



Community  
Driven  
Artist Led



# ANNUAL REPORT **FY2022**



VISION

**ARTISTS &  
COMMUNITIES  
REMAKING  
THE WORLD**  
*Together*

Book Design, Cover & Interior Illustrations by Evan Verrilli

# "TRANSFORMATION THROUGH COLLABORATION IS THE HUMAN CONDITION."

ANNA LOWENHAUPT TSING  
*The Mushroom at the End of the World*

Wave Pool connects...people, places, things; we provide conditions for collaboration and thus for transformation—both for individuals & our world.

Our work is an art practice through which we provide resources for others to create.

Writer, curator and activist Lucy Lippard spoke of socially-engaged art as the work of creating a "social collage." That is what we do. We allow ourselves to be vulnerable to transformation. We know that we are greater than the sum of our parts when we come together and leverage our individual assets for the good of the collective. We ask our partners, communities, and artists to be vulnerable with us to aid in this co-creation.

We know that in sharing and listening we meet our best hopes for survival as we face the myriad of challenges at present. We are working diligently on issues of mental health and trauma recovery, food access, holistic support for local artists, and immigrant and refugee empowerment and advocacy. Over the past year we have demonstrated this through many ways that are presented in the following pages.

The work of transformation is messy. We make mistakes; we learn in public. We anticipate that those who we work with will as well. This is the beauty of being human. Making space for us all to be fully human is one of our most joyous gifts to both give and receive.

We see you: artists, community members, program participants, champions of your own causes and personal dilemmas. We know that collectively *we are enough* and that *things can be better*. I invite you to join us in our quest to create a more connected, joyous, and equitable world.



CALCAGNO CULLEN  
*Co-Founder & Executive Director*



MISSION

**WAVE POOL  
CREATES  
COMMUNITY  
FULFILLMENT  
THROUGH ARTIST  
OPPORTUNITIES.**

With exhibitions, creative engagements, and collaborations we...

**LISTEN**

Wave Pool is community driven, exploring the stories and needs of the diverse communities we serve.

**ACTIVATE**

Wave Pool is artist led, reflecting the concerns and interests of contemporary creatives.

**SHARE**

Wave Pool uses our platform to amplify the ideas, expressions, and work, through which the world is made more joyous and equitable.

## ORGANIZATIONAL ASSUMPTIONS

# DIGNITY

We believe that dignity for all begins with a commitment to equity and inclusion.

# ARTWORK IS WORK

We believe that the labor involved in being an artist is valuable and should be compensated accordingly.

# POSSIBILITY

We believe that every moment is pregnant with the potential to positively transform the world around us through the power of art.

## VALUES

# SERVICE

We share resources, build connections, and encourage creative experiments.

# CONSIDERATION

We listen and learn, cultivating a culture of curiosity and empathy.

# COMMUNITY

We center the needs of artists in order to discover opportunities that can bring people together.

# EXPERIMENTATION

We seek out novel approaches to seemingly impossible problems through art.

# OPTIMISM

We believe that collectively we are enough and that things can be better.

# ABOUT US

Wave Pool is a socially-engaged art center that acts as a conduit for community change through artist opportunities and support.

Pairing communities' knowledge of their needs with artists' sense of possibility, Wave Pool provides a structure whereby contemporary art and artists can be integral contributors to the fabric and success of our city, country, and beyond, by helping us build relationships and collective knowledge around complex issues, centering the insights and experience of those most intimately affected.

Our space includes an art gallery, studios, artist residency program, wood shop, ceramics studio, and community gathering space. We are best known for initiating and supporting artist-driven social practice projects and exhibiting work that stretches beyond our gallery walls through interactive projects that proactively support our neighbors. Listening deeply, and collaborating broadly, we work with neighbors and partner organizations to tackle tough problems through asset-based development and promote visionary approaches to problem solving as artistic practice.

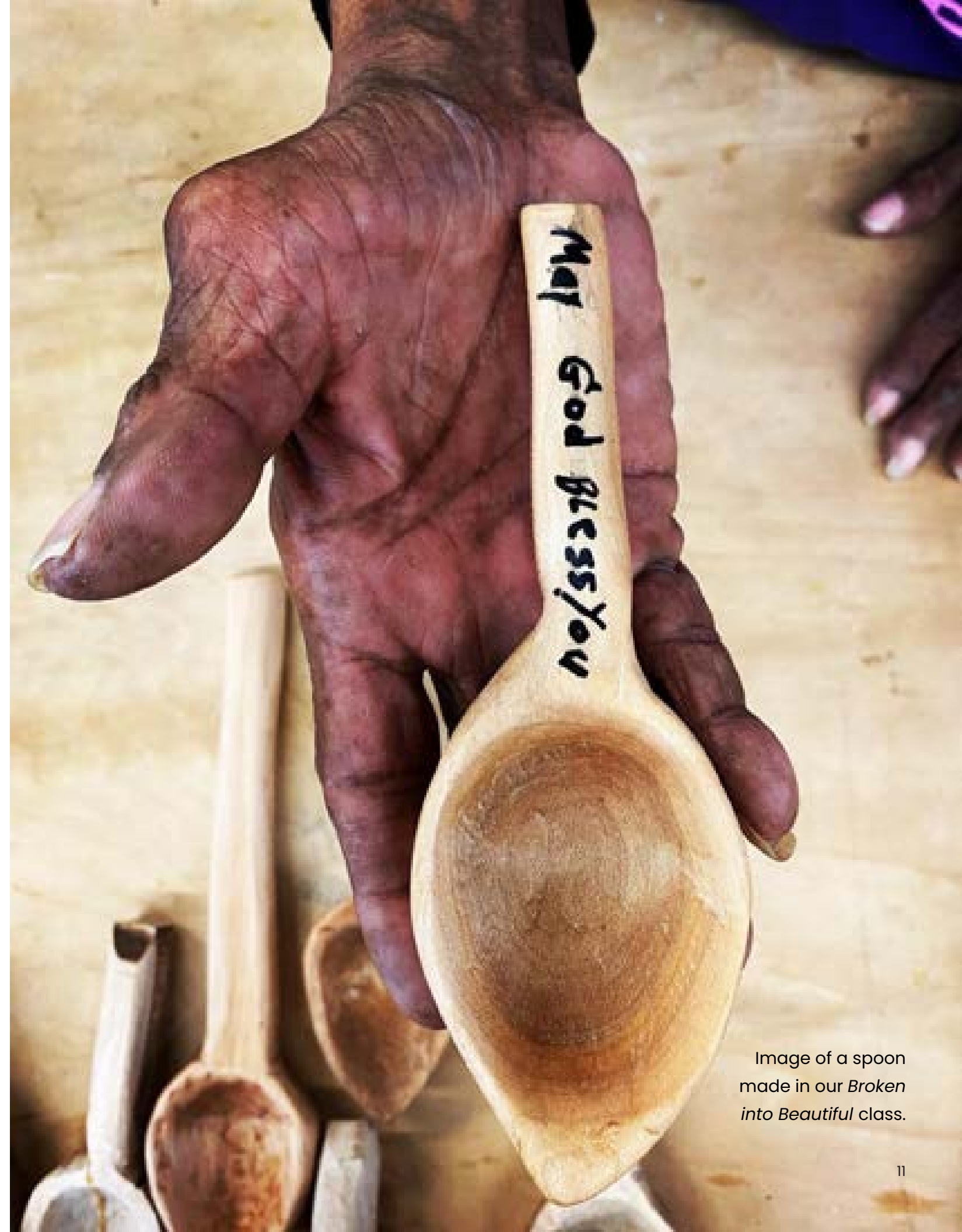


Image of a spoon made in our *Broken into Beautiful* class.

