

# CHERRY STREET PIER <sup>No. 9</sup>

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **GET TO KNOW THE NEW ARTISTS-IN-RESIDENCE AT CHERRY STREET**

*Visit the most dynamic arts space on Philly's Waterfront, featuring painters, musicians, multi-disciplinary artists, a filmmaker, industrial designer, and other local creatives.*



**PHILADELPHIA (October 13, 2020) – The Delaware River Waterfront Corporation (DRWC)** is excited to welcome its second-year cohort of resident artists at [Cherry Street Pier](#), the Waterfront's newest public park and incubator space that showcases Philadelphia's creative community. The Pier, which features an outdoor garden, exhibition and installation areas, and dining with spectacular views, includes 14 artist studios built out of retrofitted shipping containers.

Incoming new artists include:

- **Samantha Billig**, a mixed media artist who uses a combination of alcohol inks, epoxy resin, and spray paints, to create ethereal abstract pieces.
- **Blue Stoop**, a diverse and inclusive writers' collective that supports and connects emerging and established writers through a variety of workshops, cohort sessions, and other activities and resources.
- **Portside Art Center**, an organization that provides arts access to over 100 adults and 400 youth through events, core programming, and outreach efforts.
- **SpArc Services**, a cultural arts program that fosters creativity, self-confidence, and community connections for adults with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities through classes in the visual and performing arts.
- **Jason Alexis Ramirez**, also known as JAR, a painter, contemporary artist and designer whose use of nostalgic characters, alluring floral designs, vibrant colors, and bold lines brings his paintings, custom apparel and furniture alive.
- **Athena Scott**, a mixed media artist whose portraits are the synthesis of fine art and design, heavily influenced by music and human expression.
- **Keni Thomas**, a pop-Surrealism visual artist known as **Thomcat23**, who focuses on social, political, and environmental issues, while pushing unrelated forms and visual puns together.

Returning artists include **James B. Abbott** (photography) and **India Abbott** (moving image), **Acori Honzo** (sculpture, painting, African-American dolls), **Ed Marion** (painting and digital illustration), **Orchestra 2001** (contemporary classical music), and **Sharif Pendleton of PLAID** (product design).

The complete list of artist bios can be found [here](#).

### **ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES**

In addition to the new artist cohort, the Pier is host to several exhibitions and programs this Fall, which feature multimedia installations, performances, First Friday fun, and kids' activities. ***Cherry Street Pier adheres to mandated capacity regulations as well as health protocols to keep all of visitors—and resident artists—safe. Masks and physical distancing are required while on site.***

### [Testing Grounds Exhibition](#)

Through November 6

*Testing Grounds* is an exhibition featuring a diverse group of Philadelphia-based emerging artists that engages with "the public" as an unfixed site and community and holds infinite realities. It is a place that can and should be constantly re-imagined and reconfigured.

### The Head & The Hand Book Nook

Every Saturday in October from 2-8PM

Open-air browsing and book specials from local and national fiction and nonfiction for adults and children.

### Artist and Artisans Market

First Fridays through December from 4-9PM

Every Sunday through December 13 from 12-5PM

A curated selection of local business and makers present unique, one-of-a-kind items.

Cherry Street Pier's first cohort of resident artists were chosen from an applicant pool of 52 and represented a wide range of artistic endeavors—from fiber artists and poets to painters and creative entrepreneurs. Over 70 artists applied for residencies in year two, some of whom were returning artists and collectives while others were rising creatives from across the city.

The selection of artists was spearheaded by an esteemed committee of artists, curators, art administrators, along with DRWC staff and board members. Cognizant of the potential impact of the artists not only on the Pier but the Waterfront as a whole, the committee painstakingly reviewed applications and conducted interviews to identify individuals and collaboratives who truly represent the breadth and depth of Philadelphia's rich artistic community.

The Cherry Street Pier brand has grown within the greater arts community in Philadelphia, thanks in large part to the year one artists themselves. Interest in obtaining studio space and programming at the Pier has skyrocketed, as evidenced, for example, by the 117 applications received for a recent Art and Artisans Market, a carefully-curated series of markets featuring local makers.

