

ART AT WORK | TESTIMONIALS

FROM OUR PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

Rob Wood, Portland Adult Education: We serve over 1,000 adult learners many of whom are newly arrived immigrants and refugees. In many ways, our students represent Portland's future and yet there are few opportunities for social and civic engagement with other residents outside their own communities. Meeting Place and Portland Works offer an invaluable opportunity for Portland Adult Education to partner with Art At Work to build civic engagement and leadership pathways for our students.

Alex Endy, East Bayside Neighborhood Organization: Diversity, in almost every conceivable aspect, is no abstraction in East Bayside, and is a considerable source of power and potential for growth. It also stands as a primary challenge in growing our relatively young organization into one that speaks with a truly representative voice. In seeking to bridge cultural and economic divides and forge relationships among residents, businesses and institutions we've been advocates from the beginning of the transformative role the arts can play in community development.

U.S. Senator Susan Collins: Meeting Place promises to reach thousands of residents across the spectrum of age, religion, economic background and political persuasion . . . offering a platform for the city, businesses, faith-based organizations, schools and neighborhood organizations to connect, collaborate and engage in civil society.

Kristen Smith, Portland Independent Business and Community Alliance, BUYLOCAL: Several of our members have worked with Art At Work over the last four years, selling calendars, hosting readings, contributing refreshments and supplies . . . [We] appreciate the idea that this partnership will help create a model for other cities around the country and their locally owned independent business owners as well.

U.S. Representative Chellie Pingree: Art At Work puts creativity and the arts to work inspiring our citizens, uniting our communities, invigorating our local economy and helping our local arts organizations.



Jennifer Hutchins, Portland Arts & Cultural Alliance: This is a transformational time for PACA, and Meeting Place provides the perfect platform for launching our priorities, which include fostering civic engagement, integrating the arts more fully into daily life and promoting Portland's vibrant communities. Now is the perfect time for this community to reach out to our neighbors and put art to work, with the joy, fulfillment and transformation that can only be offered through the arts.

Nicola Wells, The Maine League of Young Voters Education Fund: There are very few places for citizens to share their stories and build bridges across the issues that divide them. Meeting Place and Portland Works are excellent ways to move things forward and help enrich the cultural, social and economic life of Portland. Young Voters believes that arts and cultural events are one of the core ways to provide leadership development and build relationships within diverse communities.

ART AT WORK | TESTIMONIALS

FROM OUR CITY, UNION AND ELECTED OFFICIALS

Nick Mavodones, Mayor, City of Portland: As public servants we need to be proactive and innovative in coming up with ways that bridge the considerable divides between newly arrived immigrants and refugees and those of us who have made Portland our home for generations. It is part of our culture to care about people and to take care of each other; but there are few formalized methods or structures in place that bring us together across the barriers of race, class, and national origin, to share life stories and build the kinds of relationships that keep us on track during difficult times. *Portland Works* is a structured approach to creating and sustaining these connections and builds on the excellent work done through the city's partnership with Terra Moto/Art At Work.

Pat Finnigan, Asst. City Manager, City of Portland: In choosing the three departments to begin working with, Marty chose the most misunderstood and most stressed departments in the municipal system — police, public works, health and human services. The Art At Work initiative has already made a real transformation for our employees. Should we already have had respect for each other? Yes. But is municipal government set up to give that respect a chance to be made visible? Rarely. For the city councilors, with increasing pressures regarding money, layoffs, and budget cuts, the challenge is to get the arts to be as central, as core to our community, as a police cruiser or a water fountain.

Jill Duson, City Councilor, Former Mayor, City of Portland: This collaborative partnership has enhanced the city's sensitivity to issues of cultural bias and broadened the range of approaches taken as an institution to address issues of inclusion and respect for all segments of our municipal family. Art At Work has played a key role in helping departments, city employees and residents to build bridges and address challenges as a community.

Kate Webb, Shop Steward, Dept. of Recreation: The act of making art allows us to play, to expand our minds, to experience joy and connection to something greater than just the details of our various jobs. I would love to have all city employees have the chance to experience that kind of pride in what we do as public service people.

Joe Loughlin, Former Police Chief, Portland Police Dept.: We had no idea that the outcome would be this outstanding. The photographs in the hallways, reading poems at roll calls—it's brought us a different sense of who we are and what we do. It's changed a lot of minds about the police and about poetry.

