Building an Education, Mentorship, Education Program

Brew House Association
2100 Mary St. Pittsburgh, Pa. 15203 (412) 381-7767

Brew House Association (History)

A nonprofit arts organization dedicated to fostering regional artists through residencies, exhibitions [SPACE 101], performances [Industrial Arts Co-op Garage] and educational outreach. A single locale containing twenty-five unique work and living spaces for artists in all visual disciplines.

The former home of the Duquesne Brewery, the historic site has housed artists -- first as urban scavengers, then respectable tenants -- since the company went bankrupt in 1972. But by the early '90s, those artists had mobilized to save their cheap living quarters from a neglectful landlord and, later, from a local property developer. The artists finally purchased the half of the brewery they’ve occupied and rehabilitated since the late '80s, after a long struggle to organize themselves into a viable entity with good standing in the community. In recent years, they’ve become a community arts center and a South Side success story.*

*Pittsburgh City Paper Archive

Vision

Vision #1: Expand the Brew House Association’s program offerings both within and beyond the walls of the building

Vision #2: Increase organizational capacity (expand the Brew House Association beyond the walls, increase membership, hire more paid staff, restructure committees), with increased visibility for Brew House Association artists and events

Vision #3: An organizational structure that is inclusive, not top down, allows for the input of the membership, while empowering the officers of the organization to lead

Vision #4: Initiate significant capital improvements to the physical structure, including expansion into the 60% of the building that is currently undeveloped

Mission

The mission of the Association is to encourage community participation and create educational opportunities in the creative arts for artists as well as non-artists. Its aims are:

· To provide a public forum for creative expression
· To serve as a gathering place for artists
· To foster an appreciation for the arts within the larger community
· To promote the growth of Pittsburgh’s South Side as a creative community
· To promote community participation in the creative arts
· To support community art education
· To provide cost-effective spaces for artists to work and live

WHAT

This research builds upon a Systems Synthesis project from Spring 1999 entitled The Brew House Project in which the deliverable took the form of suggestions for a strategic plan document. Since that time slow progress has been made and the facility has come under the control of the artist-residents and the board of directors.

The BHA has identified the following models for study in constructing their desired programming:
**Bemis Center**
Bemis has a great appeal to working artists, their residency program is at the core of its operations- built for artist use and process. Their image is great; their language is to the point. It has grown over the years to become a real destination for artists- prestige! Focuses on the creation of work as much as the presentation.

**MASS MoCA**
This place is now huge, a national and international venue. Mass Moca showcases super diverse and often exotic ideas and artists. Quality programs that demonstrate the higher end stuff, maybe a few steps beyond our reach for now… but the real deal! Somewhere in between Bemis and Walker in terms of artist usage.

Their physical resources are great! The re-use is too.

“...? Our physical facility is one of the largest cultural institutions in the country? over 300,000 square feet of developed space and another 300,000 of "mothballed" space, in 26 buildings on 13 acres ? and we manage this property, mount 5 challenging exhibitions per year, and present over 80 major performing arts events, all with a staff of just 54. Most facilities of comparable size and programmatic complexity require several times as many staff.”

**Walker Art Center**
The Walker is the cream of the crop, probably more institutionalized than we will every need to be, but professional, serious image is worth admiration. More in line with museums in terms of programs, but has interesting history. Mostly a great exhibition space, less about the process of art making- more about the finished results.

**Storm King Art Center**
Giant outdoor space only for exhibition and well known artists but a huge service. the development and use of their resources; the land and the introduction of art are the most notable features.

An even better example because of its multi-use: Socrates Sculpture Park in New York. [http://www.socratessculpturepark.org/](http://www.socratessculpturepark.org/)

Site-based sculpture that steps towards younger artists and experimental work. it is urban, industrial and a reclaimed park. Has programs for visiting artists too. Includes the process plus finished goods!*

*From Tim Kaulen, BHA President, artist and former resident.

The process will include in-depth case-studies of model alternative artist-run and other organizations. Interviews and focus groups with stakeholders will be conducted. Research into existing regional programming and a SWOT analysis will be conducted. Suggested curriculum, budgets, earned revenue projections, action steps, timelines and implementation suggestions will follow.

Special attention will be devoted to integrating resident artists into their roles as faculty, mentors, artist community members and Brew House residents. Resident artists will also be integrated into the governance, planning and operations structure of BHA and a working model for these roles must be incorporated into our research.

**WHEN**
Spring Semester 2007

**WHERE**
BHA current facility including undeveloped space and surrounding Pittsburgh area.
Possible Advisory Board Members:

Local Artists and Arts Educators, Lawyer, Financial Advisor, Arts Administrators, Possible Collaborators.

Possible Funding:

GSA, GUSH, Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council, various other university sources

WEBSITES

http://ww.pittsburghcitypaper.ws/prev/archives/covarch/cov02/cv21302.html