

# SPACES ANNUAL REPORT 2017





# HELLO!

SPACES

ART



## BOARD PRESIDENT • THOMAS STARINSKY

It seems like just yesterday that we unveiled the new home of SPACES in Ohio City. Every time I walk past the corner window, I think about Jeff Chiplis playing his portable pipe organ in a tux, and how the entire facility was infused with art. The grand opening on January 14, 2017 was a celebration of our legacy as a leader in Cleveland's art scene, and a nod towards what we can accomplish in our new home.

Our objective was to become an integral partner in the vitality of Ohio City. That is coming to fruition; the businesses on W. 29th Street experienced one of their busiest weekends during our grand opening, and on a typical Friday night you can meet friends for dinner, come to an exhibition opening at SPACES, and discuss the art over a beer—all within one city block.

During the year leading up to our move and into 2017, SPACES staff never skipped a beat in producing programs that make a difference. Exhibitions like *The First 100+ Days* and José Carlos Teixeira's *On Exile* inspired ongoing dialogue in the community. With the successes of 2017 under our belt, the board and staff are working to build a new future. The new SPACES at 2900 Detroit Avenue will have a deeper impact on a broader scale, as an artist-driven organization.



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## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR • CHRISTINA VASSALLO

SPACES entered an exciting new era in 2017—one where visitors and artists are supported by the physical and geographic attributes of our new home. After nearly 4 years of planning, SPACES is now part of a bustling neighborhood, where we can more fully realize our mission of being a resource and public forum for artists who explore and experiment.

We have completely transformed through a relocation that heightens our visibility and better positions us as a site for audiences to approach contemporary issues through an aesthetic framework. With fully outfitted art studios, 4,000 square feet of gallery space, and more welcoming areas for people to gather, SPACES has never looked so good.

SPACES is building on these accomplishments, more deeply engaging our audience, and serving as a creative catalyst for the region in the years ahead. We love what we do here and your support has made this thrill ride possible.

# HIGHLIGHTS

## THE CULTURE SEEKERS

During our first year in the new SPACES we welcomed approximately **9,000** visitors—a **60%** increase from 2016.

We collaborated with **33** local and regional organizations to connect the civic and artistic forces that define Cleveland's character, including the City Club of Cleveland, Malachi Center, Art Therapy Studio, and regional museums, galleries, schools, and universities.

**25%** of our educational events took place off-site, at venues like YWCA, the Cuyahoga County Juvenile Detention Center, A Place for Us, and Lakeview Terrace (Cleveland Metropolitan Housing Authority).

Out of the nearly **100** events we offered in 2017, **90%** of them were FREE.

## THE ART

Through the SWAP residency, R&D exhibitions program, and The Vault, we presented **13** major projects. Demographics for these artist-driven programs were: **26%** men, **74%** women; **45%** people of color; **51%** local, **39%** national, and **10%** international artists.

Artworks that were created with support from SPACES traveled to **7** venues, worldwide, after they debuted in Cleveland: Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, Center for Integrated Media at CalArts, Ann Arbor Film Festival, Ammerman Center for Arts and Technology, The Current Sessions, Madison Museum of Contemporary Art, and Lisbon's Museu de Arte, Arquitetura e Tecnologia.

SPACES has outfitted our **10,000** square foot home with artwork production facilities, including a wood shop and clean studio, so that our exhibiting artists and community members can have access to the tools they need to create the work they want.

**88** artists from our expansive community supported SPACES by donating artwork to our annual benefit and **100** artists lent their creative energy to our spring fundraiser, Monster Drawing Rally.

## NEWSWORTHY

"The video is a remarkably beautiful document that peels away layers of cliché and stereotypes to reveal the radiant humanity of Teixeira's subjects, who come from countries torn by civil war or the fight against ISIS, the Islamic State." - Steven Litt, "On Exile video at SPACES Reveals Hopes, Dreams of Refugees," *The Plain Dealer* (August 20, 2017)

"Don't go to the new SPACES show opening tonight expecting a political slap in the face. Instead of venting rage and ridicule, the SPACES show is a generally subtle, witty and nuanced response to Trump's immigration policies." - Steven Litt, "SPACES Takes on Trump's 100 days in Witty Artistic Critiques of Immigration Policy," *The Plain Dealer* (May 5, 2017)

"Three concurrent installations explore the social, political, and economic contexts of racial prejudice across different periods of time. The shows are the first in SPACES' new gallery and a welcome contribution to the cultural scene in one of the most segregated cities in the country, where racism is not dealt with nearly enough." - Diane Sette, "Grappling with Racism Past and Present," *Hyperallergic* (March 21, 2017)



# NEW COMMISSIONS: SWAP



Anthony Warnick, *Except as a Punishment for Crime*, image courtesy of Jerry Mann Photography



Yoko Inoue, *Tea Taste Democracy & Upside Down Objects*, image courtesy of Jerry Mann Photography



UR:AD Press, *UR:AD TV*, image courtesy of SPACES

# NEW COMMISSIONS: SWAP

The SPACES World Artists Program (SWAP) supports artists in the creation, presentation, and discussion of new work through a 2-month residency that culminates in an exhibition.

