CULTURE PUSH

ANNUAL REPORT
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2016 ANNUAL REPORT

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**YEAR IN REVIEW**

**Our Summary of Successes**

- Expanded our network of artists whose projects we support through the Fellowship for Utopian Practice
- Continued support for the seven Fellows from 2015 and added an additional seven new projects through Spring and Fall Open Calls.
- Fellows engaged communities across Brooklyn, Queens, Manhattan, and the Bronx, and employed a variety of artistic methods—dance, movement, storytelling, collaborative art-making—and confronted a diverse array of social and political issues: urban ecological relations, solitary confinement and incarceration, gender-based street harassment, and the effects of colonial history on current relations between Dominicans and Haitians:
  - Victoya Venise (Protect the Art), Lise Brenner (Vox Populi); and held a Spring Open Call, supporting another four projects: Noemi Segarra Ramirez (PIS0 proyecto), Corinne Cappelletti and Eva Perrotta (roodaral), Stephano Espinoza and Cristobal Guerra Naranja (Sacudete), Piper Anderson (Mass Story Campaign)

**WINTER/SPRING**

Continued support of Olaronke Akinmowo (The Free Black Women’s Library), Aiesha Turman (Black Girl Muse), James Andrews (Spatial Resistance), aricoco (PIPORNOT), Sarah Dahnke (Dances for Solidarity),

- Released two issues of our online journal, Push/Pull in the Spring and Summer
- Presented Artifacts and After Effects, a group show of Fellowship projects at Westbeth Gallery in July.
- Began mentorship/partnership with NYFA Immigrant Artists Program

**FALL**

Held our Fall Open Call and awarded the Fellowship to: Clarivel Ruiz (Dominicans Love Haitians Movement), Ranjani Chakraborty and Salvador Muñoz (Say What? Street Harassment Intervention Strategies) and Yvonne Shortt (Women Who Build - Artists Who Own)

**From Our Fellows:**

Olaronke Akinmowo at Artifacts and After Effects Exhibition

*Photo credit: Natalia Vilela*
AWARDED IN 2015

Aiesha Turman, Black Girl Muse (BGMuseum)
Black Girl Muse is a traveling museum, digital exhibition and pop-up space that utilizes art-making as a liberating and healing tool for Black women and girls dealing with issues of sex/uality, gender, identity, community, family, and place-making.

James Andrews, Spatial Resistance
Spatial Resistance is an investigation into the spatial dimensions of civil resistance. The term spatial resistance implies not only physical space—a three dimensional field—but also the narrative and time-based dimensions. Spatial resistance can also mean examining and analyzing our own internalized blind-spots and forms of oppression, our untapped vision and skills, and the limits we impose on our movements.

aricoco, PIPORNOT (= Primus Inter Pares + OR NOT)
PIPORNOT engaged the public in a workshop series that combined collective strategizing and inspiration from social insects and their maintenance of non-hierarchical self-organization to explore how to build temporary communities during emergency situations.

Sarah Dahneke, Dances for Solidarity
Dances for Solidarity is an ongoing project that invites individuals in solitary confinement to perform a series of movements, correspond with individuals outside of prison, and contribute choreography to the series of movements.

Victoya Venise, Protect the Art
Protect The Art is a hub and resource that provides artists in under-resourced communities with the tools to properly develop their craft, and in return, become community leaders for youth in need.

Lise Brenner, Vox Populi
Vox Populi takes an intimate look at the gentrifying neighborhood of Dutch Kills in Long Island City by giving voice to and documenting the stories of those who have lived there for decades.

THE FELLOWSHIP FOR UTOPIAN PRACTICE

Active Fellows in 2016

AWARDED IN 2016

Noemi Segarra Ramirez, PISO proyecto
PISO/proyecto is a platform for intervention, mobilization, and improvisation, that channels bodily movement as a political tool in order to explore ideas related to identity and personhood for Puerto Ricans in Puerto Rico and abroad.

Corinne Cappelletti and Eva Perrotta, roodaral (of a plant) growing on waste land or among refuse roodaral is a movement-based practice and information-sharing platform where Corinne Cappelletti and Eva Perrotta bring audiences onto the streets of New York to understand the role that wild medicinal and edible plants have on our well-being, our community relationships, and our understanding of reciprocity.

Stephano Espinoza and Cristobal Guerr
Sacúdete
Sacúdete brings individuals in Corona, Queens together to experiment with various forms of performance, allowing for an unconventional exploration of one’s body, and notions of power, accessibility, and privilege.

Piper Anderson, Mass Story Campaign
Mass Story Campaign is a national participatory story exchange that will travel to more than twenty U.S cities situating the stories of people directly impacted by incarceration as a transformative lens through which communities reimagine justice.

Clarivel Ruiz, Dominicans Love Haitians Movement
Dominicans Love Haitians Movement is an series of workshops, events and performances that challenge and re-imagine the colonial legacy of the island Hispaniola that has shaped the power-relations between Dominicans and Haitians.

