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Where Freedom Flows: A Public Art Series on the Delaware River Waterfront

Delaware River Waterfront to transform into a free public art gallery with multiple large-scale art exhibits and installations during America's 250th Anniversary

PHILADELPHIA (March 10, 2026) - As the nation marks its 250th anniversary, the [Delaware River Waterfront Corporation](#) ("DRWC") announces **Where Freedom Flows**, a public art series transforming the Waterfront into a free, open-air gallery from summer through fall 2026.

Through a curated lineup of immersive exhibitions and installations at Cherry Street Pier, Spruce Street Harbor Park, and along the Delaware River, the Waterfront will become a gathering place for art, reflection, and dialogue. Rooted in Philadelphia's history and shaped by contemporary artists from around the world, the series explores how freedom moves across water, across generations, and across communities, connecting stories of migration, creativity, resilience, and renewal.

Through art, sound, light, and storytelling, *Where Freedom Flows* reinforces the Waterfront's position as an inclusive cultural destination where residents and visitors alike are invited to engage with the evolving story of freedom in Philadelphia and across the nation.

"At its core, DRWC's mission is to ensure the Waterfront remains a public space that serves and reflects the people of Philadelphia," **said Joseph A. Forkin, President and CEO of the Delaware River Waterfront Corporation**. "As the nation marks 250 years, this initiative advances our commitment to free, inclusive art programming that brings history, culture, and community together on the riverfront."

"Freedom is not static. It moves and adapts. It crosses water and carries stories with it," **said Sarah Eberle, Creative Director of the Delaware River Waterfront Corporation**. "For centuries, the Delaware River has been a place of arrival, exchange, and transformation. This series reflects that history by exploring how freedom connects people across time and culture, and by inviting visitors to see themselves as part of what comes next."

A snapshot of the exhibitions and installations with works by local and international artists, include:

- ***Let Freedom Ring* by Paul Ramírez Jones** – presented by the Association for Public Art in partnership with the Delaware River Waterfront Corporation (DRWC) at Cherry Street Pier, with support from The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage. Visitors are invited to strike a 600-pound bell to sound the final note of "My Country, 'Tis of Thee," echoing the historic performance by Marian Anderson and words later invoked by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

- ***Sail Through This To That* by Indira Allegra** – in partnership with ArtPhilly and funded by The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage, is a large-scale public procession and installation featuring artist-designed sails honoring Ona Judge, an enslaved woman who escaped from George Washington’s Philadelphia household in 1796, and Rem'mie Fells, a 27-year-old transgender woman and aspiring fashion designer killed in Philadelphia in 2020. These vibrant sewn sails, displayed on the North Wind Schooner, symbolically connect their lives across time and place.
- ***Flag Exhibition: Roots of Resilience*** – presenting flag designs by national and international artists honoring Philadelphia’s immigrant roots.
- ***PrismaPhonik* by William Simard and Anthony Gagnon Boisvert** – inviting visitors on a “magical stroll” through a symphony, where sound becomes color through an installation of 12 glowing prisms. For its Philadelphia debut, the artists collaborated with local musicians and composers to create a new presentation featuring new music with ties to Philadelphia.
- ***Colmado del Futuro* by Eunice Levis** – reimagining the Caribbean colmado through immersive mixed reality, blending Afro-Caribbean cultural memory with themes of technology, labor, and belonging.
- ***Wings and Water: The Space Between*, presented by GrioXArts and the Mason Stitch Art Collective** – a community-driven installation that reimagines the American flag through hand-embroidered bandanas created in public workshops.
- **Sonia Shiel: Solo Exhibition curated by Leah Triplett** – Inspired by the Delaware River, this site-specific installation uses nautical themes and shifting painted elements to evoke constant motion, while costume components invite visitors to participate and help shape the unfolding narrative.

****Complete overviews and timing of the 2026 exhibitions making their debut on the Delaware River Waterfront in 2026 are below for more information. ****

For more information, please visit [here](#).

HIGH-RES IMAGES:

High-resolution art images [available here](#). To stay up to date on DRWC happenings throughout the year, please visit delawareriverwaterfront.com.

Where Freedom Flows: A Public Art Series on the Delaware River Waterfront

***Let Freedom Ring* by Paul Ramírez Jonas**

Entrance to Cherry Street Pier
121 N. Columbus Boulevard, Philadelphia, PA 19106

June 4 – September 27, 2026

Presented in partnership with the [Association for Public Art](#), this monumental interactive bell tower plays "My Country 'Tis of Thee," as performed by Marian Anderson and quoted by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Visitors are invited to strike a **600-lb bell** to play the final note of the song and proclaim for whom they ring the bell of freedom. Support for Let Freedom Ring is provided by The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage and the Philadelphia Funder Collaborative for the Semiquincentennial.

