

**Free Arts NYC**

An abstract, vibrant illustration featuring a central hand with fingers spread, rendered in a light skin tone. The hand is set against a background of large, overlapping, organic shapes in various colors including red, orange, yellow, pink, purple, blue, and green. The overall style is reminiscent of mid-century modern or pop art.

**2023 YEAR IN REVIEW**

**In 2023, thanks to your support, Free Arts NYC continues our mission of providing arts access and mentorship in under-resourced communities.**

I am thrilled to be back in our office, now aptly named the “Free Arts Studio,” symbolizing the collaborative ways we create and grow together. Our dedicated team continuously innovates, developing programs and curricula, experimenting with supplies, hosting events, and training mentors to empower young individuals in their artistic pursuits.

What excites me the most is witnessing our young people thrive within the creative space. This year, I visited our interns in galleries, artist studios, and design labs. I volunteered at numerous Free Arts Days, assisting young artists in creating community-focused projects. Every week more students find inspiration and support in our studio while crafting their art and building portfolios.

Our commitment to expanding access and opportunities for the next generation of creatives remains unwavering. It is a testament to the tireless dedication of our staff, boards, mentors, volunteers, community partners, and donors who turn this vision into a reality.

**Liz Hopfan**  
Founder & Executive Director

Reflecting on our past achievements, we’ve identified new priorities to shape the vibrant future we envision. We’re confident that slight adjustments will create a substantial impact, empowering Free Arts NYC to further fulfill our mission for the next 25 years.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

**Empower COMMUNITIES** through arts and mentoring programs for youth to develop creativity, confidence, and the skills to succeed.

**Strengthen PARTNERS** in our community to broaden and scale Free Arts NYC’s impact.

**Develop and cultivate relationships with DONORS** to enable Free Arts NYC to achieve its fundraising goals and enable its mission.

**Make Free Arts NYC a great place to work and volunteer for OUR PEOPLE** so they can focus on what matters—our mission.

## LOOKING AHEAD 2024–2028

### **Teen Arts Program Vision**

Strengthen the impact of long-term relationships with students from age 12-23 and support them with education, skill building, and resources to obtain a professional career in the creative industry after graduation.

### **Free Arts Day Program Vision**

Build a Free Arts Day model that works closely and consistently with a specific network of community partners for youth ages 5-12 allowing the program to become a pathway to the Teen Arts Program.

*Free Arts NYC empowers youth from underserved communities through art and mentoring programs to develop their creativity, confidence, and skills to succeed.*

## TEEN HIGHLIGHT

“Free Arts is **one of the most amazing**, considerate, professional, supportive, and creative programs for any young person in New York City. If anyone needs **guidance** with a **great community**, Free Arts is the perfect program. They **give security** and amazing **support**. The program helped me figure out through experience, **meetings**, **artist visits**, and more what I want to do. Being in the program since I was a teenager helped me build a **professionalism** that I am beyond grateful for. **Free Arts has given me the time and space to figure myself out.**”

**-Colby**

Senior at Lehman College, Aspiring Animator

## ACHIEVEMENTS

- 5 Years in Program
- Internships at Getty Images, Cynthia Rowley, Rema Hort Mann Foundation, Maharam Studios and Free Arts NYC
- Included in two youth exhibitions at Sotheby's
- FUTURA For the Future Scholarship recipient
- Led two workshops with Tiffany & Co. employees



Colby in front of her design at Maharam



# TEEN ARTS PROGRAM

Our **T**een **A**rts **P**rogram offers young people ages 12-23 the **opportunity** of long-term, 1-on-1 **mentorship**, thoughtfully matched to support their interests and goals for an experience that's academically enriching, creatively inspiring, and professionally **empowering**. We **T.A.P.** into talent through three core tracks:

## PORTFOLIO DEVELOPMENT



## CREATIVE LAB



## INTERNSHIPS



We provide **resources** to make our programs equitable. We cover **transportation costs**, supply students with **technology** and **equipment**, provide **food**, **art supplies**, and **stipends** for additional materials.