Ed Suslovic, Former Mayor, City of Portland: Art At Work made a huge difference to city workers when we had the worst layoffs in our history. Having the work by city employees up in the Council Gallery, where all of us, union, management, city councilors, myself as Mayor, had to walk by to get to all of our meetings and deliberations and public hearings — we saw who we were dealing with, the intelligence, heart, the commitment of city workers, the service they were giving to make this city great. It hit me every time, and I know I'm not the only one.

Acting Police Chief Mike Sauschuck, Portland Police Dept.: What we've seen is our interaction with the community has certainly improved. What these projects have done is allowed citizens to view police officers beyond the uniform, to see them more as human beings with feelings and thoughts, like everyone else quite frankly. After four years, I can tell you that I couldn't be more impressed with the outcomes — in the community, for us in the department, within our own hallways, and for me. Personally, I've gained a great deal. I think the citizens of Portland have also learned a lot about the Portland Police Department and the human beings who are underneath these uniforms that you see drive around in black and whites everyday.

Leslie Kaynor, Surveyor, Public Works Dept., City of Portland: I don't consider myself a writer and these days I rarely write anything except e-mails. I was anxious about going to the City Writers Group led by Marty Pottenger. I've gone to two sessions and have found them both very enriching. I'm liking taking this time to write and I'm sometimes surprised by what comes out on my paper. And it's a delight getting to know other city workers in a different way and experience the sharing, inspiration and the encouragement.

Dave Melendez, Public Works Shop Steward, snowplow driver: With our male egos and attitudes, we don't get into the art thing too much. When we get all busy, we tend to forget the humanistic aspects of our job. At Public Works, we're like the firefighters and the police. Those guys don't get out unless we get our job done first. There's a bit of tension sometimes, especially during the winter months. This (project) was able to bring us all together in a different alley. We were all coming from a different place. It was a lot of fun.

Officer Gayle Petty, Portland Police Department: People have stopped me on the street, "I saw you in the calendar." People I don't even know, to say that reading my poem was the first time they ever thought about what it was like to be a police officer.

ART AT WORK | PORTLAND

PORTLAND WORKS

50% CITY STAFF + 50% COMMUNITY LEADERS

Challenges: establish structures for ongoing communication and relationships between municipal and community leaders; decrease tensions within and between immigrant/refugee communities and city departments; reduce incidence of lawsuits that charge city workforce with misconduct; leverage economic advantages that accompany Portland's diverse, international population

Strategy: connect city staff, elected officials and community leaders through artmaking workshops that address personal, practical, and political topics; use works generated in this process to create public art installations that further the goals of the project

Portland Works employs artmaking as a catalyst to build enduring, authentic relationships which are essential to meeting the increasing challenges facing cities. Created in response to civic and social tensions between city employees, elected officials and the immigrant and refugee communities, *Portland Works* partners municipal participants – city councilors, police, public service, social service, fire and EMS workers – with community leaders who represent both the city's growing diversity and the residents who have lived here for generations. Exploring topics including civics, history, life stories and the "state of the city," participants meet monthly to create and share individual artworks.

Project challenges are addressed through education, discussion and artmaking, with a final distillation of the art that's been created – photography, mosaics, collage, printmaking, poetry, graffiti, video, audio, music – into public art projects. Such projects might include sidewalk stencils, park benches, murals, painted light poles, images on sanitation trucks – all of it art that connects people to the communities, each other and the city.

The last workshop in each *Portland Works* session includes a debriefing to evaluate of the impacts of the project and share that knowledge with local and national audiences. The first session of *Portland Works* includes 30 participants meeting over the course of 4 months (3 artmaking workshops + debriefing session). It is our hope and intention to repeat *Portland Works* multiple times over the next two years in order to reach a maximum audience, thereby increasing the project's reach and impact.

