


# Training to be an artist: art centres, residencies, collectives and subsidised studio venues in New York City

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 [studiointernational.com/index.php/training-to-be-an-artist-art-centres-residencies-collectives-and-subsidised-studio-venues-in-new-york-city](http://studiointernational.com/index.php/training-to-be-an-artist-art-centres-residencies-collectives-and-subsidised-studio-venues-in-new-york-city)

Open Studios at Abrons Arts Center, 5 April 2014. Residents Lee Vanderpool and Tamar Ettun in Ettun's AIRspace studio. Photo courtesy of Jonathan Durham.

How many ways are there to train as an artist? Contrary to what you may think, perhaps not that many. You can go to art school, become an apprentice to an experienced colleague, or figure it out alone.

After a relatively brief period of schooling is over, how many ways are there to become an artist – to reach the stage where you feel moderately self-sufficient, accomplished and independent? Perhaps there are as many ways as there are artists themselves. In all cases, however, during this transitional time, artists need support – emotional, financial and institutional – that does not depend on their age or the number of years they have been making art. To find a way from the training stage to becoming a professional is not easy. There are many organisations that help artists along this path, especially in big cities. As one of the art centres of the world, New York attracts thousands of people from all corners of the globe who want to experience the intensity of its cultural life. Rare is a creative person who has not visited this city, some for a short time, some to settle.

To cope with the constant influx of creative talent and nurture its development, public agencies, private groups and individual entrepreneurs from all walks of life have established a constantly growing network of organisations that help artists to find the community, funding and environment necessary for the development of their work. These organisations range as widely in size, purpose and structure as their customer base – from well-known, large, established groups to relatively recent and small setups – but their quality and popularity is not necessarily related to their longevity and size.

Broadly speaking, organisations that help artists to find community and support can be divided into three categories: studio-based career development programmes, project-based and exhibition-oriented programmes, and cultural immersion programmes, the primary aim of which is to introduce first-comers to New York City and its limitless opportunities for personal and professional growth. With rare exceptions, these programmes offer workspace only, leaving artists to make their own living arrangements.

Studio-based programmes in New York can be short- or long-term. Short-term programmes, running from three months to two years, are more numerous. They are intended as career development opportunities for emerging artists and those in mid-career. Typically, they require outside funding, which means the artist is expected to find a sponsor to pay the often hefty programme fee, in exchange for which the artist receives studio space, visits from critics and curators, as well as opportunities to showcase his or her work. These programmes frequently offer help in finding support, especially for US-based artists, for whom sources of public funding are often more limited than for those from other nations.

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## SHORT-TERM, STUDIO-BASED PROGRAMMES

### **Abrons Arts Center** ([abronsartscenter.org](http://abronsartscenter.org))

Abrons Arts Center, part of the historic Henry Street Settlement (a not-for-profit social service agency), is one of the oldest art residencies in New York. Established in the mid-1970s, it is a vibrant cultural organisation offering a variety of high-quality, stimulating exhibitions, performances and educational programmes to its immediate neighbourhood and all New Yorkers. As part of its overall operations, Abrons Arts Center runs its highly regarded AIRspace programme, which each year offers five artists and one curator an 11-month residency that includes a studio or office space and a one-off \$500 (£300) stipend. (The deadline for applications is May.) The work expectation for artists is process-oriented; with one group exhibition close to the end of their residency, which runs from September to August. The curator – or a curatorial team – is responsible for producing three exhibitions a year, which may involve resident artists. Frequent studio visits are scheduled from curators, critics and other art professionals. Abrons Arts Center also boasts high-quality community-oriented and educational programmes. Apart from a regular schedule of exhibitions and performances, residents and alumni of the programme are hired as teachers and workshop leaders for numerous classes offered by the centre.

### **Flux Factory** ([fluxfactory.org](http://fluxfactory.org))

Flux Factory is a non-profit artist collective that began in 1994 in an old factory building in Brooklyn and has since changed location three times. At present, it is housed in Long Island City, a 20-minute commuting distance from Manhattan. Initially, it staged exhibitions, performances, film screenings and other educational and cultural events. In 2009, it opened a residency programme, offering 14 studios for periods of six, nine and 12 months to artists of all types from around the world, especially encouraging socially engaged practices. The Flux Factory's building is equipped with a woodshop, a silkscreen studio, a communal working space, a craft studio and a gallery. The call for residencies is announced twice a year on the organisation's website. Apart from the strictly artistic talent, Flux Factory is also occasionally looking for curators and artists working in specific media, such as silkscreen printing, for example. Because of the tightly knit nature of the organisation, the collective seeks people willing to participate in its life and communal practices, which includes regular meetings, discussions and occasional chores around the building. To strengthen its communal spirit, the programme encourages returning residents.