Merlin, *Imagery*, 2023, color pencil

We **create space** for teens and their mentors to **come together** and embark on **creative journeys** that **supercharge personal growth** through high-quality, high-impact, transformative art and mentorship programs.

### Participants attend:

**Colleges:** Albany State University, Art Center College of Design, Bard College, Baruch College, Borough of Manhattan Community College, Fashion Institute of Technology, Fordham University, Howard University, Hunter College, Lehman College, Marymount Manhattan College, Mercy College, New York University, Queens College, School of Visual Arts, SUNY Plattsburgh, The City College of New York, University of Wisconsin Madison

**High Schools:** Dr. Richard Izquierdo Health & Science Charter School, High School of Art & Design, High School of Fashion Industries, Millennium Art Academy, Pelham Lab High School, The Urban Assembly School for Applied Math & Science

**Middle Schools:** Albert Shanker Community School, Central Park East II, Harlem Academy, Mott Hall II

- 100%** **Accepted** to a school of their choice
- 100%** **Demonstrated** gains in positive self-esteem & self-management
- 95%** **Employed** in their first paid Internship
- 87%** **Increased** social capital via positive bonds with peers & industry professionals

# PORTFOLIO DEVELOPMENT

This program pairs 7th and 11th graders 1:1 with **mentors** who help them build stunning **visual arts portfolios**, dive into researching prospective schools, and navigate the challenges of **applying, interviewing, and auditioning** for high schools and colleges.



Painting demonstration by Alexandra Grounds

## STUDIO VISITS + FIELD TRIPS

- Gallery Talk with Bony Ramirez
- Armory Art Show
- Studio Visit with Derrick Adams
- National Portfolio Day

## WORKSHOPS

- Intro to Painting
- Figure & Still Life Drawing
- College & High School Applications
- How to Photograph Artwork
- SVA College Workshop



Jeffrey Deitch Gallery



Third Rail, 2023, oil on canvas

*This piece depicts a young child walking on the third rail as if it was a tightrope. I wanted to show the hopefulness and imagination that childhood brings juxtaposing the foul world children are born into.*

—River, 11th Grade, Aspiring Artist



Portfolio Development sets students on the path to artistic and academic excellence.

35 mentors

35 7th & 11th graders

90+ hours per student

Laptops, iPads, and Adobe Creative Suite provided

# CREATIVE LAB

Creative Lab provides unprecedented **opportunities** for students to engage directly with employees of all levels at **creative companies**. It's uniquely designed to offer participants intimate **access** to **explore** diverse **career paths** and engage in insightful **conversations** with industry professionals about their companies, areas of expertise, and **journeys to success**.

**Students are introduced to careers they dream about and others they didn't know existed.**

## COMPANY VISITS

- Argodesign
- Blueprint NYC
- Fairchain
- Framestore
- Gensler
- Gkids
- Marian Goodman Gallery
- Marmol Radziner
- NY Studio School
- PepsiCo
- Shawna Mills
- Sony
- Tiffany & Co.
- Titmouse
- White Columns

## WORKSHOPS

- Eric Haze Studio Visit
- Financial Literacy: Understanding Paychecks
- Resume Writing + Mock Interviews
- Intro to the Workplace with Arts Consulting Group
- Writing Cover Letters & Artist Bios with NYFA

*What is Sony doing to reconcile its carbon footprint?*  
 -En, 10th Grade, Aspiring Advertiser



Panel discussion at Sony. Facing page: Marmol Radziner, Marmol Radziner, White Columns, Marian Goodman Gallery

42  
9th-12th  
grade students

42  
mentors

17  
companies

54  
employees

50+  
hours  
per student



## TEEN HIGHLIGHT

“My experience has been the best. Creative Lab is a space for personal and professional **growth**. It’s a **safe space** for creatives. I’ve been introduced to **opportunities** and **resources** I wouldn’t have gotten if it wasn’t for this program. The workshops helped me **develop my resume** and introduced me to the expectations of a professional workspace. My **mentor has guided me** through the college application process and given me **insight** to the career I want to pursue—**architecture**. The company visits led me to network and **ask important questions**. I visited an architecture firm, Marmol Radziner, and saw the in-depth process of designing a property for construction. Creative Lab helped me to be **more responsible** as well as **improve my communication skills**. I’m forever grateful.”

