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# Durham, North Carolina: A 21st Century Case Study on Gentrification, Artists, and the Creative Economy

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**Abstract**

Artist communities both generate, and coalesce around, sites of cultural significance and aesthetic intrigue. In doing so, artists and artist-run spaces impact the cultural and socioeconomic value of place. The connection between urban transformation and artist communities is not a new concept but, as American cities adapt to post-industrial economies, economic development strategies increasingly leverage artists' cultural capital to regenerate disinvested urban areas. Over the last decade, Durham, North Carolina was ranked as the top creative class metro in the country, exceeded national medians in arts economic impact studies, and scored in the highest percentile for arts vibrancy. Durham's new creative economy has led to a rapid period of real estate development that now threatens to fragment and erase its local arts ecosystem. In spite of its top performance in national metrics, almost half of Durham's independent arts venues have closed or relocated outside of the downtown core. This project investigates the history of Durham's transformation, considers its influences, and measures its impacts on artist communities and artist-run spaces during the time period of Durham's Cultural Master Plan, 2004-2019. Complementing current academic theories and original research with a decade of experience with Durham's artist-run spaces, the author concludes with a series of observations and recommendations for the city's cultural workers and policymakers.

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This project is grounded in a collaborative art practice shaped by the community of artists and activists who make Durham, North Carolina a place I am proud to call home. It is my hope that this contribution adds to the wealth of collective resources we continue to build as we struggle together towards a more equitable future for our city and our field.

## Introduction

"The function of art is to do more than tell it like it is—it's to imagine what is *possible*."

bell hooks[1]

Artists functionalize the discarded, animate the forgotten, politicize the ordinary. It is the artist's work to build, and invite others into, the worlds we imagine.

By bringing visibility to these sites of imagination, artists impact the cultural, social, and economic value of the actual places around them. Urban transformation following the establishment of artist communities is not new. However, a new paradigm has emerged in the approach to urban regeneration in post-industrial American cities. Following a wave of urban planning, public policy, and arts advocacy research focused on the creative economy, municipalities increasingly leverage the economic potential of the arts to attract new residents, business owners, and tourists back into disinvested downtown areas. New development strategies attempt to engineer the urban qualities organically produced by artist communities. Examples include the renovation of industrial spaces for creative use, the production of public creative placemaking projects, the clustering of creative organizations in the formation of arts districts, and the instigation or institutionalization of arts and cultural festivals. These initiatives mark a notable shift in urban planning priorities aimed at attracting specific populations instead of generating more industrial infrastructure. "Creativity is in," and cities are reinventing themselves accordingly.[2]

Urban planner Elizabeth Currid sums up the tactic as "economic development focused on attracting people not smokestacks."[3] The characterization appropriately applies to Durham, North Carolina. A popular branding image for the city is a contrived skyline of Durham's

[1] bell hooks, *Outlaw Culture: Resisting Representations* (New York: Routledge, 1994): 281.
[2] Greg Richards, "Creativity and Tourism: The State of the Art," *Annals of Tourism Research* 38, no. 4 (October 2011): 1225.
[3] Elizabeth Currid, "Bohemia as Subculture; "Bohemia" as Industry," *Journal of Planning Literature* 23, no. 4 (May 2009): 368.

landmark structures in silhouette (see Image 1). The image charts much of the city's history—and its aspirations as well.[4] Durham's identity as a national center of tobacco and textile production is symbolized by the iconic Lucky Strike smokestack and water tower constructed by the American Tobacco Company in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The crown spire of Duke Chapel's bell tower and the Duke Clinical Research Building identifies Duke University, founded in 1924, and suggests the nearby Research Triangle Park, developed in the 1950s. Together with North Carolina Central University and Durham Technical Community College, Durham has earned global status as a hub for medical and technological research and education. The modernist Hill Building originally housed the Durham Bank & Trust Company in the late 1930s. Constructed by the firm responsible for New York City's Empire State Building; its Art Deco architecture and soaring height brought prestige to Durham's downtown business center.[5] The North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company Building represents the city's legacy of entrepreneurship. Founded in 1898 by Black business leaders, North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance is the oldest and largest Black-owned life insurance company in America.[6] Once recognized as the "Capital of the Black Middle Class," downtown Durham was home to more than one hundred Black-owned businesses by the 1940s, an anomaly in the Jim Crow South.[7] University Tower, an office building locally known as the "the pickle," is the tallest structure outside of downtown. Its gleaming green glass facade is a nod to a vision for a new Durham city center in the 1980s that never materialized. This was due, in part, to a significant reinvestment downtown that began in the early 2000s and directly led to the construction of the final façade of

[4] See presentation prepared by Senior Librarian for Durham County Library North Carolina Collection, Lynn Richardson, titled "The Bull City—A Short History of Durham, North Carolina," https://durhamcountylibrary.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/The-Bull-City%E2%80%94A-Short-History-of-Durham.pdf.
[5] See Open Durham for more information about historic Durham buildings, http://www.opendurham.org.
[6] Imari Scarbrough, "The Story of John H. Merrick and the Largest Black Life Insurance Company in the U.S.," *Scalawag*, July 22, 2019, https://www.scalawagmagazine.org/2019/07/black-wall-street.
[7] Leslie Brown and Anne Valk, "Black Durham Behind the Veil: A Case Study," *Magazine of History*, *Bloomington* 18, no. 2 (January 2004): 23.

the Durham brand: the Durham Performing Arts Center (DPAC). DPAC has received recognition as one of the top five theaters in the country since it opened in 2008 and is a prominent symbol of the city's reinvention.[8]

Image 1: An example of the Durham skyline branding. Source: Shutterstock.

Over the last two decades, Durham has experienced a rapid period of growth. The city's population increased by 45% from 2000-2019, with an estimated population of 274,291 in 2019.[9] It is the fourth-fastest-growing city in North Carolina and an additional 160,000 residents are expected by 2045.[10] Centrally located in North Carolina's Research Triangle region, it was

[8] "DPAC Wraps-Up 2019 with Record-Breaking Attendance," Thursday, January 2, 2020, accessed March 9, 2020, https://www.dpacnc.com/news/detail/dpac-ends-2019-with-record-breaking-attendance.
[9] The City of Durham's population increased at a significantly higher growth rate from 2000-2019 than the state and country, 30% and 17.6%, respectively. The population of Durham has increased 19.7% since 2010. Source: U.S. Census Bureau.
[10] Craig Jarvis and David Raynor, "Seven Triangle towns are among the state's fastest-growing, and then there's Garner," *The News & Observer*, May 24, 2018, accessed April 15, 2019, https://www.newsobserver.com/news/local/article211599389.html.

recently ranked fifth in the fastest-growing life sciences clusters in the nation.[11] Durham has also garnered national attention for its culinary scene, music community, civil rights history, and contemporary activist movements. The unprecedented recent surge in real estate development is credited by many to the initial redevelopment of over one-million square feet of industrial architecture at American Tobacco Campus in 2004, which doubled Durham's stock of available downtown office space.[12] Chic loft apartments, corporate offices, and tech startups have moved into former textile mills and tobacco warehouses; gas stations and car dealerships have been converted to cafés and beer gardens; a boutique art hotel has opened in the Hill Building and the North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company is now home to an architecture firm, coworking space, and affiliates of Duke University.

Durham's skyline is beginning to resemble the tightly clustered cityscape depicted in the logo. High-rise luxury condominiums, parking garages, and mixed-use commercial buildings, punctuated by the ever-present construction crane, are steadily closing the gaps between Durham's isolated landmarks.[13]

But for decades before the developers, there were the artists.

As this project will demonstrate, the term "artist" can have various meanings and best practices for the collection of empirical data on the arts and culture sector are widely debated. Economists and social scientists use various approaches to define "artist" that most often include self-identification paired with one or more external factors. These factors range from

[11] Barry Teater, "Report: Research Triangle is one of top 5 life science hubs across US," *WRAL TechWire*, March 11, 2019, accessed April 5, 2019, https://www.wraltechwire.com/2019/03/11/report-research-triangle-is-one-of-top-5-life-science-hubs-across-us.

[12] For a history of the redevelopment of American Tobacco Campus and its impact on downtown reinvestment, see the report prepared for Self Help by Amanda Frazier Wong and Sarah Wolff, "New Markets Tax Credit Impacts: A Case Study in Durham, North Carolina," March 2010, https://www.self-help.org/docs/default-source/PDFs/nmtc-case-study---downtown-durham---march-2010.pdf.

[13] This is such a frequent occurrence in Durham and neighboring cities that Triangle Business Journal started "Crane Watch," a regularly updated webpage that tracks construction projects, https://www.bizjournals.com/triangle/maps/crane-watch.

time spent producing works of art, income generated from sales, educational and professional qualifications held by the artist, and even reputability.[14] However, a recent study found that even the initial step of self-identification is fallible, as many artists are hesitant to claim the title.[15] Similarly, methods for measuring the economic impact of cultural and artistic goods require the integration of multiple valuation methods that consider intrinsic value, provenance, novelty, and performance in the consumer market.[16]

> I adhere to The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) definition of an artist as:
>
> an adult who has expert artistic skills; has received training or education in an artistic discipline or tradition (whether through institutional or community-based pathways); is actively engaged in creating artwork they share with others; and utilizes their artistic skills to derive income, further their creative work, or contribute to their community.[17]

I also follow a consensus-based definition proposed by local artists and arts organizations for the 2017 *Articulating Value in the Arts* symposium in Durham, which defines an artist as:

- One who is committed to an art-practice for which they have already invested considerable time, energy and resources;
- One who is committed to their art-practice being engaged with the world, and can clearly demonstrate ways in which the world has in turn participated in, viewed, heard or otherwise engaged with their art-practice;
- One who is committed in their daily life to the concrete work of connecting the labor of their artistic practice with the basic means and costs of living their lives.[18]

For the purpose of this project, "artists" are writers and authors; musicians and composers; visual artists including craft artists, designers, filmmakers, and photographers; and performing artists including actors, directors, choreographers, and dancers. The "arts ecosystem" refers to

[14] Sari Karttunen, "How to Identify Artists? Defining the Population for 'status-of-the-Artist' Studies," *Poetics* 26, no.1 (September 1998): 1-19.
[15] Jennifer C. Lena and Danielle J. Lindemann, "Who is an Artist? New Data for an Old Question," *Poetics* 43 (April 2014): 70-85.
[16] Roger McCain, "Defining Cultural and Artistic Goods," in *Handbook for Economics of Art and Culture*, eds. Victor A. Ginsburgh and David Throsby (Amsterdam: Elsevier North-Holland, 2006), 147-167.
[17] Center for Cultural Innovation for National Endowment for the Arts, "Creativity Connects: Trends and Conditions affecting U.S. Artists," 2016, accessed April 1, 2018, https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/Creativity-Connects-Final-Report.pdf.
[18] *Articulating Value in the Arts* was organized by Culture Mill, http://culturemill.org.

all businesses and entities that directly contribute to artists' ability to make and share their work with the public. This includes individuals and groups of artists incorporated as businesses, such as artist collectives and dance companies; businesses primarily engaged in supporting artists such as galleries, art supply stores, performance venues, art schools, and grant-making and advocacy organizations; and numerous spaces that play an important, but secondary, role as arts venues such as coffee shops, parks, libraries, and breweries.

Despite a contemporary narrative of Durham as a "ghost town" at the end of the twentieth century, the local arts ecosystem was thriving. Artists found opportunities in Durham's abundant stock of vacant industrial infrastructure and drew populations downtown with public events, festivals, and exhibitions in a multitude of artist-run spaces, private studios, and arts institutions. Artists and local advocates successfully pushed for the renovation of three historic downtown buildings to house the Durham Arts Council (1988), Hayti Heritage Center (1991), and Carolina Theatre (1994). Durham Public Schools invested in arts instruction by local artists. Several film festivals, including the North Carolina Gay and Lesbian Film Festival (1996) and Full Frame Documentary Film Festival (2002), attracted international attention to downtown Durham, as did the American Dance Festival (1978) and the African American Dance Ensemble (1984) for dance audiences. Durham Central Park was home to bronze- and iron-casting studios with nearby facilities for ceramic and sculpture. Jazz, gospel, and chamber music flourished. Longstanding music and theater programs at North Carolina Central University and Duke University gained visibility through new infrastructure and complemented a growing number of independent performance venues downtown.[19]

As Durham was beginning the process of downtown development that characterizes the city today, local reporter Kate Dobbs Ariail captured the spirit of the art scene in 2000 and raised questions about its future. She wrote,

[19] Jean Bradley Anderson, *Durham County: A History of Durham County, North Carolina* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), 443-447.

> Durham city and county are poised to commit many more millions to downtown [...] which will draw thousands of people to its one million square feet of office, commercial and residential space. Once that's done, the boosters of big say, then Durham's downtown will really live again. News flash: Downtown's already alive [...]. Over the past 10 years, [artists] have slowly been repopulating the urban core, finding opportunities in the vacant spaces, building studios and creating community in the places business and industry have left behind. With the return of big money and wider interest in downtown, what will happen to these urban pioneers?

Ariail concluded,

> Industry may have moved away, but industriousness has not. Durham's artists, averse neither to risk nor hard work, have taken up a position in the forefront of the Durham renaissance, from which they are unlikely to be shaken.[20]

Recognized as an asset in its economic development agenda, Durham initially invested in the future of its arts ecosystem. As plans for American Tobacco Campus and DPAC began to form, Durham's City Council and Board of County Commissioners approved the first Durham Cultural Master Plan (DCMP). Through a comprehensive two-year process that engaged a wide sector of the community, the DCMP assessed existing cultural assets and defined a fifteen-year path for their sustainability and growth. Published in 2004, the DCMP began with a vision statement for Durham in 2020:

> Durham County has a vision and plan for sustainability and enhancement of the cultural community. Arts and cultural offerings in Durham are effectively positioned, valued, and relevant in the community—as a creator of destination value, as an enhancement to the downtown and county-wide landscape, and as an expression of the vibrant and diverse cultures of Durham. Arts and culture are a strong economic force in building tourism and business investment in the community, and a force in building quality of education, and quality of individual, community, and family life. Durham has utilized its Cultural Master Plan to enhance its cultural landscape, maximize scarce resources, and provide coordinated vision and collaboration among a variety of cultural, civic, and business partners.
>
> Durham celebrates its rich cultural mix through visual arts, performing arts, literary arts, the history and heritage of this region, the sciences, and the humanities, as well as forms of cultural expression that ground the diverse people who live here. Durham's cultural "ecology" is strong and supports Durham's economic, social, and

[20] Kate Dobbs Ariail, "O Pioneers," *INDY Week*, May 24, 2000, accessed March 7, 2020, https://indyweek.com/culture/art/o-pioneers.

> cultural well-being. With active and committed civic, public, and cultural leadership, Durham's cultural organizations and artists have access to the financial, facility, and human resources they need for stabilization, growth, and service to the community.[21]

While the DCMP laid out clear strategies to achieve this vision, many have not been implemented. Most notably is the Plan's first strategy, ranked with the highest priority, to "establish a high visibility entity that will actively foster collaborations, mentoring relationships, joint initiatives, and, if appropriate, mergers in the cultural sector."[22] The services for individual artists and independent arts organizations that such an entity would provide are still notably absent from Durham's arts ecosystem.

In an answer to Ariail's speculation in 2000, reporter Cliff Bellamy noted the impacts of decades without the infrastructure proposed by the DCMP in a 2017 article. Under the headline, "The arts drove Durham's downtown renaissance. But did artists' success seal their own doom?," he wrote:

> In Durham's now prospering downtown, those being displaced include artists, visual and otherwise, many of whom first moved into the central city before it became a place that attracted diners, theatergoers and music fans. [...] The city made arts and entertainment the catalyst for downtown redevelopment. [...] Artists fear that the gentrification process is driving out the artists who went downtown in the first place and made it a more inviting place.[23]

In a video accompanying the article, the director of Hayti Heritage Center, Angela Lee, said,

> I have seen, over the years, Durham's art scene change tremendously. But I think that, what we are not doing fairly or doing well, is continuing to serve those artists who were very instrumental in the growth we're seeing in downtown Durham today—artists who attracted other people to Durham, who attracted early businesses and entrepreneurs, and led to Durham's vibrancy.

[21] Wolf, Keens & Company, "Durham Cultural Master Plan," August 2004, 3-4, https://durhamnc.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1553/Durham-Cultural-Master-Plan-PDF?bidId=.
[22] Wolf, "DCMP," 23.
[23] Cliff Bellamy, "The arts drove Durham's downtown renaissance. But did artists' success seal their own doom?," *The Herald Sun*, August 14, 2017, accessed February 5, 2020, https://www.heraldsun.com/news/local/counties/durham-county/article167066807.html.

Bellamy recounted the recent closures, relocation, and restructuring of several downtown arts organizations amidst growing community-wide concerns about gentrification. Three exhibition spaces had closed, Alizarin Gallery, 308 West Main, and Bull City Arts Collaborative. Horse & Buggy Press and Friends, a design, letterpress printing, and book production studio, and The Carrack, an artist-run exhibition and performance space co-founded by the author, had relocated to more affordable spaces outside of downtown. Pleiades Gallery, a member-owned, for-profit gallery, had applied for nonprofit status, and Living Arts Collective, a multidisciplinary performing arts space, was in the midst of a crowdfunding campaign—in both cases, in order to alleviate the financial strain of rising rents on organizational operating costs.

By 2019, The Carrack had closed, and Pleiades Gallery vacated its space for a virtual model. Many art spaces featured in Ariail's 2000 article had also shuttered. The artists' studios in the Venable Building and in Liberty Warehouse were displaced by the first wave of Durham's development in the early 2000s. The sculpture studio at Vega Metals and Manbites Dog Theater, both open for more than 20 years, closed in 2018 and 2019, respectively, as high-end condominiums and apartments were built around them. The Durham Arts Council's Clay Studio and The Scrap Exchange had long since relocated outside of downtown, leaving behind the now-coveted industrial architecture of Durham's former tobacco warehouses and textile mills for formerly abandoned strip malls.

Of the handful of survivors in Bellamy and Ariail's bookend surveys, only one independently operated space remains where it started in downtown Durham. Purchased in 1995 for $44,150, the building known as Durham Arts Place had an estimated value of $1,648,766 in 2019.[24] It has provided space for a rotating cast of local artists and arts organizations for decades and remains dedicated to its owner's founding mission of keeping affordable art space downtown. All of the others—including Carolina Theatre, Durham Arts

[24] Durham County Tax Administration Real Property Search, https://property.spatialest.com/nc/durham/#/.

Council, Durham Art Guild, Hayti Heritage Center, and The Armory—are owned or managed in partnership with the City of Durham.[25]

In the final quarter of 2019, twenty-seven independent artists spoke at nine consecutive Durham City Council work sessions. The speakers included writers, a journalist, a photographer, two comedians, several musicians and actors, a dancer, arts administrators, arts educators, a DJ, visual artists, a filmmaker, and a video game developer. As is common amongst artists, most individuals claimed multiple roles. Their collective experience represented a diverse range of identities and the full arc of the profession, from nationally recognized artists to self-taught emerging artists. Three interconnected themes emerged from their personal stories:

1. Artists need access to space,
2. Art spaces in Durham are disappearing,
3. Public funding opportunities for artists are virtually nonexistent.

Their message was clear and urgent: without a bold public intervention, independent local artists cannot afford to live and work in Durham.[26]

Contrary to Ariail's prediction, Durham's artists have been shaken, though not for lack of industriousness or aversion to the risks of hard work. Artists were at the forefront of downtown Durham's transformation. How did it become a city that now threatens their erasure?

This project investigates the history of that trajectory, considers its influences, and measures its impacts on artist communities and artist-run spaces during the time period of Durham's Cultural Master Plan, 2004-2019. I begin with a personal narrative about my experience as the founder of The Carrack. I then consider the implications of urban

[25] "Fiscal Year 2019-2020 Adopted Budget," City of Durham, accessed March 15, 2020, https://durhamnc.gov/DocumentCenter/View/27412/FY20-Final-Budget.
[26] Visit Monica Byrne's blog at https://monicacatherine.com for full transcripts, posted August 23, September 7, September 26, October 21, November 3, November 19, November 22, December 9, and December 30, 2019. Remarks are also part of public record, available through the City of Durham.

development strategies that employ the economic potential of the arts in city planning and arts advocacy initiatives and compare the findings to changes in Durham's arts ecosystem. Finally, I make recommendations to the City of Durham as we enter a new decade with an expired Cultural Master Plan.

This endeavor is in service to the artists who imagine what is possible and continue to bring it into being—a Durham willing to invest in its artist-run spaces, a Durham capable of sustaining its artist communities, a Durham committed to equity in all sectors, a Durham in which I want to live.

**I: Lessons from the Ground: A Short History of The Carrack in Durham (2011-2019)**

I have spent the last decade working with artist communities in Durham, North Carolina. The majority of that time was devoted to opening, managing, and closing The Carrack, an artist-run space that operated from 2011-2019. The Carrack was founded on the idea of countering local, commercial gallery trends through a democratic, community-oriented model. We offered exhibition opportunities with no gallery commission. By prioritizing ideas over resumes and removing application fees, we created an accessible application process that supported emerging and underrepresented artists, especially artists of color, self-taught artists, and queer and trans artists. We encouraged site-specific, experimental, and socially engaged projects. We instituted a peer selection process that sparked collaboration, mentorship, and long-term engagement between artists.

The openness and equity of the project evolved with our mission—and it worked. In The Carrack's eight-year tenure, we exhibited work by over 1000 visual artists in more than 150 solo or group shows and programmed countless community gatherings, performances, and art events. The Carrack opened in a 1200-square-foot loft surrounded by vacant storefronts in the heart of downtown Durham in the summer of 2011. Rent was $600 per month. We closed in the fall of 2019 after three years at our second location, a 1000-square-foot storefront one mile east of downtown. Rent was $1200 per month.

Paddy Johnson, founding editor of contemporary art blog *Art F City*, is compiling a forthcoming book entitled *IMPRACTICAL SPACES*. Her project started in 2016 as a series of zines and e-books under the provocative moniker "We Are SO Not Getting the Security Deposit Back; a Guide to Defunct Artist-Run Spaces." It has since grown into a national archive, network, and resource based on content submitted by arts space proprietors across the country. An introduction to the project in *Art F City* reads:

> Look around the sanitized streets of any contemporary city, and there's a secret, often subversive history at risk of being forgotten. What's now the nanny's room in

> Brownstone Brooklyn might've been a tiny gallery in a riotous punk house. An American Apparel could have once been home to a cooperatively-run storefront space. And undoubtedly, those renovated loft condos once housed artists' exhibition and studio spaces. Our cities are elephant graveyards of generations of artist's aspirations and hard work made temporarily tangible. We ought to remember the artist-run space.[27]

During The Carrack's life span, downtown Durham transformed through a rapid period of real estate redevelopment. New streetscapes and storefronts changed the way we navigate the city. A new skyline shifted our access to sunlight. The pace quickened. Some celebrate the change as a renaissance, while some call it gentrification. Others characterize it as a routine period in any urban life cycle. I interrogate the transformation alongside concurrent changes in Durham's art ecosystem, with particular focus on the "elephant graveyard" of art spaces past. As an introduction to my perspective for the reader, and in the spirit of Johnson's homage to artist-run spaces, I begin with The Carrack.

*Artists Need Space*

There is not much of a commercial art market in the Triangle area of North Carolina. Independent, commission-based galleries are notably absent from the arts ecosystem. More common are exhibition spaces in which operating costs are covered by some combination of public funding or private property owners, by ancillary revenue from services such as framing, or through hybrid collective models in which artists pay rent for studio or exhibition space. Here, opportunities for visual artists are predominantly supplied by nonprofit arts centers through a myriad of arts-related activities. The absence of a competitive art market results in a dependency on the spatial functions that generate revenue, namely youth programming and high-dollar event rentals such as weddings and corporate gatherings. In turn, this limits the content, media, and scale of the works of art that can be exhibited.

[27] "Call for Submissions: We Are SO Not Getting the Security Deposit Back; a Guide to Defunct Artist-Run Spaces," *Art F City*, June 7, 2016, accessed March 1, 2020, http://artfcity.com/2016/06/07/call-for-submissions-we-are-so-not-getting-the-security-deposit-back-a-guide-to-defunct-artist-run-spaces/.

