



Creating Spaces

Performing Artists in Sacred Spaces

AUSTIN • BALTIMORE • DETROIT



From the Director

In my fifteen-plus years of professional theater experience, I have witnessed the deafening clamor for space. Space for rehearsals, space for performances, space for offices, meetings, and classes, and spaces for “stuff”—props, costumes, sets, music, lighting equipment, sound equipment. I constantly hear horror stories from artists about lack of performance space, such as the dancer who wanted to produce an intergenerational dance, but the only space she had access to had a concrete floor with little heat and no bathroom.

Over the past five years working at Partners for Sacred Places, the conversation about space also exists, but the tone is different. Spaces of many historic sacred places are simply too enormous. Spaces once filled with families, activities, and programming are now empty, and the congregations continue to dwindle.

This research project conducted by Partners for Sacred Places and Drexel University changes the conversation: from general comments about artists needing space to pinpointing their exact needs within any given region. This research shifts perceptions from viewing these sacred places as impenetrable fortresses to recognizing them as assets with exciting potential. And with more than 130,000 square feet of unused space unearthed in just 18 sacred places, the possibilities are exciting. With time, manpower, technology, and the appropriate resources, sacred places can help fulfill the space needs of performing artists and fill these historic, iconic spaces with beautiful words, movement, and music.

Our work in these three wonderfully different cities—Austin, Baltimore, and Detroit—made it abundantly clear that artists have a dire need for spaces in which to create and work, and sacred places offer the potential to help fill this void in an exciting and dynamic way.



Karen DiLossi
Director, Arts in Sacred Places

From the Research Partner

Knowledge is a means to address society's greatest challenges. As a professor and a researcher, I believe effective change is a result of desire and data. Artists have passion, creativity, and talent. They improve our communities and our lives. So why do so many artists struggle when it comes to sustaining their artistic practice and careers? How can artists be more integrated into communities and neighborhoods? How can artists serve as creative entrepreneurs, building both social and financial capital?

While there is an abundance of anecdotal evidence on artists and space needs, we sought to ground our work in previous research and then gather reliable baseline data on artists and their needs for space. We coupled the artist data with data gathered from historic sacred spaces.

The real value of this project is in putting our research into action. An innovative program model is one of the key findings we developed. This model provides a structured method by which our hypothesis can be fully proven and enacted, providing a new approach to addressing issues facing artists and historic sacred spaces.



Neville K. Vakharia
Assistant Professor and Research Director
Drexel University Westphal College of Media Arts & Design

I am thrilled to have been part of this research effort, and I look forward to seeing its results in action.

Executive Summary

The **Performing Artists in Sacred Spaces** study builds upon a successful pilot program of Partners for Sacred Places, primarily focused in Philadelphia and Chicago, that facilitates long-term, mutually beneficial space-sharing relationships between arts organizations—with inadequate or no home space—and houses of worship with space to share.

The study explores the following question:

Can a scalable, replicable program model be developed for sacred places to serve as homes to performing artists and small to midsize performing arts organizations, thereby providing much needed support to the sector, encouraging emerging artists, diversifying and expanding audiences, and supporting underserved communities?

The findings demonstrate a range of issues, challenges, and opportunities facing performing artists and clearly establish that these artists

- overwhelmingly see a need for more performance, rehearsal, and administrative spaces;
- see a home space as critical to artistic development and community engagement; and
- feel that a historic sacred space could enhance the experience of their work.

The research confirms that many sacred spaces face diminished membership, limited resources to support and maintain their facilities, and a desire to provide value as a community resource and asset, but lack the resources to create these links. The findings in each city establish the significant amount of available space, the desire of sacred spaces to serve as a broader community asset, and their minimal concerns about artistic content and control.

This report and its findings have implications for artists, sacred spaces, and the funding community not only in the three cities studied, but also throughout the country. Partners for Sacred Places is uniquely positioned to seek the human and financial capital to develop a replicable, scalable program that could have significant impact across the nation for artists and sacred places.

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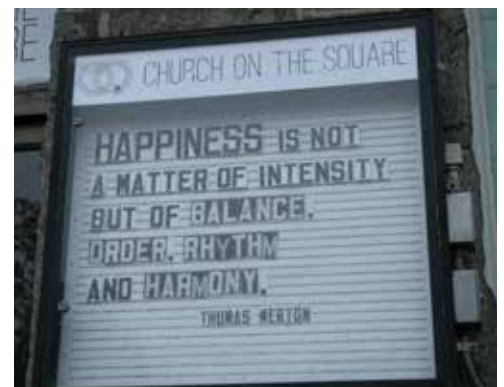
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Baltimore's Church on the Square

Terminology



Austin Shakespeare's *The Invention of Love*

Artist: Performing artists as individual practitioners, part of a performing artists' collective or cooperative, or affiliated with a performing arts organization. The term can also refer to management or executive staff and board members of a performing arts organization. The work of these artists may be multidisciplinary in nature but must comprise at least one discipline of the performing arts. Organizationally, these artists may be sole proprietors or part of a nonprofit or for-profit entity.

Home Space: Non-residential, long-term or recurring spaces that can be used by artists (as defined above) for performance, rehearsal, and/or administrative use. A home space can also refer to long-term or recurring space used by multiple artists or organizations. This term does not refer to live/work space.



Highland Park Baptist Church Sanctuary, Austin, TX

Sacred Space: The facilities of a historic faith-based institution, which include the worship spaces or sanctuaries, as well as all associated spaces, such as fellowship halls, gyms, educational wings, and social halls. Such spaces are key architectural elements in many historic sacred spaces. These spaces may be in limited use for religious purposes and may already be used by other community groups. In the scope of Partners for Sacred Places' work, a "historic sacred space" is defined as being at least 50 years in age and purpose-built as a religious property.



Detroit Fox Theatre Exterior

Austin, Baltimore and Detroit: Refers specifically to official city boundaries of each region and not the surrounding areas. Only artists that live or work in these cities were included, and all sacred spaces in the study were located within the city limits.

The Need

Due to their specialized space requirements, performing artists and small to midsize performing arts organizations have a critical need for adequate, appropriate, and affordable performance, rehearsal, and administrative spaces. These artists and organizations are routinely priced out of areas that become popular due to the very atmosphere they helped create. As artists are displaced, their ability to engage in creative activity in a setting that supports close interaction with peers and local clientele is threatened. This is evident in many cities where escalating rents and property costs have led to a severe shortage of affordable space, causing a shift in the cities' creative centers. Those hardest hit are typically younger, emerging artists and companies, which are critical to the future development of performance-based art forms.

At the same time, Partners for Sacred Places' experience and research with thousands of

congregations across the nation has shown that many sacred spaces are overwhelmed with the burden of caring for surplus space in their older and historic properties. As membership at houses of worship decreases, faith leaders struggle to find new ways to fill their buildings and fund repairs. These magnificent spaces are underused. Many congregations—committed to their cities and deeply engaged with the communities they serve—continue to occupy their historic buildings, but are so small that they no longer worship in their sanctuaries. Moreover, their fellowship halls, kitchens, Sunday school wings and other ancillary spaces are underused or vacant Monday through Saturday.

The challenges faced by both sectors—the lack of appropriate, adequate, and affordable space for small to mid-size dance and theater organizations, and historic sacred places with surplus space and depleted revenues—are only expected to intensify. With skilled stewardship, congregations of sacred spaces can be mobilized to contribute to the revitalization and renewal of the performing arts disciplines through the careful matching of their underused assets. These sacred places could serve as homes to a wide range of organizations and activities, all revolving around a historic physical space.

This research project builds upon Partners' successful pilot of Making Homes for the Arts in Sacred Places (AiSP) program, operating in Philadelphia and Chicago. AiSP was designed to facilitate long-term, mutually beneficial space-sharing relationships between arts organizations with inadequate

“Having a home space is so important to running my organization. If I have to call all over town to find space each week, the quality of my art suffers due to lack of time. Also, not having a home space makes the process chaotic for the dancers.”