**-Isaura**

Freshman at City College, Aspiring Architect

## ACHIEVEMENTS

- 3 Years in Program
- Moyer Martinez Grant recipient
- FUTURA For the Future Scholarship recipient
- Learning Pod participant with DXA Studios and Blueprint NYC
- Included in three youth exhibitions at Sotheby’s
- Macaulay Honors Program



# INTERNSHIPS

High school and college-aged students **transform** their **creativity** into **valuable career paths** through **paid internships**, kickstarting their **professional journeys** at creative companies aligned with their interests. Students gain practical experience while building their **resumes**, expanding their **social capital**, and enhancing their **career readiness skills**.

## INTERNSHIP & LEARNING POD PARTNERS

- |                      |                         |                        |                         |
|----------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Anne James New York  | Derek Fordjour Studios  | Consulting Inc.        | Foundation              |
| Artnoir              | DXA Studios             | LGD Gallery            | Salon 21                |
| Blueprint NYC        | Elliott Berman Textiles | Maharam Studios        | Sotheby's               |
| The Brant Foundation | Ford Foundation         | Masc Hospitality Group | Stitchroom              |
| Bustle               | FORMah Gallery          | Mitchell Inness &      | Tariku Shiferaw Studios |
| Canvas NYC           | Free Arts NYC           | Nash Gallery           | Threads of Habit        |
| Catbird              | Hill Art Foundation     | Reclypt                | White Columns Gallery   |
| Conrad Hotel         | Kaleidoscope            | Rema Hort Mann         |                         |



Reviewing resumes and practicing mock interviews



Internship kickoff at LGD Gallery

56 paid internships • 25 creative companies • 10-40 hours per week • commuter stipends provided



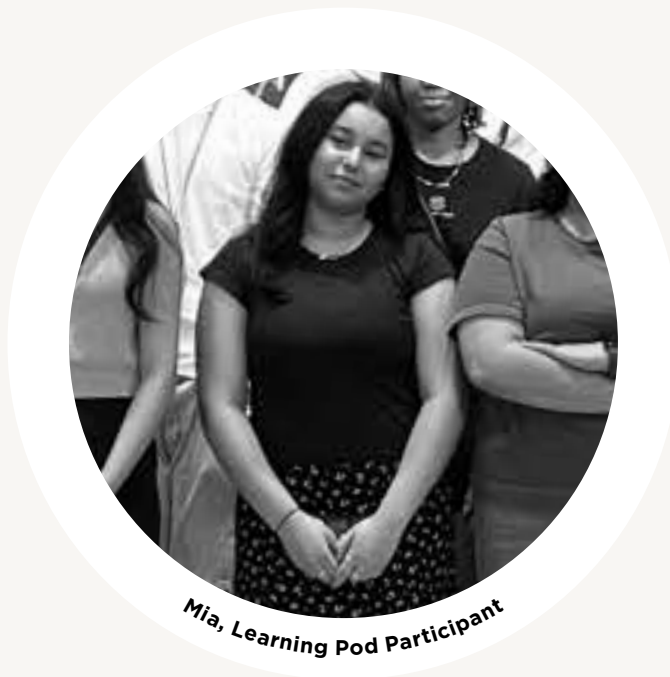
Jackie, Intern at Derek Fordjour's Studio

### WORKSHOPS

- Career Preparedness with Framestore
- Site Visit at LGD Gallery
- Art Entrepreneurship with NYFA
- Social Media Campaigns with Criteo
- Laws of Creativity with Jayaram Law

### LEARNING PODS

Paid to learn: 6-week immersive program with 10-15 hours a week at DXA Studios, Blueprint NYC, and Sotheby's.



Mia, Learning Pod Participant

*Before my internship, I was introverted. I didn't like big crowds or speaking too much. As I met with different companies, I gradually learned that communicating is not as hard as I thought. I'm now more open to new people and am asking as many questions as I possibly can to better help myself.*

-Mia, 12th Grade, Aspiring Creative



# TEEN HIGHLIGHT

Maharam has hosted interns from our program for three years. This year, Mai created digital textile designs while working with the Communications, Product Management, and Media teams.



