



critical people  
critical places  
critical issues

**freeDIMENSIONAL**

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New York—freeDimensional brings together leaders from the human rights sector, art space and practice networks, and organizations focused on the mobility of culture workers for a weeklong meeting (July 10-15) entitled '**Creative Resistance – An Intersecting Networks Approach**'. Hosted at the Breuninger Foundation's Wasan Island facility near Toronto, the retreat provides the space for a critical dialogue on the role of arts networks in strengthening the social justice movement globally and their leaders to discuss common issues and consider their synergies.

We think this meeting is especially important at a time when global interdependence is increasing and new forms of collaboration are necessary to combat economic instability (which is linked to the social issues that culture workers often challenge through their work and which may place them in the same dangerous situations as other human rights defenders). Dolores Bengolea, who runs the Proyecto Victoria Ocampo in Argentina and attended last year's meeting, says "I was not convinced about bringing these two things [art and social justice] together until this retreat on Wasan Island. Now I am truly convinced about how enriching it would be for me, for my country, for my community, and for everyone to share this idea of sheltering creators who are needing help as they pursue their ideas or their work."

Looking inward, the Creative Resistance meeting comes at a time when freeDimensional is changing the way it operates. To date, freeDimensional has built up a network of art spaces in 70 countries which willingly receive requests for use of their artist residency apartments by activists and culture workers in distress. We call this practice 'Creative Safe Haven'. This support network has been drawn upon in 60 cases over the past four years to help activist artists, journalists, musicians, writers, theater directors, and community organizers from more than 20 countries. As we move forward, we wish to forge stronger relationships with other networks and organizations in order to develop variations of support for people using creativity to fight injustice.

Networks and organizations from Latin America, Africa, Asia, North America and Europe are among the groups to attend the Creative Resistance meeting (for a full list of participants visit <http://freedimensional.ning.com/profiles/blogs/creative-resistance-meeting>). In the words of invitee, Mary Ann DeVlieg, Secretary General of the International Network for Contemporary Performing Arts, "It is encouraging to see that artists are increasingly engaged in issues such as [social justice]: instead of policies and funding programmes inciting them to do so, they are naturally looking around themselves, participating in 'the world' and with aspects of it that they care about. Thus the arts structures and people around artists are following in their wake. It's an old-fashioned word, 'solidarity', but it certainly still has significance."

The Creative Resistance meeting is made possible by support from the Breuninger Foundation, with additional support from the Ford Foundation offices in Cairo and New York.

You can find out more about freeDimensional at <http://freedimensional.org/>.

For media requests, please write to [inquiry@freedimensional.org](mailto:inquiry@freedimensional.org) or follow the Director's blog at [www.freedimensional.ning.com](http://www.freedimensional.ning.com).