Ranjani Chakraborty and Salvador Muñoz, Say What?! Street Harassment Intervention Strategies
Say What?! is a grassroots, multimedia-based project that aims to equip the NYC community with the skills necessary to respond to and intervene in gender-based street harassment when witnessing it.

Yvonne Shortt, Women Who Build - Artists Who Own
Women Who Build - Artists Who Own brings together women and girls to learn construction and building skills that will result in the co-creation of a tiny house, which will travel within the boroughs as a structure to facilitate cross-community dialogue about the lack of spaces to create. The house will travel through the 5 boroughs, acting as a goad to cross-community dialogue about the lack of space for creative workers.
FELLOWSHIP HIGHLIGHTS
A TIMELINE OF EVENTS

Spring

- Sarah Dahnke held weekly Letter Writing Clinics at Brooklyn Studios for Dance from March to December.
- Olaronke Akinmowo brought her pop-up installations of the Free Black Women’s Library to locations across Brooklyn, from the Weeksville Heritage Center and MoCADA Museum to the Center for Latin American & Caribbean Studies (CLACS) at NYU.
- Victoya Venise held Protect the Art events including youth workshops, performances, and evenings of live art making.

Summer

- Eva Perrotta and Corinne Cappelletti held four Eco Dance Labs in Red Hook, Brooklyn as part of their project, roodərəl (of a plant) growing on waste land or among refuse. The Eco Dance Labs are exploratory walks centered around a specific medicinally valuable urban weed and its relationship to a particular body system that also include somatic exercises rooted in contemporary dance practice. The first, Detox with Dandelion, focused on the lymphatic system; the second, Unwired with Pineapple Weed, focused on the nervous system; the third, Intake/Outtake with Plantain, focused on the respiratory system; and the fourth, Opening Flow with Mugwort, focused on the circulatory system.

Fall & Winter

- Sarah Dahnke and Dances for Solidarity exhibited ephemera from her project Dances for Solidarity as a Partner in Residence at Brooklyn Studios for Dance, and held performances there with her collaborators.
- Olaronke Akinmowo was given a month-long residency at Wendy’s Subway, a non-profit library and writing space located in Bushwick, Brooklyn. She installed the Free Black Women’s Library and hosted a series of events and workshops.
- Mass Story Lab at UNC Greensboro: Students from UNCG brought Mass Story Lab to the International Civil Rights Center and Museum to promote empathy, healing, reform, and justice.
- Stephano Espinoza and Cristobal Guerra Naranjo held a series of movement-based workshops at Movimiento Inmigrante Internacional (Immigrant Movement International) in Corona, Queens with non-traditional art backgrounds. The goal of the workshops was to learn how to listen to one’s body and use performance tools as a way to communicate and protest. In Summer 2017 there will be public performances by the individuals who have formed a collective through the series of workshops.

- Yvonne Shortt held monthly skill building workshops as part of her project, Women Who Build - Artists Who Own, which teaches women and girls basic construction and design skills. The workshops provide the participants with the opportunity to learn the use of new tools and get comfortable with different construction skills. Ultimately the participants will design and build a tiny house at the Knockdown Center in Ridgewood, Queens.
- James Andrews (Fellow 2015-2017) held a workshop on Urban Communes as part of his project Spatial Resistance. This was the first in a series of free workshops focusing on the spatial and architectural dimension of civil disobedience. This workshop featured guests from Point A, a project of the Federation of Egalitarian Communities that works to cultivate egalitarian, income-sharing communes in the cities of the East Coast.
In July 2016 Artifacts & After Effects, an exhibition of Fellows’ work curated by Culture Push staff was shown at the Westbeth Gallery. The exhibition was accompanied by weekly public programs, including performances of choreography created by individuals in solitary confinement, a workshop on climate change, and live painting events, among other events.
Every week we receive drawings I would hang on my wall, poetry I would expect to read in literary journals, and essays that could be published in the New York Times Sunday Review. What is impressive to me is that all of these artists were able to create despite their existence in a system that confines them to a 9’ x 12’ box for 23 hours per day. What I continue to be amazed by is that our tiny P.O. box is constantly overflowing with unsolicited creative expression.

- Sarah Dahnke
ISSUE 2 // SPRING 2016

In 2014 I started exploring Dutch Kills as part of an iLAND mini-residency. The death of the Welch farmhouse was one of the first stories I was told about Dutch Kills when I started asking residents: tell me what you love in your neighborhood.

- Lise Brenner
ISSUE 3 // SUMMER 2016

Our collaboration is an ongoing effort to find ways to transmit feminism forward. Each instantiation of our project seeks to develop techniques to incorporate a more diverse set of voices and methodologies. From language games to our ever-evolving public library of feminist books to our renegade feminist press to polling station sculptures to experimental discussions, performances, and interactive installations, our art works function as platforms to describe and preserve our movement in a way that does not retroactively erase difference, but instead makes it visible for all to see.

