

**AFA
ANNUAL
REPORT
2023**



Introduction

Arts for Art was founded in 1996 to create a platform for the very best Creative Improvised Music and Arts. At that time there was almost nowhere you could hear this music and nowhere for a multi-arts aesthetic. From the now iconic Vision Festival to neighborhood InGardens Series, AFA has created a strong presence for Improvised Music and Arts. AFA prioritized diversity to address the erasure of Black and Brown creatives. This struggle is ongoing. AFA has strived to be an example of Fair Pay, that is ensuring that Artists are always paid a reasonable fee for their performances. In this time of unrest and uncertainty, large numbers of cultural consumers are unwilling or unable to pay a fair price for performances. This means that your support is more important than ever.

Growing Younger

In 2022/23 AFA continued to include younger artists in all of our programming. We started a pilot program that involved them in the curatorial process. This coming year we will expand on this to include more curators in an Artist Series that is focused on building a younger, more diverse audience.

Last year, we introduced the Inter-Generational Ensemble (IGE) under the umbrella of our Music is Mine education program, and we will be opening the program up to new musicians of all ages in this coming year.

Staff

Todd Nicholson
Patricia Nicholson
Danilo Powell-Lima
Nathan Chamberlain
Eriq Robinson

Consultants

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Michael Lucio Sternbach - Video
Stephen Schmidt - Audio Engineer

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Patricia Ali, treasurer
Jo Wood-Brown, secretary
Tom Carhart
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Jason Kao Hwang
James Brandon Lewis
Ava Mendoza
William Parker
Matthew Shipp
Steve Swell
Michael T.A. Thompson
Fay Victor






Arts for Art is dedicated to the exceptional creativity that originated in the African American multi-arts jazz culture that utilizes improvisation to express a larger, more positive dream of inclusion and freedom.



VISION FESTIVAL: IMPROVISING THE FUTURE

Joëlle Léandre LifeTime Achievement

 142 artists
 38 performances
 6 days



June 2023, Arts for Art celebrated 27 years of the Vision Festival honoring Joelle Leandre and Reggie Workman for their LifeTime Achievements. We opened the festival with 2 days of conferences during the day followed by Films on FreeJazz artists at night. This was followed up by 4 to 5 events per night over 6 days at Roulette featuring the best of FreeJazz and we included poetry, dance and visual art. We also partnered with FourOneOne to feature an additional knock-out band and an Open Jam.



Reggie Workman LifeTime Achievement



Conferences and Film Screenings

June 10, 2023 at The Clemente

Conference on the Legacies of Black Creative Arts / Spirit of the Ancestors
Addressing the profound unifying spirituality underlying traditional and cutting edge Black Creative Arts and the struggle for justice and non-erasure.

Film: "JANZ IN THE MOMENT" by Joanna Kiernan, a feature documentary about the artist Robert Janz (1932-2021).

June 12, 2023 at Roulette Intermedium

The Ecology of Media and MUSIC

This conference focuses on enhancing accessibility and inclusivity in the creative arts. A panel consisting of musicians and media professionals will discuss amplifying the impact of music through media channels, fostering diversity and inclusivity, nurturing emerging talent, and exploring the intersection of technology, media, and music.

Affamée by Christian Pouget, on Vision Festival Lifetime Achievement award recipient Joëlle Léandre, following her as she creates, rehearses and performs "Can You Hear Me?", her piece for a 10 piece ensemble.

In Modern Time by Robert Brewster, a biopic on the great alto saxophonist Sonny Simmons, following him back to his birthplace of Monroe, Louisiana.

Carter Mathis, Nelson Maldonado-Torres, **VISION NOISE 2023 JUNE 10**, Sula Spurr Janet Ezeas, Marcia Morena Vega, Anthony Jerome Ross Adam, Harizut Rivera Omenaca, Michael Heller, Adam Zanis, William Parker, Lee Maysheem Ross, Kasea Scott, Fay Victor, James Brandon Lewis

Visual artwork was projected in conjunction with the music performances at Roulette, including work by Miriam Parker, Mincho Vega, Amir Bey, Gill Arno, Dick Griffin, William Parker, Matt Lavelle, Dawn Bisio, Jackson Krall, Nissa Nishikawa, Selina Trepp, Melanie Dyer and Patricia Nicholson



June 19 2023

Kidd Jordan Memorial



Kidd Jordan Memorial

At the end of the festival, a night long celebration of the late great FreeJazz master Kidd Jordan who received a lifetime achievement in 2008 and performed at Vision every year through 2019. The evening consisted of music, poetry and dance.

111 artists
40 performances
9 days

INGARDENS

September 5 to October 10, 2022

In Gardens is our annual free performance series celebrating community as we gather outdoors to see and hear music, poetry and dance.



