

#ARTSTAYSHERE

preventing artist displacement & creating more artist workspaces across Massachusetts

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Three-Dozen Artists & Musicians Launch Fundraiser To Support Preservation of Their Artist Workspaces in Somerville

Community Arts Advocacy Event April 21

select images & interviews available upon request

[March 25, 2025--Somerville, MA] Over three-dozen artist and musician tenants at Central Street Studios announce their preservation campaign fundraiser in support of helping to secure their affordable artist workspaces at 57 Central Street in Somerville. The fundraiser is in support of the Arts and Business Council of Greater Boston purchasing the 4-floor property at 57 Central Street, with a mission of keeping it as affordable artist workspaces, with support from the City of Somerville.



Central Street Studios, 57 Central Street, Somerville



Sculptor Colleen deMatta



Through its Cultural Land Trust initiative, the Arts and Business Council also preserved Western Avenue Studios in Lowell, a campus of 350 affordable artist work and live/workspaces.

“We are so appreciative to be part of this process of preservation of this wonderful community asset,” shares Jim Grace, Executive Director for Arts and Business Council. The leadership of the owners, the City, and artists are a testament that these spaces can be permanently saved when all the parties work together.”

A 4-person ownership group, including Paul and Karen Morse, along with Nancy Dutton and David Benson purchased the 6600+ square foot property in 1983. “David and I were woodworkers in the Fort Point Channel area,” Morse says. “We could see artists being priced out of the area and 57 Central Street in Somerville came on the market. We were able to purchase it and use one floor for our woodworking studio and the other three as artist workspaces. Since 2003, the woodworking

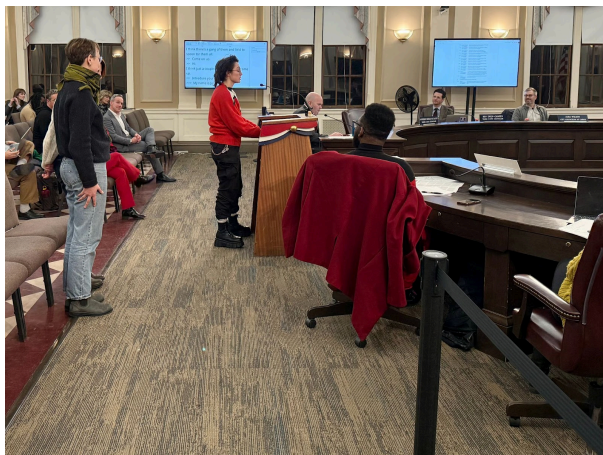
shop downsized to just a quarter floor, and turning even more space into artist studios to this day, and hopefully, long into the future.”

“It has always been our desire,” shares owner Karen Morse, “for 57 Central Street to be a place where artists thrive. We’ve nurtured this creative community space for over forty years. Now it’s time for Jim Grace and the Arts and Business Council to steward it into the future.”

The 4-floor artist community boasts over 25 individual studios that serve over 3-dozen artists including painters, photographers, woodworking, jewelry makers, fiber artists, literary artists, sculptors, musicians, video installation artists, illustrators, and others.

“We are so grateful to the longtime owners of Central Street Studios for choosing to keep the building as artist studios,” shares Jack Gruman, a video installation artist and Somerville native. “Getting Jim Grace and the Arts and Business Council on board means our workspaces can stay affordable, which is key,” he shares.

This is what arts preservation can look like when everyone shows up with a shared commitment to community,” said Somerville Mayor Katjana Ballantyne. “The Arts and Business Council, the current owners, and the artists are doing something remarkable: protecting a creative space, not just for today’s artists, but for generations to come. We’re proud that Somerville could support this acquisition, because when we protect affordable artist workspace, we’re preserving the culture, creativity, and collaborative spirit that define our city.”



Left: Video artist Jack Gruman gives testimony at Somerville City Council meeting in February. Right: Central Street Studios artists, Somerville Mayor Katjana Ballantyne, City Councilor Ben Ewen-Campen & OSPCD Director Tom Galligani after the City Council meeting.

“At a time when affordable art spaces are disappearing left and right, this outcome at 57 Central is like a dream come true. The owners of this building could easily have sold to the highest bidder, but instead they’re showing what is possible when owners stick to their values and work collaboratively with the artist community, the City, and the non-profit community to build a sustainable future for the extraordinary artistic community at 57 Central.”

