BEST PRACTICES AT-A-GLANCE

Serving Emerging Artists

A series of brief reports documenting the management practices of artist residency programs

October 2012

CONDUCTED BY
Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts
Alliance of Artists Communities

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project manager
Alix Refshauge

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Introduction + Methodology

Arrowmont School of Arts & Crafts and the Alliance of Artists Communities, with support from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), conducted several surveys and interviews in early 2012 focused on the needs of emerging artists through residency programs and other services. An initial survey garnered responses from 559 artists of all disciplines about the challenges they face in pursuing their creative work and the resources they turn to for support. A second survey was collected from 80 residency directors and gathered feedback on working with emerging artists, best practices from model residency programs, and opportunities for further program development. Additionally, feedback was collected through e-mail exchanges and phone interviews with funders who support emerging artists as well as other organizations that provide valuable resources. This document is an introductory exploration of the needs of emerging artists and aims to provide a snapshot of model programs and best practices so that the artist residency field can better serve this demographic.

There is no shared definition of “emerging” and for the purposes of this study, we asked artists to self-identify as “emerging,” “mid-career,” or “established” based on their own understanding of these terms. While some organizations define emerging artists by age or number of years working as a practicing artist, others define emerging by level of recognition an artist has received, at any age.

This report uses the term “artist” in reference to artists of all disciplines (visual artists, writers, musicians/composers, dancers/choreographers, etc.) and “art” or “art-making” refers to all practices.

Need for this Research

More than 40% of all artists served by residencies identify as “emerging,” with 39% identified as “mid-career” and 20% as “established.” Many of the issues artists face cross career stages – for example, balancing personal life and work, managing finances, engaging an audience, adapting to changes in the marketplace, and sustaining a career. However, there are recurring concerns from artists and administrators alike about the overall environment in which emerging artists are working today. Many survey respondents commented on the growing number of MFA graduates saddled with enormous student loans, facing dwindling job opportunities, and with little training on how to make a living as an artist today. The good news is that many organizations, funders, education providers, and individuals have developed ways of supporting emerging artists that address both the creative and professional needs of this group. Administrators and artists alike recognize the difficulty of transitioning from being part of an educational system to developing oneself as an independent artist, and understand the importance of finding one’s own community of peers to have as a professional and personal support group.

The Artists’ Responses

A total of 559 artists of all creative disciplines, ages, education levels, and career stages completed a survey entitled Emerging Artists’ Needs. The survey was sent to over 150 residency program directors, who in turn distributed it to artists; it was also posted online by artists and various organizations connected to the Alliance. The survey gathered responses about the challenges emerging artists face, their long-term goals, and the resources they turn to for support. Fifty-percent of the artists surveyed had participated in at least one residency; their reflections provide important insight to the value of these experiences and the impact residencies have on both the artists’ art-making and professional development.

A SNAPSHOT OF ARTISTS SURVEYED

Artistic discipline
- 59% visual artists
- 16% writers
- 9% performance artists
- 7% dancers/choreographers
- 7% musicians/composers
- 2% other (healing artists, culinary artists, circus theater performers, storytellers, furniture designers, and others)

Education
Highest level completed
- 4% Doctoral degree (64% of these in an arts field, 36% non-arts)
- 49% Master’s degree (85% of these in an arts field, 15% non-arts)
- 42% Bachelor’s degree (70% of these in an arts field, 30% non-arts)
- 5% High school diploma / GED

Currently seeking a degree
- 1% Doctoral degree (63% of these in an arts field, 37% non-arts)
- 8% Master’s degree (72% of these in an arts field, 28% non-arts)
- 4% Bachelor’s degree (81% of these in an arts field, 19% non-arts)

Age
- Artists between the ages of 21 to 73 participated in this survey; most were mid-20s to mid-40s.
Geography

- 74% U.S.-based artists
- 26% other (Canada, Czech Republic, Estonia, India, Indonesia, Switzerland, Venezuela)

CHALLENGES EMERGING ARTISTS FACE

There are significant challenges emerging artists face on a day-to-day basis. Among these, there are seemingly universal issues like health insurance, student loan debt, balancing art-making/family/job, and marketing one's work. Many artists lack a support group – they may live in a community without many other artists or may have difficulty identifying and/or forming networks relevant to their work. Artists also express great societal concerns over the lack of value granted to artists. One visual artist with a Master's degree states, "It's hard to feel like I am a valuable contributing member to society."

Artists also express challenges specific to certain places or disciplines, but with real implications for artists as a group. A sculptor from Seattle comments, "I feel that my work could be better represented in other galleries in other cities as Seattle is a bit stuck in the glass track and is less likely to support sculptural work that challenges the glass envelope." Many expressed frustration with the mindset of the "starving artist" and expectations that artists survive without adequate resources. Others mention the difficulty of breaking in to existing artistic networks as an emerging artist. "The local art community is extremely close-knit, and the only way to enter is through contacts. Sometimes I feel that the merit of the art practice is of no consequence, rather only who you know."

When not making work, emerging artists spend their professional time researching opportunities (exhibitions, schools/classes/workshops, residencies, etc.), searching for funding (grants and fellowships), developing their personal websites/blogs, networking in-person with arts supporters in their community, and networking online. Many struggle to find a balance in the time spent making work and focusing on professional development. "I don't need more workshops," says one respondent. "I need access to someone who I can talk through things with one-on-one, who can help me figure out how I need to be articulating the work I am doing and want to be doing."