# IMPACT NUMBERS

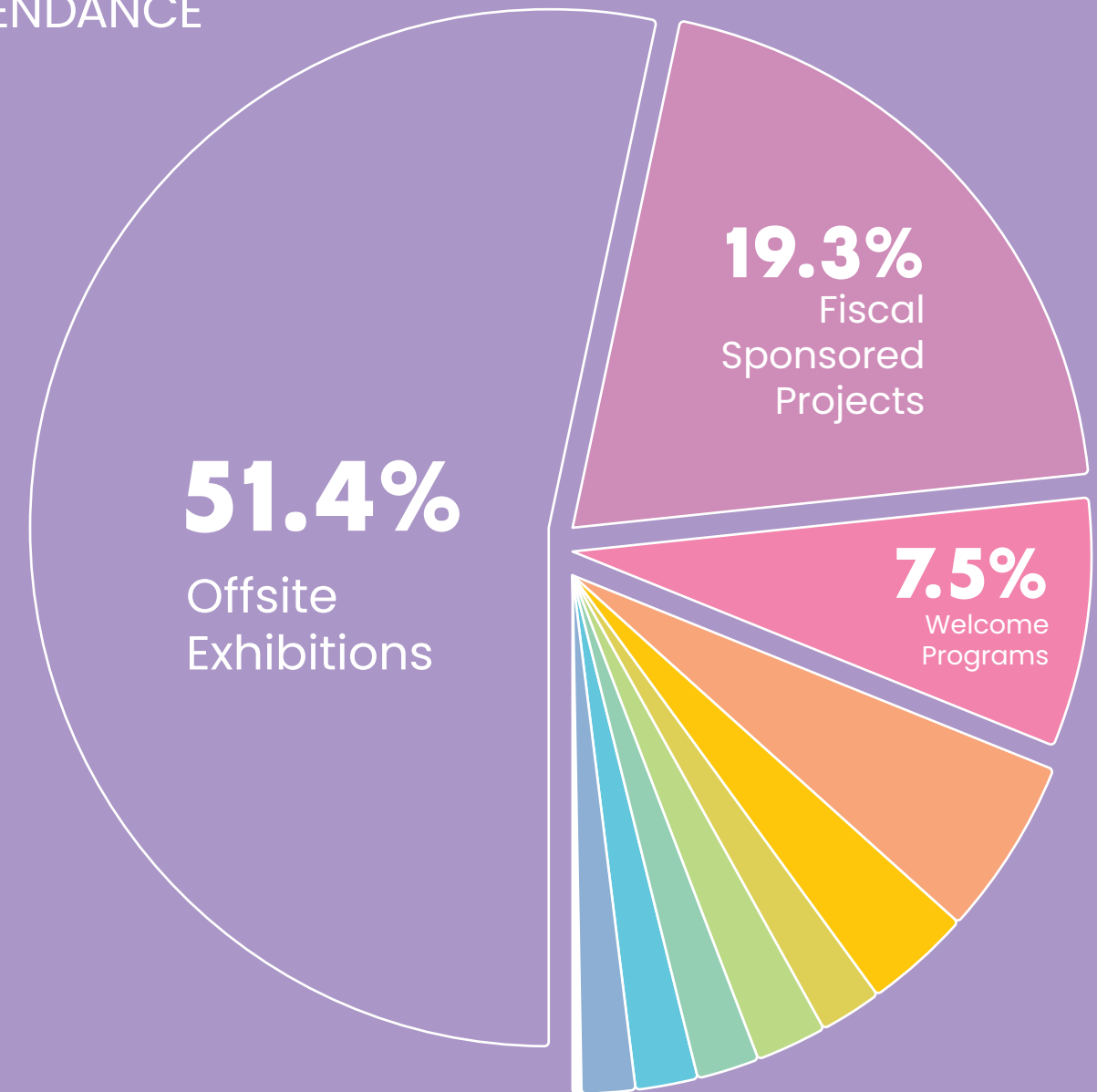
Artists Paid  
**232**

Total Events  
Classes & Programs  
**403**

Partner Organizations  
**80**

Overall Attendance  
**47,244**

## FY22 PROGRAM ATTENDANCE



**5.1%** Welcome Walk-Ins

**3.2%** Gallery Hours

**2.1%** Outreach (Festivals, etc.)

**1.9%** COVIDeo (Virtual Program)

**2.1%** Creative Placemaking

**1.7%** Fundraiser

**1.7%** Gallery & Artist Programs

**0.1%** Community Garden

# PROGRAM NUMBERS

## ON OUR *Corner*

**4**

Pop-Up Exhibitions

**4**

Curatorial Residents

**13**

Exhibitions

**149**

Artists Exhibition Work

**3,166**

Participants in Classes

## IN OUR *City*

**6**

Artists in Residence

**15**

Creative Placekeeping Projects

## IN OUR *World*

**5**

Fiscally Sponsored Projects

**2**

National Creative Data Collection Projects

**2**

International Art Fairs

The opening reception of Artist Run Spaces at the CAC with participating artists.



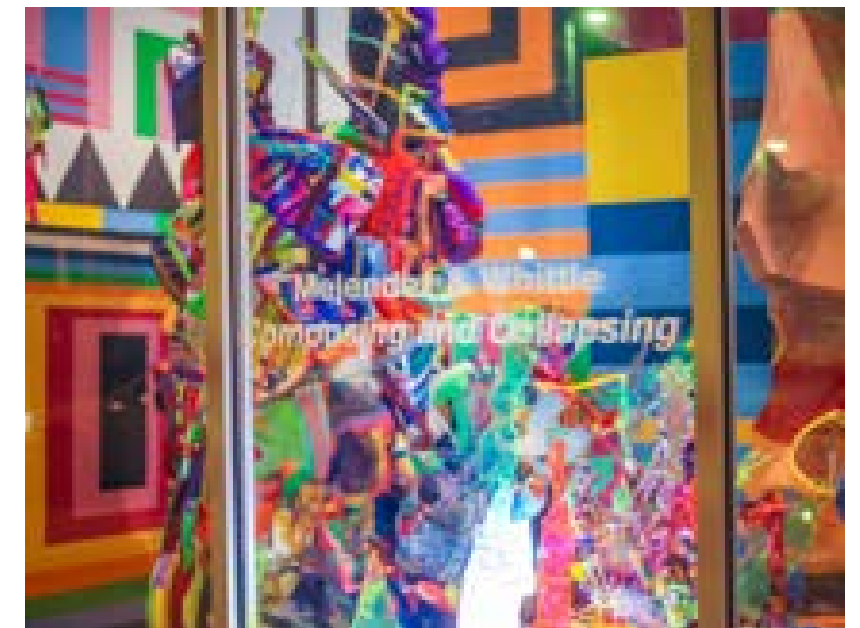
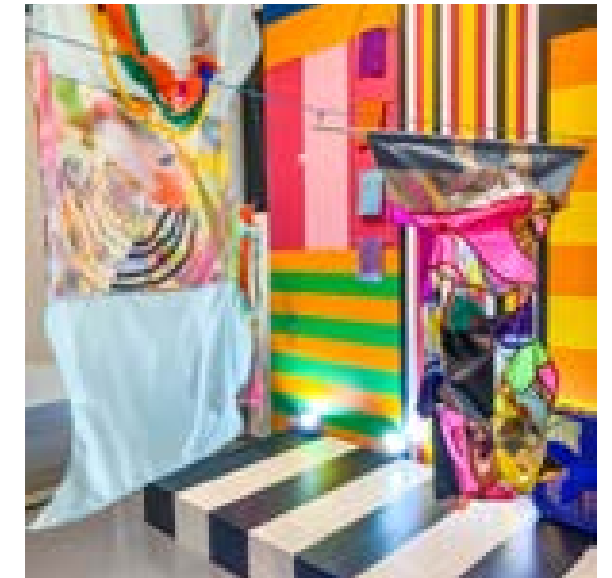