Prior to 2011, I had worked in three types of art spaces in the Triangle: as a curatorial intern at a major museum, as a co-founder of a student-run gallery affiliated with a university, and as the gallery coordinator at a nonprofit community arts center. The museum space provided almost no access to exhibition opportunities for local visual artists. The student-run gallery was temporary by design—located in a vacant downtown storefront, the space was provided rent-free as long as we agreed to leave a “For Rent” sign out front. It was a gamble as to which would lead to its closure first: graduation or a market-rate tenant. (It ended up being a tenant). The community arts center had a long history in the community, a sustainable source of income from its many public programs, a robust staff, and housed two impressive galleries dedicated to exhibitions by local artists. However, it presented many obstacles. Though it was not formally defined as such, I quickly understood that the criteria for exhibitions included several restrictions: no nudity, no overtly political subject matter or content deemed controversial, no multisensory or technologically complex work, and no site-specific or three-dimensional work that might interfere with the double life of the gallery as a multipurpose event space. In addition to this already narrow point of access, artists were required to select, price, write about, and install their artworks; generate all marketing materials and do the bulk of the promotional labor; and give 30% of artwork sales back to the nonprofit. The result was a series of exhibitions of landscapes, portraits, and abstract compositions by a predominantly white, middle-class group of photographers and painters, punctuated by the occasional ceramicist, sculptor, or fiber artist. These three experiences were formative in my early twenties, but left me disheartened.

As a recent art school graduate, I faced a bleak array of options if I wanted to pursue a career as an artist:

1. Move elsewhere (where?) and rise to the level of prestige (how?) required to exhibit my work in a museum.

2. Exhibit my work in a temporary, under-resourced space subject to the whims of volunteer labor and a landlord who, under the guise of (perhaps authentically felt) generosity, would use my work as bait for a market-rate tenant, thereby accelerating the imminent erasure of the space's function as a gallery.
3. Exhibit my work in a nonprofit, multipurpose arts center and accept the inherent restrictions on media, content, installation, promotional support, and sales agreements.

None of these options seemed satisfactory. I wanted to see and create work that generated discomfort, pushed conceptual and disciplinary boundaries, changed perspectives, and challenged the notion of the "white cube" gallery as a white, elite space. I did not want to accept that there was no such place in my community. Through my work inside of those three models, I found that I was not alone in this thinking. Almost every artist I encountered, even those who felt they had access to the above options, expressed the same dissatisfaction and desire. My art practice shifted, from painting and installation work to curating and advocacy, and I set out to build a new model.

*Build It and They Will Come*

What I repeatedly heard from artists was that they needed exhibition space with as few obstacles as possible to make, share, and sell their work. Provide it, and you've made a significant step towards a thriving, resilient art scene.

Local sculptor John Wendelbo was one of the artists with whom I had lamented on the topic. He was tired of the trends endemic to public art that resulted in what he saw as two distinct categories of work: "vanity" works, or sculptures defined by the singular voice of a wealthy patron; or "lowest common denominator" works that become removed beyond recognition from the artist's original vision through the exhaustive bureaucratic processes inherent in publicly funded projects. Wendelbo wanted to democratize the public art process by circumventing institutional support and prioritizing labor and materials provided by local artists.

His agenda for public art had, at its core, a new way of empowering the community to claim its stake in defining the local landscape. Our values aligned and, in early 2011, I began to work with him on the Durham Sculpture Project—a multi-phase project that would place large-scale sculptures, locally originated and fabricated, in public places throughout the city.

Ironically, Wendelbo's work was quickly pegged as a type of vanity project by many in the arts community. He branded the public proposal for the Durham Sculpture Project with a rendering of his own work, a 35-foot-tall steel sculpture of an abstract form titled *Dionysus* with an $800,000 price tag to be placed in downtown's central park. The image was divisive and, paired with Wendelbo's status as a relative newcomer, the fallout was swift. Still determined to bring the Durham Sculpture Project to fruition, and with some funds raised, he attempted to rebuild momentum and test our ideas for a grassroots arts model by opening a space.

Some afternoon in the summer of 2011, Wendelbo summoned me downtown to look at a loft in the building at 111 West Parrish Street. Original tin ceilings, giant windows, wood floors, historic brick, 1200 uninterrupted square feet—it was perfect. A few buckets of white paint, sheets of drywall, and suspended PVC pipes to support a questionable array of clamp lights quickly transformed the former hair salon into an art gallery. For $600 a month and a month-to-month lease signed with a personal name, we had a gallery.

The space was named "The Carrack Modern Art" and included the subheading "A Durham Sculpture Project exhibit space." "The Carrack," for a 14th-century ship known for its agility, a metaphor for ambitious artistic exploration, and "Modern Art" in both celebration of the innovative model and to make a tongue-in-cheek grab at art-world clout. The money raised for the Durham Sculpture Project paid the security deposit and sweat equity fueled the initial renovations. The original goal of The Carrack was to create a new type of art space that could bridge the opportunity gap for local artists while building support for the Durham Sculpture Project. The model was zero-commission, with short exhibitions during which the artist had complete creative control over the space. Originally, there was no business plan or mission

statement or job description. We were two people who wanted to make a thing happen and could afford to give our full attention to doing so. We officially opened as The Carrack Modern Art on June 24, 2011.

The Carrack was initially surrounded by vacant storefronts on a half-forgotten side street. West Parrish Street was so quiet in 2011 that we would loiter at the nearest intersection to flag down the occasional passersby and personally invite them upstairs to the space. Slowly, we began to convert curious pedestrians into regular gallery visitors. The artists, however, came quickly. Durham already had a well-established artist community and The Carrack met a need. Within two months of opening, the demand for exhibitions had increased well beyond the scope of our tenuous month-to-month lease. Six months after opening, we crowdsourced 2012's rent.

Though we were less than a block from City Hall, our late-night concerts, outdoor video projections, bootleg signage, and regular fire code violations drew no attention from authorities. The under-the-radar status increased our credibility with artists and allowed for an organic evolution of our mission and model. But, as I later understood, it was also indicative of a lack of investment in, and lack of resources for, arts venues in Durham.

As The Carrack gained momentum, Wendelbo left the space for other work and his Durham Sculpture Project idea went with him. As the sole director, I worked with the core of volunteers to put some standard systems in place. By 2015, we had a nonprofit fiscal sponsor, an advisory board, a reliable base of individual donors, a team of volunteer staff, a growing regional profile, and 75% more applications for use of the space than we could accommodate each year. The rent had doubled since 2011 but, at $12 per square foot, it was still well below the market rate.

Meanwhile, the quiet downtown blocks around us were changing. Empty storefronts that had recently held local art installations mounted by the Durham Storefront Project were

populated by a bank, a café, a dentist's office, a bike shop, and a brewery.[28] Downstairs from The Carrack, a bakery bustled. A boutique hotel chain that doubled as a contemporary art museum opened down the block. The Carrack's new commercial and retail neighbors were generous and supportive. The bakery provided refreshments for gallery events and their customers came upstairs to visit during daytime hours. The bank on the corner managed our account and the teller frequently popped by to see the exhibits. The art hotel donated its event spaces for our annual fundraiser. The owners of the bike shop across the street signed on to our monthly donor program. The woodshop next door built pedestals and a desk for the gallery. The printer across the plaza walked over with freshly printed flyers every Friday before a reception. The tech company that had taken up residence across the hall shared their cleaning service and opened their lobby to accommodate The Carrack's growing evening crowds. Two Yelp reviews aptly characterize The Carrack's ethos during this time period:

Posted by Lauren R. in 2013:

> This is such an awesome events venue and arts space—right in downtown Durham. And it's free! The Carrack is an art gallery in downtown Durham with rotating shows. The space is small, but they host (mainly local) artists who work in a variety of media. It's definitely worth a visit if you're in the area.
>
> Definitely a hidden gem—and I do mean hidden. It's on the second floor of the building above Loaf, and it's more-or-less unmarked, except a sign is put up when it's open. It's only open on Thursdays and Fridays from noon to 6 and on Saturday afternoons. They also have events some evenings—exhibitions with artists and the likes.

Posted by Rose. L in 2015:

> Not sure if I went at the right time, but honestly, when an establishment is open to the public, they should always have their "game face" on. I visited The Carrack after reading the (two) rave reviews for Durham's Third Friday. This was our last gallery stop of the evening because it's opened the latest of all the galleries that participate (until

[28] The Durham Storefront Project worked with property owners in downtown Durham to fill vacant storefronts with site-specific installations by local artists. As empty storefronts became scarcer, the project expanded into interior spaces and took other event-based forms. For an overview of The Durham Storefront's founding vision, see "Durham Storefront Project - Supporting artists and the community" posted by Beth Yerxa on November 24, 2011 for Triangle Artworks, http://www.triangleartworks.org/2011/11/24/durham-storefront-project-supporting-artists-and-the-community.

> 10:30pm). Located directly next to Loaf, patrons must walk down a hallway, up a flight of stairs and choose between two rooms to enter. The room on the right is smaller and on the night of my visit was trashed. Empty wine bottles, what looked to be a cheese and meat plate demolished and trash accumulating.
>
> The left room was much larger and had a lot more of the art displayed on our visit. They also had a musician entertaining and a live sketch artist (although she was sketching a little girl who looked to be about ten years old around 9:30pm at night in a room full of drunk people). Which brings me to my next point, I'm not sure if it was the free wine/beer that had been offered earlier in the night (only the evidence remained) or if this is the hopping spot to be on Third Friday, but there were more than a few wasted people, and it was early in the evening still. And nothing against all the hipsters that make up Durham, but where did they all come from? I felt like I was walking into a museum and it was the patrons that were on exhibit?! And the art itself was not appealing to me, a lot of sculpture and mixed media to create "statement pieces" displaying everything from what I'd call grunge art to talking private parts, etc. I will definitely give The Carrack another shot, although I will arrive MUCH earlier and leave before things get crazy.

The second review elicited victorious amusement amongst The Carrack's regulars. Rose L. had stumbled upon the final hour of *PANIC!: a week of unrelated arts events*, a mash-up of visual and performing art swiftly mobilized in the (panicked) wake of a last-minute exhibition cancellation. Over the course of five consecutive nights, sometimes with two events back-to-back, The Carrack hosted an experimental music concert, a whispered reading in total darkness, a public peer critique group, a queer tango workshop, a yoga class, a multimedia pop-up exhibition featuring work by artist-activists, and a collaborative improvisational performance with a visiting choreographer from France.[29] The week's success was a testament to the diversity and talent of the Durham arts community, and to The Carrack's place in it. In the following years, we purposefully left a few unscheduled weeks to be programmed only at the last minute.

By 2015, the art scene in Durham had changed as dramatically as the commercial scene. Within a mile of The Carrack, six new dedicated exhibition spaces had opened alongside

[29] The full history of The Carrack's programming can be found at https://thecarrack.org/exhibitsandevents/past/.

performing arts venues and retail spaces that frequently featured local artists.[30] Both publicly sanctioned and guerilla art had begun to appear downtown. Some of the more established art spaces hired new staff and expanded their programming. We all worked together. The galleries took up the coordination of Durham's monthly art walk and cobbled together lists of happenings for distribution. The Carrack's volunteers helped build the mobile walls for the newly opened Pleiades Gallery. Mercury Studio, a creative co-working and studio space, partnered with The Carrack to institute a collaborative monthly art salon. The Director of the Durham Art Guild volunteered to check in guests at The Carrack's annual fundraiser, and I processed sales after The Durham Art Guild's annual art auction. Through This Lens, a photography gallery and framer, donated framing services to incentivize sales at The Carrack's first fundraising auction. The owner of Durham Arts Place lent free legal advice to The Carrack. We formed a resource-sharing coalition and promoted each other's venues on our websites. Many of us were on the staff or boards of more than one organization. We walked down the block to share credit card readers and extension cords and putty knives when there was no time to run an errand before the next event. Street parking was free. We were a community, and it felt like we were thriving.

*Positionality*

It is necessary to pause The Carrack's narrative here and name my positionality in the telling of this "honeymoon" chapter of Durham's art story. I am a white, cisgender, able-bodied woman. In 2015, I was 27 years old and had lived in Durham for five years after earning an art degree. Like my peers, I consistently juggled multiple underpaying art gigs at a time. Unlike my peers, I had a consistent income provided by inherited ownership of a family business that had freed me from art school debt and allowed me to work full-time hours for very little

[30] Exhibitions spaces included 308 West Main, Alizarin Gallery, Pleiades Gallery, SPECTRE Arts, Power Plant Gallery, and Room 100 Gallery. Performance spaces included Arcana, Blue Note Grill, Casbah, Fellowship Hall, Motorco Music Hall, and The Shed, to name a few.

compensation. My financial independence from The Carrack helped enable its anti-commercial financial model.

In 2015, almost all of the leaders of art spaces in downtown Durham were white people. Though The Carrack served a diverse community, there was an imbalance between the racial composition of Durham's population and that of our artists, audiences, and volunteer team. We recognized this as a problem within our organization. Other art venues did, too, and we began to make changes together. Community conversations, events, and exhibitions emerged on the topics of gentrification, fair wages for artists, and racial equity in the field alongside regular gallery programming. The Carrack revised our mission statement and jury process and published a values statement that more explicitly named our commitment to racial equity and inclusivity of all identities.

This was, in part, connected to a rise in visible activism in Durham in the context of a growing national conversation. In 2013, The Movement for Black Lives formed after the acquittal of George Zimmerman in the fatal shooting of Trayvon Martin on February 26, 2012 in Sanford, Florida. In Fall 2013, Derek Deandre Walker, 26, was fatally shot by police in Durham's CCB Plaza, half a block from The Carrack and, on November 19, 2013, Jesus "Chuy" Huerta, 17, died in Durham police custody. Both events drew large crowds to downtown Durham for vigils and demonstrations that increased public awareness about structural racism and police violence. When police officer Darren Wilson was not indicted for the murder of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri in 2014, hundreds of Durham residents marched in protest. These events politicized art venues by making more visible the already existing ties between the artist and activist communities, embodied by central figures involved in both arenas.

*Displaced by Development*

The rising sense of social responsibility in the arts community coincided with a new phase in downtown Durham's real estate development. In 2015, construction began for a

twenty-seven-story luxury condominium on the other side of The Carrack's west wall. Construction dust and noxious fumes filled the gallery more than once. Artwork was rattled from picture hooks. The street was constantly blocked by contractor vehicles. To the developers, this was an insignificant list of routine inconveniences associated with construction. For The Carrack, the disruption had a profound impact on morale. What had felt like a stable business suddenly felt precarious, fragile. The triumphant feat of meeting the previous year's $20,000 fundraising goal felt grossly insufficient against the power of the $88 million project next door. We could not afford to compensate artists whose work had broken, and we did not have the resources to take action. We saw a decrease in attendance because construction machinery and debris often obstructed the sidewalk and our front door. We could no longer uphold the most basic tenet of our mission: to provide a safe, accessible space for artists and guests.

The Carrack began to look for another location and we chose to approach the challenge as an opportunity. Durham's development had also increased a sense of insecurity about regulation: The Carrack's crowds regularly extended beyond the small legal allowance of a second-floor space with a single entrance, and the loophole used by art spaces to serve alcohol felt like it was closing. The narrow stairwell had long been an obstacle to large-scale artworks and our mission of accessibility. And we knew that the rent would continue to rise with an eight-figure development next door.

*New Challenges*

In the summer of 2016, The Carrack moved into a space east of downtown at 947 East Main Street. Nearby was Golden Belt, a large, former textile mill redeveloped in 2008 to house a series of artists' studios and creative businesses, and SPECTRE Arts, an art gallery that had opened in 2013 and was accessible to The Carrack through an enclosed backyard. The spatial orientation was key. When we chose to move to 947 East Main, we initially saw the area as the "arts district" that it had marketed itself to be. We knew the story: downtown development was

pricing out the art spaces, so we were moving to the “next” place. But, while there was an established community of artists on the Golden Belt campus, my understanding of the intended audience of this “arts district” shifted soon after we moved to the area.

Though we were less than a mile from our former home, years of disinvestment in this part of Durham were obvious. Sidewalks and throughways were poorly lit and nonexistent in areas. Crimes that involved gun violence were statistically higher than on neighboring downtown blocks. The “Ambassadors” paid by the City to pick up trash within the Business Improvement District in the core of downtown did not venture that far east. There were no stands stacked with the weekly independent newspaper. With little foot traffic in the area, daytime gallery attendance was even lighter than it had been in the midst of construction on Parrish Street. There was no place to walk for a coffee and limited parking was a deterrent. In turn, it became difficult to retain volunteers and donations from gallery visitors dwindled.

Neighborhood residents who entered The Carrack were cautious during their first visit. There was a palpable discomfort about an unfamiliar set of rules signaled by the brightly lit, white-walled space. But again, our neighbors were generous and supportive. The lack of downtown amenities to which we’d grown accustomed was not indicative of a lack of neighborhood assets. The owner of the convenience store across the street kept a watchful eye when we locked up late at night. A group of men gathered each day on the retaining wall in the vacant lot across the street and greeted staff and volunteers at opening and closing shifts. Brown bags in hand, they became some of our most frequent visitors. The taco truck that parked in the grocery store parking lot at the end of the block became a staple after late installation nights. Latchkey kids would spend summer afternoons drawing in the gallery or outside with chalk. Gospel music and Catholic hymns sung in Spanish would filter through the adjacent wall.

The downtown art community would return to The Carrack on Third Fridays during the monthly art walk. Typically, their route began at Golden Belt and moved through SPECTRE

Arts. Visitors would enter through The Carrack's back door via SPECTRE Arts's backyard. The neighborhood outside of The Carrack's front door included compact rows of modest houses once occupied by mill workers, a convenience store, a storefront church that doubled as a boxing gym, a vacant storefront, a barbershop, a public housing community, and a grocery store. These spaces were predominantly operated and frequented by people of color. Outside of The Carrack's back door was an art gallery, artists' studios, creative businesses, loft apartments, and municipal offices. These spaces were predominantly operated and frequented by white people. A longtime neighborhood resident who lived a block from Golden Belt told me that the campus did not "feel like it was for her." She alluded to a history of broken promises made to the neighborhood during the first chapter of Golden Belt's redevelopment. When I walked the campus with this awareness, I found that the sleekly designed signage was not very informative, visibility into the buildings was obscured by tinted glass windows and doors, and it was unclear which spaces were public and which were private. The lobby staff wore security guard uniforms. If a visitor did not already know they belonged, there were few welcoming indicators.

When we chose to move to 947 East Main, we understood that we were moving into a residential district that had not yet been impacted by the wave of development that had transformed downtown, but we did not yet understand the complexity or challenges that this would present. Local concerns were mounting as Durham's gentrification quickened alongside a national discussion about gentrification and the arts. I became worried that The Carrack's story was repeating the mistakes and reflecting the same conflicts that were being chronicled across the country.[31]

[31] Local conversations about artist-led gentrification increased following the national visibility of the Boyle Heights Alliance Against Artwashing and Displacement, a coalition in Los Angeles that began serving eviction notices to galleries and mounting large protests against art organizations in the Boyle Heights neighborhood in 2016. For an overview, see the *Hyperallergic*'s collection of articles at https://hyperallergic.com/tag/boyle-heights-alliance-against-artwashing-and-displacement.

A group of local arts organizers began to coalesce around these issues, particularly our collective impact on gentrification and its impact on us. The result of a yearlong series of events and conversations was an artist-run conference titled *Articulating Value in the Arts* in 2017, during which I recounted what I had learned during The Carrack's move:

> …We were sad and scared to leave Parrish Street. But fear doesn't attract funders, and privilege has fooled us into believing that an individualistic agenda of self-preservation will protect us. Forgetting again the capitalist narrative that our founding mission set out to subvert, we focused on how to strategically present our move as a positive success story.
>
> We had always intended to find a street-level space that would provide accessibility to all bodies, we did need cheaper rent and free parking so we could better accommodate our visitors, we were glad to get away from the construction on Parrish Street, proud of the fact that we were moving into an artist-and-woman-owned space, and excited about the opportunities that proximity to the arts activity at Golden Belt would provide. We genuinely looked forward to connecting with communities outside of downtown.
>
> Our best move in that transitional process was to negotiate a sublease agreement with Durham Artists Movement [a social-justice oriented, POC-led artist collective] that provided visibility to the urgent work they were doing. But it wasn't the whole truth.
>
> We wanted to look good – strong – to not appear to be a sinking ship – to not alienate potential future sources of funding. In our efforts to appear triumphant against gentrification [a reference to a recent article written about The Carrack's move in which I am quoted saying "This is not a story of how gentrification is destroying the Durham art scene. It's an exciting story of how we've outgrown where we started."] we again failed to place ourselves within the historical context of our place and time, and we failed to align ourselves with the struggle of displacement that is happening all around us in the city – a struggle that has dire and immediate impacts on the most vulnerable members of Durham's community.
>
> By not talking about it, and in fact explicitly denying a connection to gentrification, we erased the voices of a population for whom we could have used that platform to advocate.[32]
>
> In the summer of 2016, I led a parade of over 100 people from 111 West Parrish Street to 947 East Main Street. The press was there. I carried red balloons. There was a marching band. It was a celebration of our next chapter.
>
> It was on that day that I, in this privileged body, stepped over the literal and metaphorical tracks at the intersection of Fayetteville and Main Street, and began to

[32] Brian Howe, "The Carrack Modern Art is Moving, Redrawing the Downtown Art Scene's Borders," June 1, 2016, *INDY Week*, accessed March 8, 2020, https://indyweek.com/culture/art/carrack-modern-art-moving-redrawing-downtown-art-scene-s-borders.

comprehend the reality of what we were doing. We were not moving into the "Golden Belt Arts District," we were moving into a community of predominantly poor and working-class people of color with whom I had formed no relationships, who looked at our spectacle with curiosity and confusion and, I later learned, fear.

With my heart in my throat, I plastered on the same smile that I'd hoped no one would poke through in my *INDY Week* interview and hosted a party to celebrate our "first day in our new home."

Soon after, I asked an older Black resident in the neighborhood why she had not joined us for the party that day. "There was a sign on the door! And balloons! It's for everyone, it's The Carrack!" I said in my most enthusiastic and welcoming voice. Didn't she read it on the cover of the local newspaper? Didn't she see the Facebook event? She sighed and, generously, took the time to explain to me that there was no reason she'd imagine she was invited. Where was the flyer? Didn't I know they'd been through this before? And what is a "carrack?"

It has been a hard year. The first several months felt like an overwhelming ping-pong game—running from one end to the other to appease conflicting interests, now so obviously segregated by class and race, converging at the site of the new Carrack. It took a while to realize that pleasing everyone was not my job, and that the stakes are not equal. There is violence in prioritizing the comfort of some at the expense of others. Slowly, I was reminded of what I do know and am slowly learning: how to listen, how to apologize, how to own responsibilities that surface after apologizing, and how to show up again.

I can recognize the racism and classism embedded in comments from white visitors to The Carrack about "how great it is that downtown is moving East." When a white developer who 'wants to connect with the arts community' enters The Carrack with a map to a neighborhood to which we barely belong and asks me which properties to acquire for the 'new arts district,' I can shut it down and then share this information with the long-term tenants and community leaders who are organizing against gentrification on our block. When the leasing agent at the new apartment building asks me to curate a local arts program in their lobby and then explains that she doesn't really mean "all" artists, you know, no "Black Lives Matter" stuff, I can speak clearly about who we are, who our artists are, and our organization's position in alignment with the Movement for Black Lives.

Which brings me to the topic of gentrification.

Is The Carrack to blame for development downtown, and its own displacement from Parrish Street? Are we now the harbingers of gentrification on East Main Street? Are we responsible?

Gentrification in Durham is in full effect. I don't believe there is a simple answer, but I do believe that the circular intellectualization of the problem leaves us in a hole, feeling defeated and despairing over a system that appears to feed us but really divides us.

In 2016, Hyperallergic published *An Artist's Guide to Not Being Complicit with Gentrification*. Activists Heather M O'Brien, Christina Sanchez Juarez, and Betty Marin wrote, "Art becomes alienating when entities and individuals refuse to acknowledge their

> personal and structural impacts that contribute to gentrification."[33] The piece was aimed at artists, but I want to speak to the white-led arts entities present here.
>
> I share The Carrack's story with you because the fear of incrimination, and fear of not having the answer, is often what prevents us from clearly speaking out. We, the arts organizations and projects who have regular access to space, are the outfacing entities that represent the network of people who comprise our arts community and we have a deep social responsibility to stand firmly in solidarity with the historically disenfranchised communities for whom our presence can signal a threat. We are the sites for public engagement with the arts in Durham, we must recognize the implications and potential of our power and get organized.

I remember feeling an uncomfortable mixture of pride and shame as I delivered that speech. Pride, because I had been afraid to speak up about The Carrack's role in Durham's gentrification, but I did it anyway and in the accountable presence of my peers. Shame, because I had not done it sooner and because, looking out at the conference's mostly white attendees, I was again reminded of the inequities in the arts community to which I belonged. Discomfort, because I did not know what "getting organized" really meant, or what impact that would have on the future of the arts in Durham. It was much easier to stand up and say the hard thing once The Carrack was already settled on the other side of the move. I wondered if we would have done it differently, or been publicly called to do so, if I had spoken out sooner.