## ***Except as a Punishment for Crime, Anthony Warnick (Cleveland, OH)***

The past two decades have seen the rise of for-profit prisons. This project interrogated the prison industrial complex and its connection to history, profit, and labor through objects produced within the system. The objects demanded ethical inquiry while connecting the history of labor and representation to the power of the state. Anthony Warnick's engagement reinforces the context of the goods produced through the use of captive labor, and the numerous corporations that exploit this system.

## ***Tea Taste Democracy & Upside Down Objects, Yoko Inoue (Brooklyn, NY)***

Exploring the Cleveland Museum of Art's archives pertaining to former director Sherman Emory Lee, Yoko Inoue reinterpreted his pivotal role in the protection of cultural properties as a "Monuments Man" in Japan during the post-war US occupation. Inoue created works that examined Lee's understanding of Japanese cultural identity and contextualized the socio-political condition of the time in which he conducted his extensive field research.

## ***UR:AD TV, UR:AD Press (New York, NY & Portland, OR)***

As UR:AD Press' largest video exchange program to-date, the exhibition featured video shorts from the African Diaspora submitted through a global open call. Additionally, UR:AD Press collaborated with local artist, photographer, and musician, Christopher Horne, to create a video that explores Black Cleveland.

## ***Ground Station - Cleveland, Heidi Neilson (Long Island City, NY)***

The works comprising *Ground Station – Cleveland* tracked space objects and decoded transmissions from satellites, giving visitors the opportunity to experience the space environment while grounded on earth. The central work, *Sonic Planetarium*, is a realtime spatial sound model of celestial clutter that is visually inaccessible. Heidi Neilson assigned audio files recorded from satellite radio transmissions to orbiting objects and played these sounds in the gallery as the actual satellites passed overhead.

## ***Art-Writer-In-Residence Katherine Cooper (Brooklyn, NY)***

Playboy advice columnist Katherine Cooper conducted a series of interviews with artists in Cleveland to investigate the politics and aesthetics of intimacy in artistic practice. Cooper developed a series of theoretical texts framed as letters to a fabricated lover, through which she developed her working definitions of artistic and romantic intimacy.



Heidi Neilson, *Ground Station – Cleveland*, image courtesy of Jerry Mann Photography



# NEW COMMISSIONS: R&D



Imani Roach, *Havens*, image courtesy of Jerry Mann Photography



*The First 100+ Days*, image courtesy of SPACES



Jose Carlos Teixeira, *On Exile*, image courtesy of Jerry Mann Photography

# NEW COMMISSIONS: R&D

The R&D program invites cultural producers to articulate their investigation of ideas through a supported project that may take the form of solo, collaborative, or curated endeavors.

In 2017 R&D artists responded to the many dimensions of the theme of **migration**.

## **Havens, Imani Roach (Philadelphia, PA)**

*Havens* was comprised of drawings and installations based on Cleveland locations listed in the Jim Crow-era travel guide known as *The Green Book*. Published from the 1930s until the passage of civil rights legislation in the 1960s made it obsolete, *The Green Book* was an ever-evolving index of boarding houses, service stations, restaurants, and beauty parlors that black motorists could safely patronize. *Havens* explored the sites of Cleveland's own forgotten safe havens, and what they mean today.

## **The First 100+ Days, curated by Christina Vassallo (Cleveland, OH)**

*The First 100+ Days* was comprised of 10 Ohio-based artists' responses to the initial phase of Donald Trump's presidency, with regard to his immigration policy. The artworks featured stories from immigrant and refugee communities in the US, considered how the media influences our political discourse, and captured the radical potential of artistic activism. The responses from artists living in a strategically positioned swing state were supported by a timeline of actions taken since January 20, 2017 to introduce, enact, and protest changing immigration policy during this time of political urgency and uncertainty. Participating artists: Julia Christensen, Ryan Dewey, Michelangelo Lovelace, members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Youth Association of Cleveland, Home Affairs, Tony Ingrisano, Kelley O'Brien, Darice Polo, John C. Williams, and Megan Young.

## **On Exile, José Carlos Teixeira (Madison, WI)**

Through interviews with individuals and families from Middle Eastern and African Muslim communities who have settled in Cleveland, the experimental documentary film *On Exile* developed intimate psychological portraits that were embedded in a political, historical, and anthropological context. *On Exile* reframed assumptions of home and belonging, delved into the challenges of language and translation, and reflected on the complex ity of adjusting to another culture.

