

Mayor Adams Selects People's Theatre Project to own, Operate First-of-its-Kind Immigrant Research and Performing Arts Center Coming to Inwood

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With \$15 Million Investment From City, New 17,000-Square-Foot Community Resource Will Serve Tens of Thousands of People Every Year

NEW YORK – New York City Mayor Eric Adams today announced that the People's Theatre Project (PTP) — an immigrant- and women-led nonprofit — will own and operate a first-of-its-kind Immigrant Research and Performing Arts Center (IRPAC) coming to Inwood. Filled with a range of visual and performing arts, the center will amplify the voices of New York City's diverse immigrant communities and cultivate work by local artists and arts organizations. The city will invest \$15 million to help PTP acquire a newly constructed cultural center that will deliver theater that is more equitable and representative of immigrants and people of color.

"New Yorkers deserve a city that is more inclusive and more prosperous after the pandemic than it was before, and we are building that city every day. Part of that is creating opportunities for all our young people to see themselves in our arts and culture, and this project will provide a new generation of young, immigrant New Yorkers with that invaluable experience," said **Mayor Adams**. "I know this partnership with the People's Theatre Project and the \$15 million investment we are providing will bring joy to so many in Upper Manhattan and across the city."

"When we talk about helping our city and our economy recover equitably and inclusively, projects like this one are exactly what we mean," said **Deputy Mayor for Economic and Workforce Development Maria Torres-Springer**. "With its deep roots in the community, the People's Theatre Project will provide cultural programming that reflects the diverse, immigrant community in Inwood. The selection of this group to

operate this new center demonstrates our commitment to neighborhood growth that responds to and reflects community needs and cultural traditions and that will bring New York City back better than ever before.”

“We thank the mayor, NYCEDC, DCLA, and the administration for selecting People’s Theatre Project to lead the new center,” said **Mino Lora, founding executive director, People’s Theatre Project**. “For the last 13 years, we have been committed to uplifting the voices of immigrants and people of color in New York City. This center will be an exemplary space, where artistic excellence goes hand in hand with the centering of immigrants and people of color, welcoming the local community, and catalyzing civic action. It will connect, inspire, and activate generations of immigrants and their allies. Today’s announcement is an exciting moment for New York City, with an opportunity to build a community-rooted and anti-oppressive cultural institution from the ground up.”

PTP was selected through an open request for expressions of interest conducted by the New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC) and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs (DCLA). In addition to the \$15 million in capital support from the city for the new facility, DCLA will provide \$75,000 to help PTP prepare to operate the new space.

The center will provide an accessible, vibrant, dedicated rehearsal and performance space for residents of Inwood and Washington Heights. Community members will be able to enjoy live musical and dance performances, film screenings, and other community events, and audiences from across the city will be able to experience theatrical performances that center and explore the breadth of immigrant experiences represented in New York City. For children and families, the center will offer festivals, student matinees and field trips, and community partner programming.

The center will be the home of the PTP Company — a professional multilingual ensemble of immigrant artists of color — and the PTP Academy — a theater and social justice leadership program dedicated to the holistic development of immigrant youth. All participants in the academy receive a full scholarship. Since 2009, PTP has engaged more than 10,000 Latine, Black, and immigrant youth of color in its partnerships and public programs.

The center will also offer the community:

- Weekly cultural programming for seniors, in partnership with local senior centers;
- Subsidized theater and studio space rentals for local performing artists;
- Arts exhibits by local and immigrant visual artists; and
- A home to resident companies, partners, and individual artists.

In addition, the center will serve as a community hub of immigrant history research. PTP will partner with the New York Public Library to provide research and literary programming that will allow community members to explore the immigrant experience through scholarship and the performing arts. PTP will also continue conversations with Dominican-centered institutions about having a presence in the space to enrich the cultural learning and immigrant history that is so important to the Inwood community.

“People’s Theatre Project will offer educational and artistic opportunities rooted in equity and social justice, while supporting local artists who contribute not only to our economy, but the identity of our city,” said **NYCEDC President and CEO Andrew Kimball**.

