

Exploring the Metropolis, Inc.

Workspace Solutions for NYC's Performing Arts Communities

2011 Annual Report

Exploring the Metropolis is *the* resource on rehearsal and performance space issues and solutions for New York's performing arts communities.

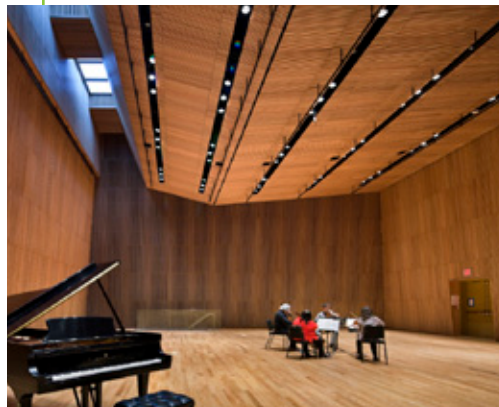
When we began in 1982, we envisioned a neutral, non-membership organization to focus on the impact of real estate on the performing arts in New York City. In recent decades, our work has increasingly emphasized infrastructure – rehearsal and performance space – needs of the performing arts. Our studies, workspace advisory resources, and our ongoing musicians' residency program serve that goal. For instance, our pioneering NYC Performing Arts Spaces database website, begun in 2001, continues to serve thousands seeking suitable space and hundreds of professional and nontraditional facilities with available space. A strategic transfer process begun in 2008 was completed in 2010; the website is now owned and operated by Fractured Atlas, which is replicating it in other cities.

In 2011, we welcomed as a Board member Kimberly Mangold, a Vice President of Corporate Real Estate and Services at Credit Suisse, and we welcomed back Anita Durst, founder and Artistic Director of chashama, a leading arts service organization also focused on use of available space. Grace Chandarlapaty, a previous member of our Musicians' Advisory Group, joined the staff as a part-time Program Specialist.

Expertise

Mary Flagler Cary Hall at the DiMenna Center for Classical Music.

Photo: Francis Dzikowski/
Esto, Courtesy of H3 Hardy
Collaboration Architecture



In March 2011, the DiMenna Center for Classical Music opened, administered and operated by the Orchestra of St. Luke's. In his remarks, Mayor Michael Bloomberg cited our 2004 study on the need for a dedicated orchestra rehearsal center as seminal in implementation of the Center. In October, we organized a tour to honor the Mary Flagler Cary Trust for its support of our initial study and the Center.

“We Make Do: More Time is Better but Budget is King”, our 2010 report for the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation on workspace issues affecting mid-career single choreographer-led dance companies, has resulted in implemented “next steps”: (1) Foundations are supplementing the crucial rehearsal space subsidy program initiated 25 years ago by the Dance Program at the New York State Council on the Arts. It serves both those who need low-cost space and the facilities that have

Lily Ockwell at Gibney Dance Center.

Photo: Samantha Siegel



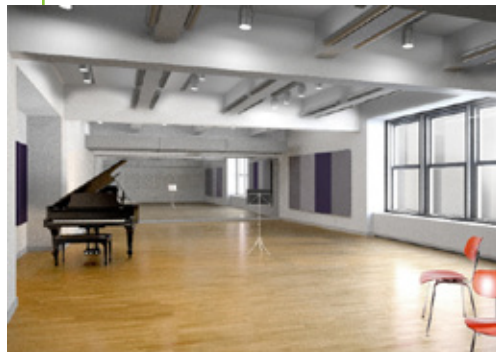
suitable space and need stable income. (2) Foundations are also funding a program of small capital improvements. These range from a new HVAC unit at Triskelion in Brooklyn, enabling them to use their studios in the summer, to removing walls and

upgrading studios to expand Gibney Dance Center in Manhattan’s Flatiron District. In February, Associate Director David Johnston presented findings from “We Make Do” during a panel presentation of Dance/NYC’s Mid-Winter Symposium at 3LD in Lower Manhattan.

Exploring the Metropolis continues to be *the* workspace advisory resource for the arts and culture/nonprofit field. Cultural facilities, government, and foundations rely on our knowledge and experience. For instance, this year Opera America

Proposed Rehearsal Hall at OPERA America’s National Opera Center.

Artist Rendering:
Andrew Berman Architect



sought our advice regarding layout of its new audition center in Manhattan and implemented our suggestions. Asphalt Green asked our advice for the community arts center mandated as part of its sports facility in Battery Park City. We have consulted with Gibney Dance Center on fundraising and development strategies for its expanded dance rehearsal center, and

with another new music organization on partnering for arts in education music programs. We consulted with a local arts service provider on a new business model encompassing significant real estate components. We assisted a new music presenter on programming and artists’ fees. And we conducted a feasibility study for a private owner on converting a former factory in Red Hook to be a proposed multi-disciplinary arts center.

Collaborations

From left to right: Kamala Sankaram, 2011 Con Edison Composer-in-Residence; Elizabeth Woodhouse, Associate Music Director at Brooklyn Youth Chorus Academy; Nicholas Urie, 2011 Con Edison Composer-in-Residence.

Photo: Eugenie C. Cowan



In 2011, the third year for the Con Edison Musicians' Residency: Composition Program, our panel of music and arts professionals selected eight composers. They are multicultural, the genres of their work varied, and their output prodigious. Biographies and interviews are at www.exploringthemetropolis.org/blog. Their residencies took place in four cultural facilities in three New York City boroughs. New to the program are host facilities Brooklyn Youth Chorus Academy and Church Street School for Music and Art in

Lower Manhattan. We had our second round of composers at Turtle Bay Music School and our third at Flushing Town Hall.

Paying musicians and composers for their talent and time is a core value of Exploring the Metropolis. For this round of residencies, we increased composers' stipends.

We increasingly involve community music schools in the program; they have professionally equipped studios and are generally empty until after-school programs begin. Hosting composers enables them to offer special programs for their students and families as well as their communities. And they welcome earned income for their underused space. Both Turtle Bay composers also conducted free Saturday Music Project programs for the Music School's students.

The required free public program component increasingly fosters partnerships. For example, initiated by the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs, our composers have offered additional programs in the Queens Library and in East Harlem.

2010 Composer-in-Residence Judith Sainte Croix and the Sonora Trio performing "Sueno del bosque (Dream of the Forest)" at Union Settlement July 29, 2011, in a performance supported by the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council's Fund for Creative Communities.

Photo: Grace Chandarlapaty



2010 composer Judith Sainte Croix's multi-media opera/dance piece developed at Turtle Bay Music School was performed at one of Union Settlement's senior centers in East Harlem in July 2011.

Our new Events Calendar on our website home page is designed to showcase our composers and increase audiences for their programs. Finally, in October Board

member Anita Durst opened her home for an opportunity to gather friends and funders and our 2011 Composers and to feature two previous composers; Nivedita ShivRaj and Octavio Vazquez.

Tripp Dudley with percussion, 2010 Con Edison Composer-in-Residence Octavio Vazquez warming up at the piano, 2009 Con Edison Composer-in-Residence Nivedita ShivRaj with veena, at October house concert.

Photo: Kimberly Mangold



Staff

Eugenie C. Cowan, *Founder and Director*

David Johnston, *Associate Director*

Grace Chandarlapaty, *Program Specialist*