- Detroit Performing Artist



MSU Community School, Detroit, MI

Sacred places provide valuable space for performing artists of all ages.

or no home space and houses of worship with space to share. AiSP maintains a database of information on arts organizations and sacred places in these two cities; provides tools such as training, documentation, and budget and legal assistance; and acts as a matchmaker and facilitator for partnerships.

Partners also has strong expertise on adaptive reuse of vacant religious properties, leading design charrettes, community and political engagements, and business and funding plan development. While the AiSP pilot programs in Philadelphia and Chicago are successful and ongoing, they are not readily scalable or replicable in other cities or regions.

Why this project?

Partners for Sacred Places sees this research project as an important opportunity to determine how to provide valuable services to artists and sacred places beyond their three regional offices in Philadelphia, Chicago, and Fort Worth. If Partners is able to cultivate cultural partnerships, assess the viability of matching artists with sacred places in the area, and develop the inventory that would satisfy the need, then the cultural impact of the Making Homes for the Arts in Sacred Places work would be felt beyond just artists and members of sacred places, to include students, audiences, and underserved communities.

This project was initially fueled by visits to each of the three regions and predated the start of the study or any funding. In each of the three cities, there was a palpable feeling of dissatisfaction with the current artist-used facilities as well as an eagerness on behalf of the congregations to maximize the uses of their spaces. The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation's Fund for National Projects provided an ideal opportunity for Partners for Sacred Places to conduct rigorous research and spend time in each of the three cities, getting well acquainted with ideal artists and sacred places. Studying these three cities in depth gave Partners a chance to envision a program with a national reach.



Austin Focus Group

PHOTO BY MATSON DUNCAN Focus groups and surveys were sources of data.

Methodology & Approach

The research methodology and approach to this study was based on the hypothesis that the space needs of performing artists and organizations in the cities of Austin, TX; Baltimore, MD; and Detroit, MI could be alleviated through a systematic approach to creating home spaces within historic sacred spaces. Further, it was hypothesized that the findings in these three cities could be used to develop the fundamental elements of a scalable, replicable program model.

The research protocols for this study employed mixed methods to ensure that useful, representative data were collected. The two sample cohorts studied were performing artists and historic sacred spaces. All research methods were completed in accordance with best practices for human subject research and aligned with protocols identified by institutional review boards for social/behavioral research.

Data Collection: Performing Artists

Data on performing artists were gathered through surveys and focus groups. The survey was broadly distributed (online and in print) to hundreds of performing artists living or working in Austin, Baltimore, and Detroit. Local arts service organizations and municipal government agencies disseminated the survey to maximize the reach and response

rate. The surveys were also disseminated at in-person town-hall-style gatherings held in each city.

The survey focused on performing artists' needs for space, the amenities required, and attitudes towards the potential use of historic sacred spaces to meet artists' needs. The survey comprised Likert Item questions for which basic statistical measures could be calculated as well as narrative elements to provide additional context. Survey respondents not affiliated with a performing arts discipline were excluded from analysis.

A total of 238 performing artists were surveyed in the three cities. Figures 1 and 2 show the breakdown of performing artists in each city by artistic discipline and affiliation.

Based on the U.S. Census estimates of the number of artists in each city and using data from other sources and regions, the response rates were deemed appropriate to reflect a cross-

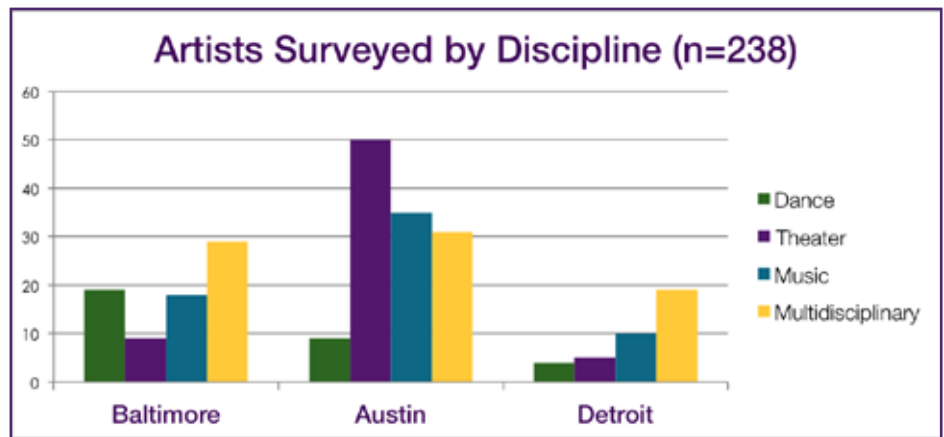


Figure 1. Artists surveyed, by city and discipline

section of the city's performing artists. However, it is important to note that the survey process was self-selecting and artists chose whether or not to participate.

A total of 12 focus groups were held in the three cities, with 63 artists participating. The focus group protocol comprised 16 structured, qualitative questions in addition to open-ended commentary. A senior staff member of Partners for Sacred Places moderated each focus group, and an additional staff member took notes and recorded the audio of each session. Participants were permitted to provide additional insights beyond

the scope of the protocol if the information provided was deemed to be beneficial to the discussion. The focus groups were recorded, transcribed, and coded for analysis of common themes.

Data Collection: Historic Sacred Spaces

Historic sacred spaces in each city were contacted directly and through denominational governing bodies to assess their interest in participating in the study. In total, 202 historic sacred spaces were contacted in the three cities. Fifty-five historic sacred places expressed interest in participating in the study, and six were selected in each city for an in-depth process to create a detailed catalog of their physical assets and amenities. These six spaces were selected based on the diversity of neighborhoods and faith traditions. Leadership from each of these six spaces was interviewed, and a standardized assessment tool was used to create uniform profile on each space. Figures 3, 4, and 5 (next page) show the names and locations of the historic sacred

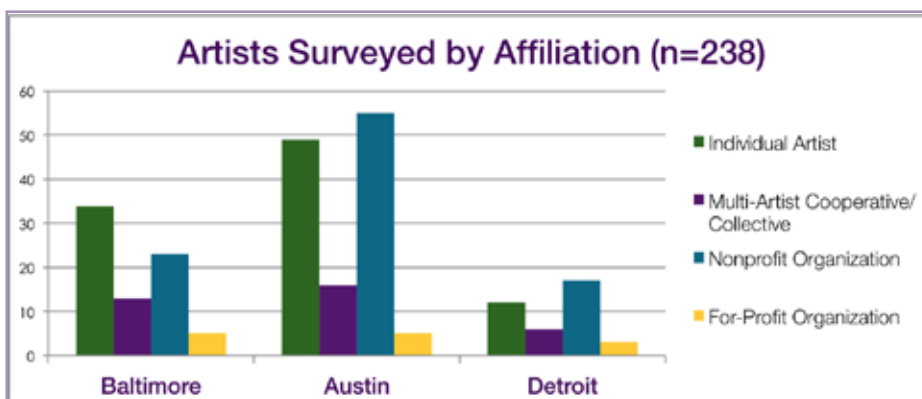


Figure 2. Artists surveyed, by city and affiliation

Findings

Through the comprehensive collection of data on performing artists and historic sacred spaces as described in the Methodology and Approach section, common themes emerged from the surveys, focus groups, interviews, and space inventories. Each of these components describe the challenges facing performing artists and historic sacred spaces as well as the opportunities to create solutions.

Key Findings: Artist Survey

The survey responses of 268 performing artists provided a wealth of quantitative and qualitative data on the challenges artists face in using their current spaces, the amenities needed in ideal spaces, and the benefits and challenges of using historic sacred spaces. Key measures and comments from the survey are as follows:

96.2% of performing artists see a need for more space

Not surprisingly, performing artists overwhelmingly see a need for more performance, rehearsal, and administrative spaces. Reasons stated for this need include increasing rents as neighborhoods become revitalized, a lack of appropriate, basic amenities in their existing spaces, and an overall lack of spaces that can be continually used, among others.



