

ABOUT: LINC's Innovative Space Awards, July 2, 2010 Visit to the UCIMC

LINC Statement on Arts in Communities

(<http://www.lincnet.net/artist-space/space-for-change>)

The development of affordable living and working spaces for artists plays a powerful role in the production of their work. These spaces provide a stable foundation from which artists may vigorously pursue their work and shape the communities they inhabit. Through direct engagement and influence, the presence of culturally rich activity contributes to the overall health and vitality of communities at a variety of scales. Exemplary artist spaces support the unique and diverse practices of individual artists; generate creative enterprises in local economies; and play significant roles in long term community development and revitalization efforts.

What LINC is looking to award:

From: <http://www.lincnet.net/artist-space/innovative-space-awards>

The MetLife Foundation Innovative Space Awards (ISA) **program recognizes, rewards, and promotes successful artist space development projects that exhibit innovation, affordability for artists, sustainability, and community impact...The program emphasizes the role affordable artist space projects play in community revitalization and socially progressive community development, and will increase awareness of replicable, sustainable approaches and models.** The ISA seeks to identify opportunities for developers and urban planners to weave artists into community development strategies, and to enlist artists for projects that contribute to neighborhood revitalization through their concern for communities' environmental well being, economic renewal, and diversity.

LINC is creating an Artists Space Database, a collection of applicant entries, and serves as comprehensive online resource. **Through the award program, this online resource will establishes a national database of artist spaces to encourage the replication of model projects and policies. The increased visibility of these projects and their developers is intended to promote cross-sector collaborations among artists, developers, local municipalities, public agencies, artist-focused organizations, community development corporations, and others.**

We will be meeting with:

- Juana Guzman, the VP of the Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum in Chicago
- Ryan Breaux, a program assistant from LINC
(see profiles on p.6)

Talking points for the UCIMC Site Visit

In particular, LINC is interested in the UCIMC's **use of the space** and our role in creating a **diverse arts space / understanding diversity issues in our community**. We would like to highlight:

The UCIMC is a community-supported space:

- The building was purchased with funds from a capital campaign of mostly small donations, raising \$85,000 to purchase the historic post office building.
- We have relied on community and volunteer support to build our organization, and does not rely upon large foundation funding.
- The UCIMC operates with the support of about 50 core volunteers and 9 AmeriCorps who work with 800+ volunteers through the course of the year.
- The UCIMC space functions as a community resource, providing low-cost event and meeting space to a variety of community groups.

The UCIMC provides a variety of valuable resources to local artists:

All artists with studios at the UCIMC are considered “artists in residence” and are encouraged to get involved in the UCIMC and our projects, hosting workshops, performances, and displays in the main space. The UCIMC offers:

- Centrally-located, affordable studio spaces, with preference given to artists and art-related programs
- Support in writing and preparing grant applications.
- Free gallery space in which to sell their work; artists typically receive 100% of their sales.
- Access to audio and video production and editing equipment.
- Access to a large performance space.
- Access to a wide variety of media outlets, including the UCIMC’s website, community events calendar, list serves and newsletter. Our radio station will play PSAs for free and the Public i newspaper includes a community events calendar.
- Support from an AmeriCorps member who serves full time as our Live Events Coordinator. She is focused on increasing engagement of new and current artists in UCIMC resources. She is also facilitating artist participation in art performances and displays, helping artists to put on live shows and events.

The UCIMC is unique in our role as a diverse community space whose resources serve many different populations.

- The UCIMC’s low power FM station has programming in four different languages. Our programming represents: members of the Hispanic and Spanish speaking populations, local Christian and Muslim Faith-based groups, Native Americans, and local musicians of all genres. Anyone is free to host a show on WRFU.
- The UCIMC’s live performances and programming represent a wide diversity of community groups, musical genres and artistic forms. A small sample of recent performances include:

- Tatsuya Nakatani, a Japanese solo percussionist who performed with local musician Jason Finkleman.
- The IMC Film Fest showcased works from 26, primarily local and independent, filmmakers. The event incorporated several musical performances, including a freestyle performance with DJ Linux, Blink tha Boss and members of UC Hip Hop Congress (see: <http://ucimc.org/content/show-imc-film-festival>)
- CU Folk and Roots Festival, including Amason, Cajun Dance lessons, and a Creole Stomp / Cajun Dance performance by Dennis Stroughmatt (<http://www.cufolkandroots.org/videos2009.html>)
- On May 8, 2010 the Children's Art Festival attracted over 500 community members to the UCIMC, blending diverse performances from the Chinese Heritage Association Dance Group, Kids Contra Dance, West African Dance by Djbril Camara, and the Bow-Dacious String band.
- Change of State Performance Project world premiered their new performance piece, *Aquatown*, on June 10th (see <http://changeofstate.org/calendar/>)
- There UCIMC provides 22 studio spaces, of which all but one is rented to artists. These artists work on a diverse variety of art forms from painting and silk screening to instrument building and original musical composition.

