



## **SPACEWORKS OPENS A MIXED-USE CREATIVE ARTS SPACE IN THE SOUTH BRONX**

**Spaceworks, Which Builds and Operates Subsidized Creative Workspace for New Yorkers, Will Open its First Location in the Bronx at 240 E 153<sup>rd</sup> Street**

**Over the Past Two Years, Spaceworks Community & Engagement Manager Raul Rivera Has Participated in Bronx Community Meetings and Activities, Learning More About the Needs and Desires of Bronx Creatives and Cultural Workers**

**Brooklyn, NY, January 14, 2019** — **Spaceworks**, the nonprofit organization that builds and operates subsidized creative workspace across New York City, opens its first location in the Bronx. With five workspace projects in Brooklyn and Queens uniquely modeled and run to support the needs of local artists and cultural workers, Spaceworks now answers a call from creatives living in the South Bronx, for space in which they can continue to make art in their community.

Situated at 240 E 153<sup>rd</sup> Street, between Park and Morris Avenues in the Melrose area of the South Bronx, this 4,597 SF space will include 15 studios for private solo practice, hosting a mix of creatives working across a number of disciplines—all of whom are from, live and/or work in the Bronx. Spaceworks' new location is on the ground floor of Park Avenue Green, a new 154-unit affordable housing community developed by Omni New York LLC, built by Monadnock Construction, and designed by Curtis + Ginsberg Architects. The space will also include an office, a community project space, and an exhibition space.

Artists and partners vitalizing the space with their practices and community-enriching projects include **BxArts Factory**, a non-profit that aims to make art accessible to everyone in the Bronx; **Milteri Tucker Concepcion's** non-profit drum and dance company **Bombazo Dance Co, Inc.**, which preserves, showcases, and educates people about Afro Puerto Rican Bomba and Afro Caribbean and traditional folkloric elements; **Seyi Adebajo**, a media artist who raises awareness around social issues through digital video, multimedia photography, and writings; **Natasha Johnson**, founder of Globalizing Gender,

an organization working to create a more Gender Just world through education in order to prevent and reform gender based violence; interdisciplinary artist, playwright, and professor **Nina Angela Mercer**; filmmaker **Ndlela Nkobi**; artist and cultural worker **Sage Rivera**, who runs the independent visual arts and event production company Concepcion Productions, focusing on creating projects for the underserved and underrepresented; and two-time International Latino Book Award winning writer and elementary school educator **Peggy Robles-Alvarado**.

Spaceworks strives to support the economic wellbeing of cultural workers—particularly artists of color, LGBTQIA artists, disabled artists, and those living on low to modest incomes. It envisions a New York where access to space for expression is not a luxury, where the development of art spaces can serve and provide space for—rather than pricing out and uprooting—existing communities and neighborhoods.

Bronx resident **Raul R. Rivera** has spent a lifetime cultivating relationships in the Bronx from his previous work as a community health worker and an artist. For the past three years as Spaceworks' Community & Engagement Manager, he has continued to nurture and expand relationships with individuals, collectives, creatives, cultural workers, residents, and community-based organizations within the borough to further understand the space needs of the Bronx creative community. Rivera and Spaceworks have participated in outreach and engagement initiatives such as Bronx-based tabling events, creative community meet-ups, community advocacy initiatives, and board meetings; Spaceworks has awarded four Bronx Community Artist grants.

Rivera says, “It’s been an exciting two years. As a community organizer, my aim has been to engage and work with folks on every level of the development process, from the beginning onward—always centering community voices in decision making processes. It's rewarding to see relationships grow, from artists working hard to find space, to building space, to working with artists operating their own studios in their own communities.”

### **Project Funding**

Support for this project is provided in part by the Rockefeller Brothers Fund.

### **About Spaceworks**

Spaceworks is a nonprofit organization that builds and operates subsidized creative workspace across New York City. The organization co-creates spaces that become resources for artists, cultural workers, creative entrepreneurs, and cultural organizations so that people can continue to make art in place.

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