Mai reviewing her textile-inspired work with her manager

**“It’s a fun internship that widens my perspective in the working industry. I get to see many different departments and how they work together to create textiles and other products. The people are so kind. Overall, it’s just an amazing place to be in and learn about the work.”**

**-Mai**  
12th Grade, The High School of Fashion Industries, Aspiring Architect

# SCHOLARSHIP

The **FUTURA for the Future Scholarship Fund** was seeded with a **\$100,000 gift** from Lenny McGurr, our 2022 gala honoree. In 2023, we awarded **\$31,500 in scholarships** to 38 Free Arts NYC students interested in pursuing the arts **academically or professionally**. Students can apply for \$1,000 of **unrestricted funding** annually.

**94%**  
are People of Color

**60%**  
have a 3.0 GPA or higher

**82.5%**  
are dependent on financial aid

**55%**  
first-generation college students



*Being a commuter student with a low-income household, this scholarship was instrumental in helping me cope with the financial stressors that come with being a student. I use the MTA daily; reliable transportation is essential to my education.*

-Nayellis, Junior, Fordham University, Studying Data Visualization



*Even though I get financial aid, it’s very hard to pay for the amount of materials they ask us to have in class. I’ll be able to pay for those materials and not fall behind in classes that are required for me.*

-Makeda, Sophomore, ArtCenter College of Design, Aspiring Designer

# FREE ARTS DAY PROGRAM

The **Free Arts Day Program** sparks imagination in 6-12-year-olds through **art exploration**. In partnership with over **40 community organizations**, transitional housing facilities, and schools, we reached over **2,000 children** this year through three areas of focus:



*I learned that I can be more creative than I thought I could be.*  
-Layra, age 8

## Free Arts Days

Children are paired 1:1 with adult volunteers for an afternoon of art making and mini mentoring. Curriculum themes include financial literacy, community, collaboration and amazing machines (STEAM).

## FAD Studios

Children explore art more deeply through field trips and special projects with art institutions, artists, and galleries including David Zwirner and the Swiss Institute.

## Art Kits & Supplies

We proudly partnered with Supplies for Success to distribute **2,400 art kits** and **1,800 backpacks** to empower young minds with inspiration, art supplies, and holiday gifts!



With support from the **Ruth Stanton Foundation** and in partnership with the **Madison Square Park Conservancy**, we hosted our 3rd Annual Free Arts Day in the park. 25 students made art alongside artist **Sheila Pepe** in her exhibition, *My Neighbors Garden*.

**Artists featured in curriculum this year:**  
Damien Davis, Derrick Adams, Faith Ringgold, Friends With You, FUTURA, Jeghetto, Nathalie Miebach, Nick Cave, Nina Chanel Abney, Poncili Creación, Sheila Pepe

Our fall curriculum featured S.T.E.A.M (Science, Technology, Engineering, **Art**, and Math) with projects inspired by Sheryl Haft's new book, *Mazie's Amazing Machines*—which every kid got a copy of!



**The Swiss Institute** hosted **five claymation workshops**, where FAD Studio participants made **stop-motion videos** to include in our Youth Showcase at **Sotheby's!**

# ANNUAL YOUTH SHOWCASE

We are dedicated to **supporting** the next generation of **young artists**. Each year, we invite participants to **exhibit** their creative work in our Annual Youth Showcase, hosted by **Sotheby's**.



*Representation is important; in my childhood I never felt connected or relevant. The only Honduran artist I could find was Teresita Fortin. She was a female artist, which was rare in Honduras. She was one of my first role models that I felt connected to.*

**-Merlin, 12th Grade,**  
*Teresita Fortin, 2023, color pencil & markers*



*While getting this shot I felt overjoyed, it was raining and I was worried I wouldn't get her picture. This reminds me how rewarding photography is, no matter the subject.*

**-Landon, 11th grade**  
*Meet You On the Runway, 2023, photography*



*70 students • 96 works of art • 1 week-long exhibition*



Artist Lee Quinones purchased Sara's work on the spot. Visiting his studio to deliver the piece, Sara felt inspired, affirmed, and confident!

