

SPACES

THE RESOURCE AND PUBLIC FORUM FOR ARTISTS WHO EXPLORE AND EXPERIMENT



Risa Puno, *Exhaust*

2015 ANNUAL REPORT: Evolving Experimentation



FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CHRISTINA VASSALLO

2015 was an incredible year for SPACES marked by new and improved programming, a deepening of our connection to audience members, major accomplishments made by our artists, and carefully considered plans for the future.

As the premier organization in Northeast Ohio that solely commissions the creation of new experimental art, we have become a national model for how small art spaces materialize artists' ideas and interact with audiences. This groundbreaking work is the result of 37 years of exploration, leading to initiatives that expand the notion of what art can do. With one-of-a-kind programming, recognition as an innovator in the cultural sphere, strong leadership in place at the board and staff levels, and sound fiscal management, we are ready to continue supporting the most adventurous artists with unwavering dedication.

FROM OUR BOARD PRESIDENT, THOMAS STARINSKY

Taking a look back is a powerful way to propel forward. In 2015 the SPACES Board of Directors and Staff worked passionately on building the organization's capacity. With the process of experimentation and innovation at the heart of our mission, it is important that SPACES strives to respond to the needs of the community..

In order to continue providing sorely needed resources to artists and audiences, we focused on our internal structure. A comprehensive set of committees, along with strong leadership, are now in place to strengthen camaraderie among the Board and Staff and develop shared goals and objectives. The work of the committees is geared toward sustaining the organization's operations, engaging the public, enhancing programming, and planning for our relocation.

When I took the reigns of Board President at the beginning of the year, I knew that SPACES holds an esteemed position among experimental arts organizations. With a growing understanding of artist-driven, noncommercial activity, I know now that everyone involved with SPACES – staff, board, artists and community – is part of an ever-evolving and enduring legacy that celebrates the process of being creative.

Kid Art Review of Ward Shelley's *The Last Library*

DEAR YOU, FROM SPACES

IN 2015:

5,500 KIDS AND ADULTS WERE INSPIRED BY OUR EVENTS AND EXHIBITIONS.

144 ARTISTS PARTICIPATED IN 13 MAJOR EXHIBITIONS THROUGH OUR 3 MAIN ARTISTIC PROGRAMS; 74 ARTISTS WERE INCLUDED IN 40 RELATED EVENTS; AND OVER 200 ARTISTS CONTRIBUTED TO SPACES FUNDRAISERS.

27% OF ARTISTS HAILED FROM NE OHIO, 69% ARRIVED IN CLEVELAND FROM THROUGHOUT THE US, AND 4% FROM AROUND THE WORLD.

7 VERY OPINIONATED YOUNG PEOPLE WROTE KID ART REVIEWS FOR OUR EXHIBITIONS.

WARD SHELLEY MADE 4,000 FAKE BOOKS FOR *THE LAST LIBRARY*, A PROJECT THAT WAS BORN AT SPACES AND WILL TRAVEL TO FRIEZE NY ART FAIR IN 2016.

47 STUDENTS FROM ST. MALACHI SUMMER CAMP MADE BOUNCY BALLS, TIED EACH OTHER IN KNOTS, AND SHOT SOUR FACE PORTRAITS DURING A 4-WEEK CLASS.

OVER 125 PROPOSALS WERE RECEIVED, VIA OPEN CALL PROCESS, FOR BOUNDARY-PUSHING EXHIBITIONS.

5 ARTISTS RECEIVED GALLERY REPRESENTATION OR INVITATIONS TO SHOW THEIR WORK AT OTHER VENUES, AS A RESULT OF THEIR PARTICIPATION IN SPACES PROJECTS.

WE PARTICIPATED IN 10 OFF-SITE EVENTS THAT BROUGHT INCREASED AWARENESS TO SPACES AND THE ARTISTS WE SERVE.