This year we expanded our series to include events in the summer on Stanton St. Lower East Side and at Governors Island in addition to six weeks in Community Gardens.

EVENTS

JAZZ LIBRE

November 5, 10, 11 and 12, 2022

31 artists
13 performances
4 days

Jazz Libre highlighted the diversity of our artists, with the opening night free. This 3-day event focused on the African Diaspora in Latin America. It was presented in partnership with The Clemente as part of the Borimix Festival.



FAMILY GATHERING

November 19 2022

46 artists
13 performances
1 day

The first annual Family Gathering event took place in the fall of 2022. Intended as a kickoff to our Artists & Friends year-end donor appeal, the event was a celebration of the multicultural and multigenerational creative community that Arts for Art serves throughout the year.

In addition to gathering over 50 musicians, dancers, poets and visual artists, we also recognized the contributions of key community members, including musicians Cooper-Moore and James Brandon Lewis; superfans/volunteers Richard and Roberta Berger, and City Council member Christopher Marte.



RIVBEA REVISITED

January 4 to 8, 2023

42 artists
14 performances
5 days

Arts for Art was inspired by the multiple acts of self-determination that the Lofts embodied and the powerful music that it fostered. By the mid 1990's venues that presented creative improvised music had all but disappeared. In 1996 Patricia Nicholson formed AFA to again make available the creative improvised music and art in NYC, where it had once flourished.

In 2022, we discovered that 24 Bond Street, the iconic Sam Rivers Loft "Studio Rivbea" had become the Gene Frankel Theatre. Gail Thacker, the theatre's director, opened up the space for AFA to present Studio Rivbea Revisited, with a week of inspired concerts that evoked the great creative music of the Lofts!





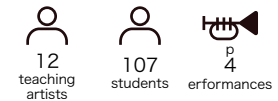
Kicking off our celebration of Joëlle Léandre, we collaborated with RogueArt founder Michel Dorbon and filmmaker Christian Pouget in documenting a special solo performance and interview with Joëlle Léandre. She discusses what it meant to be a woman in the music industry when she was starting out in the 70s, and what it means in a music industry still controlled by men today.



Digital Audience & Brand Awareness

In the pursuit of our ongoing organic social media strategy, we observed notable advancements in the organic reach of our messages across key platforms: Facebook, Instagram, and X (Twitter). Utilizing in-platform amplification mechanisms, we achieved a remarkable 160.72% Year-over-Year (YoY) surge in Facebook post reach and a 40.13% YoY rise in Instagram post engagement, comparing favorably to the corresponding period in the previous fiscal year. Similarly, X (Twitter) experienced a substantial uptick of 130.30% in user engagement over the past year.

Commencing January 2023, we initiated strategic action to bolster brand awareness and engagement on two emerging platforms, TikTok and YouTube Shorts. These endeavors align with our goal to engage younger audiences through an organic growth strategy. Within the relatively brief period of our



EDUCATION

Education

In the past year, Arts for Art's Music is Mine (MiM) education program strengthened its relationship with existing schools, new families, and developed new programs. With improvisation as the basis of pedagogy, we've strengthened collaborative skills; increased cultural awareness of the roles improvisation takes in musical traditions all over the world; improved situational awareness; developed leadership skills; and instilled in students that they are capable of making music (individually and collaboratively) with the tools they already have.

We hosted 82 workshops with partner schools the Institute for Collaborative Education (ICE) and Urban Assembly School of Music and Art (UA), free and open public workshops at Children's Magical Garden and First Street Green, and intergenerational workshops at The Clemente. These intimate opportunities taught students group improvisation through careful listening, developed student confidence by encouraging them to bring their own compositions for development and group performance, introduced students to rhythms, melodies, and instruments of different cultures, and much more.



Budget

During the past fiscal year, we experienced a slight increase in individual giving, and a slight increase in ticket sales indicates an ongoing demand for in-person programming coming out of the past few years of mostly online events. There was a decrease in government funding, however FY22 was exceptional in the level of COVID related public support received, so this number could be seen as a return to normal. Overall our expenses remained the same with the exception of production expenses due to a simplified production model which resulted in an increase in the overall number of events we produced while decreasing the costs required to present them.

