



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
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**MAYOR BILL DE BLASIO, SPEAKER MELISSA MARK-VIVERITO AND BOROUGH
PRESIDENTS APPOINT MEMBERS TO THE CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO SUPPORT
THE DEVELOPMENT OF A COMPREHENSIVE CULTURAL PLAN**

NEW YORK—Mayor Bill de Blasio, Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, Acting Cultural Affairs Commissioner Edwin Torres, Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr., Queens Borough President Melinda Katz, and Staten Island Borough President James Oddo today announced the appointment of 22 members to the Citizens' Advisory Committee to support the development of the City's comprehensive cultural plan, as required by Local Law 46 of 2015.

In April, Mayor de Blasio signed City Council legislation to create the City's first-ever comprehensive cultural plan to assess how the public sector can support and invest in the arts, especially in areas where artists face high economic pressure. The Committee will be charged with advising the Department of Cultural Affairs on the development and implementation of the plan, which will address several topics related to cultural activities in the city, including the availability and distribution of cultural activities in the five boroughs, the relationship between cultural activities and social and economic health and welfare, housing and workspace needs of artists, and increasing arts education and cultural activities in public schools.

"The talented and eclectic committee we've gathered to oversee the development of the City's first-ever cultural plan will help guide us as we lift up all New Yorkers through arts and culture," said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. "The arts are essential to our economy, our schools, and our vibrancy as a city, and with the development of a comprehensive cultural plan, we will break down barriers for artists and ensure New Yorkers in all five boroughs can experience and express themselves through the arts."

"Culture and the arts are essential to the fabric of our city," said **Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito**. "In the face of rising economic pressures, it is more important than ever that we support organizations, institutions, and creative New Yorkers who capture, showcase, and share the vibrant spirit of New York City. The City Council was proud to pass legislation establishing a comprehensive cultural plan that will unify the city's efforts to support the arts in our local communities, and the Citizens' Advisory Committee announced today will play a crucial role in developing and realizing that goal."

The Committee is comprised of appointees from a broad array of cultural and artistic organizations and practices, and other related fields. The Commission will be chaired by Ben Rodriguez-Cubeñas, co-Founder of the Cuban Artists Fund, Vice Chair of DCLA's Cultural Affairs Advisory Committee, and Program Director for the New York City portion of the Rockefeller Brothers Foundation's Pivotal Place program.

In addition to advising the development and implementation of the City's comprehensive cultural plan, the Committee will review DCLA's biannual reports on the progress of the plan. The CAC will meet quarterly and will be dissolved after making recommendations following its review of the second biannual report, or after five years.

"In New York's cultural community we have a resource that provides our city with unrivalled access to programming and educational opportunities and contributes so much to the vitality of neighborhoods in all five

boroughs,” said **Acting Cultural Affairs Commissioner Edwin Torres**. “We are eager to start working with the Citizens’ Advisory Committee to create a comprehensive cultural plan that will help us enhance the role that art and culture play in our communities and in the lives of all New Yorkers.”

“The heart of New York City beats to the tune of its arts community; it is the color and the sound that invigorates our economy, inspires our youth, and gives us our signature character. Dr. Myrah Brown Green is a local champion of the arts, particularly in communities of color, and I am pleased to have her serve on behalf of all Brooklynites on the Citizens’ Advisory Committee for the City’s comprehensive cultural plan. I look forward to working with her and all of our arts stakeholders on meaningful efforts that will address equity of cultural resources, affordable living and working space for artists, as well as greater integration of the arts in public education,” said **Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams**.

“Being a cultural capital is a key part of who we are as a city, and the comprehensive cultural plan will help us leverage our city’s artistic, historic, and cultural wealth to enrich the lives of New Yorkers,” said **Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer**. “I’m thrilled to appoint Verdery Roosevelt to this committee. Her experience in community development and at Ballet Hispanico make her an expert voice, with the knowledge and skills to help the Committee achieve its goals.”

“The arts have an important and vital role in our society, especially for our children in public schools and for less fortunate neighborhoods where such activities can be a positive influential tool to strengthening cross-cultural partnerships,” said **Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr.** “The implementation of this committee will help to remediate the immediate needs of the artist community and will virtually showcase the dynamic image of New York culture for generations to come.”

“The Borough of Queens has undergone a significant boost in tourism and cultural vibrancy in recent years, widely recognized as a top international destination of choice,” said **Queens Borough President Melinda Katz**. “The Committee will develop a citywide comprehensive cultural plan, which will take our city’s status as the center of art and culture to a new level of synergy and access.”

Staten Island Borough President James Oddo said, “In so many ways this is a crucial moment in time for Staten Island cultural organizations. They face some daunting challenges, but there are also unique opportunities for new growth in the near future. We love to show them off and look forward to more New Yorkers learning about what Staten Island has to offer. We are pleased that the talented Amanda Straniere will effectively and passionately make the case for Staten Island culturals.”