COMMUNITY COLLABORATORS:

City of Portland, Police / Public Services / Health & Human Services Departments, AFSCME Local 481, Portland Adult Education, Maine Historical Society, League of Young Voters, Portland Housing Authority, Portland Trails

Painted sanitation truck from Philadelphia



In choosing the three departments to begin working with, Marty chose the most misunderstood and most stressed departments in the municipal system — police, public services and health and human services. Art At Work initiative has already made a real transformation for our employees. Should we already have had respect for each other? Yes. But is municipal government set up to give that respect a chance to be made visible? Rarely. For the city councilors, with increasing pressures regarding money, layoffs, and budget cuts, the challenge is to get the arts to be as central, as core to our community, as a police cruiser or a water fountain.

*Pat Finnigan,
Assistant City Manager, City of Portland*



Potential mural site for the Public Works.

ART AT WORK | PORTLAND

CURRENT PROJECTS TEAM MEMBERS

Marty Pottenger, Director Art At Work, Executive Director Terra Moto Inc.

Artist, director, and activist Marty Pottenger is a pioneer in the community arts and civic dialogue movement. She has worked throughout Europe and the United States. The New York Times described her OBIE-winning “City Water Tunnel #3” as “Lyrical...speaking with intimate knowledge, and yes, even love...a blending of Studs Terkel, Anna Deavere Smith and Pete Seeger.” Her play ABUNDANCE was written from interviews with over 30 millionaires and 30 minimum wage workers and selected as one of The Seattle Post-Intelligencer’s ten best plays of 2003. Former union organizer, Board Chair of American Festival Project, and Co-Founder of Heresies magazine, Pottenger has lived in Portland since 2007.

Belinda Ray, Project Coordinator

A native Mainer and longtime lover of words, Ray received her BS in Secondary English Education from the University of Maine in 1992. She has taught writing and literature courses at Maine high schools, middle schools, a community college, and to a large and diverse group of homeschoolers, and has written 22 books for middle grade and young adult readers, including the Charm Club series for Scholastic. In 2006, Ray helped to found the East Bayside Neighborhood Organization (EBNO) for which she served sequentially as Vice President, President, and finally Community Organizer.

Chris Dwyer, Evaluation Design and Consultant

A City Councilor for Portsmouth NH, M. Christine Dwyer is senior vice president of RMC Research, a national firm engaged in research and consultation in areas related to the well-being of families, children, and communities. Dwyer has carried out studies for numerous private foundations, including Pew, Ford, Rockefeller, Knight, Andy Warhol, and Wallace. Dwyer is currently serving as the researcher for the President’s Committee on Arts and Humanities. She has chaired the state’s Arts Council; her city’s arts commission; and served on NEFA’s board. At the Music Hall, Dwyer initiated the nationally known Shipyard Project, a community-based residency of the Liz Lerman Dance Exchange.

Penny Harris, Neighborhood Fundraising Coordinator/Consultant

Penny Harris is a Certified Fund Raising Executive with 30 years of professional and volunteer fund-raising and trustee leadership experience. A graduate of Harvard School of Business’s Executive Education Program, she has raised over 50 million dollars. Board service includes the Center for Maine Contemporary Art Board of Trustees; University of Maine System Board of Trustees; Maine Public Broadcasting Corporation Board of Trustees; League of Women Voters of United States. An Advisor to U.S. Presidential Debates/New Hampshire in 1986, she produced Maine’s first US Senate and Gubernatorial televised debates. She is currently coaching, presenting, and writing a book about money.

Jennifer Hutchins, Director of Portland Arts & Cultural Alliance, Organizer Citywide Festival Prior to becoming Executive Director of PACA, Hutchins was the director of communications and external affairs for the USM Muskie School for Public Policy. She co-authored the seminal study, “Maine’s Creative Economy: Measurement and Analysis,” conducted by the Muskie School for Governor John Baldacci’s inaugural Blaine House Summit on the Creative Economy in 2004. Previously, she has been marketing director of Portland Stage Company and an Artsave representative for People For the American Way in Washington D.C.

Alfred Jacob, Community Liaison

Coming to Portland from Southern Sudan in 1987, Jacob soon graduated from Portland High School and began work there as an Educational Technical Assistant. He continued in this capacity for 9 years, interacting with students from over 32 countries. Program Director of Aserela, a Sudanese association for Southern Sudanese refugees, Jacob is also the director and founder of Portland United Soccer, the only multi-national independent sports league in Greater Portland. He is currently pursuing a degree in Business Administration at USM.