# EXHIBITIONS

Wave Pool began the 2021/22 Exhibition season with exhibitions that reflected bright visions for the future

and a coming together that we all longed for as we continued to confront the effects of the pandemic. The year continued with artists in residence, group shows, and curators in residence who showcased works in the gallery that focused on care, kindness, and bridge building in our community and beyond.

This year we also expanded our off-site exhibitions, collaborating with the Contemporary Arts Center on a monumental exhibition focused on regional artist-run spaces, and showing works at two international art fairs.



## Melendez and Whittle: *Composing and Collapsing*

*Composing and Collapsing* was a two-person exhibition that opened mid-November 2021 at Wave Pool, which featured collaborative artworks by multi-media performance/fashion artist/print designer Lindsey Whittle and sculptor/visual artist Chase Melendez.

These two artists employed the abstract and conceptually rich visual language of color and pattern to create an uprising of vivid and engaging installations within the gallery. The supportive and responsive series of site-specific works these two artists created provided a structural framework, upon which viewers could engage with and react to via creative experimentation.

## Photography & Tenderness

An exhibition guest curated by artists Lorena Molina and Eliza Gregory, and featuring the visual art of Erina Alejo, Nydia Blas, William Camargo, Rajkamal Kahlon, Stephanie Cuyubamba Kong, Jesse Ly, Gabriel Garcia Roman, Leonard Suryajaya, Gemma-Rose Turnbull, and Carla Williams.



Drawing from influential artists that are confronting, building on, and tackling the historical and contemporary photographic gaze, Gregory & Molina created a dynamic exhibition of questions.

What does a tender present and future look like? How do we build a society that is different—more loving, more accepting, more responsive—than the one we have now? How do we galvanize ourselves—as artists and audience—toward those acts of radical imagination? In which ways are artists questioning and challenging predominant narratives as an act of love?

The artists in the show come at these questions through fragments, video, collage, and self portraiture. They offer many ways of refracting the humanness of vulnerability. These are images that push back against the structures that surround us, while also nurturing new relationships and mechanisms for connection. They are pictures that will touch you, & leave a mark.

*Image Credits (bottom left to top right): In The Blue Light, Nydia Blas; Works by Jesse Ly, 2021-22; Installation by Gemma-Rose Turnbull, 2018; Navel String, Leonard Suryajaya, 2015*



### *Critical Mass*

*Critical Mass* was curated by Maria Seda-Reeder, was an exhibition that featured artists working within the context of a larger collective, galvanizing as a group to envision brighter futures.

The show included work from multiple creative collectives: a group of four women-identifying students from a local alternative educational institution (Inside the Dollhouse); artists working within the Ohio Prison Arts Connection program in order to connect people with art inside and outside of prisons (Onto Life's Pages) a group of women working through their experiences of trauma and recovery by learning new skills in storytelling and woodcutting (Owning Your Own Voice) and an ad-hoc crew of immigrant/refugee artists and artisans led by an internationally renowned artist (Welcome Editions).

### *Artist-Run Spaces*

*Artist-Run Spaces* was an assemblage of ten independent arts organizations, non-profits, and collectives based throughout Ohio and Northern Kentucky.

Sometimes known as artist-run, alternative, DIY, or independent spaces, they have historically been hubs of experimentation and community-building organized by artists for artists. Often rejecting more commercial or institutional platforms, they willingly defy museum expectations, privileging interdisciplinary exchange, grassroots organizing, and learning.

Circumventing the bureaucracy, gatekeeping, and loaded histories of the sterile "white cube" of a contemporary gallery, they create experiences and spaces that privilege trust, care, and joy through co-creation, mutual exchange, and collectivism.

Included spaces were Akhsótha Gallery (ATNSC), Basketshop, The Blue House, Cincinnati Art Book Fair, The Lodge KY, The Neon Heater, PIQUE, Rainbow, Section 15 Fraction 6 31.83 AC, and Storefronts.



# CURATORIAL RESIDENCIES

Our two Curatorial Residencies, Iman Jabra & Noel Maghathe's **Amid علم** and Chelsea Smith's **Not Quite Fatal** gave three aspiring curators the chance to realize bold visions in our gallery space.

*Works by Tyler Spohn &  
Luis Estrada installed in  
Not Quite Fatal*

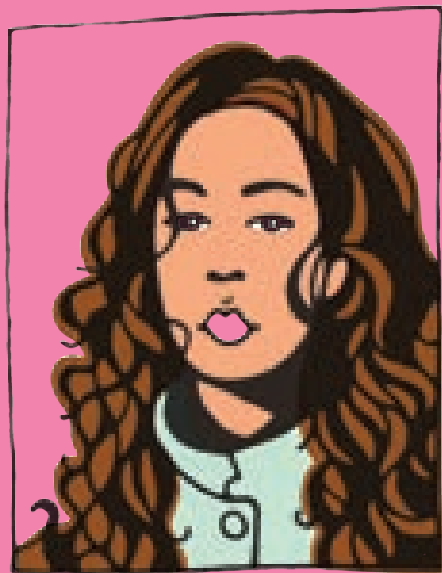
## *Not Quite Fatal*

Curatorial Resident Chelsea Smith's exhibition, *Not Quite Fatal*, brought together the work of Luis Estrada, Veronica Graham, and Tyler Spohn, visual artists practicing in printmaking, digital media and drawing. This exhibition engaged with our collective state of extinction grief and climate anxiety. Exploring a range of creative responses, these three artists addressed ongoing human place/displacement within the environment and the urgency of interspecies care.



"Wave Pool creates a welcoming and engaging space! During my curatorial Residency, I felt the support & freedom to curate a show from artists worldwide through personal connections and forming strong friendships with other Palestinian artists in the diaspora. Along with their programs like the Artist Support Group and Saturday Clay Classes, it really becomes a community hub."

**Noel Maghathe**



Noel Maghathe is a queer, mixed Palestinian-American performance installation artist. Maghathe creates and performs with queer functional tools to navigate the world. Their practice focuses on their Palestinian heritage and the occupation of Palestine, their love and pride for their country, and sharing the pain of occupation and their longing for their country to educate their audience. Connecting with other Palestinian artists in the diaspora is vital to the work Maghathe creates.

**Amid عامد**

Curatorial Residents Iman Jabrah and Noel Maghathe's exhibition, *Amid عامد*, was a collection of sentiments from queer and women Palestinian artists brought to Cincinnati, Ohio from Palestine & the diaspora. Focusing on the in-between, the artists explored themes of land and water through their work for this exhibition. Bringing artists together from across land and sea, the exhibition celebrated both feminine acts and queer identities in Palestinian culture and art.