The City Theatre's *Julius Caesar*, Austin, TX

“This need is a very serious issue for Austin-based artists right now. It is a crucial step in keeping Austin’s creative economy alive and sustainable.”

- Austin Performing Artist

89.9% see a home space as critical to artistic and artistic audience development

Performing artists see home spaces as a critical element of their artistic identity. Artists with access to reliable, affordable space are more focused on developing their artistic works rather than spending time finding space. These artists recognize that a home space can improve their ability to build their audiences. Having a dedicated space with ongoing artistic activity helps artists build demand for their work and engage the local community through work that is relevant to their needs.

"My company is getting ready to produce our third season, and we cannot find a venue."

Detroit Performing Artist

"There are virtually no clean, warm, and affordable spaces to rehearse dance."

Baltimore Performing Artist

"As an artist dedicated to physical work, it makes it very hard for us to do meaningful work when we're so concerned with the state of the rehearsal space or the safety of our actors."

Austin Performing Artist

"Finding an appropriate venue to perform is difficult and stressful. Each performance requires the same anxious competition among the many talented artists here in Austin. This creates unnecessary negative energy and anxiety."

Austin Performing Artist

"Having a secured location that will provide adequate space and amenities would not only give artists a sense of belonging, but will also provide uniformity, positive teamwork and ownership."

Baltimore Performing Artist

"I think there would be great synergistic creative energy."

Baltimore Performing Artist

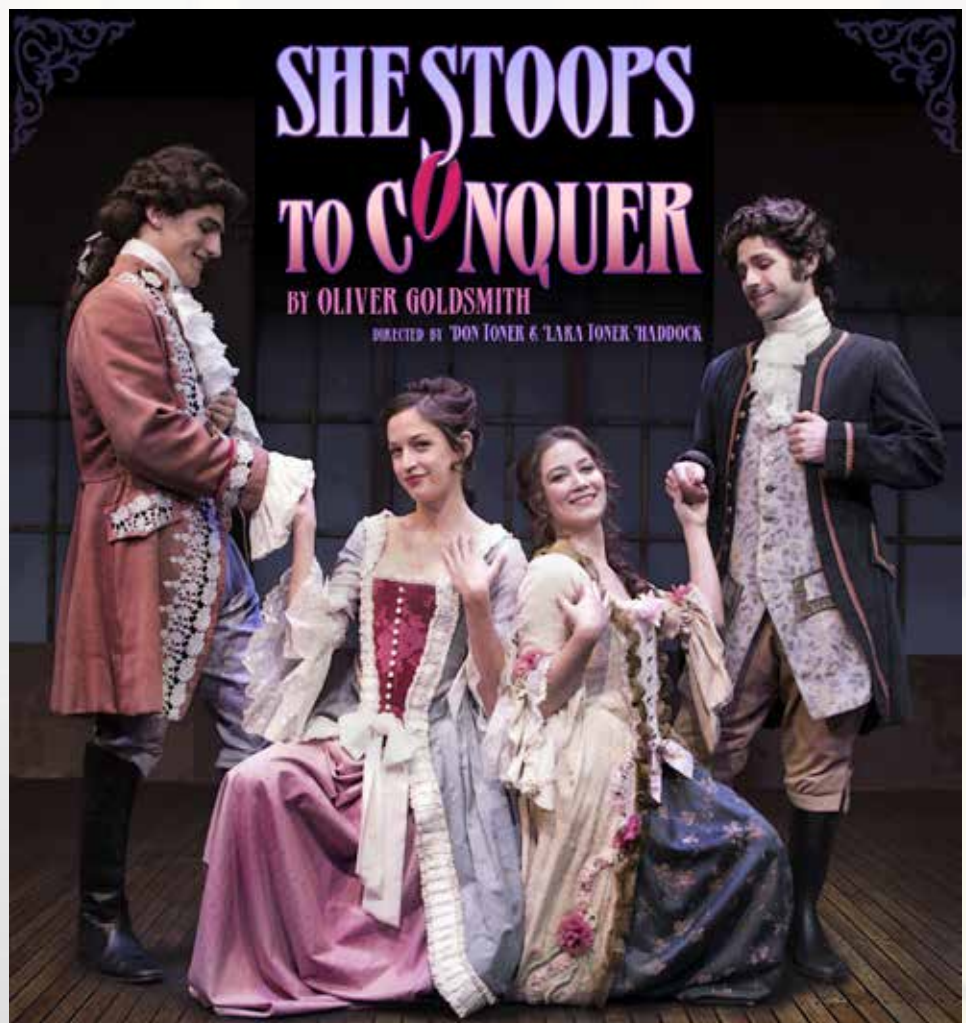
"I welcome the possibility to broaden and engage with a new community."

Baltimore Performing Artist

"I love making work for certain spaces and communities ...

I would welcome partnerships and conversations about what works best."

Baltimore Performing Artist



Austin Playhouse's She Stoops to Conquer

84.5% feel that a Historic Sacred Space could enhance the experience of their work

Performing artists are often subject to inferior quality spaces that hinder the ability of audiences to appreciate the works being presented. These artists view historic sacred spaces as a means to provide a more professional and immersive experience to their audiences.

"Having a home space is so important to running my organization. If I have to call all over town to find space each week, the quality of my art suffers due to lack of time. Also, not having a home space makes the process chaotic for the dancers."

Detroit Performing Artist

"I have no issues in using a sacred space. I welcome it. The idea of performing in a sacred space is a welcome thought."

Austin Performing Artist

"If we were to use a historic sacred space it could provide a more homey atmosphere and have our audience feel the show."

Austin Performing Artist

"When you perform in a space, the space will influence the performance and the perception of it...A sacred space would be very appropriate."

Austin Performing Artist

"The promotional aspect of the work when shown or utilized in spaces like this will benefit the artist in the long run."

Baltimore Performing Artist

"I think this is a fantastic idea, particularly for artistic ventures that embrace depth & innovation."

Austin Performing Artist

"I just feel spaces where artists can create and feed off of one another would be great."

Baltimore Performing Artist

69.1% feel that a Historic Sacred Space could enhance their brand and image

Performing artists view sacred spaces as a means to make their work respected. Having their work performed in a facility that is tied to a community or neighborhood increases the prominence of their work and their image as a reputable creative entity.



Chesapeake Shakespeare Company, Baltimore, MD



Baltimore Rock Opera Society's *Gründlehämmer*

Key Findings: Artist Focus Groups

The 12 focus groups with 63 performing artists gathered more nuanced information on the general state of spaces for performing artists and organizations in the three cities. These sessions provided additional insights into the space needs of artists and organizations based on their personal experiences and gathered feedback that could support the development of a new program to match the space needs of artists with home spaces in historic sacred places.

Three common themes from the focus groups clearly emerged when analyzing the data across all three cities. These common themes relate to the need for space by artists, the ability of a space to create links to the community and advance artists' work, the need for uncensored artistic freedom, and the need for a program that could link performing artists with spaces.

Theme 1:

Performing artists see a home space as a link to their community.

Performing artists yearn to have their work anchored to a community. They see the community as an avenue for new audiences,

outreach, and education, giving stronger purpose and meaning to their missions. Artists who are linked directly to communities have opportunities that others in city centers don't have: a louder, clearer, more impactful voice. Instead of being drowned out by the many other artists all in a centralized location, artists within a community have the

opportunity to engage on an entirely new level.

“We’d be able to produce work that is much more based on the community’s input, because we wouldn’t be nomadic. We’d have a more stable audience because we’d be more stable.”

Baltimore Performing Artist



Baltimore Symphony Orchestra



“I mean, we would get so much stuff done and accomplished [if a program existed]. That would be like a dream come true.”

Detroit Performing Artist

Austin Playhouse's *She Stoops to Conquer*

Theme 2:

Artistic content must not be hindered.

This is paramount. Censorship in any form was strongly opposed by artists in every region. These performing artists believe their voices need to be heard and express vital contributions to issue-driven conversations. Artists also suspect that religious institutions will censor their work, and that perceived censorship acts as a barrier against using sacred spaces more often, if at all. Artists need to feel safe and assured that their programming and their vision will not be hindered by the value set of the sacred place.

