

Field at a Glance:

Artists' Residencies in the US

A report on the field of artists' communities and residency programs in the US, conducted July-September 2008.

This research and report is part of the Alliance of Artists Communities' 2008-2009 **Planning Initiative**, funded in part by the National Endowment for the Arts.



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Artists' Residencies in the United States

2008 Field at a Glance

Introduction

The Alliance of Artists Communities is the service organization for the field of artists' communities and residencies – places that provide artists of any discipline with dedicated time and space to create new work. The Alliance gives a collective voice on behalf of its members, small and large, that leverages support for the field as a whole; promotes successful practices in the field; and advocates for creative environments that support the work of today's artists.

The Alliance is one of the few national organizations representing programs that support artists in all disciplines, believing that collaboration and exchange that cross traditional boundaries furthers our culture's progress.

About this study

In July 2008, the Alliance of Artists Communities surveyed the field of artists' communities and residency programs to get a snapshot of organizational capacity, number of artists served, and trends in direct support to artists.

The simple, 10-question email survey was sent to 1,144 residency programs worldwide (398 in the US). Of these, 131 in the US responded and 108 outside the US. This survey is the first of several, with subsequent research to focus on more qualitative data regarding types of artists served (by discipline, demographics, career state, etc.), earned revenue strategies, and other issues facing the field today. Our hope was to receive participation by as many organizations as possible; therefore, the questions asked only begin to scratch the surface.

The Alliance plans to conduct more comprehensive research on the global field of artists' residency programs as well, to demonstrate its impact, identify its challenges, and explore trends that affect the entire field.

Using this research

The goal of this report is to provide artists' residency programs with information that places each program in a broader context and demonstrates the impact of the field nationwide.

As a collective voice for the field, the Alliance's advocacy efforts depend on timely and relevant data on the field. The Alliance uses its research to advocate to funders, policy-makers, media, community partners, other arts leaders, and the general public. Field-wide information is also used to better inform today's artists on the opportunities artists' residency programs offer, separating the myths from reality and providing a richer understanding of residencies.

While simple quantitative data is significant, the Alliance also tries to gather information that informs us of trends in the field, and to understand these developments in the context of changes occurring in the arts and society

in general. For example, data indicating the year an organization hosted its first artists-in-residence (which for many coincided with the founding of the organization) corresponds generally to the creation of the National Endowment for the Arts (1965) and the rise in non-profits in the US in the 1970s. What the numbers don't tell us are why throughout most of the last century more rural residencies were created than urban residencies – by as much as three times as many – but that since 2002, new rural and urban residencies have been formed at an equal pace. What other factors create a fertile climate for the creation of new artists' residency programs?

Number of artists-in-residence

The research indicates an increase in the total number of artists-in-residence over the past 5 years, reflecting the number of new residency programs formed as well as the increased capacity of existing programs – through the creation of new facilities, expansion of the residency season, and greater stabilization of the field.

While the number of artists-in-residence has increased, there has been an even greater increase in the number of applicants to residency programs. The field as a whole has gained greater recognition in the last decade, artists have sought out more opportunities for the development of their creative and professional practice, and schools and other networks for artists have emphasized the importance of a residency in an artists' career. Given these trends, the data begs for more qualitative research to understand how this increasingly competitive climate has impacted residencies and the artists they serve.

Financial value of a residency

Articulating the financial value of each residency and the collective support offered by the field is one of the Alliance's greatest advocacy challenges. How is 3 months of housing valued in Marquette, Nebraska, compared to a year of studio space in Manhattan or a few weeks of intensive technical support and training in Portland, Oregon? We asked each residency program to estimate the value of support given per artist-in-residence, understanding that length of time is not accounted for in this figure.

The real challenge to quantifying the financial value of support, however, is not in what's included, but what's left out. Even if each program were able to calculate the financial value of support per artist per week, there is no accounting for the value of a community of like-minded peers, the trust a residency program places in the individual, the unexpected moments of inspiration a residency provides, the removal of everyday distractions, or the personal and creative transformation artists-in-residence experience. While arts advocacy in the US focuses currently on job creation, economic impact, tourism generation, and the like, the Alliance hopes to further highlight the less tangible – but no less significant – value of artists' residencies.

Thanks

Special thanks to the National Endowment for the Arts for their support of the Alliance of Artists Communities' 2008-2009 Planning Initiative, and for recognizing the importance of the field of artists' communities and residency programs.