*This piece has a special cultural meaning for me since El Morro is a famous landmark in Puerto Rico.*

**-Sara, 12th grade,**  
*Collage of El Morro, 2023, paper collage*



# ART OF COLLABORATION

We hosted a panel discussion in partnership with **i-D Magazine Global Editor-In-Chief, Alastair McKimm**, inviting **culture-defining leaders** from across industries to come together and **discuss their work, connections and creative journeys** with the next generation!



*Hearing encouraging words from People of Color in the industry I desire to be a part of was meaningful.*

-Jamisha, Sophomore, Fashion Institute of Technology



*I enjoyed hearing the success stories of all of the creatives, and how they were able to achieve their goals despite coming from vastly different circumstances.*

-Anushka, Sophomore, Barnard College

## PANELISTS

- Alastair McKimm**  
Editor-In-Chief, *I-D Magazine*
- Angelo Baque**  
Creative Director, Awake NY
- Dan Colen**  
Artist
- Gigi Hadid**  
Creative Director, Guest In Residence
- Kaws**  
Artist
- Mel Ottenberg**  
Editor-In-Chief, *Interview Magazine*
- Ruba Abu-Nimah**  
Creative Director
- Samira Nasr**  
Editor-In-Chief, *Harper's Bazaar*
- Sara Moonves**  
Editor-In-Chief, *W Magazine*



*The focus on uplifting others and the value of collaboration and community was inspiring.*

-Onata, Senior, High School of Art & Design



*I appreciated how intimate the space felt; it made the talk feel personal. I loved having the chance to ask questions and connect with the artists! I am feeling so inspired!!*

-Arielle, Junior, Montclair High School

# VOLUNTEER & EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Volunteer and Employee Engagement is a **cornerstone of our programming** and how we're able to deliver **individualized attention** to so many youth. This year we more than doubled our activities through **Free Arts Days**, help with material prep, and the packing of individualized **Art Kits** and **Back-to-School Backpacks**.



Bloomberg Philanthropies Volunteers



The Ralph Lauren back-to-school assembly line

As a long-time partner, 300+ employees from **Bloomberg Philanthropies** supported our programs through 15 volunteer engagements and donated individually wrapped hats and mittens to send to children at our partner sites.

**PwC** has guided us through a strategic planning process, packed 300 holiday art kits, and generously provided a \$25k grant to bolster our Teen Arts Program.

## Art Kits & Backpacks

4,200 sent with support from 1stDibs, Ascena, Bloomberg Philanthropies, David Yurman, KKR, PwC, and Ralph Lauren!

*Pro bono assistance with curriculum translations and HR support • Supply drives*



Free Arts Day with PVH Cares



Bag Painting with Spotify

These opportunities create **meaningful connections** among employees and for our **40+ community partners**. This year **36 corporate partners** and **1,600 employees** championed between 1 and 15 events each.



Free Arts Day with A+I



Prepping art materials with BNP Paribas

*33 Free Arts Days • 57 Art Parties • 11 Backpack + Holiday Kit Packing Events • 17 Company Visits + Resume Writing Workshops for our teens*

# PARTNERSHIPS

We are **energized** by the brands and creatives who align with our **mission** through partnerships and **collaborations** to help support the young people in our **community**.



## Tiffany & Co.

Working to inspire the next generation of talent, Tiffany Atrium hosted Free Arts students for a Creative Career Workshop, a Free Arts Day, a studio visit with Derrick Adams, and invited students to lead Tiffany employees and executives through imaginative paint and collage sessions. Free Arts NYC continues to be a valued Tiffany Atrium Community partner.

- Additional Partners**
- Artspace
  - BLICK
  - ICNCLST
  - Madison Square Park Conservancy
  - MCM
  - Phaidon
  - Renna Jewels
  - Sotheby's
  - Supplies for Success



## Christie's

Proceeds from *Inside Job: Christie's New York Staff Art Show* supported our programs resulting in a \$11k donation.

