Request for Qualifications

Behind the Stage Door
Partnership with Philadelphia Ballet and Mural Arts Philadelphia
October 22, 2021
Deadline: November 17, 2021
Contact information: behindthestagedoor@muralarts.org

1. Introduction

Mural Arts Philadelphia and the Philadelphia Ballet are partnering on a series of artist-designed installations that will be incorporated into the sets for a Ballet that will be performed in various locations throughout the City in Spring 2022.

The theme of the project and the installations will be “invisible processes,” providing a behind the scenes look at Philadelphia Ballet and highlighting employees and perspectives at the ballet that most audience members don’t know about.
Four artists will be selected to create and execute designs for a series of doors that will be part of the stage set for the performance, which will be staged at various locations throughout the city. The doors are being fabricated by others and will be delivered to the artist and then picked up when the artist’s work is completed (a photograph is included in this packet). Further instructions/technical details will be provided to the selected artists.

Artists will be paid $3,400, to include all artist fees, materials and supplies.

Artists who are based in the Philadelphia area and who work in any visual, two-dimensional medium are encouraged to apply.

**Project Schedule:**
- October 15th - RFQ sent out
- November 15th - deadline for submissions
- Early December - selection of artists and notification
- Mid December - additional information provided for each artist’s selected employee
- January - concepts shared
- March 15th - installation complete and picked up by Philadelphia Ballet

Submission Deadline - Wednesday, November 17th at 5 pm. All submissions must be received via email to behindthestagedoor@muralarts.org

### 2. Background

**About the Project**

Behind the Stage Door is an interactive multimedia performance that explores the “invisible” forces (behind the stage door) that bring the ballet to life. Through a soundscape of diverse voices, original musical composition, dance, film, sculpture and interactive multimedia stage design, the piece illuminates the many personalities, stories and experiences that underlie and make possible the transcendent artform that is the ballet. It is being organized by the Philadelphia Ballet in collaboration with Mural Arts Philadelphia. The performances are scheduled for spring, 2022, and will be staged at various locations throughout the city.

Behind the Stage Door will include the following components::
- Original choreography with the goal of employment for women and BIPOC in dance
- Original music for ballet and film
- The four stage-door pieces designed by artists as outlined through this collaboration with Mural Arts
• Educational workshops for the public and panel discussions featuring artists and craftsmen in the community with a goal to highlight artists in our community

About Mural Arts Philadelphia

Mural Arts Philadelphia is the nation’s largest public art program, dedicated to the belief that art ignites change.

For 30 years, Mural Arts has united artists and communities through a collaborative process, rooted in the traditions of mural-making, to create art that transforms public spaces and individual lives. Mural Arts engages communities in nearly 100 public art projects each year and maintains its growing collection through a restoration initiative. Core Mural Arts programs such as Art Education, Restorative Justice, and Porch Light yield unique, project-based learning opportunities for thousands of youth and adults.

In recent years, Mural Arts has evolved into a multi-disciplinary arts organization exploring the intersection of muralism, public art and contemporary art. In addition, Mural Arts has collaborated with an increasing range of community, civic, cultural and development organizations to realize projects that have expanded the city’s public art portfolio in new and exciting ways. Increasingly, Mural Arts has assisted in private organizations in commissioning artworks that engage the communities where they are working.

For more information: https://www.muralarts.org/

3. Scope of Work, Budget and Schedule

Scope of Work

Once selected, each artist will be responsible for creating a design, which will need to be approved in regard to concepts and materials by both MAP and the Philadelphia Ballet before the artist implements the designs.

The designs should be based on the stories of individuals who work behind the scenes at the Ballet. Artists will be provided access to transcripts of interviews, with imagery and with other relevant information about the project to inform their design.

The designs must be created using any materials that are durable enough to withstand the movement of the doors to various locations and use as part of a stage set.

The doors, which have already been constructed, will be delivered to an agreed upon location in Philadelphia (studios, homes, etc). Once the design is approved, the artist will have approximately two months to prepare the door. The artists will be required to provide an opportunity for the MAP/Philadelphia Ballet staff to have a progress visit prior to being picked up for performance.
Additionally, artists will be asked to attend two or three public events in late Spring 2022, where they may speak about their work.