Thank you, too, to the following US organizations for taking the time to participate in the survey, and for sharing critical data that will serve the field:

A Studio in the Woods
Abrons Arts Center
Acadia National Park
Addison Gallery of American Art
American Dance Festival / Duke University
Anderson Ranch Arts Center
Appalachian Center for Craft
Archie Bray Foundation for the Ceramic Arts
Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts
Art Farm
Art Omi / Omi International Arts Center
Artist House at St. Mary's College of Maryland
Atlantic Center for the Arts
Baltimore Clayworks
Bates Dance Festival
Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation / Amy Clampitt Residency
Berwick Research Institute
Blacklock Nature Sanctuary
Bronx Council on the Arts / Longwood Arts Project
Caldera
Carbondale Clay Center
CAVE
Center for Contemporary Printmaking
Center for Furniture Craftmanship
Centrum Creative Residency Program
City of Milford, CT
The Clay Studio
Coleman Center for the Arts
Colorado Art Ranch
Copland House
Corning Center for the Fine Arts
Corning Museum of Glass
Cornucopia Art Center
Creative Alliance at The Patterson
Cub Creek Foundation
Dairy Barn Arts Center
Delaware Center for the Contemporary Arts
Djerassi Resident Artists Program
Dobie Paisano Program
Edenfred
Edward F. Albee Foundation
Elsewhere Artist Collaborative
EnergyXchange
Espy Foundation
Exploratorium
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Fine Arts Work Center
Flax Art Studios
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Gardner Museum
Glassell School of Art / Core Program
Goldwell Open Air Museum
Hambidge
Harvest Works
Headlands Center for the Arts
Hedgebrook
Herbert Hoover National Historic Site
Hermitage Artist Retreat
Hopscotch House
HUB-BUB
Imagine Gallery
International Studio & Curatorial Program
I-Park
Isle Royale National Park
Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival
James and Janie Washington Foundation
James Merrill House Writer-in-Residence Program
Jamestown Fine Arts Association
Jentel Foundation
John Michael Kohler Arts Center
Julia and David White Artists' Colony
Kala Art Institute
KALANI Oceanside Retreat Village
Kansas City Artists Coalition
Kimmel Harding Nelson Center for the Arts
Klondike Institute of Art and Culture
Lillian E. Smith Center for the Arts
Lower Eastside Printshop
The MacDowell Colony
MASS MoCA
Mesa Refuge
Monarch Sculpture Park
Montalvo Arts Center
Montana Artists Refuge
Museum of Glass
Ohio Arts Council
Oregon College of Art & Craft
Ox-Bow
Penland School of Crafts
Pilchuck Glass School
PlatteForum
Prairie Center of the Arts
Pyramid Atlantic
Ragdale Foundation
RAID Projects
Red Cinder Creativity Center
Rober M. MacNamara Foundation
Ross Creek Centre for the Arts
Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site
Santa Fe Art Institute
Sculpture Space
Sitka Center for Art and Ecology
Skowhegan
Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore AIR Program
Smith Farm Center for Healing and the Arts
Soapstone
Soaring Gardens Artists' Retreat
Soul Mountain Retreat
SPACES Cleveland
Spring Island Trust
Squeaky Wheel / Buffalo Media Resources
The Studios of Key West
Sundance Institute
Sunshine Arts
Sustainable Arts Society
Three Walls
Thurber House
Tree Museum
Ucross Foundation
Urban Glass
Virginia Center for the Creative Arts
Visual Studies Workshop
Watershed Center for the Ceramic Arts
Weir Farm Art Center
Weymouth Center for the Arts & Humanities
Wild Orchard Guest Farm
Wildacres Retreat
Women's Studio Workshop
Workspace for Choreographers

Artists' Residencies Questionnaire

The following represents the Alliance of Artists Communities' survey sent in July 2008, with responses collected July-September 2008. Data given is for 2007. Numbers have been edjusted to estimate for a total of 398 identified residency programs in the US, based on a quantitative and qualitative understanding of the field.

