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BCA’s 2016 SU-CASA Program Brings Art to Seniors in the Bronx

(February 12, 2016 — Bronx) The Bronx Council on the Arts (BCA) is proud to announce the selection of artists for the 2016 SU-CASA (previously SPARC) program. Ten talented Bronx artists will deliver arts programming to Bronx seniors centers across our borough. These local artists are providing a fun and interactive atmosphere for seniors to acquire creative skills, ranging from dance to theater to writing to knitting and more.

SU-CASA is a collaboration among the NYC Council, the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) the NYC Department for the Aging (DFTA) and the city's five local arts councils: Bronx Council on the Arts, Brooklyn Arts Council, Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, Queens Council on the Arts and Staten Island Arts. The program began as SPARC (Seniors Partnering with Artists Citywide) in 2012 and was developed as part of Age-Friendly NYC, a citywide effort to make the City more livable for seniors. The newly-expanded program is funded in FY16 by the NYC Council.



2016 SPARC Artists

1st Row: Wallace Boyd, Margo Brooks, Gina Clark, Josie Gonzalez, Richard Grunn.
2nd Row: Sarah Horne, Rebecca Lloyd Jones, Ruth Marshall, Walter Rutledge, Emmitt Thrower.

This initiative connects artists with seniors in senior center settings and positively impacts the well-being of older adults through multidisciplinary arts activities. SU-CASA supports artists and organizations who are sensitive to the needs of older adults and who are interested in engaging their communities. Each senior center is unique and offers access to different types of spaces, resources and communities. Selected artists will work with the senior center population where they are placed and further refine project goals and coordinate a schedule for 60 hours of residency. 16 Bronx Senior Centers will have residencies of individual Bronx Artists and arts organizations. 2016 marks the first year that arts organizations have been eligible to apply for placement in the program. This year 10 Bronx artists were matched and placed to this highly competitive residency program.

Emmitt Thrower introduces “Seniortude: Living Life Artfully”, an interactive program at **E. Robert Moore Senior Center**, where he will produce an artistic video clip and live performance of participants’ experiences, talents, concerns and creative thoughts. **Gina Clark**, placed at **Riverdale YM-YWHA**, will lead a fiction writing workshop. In another writing residency, **Wallace Boyd** will lead seniors at **Coop City Senior Center** in “The New York City Senior Memoir Writing Project”, that will gather the rich stories of New York City’s elders and share them in neighborhoods across the City. On a musical note, **Margo Brooks** will lead her project “The Soundtrack of Lives” at **Neighborhood Shopp CASA Boricua ISC**. It is a delightful project of popular music and soulful tunes along with dramatic storytelling and comedy. Keeping it warm and snug, **Ruth Marshall** will lead “My Comfort Blanket” at **RAIN Boston Secor NSC**, where participants will create their own personalized blanket. **Richard Grunn** will introduce senior participants at **PSS City Island Senior Center** to “Radio Theater” that will be based on original short pieces written by workshop attendees. Dance is present this year with **Walter Rutledge Jr.** in his project “Those Were the Days My Friend” at **Morris Park Senior Center**. The residency will focus on designing a dance and theater performance based on the experience and interests of senior participants. At **RAIN Bailey**, participants will explore movement and swing dance with **Rebecca Lloyd Jones’** “Sharing Story and History through Movement and Dance.” **Sarah Horne** will introduce site-specific dance performances tailored to the capabilities of each senior at **PSS Davidson NSC** in her residency “What Moves You.” “Adventures in Clay Making” with **Josephine Gonzalez** will explore clay techniques and glazing, drawing on inspiration from clay creations from various cultures from around the world at **Kips Bay Castle Hill SC**.

BCA would also like to congratulate the Bronx cultural organizations (along with their programming institutions) who were selected to work as part of the 2016 SU-CASA program: Bronx River Art Center (RAIN Parkchester and Thomas Guess, NSC), Bronx Opera Company (Riverdale Y NSC), Lehman College Art Gallery (Rain Tolentine and SEBCO Mt. Carmel Senior Center), and Pregones Touring Puerto Rican Theater Collection, Inc. (Hope of Israel Senior Center and PSS Highbridge).

SU-CASA is a collaboration among the NYC Council, NYC Department of Cultural Affairs, NYC Department for the Aging and the City's five local arts councils situated in each borough – Bronx Council on the Arts, Brooklyn Arts Council, Council on the Arts and Humanities of Staten Island, Lower Manhattan Cultural Council and Queens Council on the Arts. It was developed as part of Age-Friendly NYC, a citywide effort to make the City more livable for seniors, and previously ran as a successful pilot called Space for Art.

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