



black arts district



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# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

# A LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Greetings,

I hope this letter finds you whole and happy. Although the Black Arts District is embarking on its fourth year, 2022 felt like our institution was, for the first time, really cracking the shell and spreading our wings.

Perhaps, it is because we became a formalized nonprofit in the same year the Covid 19 pandemic forced the world into isolation. So, this past year was the first time we were able to do consistent in-person programming, share space with the community, and expand as an organization.

2022 was certainly a year of growth and opportunity, but it was also a year of learning. We spent time listening, observing and intentionally diving deep into our systems, events and programs to ascertain ways we could shift and adjust for greater impact moving forward.

This was our first year implementing our new strategic plan that you all have helped us shape and though it was not perfect we are excited to share all that we have accomplished and how our understanding deepened from the places we fell short.

Our staff has tripled in size over this past year and it feels like a microcosm of our growth overall. We started with a hope of simply being representative of the Black creative community to highlight and promote the beauty that we have witnessed ourselves. Now we can undoubtedly say that we have directly supported hundreds of Black creatives across Baltimore City. We are on our way to building a brand new art center. Our institutional reach has expanded internationally. And our story has become a model, or at least an inspiration, for Black creatives beyond our own

locale. The work of the Black Arts District is a creative liberatory movement and we do not take this truth lightly. We have been called to elevate our beloved community and we intend to continue to do just that.

To the Black Arts District team, I extend my deepest gratitude. You are miracle workers and your unwavering dedication does not go unnoticed. Finally, to every creative, community member, and stakeholder, thank you for believing in us, for showing up, but most importantly, for being your amazing selves. I am so excited for the next leg of this journey with you all.

Peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lady Brion'. The signature is stylized and fluid, with a large initial 'L' and 'B'.

**Lady Brion**  
Executive Director  
Pennsylvania Avenue Black Arts  
and Entertainment District



# TABLE OF CONTENTS



2

**About the Black Arts District**

3

**2022 Impact Report**

4

**Historical Photography Project (HPP)**

6

**Project Restart**

10

**Sanaa Center Project**

11

**Looking Forward to 2023**

12

**Financials**

12

**Black Arts District Team**

13

**Thank You to Our Donors**

# ABOUT THE BLACK ARTS DISTRICT

The Pennsylvania Black Arts and Entertainment District, Inc., known as the Black Arts District is a 501 (c) non-profit organization in West Baltimore. It is Maryland's first A&E district uniquely dedicated to the celebration, support, and promotion of African American cultural production.



## Mission

The Black Arts District through an anti-displacement framework empowers Black creatives and continues the community-based revitalization efforts in West Baltimore through culture, arts, and entertainment.

## Vision

Our vision of the Black Arts District is to be a model of Black creative autonomy.

## STAY CONNECTED



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[@officialblackartsdistrict](https://www.instagram.com/officialblackartsdistrict)



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[@The\\_OfficialBAD](https://twitter.com/The_OfficialBAD)

# 2022 IMPACT REPORT

58

EVENTS  
CURATED

20,271

ATTENDEES



300,000<sup>+</sup>

REACHED



501

ARTISTS  
SUPPORTED

\$ \$ \$ \$ \$

153,049.85

PROVIDED TO BLACK CREATIVES



594 ARTISTS TRAINED

47

CREATIVE  
COMMUNITY  
SPONSORSHIPS  
DELIVERED

\$562,288

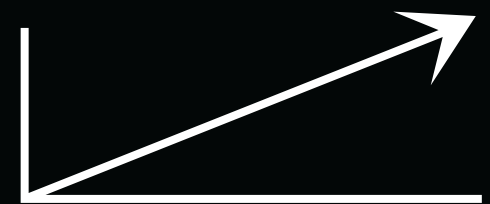
RAISED FOR 2022



\$1,350,000

RAISED FOR THE  
SANAA CENTER IN 2022

(\$2,848,324 RAISED TO DATE)



\$44,050

CREATIVE COMMUNITY  
SPONSORSHIP FUNDS DISPERSED

# HISTORICAL PHOTOGRAPHY PROJECT (HPP)

The purpose of the Historical Photography Project is to support the revitalization of West Baltimore by attracting people, encouraging reinvestment, preserving culture through storytelling, and celebrating its people and places.



## Historical Photography Project Programs

This year, we facilitated three community events encouraging residents living in West Baltimore to share stories and photos helping to illuminate histories about arts, entertainment, and culture in West Baltimore.