- Jen Kennedy & Liz Linden
ISSUE 3 // SUMMER 2016

Culture Push is currently partnering with YKON, a Helsinki and Berlin-based collective that works on the potential for utopian fantasies to shape society to produce the New York Summit for Practical Utopias, a month-long alternative conference planned for June 2018. In December 2016 we hosted The Dinner Games as an initial gathering that will lead up to The Summit. The Dinner Games was an open-format game designed by YKON to alter interactions at the dinner table. Guests at the dinner were chosen to reflect the wide range of people and organizations who are creating practical utopias of their own, with an open-minded approach to social change.
ANNUAL BENEFIT
Lucky Number 7 was hosted by Casa Mezcal and aimed to raise funds for our Fellowship for Utopian Practice. In honor of Culture Push’s co-founder Aki Sasamoto and her DOING concept, artists and professionals Michael DiPietro, Sarah Eichner, Carolyn Hall, Lilly Lam and Josh Martin led hands-on workshops for attendees—from flute-making and found object drawing to fish stories in historical marine ecology.
FUNDING AND FINANCES

FOUNDATIONS
Rubin Foundation
Lezak Family Foundation
Ringold-Brown Family Foundation

CORPORATE
Scopia Management Inc.

CITY GOVERNMENT
The New York City Department of Cultural Affairs – Cultural Development Fund

INDIVIDUAL DONORS 2016

FISCAL SPONSORSHIP
At Culture Push, once you’re a Fellow, you’re a Fellow forever. As part of our effort to create an ongoing dialogue and system of support for all Fellows — currently active and no longer active — we offer Fiscal Sponsorship to artists even after completion of their Fellowship Term. In 2016 Culture Push raised a total of $20,800 for past and present Fellows through our fiscal sponsorship program: Through Culture Push sponsorship, Barrie Cline (Fellow 2014) and The Worker’s Art Coalition were awarded a grant of $17,500 from the Archie Green Fellowship for “Illuminating History,” an oral history project documenting contemporary electrical workers in New York City, who, through manufacture, installation, and maintenance, make critical contributions to the fabric of daily life in New York. Part of their work on this peer-to-peer ethnography was displayed in The Archive of Affect, an exhibition of Fellows’ work, held at NURTUREart Gallery in Bushwick, Brooklyn. Culture Push also fiscally sponsored OlaRonke Akinmowo (Fellow 2014-16) for an award of $2,050 from the Citizens Committee for New York City (http://www.citizensnyc.org/). Finally, Culture Push fiscal sponsorship also allowed Sarah Dahmke (Fellow 2015) to raise $1300 for Dances for Solidarity through an e-mail campaign and community outreach.

REVENUE

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<tr>
<th>FY14*</th>
<th>FY15</th>
<th>FY16</th>
<th>FY17 (in progress)</th>
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<td>Individuals</td>
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*Our Fiscal years begin on June 1 and end on May 31 of the following year. FY14 = June 1, 2013 - May 31, 2014.
** Printing, postage, meeting costs, website maintenance, insurance.

EXPENSES

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<th>FY14*</th>
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<th>FY17 (in progress –projected)</th>
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** Printing, postage, meeting costs, website maintenance, insurance.
NEWS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

STAFF AND BOARD EXPANSION
To match our growing ambitions and projects, we hired one new part-time employee in 2016, Administrative Assistant Linnea Ryshke, and created a full-time Assistant Director position for Madelyn Ringold-Brown, who has been with Culture Push for almost 3 years. We also created the role of Social Media Director for Natalia Vilela, our Social Media intern. Risa Shoup, Executive Director of Spaceworks, joined our Board of Directors. We have also been continuing to realize our ambition of creating a Board that reflects the people we serve, and brought on Chlöe Bass, Artist and Public Practitioner, and Culture Push Fellow (2013) and Alicia Grullon, another socially engaged artist and Culture Push Fellow (2013).

LOOKING AHEAD
• From March 17-April 16, 2017 we presented a group exhibition of Fellow’s projects at NURTUREart, a nonprofit gallery and educational space in Bushwick, Brooklyn. The show centered on projects that seek to augment voices of those who have been written out of mainstream historical narratives.  
• We were awarded a Creative Engagement Grant from the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council to develop The Summit for Practical Utopias, with a week-long event taking place in October 2017.

STAFF
Clarinda Mac Low  
Executive Director
Madelyn Ringold Brown  
Assistant Director
Natalia Vilela  
Social Media Director
Linnea Ryshke  
Administrative Director

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Nancy Nowacek, Artist, educator and Culture Push Fellow 2012
Mark Bradford, Intellectual Property Attorney
Janusz Jaworski, Programs Director at Chashama
Chlöe Bass, Artist, Culture Push Fellow 2013 and Faculty at Queens College-CUNY Social Practice Program
Risa Shoup, Executive Director of Spaceworks
Reza Keshavarz, Director of Asia Operations at Scopia Capital

ADVISORY BOARD
Stephen Greco
Geoffrey Hendricks
Ishmael Houston-Jones
Felicity Hogan
Michael DiPietro
Sur Rodney Sur