Income	2023	2022	2021
Earned Income	101095	94834	111568
Government Support	96290	168000	72350
Foundation Grants	245230	273650	318656
Individual Donors	164787	153276	169575
	607402	689760	672149

Expenses	2023	2022	2021
Artist Fees	141150	147965	160548
Administration	398515	398834	312142
Marketing	9875	11172	6186
Technical/Production	71661	115722	76435
Space/Office Rent	13528	10816	12841
	634729	684509	568152

Institutional Support

Jerome Foundation, Ruth and Jacob Epstein Foundation, Howard Gilman Foundation, Mid Atlantic Arts, Rockefeller Brothers Foundation, Robert D. Bielecki Foundation, Chamber Music America, Henry Luce Foundation, Jazz Foundation of America, New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, New York State Council on the Arts and Council Members Chris Marte and Carlina Rivera, National Endowment for the Arts.

Gender Diversity

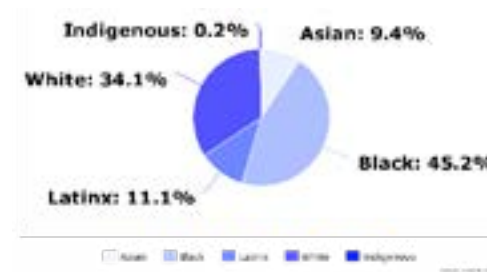
People who have been labeled female have been discouraged from following a musical career, They have received fewer opportunities and suffered abuse. People who do not conform to gender stereotypes have traditionally kept their identity to themselves due to discrimination and harassment. Most musicians over 35 don't discuss their gender. For younger musicians gender identity is extremely important. Because Arts for Art books artists of all ages it is difficult to talk about gender statistics. However AFA is committed to diversity. We respect everyone's identity and are developing programs that are consciously inclusive.



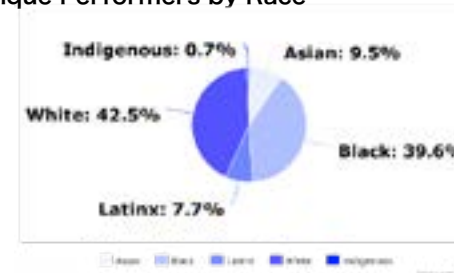
Racial Diversity

Arts for Art promotes diversity by seeking out and shining a light on African-American improvising FreeJazz musicians of all ages. This art was born out of the African-American struggle for equal rights. However the practices of free improvisation and Jazz are increasingly dominated by white men. While resisting this trend AFA encourages the highest standards of improvisational and compositional art.

Performances by Race



Unique Performers by Race



Donors

\$5,000+

Fred & Edith Allen, Tom Carhart, La Vida Feliz Foundation, George N. and Mary Lindsay Fund, Yassen Roussev, John Schiek, Brad Smith

\$1,000-\$4,999

Patricia Ali, Maria Arias, Rachel Cook, Closey Dickey, Whit Dickey, Alan Feller, George Hirose, Satya Pemmaraju, Bruce Raynor, Peter Shwartz, Tom Silverstein, Emery Snyder, Hiroko Takada

\$499-\$999

Richard & Roberta Berger, Ray Brock, Mary Calabro, Kathy Hendrickson, Frank Hiehle, Joyce Jones, Madeleine Kamber, Ariane Lopez Huici, Keith Martin, Keith McCarthy, Sandeep Mehta, Gayle Morgan, Julie Nicholson, William Parker, Frank Sakalinis, Jane Smith, Alexis Strongin, Daniel Wiener, James Wright

<\$499

Tim Ahles, Marlene Albanese, Clifford Allen, Toni Altenstrasser, Dorrie Ameen, Ronen Amit, Richard Anderson, Mary Anisi, Gene Ashton, Albey Balgochian, Robert Bellach, David Belmont, Louie Belogenis, Rachel Young Binter, Bernhard Blöchl, Larry Blood, John Blum, Karen Borca, Don Brown, Jo Wood Brown, Rob Brown, Michael Brownell, Thomas Buckner, Nadine Budbill, Dave Burrell, Juan Pablo Carletti, Terri Lyne Carrington, Geraldine Celerier, Pamela Chen, Andrew Chiappetta, Scott Clark, Ashton Coghlan, Sylvie Cohen, John Colton, Jean Cook, Wesley Covey, Paul Crellin, Beth Cummins, Scott Currie, Andrew Cyrille, Jeni Dahmus Farah, Joseph Daley, William Darkes, Doretha Davidson, Jeff Dayton-Johnson, Claire de Brunner, Andrew Demirjian, Nimish Dhawan, Christie Diaz, Robert Dick, Caroline Dickey, Lynn Dillon, Bjoern Dirlack, Jeff Douglas, Mark Dresser, Melanie Dyer, Brian Earley, Lois Eby, Dan Edes, Ken Eisen, Erik Ellestad, Jeffrey Evans, Susan Feiner, Ken Filiano, Michael Foster, Paul Frank, Guy Fraser, Greg Fuchs, Gary Funston, Ian Gendreau, Frank Gill, Kipp Gilmore-Clough,