Word-of-mouth, from friends and mentors in particular, continues to be the most important method of identifying opportunities. Professors (current and past) and local arts organizations (through workshops and staff expertise) provide critical information resources as well. There are several organizational websites the emerging artists surveyed turn to on a regular basis, including the Alliance of Artists Communities, Call For Entry (CaFE), College Art Association (CAA), deviantART, Fractured Atlas, and New York Foundation for the Arts (NYFA). Many local and regional arts organizations were mentioned as well. Information about the scope of some of these organizations can be found later in this report.

LONG-TERM GOALS

Most artists surveyed hope to work full-time as a practicing artist, though many are also interested in other professional paths, including teaching at a college/university, working for a non-profit arts organization, or running a gallery. While residencies offer critical support for artists in developing a studio practice and creating a body of work, artists with other long-term goals may also gain important career skills through opportunities to teach, engage the community, and better understand non-profit operations while in-residence.

RESOURCES FOR SUPPORT

Fig. 1: Greatest challenges emerging artists face

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% indicated “very challenging”</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>53% balancing family, job &amp; art-making</td>
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<tr>
<td>50% marketing oneself and one’s work</td>
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<tr>
<td>49% day-to-day financial challenges</td>
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<tr>
<td>44% health insurance needs</td>
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<tr>
<td>36% affordable studio space</td>
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<td>36% student loan debt</td>
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<tr>
<td>28% lack of support from local community</td>
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<td>26% determining career path</td>
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<tr>
<td>25% access to tools, equipment, or specialized facilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>21% lack of artistic community / peer network</td>
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Fig. 2: Artists’ long-term goals

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<th>% indicated “very important”</th>
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<tr>
<td>80% be a full-time artist making a living through my craft</td>
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<tr>
<td>29% teach at a college/university</td>
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<tr>
<td>25% work in non-profit arts administration</td>
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<tr>
<td>20% other part-time work to supplement art-making</td>
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<tr>
<td>19% run a gallery or other arts space</td>
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<tr>
<td>13% work in commercial/for-profit arts sector</td>
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Fig. 3: Professional development activities (indicated as a prioritization of time spent by artists)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>% indicated “often”</th>
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<tr>
<td>52% researching/applying for exhibition/performance/publishing opportunities</td>
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<tr>
<td>42% developing personal website/blog</td>
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<tr>
<td>39% researching/applying for grants, fellowships, and prizes</td>
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<tr>
<td>32% networking in-person with local arts supporters</td>
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<tr>
<td>29% researching/applying for residencies</td>
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<tr>
<td>29% networking regionally/nationally through the web</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14% participating in professional development workshops</td>
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**The Residency Directors’ Responses**

**DEFINING “EMERGING ARTIST”**

Assigning a definition to “emerging artist” is not easy. Like the residency itself, each organization has its own unique way of determining what “emerging artist” means for them. For its program, Arrowmont School of Arts & Crafts defines an emerging artist as someone who is in "early career, is self-directed, and pre-professional; artists who are able to work independently and have the necessary equipment and skills to work independently, but need support in the way of professional development opportunities/skills, time, space, financial assistance, and community." For the Institute for Sustainable Living, Art & Natural Design (ISLAND) it simply means "anyone who still has a day job." Whatever the definition, residencies aim to connect with artists who will most benefit from what these programs have to offer. By better understanding how organizations define “emerging artist,” we can begin to understand the challenges and rewards organizations encounter when working with this demographic as well as the processes and programs put in place to best serve emerging artists.

**WORKING WITH EMERGING ARTISTS: CHALLENGES + REWARDS**

Residency centers are given a unique opportunity when working with emerging artists. The organization is able to provide a transformative experience, usually outside of an academic setting, often at a vital point in an artist’s career. Many residency administrators believe the greatest reward is seeing the opportunities given to residents blossom into something greater: new and exciting work gets made, professional...
opportunities result. Administrators also state how much they enjoy working with emerging artists – as a group, they are diverse and full of energy, fun ideas, and personality, and can breathe new life into an organization.

Survey respondents indicate emerging artists – compared to mid-career and established artists – are more apt to make use of technology and new media in their art-making, more interested in critiques and studio visits during a residency, more interested in social interactions with other artists-in-residence, more interested in participating in public programs and community engagement, and more inclined to stay connected with the organization after the residency.

Working with emerging artists doesn’t come without its own set of challenges. Some administrators say emerging artists can have unrealistic expectations – some try to tackle too large of projects in a short amount of time, don’t understand the financial limitations of the organization, lack maturity in social situations, express a sense of entitlement, or lack basic professional skills such as speaking in public about their work or maintaining professionalism when teaching or during other types of community engagement. Others indicate emerging artists have a more difficult time being self-directed during a residency than more established artists. These challenges are a natural part of working with individuals during the early stages of their careers and residencies can offer significant professional development by providing opportunities and feedback to artists.