Pedestrian Poetry @ Market Square

HIGHLIGHTS

SPACES parodies natural history museums in edgy spoof built for laughs. The results, in the edgy, raffish manner typical of many SPACES exhibitions, are enjoyable and thought provoking.
– Steven Litt, Art Critic for The Plain Dealer, in his review of 2015 R&D exhibition, *The People's Museum of Revisionist Natural History*

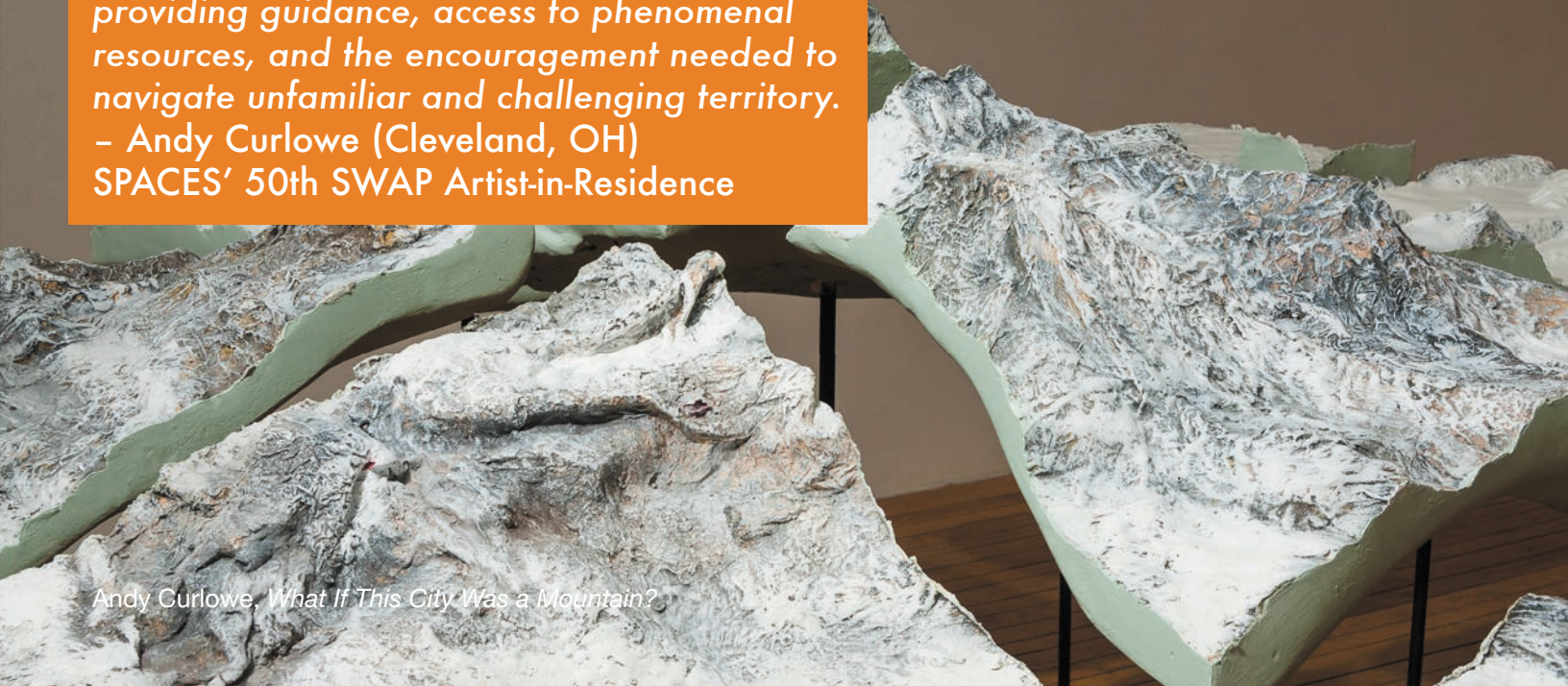


The People's Museum of Revisionist History curated by Kristin Rogers & Christina Vassallo

Enabling the exchange of ideas is at the core of our artist-driven mission. Through the SPACES World Artists Program (SWAP), R&D, and The Vault, SPACES hosted 13 major projects in 2015 that were selected, via nominations and open call process, by a panel of art professionals. Participating artists leveraged their SPACES projects to pursue new ideas in their work, often times related to the investigation of topical issues (urban planning, the psychology of advertising, representation of the queer body). These projects were made possible, in part, by the connections we developed between artists and the communities they wanted to work with, as well as our ability to provide generous financial, material, and technical support.