“As an artist, I would like to be totally shackle-free, and I shouldn't be worried I am going offend someone else's beliefs.”

Austin Performing Artist

Theme 3:

Artists seek a program supporting the creation of home spaces.

Across the board, performing artists seek help finding a space, particularly when that space is in a sacred place. For many artists, using a sacred space would elevate the nature of their work. However, artists expressed a lack of ability to learn about or access these spaces. When artists thought about approaching a sacred place to use their facility, questions arose, such as

- “How do you approach the church? “
- “How do you know what spaces are available inside of any of these facilities?”
- “How do I know if my art is something that they will respect?”

Many sacred places are in desirable areas that are both ideal for performances and open to the public. These locations often have close proximity to public transit and parking lots. The single largest factor in this theme is simply knowing what inventory is available and which specific spaces are available for the artists to share with the congregation.



Red River Church Gymnasium, Austin, TX

Zion Church Adlersaal (Beer Hall)/
Fellowship Hall, Baltimore, MDSt. Cyprian's Episcopal Church
Fellowship Hall, Detroit, MI

Common Themes: Historic Sacred Spaces

The interviews with lay leaders and clergy in six sacred places in each city, combined with the physical inventory assessment of available spaces provided the necessary data to understand the role that sacred spaces could play for performing artists as well as the needs and attitudes of clergy and leadership.

The findings from this component of the research demonstrated the sheer amount of available space, the desire of sacred places to serve as a broader community asset, and the minimal concerns about artistic content and control.

Theme 1: *Significant Space Is Available*

The six historic sacred places inventoried in each city had a significant amount of unused or underused physical capacity. For the purposes of this study, Partners surveyed and inventoried six sacred spaces of various religious traditions and geographic regions within each city. Using only the six selected participating sacred places, the inventory assessment of each space showed that the overall amount of available space was significant: over 72,000 square feet in Austin, over 42,000 square feet in Baltimore, and over 18,000 square feet in Detroit.

It was clear that these sacred places have the space to accommodate many artists' needs. Figure 3 shows the amount of space available in the spaces studied.

Even though only six spaces were needed for the scope of this study, responses that expressed interest in participating in the study far outnumbered those we could include: 19 spaces in Austin, 24 spaces in Baltimore, and 15 spaces in Detroit all were willing to participate. This serves as a strong indicator of sacred places' willingness to consider housing the performing arts in their spaces.

| | Baltimore | Austin | Detroit |
|----------------|-----------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Home Space* | 28,989 sq. ft. | 4,220 sq. ft. | 3,825 sq. ft. |
| Shared Space** | 13,477 sq. ft. | 68,564 sq. ft. | 14,363 sq. ft. |
| | 42,466 sq. ft. | Total Space | 18,188 sq. ft. |

Figure 3. Available capacity at the six historic sacred spaces in each city

* Home Space—Space exclusively for use by performing artists.

** Shared Spaced—space that can be used by artists periodically or semi-regularly, while still used by the sacred space.

Theme 2:**Sacred Spaces Want Links to their Communities**

Lay and clergy leaders of sacred places see a clear need to link their spaces to the community.

The simple fact that sacred places willingly participated in this study shows an openness to widening their community beyond those who worship within their walls. The entire facility of a sacred place used to serve not only as a center for worship but as a center for education, family activities, and community outreach. With smaller congregations and diminished budgets, neighborhood churches, synagogues, and other places of worship still remain open and ready to serve their communities.

Through the study's interviews, leaders of these sacred places viewed inviting the arts into their facilities as a way to once again fill their spaces and realize their purpose to serve. The performing arts were viewed as bringing education, physical activity, and many events into these spaces that would allow them to serve their communities once again.



B'nai Israel Sanctuary, Baltimore, MD

"We don't really have the infrastructure to mount things ourselves, but I see great potential for partnership. To create vibrancy, we see the cultural arts as a part of that mix."

Baltimore Congregation Leader

"We want to be a convener of culture and conversation, to open the larger community to interact."

Austin Congregation Leader

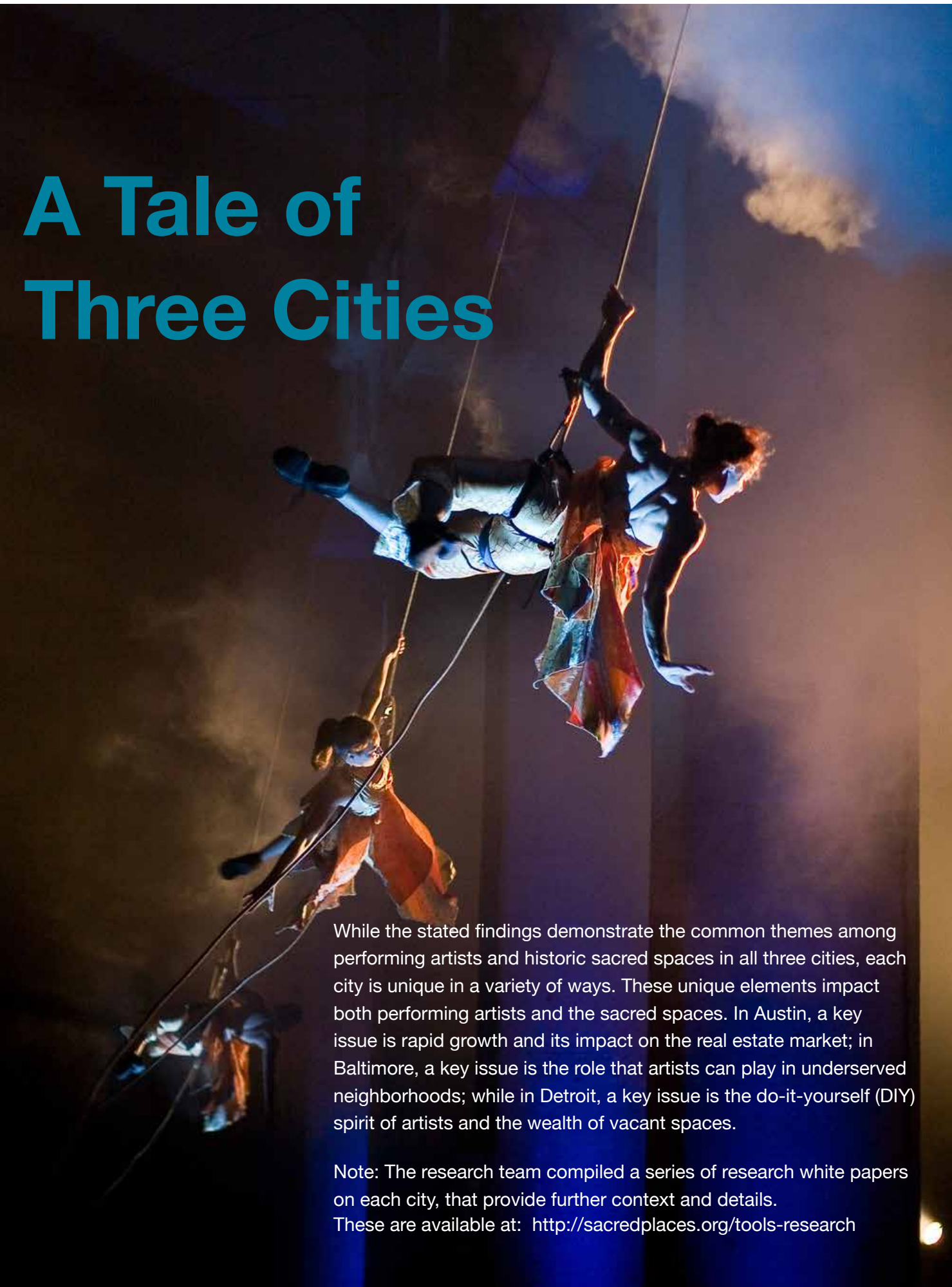
"Artists can provide an educational opportunity [to our community]."

