



# Tacony LAB Artist Residency

**Spring-Summer 2017**

**A civic improvement-focused residency, housed in a storefront library on the Torresdale Avenue Commercial Corridor in Northeast Philadelphia.**

Co-hosted by Mural Arts Philadelphia and Councilman Bobby Henon's Office in collaboration with the Tacony Community Development Corporation and the Tacony Branch of the Free Library of Philadelphia.

---

## REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

**Deadline: 5 pm EST, Monday, March 6, 2017**

Please email [tacony@muralarts.org](mailto:tacony@muralarts.org) with any questions or comments.

No phone calls, please.

---

## THE TACONY LAB

Thanks to the support of Councilman Bobby Henon, the Free Library of Philadelphia and Mural Arts Philadelphia have created the Tacony Library and Arts Building (LAB) at 6918 Torresdale Avenue. This hub for learning, creativity, and community engagement combines a temporary home for Tacony's neighborhood library with an artists studio. At the LAB, visitors can attend arts-focused events and workshops, borrow books, use computers, and access free Wi-Fi.

From the spring of 2016 through summer of 2017, the historic Tacony Library will undergo an extensive, 18-month-long renovation process. as part of the "Building Inspiration: 21st Century Libraries Initiative." While the library building is closed, library services will be available at the LAB.

Joining the library is Mural Arts Philadelphia. Through December 2018, Mural Arts will be activating the LAB with art classes for adults and youth, arts-focused events, and resident artists who will work with the community to create public art in Tacony.

From March-November, 2016, two artists took up residence at the Tacony LAB, leading both formal and informal activities for community members and creating three works of public art on Torresdale Avenue. Mariel Capanna drew on her training in the ancient art of fresco painting to create a mural that tells the personal stories of life in Tacony. Capanna developed her mural through community workshops in storytelling and fresco painting. Multidisciplinary artist Nick Cassway created a parklet in front of the LAB that provides outdoor space for library patrons, as well as for shoppers and passersby. This outdoor “reading room” will also be used for art workshops and small events. In addition, Nick “wrapped” the library’s outdoor bookdrop with a surface design he created using drawings by young library patrons.

---

## **2017 Spring-Summer Residency: The Banner Project**

The Tacony Library and Arts Building (LAB) invites visual artists to apply for a 12-week residency beginning in April, 2017. This residency is a unique opportunity to combine personal practice, community engagement, and the creation of civically-focused public art.

The Tacony Community Development Corporation (CDC) has identified the creation of new street banners for Torresdale Avenue as a key 2017 development goal. The LAB’s 2017 Spring-Summer resident artist will create these banners in collaboration with community members.

The artist selected for the residency will have access to the LAB studio space for both personal practice and project creation; the space will be shared with LAB art classes and workshops.

The artist will receive a total stipend of \$4,000, in addition to full funding for materials and supplies associated with banner creation. The artist will be expected to spend approximately 15 hours per week on-site in the studio and the Tacony neighborhood. Some of this time will be devoted to engaging the community through weekly activities with youth and adults. The artist will develop these activities in collaboration with the LAB Project Manager and the library staff. The artist will also be expected to take part in LAB open houses, relevant community meetings, and similar events.

### ***ELIGIBILITY***

The residency is open to visual artists based in the Philadelphia area who have experience in public art and/or community engagement. Visual artists working in any medium may apply and artists need not have experience in mural-making to be considered. Both established and emerging artists are encouraged to apply. Artists with ties to Northeast Philadelphia are encouraged to apply. Collaborative groups may apply, but please note that we cannot offer additional funding to groups with multiple members. Artists must be citizens of the U.S. or have U.S. work authorization.

**The deadline for applications is Monday, March 6, 2017.**

## ***STUDIO***

The Tacony LAB shared studio is roughly 450 square feet. A raw basement work space of roughly 900 square feet is also available for use. Wi-Fi is provided in the space.