Cherry Street Pier has also supported the entrepreneurial ambitions of the artists, providing some artists—for the first time—a permanent space in which to create and sell their wares. That artists were able to expand and deepen their artistic practices while building and scaling their businesses is a testament to the successful model of providing below market rent, 24-hour studio access, and operational, marketing, and promotional resources. Among the first cohort of artists, each have seen their social media following increase from 12-455%.

A few of the success stories for the artists include:

- **PLAID** (Sharif Pendleton) has become financially self-sufficient
- **Acori Honzo** has sold several high-end dolls and sales continue to increase.
- Since April 2019, **Carla Fisher's** work has been in such high demand that she currently works solely on commissions that require a six-month lead time.
- **Jim Abbott** has had success with sales of larger works after participating in the markets.
- **Orchestra 2001** has received several grants specifically for work tied to the Pier.

“We are so proud to call Cherry Street Pier home to amazing artists and collectives and that the space and program helps to foster such incredible local talent. We are honored to be able to offer them a place to hone their crafts while simultaneously connecting with the thousands of visitors to Cherry Street Pier. Many impressive milestones were met for our first class of resident artists, and we can’t wait to see what this next year brings for those who are returning and the new artists who have taken residency,” said Joe Forkin, President of DRWC.

Since its October 2018 opening, Cherry Street Pier has welcomed over 300,000 visitors, been home to Festival for the People, Tiny Room for Elephants, Design Philadelphia, and Ghost Ship and hosted over 175 additional events.

Initial funding for Cherry Street Pier was provided by the [City of Philadelphia](#), [the William Penn Foundation](#), [The Board of Directors of City Trusts and the Delaware Avenue Fund](#), [the PA Department of Community and Economic Development](#), and [The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation](#).

#### **ABOUT THE ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE PROGRAM AT DRWC**

One of the unique components of this new park is the focus on fostering and building the creative community in Philadelphia by providing low-rent studios, market and exhibition areas, and programming focused on showcasing the breadth of work being done in the city. The artist studios were intentionally created to be completely public facing so that all visitors could see how art is made, and so that the artists could meet and interact with new audiences.

To choose artists for the studios, DRWC put out an open application across the city, and used both an internal review process as well as consultation and guidance from experts in public art, public space, and community building. The goal was to put together a cohort that would work collaboratively, be open to and excited about engaging with the public, and would be a good representation of Philadelphia and its creative community.

## ABOUT CHERRY STREET PIER



Municipal Pier 9, the original name for Cherry Street Pier, is a 99-year old warehouse and former shipping pier that has sat vacant for decades. In the span of six months, DRWC and its design and construction team consisting of [ISA](#), [Groundswell Design Group](#), [W.J. Castle & Associates](#), [Scungio Borst](#), [Hydro Marine Construction](#), and [D3 Development](#), breathed new life into this 65,000 square-foot space, one of the last remaining historic finger piers in public control along the Central Delaware River Waterfront.

### CONNECT

Facebook: [Cherry Street Pier](#)

Instagram: [@cherrystreetpier](#)

Twitter: [@cherrystpier](#)

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### ABOUT DELAWARE RIVER WATERFRONT CORPORATION

DRWC is a 501(c)(3) created in January 2009, exclusively for the benefit of the City of Philadelphia and its citizens. The fundamental purpose of DRWC is to design, develop, program and maintain public amenities such as permanent and seasonal parks, trails, and streetscape improvements to transform the waterfront into a vibrant destination for recreational, cultural, and commercial activities for the residents and visitors of Philadelphia as is consistent with the goals of the Master Plan for Central Delaware. Daily programming throughout the entire year is

changing the way Philadelphians see and converse about the waterfront, and is helping to create spaces and communities that connect residents and visitors to the waterfront. Visit [delawareriverwaterfront.com](http://delawareriverwaterfront.com) for more.

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