Brenden Mastache  
*Tea Time, 2023*



## Artspace & Phaidon

Sarah Sze chose Free Arts NYC as the beneficiary of her print with Artspace and Phaidon resulting in a \$24k donation.

## The Athletic Clubs & TCS New York City Marathon

Artist **Lee Quiñones** designed our marathon shirts donated by **WOLACO**. Together, Team Free Arts NYC raised over **\$93k**.



## Bluestone Lane

From **fueling our office** grind with coffee to hosting **epic mixers** that boost our **marathon** runners, Bluestone Lane keeps the fun and **camaraderie** brewing!

## Echo

Artist and Free Arts **Mentor, Alexandra Grounds**, launched a **scarf collaboration** with Echo, of which \$100 from each sale supports our programs.



## PacSun & Circulate

Creative Director and Founder of Circulate, **Corey Populus**, teamed up with PacSun to donate proceeds from sales of his NYC tee.

## FOUNDATION, GOVERNMENT, CORPORATE & IN-KIND PARTNERS

### Foundations\*

American Eagle Outfitters Foundation  
Brown Rudnick Charitable Foundation  
Ethel + Philip Adelman Charitable Foundation, Inc.  
Ford Foundation  
Joy of Giving Something, Inc.  
Kathi and Peter Arnow Foundation  
Leroy Neiman & Janet Byrne Neiman Foundation  
Muna & Basem Hishmeh Foundation  
PwC Charitable Foundation  
Ruth Stanton Foundation  
TD Charitable Foundation  
The Bud Frankel Family Foundation  
The Hyde and Watson Foundation  
The Pinkerton Foundation  
The Richard & Natalie Jacoff Foundation, Inc.

### Government\*

National Endowment for the Arts  
New York State Council on the Arts  
New York City Department of Cultural Affairs

### Corporate\*

1stDibs  
Architecture Plus Information  
Ascena Retail Group  
Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP  
Amazon  
Ares Management  
Argo Group Inc  
Away  
Bank of America  
Bloomberg Philanthropies  
BNP Paribas  
Christie's  
Citibank  
Credit Suisse  
Currency Cloud  
David Yurman  
Douglas Elliman  
Goldman Sachs  
Goodwin Procter LLP  
Herman Miller / Maharam Studios  
Hermès of Paris  
KKR & Co Inc.  
MongoDB  
Paramount  
Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP  
PIMCO  
PVH Corp.  
PwC  
Ralph Lauren Foundation  
Renna Jewels  
Saatchi & Saatchi Worldwide  
Schonfeld Strategic Advisers LLC  
Snapchat  
Société Générale  
Spotify  
Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation

The Knot Worldwide  
Tiffany & Co.  
UBS  
United Talent Agency  
Warby Parker

### In-Kind

Blick Art Materials  
Blu Dot  
Bluestone Lane  
Catbird  
Guggenheim Museum  
ICNCLST  
PwC  
Shake Shack  
Sotheby's  
The Athletic Clubs  
Voice  
WOLACO

### Transitional Housing Sites

Adam's House  
Belt Park Family Residence  
Corona Family Center  
CRF Hope House  
Crystal's Place  
Day's Inn Wyndham Bronx  
Evergreen Family Center  
Gloria's House  
Holiday Inn Corona  
Hospitality House  
Ketty's Place  
Nelson Family Center  
Park Avenue Family Center  
Queens Family Center  
Salvation Army, Springfield  
Urban Transitional Residence

### Schools & Community Centers

Compass, P.S. 134  
DOE Shelter services  
DSS  
Graham Windham Beacon  
Grand St. Settlement, (7 locations)  
Bushwick Hylan  
Rutgers  
Baruch Community Center  
Beacon CC  
COMPASS PS 196  
Seward Park  
WCC  
I Have a Dream, PS 7  
Little Sisters of the Assumption  
University Settlement, Campos Plaza  
University Settlement OST, PS 63



Council on  
the Arts

NYC Cultural  
Affairs

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**Eddie Martinez** Artist  
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**Cover Art**  
Yesenia Saavedra  
*Wanting, Longing, Craving*  
2023

\*At time of publication



**Donate Now**

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