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New York City Council Hearing

FOR THE RECORD

Performance Space 122  
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As the new Executive Artistic Director at Performance Space 122 I am joining the institution when it is at a crossroads. After five years of renovation, generously funded by the City, we are looking forward to moving back to our beloved East Village home on 150 First Avenue.

From all the issues the Cultural Plan is addressing Equity and Affordability are the two subjects that preoccupy us the most these days.

Although we will have the great fortune to reside in a beautiful City-owned building our institution faces a big challenge in covering the annual costs of operating and maintaining our building and the core staff who are essential to offering meaningful cultural events and experiences for the NYC community. That is why we are very hopeful for the New Coalition of Culturals in City Buildings advocating for (1) lowering the base income costs (2) direct investment in artists (3) support for professional development.

Having worked at MoMA PS1, which is part of the Cultural Institutions Group (CIG), I have personally experienced the difference the DCA can make in promoting health and sustainability of cultural institutions.

Secondly, yet very much related, we are actively working on ways to have our program, staff, and board reflect the rich diversity of NYC even more than before. In my former position at MoMA PS1, I experienced first hand how working with artists as well as staff from diverse backgrounds made for more interesting, meaningful, and urgent programming and also helped the institution broaden and diversify its audiences. That said, the development of a more diverse program did not come easily for reasons that are systemic as well as historical. One of which is the funding structure of the arts. Institutions of our size heavily depend on outside funding and support and it is a matter of fact that white male artists receive the best funding and this disadvantages places like PS122 as we strive to produce work that reflects the cultural landscape of our city. I am well aware of the important work the City Council and the DCA have been doing on the Cultural Plan addressing these issues and we offer our wholehearted support and will continue to drive this point as the plan moves forward.

Thank You.