

Still Making Art Happen

Miami's incubator of new art and ideas | Visit us at locustprojects.org



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

LOCUST PROJECTS STILL MAKING ART HAPPEN WITH ARTIST GRANTS, PROBONO LEGAL RESOURCES, AND MORE

Locust Projects Resources for Artists:

[Miami Artist Relief Fund](#)
[LegalARTLink](#)
[WaveMaker Grants](#)

Still Making Art Happen Campaign surpasses goal

Locust Projects receives NEA CARES grant

New exhibitions on view:

Christina Pettersson: *In the Pines*
and Summer Jade Leavitt: *The Language is Leaving Me*

Public Hours:

By appointment only: Wed-Sat
12-6pm, limited capacity, masks
and social distancing required
[MAKE AN APPOINTMENT](#)

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ABOVE: Miami-based artist Christina Pettersson in her new exhibition, *In the Pines*, image by Zachary Balber

Believing that art and artists are essential, Locust Projects is committed to *Still Making Art Happen* during the COVID-19 pandemic. Working harder than ever to advocate for artists through the coronavirus crisis, Locust Projects has supported artists through the [Miami Artist Relief Fund](#), [LegalARTLink](#), the [Still Making Art Happen Campaign](#), [WaveMaker](#) incubator grants, and sustaining funding to artists commissioned to create ambitious new work.

Locust Projects' Executive Director Lorie Mertes says "So many artists have been destabilized by COVID-19 related closures, postponements, job cancellations, loss of access to studios, and other restrictions impacting their ability to work, create and support themselves and their families. Locust Projects is as dedicated as ever to living our 21-year mission to advocate for artists and help make art happen by supporting artists with access to resources and opportunities to navigate these difficult times."

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With 64% of artists fully unemployed and another 93% experiencing significant loss in income nationally, Locust Projects was selected to be among 16 national organizations to provide emergency relief funds to artists through the Warhol Foundation's regional re-granting program. In June, **Locust Projects' Miami Artist Relief Fund** provided forty (40) local artists selected through a lottery from a pool of more than 280 applicants, with grants of \$1,500 each to help with rent, childcare, medical costs, and other basic needs. "We know all too well that artists operate in precarious financial conditions in the best of times. Evidenced by the overwhelming response to the relief grant, the Miami arts community has been hit hard by this crisis," says Locust Projects' Executive Director Lorie Mertes. "In addition to the Miami Artist Relief Grant, we are committed to continuing to find additional ways we can provide resources and opportunities to artists in these unprecedented times."

One example includes waiving the administrative fee for Miami artists of all disciplines to access [LegalARTLink](#). Providing pro bono legal advice and services to hundreds of artists since it was founded by Miami lawyers in 2003, Locust Projects' LegalARTLink program is more vital than ever. Shortly after the county-wide closures, LegalARTLink Director Allyn Ginns-Ayers organized a series of webinars providing insights for artists on how to navigate cancelled gigs and exhibitions, lost contracts and commissions, and even evictions, as a result of the pandemic, upcoming webinars will focus on the eviction moratorium and other legal issues artists are facing with the ongoing pandemic. Supporting all manner of legal issues, Locust Projects' pro bono legal service program is available to multidisciplinary artists, authors, composers, filmmakers, dancers and visual artists, living and working in Miami helping to protect and empower artists and their creative careers.

In May, Locust Projects announced the latest WaveMaker grant recipients. Twelve Miami-based artists and collectives received grants up to \$6,000 each to create publicly accessible, non-institutional projects in 2020-2021 for a total of \$60,000 in funding for the creation of new work. Supported by the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts' Regional Regranting program, Locust Projects informed the Cycle 6 grantees that up to 50% of their grants may be applied to emergency relief needs and their projects amended, as their situations may have changed since they submitted their applications in January. The new grantees gave presentations about

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their projects and were celebrated with an online happy hour on May 14. Since 2015 WaveMaker grants have provided \$399,000 incubator grants to 77 Miami artists and collectives.

To sustain and continue to deliver Locust Projects' mission to serves as ADVOCATES for artists in our community, Locust Projects' Board of Directors launched an ambitious campaign to recover lost income from the organization's popular annual Spring Fling Fundraiser. The ***Still Making Art Happen Campaign*** surpassed its goal in June, thanks to an outpouring of support from a community of arts patrons, members and supporters, as well as artists. Notably, Locust Projects artist board members, Adler Guerrier and Antonia Wright, donated works for a benefit art sale with seventy-percent of the nearly \$10,000 in sales, going directly to Locust Projects.

Also helping to sustain us through this crisis, most recently, Locust Projects was among the more than 800 national arts organizations to receive the NEA CARES grant, one of 33 Florida organizations and the only visual arts organization to receive the grant in Miami.

Today, Locust Projects reopened its galleries following local and federal safety guidelines, Locust Projects' content is thriving, with two new installations on view by [Christina Pettersson](#) and [Summer Jade Leavitt](#), both previously postponed exhibitions, and a new blog, [CLOSER LOOK](#), featuring the artists, people, and stories behind Miami's longest running alternative art space. Recent entries feature a behind-the-scenes look at projects by current and upcoming exhibiting Miami-based artists, [Christina Pettersson](#) and [GeoVanna Gonzalez](#), as well as highlighting recent and past [WaveMaker](#) grantees' projects. In addition, the season's postponed Talks, curatorial speaker series presented in partnership with Oolite Arts, were rescheduled and presented on Facebook Live to a broad national audience and are available to view at [Talks.Miami](#)

"As a leading incubator of new art and ideas, we are committed to supporting the artists we have commissioned to do projects—many began production over a year ago and continue to work and incur expenses," Mertes continues, "Despite the uncertainty and unpredictable scheduling in the months and year ahead, artists contracted for exhibitions continue to receive production funds and artist fees for

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their postponed and forthcoming projects. We also are establishing new platforms for program participation and commissioning new projects to provide income to local artists made possible by the Still Making Art Happen Campaign. **“Believing art and artists are essential, we remain steadfast in our twenty-one year commitment to our artist-centric mission to help make art happen.”**

ABOUT LOCUST PROJECTS

Founded by artists for artists in 1998, Locust Projects is Miami’s longest running nonprofit alternative art space. We produce, present, and nurture ambitious and experimental new art and the exchange of ideas through commissioned exhibitions and projects, artist residencies, summer art intensives for teens, and public programs on contemporary art and curatorial practice. As a leading incubator of new art and ideas, Locust Projects emphasizes boundary-pushing creative endeavors, risk-taking and experimentation by local, national and international artists. We invest in South Florida’s arts community by providing artists with project grants and empower creative careers by supporting the administrative work of being an artist through an onsite artist resource hub and access to pro bono legal services.

Locust Projects 2020-2021 exhibitions and programming are made possible with support from: The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation; The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts; The Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs and the Cultural Affairs Council, the Miami-Dade County Mayor and Board of County Commissioners, The Children’s Trust; The National Endowment for the Arts Art Works Grant; Hillsdale Fund; the Albert and Jane Nahmad Family Foundation; The State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture; Funding Arts Network; The Jorge M. Pérez Family Foundation at The Miami Foundation; Susan and Richard Arregui; Kirk Foundation; Miami Salon Group; Scott Hodes; Jones Day; Community Recovery Fund at The Miami Foundation and the Wege Foundation; and the donors to the Still Making Art Happen Campaign and Locust Projects Exhibitionist members.

ART HAPPENS HERE.