SERVING EMERGING ARTISTS EXCLUSIVELY

While most residency programs are open to artists at any career stage, a number offer residencies to artists who are in specific stages of their career. Arrowmont and Skowhegan are designed exclusively for emerging artists, for example, while RedLine Milwaukee and Oregon College of Art & Craft have distinct programs that accommodate emerging artists as well as mid-career and established artists. Emerging artists benefit from these models in different ways.

Located in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, Arrowmont provides early career artists with time, space, and support to work in a creative community environment that includes hundreds of students and an annual roster of 160 visiting artists who teach workshops. Each year, five emerging artists participate in the 11-month residency program in which they are given a monthly stipend, shared housing, meals, and a private studio. Professional development opportunities, including teaching, are also made available. Arrowmont considers a residency experience to be a success when residents grow as professionals, and experiment and take risks when making work; maintain ongoing enthusiasm, positive attitude, and work into the final residency week; serve as ambassadors for the organization, including post-residency correspondence, involvement, and advocacy; and maintain ongoing, positive, and meaningful relationships with other residents and staff.

“Energy, skills, talents, and humor associated with emerging artists brings new energy and fun to our staff and campus each year. Personal friendships and lasting professional relationships are other great rewards,” says Bill Griffith, Director of Programs at Arrowmont. (See a more detailed case study of Arrowmont later in this report.)

Also exclusively for emerging artists, Skowhegan is located on a lake campus in Skowhegan, Maine. The organization offers a nine-week summer residency as an opportunity for intense work and creative direction. All participants, faculty, and staff live and work on campus and are provided with studio space and technical support for their work. Each summer, a new faculty cohort of highly accomplished and diverse Resident and Visiting Artists is invited to campus. Emerging artists receive regular one-on-one critiques given by the faculty, and are offered a series of lectures throughout the summer. Participants also gather weekly for open critiqued led by a Dean.

“Keeping everyone safe and sound while encouraging them to really break through their practices, and pushing the agenda of current paradigms (which is hard) is a big part of working at Skowhegan,” says Sarah Workneh, Co-Director at Skowhegan. “Watching it happen and watching the art world change is the biggest reward. Success here is determined by growth, in whatever form that takes, and sometimes that includes very difficult moments.”

Ox-Bow has a program specifically for MFA candidates that gives artists an opportunity to both be self-directed and receive critiques from faculty and staff. These kinds of hybrid programs that combine the benefits of a solitary residency with those of an educational setting can be particularly valuable to pre-professional artists who are still developing an independent studio practice.

Some residencies have programming designed specifically to help artists develop their professional skill sets. Often this involves mentor programs or other ways of providing direct access to more established artists.

“I find that many of our emerging artists come to us with very little to no business or curatorial experience. As an example they know very little about insurance issues or how to focus lights. Many have never spoken publicly about their work and have little exposure to goal setting. These are areas that are typically not experienced in the education setting,” says Lori Bauman, Co-Founder of RedLine Milwaukee.

To address challenges like these, RedLine Milwaukee has a unique mentoring program where, in addition to affordable studio space, the resident artists receive mentoring from five accomplished artists who are also in residence, along with guest artists of the organization. RedLine measures success based on self-governed goals each emerging artist sets with his/her mentor. The goals are reviewed every six months and adjusted to raise the bar if the artist is meeting the goals or revised if the artist is struggling.
Oregon College of Art and Craft (OCAC) offers a 16-week fellowship program for emerging artists. The goals of the program are to present the participants as role models for OCAC students, advance the careers of the fellows, and strengthen the public’s awareness of the significance of craft. Additionally, OCAC offers Senior Residencies each summer, open to outstanding mid-career artists. In even-numbered years, the college hosts seven established artists-in-residence for a two-week period. This invitational residency provides the opportunity for these top artists and craftspeople to gather together, share ideas and inspiration, and be a part of an intensive discourse about art. Students, emerging artist fellows, and senior professional artists all benefit from working in this environment.

**SERVING EMERGING ARTISTS: COMMUNITY-ENGAGEMENT PRACTICES**

Given that many emerging artists are interested in developing professional skills beyond their studio practice, residencies that also include programs that engage the community can provide valuable experiences to artists. More than half of all residencies surveyed encourage artists-in-residence to engage the local community while in-residence (and help facilitate such engagement), though a small number discourage community engagement altogether. Knowing that many emerging artists are eager to engage the public, it is important for residency programs to make expectations and opportunities clear, and for artists to understand what is realistic before embarking on a residency. (The Alliance of Artists Communities’ publication, “Engaging Communities: Lessons Learned,” explores further the range of community engagement practices at artist residencies.)

For artists interested in community involvement during a residency, programs like HUB-BUB and Arrowmont offer valuable opportunities to work with the public and to connect with others outside the organization. Ox-Bow’s MFA residents are asked to give a lecture to the general community on their work as well as on the progress of their project, and project proposals that engage the overall community – the other students, faculty, and residents at Ox-Bow as well as the broader local community – are given preference. Other programs, like Djerassi, focus on providing solitude, recognizing that an opportunity to retreat from society and completely submerge oneself in work can be the most beneficial thing for an artist at the right time in his or her career. Some residency programs require minimal community engagement (such as having residents speak about their work, participate in an open studio, or attend a dinner with patrons). Others have no requirement, but like Fine Arts Work Center and Institute for Sustainable Living, Art & Natural Design (ISLAND), staff will help facilitate public engagement if residents are interested.