“Supporting our cultural institutions is central to Mayor Adams’ economic blueprint, and we thank our partners, elected officials, and community members for their support of this project.”

“As the anchor of the Immigrant Research and Performing Arts Center, People’s Theatre Project will tap into the power of the performing arts to capture and distill complex experiences, bring people together, and celebrate our diverse identities and backgrounds,” said **DCLA Commissioner Laurie Cumbo**. “We are thrilled to join with Mayor Adams and NYCEDC to announce the long-term home of this amazing organization, where they will energize this new facility to celebrate the diverse immigrant experiences that have shaped and strengthened our city over generations.”

“Immigrant New Yorkers contribute an abundance of culture and language that make our city one of the most diverse cities in the world,” said **New York City Mayor’s Office of Immigrant Affairs Commissioner Manuel Castro**. “I applaud DCLA and NYCEDC for moving forward with the Immigrant Research and Performing Arts Center. This will be the first cultural institution dedicated to showcasing the immigrant experience in New York City. I look forward to working with our sister agencies to ensure it’s amplified all across the five boroughs.”

“We look forward to welcoming diverse audiences, and our community, school, and cultural partners to what will be a vibrant home for arts and culture right here in Inwood,” said **Zafi Dimitropoulou Del Angel, artistic director, PTP**. “While operating as PTP’s home base, the center will cultivate new work by local artists and arts organizations and present national and international work uptown. Binding all of the activities of the center will be a shared commitment to sustain the neighborhood’s immigrant voice and strengthen the movement for social justice.”

The center’s 17,000-square-foot space will be in a new, mixed-income, mixed-use building located at 407 West 206th Street, developed by a joint venture of LMXD, MSquared, and Taconic Partners. Designed by the woman- and immigrant-owned architecture firm WORKac and theater and acoustics consultant Charcoalblue, the center will have a flexible midsize theater, a smaller performance space, rehearsal studios, soundproof practice rooms, and gallery space.

Construction on the center is expected to begin this year. The project is slated for completion in 2027. The center will be named with input from and collaboration with the community.

The IRPAC is a key component of NYCEDC’s ‘[Inwood NYC](#)’ neighborhood plan, which is prioritizing public investment in Inwood to allow it to remain a place where New Yorkers work, live, and raise families. The ‘Inwood NYC Action Plan’ was the product of over three years of extensive community engagement led by NYCEDC.

“Providing spaces for Latino voices is vital in our ability to recognize the diversity of our communities and celebrate our contributions to making them stronger,” said **U.S. Representative Adriano Espaillat**. “I look forward to projects that will be developed through this collaboration with our community that will inspire generations of BIPOC and immigrant New Yorkers for years to come.”

“I support having an Immigrant Research and Arts Performance Center in Northern Manhattan and look forward to being involved in the work ahead on this project,” said **New York State Senator Robert Jackson**. “Community members should have a space that is inclusive, educational, and rooted in the community.”

“For decades, our Washington Heights and Inwood neighborhood has been home to many artists, yet there were few local artistic institutions that truly seek to represent our

culturally diverse community,” said **New York State Assemblymember Manny De Los Santos**. “The new Immigrant Research and Performing Arts Center will help ensure this neighborhood’s history will be preserved for years to come.”

“Northern Manhattan is a community abundant with art and culture,” said **New York City Councilmember Carmen De La Rosa**. “For generations, our community has been a hub for many new immigrants, in particular the Dominican diaspora. The Immigrant Research and Performing Arts Center will continue to solidify and expand the important work of local cultural institutions in our community. We welcome and look forward to partnering with People’s Theatre Project and others to uplift the voices of immigrants and people of color who have contributed to uptown’s vibrant culture.”

“The Miranda family is excited that People’s Theatre Project has been named the owner and operator of Inwood’s first performing arts and cultural center,” said **Luis A. Miranda, Jr.** “For too long, our artists of Northern Manhattan of all disciplines have needed local space to create, display, and perform their work. We are proud to support PTP as they build this home for our immigrant artist community.”