Participating artists Dalia Ali, Fadl Fakhouri, Haya Mohammad, Kiki Salem, Salma Shaka, Amena Sheikh, Dalia Tuffaha, and gfn X created a conversation around displacement, resistance, & roots intertwined with today's ongoing challenges that Palestinian artists face in the 74th year under occupation.

*Image credits  
(left to right, top to bottom):  
Installation image from Amid with  
work by gfn X; Artist Amena Sheikh  
with curator Iman Jabrah; Work by  
Fadle Fakhouri & Haya Mohammad;  
Works by Kiki Salem*



# ART SPACE IS YOUR SPACE RESIDENCY PROGRAM





### *Puzzle Piece Cincy*

Ashley-Devon Williamston is an artisan academic who combined qualitative research and poetry to highlight the essence of six Cincinnati neighborhoods. Their project *Puzzle Piece Cincy* took the typically private and inaccessible discipline of anthropology public by engaging ordinary citizens in dialogue about what makes their neighborhood a unique and essential facet of the Cincinnati landscape.

The insights from the dialogues were synthesized into poetic narratives that were featured on murals in each neighborhood. Ultimately the project fostered community through collective self-reflection and culminated in an artistic depiction of the beautiful & extensive diversity of the Queen City.

Cincinnati, Ohio consists of 52 distinctive neighborhoods, many of which were self-contained villages prior to their incorporation into the city. For decades, Cincinnatians have studied, worked, played, shopped, dined, and raised families within the bounds of these neighborhoods, proud of their unique cultures that often go unnoticed against the broader city image.

*Puzzle Piece Cincy* aimed to foster community and renew a sense of belonging in four neighborhoods: Camp Washington, Avondale, Kennedy Heights, and College Hill. By coming together to reflect and share what makes their neighborhood a unique facet of the Cincinnati gem, residents contributed to a public artwork that tells their story, using their voices.

"As my first ever artist residency, the Art Space is Your Space residency really challenged me to hone my practices while giving me the grace and tools to develop as an emerging artist. In a society that favors artists who already have connections and formal art academy backgrounds, the residency offered me a unique opportunity that helped soften the learning curve and reduce access barriers to the world of professional artistry. The dynamic skills I've learned are ones that I'll carry with me for a lifetime!"

### **Ashley-Devon Williamston**



Ashley-Devon is an anthropologist, poet, collagist, and meandering child of The South currently attending the Writer's Foundry MFA program in Brooklyn, NY. In addition to their *Puzzle Piece Cincy* project, created as an Art Space Is Your Space resident, their work appears in *Tidelines*, *Dinner Bell Magazine*, and *Ginger Magazine*. You can find them on Instagram @onerarecreature or in Brooklyn searching for green spaces and good eats.

"My 2022 Vance-Waddell residency/exhibition at Wave Pool was by far the highlight of my year! It was such an incredible opportunity and privilege to get to work with so many absolutely brilliant local drag and burlesque performers as a part of that, and to get to add their video portraits to my Life is Drag series/archive. AND to get to show these in dialogue with a Cindy Sherman and Janine Antoni thanks to Sara and Michelle Vance-Wadell?! THANK YOU, Wave Pool!!!!"

**Rachel Rampleman**



Based since 2004 in New York City, Rachel Rampleman received her MFA from New York University in 2006. Since then her work has been shown internationally at the Shanghai Biennale (China), the Chennai Photo Biennale (India), JAM (Thailand,) S.M.A.K. and Art Cinema OFFoff (Belgium), C/O Berlin and VIDEONALE.16 (Germany), and nationally at such venues as SPRING/BREAK Art Show, Satellite Art Show, SELECT Art Fair, Smack Mellon, BAM, Wassaic Project, Flux Factory (NY), Other Cinema at Artists' Television Access (CA), The Wexner Center and The CAC (OH), PULSE Miami (FL), The Flint Art Institute, (MI), and The Andy Warhol Museum (PA).



### *Life is Drag*

With her ongoing project *Life is Drag*, Rampleman is documenting the most singular and innovative performers of the currently exploding international alt-drag and alt-burlesque scenes.

The aim of the project was to create an extensive archive of these video portraits, accompanied by performer interviews. Rampleman's long-term goal is to continue to do a series of such residencies nationally and internationally, which will allow me to create a comprehensive archive of video portraits of drag, burlesque and performance artists from a wide range of locations, backgrounds, cultures, and ages.

During Rampleman's Wave Pool residency, she worked with members of Cincinnati based ODD Presents drag haus and Smoke & Queers burlesque troupe, as well as with other performers from the tri-state area. Life Is Drag was the 2022 Vance-Waddell Residency and Rampleman worked with the Vance-Waddell collection to inform and expand on her installation for this project, showing works by Janine Antoni and Cindy Sherman in the context of the exhibition.





## Ode to the Crone

Nikita Gross' *Ode to the Crone* project honored aging and celebrated women in the third phase of their lives.

In a society where youth & beauty are idealized and commodified, we have become frightened of aging. As a consequence, we cut ourselves off from the wisdom and connection that comes along with it. Growing older is a sacred gift. *Ode To The Crone* was a photo & video project by photographer Nikita Gross that honored women who are in their third phase of life.

No longer a maiden and beyond their child-bearing years, the accumulated knowledge of their life experience, coupled with less

time serving others in caretaking roles, can often provide women of a certain age with a newfound sense of liberation and self-actualization.

For her *Art Space is Your Space Artist Residency*, the artist photographed 11 local, community-minded women. Celebrating them in her signature, otherworldly photographic style, Nikita Gross depicted these "cronoes" as goddesses; both beautiful and empowered by their years.

Additionally, Gross created a short film featuring frank and honest interview clips with her muses—amplifying their voices as well as sharing their collected wisdom.

"Johnny Gutter" by Nikita Gross for her  
*"Ode to the Crone" Residency Project, 2022*



## ARTIST SUPPORT SERVICES

# FISCAL SPONSORSHIP

As part of Wave Pool's commitment to supporting artists and art endeavors in our region, we fiscally sponsor artists, projects, and groups that fit within our mission of pairing art with community.

Fiscal sponsorship allows artists and arts organizations to solicit tax-deductible donations and apply for grants, without going through the onerous process of launching a 501(c)3.

The sponsored 'project' could be a one-time program, an independent artist, or an arts organization that does not have its own 501(c)3 status.

Over the past year we fiscally sponsored the following artist-led projects:



**Tide Pool** is a burgeoning new contemporary art fulfillment center in the East End neighborhood of Hamilton, Ohio. How can we duplicate the magic that has happened in Camp Washington for other cities? We've discovered that building a new Wave Pool is more about sharing a process than a model, and empowering locals to steer the ship.

Wave Pool is empowering local Hamilton artists to take the reins for Tide Pool, and they are now envisioning, programming, and building the organization based on neighborhood and artist needs in Hamilton.



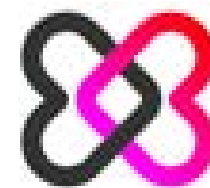
**The Underworld Black Arts Festival** was launched in 2018 as "The Underworld Jazz Festival" to amplify rich, colorful and nuanced Black art traditions. The word "underworld" is used because despite the revenue it generates, Black art remains marginal to mainstream society. The

term "jazz" is used; less as genre and more as a way to think about an approach to music, creativity and life. In 2022, the Jazz festival was crowned as the "Black Arts" Festival to truly demonstrate the dedication to 360° of Black Creativity.