At HUB-BUB in Spartanburg, South Carolina, an urban residency in a small Southern city, three emerging visual artists and one emerging writer are given an 11-month residency and are required to spend up to 20 hours a week working with the community and helping the organization advance in its mission to build community through dynamic art and ideas. Community engagement involves everything from public speaking to teaching in local schools to full-blown community art projects and individual partnerships with local non-profits. Additionally, residents help with both the grunt work and event programming for the 200+ cultural events that take place annually in HUB-BUB’s 3,000-square-foot gallery/performance space. Each year’s writer-in-residence serves as an intern with HUB-BUB’s sister program, the Hub City Writers Project. She gains professional experience by editing a book that gets published, coordinating writers’ workshops and readings, and helping with the day-to-day needs of running a non-profit press/independent bookstore. “Residents become very involved in the organization and our local community. One of our hopes is that they stick around once it’s over and continue to help make our town a better place,” says Alix Refshauge, HUB-BUB’s former AiR Director.

Arrowmont offers residents a variety of community teaching opportunities, which is a strong professional development aspect of its program. In addition to getting current residents involved with the community, Arrowmont also invites alumni to return to teach workshops and participate in symposia, exhibitions, and conferences.

Both Fine Arts Work Center (FAWC) and ISLAND are located in remote areas, and take a less formal approach to community engagement for those residents who are interested. Located on the tip of Cape Cod, FAWC welcomes 20 artists-in-residence (visual artists and writers) for seven-month residencies during the off-season, when the town is quiet and there are few tourists or vacationers. For the past 30 years, FAWC has dedicated itself to the founders’ belief that providing the freedom to pursue creative work within a community of peers is the best catalyst for artistic growth. Residents are given the option to attend program committee meetings and interact with visiting artists, but are not expected or asked to engage with the community during their residencies. Similarly, ISLAND, in Northwest Lower Michigan, gives residents total solitude, should they desire it. For residents who wish to engage with the community, ISLAND facilitates meals with staff and area artists as well as opportunities to connect with galleries, performance spaces, and the cultural community.

While community engagement is a component of many residencies and desired by many artists, solitude and an opportunity for uninterrupted work are also highly valuable. Djerassi Resident Artists Program, in Woodside, California, offers residencies to emerging and mid-career artists. Their mission is to support and enhance the creativity of artists by providing uninterrupted time for work, reflection, and collegial interaction in a setting of great natural beauty, and to preserve the land on which the Program is situated. The Program is designed as a retreat experience to pursue personal creative work; there are no workshops or other educational components connected with the residency and no expectations of the residents to engage the public.
Funding Emerging Artists

Funding is a challenge for artists at any career stage, whether project-specific support, professional development grants, or unrestricted fellowships. Many artists surveyed express the overwhelming difficulty of keeping up with everyday living expenses while struggling to maintain an art-making practice. Thankfully there are foundations, organizations, state arts councils, and grassroots initiatives that make it a priority to support emerging artists. In addition to receiving funds to help with a project or subsidize the day-to-day life as an artist, such supporting agencies can also offer artists connections to a supportive network and confidence and validation as artists.

FOUNDATION + ARTS COUNCIL SUPPORT

The Puffin Foundation and the Jerome Foundation are just two examples of funders that support individual emerging artists. The Puffin Foundation, in Teaneck, New Jersey, believes that culture is vital to a thriving democratic society and that local emerging artists play a critical role in enriching the lives of the public and of our democracy on a local level. The foundation encourages artists to address needs and issues relevant to their communities, and provides modest grants (up to $2500) that support emerging artists whose works might have difficulty being aired due to the artist’s genre and/or social philosophy. The foundation’s long-term goals for the artists who receive funding are, according to the foundation’s Vice President, Neal Rosenstein, “the same as their parents...that their projects should be successful and they should be happy (and famous too if they should want it.)”

The Jerome Foundation, based in St. Paul, Minnesota, extends its support to individual emerging artists and organizations in the states of New York and Minnesota. Supporting individuals is an inherited priority of the Foundation, thanks to its founder, Jerome Hill, and the foundation appreciates the risk and the energy involved in supporting emerging artists. Over the years, the Jerome Foundation directors have found great sustenance and challenge in that focus, seeing its support of individuals as a way a small foundation with limited resources can have greater impact. The foundation’s primary priority is to provide direct cash support, and the foundation may also fund commissions, fellowships, residencies, professional development opportunities, high-level educational seminars and workshops, and development and production subsidies. For the artists they support, the foundation’s hope for them “is to continue to function creatively in the world, and that they continue to take risks and challenge themselves,” says Cynthia Gehrig, President of the Jerome Foundation.

any state arts councils also offer support for individual artists in the form of grants, fellowships, and professional development services that can be critical for emerging artists and others learning how to market their work, develop an online presence, research other artist opportunities, and build a support network. Several state arts councils have funding programs that are career-stage specific. The Alaska State Council on the Arts, for example, offers the Connie Boochever Artist Fellowships for emerging artists in the performing, literary, visual, and media arts. The $2500 awards are intended to support the general advancement of an artist’s career, at a critical time in his/her creative and professional practice. The Council also provides Career Opportunity Grants to support professional development activities that will contribute to an artist’s professional standing or skill.