Detroit Congregation Leader

Theme 3:**Little Concern About Artistic Content**

Lay and clergy leaders expressed little concerns about artistic content. There is a significant difference in performing artists' perceptions of sacred places when compared to the realities shared by lay and clergy leaders. As noted in the performing artists findings, almost all artists were concerned that artistic content would be censored and artistic freedom would be comprised. These artists believed that a moral compass would have to be in place in order for any artist to use the facilities within a sacred place. The interviews with lay and clergy leaders demonstrated that this is simply not the case. The reality is that these institutions are more accepting of artistic freedom than the performing artists believe. Often, artists' missions reflect work that many sacred places wish to see provided within their communities. In this component of the study, the perception did not accurately reflect the reality. A large portion of the Arts in Sacred Places program is dedicated to removing these barriers.

A Tale of Three Cities



While the stated findings demonstrate the common themes among performing artists and historic sacred spaces in all three cities, each city is unique in a variety of ways. These unique elements impact both performing artists and the sacred spaces. In Austin, a key issue is rapid growth and its impact on the real estate market; in Baltimore, a key issue is the role that artists can play in underserved neighborhoods; while in Detroit, a key issue is the do-it-yourself (DIY) spirit of artists and the wealth of vacant spaces.

Note: The research team compiled a series of research white papers on each city, that provide further context and details. These are available at: <http://sacredplaces.org/tools-research>



Figure 4. Historic sacred spaces in Austin

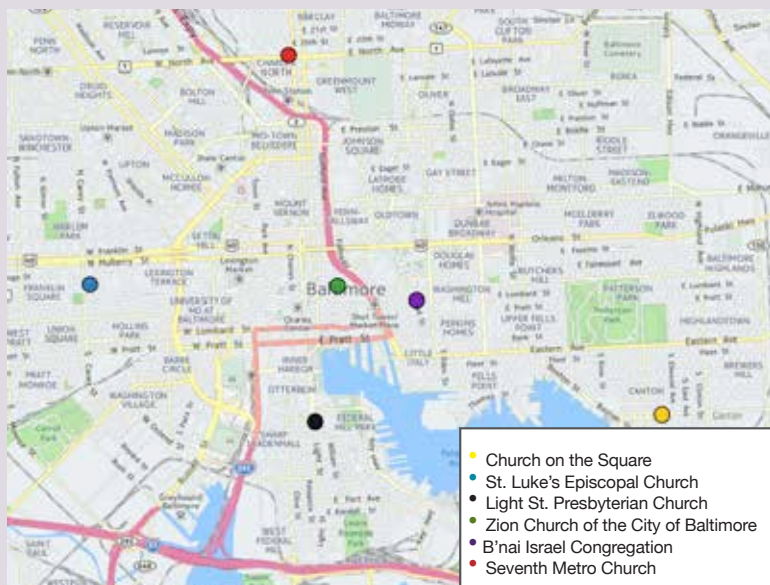


Figure 5 Historic sacred spaces in Baltimore



Figure 6. Historic sacred spaces in Detroit

Why Austin, Baltimore, and Detroit?

These three cities were selected based on very specific criteria: geographic diversity within the United States, a stated interest in participation in the study, previous in-person visits and discussions, and regional cultural service organizations with an interest in collaborating.

The regional cultural service organizations participating in this study were the Austin Creative Alliance, Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance, and CultureSource (Detroit). In addition to the above criteria, it was paramount that all three cities could be easily linked to one of Partners' three regional offices to provide additional staffing support and resources.

These three cities have distinctly different demographic and socioeconomic profiles, as shown in Table 1 (page 16).

**PHOTO (opposite page) BY
TOM ATHEY Blue Lapis Light's
Illumination, Austin, TX**

Austin

As the 11th-most populous city in the United States, the City of Austin is a creative and cultural hub for Texas and the country. With a rapidly growing population driven by the burgeoning technology and pharmaceutical sectors, Austin is a thriving and vibrant city.

With an official designation as “The Live Music Capital of the World,” Austin has more live music venues per capita than any other city in the country. More broadly, the performing arts are prominent in Austin, as exemplified by major performing arts centers, a renowned ballet company, major music and arts festivals, and a vibrant theatre community focused on new and experimental works.

Takeaways from Austin fieldwork:

- Austin’s rapid growth in population, combined with rising real estate prices, is pushing artists

out of the economic core of the city. Affordability of spaces is becoming an increasing challenge.

- Artists value a creative home space as a means to become a part of their community, rather than being nomadic.
- Austin’s artist survey response rate was the highest of the three cities, with 67% more responses than Baltimore and 229% more responses than Detroit. The high response rate combined with the urgency expressed in the survey comments could be indicative of a time-sensitive need to develop solutions.
- 98% of Austin’s performing artists saw a need for more performance, rehearsal, or administrative spaces in Austin.
- Austin’s artists expressed a high level of interest in using historic sacred spaces:
 - » 85% of respondents are receptive to associating their work with a historic sacred place.
 - » 85% of them also felt that a historic sacred place would enhance the experience of their work.

Austin artists are suffering from their city’s economic

| | Austin | Baltimore | Detroit | United States |
|--|-----------|-----------|----------|---------------|
| Population (2014) ¹ | 912,791 | 622,793 | 680,250 | 318,857,056 |
| Change in Population Since 2010 ² | 15.5% | 0.3% | -4.7% | 3.2% |
| Median Household Income ² | \$53,946 | \$41,385 | \$26,325 | \$53,046 |
| Median Home Value ² | \$220,500 | \$157,900 | \$50,400 | \$176,700 |
| Percent Individuals in Poverty ² | 19.1% | 23.8% | 39.3% | 15.4% |
| Race: ² | | | | |
| - White | 73.2% | 30.3% | 11.8% | 74.0% |
| - Black or African American | 8.0% | 63.2% | 81.7% | 12.6% |
| - Asian | 6.2% | 2.4% | 1.2% | 4.9% |
| - American Indian/Alaska Native | 0.5% | 0.4% | 0.3% | 0.8% |
| - Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander | 0.1% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.2% |
| - More than one race | 2.9% | 2.3% | 2.0% | 2.8% |
| Ethnicity: ² | | | | |
| Hispanic/Latino (of any race) | 34.6% | 4.3% | 7.1% | 16.6% |

Table 1

1. U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates Program, 2014.
2. U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Demographic and Housing Estimates, 2009-2013.

success and growth. Austin is an old city, originally traffic-free, with a strong independent streak. The city's slogan of "Keep Austin Weird" was adopted by the Austin Independent Business Alliance to promote small local businesses.

These small-town roots are in direct conflict with Forbes magazine listing Austin as the "#1 Boom Town" in 2015. The city is growing at an astronomical rate with "new money" moving in and pushing out many working class individuals and artists away from the cultural and activity centers they helped to create.

Performing artists in Austin shared that rent on their personal or creative homes skyrocketed as soon as the lease ended. Having no other options available to them, many artists are forced to create their work in living rooms and backyards.



**Deep Vision Dance Company,
Baltimore, MD**

Baltimore

The city of Baltimore plays a key role in Maryland's creative sector. With a diverse range of cultural institutions and artists, 72 designated historic districts, three of the state's 20 designated arts and entertainment districts (Station North, Highlandtown, and Bromo Seltzer Tower), a world-renowned orchestra (Baltimore Symphony Orchestra), and the largest free arts festival in the country (Artscape), Baltimore serves as a hub of creative activities. More than 1,000 visual and performing artists live in the

city, with musicians making up the majority of this figure and a significantly smaller number of actors and dancers.

Takeaways from Baltimore fieldwork:

- Baltimore's median household income is 22% lower than the national average. Performing artists feel that every dollar they save on space is money that can go toward the creative product or their own standard of living.
- Of the six surveyed sacred places, four offered performing



Young Audience Maryland, Baltimore, MD



Michigan Opera Theatre's *Elektra*, Detroit, MI

artists exclusive space totaling 13,500 square feet of space. This was the largest amount of space offered exclusively to artists of all three cities.

