



DC COMMISSION ON THE ARTS & HUMANITIES

PUBLIC ARTS COMMITTEE REPORT

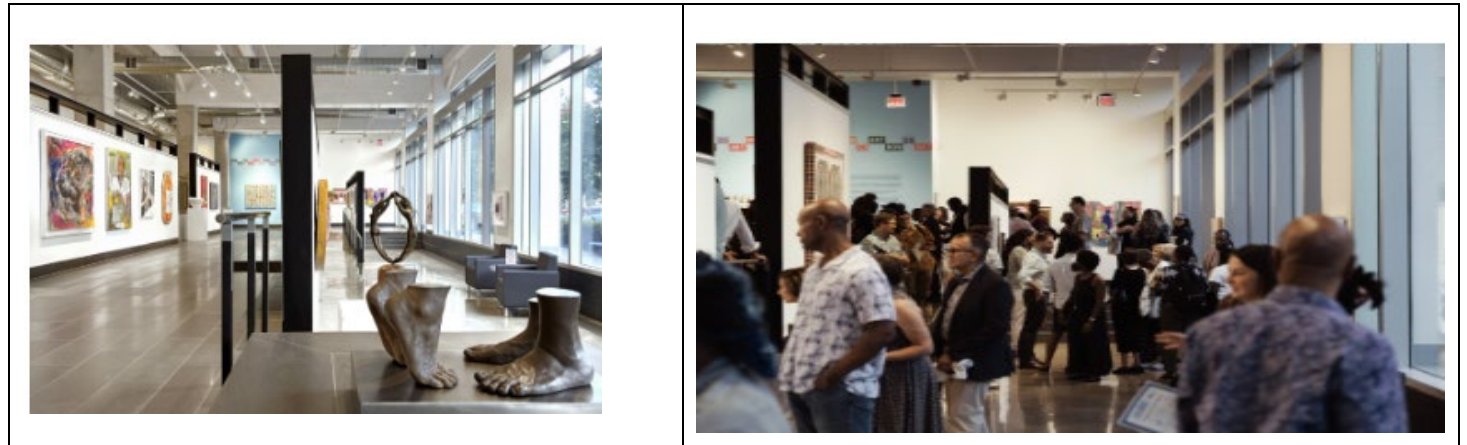
Carla Sims, Chair

September 28, 2026

Art Bank Program (ABP)

In early September, panels were held for the Art Bank Program Grant with in-person panel reviews for 134 finalists. The Public Arts Team finalized the grantee list based on panel scores, budget, and collection fit. The Public Art Committee (PAC) unanimously approved the funding recommendations and will present them to the full Commission on September 28, 2026.

On September 10, 2026, CAH opened **DC Art Now 2026** at the Eye Street Gallery, showcasing 58 finalists. The event drew hundreds of attendees to kick off **Art All Night** weekend with special tours of the Art Bank Vault, a DJ, brief remarks, and light refreshments. The exhibition runs through Friday, December 11, 2026.



Left: **DC Art Now 2026**, credit: Gregory Staley, Right: opening reception from **DC Art Now 2026**, credit: Mika Maltese

FY27 Art Exhibition (Curatorial) Grant Program (AEG)

On Monday, August 17, 2026, the FY27 AEG panel virtually reviewed nine eligible submissions. The Public Art Committee (PAC) unanimously approved the funding recommendations and will present them to the full Commission on September 28, 2026.

FY27 Juried Exhibition Grant Program (JEG)

The FY27 JEG will feature DC artists whose work explores water and waterways—touching on stewardship, displacement, spiritual reflection, environmental justice, recreation, adventure, and collective futures. The Request for Applications (RFA) opens Monday, October 19, and closes Monday, November 30, 2026 with applications from eligible DC-based artists and nonprofits. The inclusion of nonprofits is new this year to encourage wider participation. The exhibition runs from Thursday, June 10 to Friday, August 6, 2027.

FY27 Public Art Building Communities Grant Program (PABC)

On Monday, September 14, 2026, the FY27 PABC Grant Program adjudicated 12 eligible applications during a virtual panel review. Staff compiled recommendations and prepared a report, which was presented to the Public Arts Committee. The Public Art Committee (PAC) unanimously approved the funding recommendations and will present them to the full Commission on September 28, 2026.

FY26 Public Art Building Communities Grant Program (PABC)

A dedication was held with PABC grantee Shani Shih on Sunday, September 13, 2026. The mural, **Liberation is a World We Weave**, highlights activism in Adams Morgan and staff reported strong community engagement at the event, with activities for children and performances.



