

AFA ANNUAL REPORT 2021



Arts for Art is Ready

BY EARLY 2020, Arts for Art was actively implementing an updated strategic plan. The goals: to increase the visibility of Arts for Art locally and globally, to expand our infrastructure and funding base, and to grow and diversify our audience.

On March 4, as part of putting those goals in practice we presented a concert at The Town Hall to our largest and most diverse audience.

When NYC went into COVID lockdown just days later, Arts for Art leapt into the moment, pursuing new funding to increase artist pay, and shifting performances to twice-weekly live streaming concerts with talk-backs.

Even now we continue to explore safe programming models while keeping the music and art available to our growing, more diverse community. One that keenly feels the importance of this creativity. And true to our goals we've also grown and diversified both our staff and our income.

Looking forward we know Art is more important than ever, in particular Art grounded in ideals of community, improvisation and a commitment to social justice. Art inspires and brings hope. Art keeps us strong. Join us.

STAFF

Todd Nicholson
Patricia Nicholson Parker
Sean Madigan
Eriq Robinson
Danilo Powell-Lima

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Michael Lucio Sternbach - Film, Video
Zak Sherzad - Streaming
Stephen Schmidt - Audio Engineer

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Mission

Arts for Art is dedicated to the exceptional creativity that originated in the African American multi-arts jazz culture that utilizes improvisation to express a larger, more positive dream of inclusion and freedom.

Online Salons

Ongoing, August 2020 through June 2021



200
artists



56
performances



2,600
views

WITH SUPPORT from many donors, both small and large, AFA transitioned to livestream events and thus served our wider creative community with bi-weekly performances followed by in-depth interviews. All performers were fairly paid.



Outdoor Concerts

51
artists

19
performances

5
days

Artists for a Free World Protest Concerts

September 7, 12, 27, 2020 at The Clemente and St. Marks Churchyard and June 12 & 13, 2021 at First Street Green

IN SEPTEMBER, 2020 we presented our first in-person concerts outdoors with limited capacity in socially distanced outdoor settings since the beginning of the pandemic. We featured 13 sets of music and poetry that gave creative expression to feelings of isolation as well as cries against ongoing injustice.

PROGRAMS 2020 - 2021



Photos clockwise from top: Eva Kapanadze (2), Dave Kaufman (2)

Vision Festival Healing Soul

October 8-12, 2020



46
artists



13
performances



5
days

A SPECIAL, primarily online edition of the Vision Festival: Healing Soul presented world-class FreeJazz artists making a creative statement to uplift, move hearts, and give voice for racial and economic justice.



Photo: William Mazza

Around 850 people watched online, with an additional 200 people attending in-person with limited seating.

Special Events

Bringing on the Hallelujah

November, 2020

Online screening w/ Zoom conversation



AFA SCREENED a special, early cut of the ongoing documentary film about Kidd Jordan, *Bringing on the Hallelujah*. This film as well as the short film about Amina Claudine Myers that was screened at Vision 25, are part of a series of biopics on Vision Festival LifeTime recipients produced by Arts for Art and created by Michael Lucio Sternbach's Moon Lasso Productions

Amina Claudine Myers Birthday Celebration

March 21, 2021

Live streamed and recorded at Scholes Music Studio, Brooklyn, NY



AMINA CLAUDINE MYERS was featured in an intimate solo piano performance and conversation on her birthday. Funds raised were in support of V25 LifeTime Achievement programming and the creation of a biopic on Myers' art and career that was screened at Vision 25.

Vision Festival 25 | *Breaking Free Coming Home*

July 22-31, 2021

Pioneer Works, Red Hook, Brooklyn and The Clemente, LES, NYC

Amina Claudine Myers V25 LifeTime Achievement Honoree



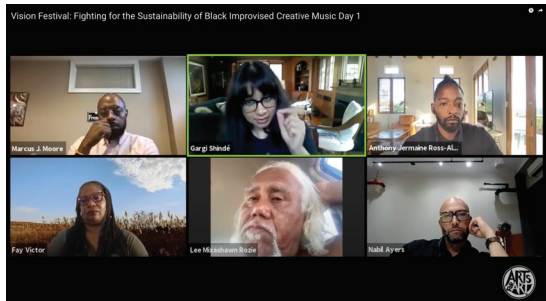
AMINA CLAUDINE MYERS holds in her hands and voice all of the African American music from Gospel to Blues to Jazz and FreeJazz.