- Baltimore performing artists overwhelmingly expressed a desire to be in the neighborhoods of the city rather than in the central, downtown area.
- 88% of Baltimore's performing artists strongly believe that having a home space would help develop both their artistic identity and their audiences.
- Baltimore's performing artists had the highest levels of interest in using a sacred place for their work:
 - » 93% of respondents are receptive to associating their work with a sacred space.
 - » 93% of them also felt that an historic sacred place would enhance the experience of their work.

In Baltimore, artists are paying high rates for sub-par spaces. Dancers are rehearsing and providing classes in warehouses outfitted with concrete floors without a proper HVAC system, and they are paying a premium to be there simply because there are no other options.

Free and in-kind spaces have proven inadequate and limiting both creatively and geographically. For example, the limited public transportation options in Baltimore City make it difficult to have nightly rehearsals in the trendy neighborhood of Fell's Point. Although artists

were using space in Fell's Point free of charge, it was difficult to get there. Once there, artists had to clear out items in the space they were using then return those items to their original configuration when done.

Detroit

As the most populous city in the state, Detroit is Michigan's cultural and economic hub. Detroit is currently the 18th largest city in the country, though its population has been declining since the 1950's when more than 1.8 million people lived within the city limits. While Detroit's recent fiscal struggles and population loss are widely known and documented, the city is now experiencing a period of opportunity and hope. Artists, cultural institutions, and arts service organizations are helping to demonstrate the critical role that arts and culture can play in the future of Detroit.

Artists continue to flock to the city due to its affordable cost of living and its collaborative and collegial creative community, fostering a "DIY" spirit and opportunities to create spaces of their own making. The city's major institutions provide world-class performances and exhibitions to local, national, and international audiences, while its growing public art collection instills civic pride and spurs community development. Detroit has a wealth of creative assets that can be transformative to the city with the proper support and resources.



First Baptist Austin's music rehearsal room, Austin, TX

Takeaways from Detroit fieldwork:

- Two key elements foster Detroit's DIY spirit and the manner in which artists are creating their own opportunities:
 - a. The city's affordable cost of living; and
 - b. The collaborative and collegial creative community.
- This DIY spirit created a palpable sense that artists wanted to take action on their need for spaces rather than continue to discuss or plan. The artists felt that previous planning efforts often did not result in tangible actions.
 - » Detroit performing artists who responded to the survey blur the lines between artistic disciplines, with the highest percentage of multi-disciplinary artists of all three cities.
- Two of the six sacred places inventoried in Detroit were no longer active worship sites and have been adaptively reused for a variety of community purposes. This creates potentially new scenarios for performing artists and sacred spaces.
- In Detroit, some performing artists have begun acquiring abandoned churches as performance and rehearsal spaces. The low cost of real estate creates opportunities for this approach, but issues of longer-term sustainability remain.

See "An Alternate Model for Artists and Sacred Places in Detroit" (next page).

- Detroit had the highest number of artist respondents (68%) who previously used a sacred space for rehearsal or performance.

Detroit has become a city of possibilities and opportunities. Many young makers and entrepreneurs have moved to the Motor City in the hopes of carving out their own unique career path. Artists in Detroit are no different. Performing artists in Detroit are also part of the DIY spirit that is pervasive throughout the city. The many vacant properties are seen as an opportunity to invest in a space to call their own. They are succeeding at doing it in a vacuum of traditional resources or funding.

This also means that they are carrying the burden of capital fixes and improvements. Detroit is clearly in the middle of reinventing itself, and, because of that, it is difficult to decipher appropriate next steps without more in-depth investigation. Artists are creating (and sometimes living) in DIY spaces while simultaneously trying to engage new audiences. Detroit performing artists are fiercely passionate about their city and equally passionate about the direction Detroit is taking. There is much more to be learned in Detroit regarding its artists and their unique motivations.



Mosaic Theatre, Detroit, MI

An Alternate Model for Artists and Sacred Places in Detroit

In the course of the field research in Detroit, another emerging model for artists and the use of sacred spaces was observed—community-oriented developers and DIY collaboratives purchasing vacant or abandoned churches for use by artists. Two representatives of these spaces were interviewed in order to learn more about this model and its potential to serve more artists in Detroit. While these developments were not fully operational, they seek to achieve a similar goal to create an affordable home space for artists. A key challenge of this model is the significant capital funds necessary to restore an abandoned property to usable condition, often requiring environmental remediation and structural repairs. One developer in Detroit is seeking to include a retail component to create additional revenue streams, but the building is not currently in a condition to do so.

The major financial challenges of this model to home spaces for artists, combined with a limited ability to scale up, demonstrates that the approach of acquiring abandoned churches for artists' spaces is not an efficient way to serve a large number of artists. This approach has yet to show the financial consequences of these purchases on the developer or the collaboratives. Detroit has a large inventory of abandoned and vacant properties, including sacred spaces, which are being repurposed for a variety of uses, and it will be important to continue to assess how this model could be of benefit to performing artists and organizations and what additional types of assistance and financing solutions could assist this alternate model.

Program Model: Theory of Change

Toward a theory of change and programmatic solution

Distinctions among the three cities directly correspond to several factors, including the perceived value of artists within the city, the specific economics and demographics of the region, and the population density. These external forces were major factors in how the artists and sacred places provided their input and feedback to the study and the urgency expressed in their responses. These factors, combined with the unique elements of each city, indicate that it is not wise to apply a singular programmatic approach and solution to each region.

In fact, before this study was initiated, anecdotal evidence began to surface from a variety of arts leaders in the three cities based on their current assumptions. This anecdotal evidence included statements claiming that Baltimore and Detroit will be very similar in terms of artists and needs; that sacred places in Austin will be too conservative to engage with artists; and that Detroit will be the most responsive in both survey counts and level of interest to this project.

Based on the findings of this study, it is clear that these statements are false, but reflect the perceptions in each city. This demonstrates that it is vitally important to take a data-

driven approach to determining a programmatic model that could address the findings of this study. This model should also factor in each city's unique issues and the potential for creating partnerships.

Based on the widespread and urgent space needs of artists, and the need for sacred spaces to become vital, relevant community assets, it is critical that any programmatic approach to address these needs must systematically take an impact-based approach. Beginning with a clear identification of the problems identified and understanding the impact sought can create a theory-of-change approach to drive program development.

Using theory-of-change frameworks developed by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the research has identified two clear problem statements:

1. Performing artists and organizations lack home spaces to develop their art, expand their artistic reach, and connect with communities and audiences.
2. Historic sacred spaces face diminished membership, limited resources to support and maintain their facilities, and a desire to provide value as a community resource/asset.