### **Gallery Aferro** ([aferro.org](http://aferro.org))

Gallery Aferro is an alternative space started by artists in 2003 in Newark, a city in the state of New Jersey, approximately 30 minutes away from New York by public transport. In 2006, a private owner gave the gallery an indefinite lease for a 20,000-sq ft former furniture store in the centre of town. The idea behind this generous gesture followed the Soho model of revitalising the neighborhood: once the artists bring life to the area, the building will be demolished and something else built in its place. For now, however, Gallery Aferro has the space. The gallery divided the building into two parts – one for screenings and exhibitions and the other for making art. Gallery Aferro accepts local and international artists on to its programme and is open to proposals from collectives. It has, on average, one exhibition a month, showcasing its resident artists. At the moment, it has a dozen studios, which are used by between two and 10 people. The studios are large, about 600 sq ft each; the fee for use is \$200-400 a month on average, and covers the operating expenses of the building. Residencies last from six months to two years. Presently, the gallery announces two open calls a year, in spring and autumn, but this arrangement may change soon. Earlier this year, the Aferro's co-directors, Evonne M Davis and Emma Wilcox, convinced the landlord to give them two additional buildings adjacent to the original one under a similar long-term lease, bringing the total footprint of the buildings to 90,000 sq ft of space. If finalised within the next few weeks, this addition will make it

possible for the gallery to expand its residency programme to 72 studios. Exciting changes are on the way for Gallery Aferro and the best way to keep track of them is to sign up for its mailing list.

### **The Greenpoint Gallery** ([thegreenpointgallery.com](http://thegreenpointgallery.com))

Named after the working-class neighbourhood in Brooklyn in which it is located, this non-profit gallery is home to a dozen artists, writers, and musicians who live and work in the space. Under the leadership of Shawn James, a man of many artistic and organisational talents, the Greenpoint Gallery has grown from a startup exhibition space into one of Brooklyn's well-known cultural hubs. Apart from popular weekly exhibitions, it offers performance and rehearsal space for theatrical and musical events. The exhibitions, which happen on Friday nights, are the highlight of the gallery's bohemian existence. They showcase the work of 75 to 100 artists every week. Anyone can submit their work to these Friday shows: The deadline for the entries is the night before, and submissions are free. Once the work is accepted, a \$5 fee is charged for every piece to cover the \$200 prize for the winning work and the expenses of the reception. The gallery's residency programme accepts applications as spaces become available. Prices for residency vary depending on the size of the studio, but are all within reasonable rates. On average, artists stay in the space from six months to a year – long enough to help them to launch a career. Employment opportunities for gallery's residents frequently come from connections made at the weekly exhibitions, as well as from gallery's clients who rent the space for film shoots, TV shows and private events. Throughout the year, the gallery administers internships to help run its daily business, exchanging the use of facilities and free studio space for help with administrative duties. At the moment, the gallery is at a crucial stage of its development. It is trying to raise funds to acquire the building and expand its operations.

### **International Studio & Curatorial Program (ISCP)**([iscp-nyc.org](http://iscp-nyc.org))

Celebrating its 20th anniversary this year, ISCP is a non-profit, studio-based art residency, well-known in the US and internationally. Founded and led by Dennis Elliott, it is run by a staff of seven. ISCP has offices, 35 well-lit and spacious studios, an exhibition gallery and a project space in a sprawling turn-of-the-century building in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn. Many artists come from abroad because of ISCP's financial structure: it demands that the \$20,000-plus yearly residency cost be underwritten by a sponsor. For reasons left unexamined for this brief overview, it is often easier for international artists to secure this type of support from their governments and other public and private sources. The structure of the programme is outlined on its excellent website, which lists the artists and their sponsors by country. ISCP does not provide living space, but sponsors often allocate additional funds for this expense. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis throughout the year. Usually, residencies last from three months to a year. Once in the programme, artists participate in intensive career-development activities, including studio visits with visiting critics, field trips to cultural institutions, and open studios. They also often take part in exhibitions and receive commissions for public art projects.