Rachel Morales, Community Liaison

Rachel has been the Associate Director of Undergraduate Admission at the University of Southern Maine, focusing on Multicultural & International Recruitment, since 2003. Proprietor of Morales McKenzie Photography, she has been taking photographs since she was a teenager in Boston. Community service includes Cultivating Multicultural Alliances, Dialogues in Diversity, Maine Youth Suicide Prevention Speakers Bureau, and serving on the Board of Directors for Center for Preventing Hate. In 2010, she received the IDEAL (Inclusion, Diversity, Education, Access & Leadership) Award from the New England Association for College Admission Counseling. Rachel lives with her family in Portland, Maine.

Mike Murray, City of Portland, Island/Neighborhood Administrator

Since 2007, Mike has worked to insure that the ideas and interests of the residents of Portland’s 19 neighborhoods are integrated into the city’s policies and planning. Serving as a conduit between city government and the diverse communities that make up Portland is often challenging. Meeting Place is grateful to have Mike’s experience, perspective and relationships guide us as we assist neighborhoods in creating strong sustainable collaborations in these challenging times.

Edwige Charlot, Project Assistant/Designer

Born in France of Haitian heritage, Charlot earned a BFA at Maine College of Art in 2010. She has served on MECA’s Student Senate, Diversity Committee, and Mission Taskforce. Portland exhibits include Two Point Gallery and Whitney Art Works. Awards include a Peregrine Press fellowship and Maine Campus Compact PILARS award for outstanding contributions to Maine’s university environment. Charlot interned with Art At Work in 2009. Her contributions include the design of the AAW blog and booklet and www.artatwork-project.us. She also coordinated the 2009 police poetry calendar evaluation interviews with participating officers and poets and creatively oversaw the 2010 police poetry calendar.

ART AT WORK | PORTLAND MEETING PLACE

RESIDENTS + NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATIONS

Challenges: strengthen neighborhood organizations as partners with government; expand memberships to reflect socioeconomic and cultural diversity of community; increase civic participation; fortify the cultural and economic viability of neighborhoods

Strategy: directly involve residents and businesses in associations through art workshops that focus on neighborhood histories, assets and challenges, capacity building and leadership development

Vibrant neighborhood organizations are one of the most significant untapped assets available to cities as they struggle to face increasing challenges amidst diminishing resources. Portland has a rich tapestry of 19 diverse neighborhoods, all with the potential to play central roles in ensuring the well-being of their residents through positive working partnerships with local businesses, organizations and institutions; civic engagement; and community planning.

“Portland’s neighborhoods have always been at the heart of who we are.”
Mayor Nick Mavodones

In order to have impact, a strong neighborhood organization needs 1) plenty of engaged, active members that reflect the diversity of the community; 2) a collaborative culture with recognized and supported leaders; 3) a knowledge of the challenges and assets; 4) good relationships with other neighborhoods and city government and; 5) an environment of respect, caring, hope and vision.

Art At Work’s newest project, *Meeting Place*, is a multidisciplinary arts project to help five of Portland’s neighborhoods develop and deepen their networks of connection by tapping into the transformative power of the arts through dynamic year long partnerships with local artists.

Selected by the National Endowment for the Arts as part of its national Our Town initiative, *Meeting Place* seeks to re-envision and reset Portland’s identity as a diverse, welcoming and innovative city with an engaged vital partnership between her neighborhoods and city government.

Meeting Place artists will lead monthly arts-based workshops on neighborhood-related topics that increase civic engagement and restore a sense of neighborhood pride and unity, culminating in the creation of five temporary public art works and a citywide celebration organized by project partner, the Portland Arts & Cultural Alliance.