“The objective of New York City’s first-ever cultural plan is to expand access to our world-renowned arts and cultural sectors,” said **Council Majority Leader Jimmy Van Bramer, Chair of the Committee on Cultural Affairs and Libraries**. “The establishment of a Citizens’ Advisory Committee is the first step toward making this plan a reality. I’m proud to have worked with Mayor de Blasio and Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito to appoint an eclectic mix of New Yorkers which reflect the diversity of our great city. Every New Yorker deserves access to all the great cultural and artistic programming that makes our city the cultural capital of the world. Working together with the newly established advisory committee we will create a blueprint and implement a five-borough strategy that increases access, opportunity and equity so that all New Yorkers.”

“These appointments represent the best of New York City. I’m proud that the Council, the Borough Presidents and the Mayor worked together to assemble a Citizens’ Advisory Committee that reflects the vibrancy and vitality of New York’s cultural sector. I’m sure the diversity of expertise and experience among these appointees will prove an invaluable part of the process of building our first ever cultural plan,” said **Council Member Stephen Levin**.

The following members were appointed by the Mayor:

Tino Gagliardi is the President of The Associated Musicians of Greater New York, Local 802, and an Executive Officer of the American Federation of Musicians. He was previously Recording Secretary of the New

York Chapter of the Recording Musicians Association, a non-profit advocacy organization for the Recording Arts and the role they play in the artistic and economic life of citizens in the United States and Canada. He is a Board Member of One Percent for Culture, on the board of directors for Inside Broadway, and a delegate to the AFL-CIO Entertainment Committee.

Joanna Haigood is the Artistic Director of the Zaccho Dance Theatre in San Francisco. Haigood's creative work focuses on making dances that use natural, architectural and cultural environments as points of departure for movement exploration and narrative. She has choreographed a number of works for NYC-based organizations, including Paseo which was produced by Dancing in the Streets and Casita Maria Center for Arts and Education in October 2012 as part of the South Bronx Culture Trail.

Karen Brooks Hopkins is Senior Fellow in Residence at Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Hopkins previously served as president of the Brooklyn Academy of Music where, over 36 years, she helped transform the organization into one of New York City's most prominent cultural organizations, presenting, commissioning, and exhibiting works of cinema, performing, and visual arts. During this time, BAM became an anchor for the revitalization of Downtown Brooklyn, which today is undergoing a renaissance with new commercial, residential, entertainment, and cultural development bringing new life to the area. Hopkins also represented Brooklyn on the New York State Education Department's Board of Regents from 2005-2010.

Sandra Jackson-Dumont is the Chairman of Education at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and a member of DCLA's Cultural Affairs Advisory Committee. Prior to joining the Met in 2014, she worked at the Seattle Art Museum, where she was the Kayla Skinner Deputy Director for Education and Public Programs as well as Adjunct Curator for Modern and Contemporary Art.

Arnold Lehman has been an activist museum director for over 40 years, advocating for public accessibility, diversity, community, innovation, and freedom of expression. His 18 years at the Brooklyn Museum brought over 200 acclaimed exhibitions and thousands of progressive educational programs to Eastern Parkway. Lehman was President of the Association of Art Museum Directors, three-term Chair of the Cultural Institutions Group (CIG) of NYC, and serves as a Trustee of the American Federation of Arts, on the Executive Committee of the Bard Graduate Center, and recently received the Wunsch Award for Excellence in American art. As a Ford Foundation Fellow, he advises on issues of social justice, creativity, and freedom of expression, as well as personally working on a project for the advancement of museum professionals of color. In addition, Lehman is Chair of the Board of Legg Mason Funds and Senior Advisor at Phillips. He was recently appointed to the Department of Cultural Affairs' Cultural Affairs Advisory Committee.

Miguel Luciano is a Resident Artist at El Barrio's Artspace PS109, an affordable housing development for artists in East Harlem. Luciano's work has been exhibited nationally and internationally, and he has received numerous grants and awards and his work is featured in the permanent collections of The Smithsonian American Art Museum, DC; The Brooklyn Museum, NY; El Museo del Barrio, NY; the Newark Museum, NJ; and the Museo de Arte de Puerto Rico, PR.

Eric G. Pryor was appointed President of the Harlem School of the Arts in August 2015. Before that, he served as Executive Director of The Center for Arts Education, a nonprofit committed to ensuring that every child in every New York City public school has equal access to a well-rounded education, of which the arts are a central component.

Tattfoo Tan is a Staten Island-based artist whose practice responds to issues of ecology, climate change and nutrition. His art making process is centered on learning new forms of knowledge, practicing them, and in turn teaching others. Tattfoo has presented in, collaborated with, received commissions from, and shown his works in various venues and institutions including DCLA's Percent for Art program, Queens Museum, The New School, Fashion Institute of Technology, and Creative Time Reports. In 2010, he received an Award for Excellence in Design from the City's Public Design Commission for his design for the Bronx River Art Center.