OUR PROGRAMS

SPACES was with me every step of the way, providing guidance, access to phenomenal resources, and the encouragement needed to navigate unfamiliar and challenging territory.
– Andy Curlowe (Cleveland, OH)
SPACES' 50th SWAP Artist-in-Residence



Andy Curlowe, *What If This City Was a Mountain?*



Anna Viola Hallberg, *Imperial Differences*
SPACES' 54th SWAP Artist-in-Residence

All 2015 SWAP projects functioned, in some way, as a portrait of this city. Andy Curlowe (Cleveland, OH) re-imagined Cleveland as a sculptural mountain range. Chloë Bass (New York, NY) chronicled her time spent with 17 Clevelanders to examine the lost art of one-on-one interactions. Anna Viola Hallberg (Stockholm, Sweden) explored political containment among Russian immigrants in Northeast Ohio. Ward Shelley (Brooklyn, NY) solicited book titles from people he met during his 2-month residency, to fill a library with our thoughts, pre-occupations and hopes. Additionally, we expanded SWAP this year to include one slot for a visiting art writer, Morgan Meis (Schwenksville, PA), in order to export Cleveland's visual culture to a national audience.

NEW COMMISSIONS: SWAP



Institute for New Feeling, *The Felt Book*

If artists are to honestly respond to their age and be a cultural interpretive lens, they must be free to explore and experiment with little or no constraint. SPACES affords artists an opportunity to reach their full potential without the imposition of the market place.

– keegan & nick (Detroit, MI)
2015 R&D Artists



keegan & nick, *Bounce*

Institute for New Feeling (Los Angeles, CA & Pittsburgh, PA) launched *The Felt Book* at SPACES, a collaborative publication by 40+ artists that is now touring the country. keegan & nick (Detroit, MI & Shrub Oak, NY), presented works that inspired collaborations with local sound artists and workshops with Case Western Reserve University and The Cleveland Performance Art Festival. Risa Puno (Brooklyn, NY) harnessed the evocative power of scent to address the timely topic of energy politics. Powerful storytelling, exceptional objects, multimedia stations, and a feminist planetarium in the thematic group exhibition, *The People's Museum of Revisionist Natural Itstory*, enabled visitors to participate in a collaborative effort seeking narrative justice.

NEW COMMISSIONS: R&D



I was grateful for the flexibility, the support of my ideas, the openness and space you gave to me. I understand that SPACES is a non-profit without an enormous endowment, so I was glad for the curatorial stipend and was especially excited that the artists received honoraria as well.

*– Kerry Downey (Brooklyn, NY)
2015 The Vault Curator*

Deeper Structures curated by Elena Harvey Collins

In 2015 we expanded The Vault program by inviting external curators to organize quarterly exhibitions of experimental sound and video art. Additionally, we worked with students from Cleveland School of the Arts to curate a selection of video works responding to the pervasiveness of electronic media, 24/7 news cycles, and viral postings. For the first year in the history of The Vault program, we provided stipends to all participating curators and artists.

NEW COMMISSIONS: THE VAULT



"My children participated in the SPACES Kid Art Review. They were warmly welcomed and enjoyed the interactive experience with the exhibit. I would sign them up again!"
 – Lara Nour Eddine,
 Parent of Kid Art Reviewer

Summer Art Camp with St. Malachi students



Character drawing class taught by Josh Usmani

This year we launched the SPACES Creative Engagement Campaign, which represents a shift in the culture of how we relate to our audience, shape meaningful visitor connections to our programs and the organization, and—in some cases—develop fundraising tools that complement our mostly free or low cost programs. The revised and comprehensive plan has been made possible by having a dedicated staff person focused on engagement activities, and a restructured Engagement Committee of the SPACES Board of Directors.

CREATIVE ENGAGEMENT CAMPAIGN

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THIS FISCAL YEAR

153%

INCREASE IN
MEMBERSHIPS

ALMOST
\$45,000

PAID DIRECTLY TO
ARTISTS

IN-KIND SUPPORT
VALUED AT OVER
\$22,000

34%

INCREASE IN
SPONSORSHIPS

INCOME

Grants	\$237,782.00
Net Assets (grants booked in previous years, released in 2015)	\$102,369.73
Donations from Individuals	\$13,314.71
Donated Goods & Services	\$22,328.76
Special Events	\$37,259.92
Artwork Sales	\$41,144.42
Facility Income	\$4,850.00
Other	\$322.85

TOTAL OPERATING REVENUE	\$459,372.39
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EXPENSES

Occupancy	\$49,916.46
Administrative	\$37,932.57
Personnel	\$249,942.68
Program Services	\$76,974.82
Direct payment to artists (honoraria, commission, materials)	\$44,605.86

TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$459,372.39
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2015 income & expenses based on pre-audited figures.

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Rooftop tour of Cleveland by Andy Curlowe

THANK YOU!