The UCIMC's projects and programs strengthen and support the local economy:

- UCIMC volunteer opportunities, live events, workshops, classes, internship programs, and daily services bring over 30,000 people to the downtown area each year.
- UCIMC members helped design the City of Urbana's Public Arts Program which provides grant resources to non-profits and local artists, with a particular focus on the downtown Urbana areas.
- The UCIMC has strategically worked to provide income opportunities for community members. The UCIMC's partnership with the Champaign Consortium led to paid summer employment for twenty youths since 2009.
- The UCIMC hosts 8 full-time AmeriCorps positions in CU, serving both the UCIMC and our community.
- The UCIMC has fiscally sponsored 66 organizations, providing them with 501c3 status and all the benefits of being a non-profit. Of these 66, twelve of which are located in Central Illinois.

The UCIMC is home to fourteen different working groups and projects. We offer a diversity of programming that fosters the creation and distribution of media, art, and narratives emphasizing underrepresented voices and perspectives and promote empowerment and expression through media and arts education.

- Our working groups are:
 - UCIMC Artists
 - Audio / Video Production
 - WRFU 104.5fm
 - Print / The Public i

- Books to Prisoners
- Radical Librarians and Archivists
- Shows and live events collective
- Web
- Tech & Computer Help Desk
- Finance & Space
- Maker Space Urbana
- Community Connections
- OddMusic
- The Bike Project

In addition to our fourteen working groups, hundreds of unique performances, exhibits, and events, the UCIMC has worked to develop and hosts a series of annual events:

- In 2009, the UCIMC hosted the first Indy Media and Arts lab, a low to no-cost summer camp for low-income youths in Urbana. They learned painting, sculpture, drumming, radio/audio production and community gardening. The camp will again take place again in July of 2010.
- In February of 2009 and 2010, the UCIMC developed, organized and hosted three-day Film Fests, featuring the work of local filmmakers and artists. Films came from all genres and the festivals incorporated local musicians and non-profits. The goal of the Film Festival is to support local filmmakers, to connect artists to each other, to the UCIMC's resources and to interested audiences.
- Since 2006, the UCIMC has hosted IMC Fest, generally in April. For the past two years, the UCIMC has partnered with the Boneyard Arts Urbana Planning Committee, serving as the evening entertainment venue and hosting over 30 visual artists and musicians annually.
- In 2010, with a grant from the Urbana Public Arts Program, the UCIMC hosted our first annual Children's Art Fair.

LINC Program Officer Profiles:

Ryan Breaux, Program Assistant, LINC

<http://artsinachangingamerica.net/bio/view/organization/1/8>

Ryan Breaux is Program Assistant at LINC and provides administrative support to LINC's grant making programs, including Space for Change. Ryan began his tenure at LINC as an intern in January 2009. Ryan's previous experience includes serving as Gallery Staff at SUPERFRONT—a not-for-profit project space for experimental architecture in Bed Stuy, Brooklyn—where he was responsible for grant writing and maintaining daily gallery operations. In addition, he has interned at several architecture firms in New York City, such as Eisenman Architects and Acconci Studio. Ryan received his Bachelor of Science in Architecture from the University of Cincinnati in Ohio.

<http://newyork.superfront.org/about/>

SUPERFRONT's mission is to support, promote, and produce radically contemporary architecture, while fostering creative interdisciplinary exchange. This mission is achieved through exhibits, publications, panels, and projects that, while focused on architecture, may also concern art, performance, media and social science. Since January 2008, SUPERFRONT has invited students, emerging architects, designers, visual artists, and performance artists to engage in a public forum that raises awareness of contemporary architectural practice and theory.

Juana Guzman

Vice President

Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum

<http://www.artsusa.org/events/2007/abc/namc/bios/071.asp>

A native Chicagoan, Juana Guzman, an arts activist for over thirty years, has been serving as the vice president for the Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum since 1999 and was the former director of community cultural development for the city of Chicago's Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA), where she served for twenty years. Prior to her departure, she was responsible for a multicultural effort that created awareness and enhanced economic opportunities for Chicago's diverse communities through the creation of the Chicago Coalition of Community Cultural Centers, a partnership of sixty nonprofit arts organizations. Developing several unique programs, such as the nationally acclaimed Chicago Neighborhood Tours in 1996 for the DCA and rallying and receiving over \$8.1 million dollars as part of the City of Chicago's Empowerment Zone's Cultural Diversity Program. The program provided crucial capital development dollars to community-based, culturally diverse arts organizations for the creation and expansion of community based arts centers and museums. Ms. Guzman has gained national attention for her

skills in developing innovative entrepreneurships, along with her deep understanding and support of community-based arts organizations. She has created a viable market for cultural tourism and retailing, involving a unique partnership with local arts organizations, community business leaders, artisans, and city government. Ms. Guzman also has her own company, Economic Connections, which focuses on economic development initiatives for the arts and has developed tours and retailing opportunities in Chicago, Philadelphia, New York City, Houston, and Durban, South Africa. Juana Guzman's expertise includes fundraising, organizational and computer development, earned income and online ventures, community tourism, business planning retailing, cultural facility development, artist's live-work space, and marketing.