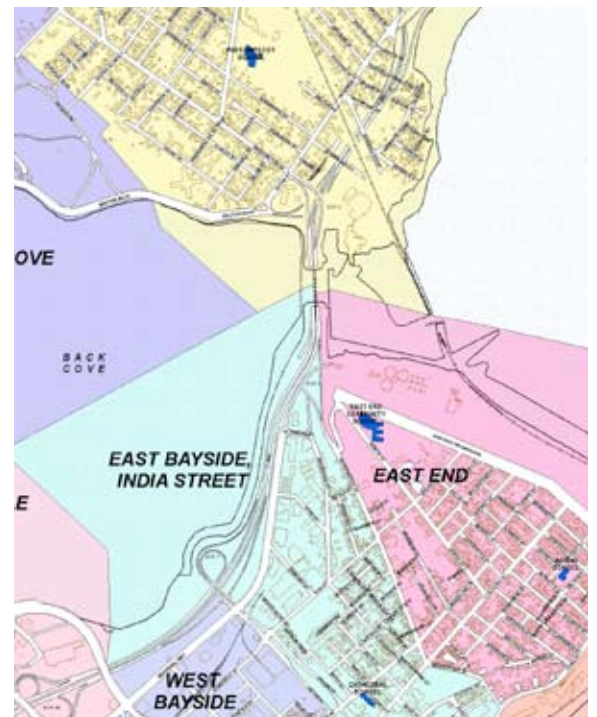
Topics include “Stories and Places of Meaning” with photographer Toney Harbert; “Neighborhood History from Dinosaurs to Now” with the Maine Historical Society and former Maine Poet Laureate Betsy Sholl; “Mapping Relationships, Assets & Challenges” with USM Muskie School staff and visual artist Daniel Minter; and “Neighborhood Economic Development” with the city’s Greg Mitchell and chorale director Elise Witt.

As part of building neighborhood capacity and organizational muscle, professional fundraisers will lead workshops to assist each neighborhood to raise \$5000 towards the cost of its own public arts project. The work of Meeting Place culminates in a city wide festival hosted by all of the participating neighborhoods and businesses.



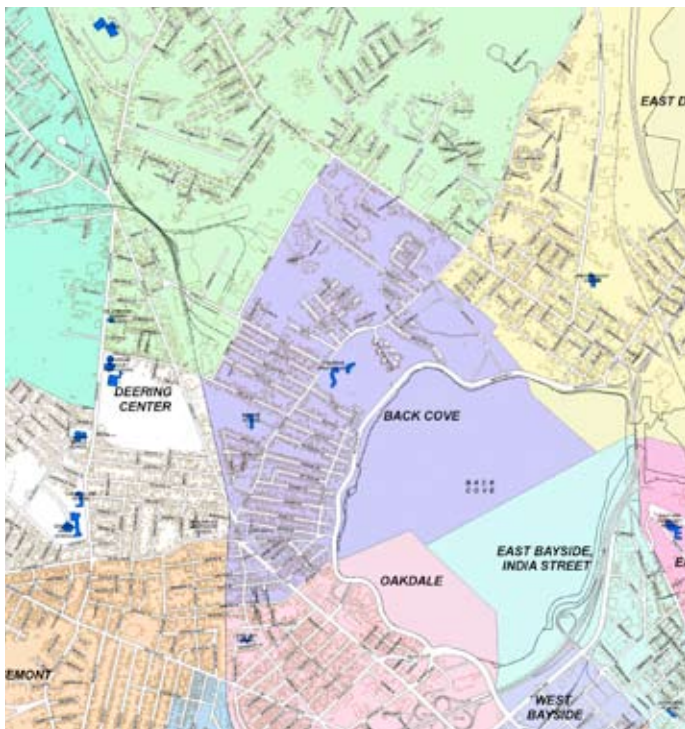
COMMUNITY COLLABORATORS

City of Portland, Portland Arts & Cultural Alliance, Portland Adult Education, Portland Buy Local, Maine Historical Society, League of Young Voters, Portland Public Library and anchor neighborhood group, East Bayside Neighborhood Organization



PROJECT TEAM:

Marty Pottenger/Director
Belinda Ray/Project Coordinator
Alfred Jacob and Rachel Morales/Community Liaisons
Penny Harris/Fundraising Coordinator
Mike Murray/City of Portland
Jennifer Hutchins/ PACA, Festival
Chris Dwyer/Evaluation
Edwige Charlot/Design & Exhibits



MEETING PLACE LEAD ARTISTS

Annegrete Baier, percussion, Loopin' & Inanna

Growing up in Germany, Annegrete received her classical music training in violin, voice and piano from the University of Music in Stuttgart. She then studied with master drummers from Guinea, Ghana, Cuba and Brazil including several residencies with her primary teacher, Famoudou Konate in Conakry, Guinea. She performs solo and with the bands Loopin' and Inanna, Sisters in Rhythm. Her workshops include descriptions of West African culture and invite the direct participation of the listeners in rhythmic training exercises including body percussion, movement, and drumming. She often incorporates African dance into her performances and instruction as well.