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Shih Mural Dimensions: 78 ft wide x 45 ft high

At the center is Arely Andrade, alongside Ana Rondon and members of the Migrant Family Collective and the National Domestic Workers Alliance, reflecting community care rooted in Black radical traditions.

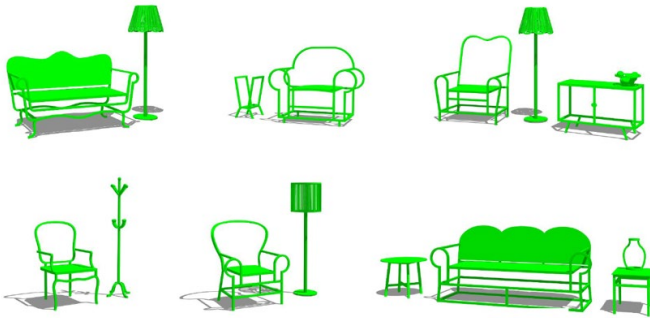
In the background, Sandra G. appears in an anti-war protest, emphasizing Adams Morgan's long commitment to global solidarity and coalition-building.

FY26 Public Art Building Communities Grant Program (PABC)

Grantee NoMa BID's dedication for **Curve** by local artist Rania Hassan will be held in early October. The sculpture honors Mamie "Peanut" Johnson, a professional baseball player who played in the American Negro Leagues. The installation is slightly delayed due to recent rains.

FY25 Public Art Building Communities Grant Program (PABC)

Grantee Southwest BID will unveil **Southwest Living Room**, a new public artwork featuring sculptural seating at six bus stops. Inspired by living-room furniture, the bright green steel pieces bring the comfort of interior spaces into the public realm, encouraging conversation and connection. Artist Bruce Willen designed the installations and artist Chelsea Ritter-Soronen will add temporary "rugs" beneath each one.



@SWBID → SWBID.ORG → INFO@SWBID.ORG

Dedication of the Southwest Business Improvement District's (BID) **Southwest Living Room:**

Friday, September 25, 2026, 9:30 A.M.

Greenleaf Recreation Center at 201 N Street SW. The six sites span locations in Southwest along M Street, 4th Street, P Street, and 1st Street SW. The Southwest BID selected sites based on ridership data and need for seating or shelter.

FY26 Color the Curb: School Safety Grant Program (CTC)

Artists Shani Shih, Hillel Smith, and JD Deardourff are continuing work on murals. The team of Lindsay Gressard and Nessar Jahanbin completed their mural for Kimball Elementary School. A dedication was held on Friday, September 18, 2026, attended by students, teachers and staff from DDOT and DCPS Arts.

The RFA for FY27 CTC was released on Monday, September 28, 2026. Changes to the RFA are designed to allow space for new grantees and requires repeat grantees to build a case for why they want to return to the program. Three informational workshops will be offered, including past grantees and in person workshops.





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FY26 Fresh Paint DC: CAH Mural Program (FPMP)

The artist team, Creative Junkfood, has an approved design and began installation in mid-September. Due to challenges with site selection and some delays with the Downtown BID, agreements have been extended for artists Kaliq Crosby, Nabeeh Bilal, and Joel Bergner to allow additional time.



Approved design for 3946 Minnesota Avenue NE (Unity Health Center) by Creative Junkfood

The FY27 FPMP RFA will open in October. The cycle will include a muralist mixer designed to encourage collaboration between emerging and established artists.

Collections Management

In early September, the team installed new artwork at the Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants, as well as in three neighborhood libraries—Bellevue, Capitol View, and Takoma Park. Plans are underway to install artworks at Georgetown Library and additional artworks at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Library.

FY27 Public Arts Work Plan

Community input for the FY2027 Public Arts Work Plan has been productive. A draft of the plan was presented and discussed during three community input sessions in September. Additional comments and suggestions were submitted via email. The team will publish the completed plan at the beginning of the fiscal year.

National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA)

The Public Arts Department will engage with the NASAA conference in DC in October through a variety of programs and panels. The team will hold a half day onsite session, touring public art leaders from around the country through notable public art projects in DC. Additionally, *“From Reactive to Strategic: Leading State Arts Agency Tech Transformation”* is a session on how state arts agencies are approaching AI policy with technology infrastructure. It will be held on Friday, October 9, 2026, at 3:45 PM - 4:45 PM with Kerry Kennedy, CAH; Kerry Kaleba, CAH; and Bethanne Abramovich Smith, Arizona Commission on the Arts on the panel.