In contrast to a decrease in daytime visitors due to our removal from the downtown urban ecology, the demand from artists for The Carrack did not decrease with the move. We consistently received twice the number of applications we could accommodate in a year, and the quality of exhibitions was steadily improving. We hosted an average of four evening events per week—sometimes as many as six. But our available resources did not increase in step with the need. The number of consistent donors was no longer enough to fully financially support us, and we struggled to expand that pool. As Durham art spaces gained categorical visibility, increased regulation and higher property values called for more organizational infrastructure.

[33] Heather M. O'Brien, Christina Sanchez Juarez, Betty Marin, "An Artists' Guide to Not Being Complicit with Gentrification," *Hyperallergic*, June 19, 2017, accessed March 15, 2020, https://hyperallergic.com/385176/an-artists-guide-to-not-being-complicit-with-gentrification.

Pressures to institutionalize inhibited The Carrack's ability to continue our participation in the grassroots infrastructure we had created with other arts venues in earlier years. As we became a more established arts organization, more administrative time and expertise was required of our staff. We were growing up as individuals, too. Our stable of volunteers was aging out of the ability to work hours at The Carrack due to the increased responsibility that naturally occurs in the transition from "recent college graduate" to "young professional."

The Carrack needed a different kind of financial support. In the beginning, we had willfully resisted reliance on the limited pools of local public funding for the arts. Instead of further dividing resources and thereby pitting ourselves against worthy neighboring arts organizations, we sought to generate new revenues by catalyzing individual stakeholders in the Durham community. We were wary of the "nonprofit industrial complex" of arts councils and foundations, and the type of organizational institutionalization and financial infrastructure that we feared it would require. Conventional project grants can often cost more of the organization than the amount of the grant award, and typically require a minimum organizational annual budget well above The Carrack's small numbers. Members of our staff, volunteer teams, and advisory board had all witnessed "mission drift" and internal adversity between the staff and boards of other, more established, 501c3 arts organizations. We did not want to lose our agility and freedom.

Also, by 2017, I personally and professionally needed a change. I had spent the majority of my twenties in a deeply codependent relationship with The Carrack. I was consistently working well more than forty hours per week and never made more than $8,000 per year. I could not turn off my cell phone because I was the primary contact for The Carrack's alarm system. If a volunteer could not show up for their shift, I had the responsibility to fill in. I no longer had time to stay up all night with an artist to install a show or muse about the contemporary art world or dream up the next project. This wasn't for a lack of energy or passion

for the mission, but because all of my waking hours were being spent on administrative tasks and fundraising to sustain the space. I was no longer finding joy in the work. I was burnt out.

With the Advisory Board, we began to explore a new chapter for The Carrack that might exist independently from my involvement. At the same time, a new community code of ethics was emerging in the field. Working Artists and the Greater Economy (W.A.G.E.), a New York-based organization founded in 2008 to advocate for fair pay for artists' labor, had reached the Triangle artists' community. Another movement started in New York in 2012, Fight for $15, gained visibility through the work of Durham activists. Again, there was a significant overlap between the community we served and the individuals working within those movements. Ethically, we fully supported the need for more equitable pay in the arts and across all sectors, but this introduced a new complication for The Carrack's future. In aligning with a citywide and nationwide movement for a living wage, The Carrack was faced with a deep moral dilemma that set our foundational commitment to artists against our own existence. The "DIY" spirit of our model, and my ability to work for little compensation, had created an inherent dependence on unpaid labor.

We decided to restructure in response to that dependence. In 2017, The Carrack initiated a new type of fundraising campaign that transparently laid out our struggle for sustainability and highlighted the need for equitable staff pay. We raised enough additional funding to commit to a $15/hour rate for The Carrack's two consistent staff positions: Executive Director and Operations Director. We were confident that we could formalize the roles of additional volunteer committees to allow a reduction in weekly hours for each position, to 25 hours and 10 hours, respectively. Recognizing the risks in a new model and new leadership, we also decided to become a 501c3 organization so that we could qualify for public funding.

On April 17, 2018, after months of careful planning with the Advisory Board, I announced my intention to resign. We simultaneously released a call for applicants for the Executive Director position. The Advisory Board was overwhelmed by the number of qualified candidates

who applied for the job. Our visibility within, and commitment to, a close-knit community of artists meant that the hiring process was thoughtful, slow, and labor-intensive. One candidate rose to the top—an artist-activist who had exhibited with us many times; had previously served as a volunteer, juror, and Advisory Board member; and had led the Durham Artists Movement, an organization that had taken over our lease at 111 West Parrish Street for the second half of 2016 after The Carrack moved to 947 East Main Street. Saba Taj became The Carrack's new Executive Director on June 15, 2018.

Taj's appointment was celebrated widely by The Carrack's community. She was already established as a respected leader and was beginning to receive national acclaim for her art and activism. She, and The Carrack's longtime Operations Director, Kerry Crocker, streamlined many of The Carrack's systems in the first months of Taj's tenure. They introduced a new fundraising event, the Sticky Note Show, that was immediately beloved by artists and successfully generated much-needed revenue. The Carrack became more efficient, equitable, and socially engaged. The exhibitions and programming continued to rise in quality and notoriety. I stepped into a position on the newly formed Board of Directors for The Carrack's iteration as a 501c3 organization. Taj and I worked closely together, and with other members of the Boards, to institute the supportive structures that had been promised in the job description. But, six months after Taj was hired, it was clear that The Carrack could not uphold its commitment to its staff. Taj and Crocker were both consistently working well beyond their paid hours and all possible solutions for more funding simply required more unpaid labor. There were few prospects for public funding, in spite of our new 501c3 status. The grants for which we qualified were almost entirely focused on programming, not overhead or operational expenses, and because our annual budget was still less than $80,000, we only cumulatively qualified for about $10,000 per year. At the beginning of 2019, Taj, Crocker, and I began to have the heart-wrenching conversation about The Carrack's viability.

*Sunset*

Around this time, a friend and fellow member of The Carrack's team shared this quoted text with me from the introduction of *Artist-Run Europe: Practice / Projects / Spaces*:

> If an artist-run space is to sustain itself, more often than not the voluntary roles that brought it into being need to be phased out, as voluntary labour in the long term is unsustainable in most models. If voluntary labor is removed, funding or other revenue streams are required to replace it, and to a large degree, if funding is applied, a new level of bureaucracy and standardisation of organisational structure is generally insisted upon. Therein lies the catch-22 of duration and the artist-run. In most cases, for an artist-run space to be sustainable, it needs to homogenise its structure and appoint a director, curator, administrator, and technical staff, artists may retain some oversight or advisory role, or may be jettisoned entirely. To succeed in the duration stakes, artist-run spaces often have to cease to exist as artist-run.[34]

I better understood why exhibition opportunities were so limited for local artists. Through decades of contortion in the name of survival, enduring artist-run spaces like The Carrack often matured into conventional nonprofit arts organizations, becoming shadows of their founding mission—erasing themselves. In reckoning with this realization, I felt the same disheartened feeling that I had experienced nine years prior, as a recent art school graduate. Except, this time, I no longer believed that the key to a thriving, resilient art scene was as simple as providing access to space. Or rather, I no longer believed that providing access to space was simple. I still believed that they would come if we built it, but I no longer believed we could build it alone. There was no such thing as a $600-per-month, 1200-square-foot space waiting to become a gallery in downtown Durham anymore.

The realization was devastating, for all of us. We were faced with a decision: stay open, continue providing a vital community asset, do what we loved, but accept that we would knowingly do so in opposition to our values and at the expense of our staff; or close, take a well-

[34] Gavin Murphy and Mark Cullen, eds., *Artist-Run Europe: Practice/Projects/Spaces* (Eindhoven: Onomatopee, 2016), 11.

articulated stand for those values, and attempt to use the opportunity to increase awareness about the issues that face artist-run spaces, particularly in the face of gentrification.

By 2019, The Carrack was recognized as an established leader in the local arts community. Thanks to the brave activism of the artists who had found a home in our organization over the years, we were also recognized as a leader in social justice circles. We had worked hard to earn that reputation and took the responsibility seriously. After months of passionate and tearful meetings, The Carrack's Board, Advisors, and staff came to full consensus and made the decision to close. We made the announcement on June 25, 2019, almost exactly a year after I resigned, with the following statement:

> Dear Friends of The Carrack,
>
> After over eight years of exhibits, events, and community programming, The Carrack's staff, Board of Directors, and Advisory Board have made the difficult decision to close the gallery at the end of September 2019. With our fundraising to date, The Carrack has been unable to generate enough revenue to continue supporting its operations. While we are deeply saddened to bring this project to its endpoint, we are proud of what The Carrack has collaboratively built with our community.
>
> The Carrack has been a beacon for the Triangle arts community from its Parrish Street beginnings. Our mission has been centered absolutely around artists—supporting their vision, their process, and their work especially when it challenged the restrictive norms of the art world. We chose not to take fees or commissions from our artists and eschewed the typical art auction fundraising model. Instead, we turned to the generosity of the arts community to sustain us through widespread, small donations and volunteered time and expertise.
>
> The Carrack started by signing a month-to-month lease on a space and seeing if we could scrounge up the next month's rent in donations in a plexiglass box by the door—a wonderful, wild concept for an art space. This model also meant existing on a shoestring budget in order to remain devoted to our mission. Our first lighting system was PVC pipes and clip lamps. Volunteer staff brought toilet paper from their closets at home for the gallery restroom. Our furniture was curb finds. But it had great energy, produced great work, and attracted great people, so we carried on.
>
> Durham and The Carrack have changed, however, as has our awareness of the inequities in the field of nonprofit arts organizations. Many interacting factors led us to our decision to close, including rising organizational costs, pressures to institutionalize, our relocation away from downtown, and recognizing the dire necessity to pay our staff fair, living wages.
>
> In 2017, co-founder and director Laura Ritchie prepared to transition out of her position, after seven years of full-time work with little to no compensation. The possibility of new leadership challenged us to face the financial constraints created by our previous

dependency on a director who could work unpaid. We strove to create an appropriate support structure for incoming staff and welcomed the leadership of current director, Saba Taj. Over the past year, we have continued to pursue possible solutions to an essential problem at The Carrack's core—we have never been able to adequately pay staff for their labor.

A few months ago, we learned that Saba Taj and longtime Carrack staff member, Kerry Crocker, would be resigning to pursue new opportunities. These vacancies pushed us to take another critical look at our model. We questioned how to fulfill the positions and remain accountable to our core mission—to honor the dignity of labor in the arts. The ethical and material consequences of inadequate staff pay have come into sharp focus this last year, and we have chosen to break this cycle of inequity by speaking honestly about these issues, and by not bringing new staff into these circumstances. This decision was made carefully, and not without struggle, in collaboration with all members of our staff and Board teams.

We celebrate the many artists and wealth of programming we have had the pleasure of hosting over these years, and the abundance of the Durham arts community in this vibrant, complex city. Thank you to all who transformed The Carrack with your creations, your volunteering, your donations, and your patronage. Without you, we were just an empty room. With you, everything felt possible—and was, for a while.

Our second Sticky Note Show Fundraiser will happen as scheduled this week. Opening night is Thursday, June 27th from 6–9pm.The funds raised will help us meet our closing costs. Under North Carolina law, and in alignment with our mission, any remaining assets will be redistributed to other nonprofit, artist-centered efforts. We will continue to host exhibitions as scheduled through August and are working with partner organizations in Durham's art community to place remaining shows in new venues. Our much-anticipated Fashion Week will happen as planned September 13–15. Our very last exhibit will be a Community Show organized by members of The Carrack's founding team, on display August 30–September 20. All artists are invited to bring their work.

Thank you—so much—for participating in this terrific project called The Carrack for all these years. While the story of The Carrack includes many triumphs, it also highlights the difficulties that are widely felt in arts communities. Art brings brilliance to our lives. We need art, and artists need our support. We hope you will join us at The Carrack in the coming months to celebrate this project, its supporters, and its artists. Together, we will dream for the future. This work never ends, it only changes form.

Sincerely yours,
Kerry Crocker, Jameela Dallis, Marla Hawkins, Jessica Kemp, Jim Lee, Annick Le Goff, Laura Ritchie, Wendy Collin Sorin, Saba Taj, Chris Vitiello, Tim Walter, Carin Walsh

We received an outpouring of support that took the form of grief, gratitude, remorse from those who wished they had done more, and anger at the factors that caused us to close. The Carrack's final months were scheduled like an extended version of *PANIC!*. The fatigue

dissipated and was replaced by the type of fervor found only on the home stretch. Programming included a week of fashion-related events, a participatory dance performance, a community potluck, and a panel discussion with local arts leaders about the necessity, and precarity, of counter-institutions in the Durham community.[35] These were integrated with programs consistently hosted by The Carrack, including an anti-racism workshop called Dirty White Matter, donation-based figure drawing and yoga classes, and a free public critique group.

Exhibitions continued at The Carrack as planned through August 2019. We worked with other arts organizations to find homes for the artists selected for exhibitions through the end of the year. Our last exhibition was a Carrack Community Show. A quarterly tradition instituted in our first year on Parrish Street, we invited any artist to bring one work of art to be displayed in the gallery. There was no application or selection process and works could be sold at the artist's discretion under The Carrack's normal zero-commission agreement. Artists were required to simply fill out a form and bring the work during designated hours to be guaranteed a place in the show. Each Carrack Community Show consistently featured work by more than 150 individual artists. The range of representation mirrored a compressed version of our diverse exhibition program: self-taught or emerging artists, internationally recognized artists, many of whom worked in the art departments of the Triangle's many universities, and recent graduates from BFA and MFA programs displayed alongside work by novices, hobbyists, and youth. Over the years, Community Shows had provided many artists with their first exhibition experience and had become a beloved part of the local arts scene. Of The Carrack's final Community Show, the local newspaper wrote:

> The Carrack Modern Art's annual community show is usually one of the most joyful times of the year in the Durham visual-art scene. But this year, it's bittersweet, as it's the final exhibit at the eight-year-old downtown-art lightning rod before it closes amid

[35] "Alternate Visions and Counter-Institutions" was a panel curated by Sinan Goknur, Quran Karriem, Laura Ritchie, and Max Symuleski at The Carrack on September 14, 2019 as part of "Emergent Futures: State of the Field," a collaborative event series organized with Open Engagement. For more information: http://openengagement.info/emergent-futures.

> financial struggles in a city of skyrocketing expenses. The Carrack, always a welcoming home for local artists of all stripes and accomplishment levels, never feels more like a living room for Durham than during the community shows, which feature contributions from as many local artists as possible. Imagine the walls of the gallery all but completely covered by works that speak to our city as it sees itself. Imagine each of those many artists, from diverse social worlds, bringing their friends and family to congregate, particularly at the opening reception on September 6 and the closing reception on September 20. Then, imagine all that gone—but not yet. Now is a time to celebrate The Carrack's ineradicable contribution to Durham before we all try to figure out what comes next.[36]

On September 21, 2019, The Carrack officially closed to the public after an evening of multidisciplinary performances under the title *PROMPTS: release me.* We thanked our donors and volunteers, hugged artists, and dug into the final concluding steps. It took only two weeks to redistribute eight years' worth of coveted physical resources. Artists and staff at other arts organizations picked up half-empty cans of paint, easels, pedestals, ladders, and lights. We deinstalled the custom metal sign with the old version of The Carrack's "C" logo, a relic transported from Parrish Street. We sanded down the thousands of pockmarks and painted the walls one last time. It ended the way it began, with a group of artists in an empty space.

Through my experience at The Carrack, I learned that artist communities and artist-run organizations need affordable space, sustainable infrastructure, political power, and access to funding that does not come at the expense of organizational autonomy. In the following sections, I contextualize The Carrack within the broader arts ecosystem and consider external factors that impacted The Carrack's trajectory. I continue the thread of Johnson's elephant graveyard, looking at other lost spaces in Durham that preceded or closed alongside The Carrack, and analyze the urban planning, policy, and arts advocacy initiatives that characterized the city's development. Finally, I make recommendations that can inform Durham's next chapter, as it considers the renewal of its cultural master plan.

[36] "The Carrack's Final Community Show," *INDY Week*, https://indyweek.com/events/carracks-final-community-show/.

## II: Fuzzy Concepts, Imperfect Data, and Informational Asymmetry in the Study of Creative Economies

I began my graduate work at Duke University in 2016, the year The Carrack moved, with many questions: How do artist-run spaces and artist communities contribute to urban economic development? How are they impacted? Can the arts serve as a bridge between urban stakeholders with seemingly incompatible agendas? Are the arts disappearing in Durham, or is this a false perception? What are the ethical responsibilities of artist-run spaces in gentrifying areas?

Seeking answers, I joined a Duke University project called *Bass Connections: Creative Industries and the Urban Environment*. The project was prompted by Richard Florida's 2010 designation of Durham as the top creative class metro in the country in the revised edition of his influential book, *The Rise of the Creative Class*.[37] Under the leadership of art markets scholar Hans Van Miegroet, the Bass Connections team took an interdisciplinary approach and combined the fields of the humanities, social sciences, law, and economics, to analyze Durham's creative economy.[38]

As Durham has grown, an ideological disparity has become more visible between those actively engaged in driving economic growth, such as private developers, urban planners, and commercial entrepreneurs, and those engaged in the cultivation of sociocultural community initiatives, such as artists, activists, and community organizers.[39] In short, those with "high economic capital and low cultural capital" versus those with "high cultural capital and low

[37] Richard Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class: Revisited* (New York: Basic Books, 2012).
[38] I am grateful to my collaborators in *Bass Connections: Creative Industries and the Urban Environment* for their contribution to the research that informs this project.
[39] The populations described here are not monolithic, in Durham or elsewhere. There are urban planners engaged in social justice activism and there are artists fully committed to a commercial art practice; there are entrepreneurs working to create affordable housing and arts organizers unapologetically leveraging their platform to encourage and benefit from urban economic growth. An objective of this project is to bridge the gap between the populations at the extreme ends of this generalization. I group them as such to introduce the reader to the overarching threads of the local debate.

economic capital."[40] The two agendas are not unequivocally opposed—indeed mutual benefits have occurred at certain intersections—but the fast pace of Durham's downtown transformation has heightened their contradictions. The former group values Durham's arts and cultural resources, the "arts ecosystem," as an asset in the city's economic development and generally takes the stance of "a rising tide lifts all boats"—economic prosperity will increase consumerism in all sectors of the business community. This perspective falsely designates the arts ecosystem as a subcategory of the retail or entertainment industry. While arts organizations and freelance artists are businesses that provide entertainment and sell consumer goods, the arts ecosystem has a unique set of needs and characteristics that cannot be solely quantified by traditional economic metrics. Exhibition and performance opportunities for artists in Durham are primarily provided by nonprofit arts organizations and artist-led initiatives and therefore depend heavily on subsidies, in the form of public grants, reduced rent, and private donations, in addition to artwork or ticket sales.

The latter group prioritizes qualitative variables such as artistic merit, experiential community impacts, and the political potential of the arts to address inequities inherent to, and perpetuated by, free-market capitalism. From that perspective, the "rising tide" in Durham only benefits a privileged few and generates detrimental effects for marginalized populations in the process. The resulting antagonism between artistic producers and commercial proponents of the city's increasing property values is due, in part, to fuzzy concepts, imperfect data, and informational asymmetry in contemporary understandings of the creative economy.[41] Borrowed from cultural economist Ann Markusen, the term "fuzzy concept" refers to one that "posits an

[40] David Ley, "Artists, Aestheticisation and the Field of Gentrification," *Urban Studies* 40, no. 12 (November 2003): 2530-2531.
[41] Ley, "Artists," 2531.

entity, phenomenon or process which possesses two or more alternative meanings and thus cannot be reliably identified or applied by readers or scholars."[42]

In the following section, I demonstrate the methodological limitations of arts-focused economic research that relies on isolated sets of occupational and industry data. I argue that an aggregate understanding of artists, the creative class, creative industries, and the arts ecosystem ignores key points of divergence between the groups. Such oversight threatens to endanger and erase the distinctive social, cultural, and economic contributions of artists and adversely affect the arts ecosystem when employed in urban planning and arts advocacy initiatives. Instead, I propose a context-specific approach that combines elements of prior creative economy studies with new primary research that accounts for the unique network characteristics of the arts ecosystem at the local level.

*Creative City Making and the Creative Class*

The link between the creative economy and urban planning can be found in the overlapping concepts of the "creative city" and the "creative class." Charles Landry coined the term "creative city" in the 1980s with a new approach to urban planning that aimed to increase cities' ability to attract and retain talented people by cultivating the urban assets that made cities desirable places in which to live. Landry encourages investment in that which creates a city's distinct cultural identity and underscores the importance of urban design that facilitates the organic transfer of knowledge between people. He identifies "soft infrastructure" such as public parks, cafes, and cultural sites, as uniquely valuable to the "creative milieu" in which creative thinking and interaction occur.[43] With the first publication of *The Rise of The Creative Class* in 2002, Richard Florida popularized the creative city concept and extended Landry's recognition

[42] Ann Markusen, "Fuzzy Concepts, Scanty Evidence, Policy Distance: The Case for Rigour and Policy Relevance in Critical Regional Studies," *Regional Studies* 33, no. 9 (1999): 870.
[43] Charles Landry, *The Creative City: A Toolkit for Urban Innovators, Second Edition* (Sterling, VA: Earthscan, 2008),133.

of people as primary assets. Florida defined the "creative class" as a distinct demographic group composed of the information and knowledge-generating workforces that drive the new creative economy. Both Landry and Florida ascribe to what Landry names the "changing planning paradigm" in contemporary urban development strategies, from "urban engineering" to "creative-city-making."[44]

The creative class comprises nine occupational groups as defined by Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) codes. Florida sorts these into two sets: the "super creative core," which includes architects, librarians, scientists, mathematicians, designers, and artists; and "creative professionals," including legal, business, and healthcare professionals. The rest of the employed population is organized into the service, working, and agricultural classes. For Florida, the key to attracting the creative class, as well as the economic benefits of an increased creative class presence, are represented by what he calls the "3 T's:" talent, technology, and tolerance. Florida's use of creative class occupations as a proxy for talent marks a departure from the well-established human capital theory in which educational data, over occupational data, is used as an indicator of a highly skilled labor force.[45] Florida builds on human capital theory and argues that a high concentration of human capital is dependent upon "flow"–the ease with which highly skilled and educated people can mobilize resources for innovation and entrepreneurship. Flow is dependent on qualitative place-based characteristics such as diversity and openness (tolerance)–most likely to occur in sites described by Landry as soft

[44] Landry, *The Creative City*, xxii.

[45] The distinction between creative class theory and human capital theory has been widely debated. Florida's critics claim that creative class theory is a rebranded version of human capital theory with less reliable metrics. In response, Florida asserts that population analyses using creative class occupational codes, rather than educational measures, build on the assertions of human capital theory and produce valuable insights into the indirect indicators of economic growth, such as the urban elements that attract human capital. For an introduction to the debate, see the exchange between economist Edward Gleaser and Richard Florida in Edward L. Glaeser, "Review of Richard Florida's *The Rise of the Creative Class*," *Regional Science and Urban Economics* 35, no. 5 (September 2005): 593-596, and Richard Florida, "Response to Edward Glaeser's review of *The Rise of the Creative Class* By Richard Florida," June 13, 2004, http://creativeclass.com/rfcgdb/articles/ResponsetoGlaeser.pdf.

infrastructure.[46] Florida frequently refers to the arts as a progenitor of the "ethos" that forms the foundation for the experiential lifestyle that the creative class seeks.[47]

In *The Rise of the Creative Class, Revisited*, Florida ranked Durham, North Carolina as the top creative class metro nationwide in 2010, with 48.4% of the employed population belonging to the creative class.[48] While Florida makes clear the requisite value of a vibrant arts ecosystem in attracting the creative class, the inclusion of artists within the creative class demographic is misleading. For example, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) occupational employment data that Florida uses to define the creative class indicated that, in 2017, only forty individuals in the Durham-Chapel Hill Metro Area were classified as "Fine Artists, Including Painters, Sculptors, and Illustrators."[49] This is a tremendous understatement based on what locals know to be true, and indeed by other measurements. Durham's Cultural Master Plan noted that there were nine hundred artists active in Durham in 2004.[50] A single Community Show at The Carrack exhibited work by more than one hundred artists, on a quarterly basis. Monthly arts events feature work by well over forty Durham visual artists at multiple locations. It is no surprise that the Bureau of Labor Statistics misses the presence of artists in Durham, and likely elsewhere. Even for well-established artists, it is relatively rare for an artist's practice to generate their primary source of annual income, and therefore unlikely that they are recorded as such.[51] It is, however, surprising to see the insignificant role of artists in Florida's account of the creative class.