**Why We Walk** is a feature-length documentary telling the story of three black explorers, from across the globe, united in Cincinnati, OH to empower and de-stigmatize urban communities of color and their participation in the great outdoors. Follow the hikers as they embark on a 61-mile

back-packing pilgrimage, from the birthplace of the Civil War in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia to the nation's capital, Washington DC.



**Broken into Beautiful** works to reduce stigma and connect those struggling with addiction and trauma to resources, community, and recovery. Through weekly meetings with founder Loretta Davis, wood working, gardening and more, Broken into Beautiful is a support to the community and advocate for mental health care.



**The Peace Offering Project** is a divinely inspired project through **Baoku Moses** the founder of Positive Image Arts, Cincinnati, Ohio. Baoku Moses has created this project to focus on bringing Nigerians together in unity and peace through music.



*Image of one of our monthly Artist Support Group meetings.*

## ARTIST SUPPORT SERVICES

# DRIVING LESSONS & ARTIST SUPPORT GROUP

In order to provide local artists with the inspiration, skills, and knowledge they need, since May 2020 we have been offering an artist professional development program called "Driving Lessons."

These classes offer valuable tips for networking opportunities, financial literacy skills, business management, goal setting, communications, negotiation, taxes, budgeting, marketing, and a custom artist-designed workbook to guide artists through the process.

From large envisioning to the nitty gritty, this course helps participants build a strategic plan for their lives and careers. We hire artists and entrepreneurial professionals with real-world experience to teach these classes.

Instructors such as: Anissa Lewis who specializes in goal setting and artistic career development; Morgan Owens, who specializes in media and branding; Maria Seda-Reeder, who specializes in writing and press relations; Cal Cullen, who specializes in connection building and grant writing; and Morgan Rigaud,

who specializes in financial literacy and budget management.

This program is expanding to offering whole and two day classes in person to better suit networking and conversational needs.

Additionally we've reinvigorated our Artist Support Group this year, offering monthly group sessions that give us space to collectively tackle tough issues and have open conversations with each other.

Past programming has included, meeting with OAC representatives to allow people to ask questions about their Individual Excellence Awards; hosting a local gallerist with 30+ years of experience to answer FAQ's about proposing shows; crits by local artists; how to document your work, etc.

SPOON CARVING AND SOUP & STORIES

# OWNING YOUR OWN VOICE

Owning Your Own Voice is a community-based project designed to increase resiliency, build community, and combat stigma around trauma, substance use, and mental wellness.

Led by a partnership of multiple community organizations as well as a coalition of women navigating recovery, Owning Your Own Voice offers a space for healing and empowerment through the process of story-sharing and mentorship.

In 2022 Wave Pool embarked on a second and third phase of **Owning Your Own Voice**, our ongoing project with Broken into Beautiful that uses creative storytelling to build community, healing, and resiliency one story at a time.



## Spoon Carving

After last year's experience in the wood shop creating community healing benches, this year the women went on to spoon carving. The hand carved spoons show the uniqueness and individuality of each of the participants, with some having additional affirmations carved into them. The spoons were then exhibited in Wave Pool's Locker Room Gallery in a pop-up show titled *The Feeding of the Soul* along with a few Spiritual Autobiographies.



## Soup & Stories

Every Wednesday from May to the end of September, Loretta Davis, founder of Broken into Beautiful, guided **Soup & Stories** as a step in recovery through the process of 'owning their own voice'. People shared their stories at The Welcome Project in an effort to reduce stigma, empower the speakers and visitors, and connect those interested in recovery to assistance. A rotating chef served free soup while stories were shared. Caracole, an AIDS Service Organization in Northside, was present on the Second Wednesday of each month to direct visitors towards direct service and care needs.

# FLOWER BOXES

Wave Pool hosted a series of classes and programs that engaged and educated our neighbors while empowering our community to become proactive in the neighborhood's renewal.

The first part of this project hosted 8 neighbors with woodworking classes taught by artist Scottie Bellisemo that resulted in over 40 flower boxes for the community. Two local artists, Mark Harris and Carmel Buckley, painted these boxes with the neighborhood with words and phrases that were community-sourced and potted them with local pollinator plants through a series of neighborhood-wide events. This project also included the creation of an "Intro to Woodworking" video for the safety of all who participate in our wood shop programs.



# THE WELCOME PROJECT

The Welcome Project empowers Cincinnati's refugee and immigrant population while connecting, assisting, and inspiring all through art and food.

"My hands landed on clay by chance. I began working at Wave Pool in 2018 and we were creating programs for the immigrant and refugee communities that we serve in Cincinnati, programs also open to the residents and workers in and around the working-class urban neighborhood of Camp Washington, where Wave Pool is located. I took the donation-based ceramics

class as a staffer and wasn't expecting to have such a connection with dirt. As a result of this experience, I am now working towards my MFA in ceramics at Cranbrook Academy of Art. This past summer during my break from grad school Wave Pool hired me back to run the Welcome Project. It is very comforting to know that WP trusts my ability to manage such a diverse community-based space. Being able to work and support myself during this time reinforces the fact that WP is always there to support me as an artist and neighbor, and for that I'm forever grateful."

**Erika Nj Allen**

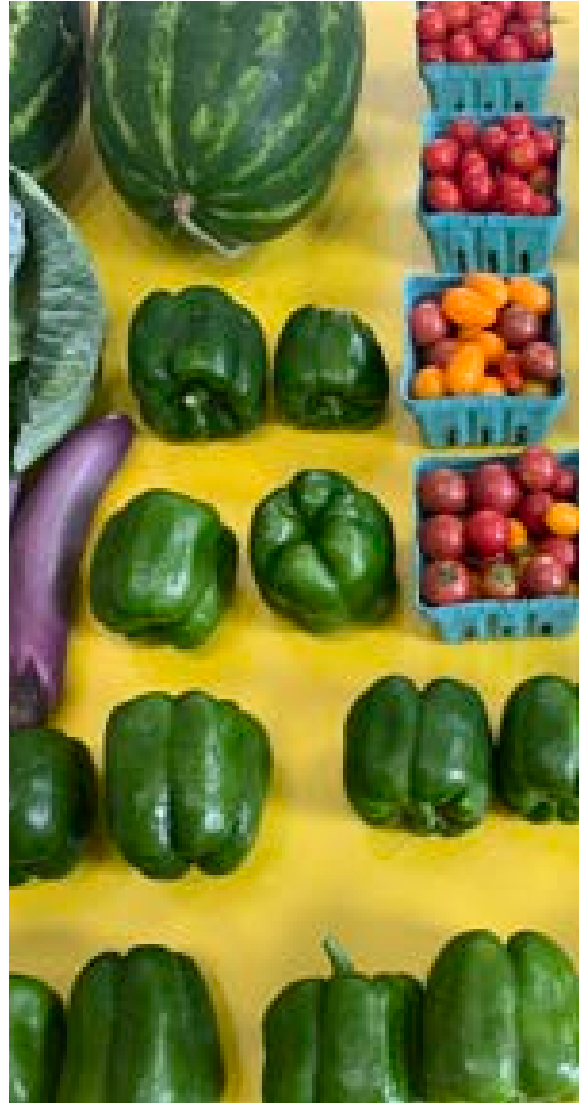


Erika Nj Allen is a multi-media artist with a BFA in photography from the Art Academy of Cincinnati, and a current MFA candidate at Cranbrook Academy of Art in the Ceramics Department.