OTHER FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

The following are just a few examples of some of the other kinds of funding support available to emerging artists:

Community-Supported Art

Modeled after Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), programs where local farms supply shareholders with regular installments of food, CSArt programs supply shareholders with regular installments of art. This idea was first developed by Springboard for the Arts in St. Paul/Minneapolis in 2010 for artists in the Twin Cities. Since then, programs like ArtServe Michigan’s CSA have adapted Springboard’s model. At ArtServe Michigan, nine artists are selected by a five-person jury. Each month, three artists provide work for the shareholders. Shareholders pick up their “boxes” at an event (which is also open to the public) where the artists are given the opportunity to talk about their work. Artists receive $1,000 to be a part of the program, shareholders pay just $350. Springboard has encouraged many other organizations to develop CSArt programs across the U.S., and these are listed on Springboard’s website. (www.springboardforthearts.org)

“Our long-term goal with the CSA is to create sustainable funding for original work by artists at the emerging and mid-career stages,” says Cezanne Charles, Director of Creative Industries at ArtServe Michigan. “We also want to grow a base of arts supporters to invest in the work and careers of local artists. This works in a place like Detroit where there is a natural crossover with the buy local movement and art scene in the city.”

FEAST

Programs like FEAST (Funding Emerging Art with Sustainable Tactics) are also popping up all over the country. FEAST is a recurring public dinner in Brooklyn that is designed to use community-driven financial support to democratically fund new and emerging art makers. At each FEAST, patrons give a $20 donation for which they receive supper and a ballot. Diners spend the evening reviewing a series of project proposals and conversing with the artists behind each idea. Attendees cast a vote for their favorite proposal, and by the end of the night, the artist who garners the most votes is awarded a grant comprised of that evening’s door money. (www.feastinbklyn.org)

The West Prize

For the past 15 years, the West Collection has purchased art from young artists who are creating challenging and inventive work. In 2012, they will purchase $300,000 worth of artwork. Most of the work is then loaned and put on display at SEI, a financial services firm in Philadelphia.
Federation), offering a user-friendly online application system that allows artists to search and apply for opportunities. WESTAF offers a broad range of other technology services for artists including ArtJob.org and ArtistsRegister.com, useful for artists of all career levels in finding arts-related opportunities. WESTAF's goal is to develop tools that are relevant to the practice and career efforts of artists and arts agencies, and to make online programs affordable and accessible. (www.callforentry.org)

**Residencies for Emerging Artists**

The following is a summary list of organizations that offer residency programs exclusively for emerging artists, though there are hundreds more residency programs for which emerging artists are eligible:

- Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts (Gatlinburg, Tennessee)
- Bamboo Curtain (Taipei, Taiwan)
- Cemeti Art House (Yogyakarta, Indonesia)
- CORE Program at Glassell School of Art (Houston, Texas)
- Fine Arts Work Center (Provincetown, Massachusetts)
- HUB-BUB (Spartanburg, South Carolina)
- Institute for Sustainable Living, Art & Natural Design (Bellaire, Michigan)
- Lanesboro Arts Center (Lanesboro, Minnesota)
- Oregon College of Art & Craft (Portland, Oregon)
- Ox-Bow (Saugatuck, Michigan)
- Pilchuck Glass School (Stanwood, Washington)
- RedLine Milwaukee (Milwaukee, Wisconsin)
- Skowhegan (Skowhegan, Maine)
- Tofte Lake Center (Ely, Minnesota)

**Other Resources**

Outside of the residency field, many artists look to organizations like the Alliance of Artists Communities, Call for Entry (CaFE), College Art Association (CAA), deviantART, and Fractured Atlas for a variety of resources and support. There are many other organizations, programs, and advocates doing good work for emerging artists, and this list aims to serve as a small snapshot of some of the resources survey respondents most frequently utilize.

**ALLIANCE OF ARTISTS COMMUNITIES**

The Alliance gives a collective voice on behalf of residency programs, small and large, that leverages support for the field as a whole; promotes successful practices in the residency field; and advocates for creative environments that support the work of today’s artists. The organization provides professional development opportunities for residencies, forums on support for today’s artists, valuable research and benchmarking data, and funding partnerships that bring new funding resources to residencies and artists. Artists can find valuable information on the Alliance website about residency opportunities worldwide. (www.artistcommunities.org)

**CALL FOR ENTRY**

Call for Entry (CaFE) is a program of WESTAF (Western States Arts Federation), offering a user-friendly online application system that allows artists to propose projects, sheds light on successful practices in the residency field; and advocates for creative environments that support the work of today’s artists. The organization provides professional development opportunities for residencies, forums on support for today’s artists, valuable research and benchmarking data, and funding partnerships that bring new funding resources to residencies and artists. Artists can find valuable information on the Alliance website about residency opportunities worldwide. (www.artistcommunities.org)
insurance companies on providing health care options for artists. “We’ve worked with insurance companies to provide health care for performance artists. Over the past 5 years there have been zero insurance claims. These numbers help insurance companies see that this is a good market,” says Emily Gray, Insurance Program Director at Fractured Atlas. Fractured Atlas has a knowledgeable staff that is open to working one-on-one with artists from across the country, and has a strong reputation as an artist-centered organization serving artists of all disciplines. (www.fracturedatlas.org)