“A collaborative solution has proven to work,” shares Ethan Dussault, #ARTSTAYSHERE volunteer and Somerville business owner and resident. “When artists, nonprofits, owners, developers, funders and government all work together toward the same goal -- we can preserve the affordable artist workspaces we have. We applaud the Arts and Business Council, the City of Somerville, the owners and the artists for all doing their parts. And now the community can do its part by supporting the artists’ fundraiser, too.”

The online fundraiser aims to raise \$100,000 to help bridge the gap of funding by the Arts and Business Council and the City of Somerville (see details below).

Along with the GoFundMe online fundraiser, the artists will host an in-person community arts advocacy event April 21, 7-9pm at Warehouse XI in Somerville's Union Square. Attendees will hear first-hand about the value of affordable artist workspaces, and the value of artists to our communities. Artists from Central Street Studios will showcase their artwork, offer on-site advocacy stations, and launch their auction that evening. Attendance is free with RSVP here: <https://preservecentralstreetstudios.eventbrite.com>

“Artists and musicians rely on workspaces like these, and the intent of owners like ours to provide places where we can create, grow as artists, and develop our creative practices,” explains Lena Warnke, a member of sidebody Band who rehearses at Central Street Studios and will perform at the acclaimed Boston Calling music festival this May. “We need room for our instruments, room to play music, room to write and record. Central Street Studios is our creative backbone.”



sidebody Band rehearsing



Sri Thumati painting



Zainab Sumu creating fiber art

Central Street Studios Artists & Musicians

Artem Aleksanyan
Andrea Ballou
Lucas Boegehold
Jack Brookes
Tommy Burke
Jason Bunny Correia
Patrick Curtin
Colleen de Matta
Cara Giaimo
Jack Gruman

David Hogan
Hava Horowitz
Louise Keogh Weed
Caroline Kipp
Nancy Kramer
Janella Mele
Logan Puleikis
Donna Rains
Tom Henry Reagan
Amanda Saunders

Eve Schauer
Martha Schnee
Kayla Scullin
Jack Seigenthaler
sidebody Band
Zachary Stern
Rico St. Paul
Zainab Sumu
Sri Thumati
Lena Warnke

centralstreetstudios.org

Preserve Central Street Studios Fundraising Campaign

gofundme.com/f/preserve-central-street-studios

Central Street Studios artists will thank donors in the following ways:

Donations of \$5-99	will be thanked on the artists' website & via social media
Donations of \$100-249	choice of limited-edition, hand-printed campaign poster or t-shirt
Donations of \$250-499	the above, plus limited edition #ARTSTAYSHERE placard
Donations of \$500-999	the above, plus engraved name on Silver Paintbrush Circle permanent placard on site at Central Street Studios
Donations of \$1000+	the above, plus engraved name on Gold Paintbrush Circle

**permanent placard on site at Central Street Studios,
plus private in-person studio tour with artists**

Donations of \$5000+ the above, **plus engraved name on Platinum Paintbrush
Circle permanent placard on site at Central Street Studios,
plus private in-person studio tour & dinner with the artists**

All donations are tax-deductible.

Donations \$1000+ may be made online through the artists' GoFundMe online fundraiser, or via pledge form through the Arts & Business Council of Greater Boston.

Donate by Check (instead of online)

-Please make checks payable to the Arts and Business Council of Greater Boston & include your name, address, phone number & mail to: Arts & Business Council of Greater Boston, 15 Channel Center Street, Suite 103, Boston, MA 02210

Donate Stocks and Bonds

-Gifts of publicly-traded securities are welcome & may save you income and capital gains tax, too.

A gift of publicly-traded securities could be right for you if:

- you own publicly-traded securities that you've held for at least one year
- some of these securities have increased in value since you bought them
- some of these securities may provide you with little or no income
- you would like to make a gift to support this project

How it works

-you transfer shares of one or more publicly-traded securities, such as stock, bonds, and mutual funds to the Arts & Business Council of Greater Boston

Donate with Donor-Advised Funds

Donor-Advised Funds (DAF) are an increasingly popular way to make a charitable gift. DAFs can provide you with immediate tax benefits while making your charitable giving easier. Just contact your Donor-Advised Fund administrator to recommend a grant to this project. You can recommend that your favorite public charities, such as Preserve Central Street Studios through Arts & Business Council (ABC), receive grants from your Donor-Advised Fund. Most Donor-Advised Funds have a minimum grant recommendation, or you can recommend distributing the entire balance of your Donor-Advised Fund for a cause important to you. ABC is grateful for grants from Donor-Advised Funds. Make your DAF gift [here](#).

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