

ARTS IN THE PARKS

Bringing Creativity to Queens Communities

A partnership between the Queens College School of Arts & NYC Parks
IMPACT REPORT 2024-2025





PARTNERSHIP OVERVIEW

Between fall 2024 and summer 2025, the Queens College School of Arts (QC SoA) partnered with NYC Parks to bring vibrant arts and cultural programming to public spaces across Queens.

An initiative designed by QC School of Arts **Associate Dean Julia del Palacio** and implemented by **Program & Communications Manager Neophytos Ioannou**, the partnership consisted of dance workshops, arts trail nature walks, jazz and World Music concerts, and more to enhance the lives of New Yorkers, promote well-being, and provide invaluable professional opportunities for SoA students and graduates.

Now in its **second year**, the initiative spanned **twelve** Queens parks, with the majority of events concentrated in summer 2025 and select dates held in fall, winter, and spring.

KEY PARTNERSHIP OBJECTIVES

- **Expand access to arts and culture** for diverse communities throughout Queens.
- **Foster collaboration** among SoA students, alumni, staff, and NYC Parks to deliver free programming.
- **Transform public spaces** into hubs of creative expression, learning, and connection.
- **Strengthen community well-being** through accessible cultural experiences to engage and inspire.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

As we celebrate the partnership, here is a snapshot of our activities and achievements this year:



**13 VISUAL ART
ACTIVITIES**



**28 MUSIC
ACTIVITIES**



**24 DANCE
ACTIVITIES**



47 PERFORMANCES



35 WORKSHOPS



**17 THEATRE
PERFORMANCES**

PARK BREAKDOWN



**Flushing Meadows Corona Park:
12 Events**



**Forest Park & Highland Park:
22 Events**



**Rockaway Parks:
9 Events**



**Roy Wilkins Park:
27 Events**



**District 7A (Crocheron Park,
Alley Pond Park, & Little Bay Park):
11 Events**



**80+
Total Events**

Activities ranged from performances, workshops, and interactive trails and included Arts Trail Nature Walks, Visual Art Workshops, Percussion Workshops, World Music Concerts, Jazz Concerts, Theatre Performances, Dance Performances, Salsa Dance Workshops, Hip Hop Dance Workshops, and Afro-Caribbean Dance Workshops.

Theatre - Peter & The Wolf

This year, the School of Arts presented a reimagined, in-the-round theater adaptation of Sergei Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf*, touring **17 free performances** in Queens parks. **More than 500 attendees** enjoyed family-friendly productions brought to life by School of Arts students and recent alumni, led by faculty mentorship. The series **nurtured emerging talent**, **activated public spaces**, and **strengthened community connections** across the borough.

*"Whether you're hearing Peter and the Wolf for the first time or the hundredth, this fresh take brings the story to life in a whole new way. It's not just music—it's **movement, emotion, and storytelling**, right here in the heart of Queens."*

-Simone Yearwood, Dean of Faculty, Queens College School of Arts & Humanities.



ENGAGEMENT

1,700+ Queens Residents Reached

Engaged diverse communities across New York City, bringing creativity and culture directly to neighborhoods and fostering a sense of belonging through shared cultural experiences.

40 Artist Opportunities

SoA students and recent graduates taught and performed across all artistic mediums.

5 School of Arts Internships

Trained students and recent graduates with hands-on learning in administration, curation, operations, and outreach, bridging the gap between academic study and professional practice.



IMPACT

Benefiting community residents and Queens College students and graduates, we have transformed public spaces across Queens into vibrant cultural hubs and provided valuable hands-on experience for artists.

TESTIMONIALS



Artist Reflections:

"It's deeply fulfilling to connect with participants and bring joy while fostering wellness, culture, and community through dance."

- Kiara Paige, Founder of CarNYval Dancers

"I'm proud to see kids, teens, and adults transform these workshops into their own creative expression, with our local talent showcased at Roy Wilkins Park!"

- Daniella Campero, Visual Art Teaching Artist

"Playing jazz and World Music for local neighborhoods was both refreshing and inspiring. It's always a privilege to perform for groups that appreciate these free, high-quality, and accessible events."