NEW YORK FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS (NYFA)
NYFA’s mission is to empower artists at critical stages in their creative lives. The foundation’s website offers access to the most comprehensive list of resources for artists in the U.S., opening doors to the widest range of financial, educational, technological, and institutional resources and information. NYFA’s information programs include listings of jobs, grants, fellowships, residencies, and other opportunities for artists; online learning workshops; and articles on the business of art. (www.nyfa.org)

Conclusion

Residencies have provided important resources to artists of all career stages since the field’s inception over a century ago. For many emerging artists, a residency is the first opportunity to be truly self-directed, without assignments, critiques, or cohorts to offer direction. We cannot overstate the value of a residency’s core purpose: to provide artists with dedicated time and space for creative development and exploration. In addition, residencies can be a fertile ground for networking, exhibiting/presenting work, and gaining skills in public speaking, teaching, and other professional practices. And while some residencies focus specifically on serving emerging artists, other residencies offer a rare opportunity for artists of different career stages to engage with each other as peers.

With limited resources, no single residency can be all things to all artists, and it is important for artists and organizations alike to be clear about expectations and opportunities. But with the right match, residencies can offer emerging artists a transformative experience that both deepens one’s creative practice and broadens one’s professional development.

For more information on artist residency programs, visit the Alliance of Artists Communities’ website at www.artistcommunities.org.
Case Study: Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts

AT A GLANCE
Each year, five artists working in different media are selected to participate in Arrowmont’s 11-month program, which begins in mid-June and continues through late May of the following year. Artists are given a monthly stipend; shared housing with private bedrooms; meals (during workshop sessions); a private studio with climate control, a work table, sink, and shelving; and some basic standard equipment to share. Professional development and teaching opportunities are made available to the residents, and at the conclusion of the program residents exhibit their work collectively in the Arrowmont main gallery and have opportunities to sell their work through Arrowmont’s Artist Outfitters Store.

THE PROGRAM’S HISTORY
Much has changed since Arrowmont established its residency program in 1992. Bill Griffith, Director of Programs, spent two years researching existing residency programs throughout the country before starting the Arrowmont program, looking to established residencies like those at the Glassell School of Art (Houston, TX), Oregon College of Art and Craft (Portland, OR), and Archie Bray Foundation (Helena, MT) to help guide programmatic decisions. Out of his research, Bill determined that a year in-residence would be ideal for a studio artist to best experience the sort of deep impact Arrowmont hoped to have; any less would be insufficient. Early on, four resident artists were invited to live in rustic campus housing and required to pay a modest monthly fee for studio utilities and half the cost of their meals. Resident Artists were also expected to commit to 10 hours a week working for the organization in studio, gallery, and other program-related areas. Located in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, a remote mountain town and tourist community, Arrowmont then served as the main cultural attraction, and the residents provided much-needed administrative assistance to Arrowmont’s public programs.

Fast forward to 2001 when Arrowmont received an anonymous gift of $2 million to establish an endowment, providing sustainability and funding to expand and enhance the residency program. Thanks to that gift, Arrowmont now provides a $300/month stipend for artists, modern comfortable housing, three daily meals during workshop sessions, and funding for the artists to participate in professional development opportunities. The Artists-In-Residence Program now accommodates five emerging artists working in different media for 11 months at a time.

In 2012, Arrowmont celebrated 20 years of the Artists-In-Residence Program. Of the 91 alumni, 49 were in attendance, a true testament to the lasting impact of this program. The week-long

MISSION
The Arrowmont Artists-In-Residence Program provides early career, self-directed artists time, support and space necessary to develop a major body of work while living in a creative community environment of students, artists and visiting workshop instructors.

OVERVIEW
Location: Gatlinburg, Tennessee
Eligibility: emerging visual artists
Length + Number of Residencies: 5 artists are in residence for 11 months each year
What’s Provided: monthly stipend, shared housing with private bedroom, some meals, private studio, group exhibition, teaching opportunities

FROM BILL GRIFFITH, PROGRAM DIRECTOR
“Residents arrive each year in a sense as ‘students’ and leave as friends, ambassadors, artists and colleagues. Each discovers something new about themselves personally and artistically. Most residents credit the program as a pivotal time and influence in their professional and personal lives. Though initially viewed as a one-year commitment, most residents remain connected and engaged with Arrowmont after leaving.... I am lucky to have crossed paths with all of them.”

www.arrowmont.org
event included studio time, collaborative projects, artists talks, hikes in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, group meals, and a great opportunity for artists to re-connect with a transformative place and time in their lives.

WORKING WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

Arrowmont refers to “community” as both the individuals involved in its programs (including rotating visiting workshop artists/instructors, students, and work-study and studio assistants that participate in Arrowmont’s national workshops and conferences which change every one-to-two weeks from June through October) as well as the greater Gatlinburg community (made up of regional and local outreach programs, artists, and permanent local residents).