## The Kitchen and Market

This year we have been able to utilize our corner market and teaching kitchen to serve the needs of our community by expanding our market offerings and hosting lots of free community events and dinners. From Soup and Stories lunches to Third Thirsty Thursday Art Salons to Wednesday Drink and Draw events, The Welcome Project has continued to grow and evolve this year, exploring options for programming and finding better ways to serve our neighbors.

We now have a mutual aid free fridge and pantry inside of the space, continue to host monthly produce pop-ups with Community Action Agency and Freestore Food Bank, offer regular hot food options (tamales!) and drinks, and growing our cooking class programs and events. We even started a weekly farmers market in partnership with CWURC this summer that is set to expand and evolve in 2023. Keep an eye on our calendar to experience all that this space has to offer!



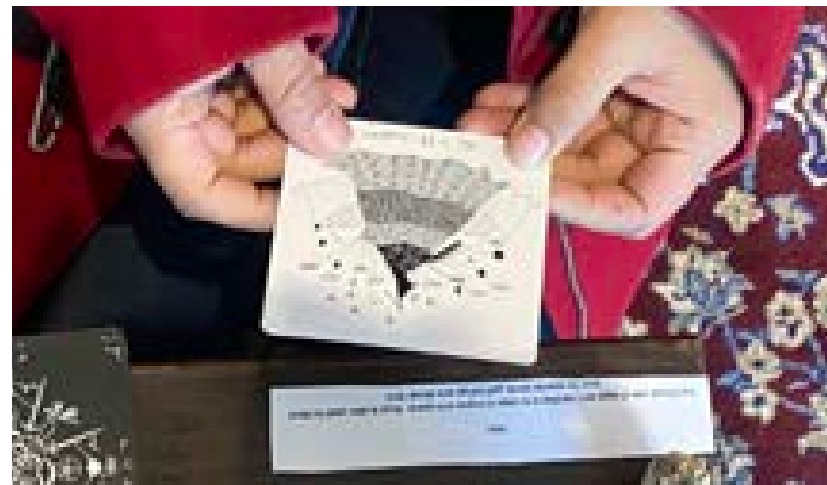


## THE WELCOME PROJECT

# WELCOME (M)ARTISTS IN RESIDENCE

We brought on new artist vendors to show and sell their items at The Welcome Project this year, as well as offered a myriad of performances, programs, and pop-up exhibitions in the space.

The biggest growth in how we program and operate this space is that we launched Welcome (M) Art, an immersive food and art residency program that showcases art installations that use food as a starting point to bring us into dialogue on issues of power, place, sustainability, and culture.



### Stephanie Gonzalez

*Fried Green Tomatillo* was a food installation created by Stephanie Gonzalez that highlighted three central components in cuisines of the deep south and the global south: fried, greens, and sweet acid. This project suggested that each of these components found in cuisines from the gulf of Mexico to Louisiana are sites for creolized aromatic and savory flavors in southern cuisine. To complement Gonzalez's vision for this project, local artist Aryn Blazer created some elements for the installation.

### Ruoyi Shi

In many cultures, people insert letters or objects in food and use food as an envelope for secrets, or transform a regular message into a revolution: mooncakes, fortune cookies, king cake, or new year dumplings. In *Food Envelopes*, our first Welcome (M)Artist Rouyi Shi used food to deliver messages. By presenting video installations along with edible objects that contained letters inside she retold the "fish story" in Cincinnati at The Welcome Project for the first quarter of 2022.

The storefront was transformed into a museum of "food envelopes". It was a space that mixed fantasy and reality. Shi creates objects with edible materials and ceramics to showcase how people have historically used food to transport messages. A small post office was set up at the entrance, and everyone who entered the space could use the food Shi prepared to send a hidden letter to their friends.



“Wave Pool and Welcome are unique and special projects and I’m so lucky to have worked with this community of authentically passionate people. My Welcome (M)Art residency was such a vital reminder to me that art, whether object or activity, is above all opportunity to explore our shared human nature together – in a gallery or on a street corner. Welcome is a space that’s about possibility and positivity and connection. As an artist it was so liberating to participate here, and as a human so gratifying to know y’all are doing this.”

### Christopher Leitch



Christopher Leitch is an artist and curator in Merriam, Kansas, near Kansas City. His works have been published and exhibited across the US. He’s currently organizing “An Angel in America: Jaymes Leahy’s Sublime Passage” with Stuart Hinds for exhibit summer 2023 at Kansas City Art Institute and the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

### Christopher Leitch

Hailing from Kansas City, Missouri, Christopher Leitch was Wave Pool’s third Welcome (M)Artist in residence. While here, he created an immersive, food-based installation that collected and shared Cincinnati’s collective histories and familial stories through recipes, taste, and memories.

*Cooking from Memory* built an ecumenical and historical culture diary of Cincinnati food ways. The installation and events illuminated subtle and profound powers of daily sensory engagement with food to translate and transmit personal and public history, culture and identity, especially for people in new places.

Throughout the three month residency and exhibition, Leitch facilitated public programs that included cooking, story sharing, and art making to build a rich and illuminating archive of Cincinnati’s immigrant history through food.



# CINCINNATI'S TABLE

Cincinnati's Table is a series of dinners held at neighborhood community centers around the city.

The series aims to bridge relationships within neighborhoods including but not limited to helping immigrants connect with each other and their neighbors through shared meals.

Each of these meals revolves around a theme, which are introduced by a local artist through an interactive artwork or installation and are strengthened by food cooked by an immigrant or refugee in order to best start conversations across many groups and bridge divides within our city.

This fiscal year we hosted three Cincinnati Table Dinners, with a fourth happening in November 2022. These events fed approximately 1100 people and featured 6 local chefs and 3 artists.

*Image credits (from top to bottom): photo by Natalie Grilli at Annex Gallery, photo by Calcagno Cullen at World Refugee Day, photo by Natalie Grilli at Somerhaus*



# WELCOME EDITIONS

Welcome Editions are limited edition art objects designed by nationally recognized artists and fabricated at least in part by the refugee and immigrant women involved in the Welcome Project.

Often functional, affordable and always collectible, the Editions appeal both to collectors of contemporary art and those seeking to support refugees.

Welcome Editions brings much needed employment & empowerment to local refugee and immigrant women & it likewise presents an opportunity to feature work by nationally-regarded artists that is exclusive to Cincinnati.

Each edition is artist-designed and then fabricated, in most instances, by the immigrant and refugee women. The level of artist involvement with the fabrication varies, but all final pieces are artist approved and signed.



Welcome Edition by Vanessa German in progress.

All profits from Welcome Editions feed back into the growth of the Welcome Project & towards completing future editions.

Over the course of 2022 we worked with renowned artists Vanessa German & Baseera Khan to produce Welcome Editions #6 & #7 respectively.

Vanessa German, in collaboration with local artists, created a series of 10 power figure sculptures.

These pieces included bead weavings by Bhutanese refugee artists, ceramic works by artists of Visionaries and Voices, wood carvings by a Nigerian sculptor, hand dyed prayer beads created by a Zimbabwean artist, as well as glass blowing, cement work, and other pieces created by Cincinnati's artists.