The following member was appointed by the Commissioner of Cultural Affairs:

Ben Rodriguez-Cubeñas will serve as Chair of the Citizens' Advisory Committee and is the Program Director for the New York City portion of the Rockefeller Brothers Foundation's Pivotal Place program where he oversees funding for a portfolio of arts organizations in NYC, as well as the Pocantico Arts Collaborative. In addition to serving on various arts-related boards, he co-founded the Cuban Artists Fund in 1998, an international organization dedicated to helping individual artists and promoting cultural exchanges with the Cuban community. He is also Vice Chair of the Department of Cultural Affairs Cultural Affairs Advisory Committee.

The following members were appointed by the Speaker of the City Council:

Gianna P. Cerbone-Teoli is Chef and Owner of Manducatis Rustica, an Italian restaurant in Long Island City. She is an active member of the community serving on various boards, including as Founder of LIC Women in Business, Board President of the Queens Council of the Arts, Committee Member of LIC Arts Open, and Committee Co-Chair of the LIC Business Improvement District.

Catherine A. Green is the Executive Director and Founder of ARTs East New York Inc. The organization is committed to presenting and promoting multicultural arts to address socioeconomic issues that hinder the growth and development of that community.

Tia Powell Harris is the Executive Director of Weeksville Heritage Center, Brooklyn's largest African American cultural institution. As an arts educator for 20 years, Harris previously served as Director of Artistic Affairs for the Duke Ellington School of Arts in Washington, D.C, Associate Director of Education Programs at the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery, Manager of Community Partnerships at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing, and chairperson of the Theatre Department and Managing Director of The Ellington Company.

Adam Huttler is the Founder and Executive Director of Fractured Atlas, a national non-profit organization that provides technology-driven infrastructure for the cultural sector. Huttler serves on the Board of Directors of Performing Arts Alliance.

Kenneth Pietrobono is the Queens-based artist whose work focuses on political and social critique. His work has been exhibited in New York and Florida.

Daisy Rodriguez is the Director of Government Affairs of the Department of Institutional Advancement at the American Museum Natural History. She served in U.S. Senator Charles E. Schumer's office in various roles. Most recently, she was Community Outreach Director and Intern Coordinator.

Rosalba Rolon is an actor, director, writer, and dramaturge. She has been co-Founder and Artistic Director of Pregones Theater in the South Bronx since 1979 advocating for young artists. Pregones Theater has addressed the issues of violence against LGBTQ youth, among other social issues.

Ken Tabachnick is the Deputy Dean for Tisch Asia at NYU. Prior to joining NYU, he was Dean of the School of the Arts, Purchase College, SUNY, and before that was the general manager for the New York City Ballet. Tabachnick also serves as a vice-chair of Dance/USA, and is a trustee of the Gilbert V. Hemsley Lighting Programs and Stephen Petronio Company.

The following members were appointed by the City's five Borough Presidents:

John F. Calvelli is the Executive Vice President of Public Affairs for the Wildlife Conservation Society, a global conservation organization headquartered at the Bronx Zoo dedicated to saving wildlife and wild places. Calvelli serves on the Executive Management team that manages the overall organization and he specifically oversees the work of WCS in government and community affairs, public policy, communications and digital space. He is appointed by Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr.

Myrah Brown Green is the Founder and Executive Director of MBGreen Arts Curating, an organization dedicated to documenting and promoting the careers of under recognized master and emerging artists of color. She previously served as Distinguished Lecturer of Art and Executive Director of Art and Culture at the City College of New York, where she curated numerous exhibitions. She is appointed by Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams.

Verdery Roosevelt is Senior Vice President of Program and Nonprofit Investments at the Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone. Roosevelt previously served as Executive Director of Ballet Hispanico for over three decades where, in partnership with Founder and Artistic Director Tina Ramirez, she led its growth from a community-based organization to the nation's preeminent ambassador of Hispanic culture, producing dozens of new works that the company performed around the world while engaging tens of thousands of students and audience members from its base in New York. She is appointed by Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer.

Amanda Straniere is the Community Campaign Coordinator for the Staten Island Museum and previously served in the office of the Staten Island Borough President, where she worked to increase tourism to the borough by supporting local cultural and historic groups. She is appointed by Staten Island Borough President James Oddo.

Nayelli Valencia serves as the Director of Cultural Affairs and Tourism for the President of the Borough of Queens. Most recently, Valencia was the Director of Strategic Partnerships for the Kupferberg Center for the Arts at Queens College, and formerly Director of Development for the Louis Armstrong House Museum in Corona. Previously, she was an attorney by trade specializing in corporate law. Valencia was also a professional ballerina for eight years with the Compañía Nacional de Danza, the national ballet company based in Mexico City. She is appointed by Queens Borough President Melinda Katz.

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