## **7000 Marks, Sara Black & Amber Ginsburg (Chicago, IL)**

SPACES was the inaugural site for *7000 Marks*, where 7,000 pencils made from diseased wood were released into curated activity throughout the exhibition. Collaborating with local activists, scientists, and artists, Sara Black & Amber Ginsburg mapped our relationships to nature, adaptation, and survival. The work contrasted Joseph Beuys' utopian project, *7000 Oaks*, by problematizing tenets of conservation through the lens of immigration.



Sara Black & Amber Ginsburg, *7,000 Marks*, image courtesy of SPACES



# NEW COMMISSIONS: THE VAULT



Cameron Granger, *Coronation*, image courtesy of the artist



Sabina Haque, *Signs of the Times*, image courtesy of the artist



Snow Yunxue Fu, *Side*, image courtesy of the artist



# NEW COMMISSIONS: THE VAULT

The Vault functions as an intimate setting where audiences can experience a variety of video and audio art. Curated selections are added to The Vault on a quarterly basis.

## **Soda\_Jerk (b. Sydney, Australia / I. New York, NY), *Astro Black*, curated by Christina Vassallo**

SPACES presented four episodes of Soda\_Jerk's *Astro Black*, an ongoing video series which uses sampled material to consider the origins and politics of Sun Ra's mythology. Informed by cultural theories of Afrofuturism, this speculative history draws out the nexus of science fiction and social politics in Black Atlantic sonic culture. Material ranging from Star Trek to Afrika Bambaataa & Soulsonic Force to Kraftwerk round out this multi-channel jam session.

## ***Home Again*, curated by Cigdem Slankard (Cleveland, OH)**

*Home Again* asked "what does 'home' mean in the 21st century"? This project looked at the concept of home in a larger sense and invited the audience to question its meaning through a selection of video works by artists from around the world. Participating artists: Bissane Al-Charif, Halil Altindere, Sabina Haque, Charlotte Windle Mikkelsbørd, and Mohamad Omran.

## ***Whys-and-wherefores*, curated by Marilyn Ladd-Simmons (Cleveland, OH)**

*Whys-and-wherefores* provoked questions of entitlement and erasure as they relate to racially motivated violence, identity, and gentrification. Comprised of footage connected to the recent shooting of Malissa Williams and Timothy Russell, who were chased and shot 137 times by Cleveland police officers, the stereophonic repetition in Daniel Rothman's *Pinball Justice* presented an echo chamber of incredulity for the viewer. Ricardo Iamuri Robinson's *Gem Way* is a sound walk down an alley in Pittsburgh – a microcosm of what it's like to be black and white in America, and was followed by the sound collage, *Audiograph*, which created a confusing and claustrophobic environment. Cameron Granger's *Coronation* portrays his personal navigation into the primarily white art world, and *Chain Heavy* is a window into the tragically shortened life cycles of, and a dedication to, black men in the artist's hometown of Cleveland.

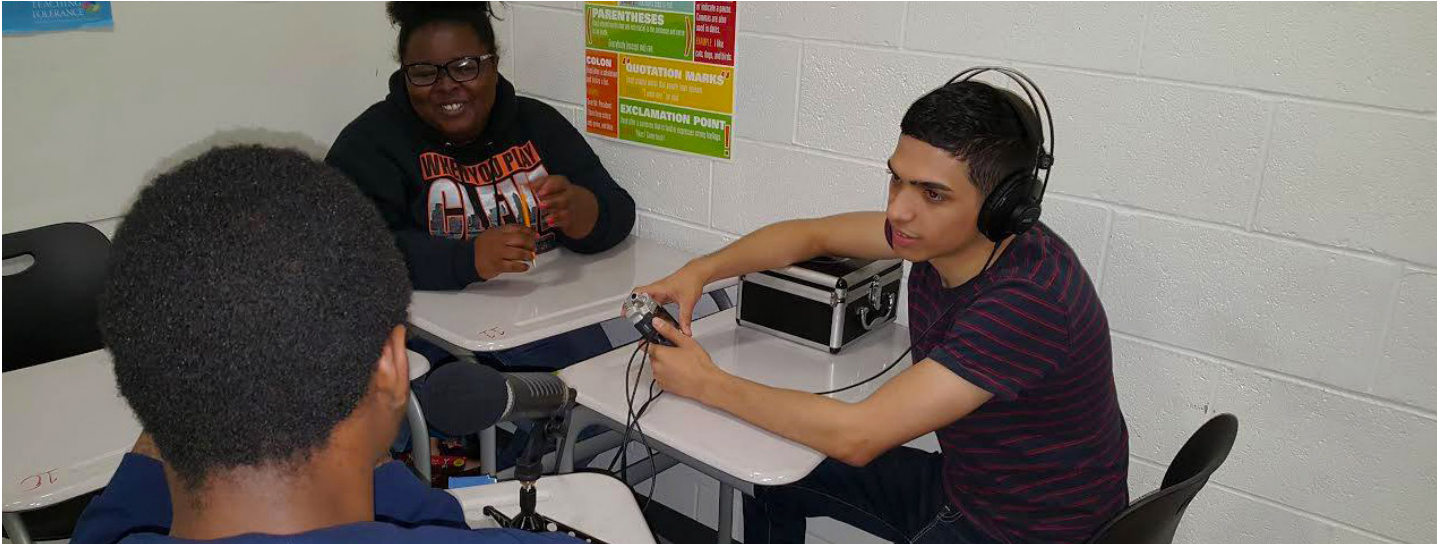
## ***Currents*, curated by Qian Li (Cleveland, OH)**