1. *Year the organization hosted its first artists-in-residence*

- a) range
 - 1900-1925 3 (0.75%)
 - 1926-1950 8 (2%)
 - 1951-1975 40 (10%)
 - 1976-1985 72 (18%)
 - 1986-1995 60 (15%)
 - 1996-2001 103 (26%)
 - 2002-2007 111 (28%)

2. *Number of artists-in-residence in 2007*

- a) total 8,850
 - b) from the US* 7,611 (86%)
 - c) from outside the US 1,239 (14%)
- *20% of all artists-in-residence reside in the same state as the residency program*

2a. *Over the past 5 years, the number of artists-in-residence from the US has:*

- a) increased 34% of respondents
- b) decreased 5%
- c) stayed the same 56%

2b. *Over the past 5 years, the number of artists-in-residence from outside the US has:*

- a) increased 25% of respondents
- b) decreased 8%
- c) stayed the same 55%

2c. *Over the past 5 years, the number of artists-in-residence from the same state has:*

- a) increased 15% of respondents
- b) decreased 7%
- c) stayed the same 69%

3. *Number of applicants for residencies in 2007*

- a) total 44,555
 - b) ratio of applicants to accepted residents* 5:1
- *Among organizations who accept applications, the ratio of applicants to accepted residents ranged from 1:1 to 60:1, with 5:1 being the average*

3a. *Over the past 5 years, the number of applicants has:*

- a) increased 53%
- b) decreased 7%
- c) stayed the same 29%

4. *Financial value of support given per artist-in-residence*

- a) all support (housing, studio space, food, materials, stipends, technical assistance, etc.) \$20.8 million
 - b) all support, average per artist* \$2,350
 - c) cash support / stipends only* \$3.4 million
- *The amount of support per artist varies widely, depending on the length of residency, amenities offered, and many other factors. Almost 60% of residency programs offer some form of cash support through stipends; among these, the amount of stipend varies from \$50/week to \$5,000/month.*

4a. *Over the past 5 years, the amount of cash support / stipends to artists-in-residence has:*

- a) increased* 30% of respondents
 - b) decreased 5%
 - c) stayed the same 49%
- *In addition to an increase in the amount of cash support and stipends given, the number of organizations offering stipends has increased, from 41% in 2004 to 58% in 2007.*

5. *Total number of artists served by the organization each year through programming other than residencies (studio rentals, exhibitions, etc.)*

- a) total 67,041
- This question reflects the role an organization often fills in serving artists in other ways beyond the residency program, including other creative development programs, exhibitions, teaching opportunities, and more.*

6. Total number of people – artists and general public – served by the organization each year through public programming (exhibitions, workshops, performances, open studios, etc.)

a) total 17,672,884

This question represents a wide range of responses. For secluded, retreat-style artists' colonies, organizations may serve several hundred members of the public a year (or none), compared to organizations who have a residency program within a larger cultural center or other public site that may serve more than a million public participants annually.

7. Environment that best describes the residency location

a) rural area 169 (42%)

b) small town 82 (21%)

c) suburban area 34 (9%)

d) urban area 115 (29%)

8. Expenses in 2007*

a) total \$116 million

b) average \$290,000

c) range

< \$150,000 50%

\$150,000-300,000 30%

\$300,000-500,000 16%

\$500,000-750,000 1%

\$750,000-1 million 1%

\$1-3 million 2%

\$3-5 million 0.25%

**In order to make as accurate an estimate as possible, a larger sample was used for this question, with data supplemented from the 990s of organizations who did not participate in the survey.*

The total expenses for the field, average expenses per residency program, and range of expenses are based on the combined 1) total expenses of organizations whose primary purpose is providing artists' residencies, and 2) the residency program expenses of organizations for which the residency is a smaller portion of the overall budget.

9. Staff in full-time equivalents

a) total residency staff* 995

b) average (per residency program) 4

**The total staff is based on the combined 1) total personnel of organizations whose primary purpose is providing artists' residencies, and 2) the residency program staff of organizations for which the residency is a smaller portion of the overall operations.*

Residency staff in full-time equivalents ranges from 0 (all volunteer organizations) to 40, with an average of 4.

MISSION

We strive for a society that values creative people and process, not just products; that celebrates experimentation and the exploration of new ideas; and that recognizes the role artists and the creative process can have in achieving this vision.

Believing that the cultivation of new art and ideas is essential for an innovative, vibrant society, our mission is to advocate for and support artists' communities, to advance the endeavors of artists.

The Alliance is the only national service organization supporting the field of artists' communities, colonies, and residencies – organizations that provide dedicated time and space to artists of any discipline for the creation of new work.

The Alliance is supported by dues from its members and contributions from the Patrons Council and other individuals. The Alliance is also supported by The Ford Foundation, The James Irvine Foundation, The Joyce Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts.



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