“We are proud to be part of this partnership and look forward to working with People’s Theatre Project and the city to make the IRPAC a reality,” said **George Tsapelas, vice president, Taconic Partners**. “The space will serve as an amazing cultural amenity and educational space for both the neighborhood and building residents. It is an integral part of our development as we take our first steps towards bringing our vision for the site to life.”

“Charcoalblue is honored to be working with People’s Theatre Project as theater and acoustics designers, in helping them create their first permanent home,” said **Owen Hughes, director, Charcoalblue**. “PTP’s mission of education and performance, centered on the immigrant communities of our vibrant city, has inspired us in creating a series of unique spaces for performance, education, and community engagement. The uptown theater community in New York City is in dire need of professional-quality spaces to create, rehearse, and perform, and Charcoalblue has always been passionate about creating new spaces for telling stories and making music. Working with PTP, we’re delighted to be part of creating a place where voices that have been underrepresented in our city can be heard and be celebrated.”

“We are thrilled to be collaborating with Mino Lora, Zafi Dimitropoulou, Bob Braswell, and the entire PTP team in the design of their new home and are dedicated to supporting PTP’s longtime commitment and success in amplifying the powerful and inspiring stories of immigrants of color and underrepresented voices through performance, creativity, and artistic expression,” said **Amale Andraos and Dan Wood, principals, WORKac**. “We look forward to designing an open, warm, generous, and flexible space that fosters connection and exchange across specific and shared experiences and celebrates the everyday lives of the vibrant communities of Inwood and Washington Heights and beyond.”

“This immigrant cultural center is a win for the uptown arts world, especially the small groups,” said **Yolanny Rodriguez, secretary, Teatristas Dominicanos en el Exterior**. “Thank you for fulfilling the dream of a space for our resilient community. Knowing Mino and PTP’s amazing adaptability assures me we will have a beautiful, light-filled, affordable space to perform, grow, and lift each other up. Congratulations on this colossal achievement.”

“We are thrilled about this project and about the addition of a very needed theater space in Upper Manhattan — a resource that has been severely lacking uptown,” said **Heather White Godfrey, executive director, Dance Project of Washington Heights**. “The arts are thriving here due to the hard work of so many arts organizations, and yet there are so few places for those arts to be shared with audiences. As a longtime partner of PTP, we are thrilled they are taking this on and confident it will be an invaluable addition to our community.”

“We are thrilled that People’s Theatre Project will be stewarding uptown’s first theater and cultural center,” said **Kate Reuther, executive director, Uptown Stories**. “As a longtime friend and partner of PTP, we know personally how invested they are in our neighborhoods of Washington Heights and Inwood, and this project is further proof of how the arts can help revitalize and unite a community.”

“There are many immigrants and artists who make Inwood and Washington Heights their home. For far too long, they needed a center to highlight their contributions to the community, and artists needed a performing arts center to showcase their work and talent,” said **Maria Lizardo, executive director, Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation**. “We are thrilled that the People’s Theatre Project will own and operate the

first theater and research and cultural center in Inwood and Washington Heights. It's a big win for our community!"

"We are delighted that the People's Theatre Project has been named owner and operator of the coming Immigrant Research and Performing Arts Center," said **James Bosley, founding artistic director; and Laura Fois Bosley, founding managing director, UP Theater Company**. "It is a dream we've mutually shared with PTP for 10 years, and we are so grateful that Mino and company were able to carry the ball to the goal. We are confident that this new center will be a boon for all uptown."

"We are immensely excited to know that the People's Theatre Project has been selected to operate an immigrant performing arts center, a first of its kind in our communities of Inwood and Washington Heights," said **Yvonne Stennett, executive director, Community League of the Heights**. "This state-of-the-art center will celebrate the richness and historical contributions made over decades by many immigrant communities. CLOTH has had the honor of working with the People's Theatre Project since its inception and has been impressed with the growth, commitment, creativity, and resilience the nonprofit has demonstrated. This designation is solid proof that People's Theatre Project's work in highlighting the social justice issues faced by our immigrant communities, through their performances and artistry, is in fact necessary and needed. We are confident that as the operator of the center, People's Theatre Project will continue to make our entire community proud."

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