THE VISION FESTIVAL celebrated 25 years with a glorious return to in-person performances across seven nights in partnership with Pioneer Works in Red Hook, Brooklyn and The Clemente on the Lower East Side, Manhattan, with all events live-streamed. EACH YEAR the world-renowned Vision Festival celebrates the best of African American, multi-cultural, multi-discipline FreeJazz arts by bringing together practitioners of music, poetry, movement, and visual arts who embrace improvisation as both an aesthetic and a means of collaboration.

Conference: Fighting for the Sustainability of Black Improvised Creative Music, Parts 1 & 2

Each Vision Festival features facilitated conversations with industry leaders on issues key to the AFA community and mission.

DISCUSSION





163
artists



45
performances



7
days

PROGRAMS 2020 - 2021

DANCE



VISUAL ART



POETRY

COMMUNITY is a founding principle of Arts for Art.

CELEBRATING ELDERS



At V25 the community came together to honor Milford Graves a seminal artist, a healer, a scientist and a charismatic force leading and teaching and learning at all times.

TRIBUTES



THE VISION FESTIVAL HOLDS SPACE so that artists can bring insight and inspiration in ways more fluid, more open, and a bit kinder, to all peoples and cultures.

Photos: Eva Kapanadze

Education

Creative Vision Ensemble

IN MARCH 2021, after holding a series of weekly workshops/meetings over a six month period with a select group of world class musicians and educators, AFA committed to reestablish the youth music education program.

Coming out of these conversations were two key principles:

- The music that Arts for Art supports and presents and teaches is reflective of the African Diaspora and other world cultures that comprise the communities of color that we serve in this program.
- The formula for the success of the program is “Commitment and Consistency” from all participants - the teachers, students and parents.



Photo: Eva Kapanadze

Beginning in April, we made free individualized coaching sessions available to twelve young musicians aged 10 to 15. Demographic breakdown: 3 African-Americans, 3 Latinx, 2 Asian and 4 white students; 7 male, 3 female and 2 non-binary. These sessions took place online and were targeted to the students’ individual needs. In June and July we held six in person weekly Sunday afternoon workshops. This culminated in a performance at the 25th Vision festival on July 24 at The Clemente.

Budget

DURING THE PAST FISCAL YEAR, we experienced a major increase in earned revenue through an increase in ticketed events, ticket prices and a strong turnout at the Vision Festival. We also experienced a major increase in foundation income, thanks to new grants from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, the Jerome Foundation, our association with COSA (the Coalition of Small Arts) and special emergency funding from the Howard Gilman Foundation. Our programming and administrative costs went up due to our focus on presenting a consistent series of live streaming concerts, and newly edited archival content. This modified model required us to purchase new equipment and make new hires. All of this would not have been possible without the generous support of individuals, foundations and government agencies.

Income	2019	2020	2021
Earned Revenue	80,252	37,030	111,568
Government Grants	42,915	67,583	72,350
SBA Loans (forgivable)	0	54,037	0
Foundation Grants	78,942	146,857	318,656
Individual Donors	176,628	150,124	169,575
Totals	378,737	455,631	672,149

Expenses	2019	2020	2021
Artist Fees	113,450	62,277	160,548
Administration	213,238	230,693	312,142
Marketing	5,641	6,745	6,186
Technical/Production	16,428	16,829	76,435
Space/Office Rent	29,465	18,648	12,841
Totals	378,222	335,192	568,152

New Institutional Support

Jerome Foundation, Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, COSA (Teiger Foundation, Willem de Kooning Foundation, The Henry Luce Foundation), Tinker Foundation and The Givens Foundation for African American Literature

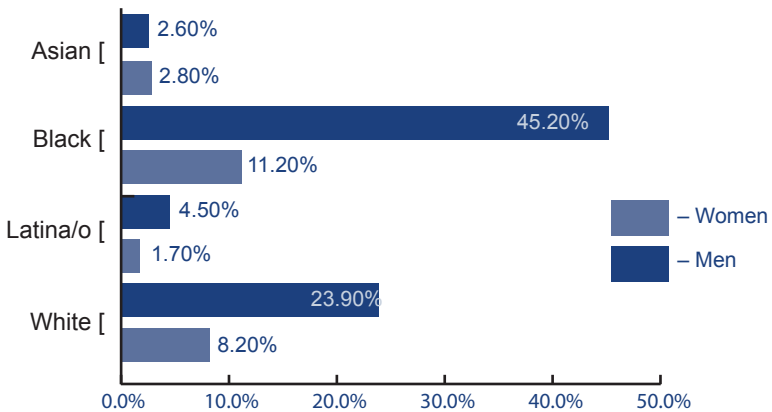
Continued Institutional Support

Ruth and Jacob Epstein Foundation, Chamber Music America, SMS Foundation, Howard Gilman Foundation, Jazz Foundation of America, New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, New York State Council on the Arts, National Endowment for the Arts and Council Members Margaret Chin and Carlina Rivera