### **Lower Manhattan Cultural Council (LMCC)** ([lmcc.net](http://lmcc.net))

Lower Manhattan Cultural Council is one of the most well-known non-profit organisations dedicated to the arts in New York. In existence since 1974, LMCC currently presents a host of successful programmes meant to empower artists, including grants for individuals and small arts organisations, professional development workshops and intensives, and artist residencies, among which Workspace is the most competitive. Using temporarily vacant space provided by property owners and leaseholders, LMCC hosts 15 to 20 visual artists, six to eight creative writers, and three to five performing artists and arts groups as participants in its Workspace programme, totaling about 30 residencies. In 2013-14 an entire floor at One Liberty Plaza was donated by Goldman Sachs for these studios. According to Melissa Levin, LMCC's director of cultural programmes, in 2014 the organisation received 1,100 applications from visual artists and about 150 each from writers and performing artists. The applications are judged according to four criteria: quality of work, proposed

ideas, the stage of the artist's career (the timing of the residency must make sense in the overall development of the work), and diversity in the broad sense of the word. The Workspace programme is geared specifically to emerging artists. They may come from other countries, but must live and work in the city, because LMCC is not responsible for living arrangements. The programme provides professional development support for its participants in the form of weekly Salons, group discussions and visits from critics and curators. It is process oriented: artists are not required to finish a work or participate in an exhibition or performance as the culminating point of their residency. However, many use Open Studios as an opportunity to showcase their work. Apart from the Workspace programme, other residency support LMCC offers include Process Space, Extended Life Dance Development, Seniors Partnering with Artists Citywide (SPARC) and a six-month residency in Paris. Process Space is shorter in length and is intended for mid-career artists who are preselected and invited to develop their projects at LMCC's Arts Center at Governors Island. Extended Life is a two-year programme for 12 movement-based artists providing, in addition to residency time, the opportunity to translate an existing work on to a site in Lower Manhattan for public presentation, and personalised career support. The SPARC programme improves the quality of life of New York's senior citizens by placing 50 artists in the city's senior centres each year, 12 of which are in Manhattan and overseen by LMCC. The council's bi-annual Paris residency programme – a partnership with the Mayor's Office of the City of Paris – provides New York City-based visual artists with the opportunity to spend six months in Paris.

#### **NARS Foundation** – ([www.narsfoundation.org](http://www.narsfoundation.org))

Established in 2006, the New York Art Residency and Studios Foundation is a non-profit organisation that, from 2011, has provided 12 short-term residencies to emerging and mid-career artists from the US and abroad. The foundation occupies one floor of an industrial building in the Sunset Park section of Brooklyn, accessible by the subway. Like other New York studio-based residencies, NARS offers its artists an intensive professional development programme, which includes visits from critics and curators, group discussions, workshops, tours of museums and other cultural sites and institutions. Unlike many of its counterparts, NARS encourages a product-oriented attitude in its artists: it holds at least two group exhibitions for residents, in May-June and November-December, in which they are encouraged to participate. International applicants are eligible for three- and six-months residencies, while US-based artists can also apply for six- and 12-month stays. For international residents, the programme costs \$5,000 for three months and \$10,000 for six months, paid either by the artist or a sponsor. US-based residents are eligible for either full or partial residential fellowships. Full fellowships cover the entire cost of the programme; partial fellowships expect the artist to pay \$2,100. Apart from the 12 studios allocated to its residency programme, NARS also offers 20 studios to artists at market rates, at \$550-\$750 per month. This diversified approach creates a more permanent artistic community, allowing residents to make connections and interact with their local peers on a regular basis. International artists are also eligible for the short-term studio programme, which enables them to rent NARS studios for up to a year, freeing them from the burden of providing credit history and signing commercial lease agreements required by real estate agencies. To offset the expense accrued during the inevitable periods of vacancy demanded by this arrangement, a \$100 a month fee is charged in addition to the basic rent. Apart from its residency, NARS also has an active exhibition programme launching open calls for juried solo shows from artists and exhibition proposals from emerging curators, as well as a vibrant public programme of artist talks, panel discussions and salons.