The artist will be asked to work in collaboration with library staff to schedule activities and studio time. The studio is a semi-public space and artists should be prepared to share their personal practice with interested community members and library patrons.

## ***BANNERS***

Pole banners – also known as “Main Street banners” – are a popular way to boost community pride and identity. As part of their efforts to revitalize the Torresdale Avenue Business Corridor, the Tacony CDC identified new pole banners as one of their goals for 2017. MAP is delighted to be able to collaborate with the CDC on this project. The project aims to create a unique and striking artistic intervention, elevating this common marketing and development tool to a new level. Pairs of commercially-fabricated banners with multiple designs will be installed on 20-30 street poles, building visual vibrancy along Torresdale Avenue.

## ***RESIDENCY AWARDS and TERMS***

- Access to free studio space at 6918-20 Torresdale Avenue.
- \$4000 stipend for 12 weeks residency.
- Funding for the Torresdale Avenue banners and associated workshops.
- Support from Mural Arts Philadelphia administrative, marketing and production resources.
- Introduction and orientation to community leaders in Tacony.
- Housing will not be provided.
- Travel costs to/from Tacony will be the responsibility of the artists. The storefront is located a 10 minute walk from the Tacony Regional Rail station.

## ***SELECTION TIMELINE and PROCESS***

- Monday, March 6, 5:00 pm: applications due.
- Week of March 13: applicants will be notified of decisions.
- April 10: residency begins.
- Applicants will be evaluated on the following criteria:
  - The artist’s experience and skill in the creation of unique works of public art
  - The artist’s ability to engage community members in a reciprocal creative process
  - The artist’s grasp of the goals of civic improvement

## ***APPLICATION***

Applications must include the following items to be considered:

1. Cover sheet listing:

- a. Name
  - b. Email address
  - c. Telephone number
  - d. Mailing address
  - e. Website may be submitted as supplemental material, though we cannot guarantee that it will be reviewed by the selection committee.
2. Application Narrative
  3. Work Samples
  4. Work Samples Description List
  4. CV

All application materials - except for work samples - must be submitted as PDFs. See below for work sample formatting instructions.

Materials should be submitted in a single folder titled with your last name and first name. Example: *LastnameFirstname*.

Please submit all materials via Dropbox. Upload the folder to your Dropbox account and then “share” the folder with [tacony@muralarts.org](mailto:tacony@muralarts.org). (For help with sharing files on Dropbox, visit: [www.dropbox.com/en/help/19](http://www.dropbox.com/en/help/19).)

Title all files in the folder with your last name, first name, the type of file, and no extraneous spaces or punctuation. For example: *LastnameFirstnameApp.pdf*, *LastnameFirstnameCV.pdf*, *LastnameFirstnameWorksample01.jpg*.

**Submit your application by 5:00 p.m. EST on Monday, March 6.**

#### Application Narrative (maximum 500 words)

Please provide an artist’s statement that details your experience with and approach to community-engaged art.

In addition, describe your initial ideas regarding the creation of the Torresdale Avenue banners. How would you structure community engagement? What materials and methods would you use?

#### Work Samples

You may submit a minimum of 7 and maximum of 10 images.

Images must be:

- Formatted as .jpgs
- Less than 1MB each in size
- No more than 2000 pixels on the longest side
- A maximum of 300 dpi and a minimum of 72 dpi
- Titled with your last name, your first name, “worksampl,” and a number indicating the viewing order. Use “0” in front of single digit numbers. For example:  
*LastnameFirstnameWorksample01.jpg*

If you would like to submit video or audio files as work samples, please contact Project Manager Maria Möller at [tacony@muralarts.org](mailto:tacony@muralarts.org) with your request.

### Work Sample Description List

Please include title, date, medium, size, location and a brief description (maximum 100 words).

### CV

Maximum of 3 pages, including education, exhibition or project history, and any other relevant professional artistic experience.

