

WATERFRONT PARK: PERFORMING ARTS RESIDENCIES

Request for Qualifications

Submission Deadline: February 20, 2019 by 5:00 PM Eastern Standard Time



The City of Alexandria's [Office of the Arts](#) is seeking two performing artists or artist groups/organizations to develop and perform new work for Waterfront Park. These site-specific residencies are opportunities to collaborate with the Office of the Arts on the creation of an original site-specific performance in response to the new temporary interactive public artwork *Mirror Mirror* by [SOFTlab](#) installed at Waterfront Park. One opportunity is for dance or movement-based work and the other is for music or sound-based work.

The selected artists or artist groups/organizations will be commissioned to create a new site-specific work through a residency process, beginning with a period of site research and exploration, followed by proposing a direction for the work, time developing and rehearsing the performance, and a minimum of four scheduled public performances. *Mirror Mirror* is the first artwork commissioned in the [Site/See Exhibition Series](#), an annual exhibition of temporary public art whose goal is to attract visitors, foster interaction, provide a visual anchor and enrich the experience of Alexandria's waterfront.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

About Alexandria's Public Art Program

[Alexandria's Public Art Program](#) is an emerging program housed in the City's Office of the Arts that is building a reputation for working with artists in innovative ways to realize new projects. The Program's vision is for public art to enrich the experience of Alexandria's past, celebrate the spirit of Alexandria's present and shape the identity of Alexandria's future.

About Waterfront Park

[Waterfront Park](#) is a new public plaza at the foot of King Street, historic Old Town's main commercial street. The new plaza is adjacent to the Torpedo Factory and the existing Waterfront Park, on the site of the former Old Dominion Boat Club's building and parking lot. The new park serves as the keystone to the revitalization of the Potomac River waterfront in Alexandria. It features an open plaza, a waterfront promenade, shade structures and modular space that can adapt to different uses throughout the year.

About the *Site/See* Exhibition Series and *Mirror Mirror*

Site/See: New Views in Old Town is a new annual series of temporary public art installations that are intended to showcase Alexandria's Public Art Program through new, exciting, high-quality contemporary artwork at a key riverfront location. The series aims to foster engagement and interaction with contemporary works of art on Alexandria's historic waterfront and to amplify Alexandria's reputation as an arts destination with new work that captures that public's imagination and is unlike anything that can currently be experienced in the region.

Mirror Mirror is the inaugural work in the series. It is an interactive artwork that takes the form of an opened circle, 25 feet in diameter and approximately 8 feet high, that visitors can walk inside and around. Sited along the Potomac River near King Street, it is inspired by both the form and function of a lighthouse, one of the most prominent pieces of architecture to connect land and sea. The artwork is programmed to respond to sound with light, allowing visitors to interact with it and affect its appearance using their voices and bodies. Its materials and

interactive nature play with the ideas of reflection and refraction of light, referencing Alexandria's historic Jones Point Lighthouse and its special Fresnel lens, which was the most advanced lens technology of its time in the 1800s. A full description of the artwork and its interactive capabilities, including images and an animation are available [here](#).

Mirror Mirror will be installed in March and remain on view until November 2019.

GOALS AND PROCESS

The Office of the Arts is developing a robust line-up of public programming to accompany the *Site/See Exhibition Series*, which will include pop-up programming facilitated through its [Mobile Art Lab](#), performances created through the Performing Arts Residencies, as well as workshops and panel discussions. The intent of this programming is to support the *Site/See Exhibition Series* and further activate Waterfront Park, foster engagement and interaction with the temporary artwork, and attract visitors to experience the temporary artwork.

Performing Arts Residencies' Goals

Work created through each Performing Arts Residency should:

- Feature or explore themes, topics, materials, and/or concepts related to *Mirror Mirror*;
- Make use of and engage with the interactive qualities of *Mirror Mirror*;
- Capture the public's imagination;
- Highlight and activate the park as a new civic space; and
- Attract new and repeat visitors to the park.

Process

Once the selected artists or artist groups/organizations are under contract they will begin a two to three week long immersive period of site research and exploration, which will include access to Office of the Arts staff and consultants, SOFTlab, and other City staff or partners for conversations. The artist or artist group/organization will then propose to Office of the Arts staff a direction and a schedule/timeline for the original site-specific piece they will create and perform. Once this direction and schedule/timeline is approved by staff, the artist or artist group/organization will develop the piece and conduct rehearsals, according to the agreed-upon schedule/timeline. The artist or group/organizations will work with Office of the Arts staff to schedule at least four public performances to take place during the period from June to November 2019.