Christ Church Parish Hall, Detroit, MI

Preliminary Theory of Change: Performing Artists and Historic Sacred Spaces

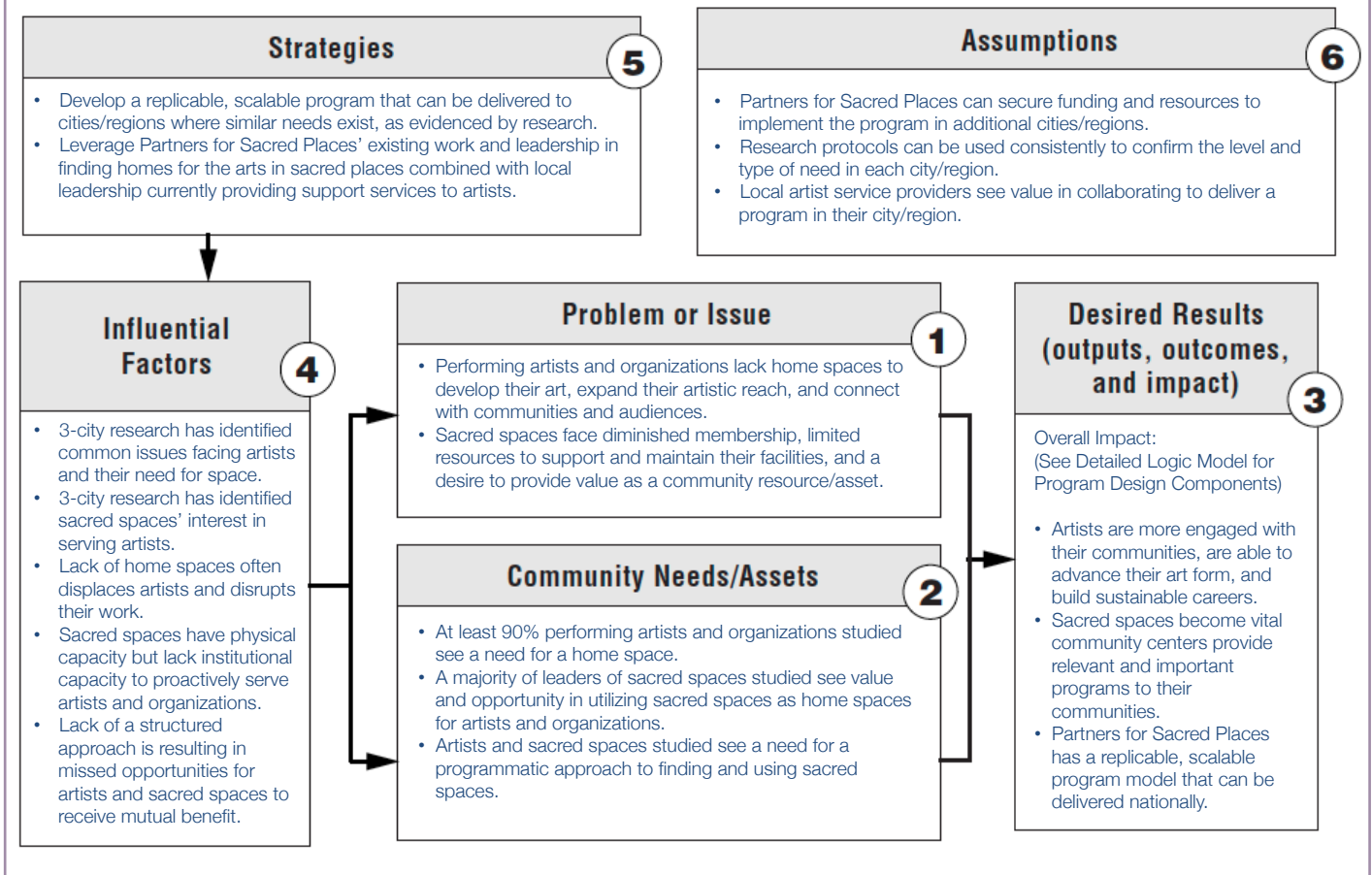


Figure 7. A detailed theory of change framework based on the problem statements and desired impact.

To address the problems identified, impact statements can be developed for performing artists, historic sacred spaces, and Partners for Sacred Places. These impact statements will frame the theory of change and the programmatic model that is developed. The impact statements are:

- Performing artists and organizations are more engaged with their communities, are able to advance their art form, and build sustainable careers.
- Historic sacred spaces become vital community centers and provide relevant and important programs to their communities.
- Partners for Sacred Places has a replicable, scalable program model that can be delivered nationally.

Aligning the problem and impact statements into a theory of change framework provides the necessary insights into program development. This framework is shown in Figure 7 (above).

The logic model at right shows the planned work of Partners for Sacred Places and the intended results or outcomes sought to achieve the impact of their theory of change.



Maker Faire 2014, Detroit, MI

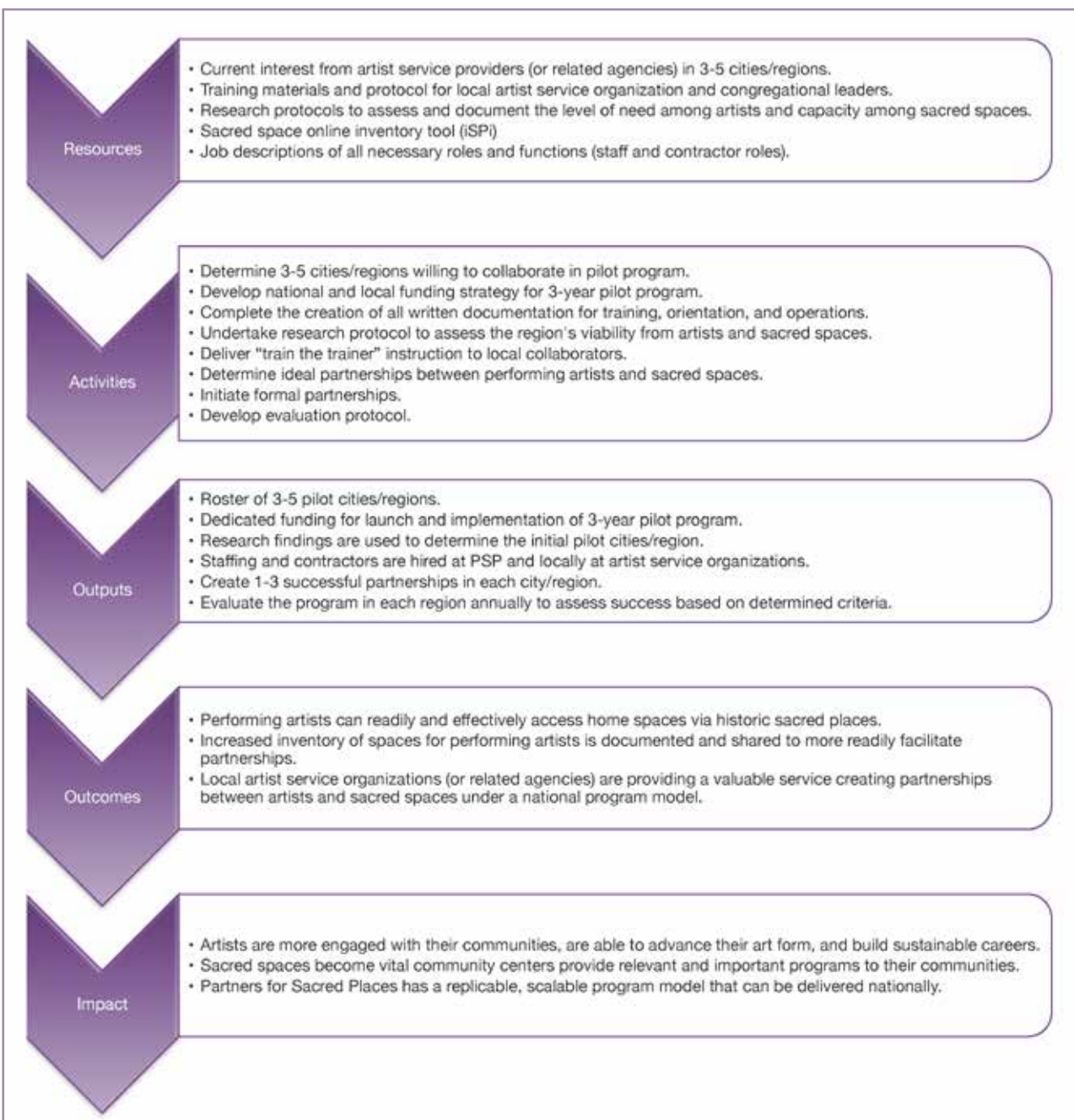


Figure 8. Preliminary 3-year logic model: Performing Artists and Historic Sacred Places



Baltimore School of Dance, Baltimore, MD

Conclusions & Implications

Program Needs

This research project has gathered the data, identified the need within each community, developed a theory of change, and now a program should be able to fit into place. In order to provide quality programming at all phases of this work, there are some minimum requirements that need to be in place. The following list provides the optimal environment for success.

Interest in Participating

This is by far the most critical need for the program. Above all else, if a community's artists or sacred spaces are not already open to the concept of bringing cultural and faith communities together in the same space, then

a successful program cannot be implemented. This interest and commitment are key to a program's success.