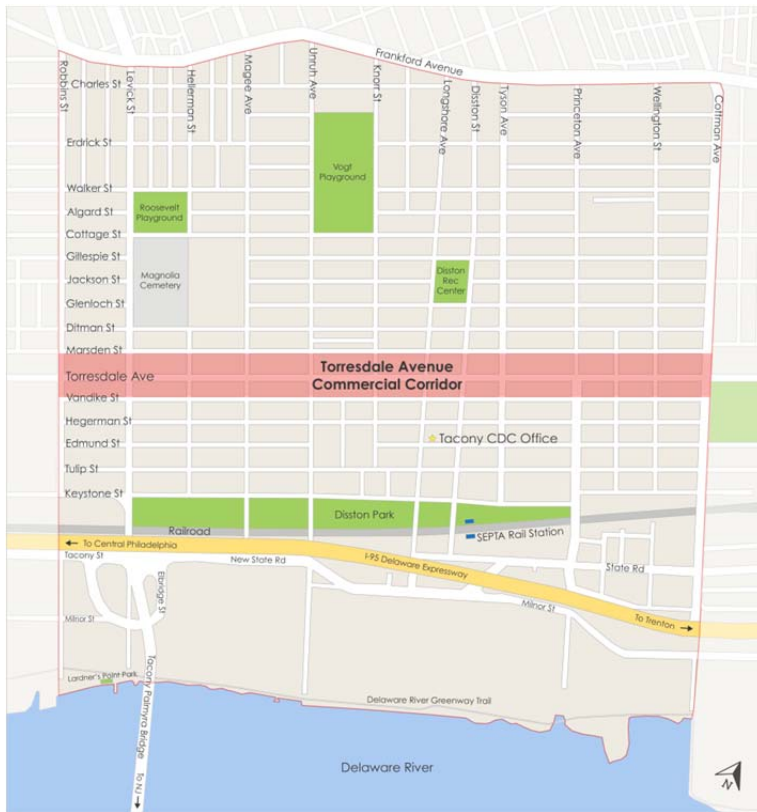
## ***PROGRAM GOALS***

Over the last few years Mural Arts Philadelphia has launched several storefront hubs to maximize its presence in communities where we are involved in major participatory public art projects. With projects such as Southeast by Southeast in South Philadelphia ([muralarts.org/southeast](http://muralarts.org/southeast)) and Neighborhood Time Exchange in West Philadelphia ([neighborhoodtime.exchange](http://neighborhoodtime.exchange)), we have found that having a consistent presence helps to galvanize the community, provide additional services, create a safe and welcoming space, and make an impact on life along a corridor.

In Tacony, we look to the Torresdale Avenue corridor as the point of inspiration and the storefront studio hub as the spark. With civic projects such as the library renovation, the neighborhood is entering a new phase of exploration, evaluation and transformation. We are inspired by the robust blend of challenges and opportunities the neighborhood provides; it is the perfect creative springboard for artists.

With the launch of the Tacony LAB and the production of several public art interventions along Torresdale Avenue, we are engaging the community in the language of place-making. This process infuses Tacony with the presence of artists working on public projects in public space, exploring the cross-fertilization of the visual arts and the library's mission and programs, and demonstrating how working with creative thinkers and artists can amplify community assets while tackling challenges.

## ABOUT THE COMMUNITY



*The Torresdale Avenue Commercial corridor, located between Cottman Avenue to the north and Robbins Street to the south. Map courtesy of the Tacony CDC.*

Located along the Delaware River in Northeast Philadelphia, Tacony is a historic community with roots dating back to 1679. It is perhaps most well known as the location of Disston Estate, a “company town” created by industrialist Henry Disston in 1871 to house workers at the Disston Saw Works. Disston intended Disston Estate to be “a paradise for the working man of moderate means” and to a great degree, he achieved this goal. Well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Tacony was a suburban-style town within the city: a place of steady jobs, public green space, single-family homes, and cohesive community.