#### **Triangle Residency**([triangleworkshop.org/residency](http://triangleworkshop.org/residency))

Triangle Arts Association's residency programme is an outgrowth of the Triangle Arts Workshop, which was started by the sculptor Anthony Caro in 1982, when he and art collector Robert Loder gathered artists, critics and curators from the US, the UK and Canada at a nature preserve in Pine Plains, New York. The workshop was intended to start a dialogue among artists and between artists

and critics, bringing them together for collaborative, process-oriented work-sessions and discussions. Since then, the workshop has become more multicultural and grown in popularity, establishing sister organisations across the globe. For 16 years it convened yearly in various countries and biannually after 1998. The Triangle Network has a central office in London, which unites the international branches. In New York City, the year-round Triangle Residency was formed in 2002, in response to the need of affordable studio space. The five resident studios as well as the Triangle office are located in Dumbo, Brooklyn. During their stay in New York, artists receive visits from critics and curators and have open studios. The contained location and the small size of the programme create an intimate working atmosphere for artists and the staff to interact on a daily basis. Open calls are announced frequently for these three-month, six-month, and year-long residency programmes, and the residency studio space is free, not including housing and transport. In addition to the open calls announced through its website and newsletter, Triangle has also established partnerships with various organisations, such as the Asian Cultural Council, the Finnish Cultural Institute and the International Visegrad Fund, for example, which participate in the selection of international artists and sponsor their residencies. Laurel Ptak, Triangle's executive director, says the residency programmes are further subsidised through sponsorships, grants, and private donors found by Triangle.

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## **LONG-TERM STUDIO RESIDENCIES OR SUBSIDISED STUDIO SPACE**

Organisations that offer long-term studio residencies or subsidised studio space in New York are fewer and far between. Although some of them also rely on private and public funding, because of a longer time commitment, these residencies are frequently funded through sources directly connected to real estate.

### **Chashama** ([chashama.org](http://chashama.org))

Chashama, which means "to have vision" in Farsi, is a case in point. It is a dynamic organisation creating viable working conditions for artists at all stages of their careers by providing them with affordable studio, exhibition and performance space. According to Anita Durst, Chashama's artistic director, Chashama helps more than 600 artists yearly through its programmes. Durst, who is a member of a family that made its name in New York's real estate market, founded Chashama in 1995 to commemorate the life and works of her teacher, Reza Abdoh. Abdoh was a theatre director famous for staging large-scale productions occupying entire buildings and city blocks, active in New York in the late 1980s and early 90s. He introduced Durst to art and, after his untimely death in 1995 at the age of 32, she continued to promote his work by staging large-scale theatrical productions in the city's buildings. Soon Durst realised the acute need for affordable working space not only for theatre artists, but for the entire artistic community. Using her knowledge of the real estate and her family's connections, she began finding vacant commercial buildings in underdeveloped neighbourhoods whose landlords were happy to have artists as tenants to keep the buildings occupied. Currently, Chashama uses 19 such buildings throughout the city's five boroughs: six group studio buildings that have more than 120 studios, six curated building lobbies, and seven presentation venues for exhibitions, performances and other events. The rent in these buildings ranges from \$150 to \$650 a month for 150-400 sq ft of studio space – the minimum that covers the cost of utilities and maintenance, which makes it among the cheapest in the city. Presentation space is granted to artists for free. The downside of this arrangement is its volatility. Chashama uses a building on a month-per-month contract: artists have to move within 30 days if the landlord's plans for the building change. However, this arrangement provides flexibility for buildings in transition and creates access to affordable space for artists' use. At the moment, Chashama has a two-year waiting list for its studios. If it loses a building, its occupants are placed back on the waiting list. Apart from its studio and exhibition programme in the city, Chashama also runs ChaNorth, a short-term

artist's residency in Pine Plains, NY, a two-hour drive from the city. From May to October each year, 25 artists live and work on a five-acre estate there. Currently, Chashama is searching for an arts group to take over this residency.