About the Artist: [Paul Ramírez Jonas](#) is an artist whose practice focuses on inspiring civic participation and exchange through public monuments. Over the last thirty years Paul has created works that range from large-scale public installations and monumental sculptures to intimate drawings, performances and videos.

***Sail Through This To That* by Indira Allegra**

Curated by: Rob Blackson

Penn's Landing Marina & Spruce Street Harbor Park
301 S. Columbus Blvd, Philadelphia, PA 19106

May 28 – July 30, 2026

Hosting ***Sail Through This To That***, in partnership with **Art Philly** and funded by The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage, this installation is a celebration of life created by the poet, artist, and community organizer **Indira Allegra**. This large-scale public artwork and community procession follows the waters of the Delaware River and Schuylkill Rivers connecting two women: Ona Judge who escaped to freedom from Philadelphia in 1796 and the Philadelphia fashion designer and trans woman, Rem'mie Fells who was killed in 2020.

The centerpiece of *Sail Through This To That* is a triptych of vibrant sewn sails cast on North Wind schooner docked at the Delaware River's Spruce Street Harbor for the summer of 2026. The boat will also host a selection of the project's public programs offering a range of free events.

About the Artist: [Indira Allegra](#) is a poet, artist, and community organizer. Indira is a conceptual artist and founder of [Cazimi Studio](#). Cazimi Studio uses weaving as a framework to creatively transform tension within different sites. The studio is unique in its emphasis on performance, publication, and the integration of spiritual care as preferred design solutions. Thinking as a poet, threads of connection are discovered between seemingly disparate experiences. Moving as a weaver, these connections are interlaced into a greater whole.

2026 DRWC Flag Exhibition: Roots of Resilience

Spruce Street Harbor Park
301 S. Columbus Blvd, Philadelphia, PA 19106

May 22 – September 7, 2026

This exhibition features flag designs from national and international artists that explore **Philadelphia's history as a central immigration hub in the United States**. The flags embody the spirit of resilience experienced by those who have immigrated to Philadelphia, highlighting the stories of hope, change, and interconnectedness. Artists are encouraged to explore a variety of

interpretations, drawing inspiration from historical events, cultural traditions, and personal stories that reflect the immigrant experience in the city. The exhibition aims to celebrate the tapestry of cultures that continue to enrich Philadelphia and inspire future generations.

About the Artists: A curated cohort of national and international artists selected through a proposal process to DRWC.

PrismaPhonik by William Simard and Anthony Gagnon Boisvert

Spruce Street Harbor Park
301 S. Columbus Blvd, Philadelphia, PA 19106
June 26 – August 17, 2026

A "magical stroll in the heart of a symphony orchestra," this installation consists of twelve **luminous, colorful prisms**. Each prism embodies a virtuoso musician, allowing visitors to experience **synesthesia**—the ability to see sounds in color—through a mathematical calculation of musical tensions.

While the colored light effects illustrate the movements of the instrumentalist in full performance, the choice of shades hides a well-kept secret resulting from a mathematical calculation based on the tensions between the notes felt in the pieces of his repertoire. Each prism is sensitive to surrounding stimuli, creating a dialogue between the work and its audience. By being part of this visual and sonic symbiosis, guests will have the vivid impression of "being music."

About the Artists: [William Simard](#) and **Anthony Gagnon Boisvert** developed this work in collaboration with Philadelphia musicians and composers. For its Philadelphia presentation, the duo worked with the local brass-band sensation SnackTime, integrating one of the group's newest tracks into the installation. They also partnered with Orchestra 2001 to create an original composition written specifically for this iteration of the work. Since 2016, this creative duo has been bringing people together around their passion for art and its universal beauty thanks to science and technology through music and visual arts.

As multi-instrumentalists and orchestrators, they have toured with multimedia and musical projects. They often collaborate on audiovisual productions combining sound design, software development, and industrial design.

Colmado del Futuro by Eunice Levis

Cherry Street Pier
121 N. Columbus Boulevard, Philadelphia, PA 19106
June 5 – July 26, 2026

Colmado del Futuro is an immersive, mixed-reality art installation reimagining the traditional Caribbean corner store ("colmado") as a futuristic gathering space disrupted by automation, surveillance, and artificial intelligence. Rooted in Dominican and Afro-Caribbean cultural memory, the work blends physical installation, projection mapping, sound design, and interactive storytelling to explore how technology transforms labor, community, and belonging.

