

SHIFT RESIDENCY

SHIFT

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SHIFT

○ a change in
position or direction

/ a change in how
something is done or
how people think about
something

• a group of people
who work together during
a scheduled period or
time

A NECESSARY SHIFT IN PERSPECTIVE

RATIONALE

For artists, New York City is one of the most inspiring places to live, and also one of the toughest. Most artists cannot survive on their art alone, and must secure other sources of income. Finding affordable studio space—and time to use it—has become an almost insurmountable challenge, putting all artists in the position of evaluating existing resources, and imagining new ways in which they can live and work as artists while remaining in the city.

An essential yet vulnerable subset of the art community are the artists who hold positions at arts organizations. Now in its fourth year, *SHIFT IN PERSPECTIVE* is the first to support this particular demographic of artists/arts-workers, who not only work for institutions as curators, fundraisers, residency managers, educators, writers, directors, and myriad other positions, but who also have an artistic practice independent of these roles.

Arts organizations rely on the dedication and resourcefulness of the artists who work for them, as well as their natural connection to the mission at hand. These artists do not think of their livelihood as just a day job—it is a passion and a responsibility, and as such demands high amounts of stamina and creativity, depleting the very emotional and physical resources needed to make art. The more conscientious and enthusiastic an artist is about organizational work, the more he or she places stress on his or her artistic career. Moreover many employers don't consider that their employees who are artists are straining to fill the demands of another consuming job: making art.

ᏚᏐᏐᏐ ᏐᏐᏐᏐᏐᏐᏐᏐ gives arts-workers a chance to recharge their artistic practice and realign it with their commitment to advocating on behalf of the arts. The immersive, collective, intensive studio experience that starts off each session provides residents a chance to temporarily set aside their arts-worker hats in order to focus fully on an area of artistic development that has been perpetually postponed due to time and space constraints.

STRUCTURE

The residency is tailored to arts-workers' challenging schedules, binding commitments, and limited flexibility. Seven artists are selected through a nomination process. The residency begins with an immersive studio intensive for three weeks in August, historically the “downtime” for most arts organizations. EFA Project Space is converted into a collective studio environment to which the artists are given twenty-four-hour access to set up shop and dive into new projects. During regularly scheduled critiques, residents break bread together and discuss their artistic progress and the challenges they face. The intensive concludes with an open house for colleagues and friends, and a final dinner where the artists share the realizations of the past few weeks and their plans for the year. The following year

consists of regular monthly meetings, structured and hosted by the residents at places of their choosing. The residency year concludes with a weekend retreat, and final public presentations at EFA, detailing each individual's experience over the past year.

THE RESIDENTS

The inspiration to create this residency came from the awareness that artists/arts-workers work so hard to provide services for others, as well as put in hours on their own artistic practice, that they have little time to apply for residencies and take advantage of other resources that are out there. Believing that at least one opportunity should cut them some slack, ᏚᏐᏐᏐ ᏐᏐᏐᏐᏐᏐᏐᏐ honors the accomplishments of artists/arts-workers by inviting them to be considered without going through a laborious application process. When requesting nominations, we seek candidates who have worked a minimum of five years at a cultural organization, and who have made a significant contribution (as assessed by the nominator) to the New York City arts community through this role.

The ideal candidate is a practicing artist who has a desire for greater focus and professional recognition, finding him or herself at a crossroads, unsure of how to push their art further—perhaps due to the constraints and commitments of a full-time job. Most importantly, ᏚᏐᏐᏐ residents are individuals who would benefit from and contribute to a supportive, interactive peer community. Each session brings together a group of individuals from different backgrounds and career phases, working in a diverse array of media ranging from object-making to sound, video, performance, social practice and installation, who are willing to share their individual insights and skillsets with their new cohorts. The circumstances that connect this group set the stage for a unique environment of thoughtfulness and reciprocity.