[46] Richard Florida, *The Rise of The Creative Class, Revisited* (New York: Basic Books, 2012), 260–265.
[47] Florida, *Rise*, 149.
[48] Florida, *Rise*, 404.
[49] Florida's data is based on the Durham-Chapel Hill metro area which includes four counties: Durham, Orange, Chatham, and Person. This project focuses on Durham County and primarily on the City of Durham but refers to the metro when making direct comparisons with Florida's scholarship.
[50] Wolf, "DCMP."
[51] This was the case for the majority of artists at The Carrack. For a broader example, a 2018 survey of 1,016 artists conducted by *The Creative Independent* in Brooklyn, New York found that 60% of visual artists earn less than half the average American household. See https://tci-assets.s3.amazonaws.com/pdfs/artist-survey-report/artist-survey-report.pdf.

While scientists, mathematicians, and tech-oriented entrepreneurs are undoubtedly creative thinkers, these occupations have little in common with income-generating opportunities for artists. Table 1 illustrates the changes in Durham's creative class population from 2010 to 2017. "Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media" occupations account for the smallest section of the super creative core. Though employment increased almost 14%, the mean annual salary for the occupational group increased by less than 7%–compared to a 31% increase in mean annual salary for "Legal Occupations" and 20% for "Business and Financial Occupations." The salary range also varies widely within the "Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media" occupations. "Fine Artists, Including Painters, Sculptors, and Illustrators" had a mean annual wage of $45,450 in 2017, almost half that of "Technical Writers."

Table 1: Occupational employment data for creative class occupations in Durham-Chapel Hill metro area, 2010 and 2017. Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics.

| | **2010** | | **2017** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Occupation** | **Employment** | **Annual Mean Salary** | **Employment** | **Annual Mean Salary** |
| Computer and Mathematical | 18,760 | $83,840 | 18,490 | $88,850 |
| Architecture and Engineering | 5,190 | $75,000 | 5,820 | $80,480 |
| Life, Physical, and Social Science | 10,420 | $67,240 | 9,340 | $77,760 |
| Education, Training, and Library | 23,860 | $66,730 | 31,900 | $80,600 |
| Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media | 3,770 | $53,530 | 4,360 | $57,310 |
| Total Super Creative Core | 62,000 | | 69,910 | |
| Management | 16,340 | $109,610 | 17,480 | $136,140 |
| Business and Financial | 15,160 | $64,150 | 21,210 | $80,640 |
| Legal | 1,550 | $74,180 | 1,480 | $108,610 |
| Healthcare Practitioners and Technical | 25,510 | $62,980 | 26,640 | $75,160 |
| Total Creative Professionals | 58,560 | | 66,810 | |
| **Total Creative Class** | **120,560** | | **136,720** | |
| **Total Employed Population** | **266,990** | | **298,540** | |

Florida's definition of the creative class is not a fuzzy concept, but its prevalent use as shorthand for artist populations is inaccurate. The equation of Florida's precise occupational data with a broad understanding of artistic producers and cultural workers becomes problematic when theory becomes practice. For example, the promotional text for a recent multi-million-dollar real estate project in downtown Durham boasts: "1.7M square feet of possibility nestled among lab rats, hipsters, locavores, artists, pre-revenue-work-all-night start-up junkies, and a few thousand rabid Bulls and Blue Devils fans."[52] The leasing brochure prominently references the creative class and includes a map of nearby arts and cultural sites, as well as bars, restaurants, and retail spaces, as a selling point for future tenants. However, as demonstrated in Table 1, it is highly unlikely that artists could afford to live or work there. The local arts council, located just a few blocks away, perpetuates the misunderstanding in their 2017 Strategic Plan by citing Florida's top creative class ranking of the city as an introduction to Durham's artist community.[53] The state arts council uses the term "creative class" interchangeably with a list of occupations that contradicts Florida's definition.[54] Meanwhile, artists who rely on income generated by occupations outside of Florida's creative class definition, such as in the service class as waitstaff or in the working class as teachers, are excluded from creative-class focused economic research, as is an entire network of essential urban actors whose presence is discounted by the metric.

The creative class grew at a faster rate than the overall employed population in Durham from 2010-2017, at 11.8% and 10.7%, respectively. Though occupational data paints an incomplete picture of the local artist population, it does reveal that more people are entering

[52] "Durham.ID Leasing Brochure," Longfellow Real Estate Partners, 2018, accessed December 8, 2018, http://durhamid.com/_uploads/southerngateway_leasingbrochure.pdf.
[53] Durham Arts Council, "Strategic Plan (2016-2021): Creating a Vibrant Community Through the Arts," 11, accessed April 20, 2017, https://issuu.com/durhamartscouncil/docs/durham_final_plan_w__cover_page_fin.
[54] North Carolina Arts Council, "Creative North Carolina Measures: 2016 Data Summary," accessed October 7, 2018, https://files.nc.gov/ncarts/2016%20Data%20Summary.pdf.

arts-related jobs with disproportionately smaller salaries than all other creative class fields. The wage gap has significant repercussions on the vitality of Durham's arts ecosystem and artists directly. Real estate market trends show that the median sales price for homes in the City of Durham increased 46% between 2010 and 2018, and 87% since 2000.[55] Commercial property values have also been on the rise. The 7% increase in already low artists' salaries cannot keep pace. As cheap space becomes less and less accessible, artists are forced to move elsewhere or seek alternative occupations, as are other community members.

Many have confirmed the urban economic benefits of a vibrant arts ecosystem, what Florida describes as a "scene of scenes:" "coffee shops, restaurants, and bars, some of which offer performances or exhibits along with food and drinks; art galleries; bookstores and other stores; small to mid-sized theaters for film or live performance, or both; and various hybrid spaces–like a bookstore-tearoom-little theater or a gallery-studio-live music space–often in storefronts or old buildings converted from other purposes. The scene may spill out onto sidewalks, with dining tables, musicians, vendors, panhandlers, performers, and passersby […]."[56] But, while this is an indicator of a city's ability to attract the creative class, increased creative class presence is not an adequate indicator of a healthy arts ecosystem.

More recently, Florida and others have admitted that increased creative class presence may instead be an indicator of increased wealth disparity and gentrification, thereby posing a threat to the community and cultural assets coveted by the population.[57] Florida laments the misuse of his research in urban development strategies that can endanger the local arts ecosystem, but the frequency with which cultural master plans, creative placemaking initiatives,

[55] Trulia, https://www.trulia.com/real_estate/Durham-North_Carolina/market-trends.
[56] Richard Florida, *The Rise of The Creative Class, Revisited*, 149.
[57] Richard L. Florida, *The New Urban Crisis: How our Cities are Increasing Inequality, Deepening Segregation, and Failing the Middle Class—and what we can do about it* (New York: Basic Books, 2017).

and creative industry studies still champion his theory reveals the need to further address the misconception.[58]

*Defining the Creative Economy*

Research about the characteristics and socioeconomic impacts of "cultural industries" began in Europe in the late 1970s and early 1980s. By the end of the twentieth century, the terms "creative industries" and "creative economy" had replaced the earlier label, though "cultural" is still frequently used interchangeably as a descriptor. Six distinct models of measuring the creative economy had emerged worldwide by 2013 according to *America's Creative Economy,* a comprehensive report produced by the National Creativity Network (NCN) that analyzed the definition, segmentation, and quantification of creative industries in America. The report reviewed twenty-seven American creative economy studies between 2002-2012 in twenty states and the District of Columbia. Each study included at least two of three of the following employment categories in their definitions of creative economy: for-profit creative service businesses, nonprofit arts groups, and independent creative businesses.[59]

Creative industries are identified by codes assigned to businesses according to the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) and the SOC system. Of the twenty-five studies that utilized NAICS codes, *America's Creative Economy* found that only four NAICS codes were used by all studies. SOC codes produced similarly variant results. The authors

[58] Fiona Morgan, "Creative Class War," *INDY Week*, April 20, 2005, accessed April 5, 2019, https://indyweek.com/news/creative-class-war.

[59] "America's Creative Economy, A Study of Recent Conceptions, Definitions, and Approaches to Measurement Across the USA," National Creativity Network, 2013, 1, accessed February 28, 2018, http://www.centerforcreativeeconomy.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/AmericasCreativeEconomyFULLReport.pdf.

recommend the use of thrity-nine NAICS codes and thirty-four SOC codes used by 75% or more of the evaluated studies to establish a national definition for the creative economy.[60]

The report reveals the methodological inconsistencies in the field of creative industries research. Similar to the colloquial use of the term "creative class," the semantics also present significant complications. For example, the NAICS category "Independent Artists, Writers, and Performers" is used as an industry classification, though it reads like a description of occupations. It refers to:

> …independent (i.e., freelance) individuals primarily engaged in performing in artistic productions, in creating artistic and cultural works or productions, or in providing technical expertise necessary for these productions. This industry also includes athletes and other celebrities exclusively engaged in endorsing products and making speeches or public appearances for which they receive a fee.

Musicians, graphic designers, and artisans are excluded from this industry. Instead, they are in NAICS categories, "Musical Groups and Artists," "Graphic Design Services," and "Manufacturing," respectively.[61]

The Bureau of Labor Statistics relates occupations (SOC codes) to corresponding industries (NAICS codes) to produce national industry-specific occupational employment and wage estimates. Fourteen major occupational groups comprise the NAICS industry category "Independent Artists, Writers, and Performers."[62] Each of the fourteen groups is then broken down to more granular levels. There are thirty distinct occupational groups categorized under the major occupational group "Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations."

[60] The most common industries represented in that data set are advertising, architecture, culture and heritage (including libraries), film and sound, independent artists, internet broadcasting and publishing, music production, distribution and sales, performing arts printing and publishing, and television and radio.
[61] United States Census Bureau data, census.gov.
[62] Business and Financial Operations, Computer and Mathematical, Architecture and Engineering, Education, Training, and Library, Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media, Food Preparation and Serving Related, Building and Grounds Cleaning, Personal Care and Service, Sales and Related, Office and Administrative Support, Construction and Extraction, Installation, Maintenance and Repair, Production, Transportation and Material Moving.

Though the NAICS industry categories, “Independent Artists, Writers, and Performers,” and “Musical Groups and Artists,” are distinct, the SOC occupational category, “Musicians and Singers,” is one of the thirty occupational groups in “Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations.”[63]

If this causes confusion or exhaustion for the reader, then the point has been made. This type of categorical complexity makes intuitive sense: businesses (including freelance individuals) that produce artistic work are employers of many types of workers. Even small operations require the skills of an accountant, contractor, and administrator in addition to the artist. Likewise, artists find employment in many types of businesses. Musicians and singers may work for performing arts companies, religious organizations, or may be part of a band or orchestra that manages their own facilities. But there are consequences to the misunderstandings created by divergent methodologies and complex semantics that extend beyond national employment and industry accounting. Advocacy efforts can be crippled without the foundation of a shared language.

The informational asymmetry between creative industries and nonprofit arts organizations presents another obstacle, as does the availability of reliable business information in large industry databases. In 2017, Americans for the Arts (AFTA) produced a creative industry report and an arts economic impact report that included Durham as a study area. *Creative Industries: Business & Employment in the Arts* cites 697 arts-related businesses in Durham County “that range from nonprofit museums, symphonies, and theaters to for-profit film, architecture, and design companies.”[64] In contrast, *Arts & Economic Prosperity 5* defined eligible study participants as arts and culture organizations that “play a substantial role in the

[63] Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Employment data, https://www.bls.gov/oes/2017/may/oes_nat.htm.
[64] “Creative Industries: Business & Employment in the Arts,” Americans for the Arts, 2017, accessed April 1, 2018, https://secures21.brinkster.com/aftadc/North_Carolina/county/NC_Durham_County.pdf.

cultural life of the community or if their primary purpose is to promote participation in, appreciation for, and understanding of the visual, performing, folk, and literary and media arts." AFTA partnered with the local arts council and identified 102 eligible organizations in Durham County. Sixty-nine participated in the study and the report found that the nonprofit arts and culture sector generates $154.2 million in annual economic activity.[65] Data for the creative industries report was sourced from a national commercial database managed by Dun & Bradstreet and therefore excluded any organization that had not registered. Of the sixty-nine arts organizations included in the economic impact report, one third are unaccounted for by common industry standards: eighteen organizations had no record in the leading national business database, ReferenceUSA, and six were present in the database but classified by NAICS code "999990: Unclassified," and therefore would be omitted by research that employed NAICS codes to identify the sector.

Creative industry reports are primarily created by nonprofit arts advocacy organizations. Paired with economic impact studies, they are used to track attributable spending by arts organizations and arts consumers to make the case for the arts to policymakers and funders. Markusen describes the tactic as a "flimsy re-spending argument" and notes that "though arts lobbyists insist that such studies win politicians' votes on arts agency budgets, the studies rely on vulnerable methodologies and logic."[66] As an example, a value proposition for The Carrack quantified by the dollars spent by gallery visitors in the bakery downstairs or by its inclusion in the architectural renderings used to attract investors to the twenty-seven-story development next door did not benefit The Carrack. The distillation of the value of the arts into its quantifiable

[65] For a comprehensive list, see the Durham Arts Council's June 19, 2017 press release, "Durham's Nonprofit Arts and Culture Industry Generates $154,170,023 in Economic Activity and Supports 5,722 Jobs Annually According to Americans for the Arts," accessed April 17, 2019, http://www.durhamarts.org/pdf/DAC_News_Release_AEP_5_Study.pdf.
[66] "Report on the Working Artist," The Clark Huhlings Fund for Visual Artists, 2019, accessed March 2, 2020, https://clarkhulingsfund.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Report-on-the-Working-Artist-Ver1.0-1.pdf.

economic potential overlooks its many important qualitative contributions. Financial capital is just one of many assets, among human connection, trust, health, and belonging, required to sustain urban life.[67]

The omission of artist populations from the creative class is, in part, due to the unique occupational characteristics of artists and the well-cited limitations of industry and occupation data in the measurement of cultural assets.[68] In a strong critique of Florida, Markusen warns against the aggregation of artists and creative class workers. Markusen instead focuses on the infrastructure that lends itself to the development of successful artist careers, which she describes as a community network of artists' centers, studio buildings where artists live or work, and smaller scale performing arts venues.[69]

In the absence of a database of individual artists, a link between industry and occupation is still necessary when considering the role of artist-run spaces and local artist communities in the creative city model. While there are many artists who cannot be classified by occupation *or* industry data, such as the busker on the corner or the pop-up art exhibition in a vacant storefront, a refined assessment of Durham's creative industries paints a clearer picture of the many sites engaged in producing creative innovation.

[67] Landry, *Creative*, 66.

[68] For an overview of cultural impact study methods, see Carl Grodach, "Cultural Economy Planning in Creative Cities: Discourse and Practice," *International Journal of Urban and Regional* Research 37, no. 5 (2013): 1747-1765. The paper compares five different models, including Richard Florida's creative class model and Ann Markusen's cultural occupations model. Grodach also explores a conventional model, a cultural industries model, and a cultural planning model. The conventional model does not include a focus on cultural assets within the economy and instead prioritizes attracting firms and outside investment. The cultural industries model is essentially the reverse of Florida's—instead of cultural amenities used to attract human capital, the role of cultural industries is to support labor markets and provide the necessary infrastructure for existing human capital. The cultural planning model centers the use of community assets, such as arts and culture, to build capacity and connections at the local level and to identify and strengthen grassroots cultural initiatives. Grodach reviewed a decade of cultural development programs in Toronto and Austin. He ultimately asserts that the cultural occupations model (followed by Markusen) and the cultural planning model are the two most tailored to support artists and cultural workers.

[69] Ann Markusen, "Urban Development and the Politics of a Creative Class: Evidence from a Study of Artists," *Environment and Planning A* 38, no. 10 (2006): 1922-33.

## III. An Improved Approach to Understanding Durham's Arts Ecosystem

In 2017, in order to address some of the methodological shortcomings noted above, I assembled a database of businesses in Durham's arts ecosystem by adapting the occupation-by-industry, or "cultural occupations," approach recommended in a 2008 paper by Markusen, Gregory H. Wassall, Douglas DeNatale, and Randy Cohen.[70] I cross-referenced the recommended NAICS codes from *America's Creative Economy* with those in a recent report by the North Carolina Arts Council (NCAC) (see Appendix A).[71] I used the resulting list to sort historical business records from ReferenceUSA.[72] The sixty-nine nonprofit arts and cultural organizations that participated in AFTA's economic impact study were foundational entries. To account for limitations in ReferenceUSA, I then included nonprofit organizations defined by a set of National Taxonomy of Exempt Entities (NTEE) codes designated by the National Center for Arts Research. Finally, I consulted local arts and event directories, news outlets, and online sources.[73]

The database includes 3,448 records representing 387 locations and 345 businesses located in Durham County from 2003-2017.[74] Though some of the lexical and methodological issues remain—industries are not a direct representation of population and NAICS industry categories are not to be confused with SOC occupational groups or individuals—it provides a

[70] Ann Markusen et al., "Defining the Creative Economy: Industry and Occupational Approaches," *Economic Development Quarterly* 22, no. 1 (2008).
[71] North Carolina Arts Council, "Creative." NCAC identifies 73 NAICS Codes and 51 SOC codes as key determinants of creative industries. In comparing the two lists, 100% of NAICS codes in the 2013 *America's Creative Economy Report* are also represented by the NCAC report. The NCAC report includes an additional 33 industries. 31 of the 34 SOC codes were in both the NCAC and NCN reports. The NCAC report includes an additional 20 occupations. SOC codes in the NCN report that were excluded from the NCAC report are Entertainers, performers, sports, and related occupations, Reporters and correspondents, and Broadcast news analysts.
[72] Available through Duke University Libraries.
[73] Zannie Giraud Voss, Glenn Voss, Brooke Awtry, and Jennifer Armstrong, "NCAR Arts Vibrancy Index IV: Hotbeds of America's Arts and Culture," SMU National Center for Arts Research, July 2018, accessed November 30, 2018. https://sites.smu.edu/Meadows/NCAR%20VibrancyIndex%20July2018_7.9.pdf.
[74] The full dataset and codebooks for the Durham Arts Ecosystem and Durham Arts Venues databases are available upon request. Contact the author at laura.ritchie@duke.edu.

more accurate portrayal of Durham's arts ecosystem than the AFTA economic impact study and creative industries report, and allows for analysis over time. From 2003-2017, the overall number of arts-related organizations in Durham grew 112%.[75] The increase was steady until 2011 but decreased from 2011-2012, 2013-2014, and 2016-2017. In a year-by-year study of the opening, closing, and relocating patterns of arts establishments, the number of organizations that *closed or moved* from 2013-2014 and 2016-17 exceeded the number that opened (see Appendix B). In both intervals, the largest number of organizations that closed or moved were visual arts-related organizations.[76]

Industries outside of the arts ecosystem also contribute to the street-level culture (Florida) and soft infrastructure (Landry) that attracts the creative class. To examine the relationship between those industry groups and the arts ecosystem, I created a second database for retail establishments, bars, and restaurants that were open in Durham's Business Improvement District (BID) 2010-2017.[77] Located in the core of downtown Durham, the BID was instituted as a municipal services district by the City of Durham in 2012. Businesses and individuals inside the BID pay a tax of 7 cents on every $100 of assessed property value to fund additional services within the district's boundaries.[78] Private and public investment in the BID increased 75% between 2009-2017 according to permit data. Development initiatives for the district follow the creative city model and seek to "[...] create an amenity rich environment that makes downtown more attractive for office users and our residents." Real estate investment in

[75] The overall arts ecosystem in Durham County includes bars, restaurants, libraries, art supply stores, festivals, galleries, museums, and other organizations that provide arts-related programs or services.
[76] The data is an expanded definition of industries related to visual artists. The category includes visual art services such as framing and art supply stores; businesses that employ visual artists such as advertising, design, and photography; individual artists incorporated as businesses at specific geographical locations; artist collectives and organizations; studios; visual arts education programs; and bars, restaurants, and retail spaces that provide visual art exhibition opportunities.
[77] Thank you to Downtown Durham, Inc. for generously sharing their data with me for this project.
[78] "Business Improvement District Memo," City of Durham, June 13, 2016, http://www.durhamnc.gov/agendas_new/2016/cm20160620/11167_MEMO_BUSINESS_IMPROVEMENT_DIST_392049_701974.pdf.

the 0.8-mile area was over $250 million in 2016, and has likely grown since, driven primarily by private investment in housing units, hotel rooms, and office spaces.[79]

The previously mentioned commercial real estate project that advertised to “hipsters, artists, and lab rats” is one example of this type of investment, as is the twenty-seven-story luxury condominium building constructed next to The Carrack’s first location in the earlier section’s narrative. These, and many other, real estate projects are directed to a creative class audience and use the city’s cultural capital–driven by its artist population–as a central element to attract financial capital. However, as noted previously, not all industries are impacted equally by creative class presence.

Many retail businesses, bars, and restaurants serve an important role in the arts ecosystem by hosting local and visiting artists for exhibitions, concerts, and community programming and are therefore included in both databases. The number of bars in the BID more than doubled between 2010-2017 and the number of restaurants rose by 68% (see Appendix C). The performance of retail establishments in the BID, a category that includes art galleries, indicates a shift in consumer preferences downtown that may be connected to the overall patterns in arts ecosystem growth. The number of retail establishments in the BID began to decrease in 2016, the same year that the highest number of overall arts ecosystem organizations closed or moved county-wide. These findings connect the socioeconomic pressures felt by The Carrack in 2016, which led to its relocation and eventual closure, to broader community outcomes. However, without further inquiry, the overall growth of the arts ecosystem alongside the growth of service industry businesses inside the BID could be interpreted as successful creative city-making with the exception of only a few outliers. This obscures the experiences of artist communities and losses of artist-run spaces in Durham.

[79] “The State of Downtown Durham,” Downtown Durham, Inc., 2018, accessed December 5, 2018, https://downtowndurham.com/cms/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/SODD-2018-Report.pdf.

Therefore, I assembled a new database in 2019 to measure the impacts on a smaller subset of entities within the arts ecosystem that better explains these experiences and losses.

*System Mapping: Arts Infrastructure*

In 2012, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) created a system map and measurement model to facilitate public understanding of the arts as an ecosystem. These tools respond directly to the "descriptive and reactive" datasets that inform arts and culture research and instead propose a "theory-driven and proactive" assessment of the value and impact of the arts.[80] NEA's system map asserts the specific role of arts *venues* within the system map node labeled as "Arts Infrastructure." Venues are divided into two categories: "Core" spaces with a primary arts-related function such as galleries, studios, and performance venues; and "non-core" spaces in which the arts play an important, but secondary, role such as parks, libraries, bars, and even offices that regularly engage in arts programming. In the NEA system map, arts venues are impacted by "Societal Capacities to Innovate and to Express Ideas" (input) and facilitate "Arts Participation" and "Arts Creation" (outputs) towards economic, civic, cognitive, and emotional outcomes. Arts venues create the public link between the production and consumption of the arts.

Durham's arts ecosystem includes a wide range of the independent but interconnected entities that both serve and are driven by artist communities. By refining the arts ecosystem database to only include the subset of core and non-core arts venues defined as "Arts Infrastructure," a clearer picture emerges of how the character of Durham's arts ecosystem is changing alongside its development.[81]

[80] "How Arts Works, The National Endowment for the Arts' Five-Year Research Agenda, with a System Map and Measurement Model," September 2012, https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/How-Art-Works_0.pdf

[81] The Arts Venues Database includes 2377 records, representing 148 businesses at 167 locations.

During the fifteen-year period of Durham's Cultural Master Plan (DCMP), 148 arts venues have been open at 167 locations in Durham.[82] Since the DCMP's adoption in 2004, ninety-six new arts venues opened. However, fifty venues closed between 2004-2019 (many opened *and* closed in the study period). Table 2 compares the number of core and non-core venues that opened or closed.

Table 2: Art venues open in Durham 2004-2019. Source: Laura Ritchie, Durham Arts Venues Database, constructed primarily from ReferenceUSA, National Center for Charitable Statistics, Durham Arts Council, Triangle Artworks, and INDY Week directories.

| | Opened since 2004 (All) | Closed since 2004 (All) | Opened 2004-2019, closed by 2019 | Opened since 2004, open through 2019 | Opened before 2004, open through 2019 | Opened before 2004, closed by 2019 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Core | 53 | 32 | 26 | 27 | 18 | 6 |
| Non-core | 43 | 18 | 11 | 32 | 22 | 6 |
| Total | 96 | 50 | 37 | 59 | 40 | 12 |

The study area is geographically larger than the BID but there is a correlation between the growth of bars and restaurants in the BID and the city-wide performance of non-core arts venues, a category that includes many bars, breweries, and cafes, and experienced fewer closures than retail establishments. Figure 1 charts the number of arts venues open in each year, 2004-2019. Figure 2 illustrates the total number of arts venues that have opened versus the number that closed or moved each year.