Educational programming for kids

Prior to working for Arrowmont, Bill Griffith spent several years as a public high school ceramics teacher. In 1989, he became aware that the twelve public elementary schools in the county surrounding Gatlinburg were staffed by a single art teacher. While some classroom teachers supplemented art curriculum on their own, the lone art teacher would travel to all the schools and each student would only receive formal art classes four to six times a year! Bill recognized an opportunity to assist the local community in ways that would also be a good fit with Arrowmont’s mission. ArtReach was established in 1992 and provides local Sevier County school children with hands-on art field trips to Arrowmont. Students work in specialized studios in the areas of pottery, textiles, metals, woodworking, painting, and photography. Today, 15 schools participate in this program which impacts 1,300 students each year. The Artists-In-Schools program, which ran from 1992 to 2005, was designed for the artists-in-residence to serve as “visiting artists” for the county public schools. The Adult Evening Art Classes and the Children’s and Young Adult Saturday Classes were expanded with the formation of the residency program as well, as the resident artists served as instructors. Today, the Saturday Children’s Art Classes attract over 100 students each winter and provide a variety of hands-on studio workshops for local students in grades K-12. Resident artists are given first priority for teaching opportunities in all community outreach programs and are paid for their instruction.

“While a resident at Arrowmont I taught a variety of classes including screen printing, weaving, basketry, and drawing in outreach programs as well as adult and children's community classes. That experience helped me land a one-year position at Iowa State University in 2000, which led to a tenure-track position at the University of North Texas in 2001. I have been at UNT for eleven years, and the College of Visual Arts and Design is an excellent school with fabulous fiber facilities, but I still enjoy returning to Arrowmont to teach summer classes.” - Amie Adelman 1998-1999

The impact of community outreach on the residency program

A natural synergy exists between the Artists-In-Residence Program and Arrowmont’s other programs. Each nurtures the other and residents contribute and benefit differently from each experience. Many resident artists have recently graduated from college and have never taught before. Because of Bill’s art education training and teaching experience, he mentors resident artists and also connects them to local teachers who provide guidance and assistance. Residents learn what students can realistically do in the allotted amount of time that they have to work. Classes for adults, also taught by resident artists, connect the resident artists with people in the community who they may not otherwise get to know. This often leads to social invitations and friendships within the local Gatlinburg and surrounding community that can develop and deepen over 11 months, and often beyond the residency period.

The local community also offers artists-in-residence insights into sustaining a career as an artist. For example, many local artists who work in Gatlinburg make a living from the tourist community, designing, marketing and selling commercial work for a living while still producing more one-of-a-kind work for other audiences. Artists-In-Residence also get exposed to local craftspeople who are second or third generation weavers, potters, basketmakers, and broom makers. Exposure to these individuals often has a tremendous impact on early career artists.

“Exposure to a larger art/craft community was paramount to my experience. To be able to live, eat, and breathe as a member of this resident community for a year was amazing. Exposure to workshop instructors, participants, visiting artists, as well as fellow residents gave way to many opportunities and experiences.” - Alex Kraft, 2007-2008
Impact on the community
In a rural community where there are few cultural institutions, people have few introductions to contemporary art. Prior to Arrowmont, there was little focus on the visual arts in Gatlinburg beyond the strong heritage of traditional, functional crafts. Additionally, while many local artists make cutting edge work, the work that is most visible in Gatlinburg is tourist-driven and traditional in nature. Arrowmont’s Adult Community Classes, ArtReach, and Saturday Morning Children and Young Adult Classes have helped educate people about the arts and allow them to feel more comfortable with a variety of aesthetics. During a recent conclusion of the Saturday Children’s Classes, 300 parents, grandparents, and family members from the local community showed up at Arrowmont to see the kids’ artwork and tour the studios, and these kinds of events provide exposure to the artists-in-residence as well.

“There's no other vehicle quite as powerful as kids and their love of making art to bring value, credibility, parents, and families to Arrowmont (or any institution).” - Bill Griffith, Program Director

Arrowmont has five gallery spaces and the Gallery Program teaches residents what a preparator or museum art handler would do. Residents pack, unpack, and install work in the galleries, set up lighting, and label work. If their skills are in marketing, they help with social media and advertising of events. Arrowmont also provides resident artists the opportunity to bring in visiting artists twice per year. The resident artists work together to select and contact visiting artists; develop a budget; determine the artists’ itineraries (including teaching workshops, offering demos, and providing critiques); and coordinate all aspects of the artists’ visit.

Every Monday night for ten weeks in the summer and five weeks in the fall, residents are invited to talk about and show images of their work to instructors and students in the national workshop program. And on Wednesday nights during workshop programs, resident artists host open studios. These events provide great networking opportunities and a wonderful way for resident artists to interact and speak informally in their studios about their work. Through both of these programs, resident artists learn to present themselves and speak about their work in ways that the general public can understand, and receive experience and feedback that can be greatly beneficial in an artist’s professional practice.

“(One) of the best benefits [of the Arrowmont Residency] is being able to present an artist talk so many times in one year. I found that to be invaluable as I was able to change my talk weekly and tailor the talk into a piece in itself, fully embodying the things I needed to best present myself and work to an audience. I don’t think you get that anywhere else.” - Dustin Farnsworth 2010-2011

THE IMPACT OF WORKING WITH EMERGING ARTISTS
The words “talent,” “energy,” and “humor” repeatedly come up when Bill talks about working with emerging artists. Additionally, the artists bring intelligence and know-how to Arrowmont. They are often coming directly out of school and have technical and conceptual savvy, their approaches to art-making are sophisticated, and their individual skills and talents are often of great benefit to the Arrowmont staff.