The result of this shift in perspective is often transformative—a new understanding of each individual's own creative process while considering the question of how to realign and reinforce their multiple roles. As this project evolves, so shall the list of organizations represented in the ᄒᄒᄒᄒ ᄒᄒᄒᄒᄒᄒᄒᄒᄒ, further identifying the “demographic” of artists/arts-workers. We witness a community that starts to recognize its constituents, and an expanding group of alumni advocates. New bonds are built across organizations as artistic and organizational partnerships and collaborations emerge, inspiring a different kind of dialogue than had previously existed and bringing in new resources and opportunities for individuals and institutions alike.

As an artist who has been an arts administrator for fourteen years, I conceived this project in response to an overlooked area of need. I have sat on many selections panels and board meetings over the years where I have heard a common opinion that artists who work for organizations are not serious about their own practice. This bias may not exist in the emerging artist community, but it remains pervasive at the top. I was fortunate to have the support of EFA to initiate this project as a pilot, to see what would happen if we brought a group of hardworking artist/arts-workers to a gallery-*cum*-shared studio in Midtown in August and told them, “We believe in you, now go make something fantastic.” The results have truly been beyond what I ever expected. The inspiration I have gotten from witnessing the transformation that takes place and engaging with this exceptional support network—termed by one alumni as the “residency of superheros”—has led to a momentous shift in my own artistic practice.

—MICHELLE LEVY
Director, EFA Project Space

The great thing about this residency is that it's for you as a person who has a day job [in the arts]; and for you as this person struggling to make ends meet, make art, see art, and talk with your peers. I think that is what's really special about this. It's not only for the artist for a couple weeks in an idealized landscape where your troubles are gone; it's in the real world.
—THERESA MARCHETTA

For me, [this residency is important because] it's about
being an arts-worker in an arts institution. It is about
that recognition and that participation; that artists can
actually contribute [to arts institutions] in a way that
someone else can't.
—KAREN OSTROM

MY SHIFT RESIDENCY

In some ways, a residency feels like a reward. As an exchange for hard work, dedication, networking, and persistence, artists are granted a table or a room of their own. It can also feel like an invitation to a think tank—a cohort of experts gathered to ponder a critical issue alone or together. *SHIFT RESIDENCY* feels like membership in a not-so-secret club. My colleagues and I are a diverse group who share similar circumstances: we are artists, and we work in the arts. We are entangled with art/work. Our labors—to create, to administrate—take place within the museums, foundations, galleries, and publications that serve as anchor points in the broader art world, and we inhabit multiple positions simultaneously.

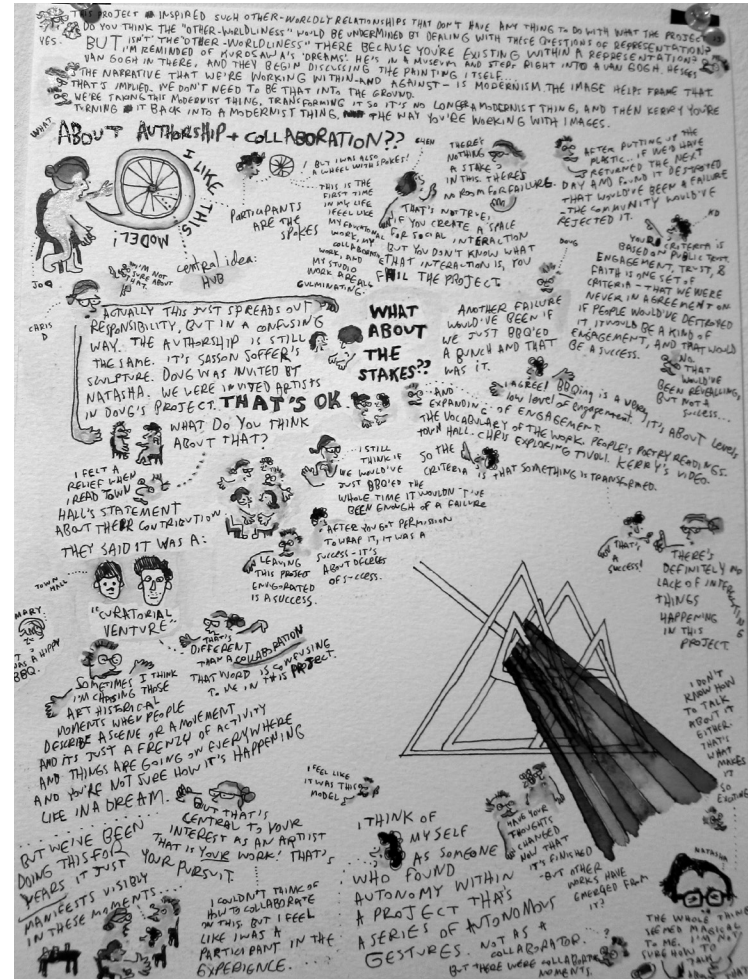
I found *SHIFT RESIDENCY* to be transformational. Being in a group identified as artist/arts-workers, and talking through the different ways we struggle, hustle, and exist gave voice to an experience I had not previously been