Training and Human Capital

Partners for Sacred Places can in no way act alone in every community, city, or state. This is where local collaborations with arts service organizations and congregational leaders and judicatories can play an important role. It is possible to use these hubs within their communities as the focal point from which Making Homes for the Arts in Sacred Places programming can thrive. Partners hopes to work together with these institutions to ready their communities for such partnerships and to be the local advocacy voices. Human capital

and resources are needed to train local collaborators to deliver key components of a program, with national oversight from Partners.

Research

The research phase that was completed in Austin, Baltimore, and Detroit would be replicated in any other community seeking these services. The research phase allows the artistic community to come forward and express their needs and wants while simultaneously cataloging neighboring sacred places' facilities and their clergy and lay leaders. Using this process, it is possible to assess the basic demand from artists and the supply of spaces and amenities available. If the demand and supply align, a specific

case could be made to local funding institutions to support implementation into any region.

Online Repository for Sacred Space Inventory and Artists' Needs

Partners for Sacred Places has developed an online system (iSPi) to catalog the sacred places' facilities, amenities, and their openness to hosting artists and arts organizations. iSPi also can capture any artists' space needs and openness to working with the faith community. This open and free resource can be used by any sacred place or artist as part of a program's implementation.

Other roles

Additional roles within Partners for Sacred Places' three regional offices would need to be shaped and established. Since Partners has offices in Philadelphia, Chicago, and Fort Worth, it would be advantageous to establish larger regions for these offices to oversee.

For example, the Northeast corridor, a large portion of the South or Southwest, and the upper Midwest could be supervised

with staffing in these three offices. Additional supporting roles would be necessary within the more localized regions, with local arts service organizations playing a role in that capacity. With Partners' national reputation within the faith community, a role at the local arts service organization would bring respect for each community's uniqueness and an assurance of quality of work to the artists of that region.

What are the implications of these findings? What are the opportunities?

The implications of the Performing Artists in Sacred Places study can be far-reaching. In this report, the voices of performing artists and the leaders of sacred places have been represented. The research in the three cities has demonstrated a range of issues, challenges,

and opportunities facing both performing artists and sacred places. The fact that artists need space is not revelatory, but the specific needs and motivations of the artists identified herein are critical in understanding how to develop an approach to address these needs and motivations.

Sacred places have a strong need to reach into their communities, but they lack the resources to create these links. Partners has proven the concept of matching performing artists with historic sacred spaces and, with this research, can now seek the human and financial capital to develop a replicable, scalable program that could have the impact sought through their theory of change. This report and its findings have implications for artists, sacred spaces, and the funding community, not only in the three cities studied, but also



Austin Shakespeare's *The Invention of Love*

throughout the country.

To Performing Artists

This report summarizes the need for space by performing artists, providing the specificity of what the artists in any region may need and the state of their current conditions. The proposed program model pushes the artists closer to fulfilling their actual space needs through a systematic approach to using historic sacred spaces. Performing artists of all disciplines require space for rehearsal, performance, office, meetings, building/construction, and storage. These types of spaces have different preferred physical assets. In this study, the artists were able to pinpoint their own space needs as well as other issues surrounding space availability beyond just the costs, including issues such as access to public transportation (or lack thereof) and the overall quality of the spaces.

This program model could be a financial game-changer for artists across the country. Artists, primarily renters of live and work spaces, are subject to the whims of landlords whose focus is on maximizing profits. Without wealthy benefactors, artists often face financial challenges and struggle to use limited funds for commercial real estate at market rates. This puts all artists at a severe disadvantage. Active sacred places, on the other hand, work from a similar mission-driven focus. This makes them



St. Albertus Polish American Historic Sites Association exterior, Detroit, MI

effective partners for artists that are more apt to understand financial constraints. It also makes them more apt to partner with arts users so that their spaces can be used or seen as a community asset and not solely for worship.

To Sacred Places

This study shows that more than 130,000 square-feet of unused or underused space exists within the sacred places that were inventoried in this study. This is just a fraction of the total space available in each city, as only six sacred

spaces were inventoried per city. In each city, there were more sacred places that volunteered to participate than were needed for the purposes of this study. Sacred places demonstrated that they are not only interested and open to connecting with performing artists, but they also have the facilities that artists so desperately need. Implications for sacred places could be as beneficial as for that of artists.

Participating in a study of this kind opens up these underused facilities to new sources of income and introduces them



Austin Playhouse's *She Stoops to Conquer*

to different members of their surrounding community. Any sacred place that wishes to act as a community resource would strongly support this type of partnership. Opening doors to performing artists, their audiences, their students, and their admirers would allow for more exposure for those sacred places. While it may not add to their membership numbers, it does create a bond between their building and their community that

previously did not exist.

To the Funding Community

The findings of this research as outlined herein provide the data, context, and programmatic strategies to address a critical need of performing artists. Grant-makers throughout the country can play an important role in addressing this need in a strategic and effective manner. The creation of a

scalable, replicable program that can be delivered regionally and administered nationally by Partners for Sacred Places would provide performing artists and organizations with spaces to develop their art form, expand their artistic reach, and connect with communities and audiences. Such a program would also strengthen historic sacred places in their approach to becoming stronger community resources and assets.

The programmatic solution developed through this research is an ideal opportunity for both local and national grant-makers to collectively impact their own communities and the communities they seek to serve. The programmatic solution developed through this research is a platform-based approach that can be supported in a manner that provides clearly defined outcomes and results.

To other regions of the country

Since 2011, the Making Homes for the Arts in Sacred Places (AiSP) program has only been able to operate in and around the regions where Partners' three offices are located, limiting the potential impact of the program. In addition, not knowing the specifics of the artists' needs and the available sacred place "inventory" has made it difficult to simply transfer services directly to another region without an investigation first.

Due to the results of this study in

What's next?

these three new regions, AiSP is now positioned to work with any area in the country and beyond. We have developed the investigative tools to properly assess an artist's needs and a sacred place's physical assets and compatibility index.

From there, AiSP will be able to put into place a programming model that suits a particular city or region. As noted herein, each region's artists and sacred spaces have unique needs, thus it is entirely possible that the needs and the current scalable, replicable program model are not the most appropriate fit. While the findings show that Detroit may not be an ideal candidate for the current model developed, in Baltimore and Austin the AiSP program model may quickly serve to alleviate the artists needs and assist sacred places with unused facilities.

Partners for Sacred Places would like to continue its work in the Making Homes for the Arts in Sacred Places program in these three cities and beyond.

With Phase I work completed in Austin, Baltimore, and Detroit, Partners for Sacred Places hopes to continue to share the city-specific data and findings, including this report and the white papers for each city. Partners will also seek opportunities to present this work at a variety of national conventions and conferences.

Partners will continue to pursue conversations with other regions that have expressed interest in our study and programming. Preliminary conversations have already been initiated with representatives in the San Francisco Bay Area, the state of New Jersey, and the city of Chicago, but these cannot proceed past exploratory conversations without adequate resources in place to support these efforts.

Performing artists play a critical role in making communities vibrant places to live, work, and play. While the current economic realities regarding spaces for artists have been long-term and well-studied issues, the findings of this study provide a potential new model by which many artists can become more engaged within their communities, advance their art form, and build sustainable careers. Historic

sacred places, facing their own challenges of relevance to their communities, can benefit from this model and become vital community centers that provide relevant and important programs to their communities. Finally, Partners for Sacred Places can play a role in building a bridge between these two distinct entities that have so much to offer each other.

Partners for Sacred Places will be seeking resources to

- *Continue to present findings to key stakeholders in each participating city.*
- *Return to all three cities with Phase II work, which includes*
 - » *program set up.*
 - » *program implementation.*



Agudas Achim Chapel, Austin, TX

COVER IMAGES:

MAIN IMAGE: PHOTO BY TOM ATHEY Blue Lapis Light's *Illumination*, Austin, TX

SMALLER IMAGES (LEFT TO RIGHT): Detroit Noel Night 2014; Baltimroe Symphony Orchestra, Austin Shakespeare's *The Invention of Love*

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