The selected artists or artist group/organizations will have access to the site in Waterfront Park for rehearsals and other preparatory activities, but the site will also be open to the public and rehearsals/activities will be in public view. Free indoor rehearsal space will also be available to the selected artist or artist group/organization at the [Durant Center](#).

ARTIST OR ARTIST GROUP/ORGANIZATION RESPONSIBILITIES

Dance/Movement Residency

The artist or artist group/organization selected for the Dance/Movement Residency will:

- Collaborate with the Office of the Arts to create an original, site-specific dance/movement-based performance, approximately 7 to 10 minutes in length, that is in response to or in conversation with SOFTlab's temporary public artwork *Mirror Mirror* and engages with its interactive qualities.

- Provide a brief written narrative description of the commissioned performance.
- Work with the Office of the Arts to schedule a minimum of four performances at Waterfront Park during the period June to November 2019. Performances should be minimum of approximately 30 minutes in length and must include the commissioned site-specific piece, and can also include performance of work previously created by the artist or artist group/organization and/or work created by others, as appropriate and approved by staff.
- Work with the Office of the Arts to document and archive the performances and the process.
- Provide any additional equipment needed.

Music/Sound Residency

The artist or artist group/organization selected for the Music/Sound Residency will:

- Collaborate with the Office of the Arts to create an original, site-specific music/sound-based piece, approximately 7 to 10 minutes in length, that is response to or in conversation with SOFTlab's temporary public artwork *Mirror Mirror* and engages with its interactive qualities.
- Provide a brief written narrative description of the commissioned piece.
- Work with the Office of the Arts to schedule a minimum of four performances at Waterfront Park during the period June to November 2019. Performances should be a minimum of approximately 30 minutes in length and must include the commissioned piece and can also include work previously created by the artist or artist group/organization, and/or the performance of work created by others.
- Work with the Office of the Arts to document and archive the work and the process.
- Provide any additional sound or audio equipment needed.

OFFICE OF THE ARTS RESPONSIBILITIES

The Office of the Arts and its City partners will provide access to the site and a green room/staging area within the adjacent Torpedo Factory for performances and rehearsals, parking for performances and rehearsals, permits, marketing and communications and project management support.

The Office of the Arts will also:

- Approve the direction for the original site-specific work before the artist or artist group/organization embarks on further development of the idea.
- Facilitate conversations between SOFTlab and the selected artists or groups/organizations.
- Work with the selected artist or group/organization to develop and schedule the public performances, including approving any additional content selected for performance.
- Provide videography and photography of the performances for documentation and media purposes.
- Provide an 8-channel mixer with two 15" powered speakers (with stands) and 2 microphones (with stands) that may be used by the selected artist.
- Provide rehearsal space at the Durant Center, if requested by artist.

SELECTION PROCESS

A jury organized by the Office of the Arts will review submissions and select one artist or artist group/organization for the dance/movement performing arts residency and one artist or artist group/organization for the music/sound performing arts residency. The jury or staff may choose to interview candidates before making a final selection.

BUDGET

The artist or group/organization selected for each residency will receive an all-inclusive fee of \$8000 to develop the original, site-specific work and provide a minimum of four scheduled performances on site at King Street Waterfront Park within the period of June to November 2019.

ELIGIBILITY

This residency is open to all contemporary artists and artist groups/organizations, age 18 and older, based in the Commonwealth of Virginia, the State of Maryland and the District of Columbia who work in the fields of dance and movement-based work for the theater or music and sound, including but not limited to choreographers, directors, dancers, dance companies, professors and students of dance or music, composers, musicians, DJs, and interdisciplinary artists.

TO SUBMIT

Please submit the following in a single PDF file to schiff@viapartnership.com by February 20, 2019 at 5:00 p.m. EST:

- 1) Cover Sheet with name, address, phone number, website and e-mail address of the artist or artist group/organization applying. Indicate if you would like to be considered for the Dance/Movement Residency or the Music/Sound Residency. If a group/organization, designate and name a lead artist who will be the main point of contact.
- 2) Letter of Interest of no more than 2 pages indicating your experience developing original work and your preliminary approach to the residency. If a group/organization, also briefly describe your history of working together.
- 3) Resume/CV of no more than 3 pages. If a group/organization, include the resume/CV for the designated lead artist and up to three additional resumes of no more than three pages each.
- 4) Web links for up to five video or sound clips of performances or compositions by the artist or group/organization. Videos or sound clips must be online and cannot be files that must be downloaded to access. For each clip provide a 1-2 sentence description, including the name of the performers and/or creators and the year.
- 5) Names and contact information for three professional references.
- 6) Any information already known about your availability from June to November 2019, including weeks/months you would prefer to work and perform.

QUESTIONS

For questions about this opportunity, please contact Aliza Schiff at schiff@viapartnership.com.