### **The Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts (EFA) ([efanyc.org](http://efanyc.org))**

The Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts is a tax-exempt public charity, established in 1992 by Jane Stephenson and her son Guy Buckles with seed money left by Stephenson's mother, Elizabeth Stanley, a patron of the arts. In the beginning, EFA gave out grants to individual artists. In 1998, it established a studio residency programme, still in existence today. It purchased a 12-story building at 323 West 39th Street in Manhattan, where it put up several studios, and later a gallery space, meeting rooms and a printmaking workshop. According to Bill Carroll, EFA's programme director, at the moment the foundation uses 89 studios, which are occupied individually or shared by two artists. The fees range from \$500 to \$1,500 per studio per month. During their stay, residents receive regular visits from critics and curators and hold obligatory open studios at least once a year. EFA residency lasts two years, but it can be renewed, which happens for the majority of current members. According to a stipulation of the foundation's charter, each year the membership of the studio programme must change by at least 15%, which means, with its present membership base, that only 10 members must leave, while the others' stay is extended. The task of deciding who stays and who leaves falls to a special committee: once a year it reviews the work of its resident members. A member in good standing is expected to produce new work and exhibit regularly. There is no limit on the number of membership renewals. Carroll says that EFA has residents who have been there since 1999. The foundation launches an open call for applications for its studio programme once a year in September, with the deadline in December. Hundreds of people compete for a limited number of openings. The applications are judged by a five-person jury composed of notable critics, curators, artists and members of EFA's administration. Artists of all ages and at all stages of their careers are eligible to apply, but they must exhibit regularly and lead an active professional life.

### **Spaceworks NYC ([spaceworksnyc.org](http://spaceworksnyc.org))**

Spaceworks is an independent non-profit real estate developer created in 2011 with the help of the city government to build long-term, affordable rehearsal and visual art studio spaces for artists in New York City. Funded through private and public sources, Spaceworks currently manages two active projects, in Long Island City and Gowanus, Brooklyn, and is developing three more, in Williamsburg, Red Hook and Governors Island. The space in Long Island City is intended for performing artists: it has three rehearsal rooms for dancers and actors and one practice studio for musicians. These rooms are rented at \$12-\$16 an hour and are featured on the Spaceworks website. The Gowanus site has two visual art studios of 200 sq ft each, which cost \$350 a month. The other planned Spaceworks locations still in the development stage include a renovated building on Governors Island with 43 visual art studios and a rehearsal/performance space, four visual art studios, and four rehearsal spaces inside two Brooklyn public library branches in Red Hook and Williamsburg. An announcement will be made on the Spaceworks website about the opening of the Williamsburg Visual Art Studios Rental Lottery once these projects are completed.

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## **PROJECT-BASED RESIDENCIES**

Project-based residencies and programmes are structured around a particular project, be it an exhibition, a performance, an installation or a broader research-oriented endeavour. The project does not have to be a presentation of a finished work, but the emphasis is always on the development and presentation of a particular idea. Usually, project-based programmes last less than a year and provide support for realisation of this idea, including the work and presentation space.

### **Eyebeam ([eyebeam.org](http://eyebeam.org))**

Eyebeam is the cutting-edge art and technology centre extending fellowships, grants, and residencies to artists, toolmakers and all creative professionals who explore digital technology and new media. Situated in a large warehouse building in Manhattan's Chelsea neighbourhood, Eyebeam sponsors emerging artists who demonstrate a keen interest in and an ability to forge a creative understanding of our constantly expanding relationship with technology. According to Roddy Schrock, the centre's director of programmes and residencies, the organisation gave out \$250,000 last year for this purpose. It awards three to five \$30,000 fellowships each year to projects that seek new forms and solutions to broad societal issues that have arisen as a result of technological development, such as explorations of cyber-feminism, generative textile morphologies, and the archival of the internet, for example. Fellowships at Eyebeam are research-oriented and inform the work of the centre. Unlike year-long fellowships, residencies last five months and are given for specific projects. Five to seven \$5,000 awards go to artists, technologists and hackers, who develop a variety of programmes, plans and systems that transform technovisions into actualities. The centre also has honorary fellows who are established artists and do not have an acute need for support demonstrated by their emerging colleagues. They are there for consultation and support to the fellows and residents. All of Eyebeam's programmes are interrelated: the intensive programme of public lectures, exhibitions and workshops is run entirely by its current fellows and residents. Usually, calls for fellowships are announced once a year in January, and for residencies twice a year, in April and October. This year, because of the centre's impending temporary relocation to Sunset Park in Brooklyn before its 2016 move to a permanent new home in this borough's up-and-coming cultural arts district near Brooklyn Academy of Music, Eyebeam is launching a two-year fellowship. It is looking for people with a background in community practice, particularly in architecture and public presentation, to collaborate with the organisation in presenting new works during the transition.