Eva Goetz, Arches/Gates, Neighborhood Consulting Artist

Goetz earned her BFA from the University of Texas, Austin and her Masters in Special Education from Bank Street College in NYC. Her eleven solo exhibitions have been in New York, Boston, Rhode Island, Utah and Maine. Museum Exhibits include: Toys by Artist, De Cordova Museum, Lincoln, MA (1991); Boat Show, Farnsworth Museum, Rockland, ME (1990); and Artist in the Market Place, Bronx Museum, Bronx, NY (1990). She has received commissions from the Simms Family of Rochester, NY (2002) and the Carner Family of Portland, ME (2001). Awards: Percent for Art, Yarmouth Middle School, Yarmouth, ME (1992); Finalist, Roswell Museum (1984); Ford Foundation (1997).

Tonee Harbert, Photography Harbert's subjects include Jamaican migrant workers, Cambodian refugee immigrants, ex-President George Bush's summer residence in Kennebunkport, Maine, and musicians. His photographs have been exhibited at the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Portland Museum of Art, Danforth Museum of Art, University of Miami (FL), the Institute of Contemporary Art at Maine College of Art and the Center for Maine Contemporary Art. In 1999, he was awarded first place in PDN/Nikon Self-Promotion Awards category of Best Ongoing Campaign, Established Talent. Harbert's work is included in the permanent collections of the Portland Museum of Art and The Danforth Museum of Art.

Daniel Minter, Visual Arts, Collage Minter is a painter, sculptor and illustrator with over 13 solo exhibitions and 25 group shows. His work has been seen throughout the U.S. and Brazil with several public art commissions from the Seattle Art Museum, Seattle Arts Commission, City of Portland, Maine, and the NAACP for the Malaga Island and Portland Freedom Trails Markers. Minter designed both USPS Kwanzaa stamps (2004, 2011). He has worked with Art At Work since 2007. Awards, honors and residencies include: Rio Grande de Norte, Brazil/Maine, Artist Exchange Project (2011); Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Artist-in-Residence, Sapelo Island, Georgia (2010).

Marty Pottenger, Stories, Performance (bio on Current Projects Team page)

Shamou, Percussion, Loopin' Shamou's early training began in his native Iran where he studied and performed with the Iranian National Ballet as a dancer. He began his formal music training in Tehran, studied with teachers from London's Royal College of Music and completed his training at Berklee College of Music in Boston. Since 2004 Shamou has been performing with his world ensemble Loopin' at festivals and venues across the United States. He is also known for his collaborative work with the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Co., Mark Morris Dance Company, ODC/San Francisco, San Francisco Ballet, Sacramento Ballet, Boston Dance Collective, and Prometheus Dance Company.

Betsy Sholl, Poetry, Maine Poet Laureate 2007 - 2011 Sholl has published seven collections of poetry, most recently *Rough Cradle* (Alice James Books, 2009). *Don't Explain* won the 1997 Felix Pol-lak Prize from the University of Wisconsin, and her book *The Red Line* won the 1991 AWP Prize for Poetry. She was a founding member of Alice James Books. Among her awards are a fellowship from the National Endowment of the Arts and two Maine Writer's Fellowships. Her work has been included in several anthologies, including *Letters to America*, *Contemporary American Poetry on Race*. She lives in Portland, Maine and teaches at the University of Southern Maine and in the MFA Program of Vermont College.

Elise Witt, Vocal, Chorale Director Since 1977, Elise has been working professionally as a singer, composer, recording artist, educator and community activist around the globe. Representing Georgia at the Kennedy Center's 25th Anniversary, she has been a cultural ambassador to South Africa, China, Italy, Nicaragua, and Switzerland. Leading grassroots and professional choruses, she creates opportunities for songs to transform communities. Her work has taken her to New York's Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, the People's Voice Café in NYC and Clearwater's Hudson River Revival, and from Minneapolis' Ginkgo Coffeehouse to Nashville's Bluebird Café, the Open Door Community, the Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Non-Violent Social Change, and RootsFest in West Baltimore.