able to articulate. It shifted my thinking. Rather than seeking to “balance” all of the facets of my work, I was challenged to be intentional with the ways that I inhabit my role as artist-in-the-world.

For me, work is all the time. There is no breakdown between day-shift/night-shift, my job and my work. It's all part of the same messy whole that is less like a puzzle—only complete with all of its pieces in place—and more like water, existing only with both hydrogen and oxygen in the form of liquid, solid, or gas. I'm an artist-in-residence on the block where I live, at the museum that pays me a salary, in meetings, in writing, on conference calls, and in the classroom. For me, art/work is often mundane and includes email, budgets, taking out the garbage, and picking up toilet paper on the way home. It also includes a community of people engaging one another via different ways, including chance encounters and long talks, laughing (and crying) together. My *5\1\4\1 2\4\5\0\4\1\0\1\1* encouraged me to be honest about all of the different ways that I work, which helped me articulate the terms of my work as an artist and a citizen. I'm less interested in figuring out how to make a living from art, than I am in making living art.

—ELIZABETH HAMBY
Resident, 2012–2013

The EFA residency for arts-workers has recognized and connected a community hidden in plain sight—bringing together artists whose work supports other artists, to turn our attention to supporting each other's creative development.
—DOUGLAS PAULSON





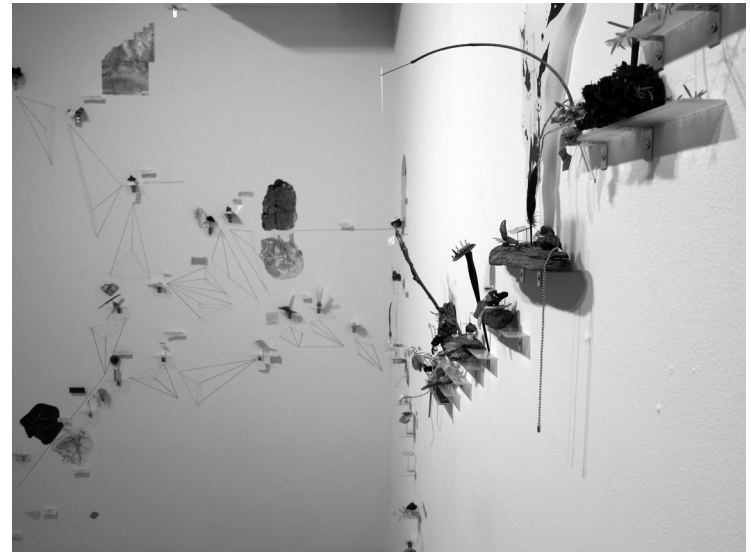
Feedback session during the studio intensive, with Elizabeth Hamby (2012).