Mural Arts will provide support throughout the RFQ, installation and performances in the spring of 2022. It is our hope that projects like these expand the artists we work with from different 2D mediums in addition to the manner with which we display our work and partnerships.

**Artist Fee and Budget**

The artist will receive $3,400, to include all artist fees, materials and supplies. The amount will be distributed over two payments, one issued upon selection and the other issued upon completion.

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**4. Artist Selection Process**

**Eligibility**

Artists must live or work in the Philadelphia area. Artists may have experience with 2D mediums.

**Selection Process**

Artists will be selected by a committee comprised of Philadelphia Ballet and Mural Arts staff, based on their response to this RFQ.

**Review Criteria**

Artists will be selected based on their body of past work and their expressed interest and approach to the project.

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**5. How to Apply**

**Preliminary Consultation / Information Meeting**

Artists who are interested in submitting their qualifications are encouraged to contact Mural Arts with any questions about the project, its scope or requirements, or how to complete an application. Artists are welcome to submit questions to Lindsey Rosenberg at behindthestagedoor@muralarts.org prior to November 10th.

**Submission Requirements**

*Please compile the submission requirements into ONE PDF for submission.*

- A CV or resume for each artist (up to 2 pages).
- A one-page response that:
- Describes your artistic practice.
- Explains what motivates you / interests you most about the project.
- Describes how you might approach this project, including what medium you would be interested in using.

- 5-10 images of past work relevant to the medium the artist wishes to use for this project.
- A list of images, including the following information (this can be listed separately from image or at the bottom of the page for each project)
  - Image name, Artist’s name
  - Title of artwork, Location, Date of Completion, Budget
  - Medium and Dimensions
  - Brief description

- Two professional references that can speak to your creative talents and your ability to undertake this project. Include name, address, email address and telephone

**Submission Instructions**

Submissions will be accepted electronically by email, DropBox or WeTransfer, sent to the following email address. Mural Arts will reply with an acknowledgement of all submissions it receives. Interested artists must submit their materials by 5 pm November 17, 2021

behindthestagedoor@muralarts.org

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**Miscellaneous**

**Proof of Insurance**

Prior to performing any Works or Services, or entering into a contract with Mural Arts, the selected artist(s)/artist team(s) must show proof of the minimum insurance as indicated below. This insurance must be maintained during the term of this Agreement:

a. Workers’ Compensation Insurance (including without limitation coverage for Artist, its officers, owners, principals, directors, employees, volunteers, guests, and/or agents) if applicable.
b. Employers Liability Insurance, if applicable, with minimum limits of the greater of $100,000 E.L. each accident, $100,000 E. L. disease-each employee, $500,000 E.L. disease-policy limit or as required by the law of the state in which the Project is located.

c. Commercial General Liability Insurance, Insurance Services Office (ISO) form Commercial General (CG) 00 01 (12/07) or equivalent occurrence policy which will provide primary coverage to the additional insureds (Owner) in the event of any occurrence, claim, or suit with limits of the greater of: (1) Artist’s actual coverage amounts or (2) One Million Dollars ($1,000,000) per occurrence and Two Million Dollars ($2,000,000) in the aggregate. Artist’s insurer will add Owner as an additional insured on this policy using ISO endorsement CG 2010 (07/04) or its equivalent.

d. Automobile Liability Insurance (1) having a combined single limit each accident in the amount of Three Hundred Thousand Dollars ($300,000) or in the amount of Artist’s actual coverage, whichever is greater, and (2) coverage applying to “any auto”, including hired and non-owned auto liability.

Artist may satisfy the insurance amounts by an umbrella / excess insurance coverage policy.
Background Information

Sculptural Door Information

Dimensions are: 93.5” x 60”
Door opening: 80” x 36”
Prior to performance, Philadelphia Ballet will build supporting structures and install plates with wheels for mobility.
**Sample Interview Transcript**

**Prop Master**

I am the property master, and basically my job is to take care of like the floor and he hand props the comforts of the dancers, like if they need a heater or ice packs, I take care of the breaks, you know, get like pretzels and stuff.