Visitors step into a 10x10-foot modular structure inspired by the architecture and textures of Caribbean bodegas, corrugated metal, wooden shelves, plastic crates, neon signage, and scent diffusers that evoke tropical goods. Inside, motion sensors trigger layered audio experiences: the hum of an AI cashier, fragments of human conversation, and ambient soundscapes of island life. As guests interact with the space, the environment “glitches” between analog and digital states, revealing how the corner store, once a social hub, becomes a site of cultural erasure and resilience.

The experience is self-guided and runs on a continuous loop of 5-7 minutes per visitor cycle. Up to 6 participants may enter once, with an estimated total attendance of 1,000 over a four-week exhibition period. The work is designed to be accessible to a wide audience and can function both as a daytime exhibition and an evening light installation.

About the Artist: Eunice Levis is a writer, director, and visual artist whose work spans genre-driven narratives rooted in Afro-Caribbean identity. Her films have screened internationally and on platforms such as Netflix and Shudder. Levis’s practice extends into immersive storytelling, XR, and installation art, blending cinematic world-building with cultural preservation and speculative futures. [?](#)

Wings and Water: The Space Between

Cherry Street Pier

121 N. Columbus Boulevard, Philadelphia, PA 19106

July 3- August 1, 2026

GrioXArts, led by artists **Santé Duwenvue Johnson** and **Kara Mshinda**, in partnership with **MSAC**, presents *Wings and Water: The Space Between*, this community-driven art installation explores themes of freedom, fluidity, and collective identity through textile-based storytelling. The title symbolizes the space between understanding and expression, inviting reflection on the gaps in societal narratives and the potential to bridge them.

The centerpiece of the exhibition is a large-scale “flagospace” — a reimagined American flag composed of hand-embroidered bandanas created during public workshops. These bandanas, stitched together by artist Santé Johnson, form tapestries that will hang from the trusses at Cherry Street Pier. The installation serves as a platform for marginalized voices, offering a visual dialogue on identity, equity, and community. The Cherry Street Pier studio artists have also been invited to create their own smaller scaled flags, which will also be hung from the trusses throughout the Pier.

Accompanying the “flagospace” is a gallery showcase documenting the creative process, featuring contributions from participating organizations and communities across Philadelphia.

Free and public workshops were held at Cherry Street Pier (Studio 3) throughout May and June 2025, where participants embroidered bandanas reflecting personal and cultural narratives. These sessions emphasized wellness, safe creative spaces, and the integration of BIPOC voices into Philadelphia’s evolving story. Upcoming workshops to be announced.

About the Artists: [GrioXArts](#) is a collaborative initiative founded by Cherry Street Studio artists **Santé Duwenvue Johnson** and **Kara Mshinda**, who are dedicated to using art for community dialogue and inclusivity.

Duvenavue Sante Johnson is a BIPOC artist with a rich heritage spanning both the northern and southern regions of the United States over the past four centuries. This diverse upbringing has significantly shaped Johnson's artistic lens, fostering a relentless quest for equilibrium, aesthetic allure, and steadiness within her masterpieces.

[Kara Mshinda](#) is a visual anthropologist and interdisciplinary artist whose practice explores identity, memory, and embodiment in community contexts. Drawing from her anthropological training, she creates photo-based artworks using collage, collaborative portraiture, and alternative photographic processes to document urban landscapes, social encounters, and the material culture of daily life. Her current body of work, *All Hands Hold*, is an instant film photography project investigating identity expression and hand performance.

Sonia Shiel: Solo Exhibition

Cherry Street Pier – Gallery (First Floor)
121 N. Columbus Boulevard, Philadelphia, PA 19106
August 7 – 30, 2026

Sonia Shiel, a Dublin, Ireland-based artist, will create an iterative, site-specific exhibition at Cherry Street Pier as one of three locations on the East Coast in succession. The paintings and materials in the exhibition will include nautical sensibilities related to the Delaware River Waterfront, infusing the works with a sense of perpetual motion. Costume elements will invite the audience to join the cast in a navigational engagement with the work and help determine its narrative direction. The paintings will shift and divide, physically engaging the audience, as if a storm of their own making is swaddling them. This exhibition is curated by [Leah Triplett](#), curator of contemporary art at PAFA.

About the Artist: [Sonia Shiel](#) is a Dublin-based artist whose work explores the relationship between the natural world and human survival through surreal narratives.

ABOUT DELAWARE RIVER WATERFRONT CORPORATION

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 the 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.

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