#### **PS122 RAMP** ([ps122.org/ramp-2014](http://ps122.org/ramp-2014))

PS122 is a non-profit performance space, whose building at 150 First Avenue in Manhattan is undergoing renovation. With its studio programme suspended during this time, PS122 launched RAMP, a new residency programme designed to support specifically early career artists. According to Jess Edkins, RAMP's creative producer, the residency is a commitment to two weeks of work funded by PS122. It is also a commitment to do a fully produced show within a two-year period. RAMP supports the artists every step of the way in this process. For this residency, artists are invited to submit two-page proposals outlining how they would use the two-week residency and the idea for the final production. RAMP residency is multidisciplinary with the emphasis on performance. This residency is by invitation only, because PS122 has insufficient staff support to manage an open-call process. At the moment, it uses the Chain Theatre in Long Island City for its purposes, but this arrangement will change soon. After renovation, the programme will be housed in PS122's permanent building on First Avenue.

#### **Recess** ([recessactivities.org](http://recessactivities.org))

Recess is a non-profit exhibition and workspace in Soho that gives an opportunity for the public to view art in the process of its creation. Founded in 2009 by Allison Weisberg, now the executive director, Recess responds to the need of emergent artists to find their public, because often they cannot afford to work and exhibit in places frequented by seasoned public interested in up and coming art. Session, the gallery's signature programme, provides artists with a stipend to mount a two-month project in its space in Soho or at PioneerWorks, the centre for art and innovation in Red Hook, Brooklyn. An open call for proposals is launched early in the year with the deadline in March. As part of the application, artists are asked to outline the project in conceptual, technical and visual terms, as well as explaining how they intend to engage the public with their work. Once accepted, the artist receives an honorarium, a stipend to cover the cost of the installation, and one-on-one mentorship in realising the work. According to Weisberg and Maia Murphy, the programme director, each year Recess receives around 350 applications, from which six to 10 are selected. A five-person

review panel is interested in fully conceived projects that will be engaging for the public. In conjunction with Session, Recess also runs a critical-writing programme, which pairs up artists and writers. Short, 2,000-word critical pieces are published on the Recess website with a possibility of a hard-cover publication. Writers can apply to the programme at any time by sending a CV, two pieces of recent writing and a description of their interests.

### **Residency Unlimited (RU)** ([residencyunlimited.org](http://residencyunlimited.org))

Residency Unlimited is a non-profit art organisation formed in 2009 to foster customised residencies through strategic partnerships with various institutions in New York City and beyond. These partnerships are mutually beneficial and offer residents access to multiple services and hands-on assistance that otherwise may not be possible. This collaborative approach allows RU to create a variety of individually tailored residencies to best meet the needs of participating artists and curators. RU supports local and international artists at all levels of their careers. It is committed to promoting interdisciplinary practices and building lasting connections between residents and the broader artistic community. RU residencies are project-based in the sense that the organisation's resources are designed for realisation of specific ideas – be it an exhibition, a performance, a presentation, an open-ended project, or a chance to establish a network of connections in the city's art scene. Throughout the year, RU launches open calls for residencies on its website, but inquiries about applications and particular projects can be made at any time by contacting RU's staff directly. RU's selection process is highly diversified, but, on average, it services about 12 artists a month, whose residencies last from three to six months, sometimes stretching up to one year. The monthly cost of a RU residency varies, but can be subsidised through various international and domestic partnerships listed on the RU's website; the staff provide help and information for reaching these sources. Apart from curatorial, critical and operational support, RU also maintains an excellent website, which has a searchable up-to-date list of artist residencies worldwide.

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## **EXPERIENTIAL PROGRAMMES**

Experiential programmes offer agendas that place an emphasis not only, or necessarily, on promoting artists' work, but on new experiences and on building a community of individuals who thrive on novelty and change. Usually (but not always), these places have residencies are offered to first-time visitors to the city. The rationale behind these residencies is that the change of environment and new interactions will enrich artists' understanding of the world and ignite novel ideas, channelling their creativity into new, unexplored directions.