*Currents* featured recent video works by Chinese artists who are exploring the formal, stylistic and material aspects in the rapidly changing economic, social and cultural realities of China. The artists use a variety of experimental film techniques to create a unique space, like a visual poem, that explores contemporary topics. Participating artists: Snow Yunxue Fu, Qiuyan Wu, and Hui Zhu.



Soda\_Jerk, *Astro Black*, image courtesy of SPACES

# CREATIVE ENGAGEMENT



Twelve Literary Arts working with students at Cuyahoga County Juvenile Detention Center, image courtesy of SPACES



8x8x8, image courtesy of SPACES



Kid Art Review, image courtesy of SPACES



# CREATIVE ENGAGEMENT

**Our Creative Engagement campaign is designed to form deep connections with visitors of all backgrounds and develop customized arts programming for Cleveland's most vulnerable residents.**

SPACES' heightened focus on community engagement has materialized in 2017 through the design of The Mistake Lab, a flexible 400 sq ft classroom located in the most accessible part of the building, where participants are encouraged to experiment without the fear of failure. Through our Creative Engagement efforts we serve an expansive audience, but intentionally reach out to intergenerational and low-income families who do not have regular access to free, high-quality arts experiences within a safe walking distance from home.

## **Programming for Kids**

The monthly FamilySPACES events are hands-on companion activities that introduce kids and their parents or caregivers to the exhibitions on display at SPACES. The focus is on the artistic process, mirroring how SPACES uniquely works with artists, and developing art literacy and communications skills for all ages.

## **Programming for Big Kids**

To support the exhibitions that originate from our 3 artist-driven programs, we host up to 50 events per year, including film screenings, hands-on workshops, panel discussions and lectures, and experimental music performances. We also offer artist professional development opportunities and events through our Season Pass membership program, which put participants in close contact with new ideas emerging in contemporary art and cultural production.

## **Beyond SPACES**

We distill complex ideas into transformative experiences by meeting people where they are to conduct art-making activities. *Create it Forward: Realizing the Potential in Our Incarcerated Youth* connects professional artists with students in the Cuyahoga County Juvenile Detention Center to make artwork that benefits constituents of local nonprofits; *Make Your Own* teaches young residents of Lakeview Terrace public housing how to make art supplies with household items; and *Write, Rinse, Repeat* is a mural program for teen peer groups to write and install inspirational quotes in areas with high teen drug overdose rates.



Creative Mornings at SPACES, image courtesy of Creative Mornings

# 2017 BY THE NUMBERS

5%

INCREASE IN  
OPERATING REVENUE  
FROM 2016

ALMOST

\$100,000

PAID DIRECTLY TO  
ARTISTS

53%

INCREASE IN  
CONTRIBUTIONS  
FROM INDIVIDUALS

19%

INCREASE IN  
REVENUE FROM  
SPECIAL EVENTS

## INCOME

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| Grants   | \$306,826 |
| Net Assets (grants booked in previous years, released in 2017) | \$45,611  |
| Corporate Contributions  | \$20,597  |
| Donations from Individuals                                     | \$39,945  |
| Donated Goods & Services                                       | \$10,427  |
| Special Events   | \$64,218  |
| Artwork Sales  | \$24,326  |
| Facility Income  | \$6,603   |
| Other  | \$7,158   |

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|-------------------------|-----------|
| TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE | \$525,711 |
|-------------------------|-----------|

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## EXPENSES

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|------------------|-----------|
| Occupancy        | \$59,223  |
| Administrative   | \$49,498  |
| Personnel        | \$136,660 |
| Program Services | \$280,330 |

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|                          |           |
|--------------------------|-----------|
| TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES | \$525,711 |
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# THANK YOU, SUPPORTERS!

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*SPACES In Wonderland, SPACES Annual Benefit, image courtesy of Steven Mastroianni*