[82] Twelve arts venues relocated at least once.

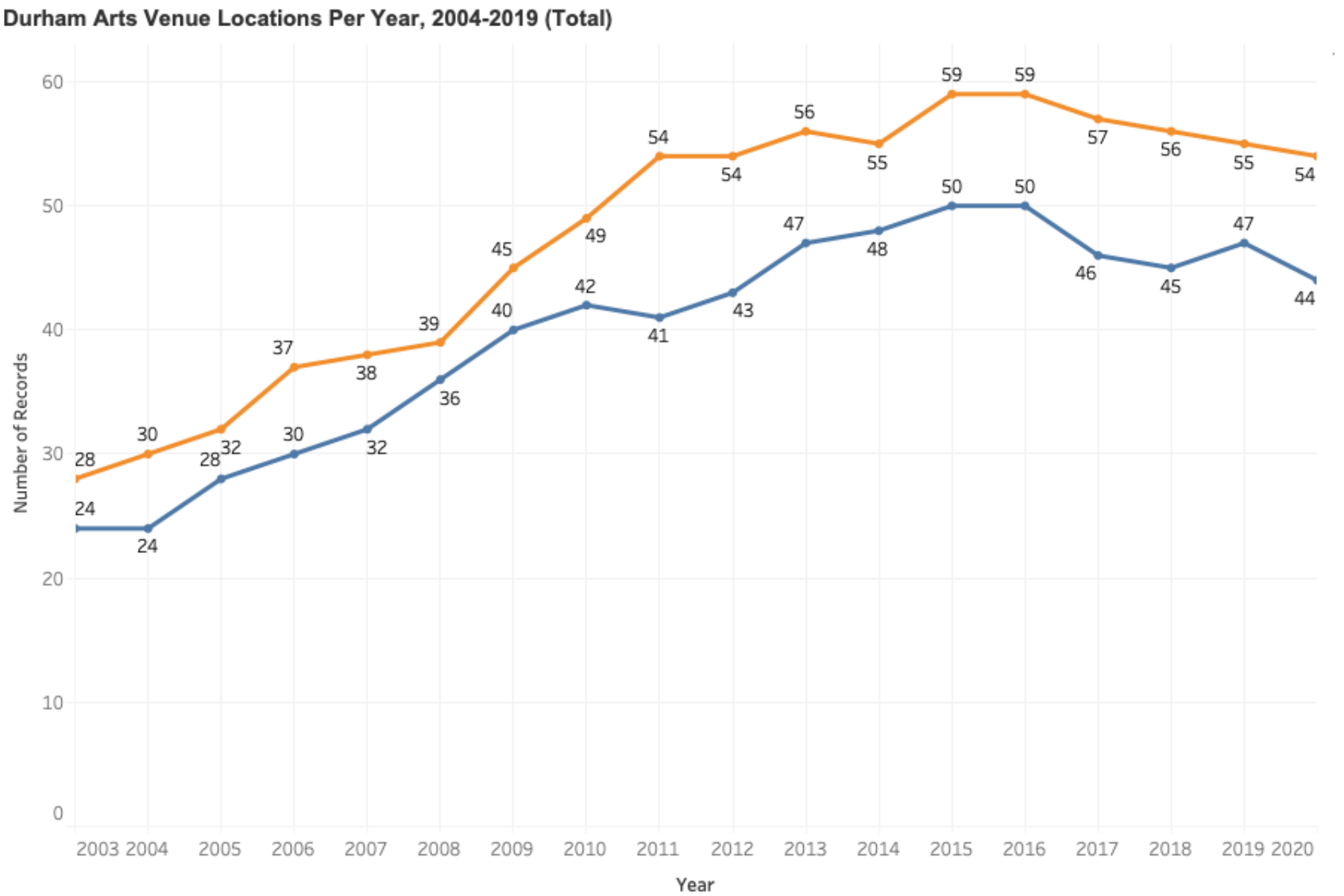



Figure 1: Core and non-core arts venues open in Durham from 2003-2019. n= 2377, representing 148 businesses at 167 locations for 16 years. Source: Laura Ritchie, Durham Arts Venues Database.

Arts Venues (Core)
Arts Venues (Non-core)

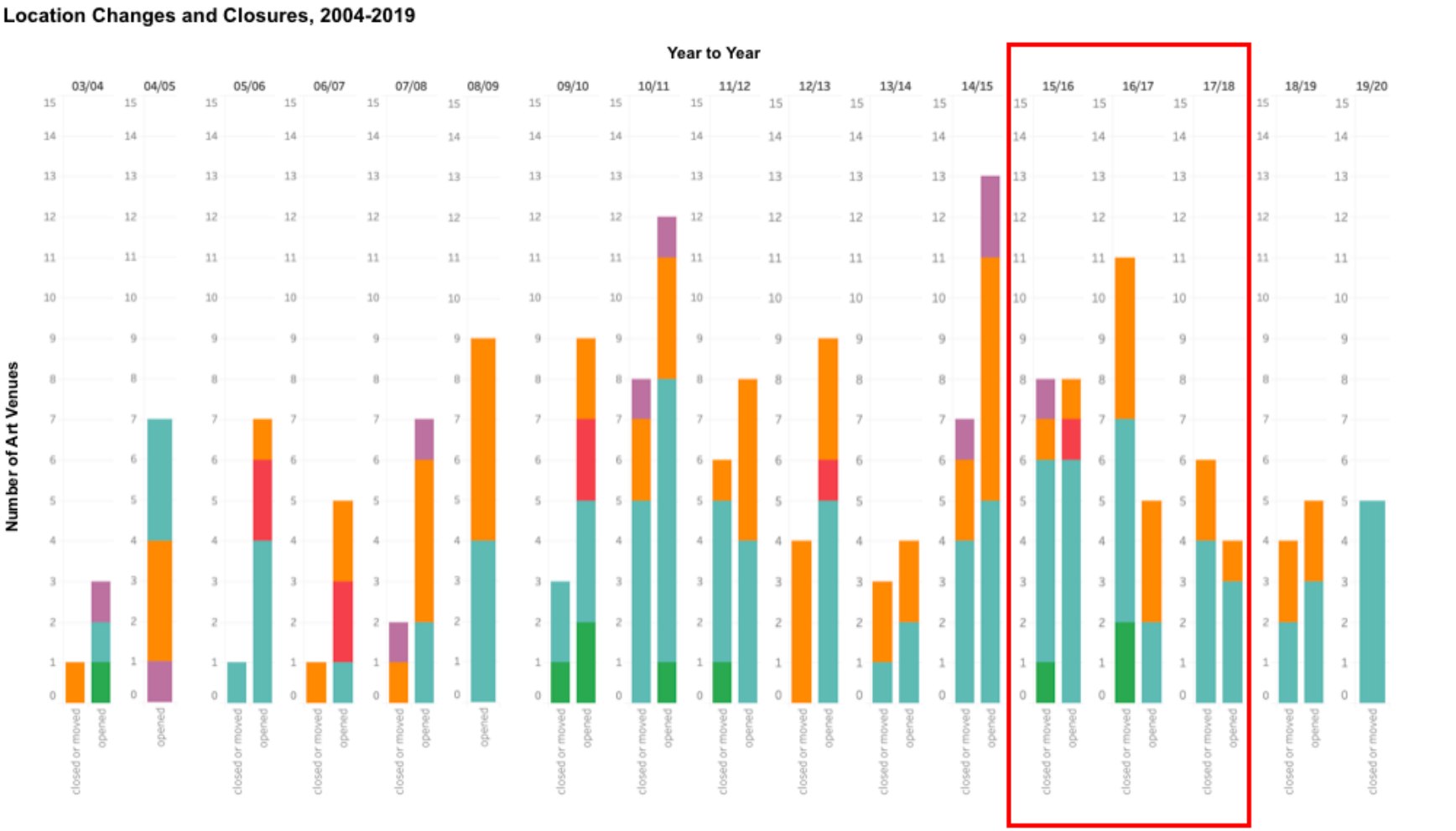
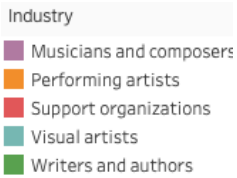



Figure 2: Arts venues organized by industry type that opened, closed, or moved in Durham, 2004-2019. n= 2377, representing 148 businesses at 167 locations for 16 years. Source: Laura Ritchie, Durham Arts Venues Database.

Note*:* 2019-2020 is included for reference on the number of venues that closed in 2019. This chart does not include venues that have opened, closed, or moved in 2020, as that data extends beyond the time of this project.



From 2004-2010, the number of core and non-core arts venues steadily increases, with the highest number open in Durham in 2015. Then the numbers begin to decline in both categories, 12% and 8%, respectively, by 2016. From the end of 2015 to the end of 2018, core and non-core arts venues closed or moved at the same or higher rate than new venues opened, compared to higher open rates in all prior study years.

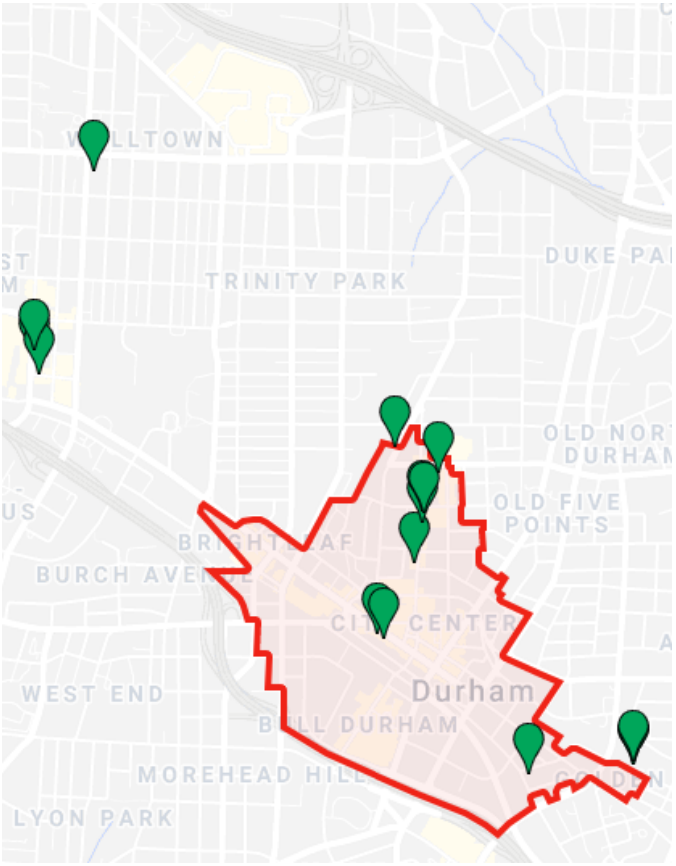
This trend reflects The Carrack's story, as does the pattern of movement for all arts venues that relocated in the study period. In 2016, The Carrack moved from a central downtown location inside the Business Improvement District to a venue one mile east. Fourteen other arts venues relocated at least once between 2004-2019 (see Table 3). Of the eleven that were formerly located inside the BID, only three moved to another location that is still inside the BID: Beyú Caffé moved just a few storefronts down from its original location, while Ngozi Design Collective and The Mothership moved from the center of the BID to its outer edge. The other nine businesses dispersed to locations a mile or more outside of downtown. Figures 3 and 4 show a side-by-side view of arts venues at their former and current locations relative to the BID.

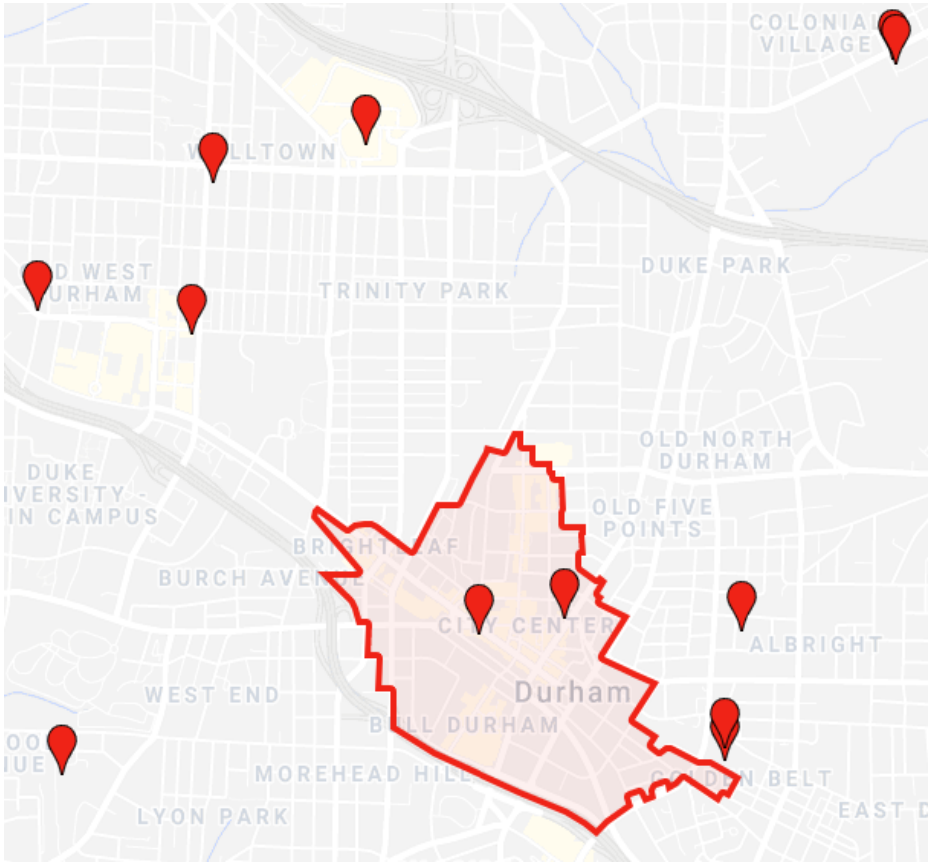
Relocation is taxing for any small business but, for visual arts spaces such as The Carrack, The Scrap Exchange, Liberty Arts, and Horse & Buggy Press and Friends, the removal from a walkable cluster of arts venues and downtown amenities presented significant programmatic challenges. Arts venues downtown coordinate monthly events, such as exhibition openings, outdoor performances, and receptions, to coincide with Durham's monthly art walk, which also benefits from proximity to many bars and restaurants. In recent years, a city agency stepped in to provide marketing at no cost to venues and book local performers to encourage wayfinding. Arts venues outside of the BID are excluded from those services and must attract visitors on their own. This is particularly difficult for venues formerly located inside the BID, to which audiences became accustomed to visiting during the art walk.

Table 3: Arts venues that relocated at least once 2004-2019. Source: Laura Ritchie, Arts Venues Database, constructed primarily from ReferenceUSA, National Center for Charitable Statistics, Durham Arts Council, Triangle Artworks, and INDY Week directories.

| Arts Venue | Locations | First Year | Last Year | Industry | Type |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Shadowbox | 900 East Club Boulevard, Durham, NC 27704 | 2009 | 2012 | Performing Artists | Core |
| | 715 Washington Street, Durham, NC 27701 | 2013 | 2020 | | Core |
| The Carrack* | 111 West Parrish Street, Durham, NC 27701 | 2011 | 2016 | Visual artists | Core |
| | 947 East Main Street, Durham, NC 27701 | 2016 | 2019 | | |
| Durham Arts Council Clay Studio | 546 Foster Street, Durham, NC 27701 | 1999 | 2010 | Visual artists | Core |
| | 1058 West Club Boulevard, Durham, NC 27701 | 2011 | 2020 | | |
| Horse & Buggy Press and Friends | 401 Foster Street Durham, NC 27701 | 2006 | 2016 | Visual artists | Core |
| | 1116 Broad Street, Durham, NC 27705 | 2017 | 2020 | | |
| Liberty Arts | 538 Foster Street, Durham, NC 27701 | 2001 | 2010 | Visual artists | Core |
| | 923 Franklin Street, Durham, NC 27701 | 2011 | 2015 | | |
| | 918 Pearl Street, Durham, NC 27701 | 2016 | 2020 | | |
| Ngozi Design Collective | 321 W Main Street, Durham, NC 27701 | 2015 | 2019 | Visual artists | Core |
| | 800 Taylor Street, Durham, NC 27701 | 2019 | 2020 | | |
| Supergraphic | 601 Ramseur Street, Durham, NC 27701 | 2013 | 2015 | Visual artists | Core |
| | 807 East Main Street, Durham, NC 27701 | 2015 | 2017 | | |
| | 2240 Dominion Street, Durham, NC 27704 | 2019 | 2020 | | |
| The Scrap Exchange | 548 Foster Street, Durham, NC 27701 | 2000 | 2011 | Visual artists | Core |
| | 923 Franklin Street, Durham, NC 27701 | 2011 | 2014 | | |
| | 2050 Chapel Hill Road, Durham, NC 27707 | 2014 | 2020 | | |
| Beyú Caffé | 335 West Main Street, Durham, NC 27701 | 2009 | 2016 | Performing artists | Non-core |
| | 341 West Main Street, Durham, NC 27701 | 2017 | 2020 | | |
| Chaz's Bull City Records | 1916 Perry Street, Durham, NC 27705 | 2004 | 2015 | Musicians and composers | Non-core |
| | 2600 Hillsborough Road, Durham, NC 27705 | 2005 | 2010 | | |
| High Strung Violins & Guitars | 1116 Broad Street, Durham NC 27705 | 2003 | 2007 | Musicians and composers | Non-core |
| | 1805 West Markham Avenue, Durham, NC 27705 | 2008 | 2014 | | |
| | 718 9th Street, Durham, NC 27705 | 2014 | 2020 | | |
| Bull City Craft* | 2501 University Drive, Durham, NC 27707 | 2011 | 2015 | Visual artists | Non-core |
| | 807 East Main Street, Durham, NC 27701 | 2015 | 2016 | | |
| | 105 West NC 54 Suite 265, Durham, NC 27713 | 2016 | 2019 | | |
| Dog Star Tattoo Company | 730 Ninth Street, Durham, NC 27705 | 1997 | 2010 | Visual artists | Non-core |
| | 807 East Main Street, Durham, NC 27701 | 2011 | 2020 | | |
| The Mothership (formerly Mercury Studios) | 407 North Mangum Street, Durham, NC 27701 | 2012 | 2014 | Visual artists | Non-core |
| | 401 W Geer Street, Durham, NC 27701 | 2014 | 2020 | | |

* Moved before closing.




(Left) Figure 3: Former location(s)of arts venues that have moved 2004-2019. n=28, representing 12 arts venues at 28 locations. Source: Downtown Durham Inc.; and Laura Ritchie, Durham Arts Venues Database; Google Maps.

(Right) Figure 4: Current location of arts venues that moved and are still open. n=12. Source: Downtown Durham Inc.; and Laura Ritchie, Durham Arts Venues Database; Google Maps.

Area outlined in red is Durham's Business Improvement District.

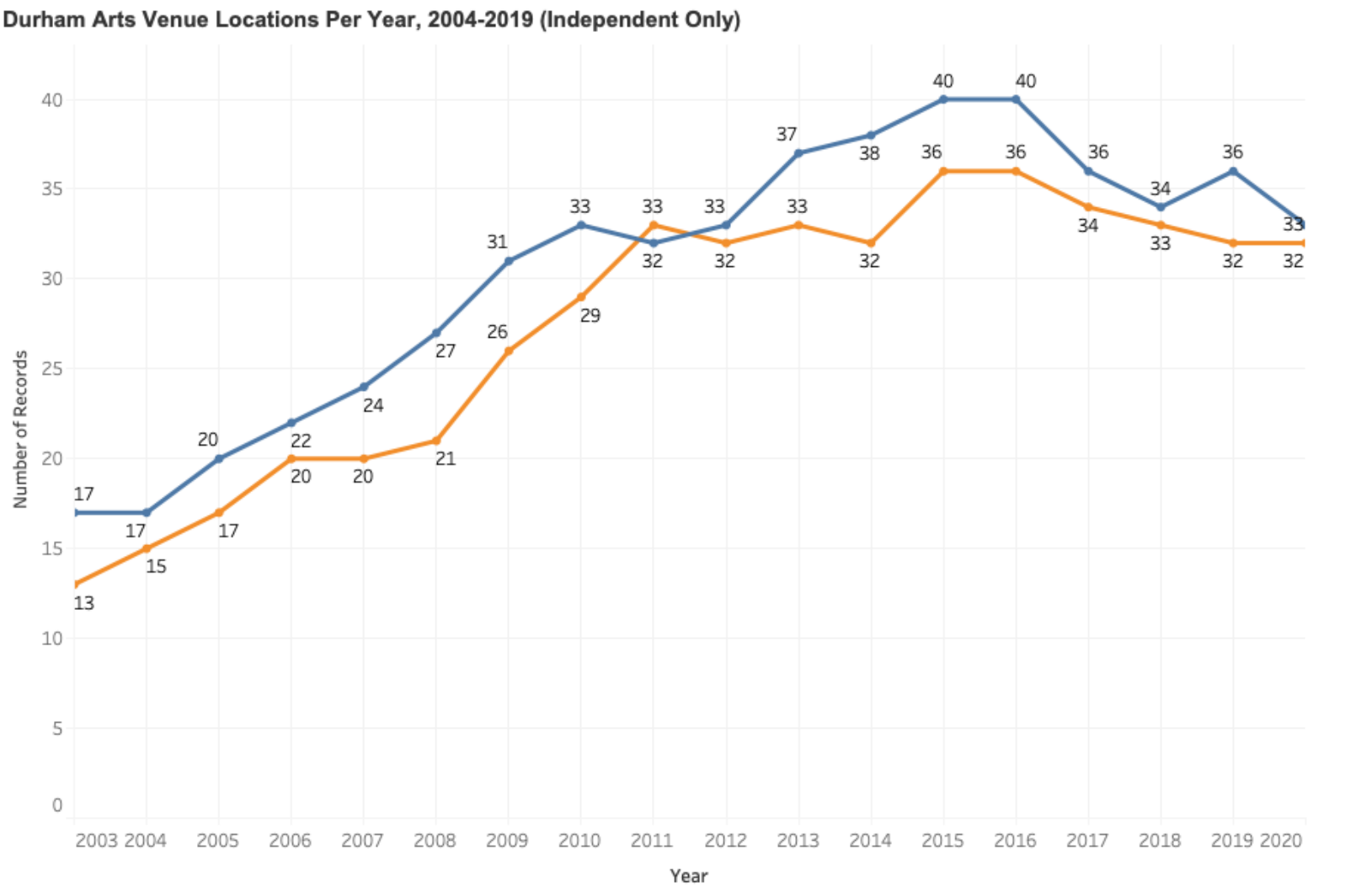



Figure 5: Core and non-core arts venues open in Durham from 2004-2019, excluding university-affiliated and City- or County-owned. n= 2377, representing 148 businesses at 167 locations for 16 years. Source: Laura Ritchie, Durham Arts Venues Database.

The decline in the number of arts venues in 2016 is likely linked to the revaluation of property taxes in the same year. Historically, all counties in North Carolina reappraise property every eight years. Between 2008 and 2016, annual taxes jumped at such a shocking rate for some property owners in Durham County that County Commissioners voted to reassess property values more frequently in the future. The 2016 property tax assessment most dramatically impacted areas of Durham within or immediately surrounding downtown. Some neighborhoods experienced increases of over 100% since 2008. 2019's revaluation also showed drastic increases across a broader section of Durham County.[83]

The 2016 assessment impacted many buildings that housed arts venues downtown. The loft that became The Carrack's first home in 2011 is in an 8,500sf building that was purchased in 2002 for $165,000. In 2020, the building's assessed value is $1.7 million. Annual taxes on the property increased 117% between 2016 and 2019, from $10,000 per year to $22,000. The Carrack's second location, a 2,000sf storefront at 947 East Main Street, was purchased in 2012 for $50,000. Though valued significantly less than the downtown space due to its location, property taxes increased 65% from 2016 to 2019 and its current assessed value is $84,000.[84]

Even for commercial property owners with a mission-focused approach, such as The Carrack's two property ownes, the hike in taxes led to rent increases. Rising rents disproportionately impact independent and artist-run spaces, a subset of the total arts venues in Durham. When the data is controlled to exclude University-affiliated venues or venues owned by the City or County, the decline in Durham's arts venues from 2016 to the beginning of 2020 is starker (see Figure 5). Venues lacking institutional backing struggle to absorb rent increases in such a rapidly appreciating real estate market.

[83] John Killeen and L'tanya Durante, "Changing Neighborhood, Higher Taxes," February 14, 2020, Dataworks NC, accessed March 10, 2020, https://dataworks-nc.org/2020/changing-neighborhood-higher-taxes.

[84] "Real Property Record Search," Durham County, https://property.spatialest.com/nc/durham.