Justin Glick, Patrick Golden, Amy Gordon, Hilliard Greene, Mary Griffin, Amy Grindeland, Jason Gross, Mary Halvorson, Mia Hansford, Robin Hardman, Paul Harless, Bill Harris, Josh Heisler, Gerry Hemingway, Jody Henefeld, Benjamin Herpel-Dobay, William Hery, Steve Hirsh, Kathi-Jane Holmes, Patrick Holmes, William Hooker, Lyn Horton, Clif Hubby, Georgia Hubley, Ulrich Hübner, Jason Hwang, Robert Iannapallo, ony Iantosca, Eva Iglesias, David Jenkins, Robert Johnston, Larry Jones, Ben Kafka, Eva Kapanadze, Letitia Kashani, Dave Kaufman, Olympia Kazi, James Kelly, Amirtha Kidambi, Amanda Kiefer, Tyler Kim, John King, Kyoko Kitamura, Masahiko Kono, Clifford Korman, David Kreuter, Peter Kuhn, Dan Kurfirst, Oliver Lake, Ingrid Laubrock, Oliver Lawson, Marek Lazarski, Richard Leach, James Brandon Lewis, Susan Littenberg, Fred Lonberg-Holm, Luis Lopez, Ofra Magidor, Anson Mah, Alanna Maharajh Stone, Kate Malchik, Susan Mannheimer, Andres Marquez, Reggie Marshall, Alexandra Mastoon, Hiroyuki Masuko, Rachel McBeth, John McCormick, Michael McGinnis, Richard McLeese, Christina Mednick, Francisco Mela, Pierre Menard, Alan Michael, Piotr Michalowski, Max Moondoc, Cooper Moore, Urania Mylonas, Nathan Nakadegawa-Lee, Sam Newsome, Uwe Noldt, Ed Packer, Katerina Pansera, Miriam Parker, John Parran, Scott Pollard, Roslyn Powell, Chris Preston, George Nelson Preston, Barbara Profitt, Kyle Quass, Tom Rainey, Mary Read, Jonathan Reisin, Dave Rempis, Jean Carla Rodea, Anita Romero Warren, Mara Rosenbloom, Steven Rosenstein, Luciano Rossetti, Ned Rothenberg, Benz Roxas, Frank Rubolino, Michael Sarian, George Scala, Klaus Schröder, Peter Schulz, Ron Scott, Michael Scott German, Tina Seligman, Gladys Serrano, David Sewelson, Rahmat Shabazz, Peter Shaindlin, Steven Shalit, Phillippa Shao, Stanley Sheats, Glenn Siegel, Mark Siegel, Marcel Franck Simon, Ilana Simons, Valerie Simopoulos, Donald Walter Snowden, Lisa Sokolov, Alex Soreff, A.H. Sphar, Peter Stepek, Ariella Stok, Robert Sutherland-Cohen, Pete Swanson, Steve Swell, Joyce Swindell, Greg Thomas, Michael TA Thompson, Kate Tolentino, Lloyd Trufelman, Jeffrey Tsai, Fay Victor, Russell Vines, Kenny Warren, Jason Weiss, Ken Weiss, David Weller, Fumiko Wellington, Lili White, Marc Wiener, Michael Wilderman, Tom Wilkins, Andrea Wolper, Richard Wood, Eri Yamamoto, John Yarling, Hisako Yasuma, Pierre Zaleski.

AFA VALUES

AFA keeps growing our community of innovative musicians, dancers, poets and visual artists with a public that cares about culture and justice.

The art is built on democratic community ideals. Its disciplined intensity speaks of equity, justice and freedom. So AFA has worked to create an inclusive, diverse and equitable space in which the artists and the public we serve can thrive.

Community: Diversity of race, age, and gender define AFA's creative improvising community. AFA creates opportunities for diverse artists to meet, share ideas and perform. AFA creates events that encourage artists and audiences to interact.

Justice, Diversity, Inclusion, Respect: AFA provides safe spaces for artists to experiment, develop and excel creatively. AFA respects artists by ensuring fair compensation, and audiences by ensuring economic access to programs and performances. AFA organizes artists' efforts to respond to contemporary social issues. AFA curates for diversity and inclusion.

Improvisation: Improvisation is the sophisticated integration of all aspects of creation in real time. AFA curates artists who have developed their own unique improvisational vocabulary and voice. This highly developed form is at the core of AFA's mission. It is also an element of AFA's organizational culture wherein AFA relies upon its tenets by operating flexibly in order to respond to opportunities as they arise.

Commitment: AFA respects artists' commitment to their life's work, and reflects that commitment by seeking and supporting new works, audiences and partnerships that help artists sustain creative and professional growth.