### **Apexart** ([apexart.org](http://apexart.org))

Apexart is a non-profit gallery founded in 1994 by artist Steven Rand to engage the work of emerging curators and artists in ways that bypass traditional institutional channels. Apexart is different from most art galleries in that it is an educational, not promotional, organisation that aims to make people realise that art is discovered in unexpected places in unpredictable ways. It administers a host of programmes, among which the Unsolicited Proposal and Franchise exhibition open calls are perhaps most famous. Apexart's residency programme is not as well-known, because it accepts participants by invitation only. It offers first-time international visitors to New York one month of cultural immersion into the life of the city. A resident is given an apartment on Union Square and a fully fledged schedule of activities, which may include a session with a psychotherapist, a boat tour around Manhattan, or a visit to a criminal courtroom (a fuller list of possible activities can be found on apexart's website). Residents are found through a directed, but also somewhat random, search: the gallery may call a university in Venezuela, for example, explain the programme to an assistant professor there and ask them to recommend an artist or a curator who is doing good work, has never been to New York, and may benefit from an experiential trip to the city. Rand says the



reason behind the invitational approach is to eliminate the competitive element from the selection process. The rationale behind the choice of activities that are generally kept outside the promotional art-world gamut is that art is enriched and innovated not only through its own internal processes, but also through events that make life interesting and meaningful. No one knows what will spark creativity in a continuous stream of strange experiences and unfamiliar stimuli showered on the visitor, but something will. Julia Knight, the gallery's operations director, adds that the majority of residents come from smaller cities and, for them, the experience of living alone in New York for a month is often life-transformative. There are eight inbound residents each year and four outbound ones, who are dispatched to various places around the globe. All housing costs and other expenses are paid, excluding food. Residents are also asked to keep individual blogs during their stay, accessible through the gallery website. Apart from the exhibitions and residencies, apexart also implements active publication and public events programmes.

### **The Con Artist Collective** ([conartistnyc.com](http://conartistnyc.com))

The Con Artist Collective, founded in 2010 by Brian Shevlin in the basement of 119 Ludlow Street, is one of New York's newest art groups. The name of the collective reflects its mission – to connect artists on the Lower East Side. Last year, the collective expanded to the first floor of the building, which it uses as a gallery and a workspace, designed by Garner Oh. Membership is open to all artists who consider themselves to be at the beginning of their careers: Con Artist defines “emergent” broadly. The yearly membership fee is \$50. By joining, members become part of the Con Artist online community and receive invitations to music performances, exhibition openings, weekly gallery nights and other events. Members also are eligible to work in the collective's space, for which fees vary according to frequency of use: for example, the monthly fee for unrestricted access to workspace and all equipment is \$229, while the fee for one-day use is \$129. Members with workspace access have “full memberships”, which allows them to use shared equipment, such as colour-screen presses, a photo studio, a light table, a drop sink, computers, sewing machines, and more. At the moment, Con Artist has 220 online and 70 full members. Full members can propose exhibitions, which are voted on by the rest of the collective. Apart from connecting artists and providing space for their work and interactions, Con Artist is in the process of launching Epic Epoch, its variegated residency programme featured on [epicepoch.org](http://epicepoch.org). All applicants to the programme will be asked to pay \$29 and build their own page on the Epic Epoch website, in exchange for which they will be considered as contestants for either a fully funded residency and a solo exhibition; a group exhibition; or subsidised membership at Con Artist. All applications will be reviewed by the jury listed on the website. The residency will be awarded to one artist only and will include a yearly membership in the collective, a three-month stay in New York all expenses paid, including housing and transport, and a two-week exhibition mounted toward the end of the residency. Six artists from the applicant pool will be chosen for the group show, five of whom will be determined by the jury and one by the public through the number of “likes” on the Epic Epoch gallery page. In total, 150 artists will receive a fully-funded one-year membership to Con Artist, while another 150 will receive a 50% discount on the yearly membership fee. According to Audrey Ryan, Epic Epoch's residency coordinator, this programme is self-sustaining: its success depends on the number of subscribers, although there is a limit set on this number as well – the programme can handle no more than 2,500 applicants. Ryan points out that all applicants to the programme will be given equal attention, and in the case of a rejection, they will receive a brief critique of their work. At the moment, the programme is suspended, but is expected to start functioning in the near future.