Universities continue to play significant roles in shaping Durham's arts ecosystem as incubators, funders, and venues for artists, and as major stakeholders in the city's creative economy, but they operate on different terms. Jean Bradley Anderson chronicled many of the early intersections that characterize the city today. The Durham Arts Council's emerging artist program was inspired and supported by Ella Fountain Pratt, director of Duke University's Office of Cultural Affairs from 1965-1984. The Duke family, and most notably Mary Duke Biddle Trent Semans, the great-granddaughter of Duke University's founder, was famously known for their support of the arts. The Mary Duke Biddle Foundation continues to be one of only a few major arts grantors for Durham artists and organizations, while also supporting the arts at Duke. Duke's establishment of the Center for Documentary Studies in 1990 set the groundwork for Durham's international reputation as a hub for documentary filmmakers and photojournalists. Opera, chamber music, and jazz became foundational cultural markers of the city through programs and festivals initiated by professors and students at Duke and North Carolina Central University. Likewise, drama and dance programs at both institutions encouraged the construction of performance venues on and off campus. The vision for DPAC was directly related to the American Dance Festival (ADF), an internationally acclaimed modern dance festival that took up residence at Duke in 1977. Poets and writers also flourished through crossovers in the academic and local literary scene. Durham's first fine art museum, the Duke Museum of Art (the present-day Nasher Museum of Art), was opened by Duke University in 1969. North Carolina Central University opened the second, NCCU Art Museum, in 1977.[85]

The physical infrastructure of Durham is characterized by the history of tobacco and textiles, but its political and philanthropic landscape is heavily influenced by University interests, both through individual stakeholders and institutional financing. Duke partially funded Durham's 2004 Cultural Master Plan and, along with North Carolina Central University, represented

[85] Anderson, "Durham," 392-398, 443-448.

multiple seats on the Plan's Executive and Steering Committees. Many of Durham's major downtown real estate projects hinge on Duke University's presence as an anchor tenant, including American Tobacco Campus, One City Center, and the renovation of the Tower at Mutual Plaza (formerly the North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company). Likewise, Duke manages three of Durham's core art venues. The Nasher Museum of Art reopened in a central campus location in 2005 and has since gained international acclaim.[86] The Power Plant Gallery, located at American Tobacco Campus, is a 2012 initiative of Duke's Center for Documentary Studies and Masters of Fine Arts Program in Experimental and Documentary Arts.[87] The opening of the Rubenstein Art Center added more than 70,000 square feet of arts-focused facilities to Duke's campus in 2018.[88] While these spaces primarily promote work that centers the interests of the University, local unaffiliated artists are occasionally represented in residencies, exhibitions, and community programming.

University venues supplement, and even attract, artist-run venues. However, they possess political and financial backing that sets them apart in an economic analysis of Durham's arts ecosystem. Future research could consider Duke University, North Carolina Central University, and Durham Technical Community College and their collective cultural and economic contributions as an independent node in the Durham art ecosystem map.

*The Negative Impact of Gentrification on Artist-Run Spaces and Their Communities*

Stuart Cameron and Jon Coaffee identify three periods of correlation between the gentrification of urban areas and the arts.[89] Their analysis places the arts, as an agent of change, within a widely accepted economic conceptualization of three waves of gentrification as

[86] "History," The Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, accessed March 31, 2020, https://nasher.duke.edu/about/history.
[87] "About Us," Power Plant Gallery, accessed March 31, 2020, http://powerplantgallery.com.
[88] "About The Ruby," accessed March 31, 2020, https://artscenter.duke.edu/about-the-arts-center.
[89] Stuart Cameron and Jon Coaffee, "Art, Gentrification and Regeneration—From Artist as Pioneer to Public Arts," *European Journal of Housing Policy* 5, no.1 (April 2005): 39–58.

laid out by the influential 2001 paper, “The Changing State of Gentrification,” by Jason Hackworth and Neil Smith.[90] Though variant across localities, the waves generally follow global economic shifts and are characterized by distinct time periods.

The first period begins in the 1960s with a demand-side model that focuses on individual consumer preferences. Cameron and Coaffee build on David Ley’s scholarship in which artists, with high cultural capital and low economic capital, recognize the potential of “devalorized inner-urban residential zones” and value the assets of the “society and culture of a working-class neighbourhood.”[91] The authors reiterate Ley’s emphasis on the alignment of values between artist communities and the population attracted by their presence—middle-class workers with a similar distribution of cultural and economic capital as artists, such as those who work in the nonprofit or public sector.

The second period spans the late 1970s and 1980s and shifts to a supply-side model in which capital property investment follows the locating pattern of artists. In this phase, the experiential contributions of artists—frequently referred to as the “bohemian lifestyle” or the “artistic milieu”—are recognized as an attractive commodity to a higher-income middle class.[92]

Urban sociologist Sharon Zukin is widely cited for the integration of cultural analysis into the supply- and demand-side economic models. In 1987, she described gentrification as a “process of spatial and social differentiation” through the “conversion of socially marginal and working-class areas of the central city […] into downtown districts of major urban centers.”[93] She introduces the role of cultural consumption in the symbolic economy, driven by the

[90] Jason Hackworth and Neil Smith, “The Changing State of Gentrification,” *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie* 92, no. 4 (November 2001): 464-477.
[91] Cameron, “Art,” 40.
[92] Cameron, “Art,” 41.
[93] Sharon Zukin, “Gentrification: Culture and Capital in The Urban Core,” *Annual Review of Sociology*, 13 (1987): 129, 131.

commodification of “authenticity.” Of the relationship of the consumer and/or producer of cultural capital to pre-gentrification residents, she writes,

> We can only see spaces as authentic from outside them. Mobility gives us the distance to see a neighborhood in terms of the way it looks, enables us to hold it to an absolute standard of urbanity or cosmopolitanism, and encourages us to judge its character apart from any personal history or intimate social relationships we have there. The more connected we are to its social life, especially if we grew up there, the less likely we are to call a neighborhood *authentic*.[94]

The idea that “authenticity”—and “authentic” spaces—can be produced and consumed is key to linking artist communities to the displacement of residents, and the displacement of artists, in the second wave of gentrification. Zukin identifies artists as “alternative consumers” and art spaces as “alternative consumption sites,” or “experimental outposts of difference.” In other words, art venues and artist-run spaces rely on the production and consumption of cultural capital and create the environment in which to do so. These spaces are characterized by their distinctiveness from mainstream society, signaled by the tastes—in food, clothing style, language—values, and, often, the political orientation of the population that occupies them. While art spaces may prioritize the inclusion of marginalized communities by defining space in which difference can be performed and celebrated, they also produce exclusion.

As an example, the presence of artists, arts venues, and the creative class in downtown Durham was well-established before The Carrack opened in 2011. In that context, The Carrack’s inclusive model was celebrated and understood as a safe space for a counterculture to flourish. However, the development of Durham’s downtown had already excluded a wide sector of the population. In 2016, when The Carrack moved into a neighborhood whose residents belong to the population economically excluded from downtown, it then became exclusive. The Carrack’s expressions of difference—the white-wall gallery space, the hipster

[94] Sharon Zukin, “Consuming Authenticity: From Outposts of Difference to Means of Exclusion,” *Cultural Studies* 22, no. 5 (September 15, 2008): 728.

presentation of artists and visitors, the radical themes of the work, the zero-commission model—were unfamiliar in that area and effectively acted to keep new neighbors out.

Zukin argues that by bringing public visibility to these sites, particularly at the transactional intersection of cultural and economic capital designated by the purchase of art, artist communities "manipulate authenticity" and can thereby "legitimize an area for commercial consumption."[95]

Artists' role in the third wave is characterized by public policy that leverages this economic potential in urban regeneration efforts. Cameron and Coaffee summarize the trajectory:

> In the first wave [the nature of the linkage between art and gentrification] involved the creation by artists of a milieu for the *production* of art, and in the second wave the commodification and *private consumption* of this artistic milieu. The emphasis in the third phase, with the more explicit public-policy engagement and link to regeneration, is on the *public consumption* of art, through public art and artistic events, and particularly through the creation of landmark physical infrastructure for the arts, such as galleries, museums and concert halls.[96]

It is in this third phase, beginning in the 1990s, that Florida's creative class theory and Landry's creative-city-making approach to urban planning have played such a major role.

*The Legacy of Urban Renewal*

Like many American cities, Durham was highly impacted by the twentieth-century practice of urban renewal—or what some call "urban removal." Federally subsidized land redevelopment projects disrupted neighborhoods and business districts across the country in the name of progress. Project sites were identified as those characterized by "blight," overcrowding, and "slum" housing that impeded urban economic growth—a designation that

[95] Zukin, "Consuming," 734.
[96] Cameron, "Art," 46.

was governed by structural racism.[97] Geographies were already encoded by race-based policies of residential segregation, enforced by redlining, that had led to decades of systemic public disinvestment. As such, urban renewal projects were devastating for communities of color, and particularly for the Black community, in Durham and elsewhere.[98] This is evidenced by the over 4,000 Durham households and 500 businesses displaced by the construction of a major freeway in the late 1960s. The project demolished a large portion of the Hayti community, a center of Black life in Durham in the early twentieth century, cut the neighborhood off from downtown, and disrupted its thriving business sector with construction for over a decade.[99]

The deurbanization of cities is characterized by historical patterns of racial inequity. So, too, are contemporary patterns of gentrification. The neighborhoods into which first-wave gentrifiers move are often located in areas disrupted by urban renewal—with a large stock of vacant housing from which former residents were scattered and unable to return due to unfulfilled promises of public financial support. The gentrification story usually includes a description of an area as "undesirable," "risky," "deteriorated," or "abandoned," and a small group of "brave," "visionary," or "heroic" actors. The erasure or omission of the circumstances that caused the neglected condition of the area, and the terms used to describe it, echo the racially biased justifications originally used for urban renewal and redlining. Communications scholar Mary Triece notes:

> Urban renewal through gentrification often relies on language that scapegoats, blames, or otherwise marks minority and poor residents as threats to the well-being of communities or as social ''ills'' harmful to the ''life'' and ''growth'' of the city. Likewise,

[97] Mindy Thompson Fullilove, "Root Shock: The Consequences of African American Dispossession," *Journal of Urban Health: Bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine* 78, no. 1 (March 2001): 75.
[98] For an overview on the impacts of redlining in the 1930s and urban renewal projects in the 1950s-60s on Durham's poverty rates, evictions, property values, and neighborhood quality, see Heather Hunt and Allison De Marco, "Racial Inequality, Poverty and Gentrification in Durham Report," Chapel Hill, NC: UNC School of Law, North Carolina Poverty Research Fund, https://fpg.unc.edu/sites/fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/reports-and-policy-briefs/durham_final_web.pdf.
[99] "Dismantling Hayti," Bull City 150, accessed March 11, 2020, https://www.bullcity150.org/uneven_ground/dismantling_hayti/.

> popular and political discourses frame city spaces as bereft or vacated but brought to life by ‘‘urban pioneers’’ such as artists and developers.[100]

Triece, along with Zukin (1998) and Fullilove (2001), draw parallels between the use of the descriptor “pioneer” and the historical colonization and the displacement of indigenous communities in America. Triece argues that “strategic forgetting” and “whitewashing” erases the impacts of structural racism and classism in contemporary understandings of the urban landscape, which positions private and public investors as “saviors” of the places they systematically destroyed just a few decades ago. “The notion of the vacated, boarded-up downtown hangs suspended in time as though there were no forces creating the decimation and as if there was no community activity prior to their decimation.”[101]

The Carrack is implicated by this. Even in name, we were complicit in the artist-as-urban-pioneer, artist-as-colonizer narrative. While we chose the moniker for its metaphorical allusion to exploration and agility, a carrack is a ship historically used for trans-Atlantic trade between Europe, Africa, and the Americas. The Carrack’s first location on Parrish Street was in the heart of historic Black Wall Street, a four-block area characterized by Black-owned financial businesses that gained national prominence in the early 1900s. When we opened, we were only vaguely aware of this rich history and devoted none of our initial labor to learning it. This was not a willful oversight, but was undoubtedly influenced by our identities as white, class-privileged, newcomers to Durham—consumers of the mainstream, whitewashed narrative and drawn to Durham’s “authenticity.”

As the arts increasingly take a prominent position in the debate, the gentrification narrative also erases the important contributions of artists who belong to the historically marginalized communities that are being gentrified. In a report for the Urban Institute, Maria

[100] Mary E. Triece, “Whitewashing City Spaces: Personalization and Strategic Forgetting in News Accounts of Urban Crisis and Renewal,” *Journal of Communication Inquiry* 41, no. 3 (2017): 252.
[101] Triece, “Whitewashing,” 259.

Rosario Jackson notes that many artists create projects and spaces in marginalized neighborhoods for reasons that extend beyond affordability:

> Spaces in which arts and cultural activity happen are often the pulse points of communities […] born from the passion of artists, tradition bearers, cultural workers, and in some cases, members of the community who may not identify as artists but are enthusiastic about art, creativity, innovation, and cultural traditions.[102]

While The Carrack aspired to connect with our new neighbors in East Durham in this way, we failed to do so. This was, in part, due to our own blindness to our position in Durham's gentrification narrative. It was also due to the lack of infrastructural support and resources for artist-run spaces in Durham. The financial pressures that led to our relocation and closure strained our capacity to its limit. This prevented us from moving slow enough—"at the speed of trust"—to do the research, have the conversations, and build the relationships necessary to make an informed decision about our ability to be a positive presence in that community.[103]

*The Role of Race and Social Class in Creative Class Theory*

Redlining, urban renewal, and the decline in the tobacco and textile industries all led to the availability of unoccupied, undervalued buildings in downtown Durham into which many artists moved in the 1950s until the early 2000s. The supply of low-rent and low-regulated properties creates favorable conditions for artists to occupy space in the urban core, with a level of geographical proximity that allows the unique network structure of the arts ecosystem to form. This new network contributes to the transformation of an urban area to an attractive hub of activity for the creative class—in Florida's words, "a teeming blend of cafes, sidewalk musicians,

[102] Maria Rosario Jackson, "Developing Artist-driven Spaces in Marginalized Communities: Reflections and Implications for the Field," *The Urban Institute*, 2012, 2-3, https://www.giarts.org/sites/default/files/Developing-Artist-Driven-Spaces-Marginalized-Communities.pdf.
[103] Thank you to Monét Noelle Marshall for teaching me this phrase and concept from adrienne marie brown's *Emergent Strategy* (Chico, CA: AK Press, 2017) and to the work of Art Ain't Innocent for continuing to shape my understanding of equitable community practice in Durham.

and small galleries and bistros, where it is hard to draw the line between performers and spectators."[104]

In addition to the inaccurate amalgamation of artists with the creative class, creative class theory also ignores dynamics of race and social class, and the systemic inequities that shape them. As previously discussed, Florida defines the creative class as a distinct demographic comprised of highly skilled, highly educated workers who, with the exception of certain occupational subgroups associated with the arts, earn a high annual wage. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) national occupational employment and wage estimates for 2018, the mean annual wage for the nine creative class occupational groups was $84,513, almost 48% higher than the national wage of $51,960.

The BLS also collects demographic labor force data at the national level for the four largest race and ethnicity groups in the United States. When cross-referenced with Florida's list of creative class occupations, it becomes clear that the creative class is also characterized by whiteness. Seven of the nine creative class occupational groups employed a higher percentage of white workers (up to 10% more) *and* a lower percentage of Black and Latinx workers (up to 62% and 68% less, respectively) than national occupational employment averages in 2018.[105] All nine groups employed a lower number of Latinx workers than national employment averages. Five employed higher populations of Asian workers than national averages (up to 108% more).[106]

[104] Richard Florida, "The Rise of the Creative Class: Why cities without gays and rock bands are losing the economic development race," *Washington Monthly*, May 2002, http://www.creativeclass.com/rfcgdb/articles/14%20The%20Rise%20of%20the%20Creative%20Class.pdf
[105] Occupational groups with a higher percentage of white workers than national 2018 employment averages: Education, training, and library occupations; Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media occupations; Architecture and engineering occupations; Life, physical, and social science occupations; Legal occupations; Management occupations; Business and financial operations occupations.
[106] Occupational groups with a higher percentage of Asian workers than national 2018 employment averages: Computer and mathematical occupations, Architecture and engineering occupations, Life, physical, and social science occupations, Healthcare practitioners and technical occupations, Business and financial operations occupations.

The characterization of the creative class by skills, knowledge, and creativity falsely removes race and social class from its claims to spark urban economic growth. In Durham, the mean annual wage for creative class workers in 2018 was $88,466. The mean annual wage for Durham households was 41% lower, $58,190. Durham's population is approximately 37% Black and 42% white.[107] Development strategies that prioritize the creative class are prioritizing a group that is statistically whiter and more affluent than the majority of Durham's population. Gentrification is directly linked to demographic changes, including an in-migration of white, college-educated, affluent residents.[108] Florida's designation of Durham as the top creative class metro in 2010 was effectively an announcement of its gentrification. If you make a place attractive to wealthy white people, wealthy white people will come.

There is an additional insidiousness to the erasure of artists in the creative class narrative. By *implying* the inclusion of artists, policymakers that push for development strategies that prioritize the creative class avoid being held to account for the unique contributions and needs of artist communities. And, as the creative class is increasingly implicated by growing wealth inequality in American cities, so too are artists. In spite of what the data shows, artists are the most visible actors in popular understandings of the creative class. While a new mural or an artist-run space may be an early marker of private and public investment that can lead to gentrification, artist communities are not amongst the primary instigators of displacement.

Artist communities both generate and coalesce around sites of cultural significance and aesthetic intrigue; they are both embedded within and working alongside marginalized communities. These locating patterns for artists are both utilitarian and asset based. Abandoned industrial buildings are well-suited for the production of artwork and cheap, unregulated space is

[107] Durham Neighborhood Compass, https://compass.durhamnc.gov.
[108] Lisa K. Bates, "Gentrification and Displacement Study: Implementing an Equitable Inclusive Development Strategy in the Context of Gentrification," *Urban Studies and Planning Faculty Publications and Presentations* (2013): 28.

abundant in neighborhoods that have suffered from public disinvestment. Artists' activation and aestheticization of space can impact the cultural and socioeconomic value of the actual places in which they locate.[109] Positive outcomes can include heightened visibility of existing assets, new and/or deeper relationships between stakeholders, increased civic pride, and overall improvements to community wellness (health, safety, pleasure) in collaboration with local organizations and initiatives. Harmful outcomes are produced when artists fail to align with and operate in accordance with community needs, especially when artists or artist-run spaces locate in communities to which they do not historically belong.[110] This can then be commodified and weaponized in the process of gentrification, and lead to the displacement of residents and artists from the communities in which they originated.

Patterns of urban disinvestment disproportionately impact poor and working-class communities of color and immigrant populations. As such, these are the populations most likely to live in proximity to sites that attract and/or cultivate grassroots artist communities and, likewise, are already at the highest risk of displacement. Artists cannot be extracted from the larger systemic social, cultural, and economic structures that drive gentrification, but we do have a responsibility to recognize the potential impacts of our magnetism on consumer economies, developers, and public interests.

In response to the conflicts between art spaces in the Los Angeles neighborhood of Boyle Heights 2015-2017, Heather M. O'Brien, Christina Sanchez Juarez, and Betty Marin wrote *An Artist's Guide to Not Being Complicit with Gentrification*. In summary:

1. Becoming involved in housing struggles—especially if we are part of a more "desirable" gentrifying class—is crucial.
2. As artists, we have to educate ourselves, especially considering that we might have racial, educational, or class privilege compared to our neighbors.

[109] David Ley, *The New Middle Classes and the Remaking of the Central City* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996) and David Ley, "Artists, aestheticisation and the field of gentrification," *Urban Studies* 40, no. 12 (2003): 2527–2544.
[110] Jackson, "Developing," 2-3.

3. It is imperative to understand the need to find other ways of dealing with conflict or safety issues besides calling the police, given who the police serve and who the police jail and kill with impunity.
4. As artists who participate in and support exhibitions, we must interrogate the spaces we choose to enter and work with.
5. We must choose between prioritizing our own individualistic artistic careers or prioritizing the dismantling of oppressive structures.
6. We must ask about the power of art spaces to decide who is included in the first place.[111]

In the concluding section, I add to O'Brien, Juarez, and Marin's contribution and propose a series of policy recommendations specific to Durham as the city considers the renewal of its Cultural Master Plan.

[111] Heather M. O'Brien, Christina Sanchez Juarez, Betty Marin, "An Artist's Guide to Not Being Complicit with Gentrification," *Hyperallergic*, June 19, 2017, accessed March 15, 2020, https://hyperallergic.com/385176/an-artists-guide-to-not-being-complicit-with-gentrification.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

Downtown Durham's strategic planning documents demonstrate how the creative city concept has been deployed in Durham's economic development over the last two decades. A review reflects the previously discussed aggregation of artists and creative class populations; charts a progressive shift away from explicit support of the arts to the prioritization of the creative class; reveals the absence of current policy that protects artist-run spaces, arts venues, and artist communities; underscores the need for a renewal of the Durham Cultural Master Plan (DCMP); and adds urgency to the implementation of key DCMP goals that have not been met.

### *Downtown Durham Strategic Plan*

In 2000, Downtown Durham's Strategic Plan included the creation of a Civic and Arts District (CAD) as one of its major development components. The objective of the CAD was to connect two nodes of the downtown area for pedestrians and invite new businesses and hotels by increasing the presence of the arts. One of four planning guidelines was to "identify opportunities for public art and support of the arts community," based on the premise that "[…] cities throughout the country are finding that supporting the arts community is beneficial to the revitalization goals of the locality.[112] The authors cite the renovation of unoccupied buildings for artists' studios, percent-for-art programs, tax incentives to support arts venues, and changes to building codes to encourage artist live/work spaces as potential models. Nine pages are devoted to the CAD. The quality-of-life value of the arts and the contributions of artist communities are mentioned frequently as important urban actors throughout the 148-page document.

[112] "Downtown Durham Master Plan," Downtown Durham, Inc., 2000, 97, 104, accessed March 19, 2020, https://downtowndurham.com/cms/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/2000-Downtown-Master-Plan-WHOLE.pdf.

The next iteration of the plan in 2008 provides a seven-year review of the previous Plan's goals. The CAD is mentioned once:

> "Arts and cultural attractions remain a focus for Downtown revitalization efforts. With the reorganization of Downtown Districts, the Civic and Arts District proposed by the Master Plan is now synonymous with the City Center District, and the CCB plaza will be programmed for concerts and arts-oriented events. Retail space will also be oriented towards these types of functions."[113]

In this version, the arts are only an attraction, part of a cluster of amenities that include entertainment and dining establishments and, most frequently, the soon-to-be-constructed Durham Performing Arts Center. In 91 pages, the word "artist" is used only once in a descriptive account of a recent project. The conversion of the Civic and Arts District to the City Center District erases the arts in more than just name. By 2020, most of Durham's core art venues formerly located in the City Center District have moved or closed.

In the most recent version of the plan released in 2016, artist communities are not represented in the planning priorities at all. The arts are only mentioned once in a summary of a public input meeting. The language that included, and alluded, to the qualitative benefits of arts and culture in previous versions has shifted to the vocabulary of "creative economy" and "creative industry."

The influence of creative class theory is evident throughout, and captured clearly in two points categorized as "logistical goals" in downtown development: to "leverage Downtown's lifestyle options to attract and retain high caliber talent" and to "advertise and publicize Downtown's diversity, vibrant culture, quality of life and lifestyle to entrepreneurs, creative businesses, visitors, and potential new residents."[114]

[113] "Downtown Durham Master Plan," Downtown Durham, Inc, 2008, 28, accessed March 19, 2020, https://downtowndurham.com/cms/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/2008-DDI-Master-Plan.pdf.
[114] "Downtown Master Plan," Downtown Durham, Inc, 2016, 22, 50, accessed March 19, 2020, https://downtowndurham.com/cms/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Final-Durham-Master-Plan-2017_10_18.pdf.

In addition to the expired Durham Cultural Master Plan, there are three active planning documents that directly address the arts in Durham. Two are referenced in the Downtown Durham Strategic Plan and relate to creative placemaking projects in Durham, as do other planning documents. As such, I will briefly introduce the practice and its controversial applications.

In 2010, the National Endowment for the Arts released a white paper on the emerging field of creative placemaking, defined as a partnership between "public, private, not-for-profit, and community sectors to strategically shape the physical and social character of a neighborhood, town, tribe, city, or region around arts and cultural activities."[115] The scope of creative placemaking projects includes the creation of cultural districts, public art, and festivals and events. The literature emphatically asserts the importance of local, ground-up involvement and leadership with the goal of creating healthier, more vibrant communities. However, trends within the field indicate a misguided convolution of creative placemaking strategies with elements of other urban planning strategies that have historically caused harm to marginalized communities.

