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## PUBLIC ARTS COMMITTEE REPORT

June 16, 2025

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### PUBLIC ARTS DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

- **UPCOMING PANELS.** The Public Art Team will be paneling several grant lines over the coming months including Public Art Building Communities, Art Exhibition (Curatorial) Grants, and Art Bank. We invite the Public Art Committee members to serve as conveners.
- **COLLECTION MAPPING.** The team continues to work on efforts to research and design a plan to map the public art collection and has begun work with the Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO) to develop a map using ArcGIS. ArcGIS is an interactive web-based map used by many District agencies.
- **PUBLIC ART PLANNING.** The team is working on the creation of a one-year Public Art Plan to guide FY26 efforts. This plan will build upon the 2021 Public Art Master Plan. In absence of funding to engage a consultant on the development and community engagement needed for a 3-5 year Strategic Public Art Plan, this new plan will operate as a shorter-term, tactical plan. The team will present a draft plan to the Public Arts Committee in the coming months for review and input. The team will host a community meeting for additional engagement.
- **MURALSDC.** The Department of Public Works would like to pause the MuralsDC program for FY26 and revisit a partnership with CAH for the following fiscal year (FY27). The Public Art Team is working towards developing a pilot mural program for FY26 pending funding, possible partnerships, and site agreements.

### PUBLIC ARTS PROGRAM UPDATES

#### Public Art Building Communities Grant Program (PABC)

Nicholson Project, a FY25 Public Art Building Communities (PABC) grantee held a dedication on Wednesday, May 14. *Song of Sons* is a suite of dynamic public art installations across the district featuring the work of artist Nate Langston Palmer. The installations are inspired by his ongoing documentation of a dance crew. Composed of young Black men, the group specializes in Beat Ya Feet, a dance style that originated in and remains unique to Washington, DC.



*Nate Langston Palmer's work is seen at several sites across the District, including at Nicholson Project shown above at 2310 Nicholson Street SE*

To view all of the work follow the link. <https://guides.bloomberconnects.org/en-US/guide/theNicholsonProject/tour/0fd8bde5-7fd4-41cf-bba3-4a557ba78e4c>

The FY26 Public Art Building Communities Request for Applications (RFA) will be open until Monday, July 21. The final workshop will be held on Friday, June 20 at 10 am.

### Art Exhibition (Curatorial) Grant Program (AEG)

The RFA for the FY26 Art Exhibition (Curatorial) Grant Program (AEG) is live now through Monday, June 30 at 9 pm. The RFA will be used to identify two exhibition proposals. The recommended proposals will receive grants for curation and installation in FY26. The final workshop for grantees will be held on Monday, June 9 at 12 noon.

### Behind the Uniform

Two successful final events were held for the *Behind the Uniform* exhibition in the 200 I Street Gallery. This included a community workshop called *Song in My Heart* held on Saturday, May 17, and a closing reception that was held on Wednesday, May 21. Congressperson Delia Ramirez from Illinois was in attendance. Her district includes the National Veterans Art Museum (NVAM).

### Queer Art Salon

CAH's final FY25 AEG grantees will open their exhibition on Friday, June 13 from 5-7 pm in honor of World Pride. Queer Art Salon will feature artworks that reflect a spectrum of identities and artistic expressions and celebrate the full range of the Queer experience. Special performances will be held during the opening and the curators are planning several related events and public programs throughout the exhibition.

### FY25 Color the Curb: School Safety Grant Program

The four FY25 Color the Curb grantees have completed all required grant paperwork. All grantees have started work on their projects, including site visits to the DC Public School classrooms with which they were paired. Installations will occur in the coming months.

### Art Collections Management

The Public Art Team is currently working on 22 requests for artworks through the Art Bank Loan program. Work was recently installed in the shared suite of the Mayor's Office on Latino Affairs (MOLA), the Mayor's Office of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning Affairs (MOLGBTQA), the Mayor's Office on African Affairs (MOAA), the Mayor's Office of Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing (MODDHH), and DC Serve. Recently we finished framing all FY24 Art Bank works. Additionally, CAH will lend two artworks, one by Alonzo Davis and another by Amy Sherald for *Before the Americas*, an exhibition at George Mason University.



Left to right: Shoshanna Ahart *Avon Place*, 1991; Lloyd McNeill, *Rainbow People*, 1991 (installed at MOLA). Nahosenay Negussie, *Under the Umbrella*, 2015; Michael B. Platt, *The Three of Us*, 2006 (installed at Serve DC). Amare Selfu, *Visible Lines*, 2018 (installed at MOAA)



The Commissioners recommended that the Public Art Team collaborate with District agencies borrowing works from the Art Bank collection to publicize via social media regarding their new installations. With this marketing effort, information and experiences about the Art Bank Loan program would reach broader audiences.

### **FY26 Art Bank Grant Program (ABP)**

The FY26 Art Bank Grant Program (ABP) RFA closed on Monday, May 19. CAH received more than 320 applications. The Public Arts Team is currently vetting applications for eligibility, preparing materials, and assembling panels. The team offered three workshops, open office hours, and countless hours of one-on-one technical assistance for applicants to the program.

### **Art Bank Program, OIG Report and 50-Mile Radius**

CAH maintains that the current Art Bank guidelines comply with DC Code § 39-204(3). Although some artists do live outside of the District (and must be within a 50-mile radius for the Art Bank Program), many have their studios and artistic practices based and anchored in DC and work closely with the District community. The policy also supports artists who may have long-standing connections living and working in DC and were forced to relocate due to financial pressures like increased housing costs and demands on studio space.

The **Art Bank Program** has established goals that focus on benefiting both DC artists and DC residents through the program. Thirty percent of the applicant's score is based on the artwork's value as a cultural asset to DC, ensuring that the artist is a current resident of the District of Columbia. Also, the artist's impact statement provides a significant connection to DC through their artistic career.

In the aggregated grant periods reviewed in the OIG report i.e., FY21 through FY24, CAH issued over \$142 million in grants. Of this number, only \$500,000, in total, was issued to grantees living outside of the District of Columbia. This amounts to 0.35% of CAH award dollars issued during the period.