

PRESS CONTACT:

Almaz Crowe
Director of Communications & Marketing
Delaware River Waterfront Corporation
acrowe@drwc.org
O: 215-629-3217
C: 267-269-0184

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEW WATERFRONT ARTS PROGRAM ANNOUNCED

Three-dimension light installation ‘ghost ship’ which has appeared throughout Europe and Asia to make its North American debut as the kickoff to the Delaware River Waterfront Corporation’s newest initiative



Ghost Ship rendering, view from Race Street Pier, courtesy of Biangle Studio

PHILADELPHIA (August 8, 2019) – The Delaware River Waterfront Corporation (DRWC) announces the launch of its newest initiative, the Waterfront Arts Program, and its kickoff public art installation set to debut this fall.

In October, a 90ft, site-specific 18th century “ghost ship” will appear under the Ben Franklin Bridge. This three dimensional light and water based installation, by Romanian-based [Biangle Studio](#), is part of a month-long public art exhibition examining the shared history of free and forced migration on the Delaware River, and reflect on its role in shaping Philadelphia today.

The exhibition, commissioned by DRWC and curated by Ryan Strand Greenberg, will be accompanied by land-side programming exploring these shared cultural histories through various medium. Set to debut between the Race Street Pier and Pier 12, this pilot project will combine international talent with local and regional artists to bring a new level of artistic programming to the Waterfront.

This project is a reflection of the goals for new public art and creative programming as part of the Waterfront Arts Program, which include embracing the evolution of the Delaware River Waterfront and its unique properties, creating new experiences and relationships for people to share in along the Delaware River Waterfront, and celebrating the city's rich diversity and culture through art.

"We are incredibly excited to share the Waterfront Arts Program with Philadelphia residents and visitors. As proven once again by the introduction of our newest park, Cherry Street Pier – a space that connects local artists with the community – the Waterfront has always sought opportunities to grow and expand our value in the most exciting and creative way, and this initiative is no exception," said Joe Forkin, President of DRWC. "We are thrilled to participate in the best of what our great city has to offer and to continue to assert our position as a key member of the arts and culture community."

As development and revitalization momentum continues to build along the Delaware River, DRWC saw the need to establish a defined vision for intentionally locating art outside of traditional venues and expanding cultural experiences along the waterfront. With funding from the William Penn Foundation, DRWC, in conjunction with Interface Studios and Hood Design, spent two years researching the complex history of the waterfront to create a "cultural layer" to the 2011 Master Plan for the Central Delaware, which creates the foundation for the Waterfront Arts Program.

The Waterfront Arts Plan is a framework for DRWC and its partners to operationalize a Waterfront Arts Program and begin commissioning public art, documenting opportunity sites, and translating the values the community identifies as themes they would like to see emerge in creative works along the Delaware riverfront.

"The launch of the Waterfront Arts Program continues the momentum of the Delaware River Waterfront revitalization," said Judilee Reed, Program Director for Creative Communities at the William Penn Foundation. "Public and performance art in the beautiful setting of the post-industrial waterfront creates experiences for people that connect art and culture, the river's edge, and Philly's urban landscape."

The Waterfront Arts Program explores five eras that represent the major cultural narrative periods of the Waterfront: Lenape Village, Colonial Town, Maker City, Disconnected Metro, and Future Region. It also looks at four primary values that people have given to the physical space of the river and the waterfront: Destination, Connector, Edge, and Livelihood. The Program then examines how these narratives and values intersect as a way to provide both context and provocation for site-specific public and performance art commissioned and developed under the Waterfront Arts Program.

The Waterfront Arts Program envisions new creative works being developed both directly through DRWC-led efforts, and through partnering with or providing guidance to, private and non-profit partners interested in expanding cultural programming along the Waterfront.

For those works that are directly commissioned through the Waterfront Arts Program, the program envisions four project types: Major Works, Annual Programming, Special Programs, and Temporary Pre-Development Activations on vacant sites.

The Waterfront Arts Program is made possible by generous funding from the William Penn Foundation's New Audiences New Places grantmaking initiative. New Audiences New Places funding supports efforts that aim to broaden Philadelphia's exposure to the arts and enrich community life by bringing cultural experiences beyond traditional venues and into public and civic spaces.

Development of the program also benefited from the expertise and insights of over 50 advisors who lent their varied perspectives as artists, curators, arts administrators, arts organizations, historians, storytellers, tribal representatives, educators, environmental activists, designers, stewards, policy implementers, advocates, and funders. The Steering Committee met five times and served as a sounding board for the consultant team during each step of the planning process. The Working Groups focused on the Arts, History, and the Environment, and presented opportunities for topic-specific discussions.

Additional consulting was offered by three working groups made up of experts in each field including an environmental working group, a history working group, and an arts working group.

Members of the community were also invited to contribute to the Delaware River Waterfront Arts Program planning process through surveys, interviews, public feedback events, and a public meeting. Hundreds of voices from Philadelphia and farther afield helped shape this plan to enrich the Delaware River Waterfront with art, culture, and creative programming.

There are many other opportunities for artists at the waterfront including [a new call for artistic programming](#), workshops, exhibition and gallery space, artist residencies, and more. Full details about the Waterfront Arts Program and pilot project as well as a downloadable copy of the plan can be found on the [Waterfront's website](#).

Additional Funders:

- **AP Construction, Inc.**
- **Pennoni Associates Inc.**
- **Pennsylvania Council on the Arts (PCA):** The Delaware River Waterfront Corporation (DRWC) receives state arts funding support through a grant from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.

ABOUT WILLIAM PENN FOUNDATION

The William Penn Foundation, founded in 1945 by Otto and Phoebe Haas, is dedicated to improving the quality of life in the Greater Philadelphia region through efforts that increase educational opportunities for children from low-income families, ensure a sustainable environment, foster creativity that enhances civic life, and advance philanthropy in the Philadelphia region. The Foundation's assets exceed \$2.3 billion as of December 31, 2018.

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 for more information.

Photos and video available to press.

###