I have a candy jaw. All the new dancers, when they come in, I try to come up with something you need when you're coming off stage, let me know and I'll be there for you. You know, I make sure they have hard candy, you know, because sometimes you see a little sugar pick me up or you're drying out. I got water there for them. Got some hand lotion for them. You know, in case they start drying out, you know, there's tissues so they're sweating. They can dab it off. And I put buckets right there with trashcans.

There always like a sewing kit on each side of the floor so they can sew their shoes. I got like Roz's schools where I could sit down to tie their shoes. There's towels sitting there like a stomach towel so that their costumes don't touch the ground.

Then I make sure the kids are always filled with like needles, different colored threads. Scissors are big, glue, tape.

**00:01:00**

So just being prepared and organized is the biggest is the biggest part of my job. My dad was the head electrician for a long time.

But then when he wanted to retire, he didn't want to just leave right away. So he became the assistant property master for the Academy of Music, and we worked together for a year and a half. I did. I meant to be electrician, but the prop job was just so much more my style.

I've been going to the ballet since I was a kid. Me, my mom, my grandmother and my sister would go out because my dad was backstage working to turn the lights on and off. And it was fun. We got all dressed up.

We went downtown. We go somewhere to eat. We'd walk around the big city because you always from the suburbs. We got to go backstage and meet the people. Everyone was so friendly. One Nutcracker. I was up there when they were doing snow.

I was maybe like eight or 10 years old, and I couldn't believe how high up in the artist eyes were. And they're just pulling on these ropes and everything, just moving. And everyone knew what rope to pull. It was amazing because it was like maybe like 50 to 100.

**00:02:00**

I don't know how many lines. That's the word. Back then it was just ropes everywhere. And everyone just happened to know which rope the board just the right time. And they sit there and talk for five minutes and then turn around and pull on.

And, you know, as a kid, that was just amazing. Sometimes you just don't know till you see it. Because a lot of the things that I do, it's not like, oh, yeah, I need this and it's just on the shelf somewhere, like I need a nutcracker.
Yeah, they're on the shelf, but they're not like the right size, not the right color. They'll break easy. They're not strong enough. So I buy them, but then I have to cut them down or redesign them to the way they have to look in the way they have to.

And the durability that I need for the show. My first Nutcracker lasted a few years before it got broken in half, and I couldn't fix it because I had literally split right down the middle. I had a back up.

I stuck it in there. It wasn't as good looking as the original, but it was like right near the end. I think it was like two shows that the old Nutcracker went through. So I said, you know what I got, I can't do this.

00:03:00
We have to make the Nutcracker. So I went looking for nutcrackers. And there's no Nutcracker is the right size, the right color, everything I need. So I went and purchased nutcrackers that were like four or five inches too tall and a whole bunch of them.

There was I cut them down the right size, painted them the way they had to be. Then I tossed in with Dal's and some glue. And so now what happens is that the nutcrackers are in a condition where they're fine after dance around.

If you drop it, it probably won't break, but if you drop it hard, it will break when it breaks it down. So all they have to do is stand it down. Draw out the holes. Glue a new piece of wood in there.

And that nutcrackers. Good to go. Although I do have like eight nutcrackers just in case. You have to be able to build things. I have lots of bouquets, tambourines, all kinds of things that I fixed. I get them at flea markets, I fix them up, Rosewall.

I see something on sale somewhere and I'll just get it and just put it in the stock because you never know what they're going to ask you for.

00:04:00
I've had some shows with Queue's Where I Could Dance, she'll be like, oh, I have to have something here and it has to be there.

So I'll make sure that myself or my assistant is there with that prop in their hand to hand it to them directly so that they don't have to. Because if it's like something quick and like sometimes like, you know, they're they're counting in their head that they're trying to keep it a step, keep the music in and out. So if the guys stand there, they come offstage and you put it in their hand and they can run right back on. I know that's a big relief to them. What people might not know about backstage is that it's a beautiful chaos because we've already rehearsed.

OK, we've all everyone knows that they have to do. But, you know, one of different dancers. They had different stagehands. It's a different day. It's live theater. Things can go wrong and yet be ready for it.