The work was created after German visited Wave Pool to meet the collective of artists involved. Titled, *a holy blue togetherness for planetary awareness of the single universal breath*, the work is in German's words, "for how the color blue is a gift; for the gifts of water,

creativity, and togetherness as balm and center in times of disconnect and delusion: a way to be here together. A way of loving."

The figures were designed to build on the strengths of Wave Pool's diverse community, pulling together disparate talents & skills to create something emblematic of the power of the collective.

Baseera Khan is a New York-based performance, sculpture, and installation artist who makes work to discuss materials and their economies, the effects of this relationship to labor, family structures, religion, & spiritual well being.

Khan mounted their first museum solo exhibition at the Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York (2021-22), & their first solo touring museum exhibition was co-organized by the Moody Arts Center for the Arts and the Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, where it will be on view through February 12, 2023.

Khan designed prayer rugs that are being hand woven and embroidered by a group of five Bhutanese refugee women living in Cincinnati. The design includes the statement, "MUSLIMS = AMERICA".

Weaving work done by Gita Rai, Durga Limbu, Bishnu Limbu, Laxmi Rai, & Sita Gurung with assistance & training of Rowe Schnure. Embroidery by Fabiola Rodriguez.



"Muslims = America" by Baseera Khan, 2022





Installation by Terence Hammonds at The Independent Art Fair, 2022

# INDEPENDENT ART FAIR

Wave Pool was invited to participate in the Independent Art Fair in New York City in May 2022. The Independent is an internationally recognized platform for galleries that prioritizes discovery and context, in contrast to the standard commercial fair.

It was a perfect fit for Wave Pool to showcase our Welcome Editions! At the fair this year we showcased a wall paper installation by **Terence Hammonds** along with a display of his prints on aluminum, a few of the **Vanessa German** Welcome Edition we completed this year, and the remaining few Gun Flutes by **Pedro Reyes** that were created in 2018.

# ARMORY SHOW

Wave Pool was ecstatic to be included for the second year in a row in The Armory Show! The Armory Show is a galvanizing force in the art world, presenting works from around the globe and kicking off New York's fall art season.

Over 240 leading international galleries from over 30 countries presented. Wave Pool was the only gallery from Ohio and the only gallery from the Midwest outside of Chicago exhibiting. Wave Pool was one of only 11 not-for-profit galleries exhibiting this year.

Wave Pool finds ways to make contemporary art accessible, interactive, engaging, & necessary for all communities. To this end, we created a space for reflection, exhibiting prayer rugs by **Baseera Khan**, community-generated power figures by **Vanessa German**, and photographic prints by **Lorena Molina**. The objects on view consisted primarily of our Welcome Editions, specifically the newest two editions by Baseera Khan and Vanessa German.



Wave Pool's booth at The Armory Show, 2022



# WELCOMING AMERICA PROJECTS

The Welcome Project was invited to participate in Welcoming America's development of their Welcoming Standard this year.

We first went to the National Immigrant Integration Conference in Las Vegas with a creative data collection project created by Monica Andino and Cal Cullen. This life-scale board game style activity answered questions related to what makes a neighborhood safe and welcoming to help inform the revision of the Welcoming Standard. Then in May, Monica Andino and Erika Nj Allen went to Charlotte, NC to help present the new standard with an interactive art piece.

# MADE IN CAMP

Camp Washington has long been a place of makers such as meatpackers, chili makers, sign benders, artists, metal workers... you name it, we probably make it here in Camp Washington.

This 5th annual open studio event was another opportunity to celebrate our local community of makers and offer Greater Cincinnati the chance to explore secret artist studios, galleries, maker spaces, and watch creatives do their thing for FREE!

Since 2017, each year Camp Washington's community of 70-plus artists, galleries and makers collaborate on a big Saturday open house on the Second Saturday of October. Designated "Made in Camp," the annual

tour invites visitors to explore artist studios, maker spaces and creative manufacturers in Camp Washington such as printers, painters, ceramicists, sausage-makers, musicians and others—all who make something out of nothing!

For the fifth year in a row, Wave Pool spearheaded the creation of an updated brochure listing The Camp's artists, galleries & makers & incorporating a locator map for the convenience of visitors to use both on the day of the event, as well as throughout the year.

Visitors at The Fringe during  
Made in Camp, 2022





# WOODSHOP

Our wood shop programming has been a continual evolution as we meet the needs of our community.

In 2022 we offered 11 eight week-long woodworking classes to over 35 students as well as continued our woodshop membership program. Additionally we host weekly classes for women overcoming trauma and addiction through the Owning Your Own Voice program. The wood shop, beyond classes, operates as a co-op, and members pay a nominal monthly fee to work in the shop on their own projects during non-class hours.



# CERAMICS

Our weekly ceramics classes provide a radically accessible way to connect and get started in the studio.

Wave Pool's Ceramics community has existed for over 5 years now and has connected neighbors, created new and lasting friendships, and built a network of diverse people that consistently work together through conversation and art. The impact of this low-barrier group for all ages and backgrounds has been astounding. Every Saturday between 10-25 budding ceramicists gather to work with clay, learn from teaching artists Diane Fishbein and Sara Torgison, and build friendships along the way.



# RADICAL PARTICIPATION

Additionally, Wave Pool has hosted a myriad of other events & activities that invite participation in art making & community building. These include, but are not limited to:

# ART CLASSES

Free, drop-in art-making sessions with local artists in our gallery, at Welcome, and at Drip Coffee Shop.

# TIDELINES

Tidelines, an open submission quarterly community zine led by Julia Warner of Cereal Box Studio.

# YOGA

Free weekly Restorative Yoga classes taught by True Freedom Recovery teachers.

# ART SALONS

Monthly "Third Thirsty Thursday" Art Salon events with special guest speakers at The Welcome Project.



*Artist Emil Robinson in his studio space in Camp Washington*

# STUDIOS

Since its inception, Wave Pool has been a place not just for the display of finished works but for the creation of art as well.

We rent out small studio spaces in order to provide reasonable market rates to local artists and to create an embedded community for artists to share, work, and learn from each other. We are in the process of expanding our studio footprint in the neighborhood as well and look forward to hosting more studio artists in 2023!

In 2022 the following artists occupied space at Wave Pool for art creation:

Carmen Bush, Jonathan Carter, Alicia Little, Rhee Lightner, Chase Melendez, Lorena Molina, Jamie Morrison, Hannah Parrett, Katrina Ratterman, Emil Robinson

# POOL PARTY

Our Pool Party this year combined block party, mega slide, and experimental performance art fair.

Visitors enjoyed food and drinks, live music, carnival games, and celebrated another year by partying and viewing art together in the street, storefronts, and parking lot on and around our corner.

In an all day artist-driven block party on August 20th, 2022, the event featured music by Cold Stereo, Mynah Tones, Static Falls, and Willie and the Cigs. Visitors also engaged with an artist-made carnival including artful versions of PLINKO, beanbag toss, “penna” tattoos, & more.

Artist-in-Residence Nikita Gross engaged visitors with interactive activities as part of their portrait installation; guests could order special “pool-side” drinks, and handcrafted tamales were served to keep us full and libated; but the most popular area was probably our inflatable water slide, which kept the community cool and entertained.