“After Arrowmont, being an artist and a teacher became my primary identity and I have never looked back. Arrowmont gave me the confidence to say it out loud.” - Fenella Belle, 1992-1993

Every year five people come into the program and breathe new life and fresh perspective into the whole organization. Working closely with a small group for 11 months allows for mentoring and guidance, observing growth and change, and opportunities to form lasting friendships. Staff and community members develop close relationships with resident artists. Residents arrive each year as strangers and leave as friends, ambassadors, artists, and colleagues. After 20 years, staff and...
community members have learned how to say good-bye to a group that they love and turn around and welcome a new group with excitement and anticipation.

The impact of the Arrowmont residency on the emerging artists is also significant. Many of the resident artists spend a great deal of time in the natural setting of the Great Smoky Mountains and some are in the South for the first time. These geographical influences can have a tremendous impact on both their artwork and their perspectives. The other artists are also a critical part of a resident's experience. Over the course of 11 months, they live and work closely with one another, developing deep bonds and informing each other's individual studio practices. It's not unusual for a resident artist to change his or her style or take on a new medium. Because the resident artists are in the early stages of their careers, their art-making processes are not so engrained when they arrive, and many take the opportunity to experiment. Dedicated time and space for creative work are invaluable to artists at all stages of their career but can be particularly hard to come by for emerging artists who have not yet developed sustained careers and must supplement their art-making with income from other jobs.

"The main benefit [of being a resident artist at Arrowmont] was that I learned to take myself seriously as an artist and a teacher, mostly because everyone around me did. While I considered myself an artist before the residency, it was mostly my internal identity as I was also a waitress and a lampmaker's assistant and many other things. After Arrowmont, being an artist and a teacher became my primary identity and I have never looked back. Arrowmont gave me the confidence to say it out loud." - Fenella Belle 1992-1993

CONCLUSION

Over the past 20 years, Arrowmont has provided a transformative residency experience for 91 artists while developing education programs that truly benefit the Gatlinburg and regional communities. The synergy between the residency and other programs at Arrowmont is intentionally designed to nurture artists in the early stages of their career: they are exposed to local artists, gain teaching experience, develop public speaking skills, learn about galleries, and are offered other professional development opportunities. In 11 months resident artists become a part of and make a positive impact on the community, both within Arrowmont and within the Gatlinburg region. Arrowmont provides a life-changing experience for those who participate.
Artist Residencies At-a-Glance

OVERVIEW
• estimated # of artist residency programs in North America ........................................ 500
• artist residency programs worldwide ...................................................................... 1,500+
• artists provided with residencies in North America annually ................................ 10,000+
• applications for residencies in North America annually ........................................ 80,000+
• average length of residency ................................................................................... 8 weeks

ARTISTIC DISCIPLINES
Artist residency programs that offer residencies in:
• visual arts (exclusively or in addition to other disciplines) .................................... 91%
• writing .................................................................................................................. 77%
• media arts ........................................................................................................... 64%
• music ..................................................................................................................... 58%
• architecture / design ............................................................................................. 49%
• scholarship ........................................................................................................... 40%
• dance ..................................................................................................................... 32%
• a single field or discipline only ............................................................................ 30%

GEOGRAPHY (WITHIN NORTH AMERICA)
Artist residency programs in:
• rural areas ............................................................................................................. 42%
• urban areas .......................................................................................................... 29%
• small towns .......................................................................................................... 21%
• suburban areas ..................................................................................................... 9%

FEES + STIPENDS
• programs that offer residencies at no cost ............................................................ 61%
• programs that offer residencies at no cost and also provide stipends .................... 26%
• programs that offer fee-based residencies ............................................................ 39%
• programs that offer fee-based residencies but also provide scholarships and subsidies 34%
• estimated value of support and services provided to artists-in-residence annually ...... $40 million
Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts

Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts is a national art education center. The School offers weekend, one- and two-week workshops for the beginner to advanced artist, taught by national and international practicing studio artists and university faculty. Students work and learn in professionally equipped studios on a 14-acre residential campus in Gatlinburg, TN. A series of weekly classes are also offered for residents of the local community. Workshops and classes are offered in ceramics, fiber, metals/jewelry, painting, drawing, photography, warm glass, woodturning, woodworking, mixed media, books and paper.

An Artists-in-Residence Program provides a supportive, stimulating work and learning environment for five early-career artists during a year-long residency. Conferences and symposia bring together artists, art educators, collectors and others to work in the studios, engage in dialogue about making art and to discuss issues and trends in the field.

Alliance of Artists Communities

The Alliance of Artists Communities is an association of artist communities, artist colonies, and artist residency programs – representing a field of 500 organizations in the US and more than 1,000 worldwide that provide artists of any discipline with dedicated time and space to create new work. Believing that the cultivation of new art and ideas is essential to human progress, the mission of the Alliance is to advocate for and support artist communities and residency programs, to advance the endeavors of artists.