Following World War Two, deindustrialization led to a decline in neighborhood conditions. One by one, the factories that drove Tacony’s economy disappeared and businesses closed on the commercial corridor of Torresdale Avenue. However, the built environment of the neighborhood remained largely intact, with many Victorian houses and tree-lined streets, in addition to historic buildings such as the Tacony Library and amenities such as Disston Park.

In recent years, organizations such as the Tacony Community Development Corporation have been working to reverse the effects of decades of disinvestment through initiatives that will have maximum impact in reducing blight and spurring development. Effective vacancy on the Torresdale Avenue Commercial Corridor fell from 30 percent to 10 percent in past 3 years. Improvements such as security cameras, street cleaning and rehabbed storefronts are working in

combination with major projects such as the renovation of the Tacony Library to spur investment and interest.

**For more information, visit:**

History of Tacony: [youtube.com/watch?v=ovjypSpk9UU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ovjypSpk9UU)

History of Torresdale Avenue: [youtube.com/watch?v=3KRUt3LvO6A](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3KRUt3LvO6A)

Historical Society of Tacony: [historictacony.blogspot.com](http://historictacony.blogspot.com)

Northeast Times: [northeasttimes.com/2015/jan/28/-depth-look-tacony-history](http://northeasttimes.com/2015/jan/28/-depth-look-tacony-history)

Preservation Alliance: [preservationalliance.com/explore-philadelphia/philadelphia-neighborhoods/tacony](http://preservationalliance.com/explore-philadelphia/philadelphia-neighborhoods/tacony)

PlanPhilly: [planphilly.com/articles/2010/05/03/look-disston-company-town](http://planphilly.com/articles/2010/05/03/look-disston-company-town)

## ***ABOUT MURAL ARTS PHILADELPHIA***

Mural Arts Philadelphia, founded in 1984, is the largest public art program in the United States. MAP believes that art ignites change. We create art with others to transform places, individuals, communities and institutions. Through this work, we establish new standards of excellence in the practice of public and contemporary art. Our process empowers artists to be change agents, stimulates dialogue about critical issues, and builds bridges of connection and understanding. Our work is created in service of a larger movement that values equity, fairness and progress across all of society. We listen with empathetic ears to understand the aspirations of our partners and participants. And through beautiful collaborative art, we provide people with the inspiration and tools to seize their own future. For most information, visit: [muralarts.org](http://muralarts.org).

## ***ABOUT THE PARTNERS***

### **Councilman Bobby Henon's Office**

Councilman Bobby Henon represents Philadelphia's 6th Council District in Northeast Philadelphia, which includes the proud neighborhoods of Tacony, Mayfair, Holmesburg, Lexington Park, Holme Circle, Ashton, Bridesburg, Wissinoming, Port Richmond, East Torresdale, Castor Gardens, Oxford Circle, Rhawnhurst, Bells Corner, and Frankford. For more information, visit: [bobbyhenon.com](http://bobbyhenon.com).

### **The Tacony Community Development Corporation/ The Historic Tacony Revitalization Project**

The Historic Tacony Revitalization Project is a project sponsored by the Tacony Community Development Corporation (TCDC) to revitalize Torresdale Avenue in the Tacony neighborhood of Philadelphia. The effort is guided by the Main Street approach to commercial district revitalization. For more information, visit: [historictaconyrevitalization.com](http://historictaconyrevitalization.com).

### **The Tacony Branch of the Free Library of Philadelphia**

The Tacony Branch opened in 1906 and is one of the busiest neighborhood libraries in Philadelphia. The branch is part of the transformational *Building Inspiration: 21st Century Libraries Initiative*. For more information, visit: [libwww.freelibrary.org/branches/branch.cfm?loc=TAC](http://libwww.freelibrary.org/branches/branch.cfm?loc=TAC).