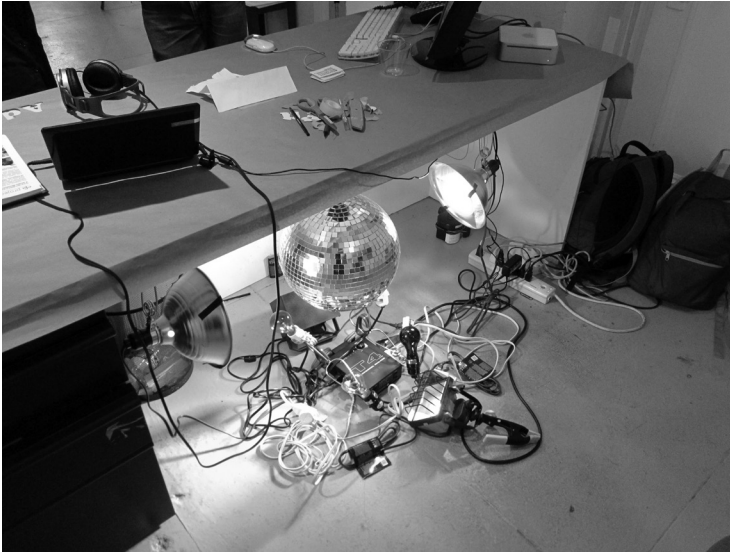
Carolyn Sickles explains her fleece felting work during a studio feedback session. August, 2013.



The 2013–2014 residents discuss Ellen Uzane Schneiderman's new paper-making experiments.



Installation by Sarah Walko during the Open House that takes place at the end of the studio intensive. August, 2012.



Sebastien Sanz de Santamaria's installation underneath the EFA Project Space receptionist desk, at the Open House for the inaugural residents 2010.



2011–2012 residents participating in an end-of-season retreat at Mildred's Lane.



Jonathan Durham (2012–2013) reflects on his residency experience during the public presentations that conclude the cycle.

In a lot of the collaborations that I do, I tend to lose my voice.
 I feel that because of this residency I was able to find my
 voice, get back to what I was saying, and understand what
 I was saying with it.
 —RACHEL VERA STEINBERG

2010–11

Tova Carlin
Sean Carroll
Paul Clay
Chantel Foretich
Amber Hawk Swanson
Felicity Hogan
Sebastien Sanz
de Santamaria
Beatrice Wolert

2011–12

Gisela Insuaste
Theresa Marchetta
Douglas Paulson
Roddy Schrock
Chad Stayrook
David Terry

2012–13

Jonathan Durham
Francis Estrada
Howard Halle
Elizabeth Hamby
Jamie Kim
Naomi Miller
Sarah Walko

2013–14

Sidd Joag
Karen Ostrom
Hatuey Ramos-Fermin
Ellen Uzane Schneiderman
Todd Shalom
Carolyn Sickles
Rachel Vera Steinberg

Organizations represented in this project include Abrons Art Center, Artists Alliance Inc., Bronx River Arts Center, Bronx Museum of the Arts, Children's Museum of Manhattan, CUE Art Foundation, Elastic City, Eyebeam Center for Art + Technology, Flux Factory, FreeDimensional, Henry Street Settlement, International Center for Photography, Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, Metropolitan Opera, Museum of Arts & Design, Museum of the City of New York, Museum of Modern Art, New York Foundation for the Arts, NURTUREart, Residency Unlimited, Time Out New York, Triangle Art Association, Vera List Center for Art + Politics at The New School, Wave Hill

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EFA Project Space, a program of the Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts, is a collaborative cross-disciplinary arts venue founded on the belief that art is directly connected to the individuals who produce it, the communities that arise because of it, and to everyday life, and that by providing an arena for exploring these connections, we empower artists to forge new partnerships and encourage the expansion of ideas.

The Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts (EFA) is a 501 (c) (3) public charity. Through its three core programs, EFA Studios, EFA Project Space and the Robert Blackburn Printmaking Workshop, EFA is dedicated to providing artists across all disciplines with space, tools and a cooperative forum for the development of individual practice. www.efanyc.org

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efa project space



The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts