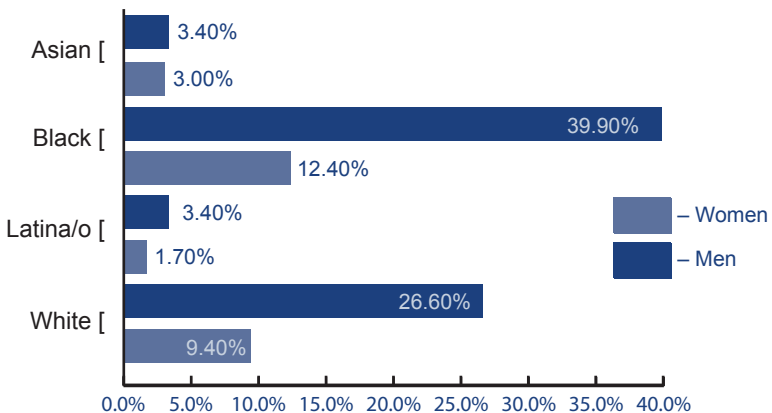
Diversity

ARTS FOR ART was founded by artists, to address the lack of support for FreeJazz in general and specifically FreeJazz created and performed by African Americans. For 26 years, we have created opportunities for artists of color, historically representing over 60% of all of our programs, to perform on an international stage. Last year our programs consisted of 68% POC artists and 24% female artists. In the past year and a half, we have been in the process of diversifying our board, staff and advisory board to better represent the community of artists that we serve and further strengthen our commitment to the ideals of diversity, equity, excellence, self-determination and community.

Appearances by Race + Gender *



Unique Performers by Race + Gender



*AFA recognizes that gender is a nonbinary spectrum. However as we do not collect self-identified gender data on either performers or attendees, we find the common use of "woman, man, or gender non-conforming" useful in this context.



ARTS FOR ART believes diversity cannot be assumed nor should it be a numbers game and therefore it is equally important to hold all artists to the same standard of excellence.

Arts for Art promotes diversity by seeking out and shining a light on African American improvising FreeJazz musicians of all ages. This art was born out of the African American struggle for equal rights. However, the practices of free improvisation and Jazz are increasingly dominated by white men. While resisting this trend AFA encourages the highest standards in improvisational and compositional art.

Arts for Art recognizes that each of us must make an effort, and work towards Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

INDIVIDUAL DONORS**Vision Angels \$5,000+**

Tom Carhart • Whit Dickey • Nancy Seiser • John Schiek • Brad Smith

Vision Improvisers \$1,000-\$5,000

Patricia Ali • Anais Brault • Sean Buffington • Rachel Cook • Jerome Deupree
Rackstraw Downes • Closey Giffen • David Kreuter • La Vida Feliz Foundation
Ariane Lopez Huici • Joseph O'Neill • Anthony Radice • Bruce Raynor
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Vision Supporters \$500-\$1,000

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Arts for Art Values

AFA keeps growing our community of innovative musicians, dancers, poets and visual artists with a public that cares about culture and justice.

The Art is built on democratic community ideals. Its disciplined intensity speaks of equity, justice, and freedom. So AFA has worked to create an inclusive, diverse and equitable space in which the artists, and the public we serve, can thrive.

Community: Diversity of race, age, and gender define community. AFA creates community by creating opportunities throughout the year for diverse artists to meet and share ideas as well as perform.

Justice, Diversity, Inclusion, Respect: We make safe space for artists to experiment, develop and excel creatively. AFA respects artists by ensuring fair compensation, and audiences by ensuring economic access to programs and performances. AFA organizes artists efforts to respond to contemporary social issues in collaboration with grassroots activist efforts.

Improvisation: Improvisation is the sophisticated integration of all aspects of creation in real time. This highly developed form is at the core of our mission. It is also an element of AFA's organization culture. We plan for our future and operate flexibly to respond to opportunities as they arise.

Commitment: AFA respects artists' commitment to their lives' work, and reflects that commitment by seeking and supporting new works, audiences and partnerships that help artists' sustain creative and professional growth.

A Permanent Home

A home for AFA and the art we serve is important to create opportunities for the art to thrive. We at AFA, along with the artists and supporters will make this a reality, Our temporary home is provided by partnerships with Teatro LaTea, The Clemente, Weeksville and others to keep the art streaming, strong and present in all of our lives.

If you want to become a part of moving AFA forward, contact us at info@artsforart.org or 212-254-5420.