Over the last decade, some creative placemaking projects have been labeled as creative place*taking* due to links with gentrification, racism, and real estate speculation.[116] Anne Gadwa Nicodemus, one of the white paper's original authors, reflected on this in 2018. She recounted a list of what she then understood as the faults of creative placemaking:

1. The emphasis on place<u>making</u> ignores/discounts/undervalues the culture of people in that place and its history, including racist policies.
2. Creative placemaking has become conflated with gentrification and displacement. E.g., it "artwashes" gentrification.

[115] Ann Markusen and Anne Gadwa, "Creative Placemaking," National Endowment for The Arts, 2010, http://arts.gov/pub/pubDesign.php.
[116] Citizen Artist Salon, "Creative Placemaking, Placekeeping, and Cultural Strategies to Resist Displacement," U.S. Department of Arts and Culture, March 8, 2016, https://usdac.us/blogac/2017/12/11/creative-placemaking-placekeeping-and-cultural-strategies-to-resist-displacement.

3. The cross-sector partnerships emphasized in creative placemaking risk insufficiently including grassroots residents, mom and pop businesses, and artists.[117]

Nicodemus's admission is accompanied by a growing body of literature that opposes creative placemaking and instead proposes creative place*keeping*. Placekeeping is "the active care and maintenance of a place and its social fabric by the people who live and work there. It is not just preserving buildings but keeping the cultural memories associated with a locale alive, while supporting the ability of local people to maintain their way of life as they choose."[118] Art can be effectively integrated into placekeeping with equitable community engagement and local leadership. As with any creative city development strategy, "creative placemaking practices must understand history, critical racial theory, and politics alongside the spatial planning and economic development theories that dominate the discourse."[119] Nicodemus elaborates, "Arts and culture are critical, under-utilized tools to give people agency to shape their place's future and build more distinctive communities."[120]

*SmART Vision Plan*

The SmART Initiative is an "arts driven economic development plan for the cities and towns of North Carolina" developed by the North Carolina Arts Council, a division of the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources.[121] Durham was selected as one of the first North Carolina cities to pilot the program in 2012 under the leadership of the Durham Arts Council (DAC). The 10-year, $10 million creative placemaking project seeks to "transform Downtown

[117] Anne Gadwa Nicodemus, "Journeys in Creative Placemaking/keeping/taking," *Metris Arts Consulting*, November 23, 2018, accessed March 6, 2020, https://metrisarts.com/2018/11/23/journeys-in-creative-placemaking-keeping-taking/.
[118] Citizen, "Creative."
[119] Roberto Bedoya, Placemaking and the Politics of Belonging and Dis-belonging, Grantmakers in the Arts, *GIA Reader* 24, no 1 (Winter 2013), https://www.giarts.org/article/placemaking-and-politics-belonging-and-dis-belonging.
[120] Nicodemus, "Journeys."
[121] "The SmART Initiative," NC Department of Cultural Resources, January 2012, accessed March 14, 2020, https://files.nc.gov/ncarts/The_Smart_Initiative_Final.pdf.

Durham into a major destination for art and cultural programs in the region."[122] DAC commissioned a Boston-based design studio to develop the SmART Vision Plan. Published in 2015, the Plan proposes the creation of an "arts corridor" that connects three downtown areas from the American Tobacco Campus and DPAC, to City Center District and DAC, to the Central Park District. The goal is to "rebrand" the passage as the "Avenue for the Arts" with a series of public art projects that include murals, ground plane art, and sculpture.

Zukin's concept of consuming "authenticity" and Triece's characterization of "strategic forgetting," as well as the trajectory of downtown gentrification can be read in the Plan's historical summary of Durham:

> The 150-year reign of the tobacco industry came to an end in Durham when the last factory officially closed its doors in 2000. Carrying tobacco as a legacy, the end of the twentieth century marks the beginning of a new and different wave of revitalization in Durham. Trade marking phrases like "Find Your Cool" and "Keep it Dirty, Durham," Durham has topped charts in the last decade as one of the most creative and entrepreneurial cities in the United States. The warehouses and factory buildings left behind by the tobacco industry have since been realized as idyllic spaces for adaptive reuse and businesses such as research and development companies. Successful projects along the downtown corridor, including the massive renovation of the former American Tobacco Campus and the construction of the Durham Bulls Athletic Park and Durham Performing Arts Center (DPAC), have attracted world class entertainers and investors who continue to inject life back into the city of Durham.[123]

The authors also devote an entire page to Florida's designation of Durham as a top creative class metro and note "Durhamites remain committed to keeping their city eclectic, gritty and innovative."[124]

The SmART Vision Plan does encourage the incorporation of local artist communities, community engagement and collaboration across sectors, and recognizes Durham's arts ecosystem as an important asset in the Plan's success. However, the location of the project

[122] Mikyoung Kim Design, "Downtown Durham SmART Vision Plan," 2015, accessed March 12, 2020, https://files.nc.gov/ncarts/DurhamSmARTVisionPlan.pdf.
[123] Mikyoung, "SmART," 13.
[124] Mikyoung, "SmART," 17.

bridges an area now overshadowed by high-rises in which local residents cannot afford to live, from which many independent artist-run spaces have been displaced. Its objective is economic development and, while that may produce positive outcomes for arts venues that can afford to remain downtown until the Plan's completion, it is not currently a viable solution for sustainability.

*Downtown Open Space Plan*

The 2014 Downtown Open Space Plan proposes improvements to the City and County's publicly owned open spaces such as parks, streetscapes, and plazas. Its authors encourage the amendment of a tax code and ordinance to generate funding by redirecting existing fees and requiring private developments to contribute new capital for the purpose of maintaining and cultivating public open spaces in downtown. In method and application, this could lead to positive impacts for local artists. The importance of public art is made clear and two key points are made that reference local artist communities: a proposal for curatorial partnerships with local organizations for temporary site-specific work and the requirement that "Durham's culture and heritage should be reflected in the choice of artist, materials, topic, and design" in any included public art.[125]

*Sustainability Roadmap and The City of Durham's Strategic Plan*

The Sustainability Roadmap, published in 2018, proposes strategies for economic, social, and environmental sustainability that align with the goals set forth by the City of Durham's Strategic Plan. Two of sixty-two pages are devoted to "Arts & Community" and connect with three of the Strategic Plan's five goals:

[125] "Downtown Open Space Plan," Durham City-County Planning Department, October 20, 2014, 17, 18, accessed March 13, 2020, https://durhamnc.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1027/Downtown-Open-Space-Plan-PDF?bidId=.

1: Innovative and High-Performing Organization,
3: Shared Economic Prosperity,
4: Connected, Engaged, and Diverse Communities.

The Sustainability Roadmap is the only active document guiding Durham's development that references the DCMP. If implemented, its strategies could significantly mitigate the challenges that currently face artist communities in Durham. The Roadmap encourages more equitable community practice, an expansion of public resources for arts organizations, increased public funding for public art, affordable housing and workspace opportunities for artists, the establishment of a local residency program, capacity-building for local artists, and a community-informed update of the DCMP.[126] These, however, are the strategies with a "Medium" or "Long" assigned timeframe and little information is provided about how they will be achieved. In bureaucratic terms, these goals could take a decade. As evidenced by the accounts provided by the twenty-seven independent artists who spoke to City Council in 2019, Durham's artist community cannot afford to wait.

*Durham Cultural Master Plan*

The creation of the DCMP was an ambitious multi-year endeavor that involved more than 500 individuals and signaled an unprecedented cross-sector investment in arts and culture supported by City and County government officials. The planning process was led by national consulting firm Wolf, Keens & Co. with AMS Planning and Research, funded by $165,000 in Occupancy Tax funds designated specifically for the Plan. Local administration was provided by the DAC, funded by an additional $35,000 from the occupancy tax, $10,000 from Duke, and $15,000 from private donations raised by DAC. $500,000 was set aside for the first two years of

[126] "City of Durham Sustainability Roadmap," 2018, https://issuu.com/cityofdurhamnc/docs/codurham_sustain_bro_web.

the Plan's implementation, the majority of which was designated for a new dedicated staff position.[127]

Some of the goals set forth by Durham's Cultural Master Plan have been met since its adoption in 2004. As described in its vision statement for 2020, the arts continue to contribute to Durham's destination value, tourism, and business investment; art is well-integrated into education, both in and out of the public schools; Durham's cultural history and heritage is celebrated in a new museum and publicly supported festivals and events; and the City has taken steps towards more equitable and inclusive practices. But the vision statement's concluding sentence, and one of its central themes—to resource local artists and cultural organizations with the economic capital they need for stabilization, growth, and service to the community—does not describe Durham today.

In interviews with five early participants in the Durham Cultural Master Planning process, I learned that there were three primary obstacles that hindered this achievement.[128] The first was a territorial tension between a local arts agency and the DCMP's first goal: to create a new entity to administer the Plan. Interviewees reported that the aforementioned agency was not equipped to perform the role but discouraged its creation for fear of losing political power to a new entity. The second was funding. The economic downturn following the financial crisis of 2008 led to a separation between the City and County for the DCMP's implementation. It became solely the responsibility of the City and, due to related budget cuts, the staff position that was created for the DCMP increasingly absorbed other City responsibilities. By 2012, the administration of the DCMP's goals had become less than 25% of the staff person's responsibilities. Further, the economic crash made it more difficult for the Cultural Advisory

[127] Wolf, "DCMP," 3, 6.
[128] The interviewees include two members of the Executive Steering Committee, two former members of the Cultural Advisory Board, and one former City employee. Due to the sensitivity of the subject matter and in respect for their candidacy, they will remain anonymous My own experience as a member of the city's Public Art Committee, a subcommittee of the Cultural Advisory Board, also informs the opinions expressed here.

Board, a City-appointed volunteer group formed to support the DCMP's implementation, to raise money for new initiatives beyond the initial $500,000 allocation. Though the economy has improved dramatically, the CAB has not regained fundraising momentum. The third obstacle came in the 2018 shift of the DCMP's stewardship, from the City's Office of Economic and Workforce Development to the General Services Department. The move was motivated by a positive uptick in public art projects and festivals, matters in which the General Services Department is uniquely positioned to support, but further obscures the DCMP's commitment to serve individual artists and organizations—an important subset of Durham's workforce.

*Recommendations for a New Decade*

**Review and renew Durham's Cultural Master Plan.**

In 2004, the Durham Cultural Master Plan devoted four of its eight goals to the direct support of artist communities. These goals have not been met. They are:

- Goal 1: Organizations and Artists
  Strengthen the organizational structure and build the capacity of Durham's existing cultural assets, including organizations, events, festivals, and artists.
- Goal 6: Facilities
  Strengthen and diversify Durham's mix of cultural facilities throughout the County.
- Goal 7: Community-Wide Organizational Infrastructure
  Sustain and strengthen existing community-wide organizations that support the arts and cultural sector.
- Goal 8: Resources
  Build a stronger resource base for arts and culture in Durham to ensure effective program delivery.[129]

The Cultural Advisory Board should conduct an in-depth review of the Plan's fifteen-year trajectory as well as a current needs assessment for artists in Durham. As previously discussed in this paper, much has changed in Durham's arts ecosystem since 2004. The review and renewal process should be conducted with the same rigor with which it was initially approached.

[129] Wolf, "DCMP," 5.

**Allocate public funding for individual artists and arts organizational operating support.**

In conjunction with the artist speaker series at the end of 2019, three local artist presented a proposal to City Council, "Proposal for a Durham Independent Arts Granting Fund, FY 2021-22." The authors requested the addition of $1,325,750 to Durham's 2021-2022 budget to create a direct granting program for arts organizations and individual artists. The amount was determined based on a $5 per capita allocation for the arts. Grants would be organized into four groups, Organizational Operating Support Grants, Organizational/Collaborative Project Support Grants, Individual Artist Project Support Grants and Durham Artist Fellowships. The proposal includes recommendations for accessibility and equity in the application process, as well as measures to protect organizational and individual autonomy.[130]

Some of Durham's civic leaders have resisted the call for public funding and have instead emphasized the need for more private sector support. While patronage and philanthropy are important, private funders cannot fill the gap left by continued cuts to public funding at the state and national level.[131] As I expressed to City Council,

> [Private support] was not the key to saving The Carrack. Our annual fundraiser drew 500 attendees four years in a row and hundreds of donors gave through our monthly sustainer program. What we needed was access to ongoing operational support so we could fairly pay our staff—pay them to continue building on the development efforts we already had in place. These grants do not currently exist for organizations like The Carrack. The closest options, through our state and city arts councils, would have granted us a maximum of $10,000 annually, combined, and came with requirements that would have increased the strain on our already overworked staff.
>
> I commend [the authors of the proposal] for their immense effort and am heartened by the attention it is receiving. It deserves it. I am also concerned that the work to protect, preserve, and nurture the arts has been left to us, motivated by the urgency of its disappearance and the harmful ways it has been wielded and discarded in the process of Durham's gentrification.

[130] Marshall Botvinick, Monica Byrne, and Akiva Fox, "Proposal for a Durham Independent Arts Granting Fund, FY 2021-22," February 2020, https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rZ1j65u2xMi4praq6CHlaGJmvmDnrvz5/view.

[131] Alexis Frasz, Holly Sidford, "How Are Private Funders Responding to Cuts in Public Funding?," *GIA Reader* 22, no. 3 (Fall 2011).

> We still need The Carrack—and The Shed, and Outsider's, and Unexposed Microcinema, and Manbites Dog Theater, and Durham Artists Movement, to name just a few of the spaces we've recently lost. Our arts ecosystem is resilient, but also incredibly vulnerable. Without direct, financial support from the City, I fear for its future.[132]

In rapidly growing urban areas like Durham, the value of a per capita arts allocation extends beyond financial support—it also signals the City's priorities to policymakers, artists, patrons, and developers. If the City leads, private sector support will follow. This directly connects to three strategies in the DCMP:

- Strategy 8.1: Develop new and stronger earned revenue streams and reduce expenses for cultural organizations through partnerships and collaborations.
- Strategy 8.2: Strengthen funding from existing sources in the public sector while exploring options for dedicated revenue streams for arts and culture.
- Strategy 8:3: The DCMP Implementation Advisory Board should explore options to restructure, coordinate, and regrant City and County support for arts and culture.[133]

In a letter of support for the proposal, Sherry DeVries, Director of DAC noted,

> …with the increase in [property tax] valuation from 19.241 in 2010 to 30.654 in 2020, the equivalent of 1 penny on tax rate is $3.4 million ($174 million total City property tax collectible for 2019). In FY2020, the City has budgeted a total of $1,875,491 to support operations of four major arts facilities […] plus another $195,000 in funding for major arts and cultural festivals that provide economic impact for Durham. The […] additional $1.2 million in grant funding for arts organizations and artists seems a workable request in this context of $3.4 million = 1 penny of the property tax collectible. Inclusive of the new grants program, total City investment in the arts would be $3,270,491-- still less than 1 penny on the tax rate, but a major step forward in supporting this vital sector.[134]

The City should adopt the "Proposal for a Durham Independent Arts Granting Fund, FY 2021-22" and invest $1.3 million into Durham artists.

[132] Laura Ritchie, Comments delivered to Durham City Council on December 19, 2019.
[133] Wolf, "DCMP," 65-69.
[134] Botvinik, "Proposal," 11.

**Establish an Office of Arts and Culture.**

The aforementioned proposal needs one amendment. Currently, it suggests the administration of the funds through two nonprofit agencies in Durham, the Durham Arts Council and Hayti Heritage Center. In a letter to City Council, a group of arts advocates instead appealed for the creation of a new City department to manage the fund.

> We cannot rely on already under-resourced nonprofit arts institutions, responsible for their own programming and fundraising within the same sector of the community, to equitably cultivate and steward this vision [for the whole arts ecosystem]. We believe that doing so is unwise and unfair, to both the community and to those institutions. We propose that the City create a dedicated office for the arts to administer the grants and facilitate the implementation of all other aspects of the Cultural Master Plan. […] An arts office within the City would not, and should not, threaten or compete with the programs, funding, or mission of the Durham Arts Council, Hayti Heritage Center, or any other nonprofit community arts organization in Durham. To the contrary, such an entity would work in collaboration with, and provide support to, those organization's efforts.[135]

The case for the establishment of an arts office was made clearly in the DCMP.

- Strategy 1.1: Establish a high visibility entity that will actively foster collaborations, mentoring relationships, joint initiatives, and, if appropriate, mergers in the cultural sector.[136]

This strategy was ranked with highest priority and supported throughout the Plan:

> The cultural master plan offers a 'road map' by which the community can achieve its consensus vision of Durham's cultural future. One thing is clear from years of developing such plans: the best plans will gather dust unless one individual organization has primary responsibility for coordinating its implementation. Many players can provide "umbrella" services for arts and culture, in Durham including DAC, DCVB (Durham Convention and Visitor's Bureau), the City's Office of Economic and Employment Development, and DDI (Downtown Durham Inc.) to name only the most prominent. Nevertheless, one entity must convene, facilitate, and serve as the rallying point for implementation.[137]

[135] Written by Jim Lee and Laura Ritchie, signed by Jaclyn Bowie, Ellen Cassilly, Lightsey Darst, Angel Dozier, Mavis Gragg, Brenda Miller Holmes, Frank Konhaus, Monét Noelle Marshall, Lewis Myers, Nicole Oxendine, Meg Stein, Chris Vitiello, sent to Durham City Council on March 4, 2020.
[136] Wolf, "DCMP," 23-24.
[137] Wolf, "DCMP," 59.

The services for individual artists and independent arts organizations that such an entity would provide are still notably absent from the arts ecosystem. These include mechanisms for shared resources, joint marketing programs, collaboration across disciplines and between multiple cultural organizations; sustained fundraising efforts and the establishment of a culture of arts patronage; and the strategic implementation, review, and amendment of the Cultural Master Plan in close alignment with the City's economic growth. This connective tissue is vital.

**Incentivize the purchase of art by local artists amongst the City's real estate developers, higher-income new residents, and commercial interests.**

An estimated twenty new people move to Durham each day, many into downtown residences that sell at over $300 per square foot.[138] Developers, municipal departments, business owners, and residents should be incentivized to purchase art by local artists in qualitative and quantitative terms. Amendments to existing tax codes and development ordinances, such as those proposed by the Durham Open Spaces Plan, could be used to economically encourage this investment. There is also a need for a cultural shift towards arts philanthropy. One of the interviewees noted," There is no 'price of admission' to support the arts in Durham, In other places, to be a civic player, you have to support the arts."

**Establish and sustain trusting relationships with local artist communities that facilitate the ongoing collection of accurate data.**

The Office of Arts and Culture should collect reliable information on Durham's artist communities and arts ecosystem. The databases compiled for this project are a starting point. Metrics should account for cultural and economic attributes and studies should be approached through an intersectional, racial equity lens informed by Durham's historical context.

[138] Sarah Krueger, "With 20 new residents each day, demand for Durham homes outpaces supply," *WRAL*, March 29, 2018, https://www.wral.com/with-20-new-residents-each-day-demand-for-durham-homes-outpaces-supply-/17452261/.

**Acknowledge the whole history.**

This applies in three ways. The first is the return to the DCMP. In recent advocacy efforts to increase City funding for the arts, it has become clear that government officials and many members of Durham's Cultural Advisory Board and Public Art Committee have forgotten or are unaware of the goals and strategies that were adopted in 2004.

The second is to remember our lost spaces. One continuation of this project will be a series of interviews with leaders of arts venues that have closed in Durham. These will be sent to *Art F City* for inclusion in Paddy Johnson's *IMPRACTICAL SPACES* archive and made available as a local resource.

The third is to remember Durham's whole history. Policymakers, urban planners, and artist communities should understand the full social, cultural, economic context of their local geography before staking a claim on space. This can be achieved formally, through educational workshops and stricter requirements, and informally, through relationships and clearer communication pathways.

**Resist.**

Local artists should organize against creative city making initiatives that appropriate our work for harmful community outcomes and instead follow the principles of placekeeping and those set forth in the previously mentioned *An Artist's Guide to Not Being Complicit with Gentrification*. In 2018, we formed an advocacy group under the name "Art Ain't Innocent" to organize these efforts locally. We propose the following community code of ethics:

On Art*:*

1. Art is vital and valuable.
2. Art is a site for, and invitation into, collective imagination and transformation.
3. All art is political. Our artistic practice opposes oppressive structures and propels us towards a just, free, and pleasurable existence.

4. Art by Black and Indigenous People of Color is central, as are their lives and stories. We are committed to repairing the historic, continued pilfering and erasure of their culture and creations.
5. We counter and envision beyond capitalism while advocating for equitable support of artistic labor.

On How We Work:

1. We value and uphold the integrity of our humanity through rigorous love and active compassion. “The human in me invites the human in you.”
2. We need each other. We find strength and power in collaboration. We are committed to creating a community that is for all of us.
3. How we are in relationship to one another is more important than what we do or accomplish. Our relationships with each other reflect our relationship to ourselves.
4. We move at the speed of trust and need to feel resourced, centered, and impactful in how we move together.
5. We are capable of doing this work, and we are already doing it.
6. Bridging communities is important. We recognize the relationships between individuals, communities, and institutions, and work to make them stronger and more symbiotic.
7. We commit to communicating and growing with one another.
8. Being in physical space together matters, and we show up at the invitation.[139]

Durham has a rich set of community assets—the work now lies in protecting them. The City does not have to build a new model from scratch. The DCMP provides an excellent starting point and there are several cities in North Carolina that have instituted government support for the arts in ways that could be repeated in Durham. Greensboro, in particular, has much in common with Durham’s industrial, civil rights, and arts legacies and shares similar demographics and budget scales. Much like the DCMP, Greensboro’s recently adopted cultural master plan lists a dedicated Office of Arts and Culture as its first goal. In 2019, they created the office and hired their first Chief Creative Economy Officer, a full-time staff position that reports directly to the City Manager.[140] The Office of Arts and Culture does not replace Greensboro’s

[139] Collaboratively authored by Jaclyn Bowie, Megan Bowser, Marcella Camara, Monét Noelle Marshall, Laura Ritchie, Saba Taj, and Meg Stein, December 2019.
[140] “Ryan Deal Named City’s Chief Creative Economy Officer,” September 23, 2019, accessed March 31, 2020, https://www.greensboro-nc.gov/Home/Components/News/News/14065/36?fsiteid=1.

Arts Council—the two agencies move together in collaborative partnership.[141] Another instructive example can be found in Winston-Salem. According to their 2017 tax return, Winston-Salem's nonprofit arts council regranted 51% of its annual budget to individual artists and arts organizations. The Durham Arts Council regranted just 9% in the same year.[142] While Raleigh's size and role as the state's capital place it in a category that makes comparisons to Durham more difficult, it has instated infrastructure for publicly supported arts funding that Durham can reference. Raleigh's Office of Arts and Culture oversees two art centers and employs twelve full-time staff to manage public art opportunities and provide organizational support to the cultural sector through advocacy and stewardship of Raleigh's $5 per capita arts allocation.[143]

Durham's greatest assets are its people. Richard Florida was right to recognize and advocate for the value of creativity, but creativity is not held by one class of the population and the arts ecosystem cannot be quantified by economic metrics alone. Durham needs its artists, and artists need space, time, and funding. To build on the epigraph from bell hooks: it is the role of artists to imagine what is possible *and*, as adrienne marie brown writes, "It is our right and responsibility to create a new world."[144] The generative act of city-building hinges not only on innovation, but also on healing, collective trust, and reflection. And it takes all of us.

[141] "Creative Greensboro: Cultural Arts Master Plan," December 2018, accessed March 31, 2020, https://www.artsgreensboro.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Creative-Greensboro-Cultural-Arts-Master-Plan.pdf.
[142] Thank you to Akiva Fox for bringing this to my attention and for presenting it to the Durham City Council on September 5, 2019.
[143] Creative Life: Raleigh Arts Plan," June 2016, accessed March 28, 2020, https://cityofraleigh0drupal.blob.core.usgovcloudapi.net/drupal-prod/COR24/RaleighArtsPlan.pdf.
[144] adrienne marie brown, *Emergent Strategy* (Chico, CA: AK Press, 2017), 19.