- David Najera Gonzalez, Music Performer

Coordinator Reflections:

"The School of Arts music students are incredible, and their passion for performing brought the joy of live music to the community."

- Sabrina Castro, School of Arts Coordinator

"It was incredibly rewarding to help coordinate a wide variety of arts events and engage directly with participants in Queens parks."

- Sara Restrepo, School of Arts Coordinator



Community Reflections:

"It's so lovely to see these events and how they bring the arts and community together."

- Visual Art Workshop Participant

"These classes are fantastic. We wish we could have them year-round!"

- Afro-Caribbean Dance Workshop Participant

"My son's planning to have his wedding here at Oak Ridge. The band is so great; I might ask them to play at the wedding!"

- World Music Concert attendee

"The Loose Change Quartet's presence brought a special added touch to our event and made it so much more with the music they performed. It was truly a wonderful performance!"

- Jackie Rogers, President of The Garden by the Bay



2025 BUDGET

Budget

Expenses	
Performing Artist fees (music)	\$24,925
Performing Artist fees (theatre)	\$16,425
Performing Artist fees (dance)	\$1,350
Teaching Artist fees (visual art, dance, & music)	\$7,100
Materials	\$980
Marketing	\$1,000
Administrative/Curatorial Expenses	\$9,860
Operations/Coordination	\$9,860
Insurance	\$5,000
Contingency (covered by the Queens College School of Arts)	\$5,000

TOTAL BUDGET	\$81,500
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Income

New York City Department of Parks & Recreation	\$43,950
The Forest Park Trust	\$18,100
Alliance for Flushing Meadows Corona Park	\$13,650
Queens College School of Arts	\$5,000
Kupferberg Center for the Arts	\$800



VISION

NEXT STEPS

- **Program Expansion:** We hope to expand our programming to more NYC Parks in 2026 to ensure greater access to the arts for all residents.
- **Diverse Offerings:** We are committed to offer a wider range of programs that reflect the unique cultural identities and interests of local communities, ensuring our initiatives resonate with diverse audiences.
- **Deeper Community Engagement:** We will ensure that we increase outreach efforts, **engage more local partners**, and **create additional leadership opportunities for SoA students and alumni**.



2026 OFFERINGS

Activity	Discipline	Style	Cost*
Expenses			
Workshop	Dance	Hip Hop	\$750
Workshop	Dance	Afro-Caribbean	\$750
Workshop	Dance	Salsa	\$750
Performance	Dance	Contemporary	\$1,000
Performance	Dance	Hip Hop	\$1,000
Workshop	Visual Art	Sketching	\$875
Workshop	Visual Art	Painting	\$875
Workshop	Visual Art	Ceramics	\$875
Workshop	Visual Art	Crafting	\$875
Arts Trail	Visual Art	Arts Trail Nature Walk	\$875
Workshop	Music	Percurssion	\$875
Concert	Music	World Music	\$1,500
Concert	Music	Classical Music	\$1,500
Concert	Music	Jazz Music	\$1,500

Cost includes the teaching artist fees, arts materials, operation fees, administrative and curatorial fees, and the marketing and graphic design expenses.



IN CLOSING

Our vision is to create a long-lasting partnership that serves as a model for public engagement in the city. Through multi-year initiatives, we will continue to bring creativity to new spaces, enriching New Yorkers' lives, and fostering a vibrant cultural landscape citywide. We aim to **expand the initiative** to include interdisciplinary projects that connect the arts through various artistic mediums and fields. By integrating these disciplines, we will create impactful programs that address both social and environmental challenges through creative solutions. We seek to **attract future funding, foster new connections, and inspire other organizations** to join us in our mission to bring cultural enrichment and empowerment to every corner of New York City.

The Queens College School of Arts & NYC Parks partnership has set a new standard for community engagement through the arts, demonstrating the **transformative power of creative collaboration**. Building on this year's successes, we are committed to deepening our impact, **continuing to enrich public spaces, and fostering creativity**. Our ongoing efforts aim to sustain and expand this meaningful initiative, ensuring a **lasting impact on New York City's cultural landscape**.

Report created by Neophytos Ioannou
and designed by Sara Restrepo.