- Black History on Penn Ave, at The Church Spot
- Virtual Information Session for Baltimore City Educators: HPP Curriculum - Snapshots Preserving Cultural Memory Through Photos
- Honoring Our Fathers: Film Screening and Panel Discussion, at Arch Social Club

## Historical Photography Project Archive

The archive is a digital library that features photographs and oral narratives by and about Black communities in Baltimore. We added many community contributions to the digital library archive this year. The archive is live at [hpparchive.org](http://hpparchive.org) and includes the following features:

### Oral Histories & Historic Photographs

We facilitated and planned 20 oral history interviews with elders and utilized historic images of Pennsylvania Avenue for our archive.

### Interactive Map

We added several previously unknown sites to the interactive map of the Pennsylvania Avenue Arts and Entertainment District, identifying historic sites for black business, culture and art and hope to expand our coverage in 2023.





## Augmented Reality (AR) Murals on Pennsylvania Avenue

This year, we exhibited the first of many augmented reality murals on Pennsylvania Avenue that transform blighted historic sites into cultural monuments that honor the legacy of Black arts, entertainment, businesses and organizations in West Baltimore. The first site we honored is the Sphinx Club. When visitors point their cell phones at any of the images, a short film plays that tells them about the history of the club and the work of club's founder Charles Tilghman Sr.



### Historical Photography Project Curriculum SnapShot: Preserving Cultural Memory Through Photos

This year, we launched the SnapShot: Preserving Cultural Memory Through Photos curriculum with the support of curriculum development specialist Alexis Ojeda Brown. SnapShot is designed to utilize the HPP Archive to encourage educators working with middle school and high school students in Baltimore City to include Black history and art enrichment activities into their courses.

Some of our partner organizations and representative schools utilizing the curriculum include:

- Arts Everyday
- City Neighbors Hamilton
- Mount Royal E/M School
- Bard HS Early College
- Great Blacks and Wax Museum
- Lillie Carroll Jackson Civil Rights Museum
- Baltimore Youth Detention Center
- 10x10 Exhibition

# PROJECT RESTART

Project RestART is an initiative geared to supporting and sustaining Baltimore's cultural economy through an equitable lens. This four part program hires, trains, sponsors and provides fellowships for black creatives, as a means of restarting the Black Creative economy post Covid.



## Creative Community Sponsorships

Each month Project RestART sponsors local Black creatives who are interested in creating art and cultural experiences that are open to the public. Projects that take place within the Black Arts District footprint are given priority. This year, we hosted a total of 30 project restart sponsored events, sponsoring a sum of \$17,300 and supporting 233 creatives in the process. We look forward to expanding this program and supporting even more creatives in 2023.

## Creative Internship Program

The Black Arts District offers paid six month internship opportunities for emerging professionals in Baltimore. Our internships are designed to both support the development of Black creatives while helping to continue the revitalization efforts of West Baltimore through culture, arts, and entertainment.

In 2022, we were able to offer this opportunity to 2 interns. These interns assist with our programs by extending outreach to elders in West Baltimore who want to share photographs and lived stories, assisting with marketing and administrative needs and more. The balance of both supporting and learning about our programs makes this a unique internship experience.



Keyonna Hill, Poet, 2022 Creative Intern



# Marquee Events

## Black Artist Fair

The Black Artist Fair is an educational and interactive event designed to connect Black creatives from the Greater Baltimore Area to resources and services to further enhance their crafts and careers. The Black Artist Fair curates a space specifically for Black creatives to combat the issues of equity around access to resources and opportunities. The Black Artist Fair is a culmination of the monthly Black to the Future event series. It welcomed over 350 attendees.



### Marketplace

The Marketplace drew 45 merchandise and resource vendors with unique products from black makers, creators, and resources from local organizations.

### Art Labs

Art Labs included *BAD AF: Painting Workshop*, *The Sacral Chakra Yoga: Tuning Into Your Creative Center*, and *Mastering Your Everyday Glam Makeup Lesson*.

### Panel Discussion

*What It Takes, Tips for Success*, drew many achieved panelists to give their tips and guidance. Panelists included 92Q radio personality Kelson, singer and *The Voice* contestant Davon Fleming. Also in attendance was singer, Broadway performer, *American Idol* & *The Voice* contestant Frenchie Davis.

### Workshops

Attendees were offered four workshops regarding business and finance from industry experts to support their creative careers and provide an intimate space for deep engagement regarding their work.

### Fade 2 Black Party

This celebration marked the end of the Black Artist Fair and was a great event to close out the year of events as well. It featured a live DJ battle, food, networking, dancing and a celebration of culture.



## Black To The Future Networking Events

Black to the Future is a Black Artist Fair monthly event series that provides an opportunity for black businesses and black creatives to gather. It includes networking, keynote speakers, local vendors, workshops and opportunities to connect with local resources. Attendees can also have free headshots taken as a part of this event.



