

CITY OF NEW YORK
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD FOUR

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JEFFREY LEFRANCOIS
Chair

JESSE R. BODINE
District Manager

June 22, 2022

Hon. Eric Adams
Mayor
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Re: Department of Cultural Affairs Budget Cuts

Dear Mayor Adams,

Manhattan Community Board 4 continues to ask that you reinforce cultural organizations by providing more additional funding for the Department of Cultural Affairs (DCLA), as noted as an area of concern by the City Council.

The recent report released to the Committee on Finance and the Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries and International Intergroup Relations on the Fiscal 2023 Executive Plan and the Fiscal 2023 Executive Capital Commitment Plan on the 13th of this month noted that “The amount of commitments planned for each year of the plan period is disproportionately backloaded, with 7.3 percent of the entire planned expenditure in the current year, 11 percent in Fiscal 2023, and 25.6, 33.9, and 22.2 percent in Fiscals 2024, 2025 and 2026 respectively.”¹

Additionally, in a report from the New York State Comptroller’s office last Winter, it was noted that “Because of the length of the pandemic and the direct relationship between the congregation of large groups and the potential for super-spreader events, this sector (Arts, Entertainment and Recreation in New York City) is likely to face the hardest road to recovery and even more creative solutions will be needed.”²

MCB4 reasserts its support of the restoration of DCLA’s funding and was happy to learn that City Council was able to include an additional \$40 Million dollars for cultural institutions in the recently agreed upon budget for Fiscal Year 2023. However DCLA’s overall budget was reduced

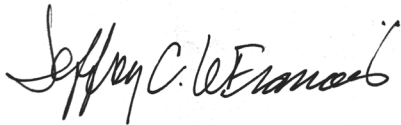
¹ <https://council.nyc.gov/budget/wp-content/uploads/sites/54/2022/05/DCLA.pdf>

² <https://www.osc.state.ny.us/files/reports/osdc/pdf/report-12-2021.pdf>

to \$150 million, a 34% reduction from the previous years, MCB4 has consistently advocated for our district’s arts and cultural organizations including among others: supporting art installations at the NYCHA Fulton Houses; proposing a study of the economic impact of small theatres; establishing a database a database for accessible practice/performance spaces; funding the 52nd Street Project to support playwriting and performance programs for young people; transforming empty storefronts into art exhibits; supporting the Open Culture Legislation; and funding a non-profit organization providing legal/financial expertise to small theatre operators.³

With the creative community being a valuable asset to our District for decades, we want to ensure that our artistic dynamism and independent artists and theaters do not agonize over unpredictability and instability in the years to come as they did during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

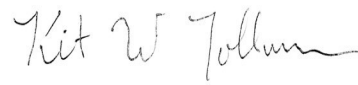
Sincerely,



Jeffery LeFrancois
Chair
Community Board 4



Allen Oster
Co-Chair
ACES Committee



Kit Tollerson
Co-Chair
ACES Committee

cc: Hon. Erik Bottcher, City Council
Fred Kreizman, Commissioner, Mayor’s Community Affairs Unit

³ <https://cbmanhattan.cityofnewyork.us/cb4/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2020/02/13-ACES-Letter-to-Art-Connects-re-Fulton-Houses-Art-Project.pdf>

<https://cbmanhattan.cityofnewyork.us/cb4/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/downloads/pdf/july-2017/31-ACES-letter-to-Mayor-Office-of-Media-and-Entertainment-re-Request-for-Economic-Impact-Study-for-Theaters-FINAL.pdf>

<https://cbmanhattan.cityofnewyork.us/cb4/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2020/04/11-letter-to-indiespace-re-support-for-arts-and-culture-programing.pdf>

<https://cbmanhattan.cityofnewyork.us/cb4/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2020/12/11-ACES-letter-re-Mayor-and-City-Council-re-Open-Culture-Legislation.pdf>

<https://cbmanhattan.cityofnewyork.us/cb4/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2021/02/12-ACES-Letter-to-DCA-and-SBS-NYC-BID-re-support-of-Chashama-.pdf>