As part of this year’s Pool Party, the 9x18 Parking Lot Art Experiment (an alternative/performative/experimental/live art fair) took over the parking lot next to Wave Pool’s firehouse.

Viewers were inundated with performance, art actions, experimental engagements, and ephemeral works featuring the work of nearly 15 performers, all of whom were paid for their time and effort.

The event was unfortunately cut short by some stormy weather, but we still had over 500 guests attend before the rain and are hoping for sunnier skies in 2023!



*Wave Pool's ED Cal Cullen takes a dip on the Megaslide at our 7th annual Pool Party.*

# FINANCES

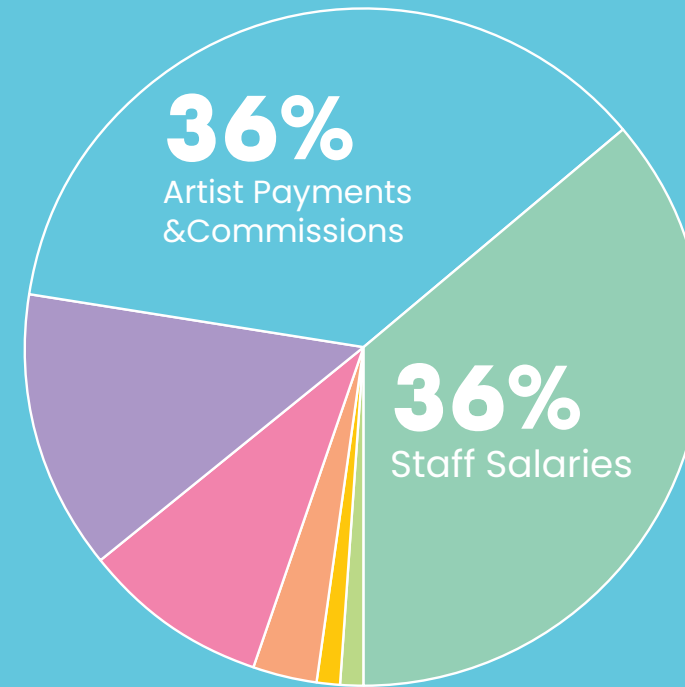
Our FY22 budget has remained consistent with prior years' as we continue to find ways to make art relevant and essential to community development and support.

We have successfully diversified our income by finding new government and foundation support, more individual donors, and more earned revenue sources through tickets and art and market sales.

Total Budget

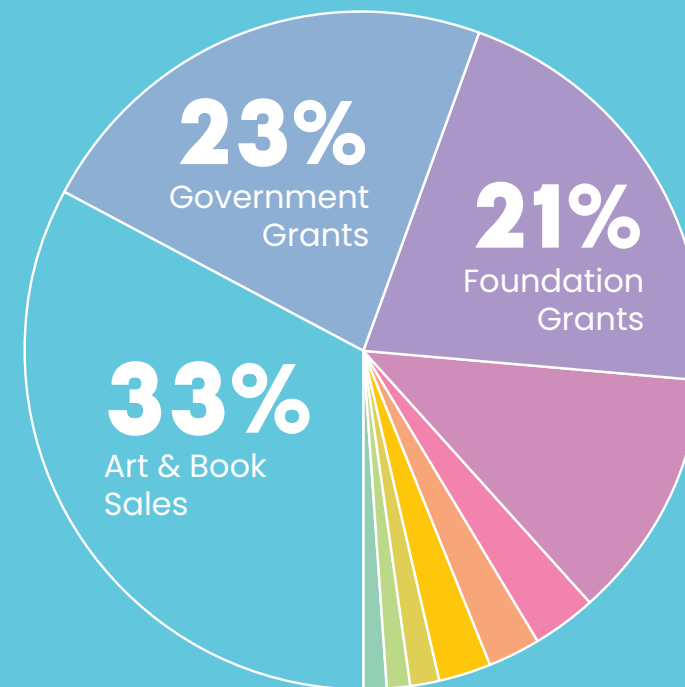
**\$625,904**

# EXPENSES



- 13%** Program Materials & Other Direct Costs
- 9%** Occupancy & Buildout Costs
- 3%** Accounting & Other Professional Fees
- 1%** Office Costs
- 1%** Other Outside Services, Insurance, etc.

# INCOME



- 12%** Individual Gifts
- 3%** Commissions & Artistic Service Fees
- 2.5%** Classes & Workshop Fees
- 2.5%** Studio Rentals
- 1.5%** Fundraiser Income
- 1%** Other Grants
- 1%** Food Sales

# THANK YOU FY 2022 SUPPORTERS

## PROGRAM SUPPORT



## OPERATING SUPPORT



## INDIVIDUAL DONOR & BUSINESS SUPPORT

We also would like to thank our individual donors. Without you Wave Pool would not be the place where art intersects with community. A special thank you to those who contributed \$500 or more over the past year:

Rhinegeist Brewery, Manuel Chavez, Mike Fleisch, Gary Gaffney, Ombré Gallery, Garry Horton, Marcene Kinney, John Kornbluh, Jennifer Mahuet, Mann & Mann LLC, Jeffrey Miller, Steph Miller, Mary Jo Minerich, Jens G. Rosenkrantz Jr., Suki Skidmore, Lizzy Solway, Kathy Thornton, Sara Vance Waddell

## OUR BOARD

Mary Jo Minerich, Chair  
Jenna Shaifer, Vice Chair  
Lee Bower, Treasurer  
Colleen Houston, Secretary  
Doris Adotey  
Carrington Broeman  
Jason Cooper  
Mark deJong  
Diane Fishbein  
Mike Fleisch  
Gee Horton  
Michael Mann  
Sara Vance Waddell

## OUR STAFF

Calcagno Cullen  
Maria Seda-Reeder  
Olivia Nava  
Elan Schwartz



WE NEED YOU

# VISIT

The best way to support art is by going to experience it! Catch a show, immerse yourself in the gallery, learn a new skill in the woodshop, or be part of an off-site program. Without participants we can not be effective! Look at our online calendar for up to date event listings.

# VOLUNTEER

We always need an extra friendly face in the gallery, an extra hand at ceramics class, or some assistance at special events. Email us at [wavepoolgallery@gmail.com](mailto:wavepoolgallery@gmail.com) if you're able to lend a hand.

# DONATE

Your belief in our mission means the world to us. Visit our website [www.wavepoolgallery.org/donate](http://www.wavepoolgallery.org/donate) or scan the QR code to support our community programs and artist driven projects. Community driven, artist led!

# SPONSOR A PROJECT

Whether you're passionate about gallery exhibitions or community dinners, a project sponsorship pays for artist stipends and program supplies to make things happen. Learn more about becoming a sponsor on our website:

<https://www.wavepoolgallery.org/sponsorship-levels>

# JOIN THE CLUB

Wave Pool's Collector's Club is for those who are curious about art and art acquisition. Membership includes behind the scenes tours, VIP passes to art fairs, and more! Join the Collector's Club or gift someone a membership through our website:

<https://www.wavepoolgallery.org/wave-pool-collectors-club>

# PARTNER

We're sure that whether you're with a big corporation or another non-profit, we can find ways to leverage our collective assets and make positive change happen with art. Reach out, let's connect!

# LIKE & SHARE

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram to stay tuned in and up to date on what we're up to. On Facebook (**Wave Pool**) or on Instagram (**@wavepoolartcenter**).

