in clear garbage bags. As we started off again, I noticed the life in the powered areas: the crowds on the sidewalk, the coffee shops and restaurants lit behind steamy glass. Traffic slowed again, inching around a long line of cars parked in the right lane, with the drivers outside their vehicles and stretching or talking on phones. “Why are they stopped?” Olivia murmured.

A quarter-mile later, we saw the reason: the car-line ended at a gas station surrounded by cop cruisers. On the sidewalk, a crowd of people stood with red plastic gas cans, waiting for a chance at the pumps. Everybody seemed orderly but there was a tension in the air, humming through the molecules like a radio wave, and I felt my heart speeding a little bit.

We drove on. A pair of military helicopters swept overhead, angling hard toward the gray angles of Manhattan in the distance. By now everything around us looked like the outer boroughs on a normal day: the avenue clogged with honking cars, the liquor stores doing a brisk business, the crowds of people conversing—or arguing, in many cases—on the sidewalk. This happening less than two miles from a neighborhood clogged with sand and wreckage.

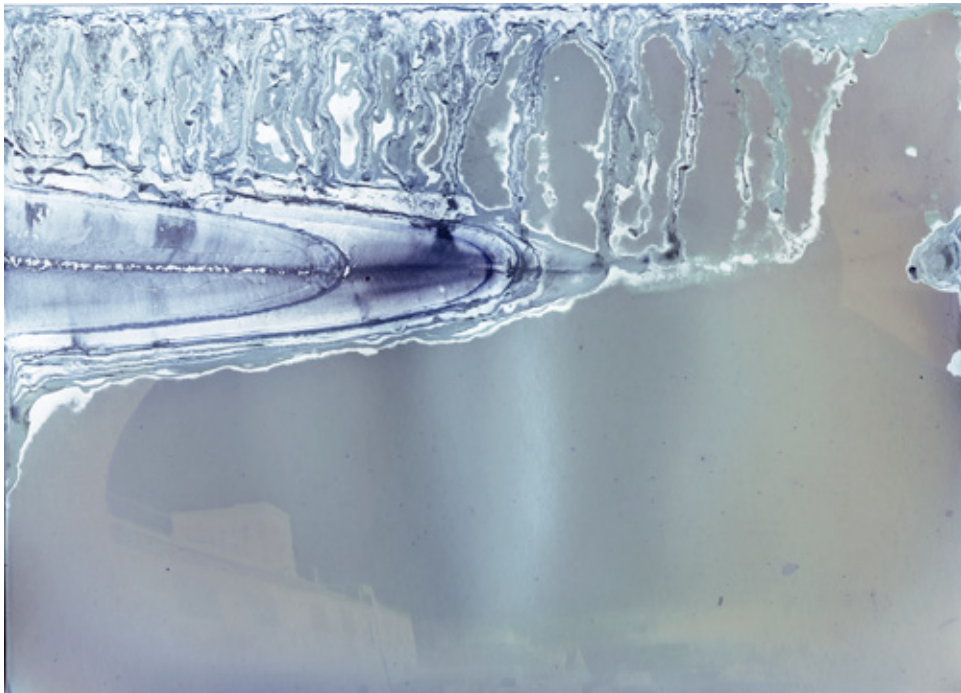
Park Slope was the same as ever: the sidewalks filled with parents pushing double-wide strollers at a stately pace, swarmed by small kids in bright jackets almost colliding into the hipster brigades with their scraggly beards and excellent ink and bandy legs, who paid absolutely no attention to the old folks with their slow gaits and gray hair, all of the latter perhaps a little aghast at what their urban pioneering had wrought: the multi-million-dollar brownstones and hip eateries with cases full of gluten-free edibles, pork shops with ironic shrines to Keanu Reeves, the bars stocked with micro-batch whiskeys. I pointed Olivia to my building, and she parked out front. “It’s really normal up here,” she said.

“Yeah, we never lost power,” I said, disconnecting my iPhone from the dash.

“It sort of makes me want to scream,” she said, staring through the windshield, her hands flexing on the steering wheel. “Like I want to grab the first person I see on the sidewalk and yell at them: ‘You know what’s going on. Why can’t you help?’”

“Maybe they are helping,” I said, anxious to escape the car and head upstairs and lock myself in my apartment, where I could shower away all the grime and not think about finding doll-heads and photographs in toxic sand. “You don’t know.”