Appendix A: *Industry and Occupational Data*

Table 4: NAICS and SOC codes used by 75% or more of all studies evaluated in *America's Creative Economy*, National Creativity Network, 2013, 32-33, 48-49, https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/Research-Art-Works-Milwaukee.pdf.

| **NAICS Codes** | | **SOC Codes** | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 712120 Historical sites | 541320 Landscape architectural services | 27-4032 Film and video editors | 27-1027 Set and exhibit designers |
| 712110 Museums | 541310 Architectural services | 27-4031 Camera operators, TV, video and film | 27-1025 Interior designers |
| 711510 Independent artists, writers, and performers | 519120 Libraries and archives | 27-4021 Photographers | 27-1024 Graphic designers |
| 711410 Agents and managers | 515120 Television broadcasting | 27-4014 Sound engineering technicians | 27-1023 Floral designers |
| 711310 Promoters with facilities | 515112 Radio stations | 27-3043 Writers and authors | 27-1022 Fashion designers |
| 711190 Other performing arts companies | 515111 Radio networks | 27-3041 Editors | 27-1021 Commercial designers** |
| 711130 Musical groups and artists* | 512290 Other sound recording | 27-3022 Reporters and correspondents | 27-1019 Artists and related workers |
| 711120 Dance companies | 512240 Sound recording studios | 27-3021 Broadcast news analysts | 27-1014 Multi-media artists and animators |
| 711110 Theatre companies and dinner theaters* | 512230 Music publishers | 27-3011 Radio and television announcers | 27-1013 Fine artists, including painter, sculptors, illustrators** |
| 611610 Fine arts schools | 512220 Integrated record production and distribution | 27-2099 Entertainers, performers, sports, related | 27-1012 Craft artists |
| 541922 Commercial photography | 512210 Record production | 27-2042 Musicians and singers | 27-1011 Art directors |
| 541921 Photography studios, portrait | 512191 Teleproduction and postproduction services | 27-2041 Music directors and composers | 25-4031 Library technicians |
| 541890 Other services related to advertising | 512120 Motion picture and video distribution | 27-2032 Choreographers | 25-4021 Librarians |
| 541860 Direct mail advertising | 512110 Motion picture and video production | 27-2031 Dancers | 25-4012 Curators |
| 541850 Display advertising | 511130 Book publishers | 27-2012 Producers and directors | 17-1012 Landscape architects |
| 541810 Advertising agencies | 511120 Periodical publishers | 27-2011 Actors | 17-1011 Architects, except landscape |
| 541490 Other specialized design services | 511110 Newspaper publishers | 27-1029 Designers, all others | 11-2011 Advertising and promotions managers |
| 541430 Graphic design services* | 453920 Art dealers | | |
| 541420 Industrial design services | 323111 Commercial gravure printing | | |
| 541410 Interior design services* | | | |

* NAICS codes in all reports **SOC codes in all reports

Table 5: NAICS and SOC codes used by the North Carolina Arts Council that were not included in *America's Creative Economy* report, https://files.nc.gov/ncarts/2016%20Data%20Summary.pdf.

| **NAICS Codes** | | **SOC Codes** | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 813219 Other Grantmaking and Giving Services | 451130 Sewing, Needlework, and Piece Goods Stores | 51-9071 Jewelers and precious stone and metalworkers | 27-3099 Communication and Media Workers, All Other |
| 813211 Grantmaking Foundations | 448310 Jewelry Stores | 49-9063 Musical Instrument Repairers and Tuners | 27-3042 Technical Writers |
| 812922 One-Hour Photofinishing | 424920 Book, Periodical, and Newspaper Merchant Wholesalers | 48-153 Public Relations Managers | 27-3031 Public Relations Specialists |
| 812921 Photofinishing Laboratories (except One-Hour) | 423940 Jewelry, Watch, Precious Stone, Metal Merchant Wholesalers | 43-4121 Library assistants, clerical | 27-1026 Merchandise displayers and window trimmers |
| 811420 Reupholstery and Furniture Repair | 339992 Musical Instrument Manufacturing | 39-3099 Entertainment attendants and related workers, all other | 25-4013 Museum Technicians and Conservators |
| 541340 Drafting Services | 339910 Jewelry (except Costume) Manufacturing | 39-3092 Costume attendants | 25-4011 Archivists |
| 519130 Internet Publishing and Broadcasting and Web Search Portals | 337212 Custom Architectural Woodwork and Millwork Manufacturing | 39-3031 Ushers, lobby attendants, and ticket takers | 21-2021 Directors, Religious Activities |
| 515210 Cable and Other Subscription Programming | 332323 Ornamental and Architectural Metal Work Manufacturing | 27-4099 Media and Communication Equipment Workers, All Other | 13-1011 Agents and Business Managers of Artists, Performers, and Athletes |
| 519110 News Syndicates | 327212 Other Pressed and Blown Glass and Glassware Manufacturing | 27-4012 Broadcast Technicians | 19-3091 Anthropologists and archeologists |
| 512199 Other Motion Picture and Video Ind. | 327110 Pottery, Ceramics, and Plumbing Fixture Manufacturing | 27-4011 Audio and Video Equipment Technicians | 19-3093 Historians |
| 512131 Motion Picture Theaters (except Drive-Ins) | 325992 Photographic Film, Paper, Plate, and Chemical Manufacturing | | |
| 511210 Software Publishers | 323120 Support Activities for Printing | | |
| 511199 All Other Publishers | 323117 Books Printing | | |
| 511191 Greeting Card Publishers | 323113 Commercial Screen Printing | | |
| 511110 Newspaper Publishers | 312130 Wineries | | |
| 451140 Musical Instrument and Supplies Stores | 312120 Breweries | | |
| 451211 Book Stores | | | |

Appendix B: *Durham's Arts Ecosystem*
The codebook and full dataset for the Durham Arts Ecosystem Database are available upon request.

Figure 6: Percent growth of Durham's arts ecosystem since 2003. n=3,448, representing 387 addresses for 345 arts-related organizations located in Durham County, NC from 2003-2017. Source: Laura Ritchie, Durham Arts Ecosystem Database.

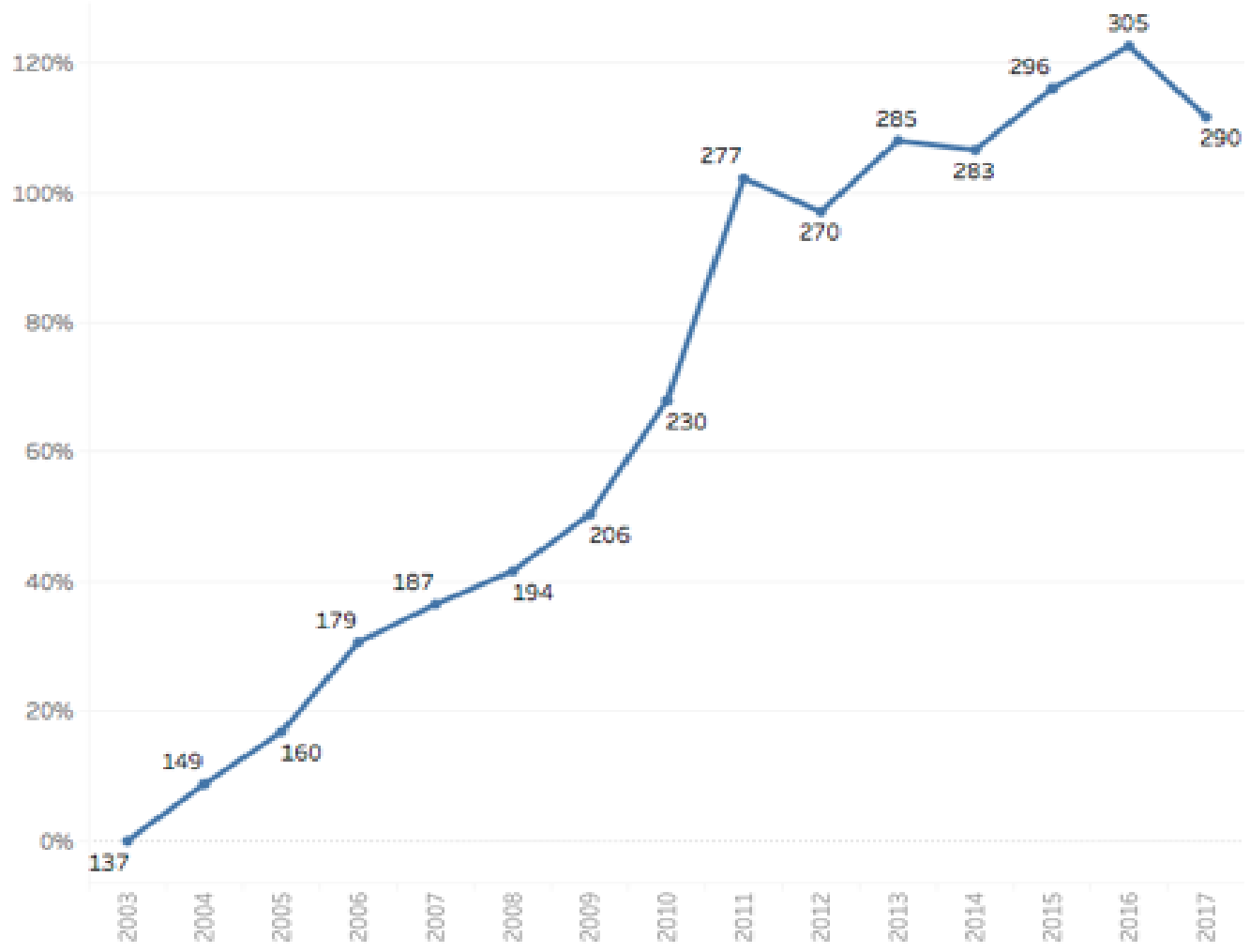
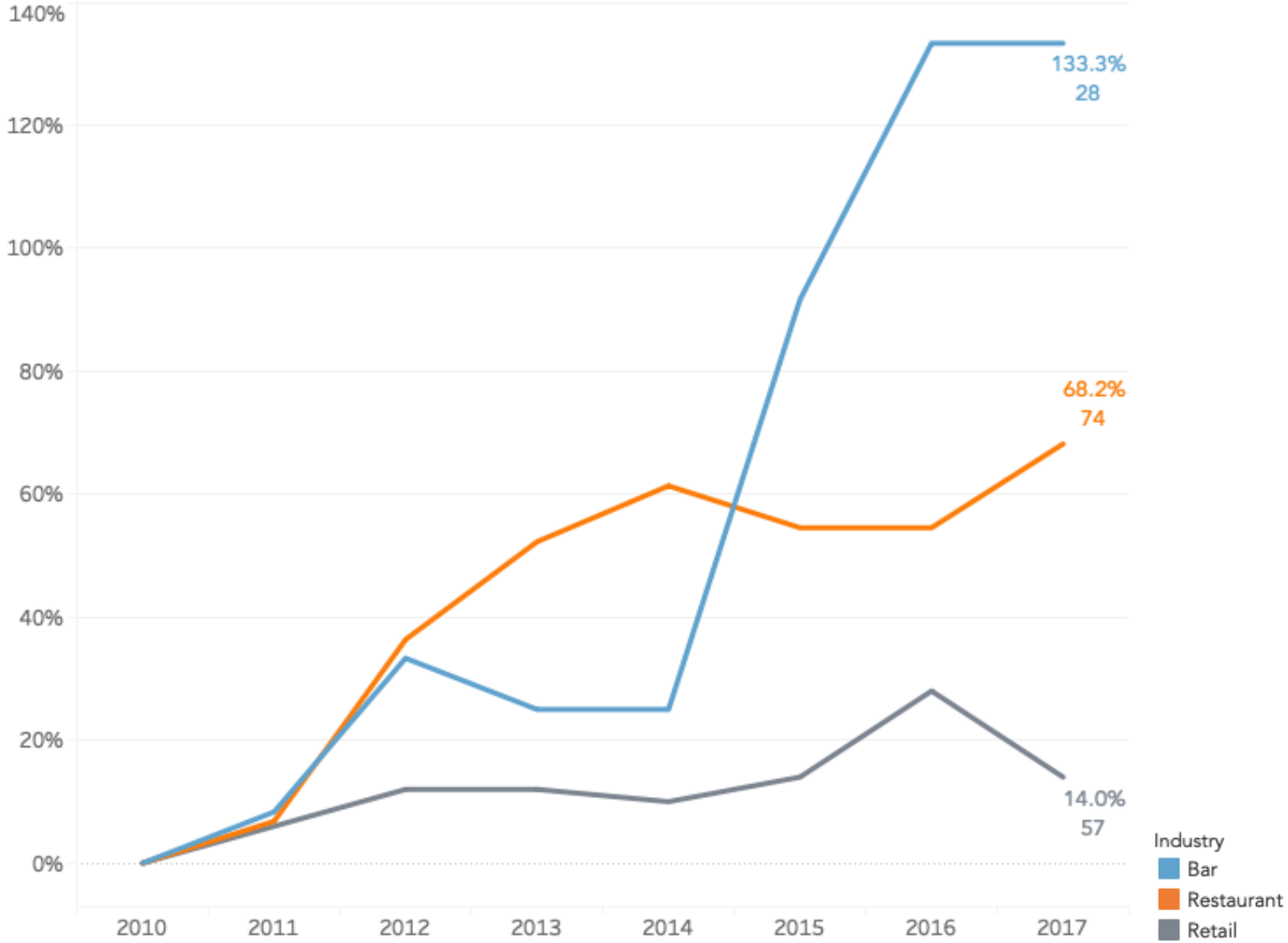


Figure 7: Arts ecosystem entities, organized by industry type that opened, closed, or moved in Durham, 2008-2017. n=287. Source: Laura Ritchie, Durham Arts Ecosystem Database.

Appendix C: *Durham's Business Improvement District*
The codebook and full dataset are available upon request.

Figure 8: Growth in retail, bars and restaurants in Durham's Business Improvement District, 2010-2017. n=1097, representing 261 businesses at 273 addresses. Source: Downtown Durham, Inc.



Appendix D: *Durham Arts Venues*
The codebook and full dataset for the Durham Arts Venues Database are available upon request.

Table 6: Arts venues in Durham that have closed or moved 2004-2019. n=81, representing 62 art venues at 81 locations. Source: Laura Ritchie, Durham Arts Venues Database.

| | **Venue Name** | **Venue Address** | **Discipline** | **Type** | **Earliest Date** | **Latest Date** | **Closed / Moved** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | 305 South | 305 S Dillard Street, Durham, NC 27701 | Performing artists | Core | 2005 | 2010 | Closed |
| 2. | Anomaly, Inc | 108 Morris Street, Durham NC 27701 | Performing artists | Core | 2012 | 2012 | Closed |
| 3. | Boxer's Ringside | 308 West Main Street, Durham, NC 27701 | Performing artists | Core | 2000 | 2007 | Closed |
| 4. | Bull City Headquarters | 723 North Mangum Street, Durham, NC 27701 | Performing artists | Core | 2007 | 2010 | Closed |
| 5. | Bully's Basement | 1004 Broad Street, Durham, NC 27701 | Performing artists | Core | 2001 | 2003 | Closed |
| 6. | Casbah | 1007 W Main St, Durham, NC 27701 | Performing artists | Core | 2010 | 2013 | Closed |
| 7. | Common Ground Theatre | 4815b Hillsborough Road, Durham, NC 27705 | Performing artists | Core | 2005 | 2016 | Closed |
| 8. | Cordoba Center for Performing Arts | 923 Franklin Street, Durham, NC 27701 | Performing artists | Core | 2011 | 2016 | Closed |
| 9. | Crazy Camp Music Park | 1920 Perry Street, Durham NC 27705 | Performing artists | Core | 2012 | 2016 | Closed |
| 10. | Manbites Dog Theater | 703 Foster Street, Durham, NC 27701 | Performing artists | Core | 1987 | 2018 | Closed |
| 11. | The Fellowship Hall | 719 N Mangum Street, Durham, NC 27701 | Performing artists | Core | 2013 | 2015 | Closed |
| 12. | The Shed | 807 East Main Street, Durham, NC 27701 | Performing artists | Core | 2014 | 2017 | Closed |
| 13. | Shadowbox | 900 East Club Boulevard, Durham, NC 27704 | Performing artists | Core | 2009 | 2012 | **Moved** |
| | | 715 Washington Street, Durham, NC 27701 | | | 2013 | 2020 | |
| 14. | 308 West Main | 308 West Main Street, Durham, NC 27701 | Visual artists | Core | 2012 | 2015 | Closed |
| 15. | Alizarin Art Gallery | 119 W Main Street, Durham, NC 27701 | Visual artists | Core | 2013 | 2015 | Closed |
| 16. | Branch Gallery | 401C Foster Street, Durham, NC 27701 | Visual artists | Core | 2006 | 2009 | Closed |
| 17. | Bull City Arts Collaborative | 401B-1 Foster Street, Durham, NC 27701 | Visual artists | Core | 2005 | 2016 | Closed |
| 18. | Durham Artists Movement | 111 West Parrish Street, Durham, NC 27701 | Visual artists | Core | 2016 | 2016 | Closed |
| 19. | Labourlove Gallery | 807 East Main Street, Durham, NC 27701 | Visual artists | Core | 2009 | 2014 | Closed |
| 20. | Liberty Warehouse | 530 Foster St, Durham, NC 27701 | Visual artists | Core | 2006 | 2011 | Closed |
| 21. | Naomi Studio and Gallery | 711 Iredell Street, Durham, NC 27705 | Visual artists | Core | 2015 | 2017 | Closed |
| 22. | Outsider's Art & Collectibles | 718 Iredell Street, Durham, NC 27705 | Visual artists | Core | 2009 | 2013 | Closed |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 23. | Pleiades Gallery | 109 East Chapel Hill Street, Durham, NC 27701 | Visual artists | Core | 2013 | 2017 | Closed |
| 24. | REDMASS Gallery | 105 West Parrish Street, Durham NC 27701 | Visual artists | Core | 2009 | 2011 | Closed |
| 25. | Seesaw Studio | 410 W Geer Street, Durham, NC 27701 | Visual artists | Core | 2007 | 2011 | Closed |
| 26. | Shed Letterpress | 618 Foster Street, Durham NC 27701 | Visual artists | Core | 2010 | 2014 | Closed |
| 27. | SPECTRE Arts | 1004 Morning Glory Avenue, Durham, NC 27701 | Visual artists | Core | 2013 | 2018 | Closed |
| 28. | Unexposed Microcinema | 105 Hood Street, Durham, NC 27701 | Visual artists | Core | 2016 | 2017 | Closed |
| 29. | Vega Metals | 214 Hunt Street, Durham, NC 27701 | Visual artists | Core | 2003 | 2018 | Closed |
| 30. | Venable Gallery & Studios | 302 East Pettigrew Street, Durham, NC 27701 | Visual artists | Core | 1993 | 2005 | Closed |
| 31. | West Main Street Gallery | 105 W Main Street, Durham, NC 27701 | Visual artists | Core | 2010 | 2010 | Closed |
| 32. | The Carrack | 111 West Parrish Street, Durham, NC 27701 | Visual artists | Core | 2011 | 2016 | Closed* |
| | | 947 East Main Street, Durham, NC 27701 | | | 2016 | 2017 | |
| 33. | Durham Arts Council Clay Studio | 546 Foster Street, Durham, NC 27701 | Visual artists | Core | 1999 | 2010 | **Moved** |
| | | 1058 West Club Boulevard, Durham, NC 27701 | | | 2011 | 2020 | |
| 34. | Horse & Buggy Press and Friends | 401 Foster St Durham, NC 27701 | Visual artists | Core | 2006 | 2016 | **Moved** |
| | | 1116 Broad Street, Durham, NC 27705 | | | 2017 | 2020 | |
| 35. | Liberty Arts | 538 Foster Street, Durham, NC 27701 | Visual artists | Core | 2001 | 2010 | **Moved** |
| | | 923 Franklin Street, Durham, NC 27701 | | | 2011 | 2015 | |
| | | 918 Pearl Street, Durham, NC 27701 | | | 2016 | 2020 | |
| 36. | Ngozi Design Collective | 321 W Main Street, Durham, NC 27701 | Visual artists | Core | 2015 | 2019 | **Moved** |
| | | 800 Taylor Street, Durham, NC 27701 | | | 2019 | 2020 | |
| 37. | Supergraphic | 601 Ramseur Street, Durham, NC 27701 | Visual artists | Core | 2013 | 2015 | **Moved** |
| | | 807 East Main Street, Durham, NC 27701 | | | 2015 | 2017 | |
| | | 2240 Dominion Street, Durham, NC 27704 | | | 2019 | 2020 | |
| 38. | The Scrap Exchange | 548 Foster Street, Durham, NC 27701 | Visual artists | Core | 2000 | 2011 | **Moved** |
| | | 923 Franklin Street, Durham, NC 27701 | | | 2011 | 2014 | |
| | | 2050 Chapel Hill Road, Durham, NC 27707 | | | 2014 | 2020 | |
| 39. | The Know Bookstore | 2520 Fayetteville St, Durham, NC27707 | Writers and authors | Core | 1991 | 2009 | Closed |
| 40. | Belt Line Station | 923 Franklin Street, Durham, NC 27701 | Performing artists | Non-core | 2002 | 2017 | Closed |
| 41. | Blue Coffee Cafe | 202 N Corcoran Street, Durham, NC 27701 | Performing artists | Non-core | 2005 | 2014 | Closed |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 42. | Joe & Jo's | 427 West Main Street, Durham, NC 27701 | Performing artists | Non-core | 2002 | 2006 | Closed |
| 43. | Sam's Quik Shop | 1605 Erwin Road, Durham, NC 27705 | Performing artists | Non-core | 1974 | 2018 | Closed |
| 44. | Siren's Lounge | 711 Rigsbee Avenue, Durham, NC 27705 | Performing artists | Non-core | 2009 | 2012 | Closed |
| 45. | Talk of the Town | 108 East Main Street, Durham, NC 27701 | Performing artists | Non-core | 1991 | 2013 | Closed |
| 46. | The Broad Street Cafe | 1116 Broad Street, Durham, NC 27705 | Performing artists | Non-core | 2006 | 2013 | Closed |
| 47. | The MarVell | 119 West Main Street, Durham, NC 27701 | Performing artists | Non-core | 2007 | 2011 | Closed |
| 48. | Whiskey | 347 West Main Street, Durham, NC 27701 | Performing artists | Non-core | 2009 | 2014 | Closed |
| 49. | Beyú Caffé | 335 West Main Street, Durham, NC 27701 | Performing artists | Non-core | 2009 | 2016 | **Moved** |
| | | 341 West Main Street, Durham, NC 27701 | | | 2017 | 2020 | |
| 50. | Offbeat Music | 905 West Main Street #S119, Durham, NC 27701 | Musicians and composers | Non-core | 2004 | 2015 | Closed |
| 51. | Chaz's Bull City Records | 1916 Perry Street, Durham, NC 27705 | Musicians and composers | Non-core | 2005 | 2010 | **Moved** |
| | | 2600 Hillsborough Road, Durham, NC 27705 | | | 2011 | 2020 | |
| 52. | High Strung Violins & Guitars | 718 9th Street, Durham, NC 27705 | Musicians and composers | Non-core | 2003 | 2007 | **Moved** |
| | | 1116 Broad St Durham NC 27705 | | | 2008 | 2014 | |
| | | 1805 West Markham Avenue, Durham, NC 27705 | | | 2015 | 2020 | |
| 53. | Bull City Craft | 2501 University Drive, Durham, NC 27707 | Visual artists | Non-core | 2011 | 2015 | Closed* |
| | | 807 East Main Street, Durham, NC 27701 | | | 2015 | 2016 | |
| | | 105 West NC 54 Suite 265, Durham, NC 27713 | | | 2016 | 2019 | |
| 54. | Francesca's Dessert Caffe | 706 9th Street, Durham, NC 27705 | Visual artists | Non-core | 1985 | 2017 | Closed |
| 55. | Runaway Flagship | 212 West Main Street, Durham, NC 27701 | Visual artists | Non-core | 2016 | 2019 | Closed |
| 56. | The Untidy Museum | 1116 Broad Street, Durham, NC 27705 | Visual artists | Non-core | 2000 | 2009 | Closed |
| 57. | Dog Star Tattoo Company | 730 Ninth Street, Durham, NC 27705 | Visual artists | Non-core | 1997 | 2010 | **Moved** |
| | | 807 East Main Street, Durham, NC 27701 | | | 2011 | 2020 | |
| 58. | The Mothership (formerly Mercury Studios) | 407 North Mangum Street, Durham, NC 27701 | Visual artists | Non-core | 2012 | 2014 | **Moved** |
| | | 401 W Geer St Durham Nc 27701 | | | 2014 | 2020 | |
| 59. | B W & A Books | 1006 Lamond Avenue A, Durham, NC 27701 | Writers and authors | Non-core | 2004 | 2016 | Closed |
| 60. | Nice Price Books | 811 Broad Street, Durham, NC 27705 | Writers and authors | Non-core | 2001 | 2016 | Closed |
| 61. | Northgate Books | 1058 West Club Boulevard, Durham, NC 27701 | Writers and authors | Non-core | 2010 | 2015 | Closed |
| 62. | Urban Knowledge Bookstore | 1058 West Club Boulevard, Durham, NC 27701 | Writers and authors | Non-core | 2010 | 2011 | Closed |

*Moved before closing.

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