## Baltimore Blaq Pride 2022

The Black Arts District worked in conjunction with Blaq Equity Baltimore and other organizations, artists and promoters dedicated to celebrating and supporting the wellness of Black Sexual and Gender Minorities in Baltimore. The Black Arts District curated a series of cultural experiences that builds upon the decades of work charted by Blaq Equity Baltimore. The cultural experiences supported Black creatives, connected communities and created fun, safe and educational experiences for Black people of all ages, genders, sexualities and economic statuses. We were able to sponsor 15 events through Project RestART sponsorships, providing \$23,000 in funds to support black culture and creators during Blaq Pride month. (October 2022).



## Legacy Fest

Legacy Fest is a full day, outdoor art festival featuring some of the most dynamic creatives Baltimore City has to offer. This event brings the community together to honor the rich history of Baltimore's Black Creative Community while celebrating the present and future of Pennsylvania Ave. Legacy Fest provides an open market for dozens of vendors, a kids zone full of fun and educational activities, and an amazing musical line up.

This year at Legacy Festival, we took it back to the 90s! Since the pandemic, this was one of the largest scale events to take place on Pennsylvania Avenue. We hosted almost 200 people and supported over 60 creatives. We also partnered with the Black A\*\* Flea Market to curate a marketplace for Black Baltimore-based vendors. We look forward to bringing this event back in 2023 and continuing to celebrate the amazing talent Baltimore has to offer and the legacy of Pennsylvania Avenue.



## Womxn of the World Poetry Slam Fest

WOWPS Fest is an international 6-day slam poetry festival that centers and honors womxn. Poets from around the world joined us March 29th - April 3rd, 2022. This festival featured networking opportunities, book signings, workshops, womxn-centered events and poetry competitions where winners received over \$8k in prizes.

In 2022, 58 people competed in person and 28 competed virtually. Our winning poets were RADI, in-person, and Queen Keiani, virtually.

We curated 10 other events throughout the festival in hosting these creatives. The collective events drew over 2,800 attendees in its first year in Baltimore.



Radi, in-person WOWPS 2022 Winning Poet



# SANAA CENTER PROJECT

## The Opportunity

The project consists of a new, 3 story construction, 4,600 SF addition to the existing Harris Marcus building located at 1947 Pennsylvania Ave. Adjacent to the Harris Marcus addition, the Sanaa Center will be a newly constructed standalone building with offices, performance spaces, and studios. This is roughly an \$8 million development project. Project slated to be completed by 2025.

The Black Arts District's mission is "through an anti- displacement framework to empower Black creatives..." Thus, we felt it necessary to work with Black led firms to bring this capital project to fruition. Furthermore, we saw this project as an opportunity to support and help grow smaller Black companies with our community-based commercial project. We are proud to be working with Chris Mfume, managing partner at CLD partners as our development manager and Drummond Project as our architecture firm. These two local companies present great promise and expertise and we are so excited to embark on the next leg of our project.

## Next Phase

In the first quarter of 2023 our capital project aims to:

- Begin the design phase of the project
- Host community envisioning sessions to develop programming
- Hire a capital campaign manager



# LOOKING FORWARD TO 2023

## Volunteer Initiatives

The Black Arts District is happy to reignite and re-engage volunteers from previous years, with some new opportunities in working with us. In 2023, we will introduce and implement a new tier system to reward our volunteers for their hard work. If you are interested in volunteering with The Black Arts District, complete the form at [blackartsdistrict.org/volunteer](https://blackartsdistrict.org/volunteer)

## VOLUNTEER TIER SYSTEM

Bronze	Silver	Gold	Black
10 Hours	25 Hours	50 Hours	100 Hours
BAD T-Shirt	\$20 Food Gift Card	20% Off Annual Fundraiser Gala	\$200 Stipend

## Advisory Committee

Black Arts District Advisory Committee is a structured way for local Baltimore creatives to share their opinions and perspectives, develop recommendations, support staff and board members as we collectively work towards making Baltimore the ideal place for Black creatives and Black creativity. To apply to join the Advisory Committee, please visit [blackartsdistrict.org/joinus](https://blackartsdistrict.org/joinus)

Advisory Committee members include Azrael, Akilah Divine, David Fakunle, Chelsea Monae, Alanah Nichole, Carolyn Robinson, Rufus Roundtree, Regina Summers and Kayla Tullis.