“Yeah,” she said, but her hands still clutched the wheel. “But ‘normal’ is driving me insane right now.”



Kim Hoeckele, *Ninety-One Days*, 2012, silver gelatin paper negative, 5 x 7 inches.



Emile Hyperion Dubuisson, *Winter Seascape I*, 2012, digital C-print, 30 x 40 inches.

Something Spared

by Cynthia Ramnarace*

They were on the fourth shelf from the floor. Good thing. Everything on the first and second shelf became a sponge for the storm waters that forced their way through my doors, my windows, up the toilet. Nearly 4 feet of water filled the first floor of my home, soaking the couch, turning the ottoman into a raft that floated down the hallway, consuming the cardboard robot costumes we'd made for Halloween. My oven was toast, my shoes sopping wet, the kids' toys covered in raw sewage. But it was the books on the bookshelf that broke me that first day I saw the destruction Hurricane Sandy had wrought.

My high school yearbook. My wedding album. Cookbooks I'd used since the first day we were married. College textbooks. Beautiful, heavy art books that our kids would thumb through, a museum within their reach. But on the fourth shelf, high above the water line, was where I nonchalantly one day long ago decided to put our photo albums. The kids' first days of life, their first birthdays, their first rides on their bikes and their first steps. Pictures from the days before the kids became the pulse that propels us through the day. On the day we threw out those sopping wet books from the bottom shelf I carried upstairs the albums that had survived. Last week, our house rebuilt, I stacked the albums and approached the staircase with the intent of returning them to their previous location. At the third step I turned around. I carried my load back up the stairs. I put these sole remaining connections to my past on a bookshelf in my bedroom. In my home, a block from the beach, nothing sacred will ever be kept at sea level again.



Ilias Koen, *New York Topography (detail)*, 0 40, 2013, limited edition embossed print on Rising Stonehenge paper, 9.5 x 24 inches.

Joy of Life

by Ilyana Kadushin*

A few weeks ago, my husband and music partner James Harrell and myself performed some of our music at The Park Slope Armory in Brooklyn.

The Armory had been transformed into an evacuation shelter for senior citizens evacuated from the Rockaways during Hurricane Sandy. The Armory was literally packed with seniors and it took so many volunteers to keep it running every day. Imagine being away from your home and all its comforts, where you are crammed in with so many others, the lights always staying on, with no privacy.

The Arts and Wellness area they set up at Armory was so great and gave so many opportunities for the evacuees to transcend the circumstances through arts, expression and special attention from those involved. We were honored to be a part of it.

We planned a set of our original music and the first song that came to mind was one of our songs called "Joy of Life." It perfectly captures a state of gratitude for being alive and for each moment of our life.

James played it on guitar and we both sang and harmonized together. We also gave the group some shakers and percussion instruments, to provide some extra energy to the song.

After we performed this song called "Joy of Life," one of the women in the group, Latisha, who was blind and had been living in this shelter for almost 2 weeks, stood up and said that our song made her want to give a speech to everyone listening.

"We have all been through a lot these past weeks, it's been hard, but we have to find the joy, find the joy in every day."

This moment will go down as one of my favorites as a musician and as a human.