### **PointB Worklodge** ([pointb.org](http://pointb.org))

In 1996, Mark Parrish opened a worklodge in a former ironworks factory in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. A designer-artist from Texas, Parrish was inspired by the idea of a worklodge during his travels in Guadalajara, Mexico, where he stayed at a place for itinerant craftsmen who came to sell their wares at a local market. In this specialised hotel, craftsmen had a place to sleep, eat, finish making their

products, and connect with their peers from other regions of the country. When an opportunity presented itself, Parrish realised an American counterpart of this Mexican prototype with the help of Dirk Sommer from Germany and Johannes Hüppi from Switzerland: the worklodge they built has all the elements essential for a comfortable and productive live-and-work environment – eight large work-live spaces with windows, a kitchen, a presentation/conference area, offices and a library. It also has an “in-house artist”, who introduces lodgers to local communities and customs. They named the lodge “PointB” to emphasise the transitory existence of the lodgers who move from their original location (point a) to the secondary studio (point b) with the minimal interruption in their workflow, enriching their experience through learning about the different ways of the world and exchanging information among themselves. For Parrish, a worklodge is not a hotel, since it intended for professionals working on a project and not for tourists. Nor is it a residency, because it does not exist for artists only, but rather for creative workers from diverse fields – architects, musicians, designers, entrepreneurs, writers, curators, scientists, and so on. The mission of a worklodge is not to sell a product, but to promote cross-cultural and interdisciplinary exchange. It is for people who are self-supporting and active in their fields: depending on the size of the studio, the stay at the lodge costs from \$2,200 to \$3,200 a month payable by the lodger. PointB welcomes returning lodgers and provides storage and shipping for them. In not too distant future, Parrish envisions counterparts of PointB springing up across the globe because of a perennial demand for such work-live places from nomadic cultural workers. For the moment, however, the Williamsburg worklodge may have to relocate because of an impending rent increase. Inquiries about applying to PointB can be made by contacting its staff at [info@pointb.org](mailto:info@pointb.org).

Places described above provide just an introduction to opportunities available in New York for artists of all ages, interests and lifestyles. There are many other opportunities that have not been covered in this brief review. Some open-call residencies are offered by museums, such as:

#### **NEW INC at The New Museum ([newinc.org](http://newinc.org))**

Apart from its inhouse residencies for artists, who are selected by the curatorial team, and which usually result in an exhibition or major series of programming, The New Museum has recently introduced New Inc – a non-profit shared workspace and professional development programme that will accept a group of 100 members for one year. This incubator is focused on the intersection of art, design and technology, and is intended to encourage the development of new businesses and initiatives. The cost is \$600 for a full-time yearly membership and \$350 for part-time membership. The programme will be located in the building adjacent to the New Museum. The deadline for applying to New Inc was 1 April, and the first round of residencies is scheduled to begin in August 2014.

#### **Studio Museum in Harlem ([studiomuseum.org/learn/artist-in-residence](http://studiomuseum.org/learn/artist-in-residence))**

Studio Museum in Harlem established its residency programme for artists of African and Latino descent in 1968. It is a year-long residency programme offered to three artists working in any media from anywhere in the world. Each artist is given a free studio and a stipend. The Studio Museum holds open studios for its artists and introduces them to the public through its programmes. At the end of the residency, the artists have an exhibition in the museum’s galleries.

A dinner at Flux Factory. Photograph courtesy of Douglas Paulson and Flux Factory.

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Ken Weathersby’s Studio at Gallery Aferro’s Residency. Photograph courtesy of the artist.



The Greenpoint Gallery’s exhibition opening. Photograph courtesy of the Greenpoint



Gallery.



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ISCP Exhibition Installation. February 2014. Photograph courtesy of Natasha Kurchanova.



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Building 110, LMCC's Arts Center at Governors Island. Photograph courtesy of LMCC.



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NARS: View of the studio hallway from gallery during Color me Badd exhibition. Photograph courtesy of the NARS Foundation.



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Triangle Workshop Barbeque, 2010. Photograph courtesy of Triangle Arts Association's Workshop & Residency Programs.



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Current studio artist Seunghwei Koo prepares for her show at Chashama's 266 W 37th St gallery. Photograph courtesy of Chashama.

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Outdoor balloon installation by EFA Studio Member Artist Eunjung Hwang. Photograph courtesy of the Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts.

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Spaceworks' Gowanus Studio. Photograph courtesy of Spaceworks.

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Eyebeam's exhibition opening. Photograph courtesy of Eyebeam Art + Technology Center.

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Liz Magic Laser at Recess. Photograph courtesy of the artist.

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Residency Unlimited exhibition and project space. Photograph courtesy of Residency Unlimited.

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PointB: Artist at work in the Guest Studio, Winter 2006. Photograph courtesy of PointB.

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