## The Baltimore Cultural Equity Committee Launch

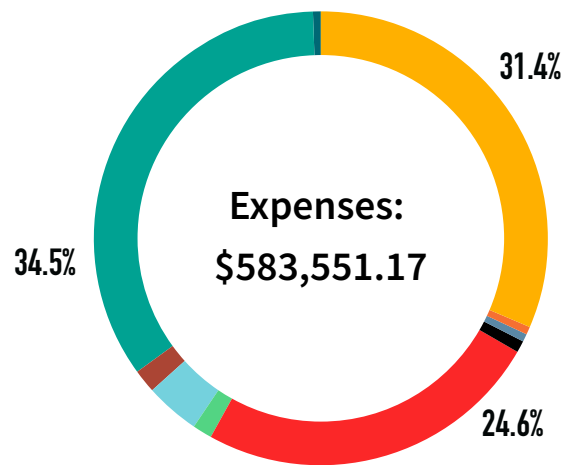
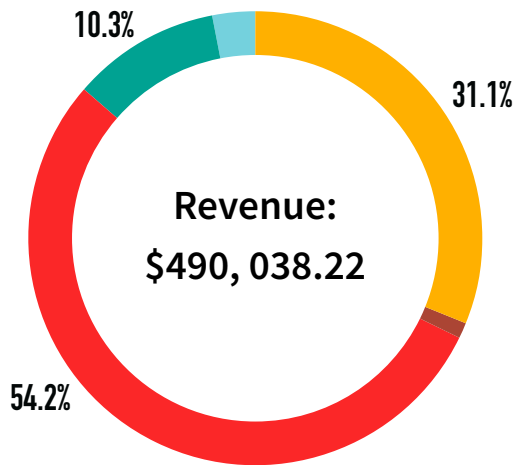
The Baltimore Cultural Equity Committee (BCEC) is dedicated to advocating for and advancing Equity in

Baltimore's Creative and Cultural Communities. The committee will be made up of 15-20 creatives, activists, educators, researchers and community leaders who are invested in helping to make Baltimore a national example of a thriving creative city that centers cultural equity.

## Emerging Artists Fellowship

The Black Arts District will recruit and secure a young creative, aged 18-24, to become our first Emerging Artist Fellow. This fellowship will provide an opportunity for this fellow to receive training, mentoring, networking opportunities and a \$20,000 stipend within the 10-month fellowships beginning in March 2023 and ending in December 2023. The Emerging Artist Fellow will be responsible for producing a public showcase or exhibition in their area of interest, that celebrates the people and places that make up West Baltimore, along with their newly developed skills and creative achievements.

# 2022 FINANCIALS



- Corporate & Foundation - \$152,500
- Individual Donors - \$6,719.31
- Government Grants - \$265,382.88
- Sponsorships - \$50,500
- Income - \$14,936.03

- Special Events - \$183,170.56
- Advertising & Promotion - \$4,631.89
- Capital/Depreciation - \$2,830.08
- Conferences & Meetings - \$4,642.90
- Professional Fees - \$143,727.07

- IT - \$9,392.76
- Occupancy - \$21,615.82
- Office - \$10,214.18
- Payroll - \$201,400.47
- Travel - \$1,925.44

## BLACK ARTS DISTRICT TEAM

### Board of Directors



**S. Rasheem**

**Board President**  
Mayor's Office of  
Employment Development



**John Harris**

**Vice President**  
Arch Social Club



**Todd Marcus**

**Treasurer**  
Intersection of Change



**Candace Chance**

The VPI Firm: Baltimore  
Collaboration Lab



**Michael Cornish**

Dad's United  
Organization



**Kevin Daniel**

St. Martin's Church Pastor,  
Morgan State University



**Kaynecha Daughtery**

Creative Nomads



**Dayvon Love**

Leaders of a Beautiful  
Struggle

### Staff

**Executive Director**  
Lady Brion

**Director of Programs**  
Kenneth Morrison

**Administrative Assistant**  
Maya Wright

**Events Coordinator**  
Candace Handy

**Community Engagement Coordinator**  
Cydni Stewart

**Lead Curator, HPP**  
Angela N. Carrol

**Program Coordinator**  
Chelsea Sherman

**Marketing & Communications Manager**  
Ciara Blue

**Graphic Designer**  
Nathaniel Thomas



# THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

We extend our deepest gratitude to all those that have supported us through grants, sponsorships and donations. Thank you so much for your generous contributions that allow us to continue strengthening the arts and culture ecosystem in Baltimore.



- |                    |                       |                       |                |
|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| Ali Ibrahim        | Candace Chance        | Johnathan D. Seligman | Peggy Murphy   |
| Allen Salyer       | Charles Miller        | Kaynecha Daughtery    | S Rasheem      |
| Allison Clendaniel | Dr. Kimya Nuru Dennis | Louis Carlat          | Simran Sidhu   |
| Ariel Davis        | Jason Nichols         | Mike Cross-Barnet     | Sulena Morris  |
| Briony Hynson      | John Harris           | Monny Wiley           | Todd R. Marcus |



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