The Floating Kitchen

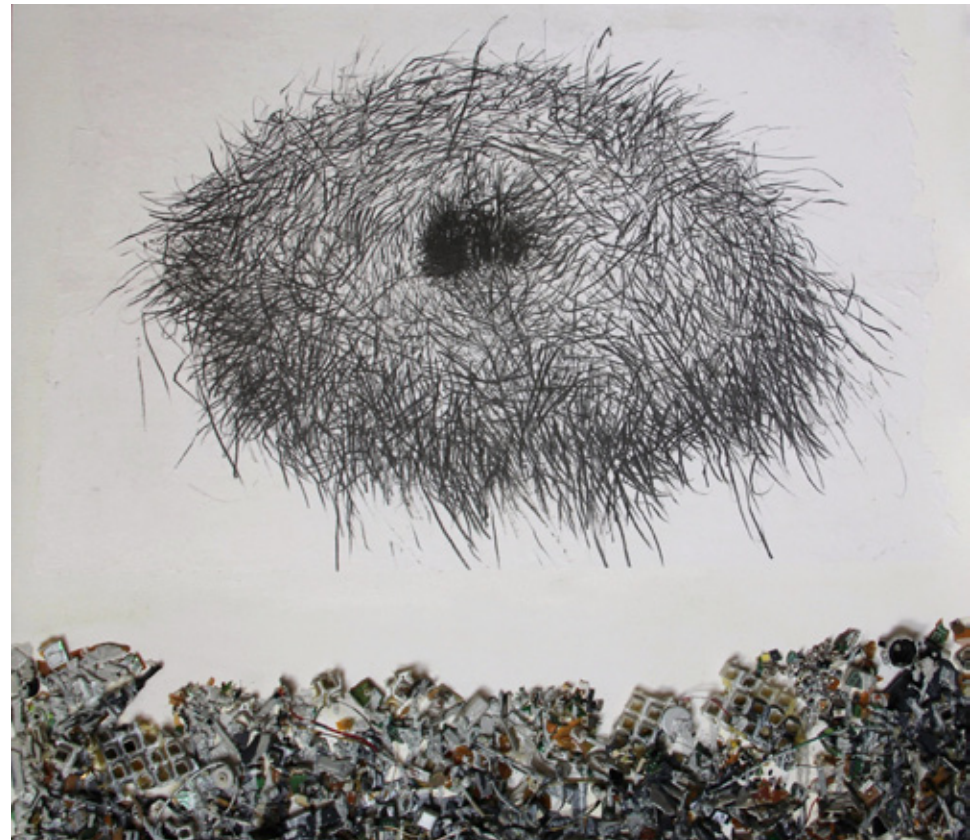
by John Russo*

My brother-in-law, Thomas Perone, runs a company in Brooklyn he's spent the last few years building up from nothing.

In the storm last week, he lost his kitchen and everything in it, when Red Hook was flooded. His business was totally wiped out.

Since then, he's been using borrowed supplies, neighbors' kitchens, and donated food to send out tray after tray of hot food to shelters, clean-up crews, and families in the Rockaways, Gerritsen Beach, Staten Island (all over the island), Coney Island, Red Hook, Howard Beach, and Belle Harbor.

He's been cooking non-stop. Even though he basically lost his business, he's been sending out food all week to help others. It's pretty inspiring. Neighbors, friends and relatives have been chipping in to buy the food that he's cooking and the basic kitchen supplies he's using. The guy's been hammering out tons of trays.



Asya Dodina and Slava Polishchuk, *Between Earth and Heaven*, 2012, mixed media on canvas, 37 x 37 inches.

The Last Thing the Storm Took

by Hillary Gardner

The trees are already gone. First the tornado came
And took the one across the street. Do not call
911 for this. It doesn't matter that the bus and cars
Can no longer pass. There are bigger emergencies than this.

Then Hurricane Irene came and split the apple tree in half
And flooded all the farms up in Vermont
And ate the roads and tore down the bridge
That we blithely crossed on our way to summer.

Do everything they tell you in a super storm.
Batten down the barrels in the garden.
Upset the furniture and secure the trellises;
Imagine exactly what is going to happen.

Again we cancel the event for kids,
Picturing them swinging wildly against a piñata
In unrelenting winds. Still, a hurricane
Is a good excuse to party since we know

The house will hold; it's held before.
Has anything happened yet?
We wait for the passing of the storm.
We take the calls

From everyone checking in to see
If everything is okay, like on 9/11.
I have nothing to tell, no window
Shattered, no absent duct tape, the light still on,

The jugs of water waiting, the batteries,
All as patient as Wallace Stevens' jar,
Expecting dominion and receiving none.
Out there the water is unseen.

The future has not happened yet.
The forecasters are losing their hats and hoods
Alongside the insolent shore. The two friends
Still haven't left the house to walk the dog,

The mom to check the damage on the street.
No one's gotten yet to the dead. It's not
9/11, we can't yet see the center of the city
Tragedy has demolished, we can't

Locate an enemy except in ourselves,
In the days later, in the trash, trash, trash
We threw into the sea, and the sea
Threw up back at us. We gather what

We've collected and take it down
To the church, which burns.
We spend time together.
Our employers call us home and we

Refuse to go. We stay outside
And give away anything extra on the shelves.
No one is calling for the longest time.
As if they don't really care to know.

ABOUT BAC

Brooklyn Arts Council is the leading organization supporting and connecting Brooklyn's arts community. Brooklyn's cultural anchor since 1966, BAC serves artists and cultural organizations, and ensures residents of all backgrounds and ages have access to affordable arts experiences.

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