

New York City Department for the Aging Public Artist in Residence (PAIR) Laura Nova Featured at Art in Odd Places Festival

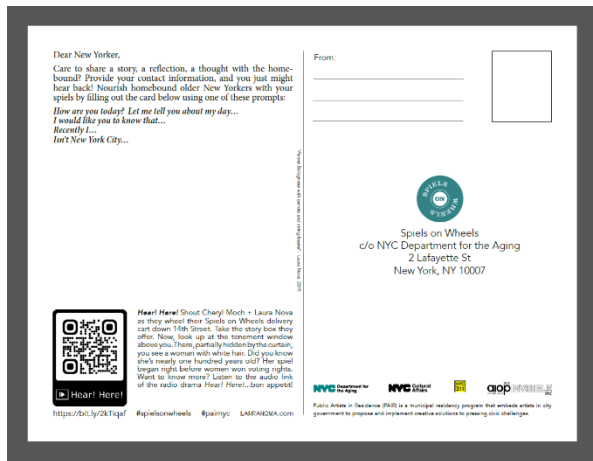
NEW YORK (October 15, 2019) – The New York City Department for the Aging (DFTA) is pleased to announce that its Public Artist in Residence (PAIR) Laura Nova will perform her interactive work "Spiels on Wheels" at the 2019 Art in Odd Places Festival this weekend. This year's festival entitled *INVISIBLE* and curated by LuLu LoLo, will highlight the work of artists over the age of sixty and their collaborators. Nova's piece will call attention to the potential isolation of our city's seniors, and offer participants the opportunity to connect with the stories of aging homebound New Yorkers. The festival will take place in Manhattan on October 18-20, along 14th Street from Avenue C to the Hudson River.

Laura Nova generates site-specific action-oriented projects which invite participatory energies of neighbors and strangers alike, particularly within the urban landscapes of older adult and migrant communities. As a PAIR with DFTA, she is working to deepen the City's understanding of ageism and its impact on older New Yorkers.

For *INVISIBLE*, Nova will launch "Spiels on Wheels," an interactive performance created in collaboration with Cheryl Moch, a playwright and social worker in DFTA's Elderly Crime Victims Resource Center. Inspired by Nova's experience helping to deliver meals with Encore Community Services, "Spiels on Wheels" comprises a delivery cart that the artists will wheel along 14th Street distributing Story Boxes that replicate actual home-delivered meals. Inside the boxes are postcards providing the public an opportunity to write messages to homebound older New Yorkers, as well as a [link](#) to an immersive radio drama that brings listeners into the lives of those receiving home-delivered meals. The drama is titled "Hear, Here" – a call that will be repeated by the artists as they progress down the street, encouraging passers-by to engage with these often unheard voices.



Story Box from "Spiels on Wheels" (2019) by Laura Nova. The box is based on DFTA provider Encore Community Services' Meals on Wheels delivery.



Postcard from "Spiels on Wheels" (2019) by Laura Nova.

"Social isolation often serves as a gateway to serious mental and physical health issues," said **DFTA Commissioner Lorraine Cortés-Vázquez**. "Through our programs that serve homebound and social isolated populations, including Meals on Wheels and Friendly Visiting, we know all too well the severity of these issues. Our artist-in-residence, Laura Nova, brings a unique artistic lens to raising public awareness of this 'invisible' population. New Yorkers can play a part in breaking the social isolation epidemic."

"To paraphrase, there are over 8 million stories in this city, and we are thrilled for this artist residency to explore some of those stories as told by older New Yorkers" said **Cultural Affairs Commissioner Tom Finkelpearl**. "Laura Nova's Public Artist in Residence collaboration with the Department for the Aging sparked this project that acts as a literal vehicle for the voices of aging New Yorkers, who we will see with new respect and appreciation thanks to this creative act of storytelling."

"I spent three hours delivering meals with Encore Community Services and was struck by how many people receive home-delivered meals and their untold stories," said **Artist Laura Nova**. "I met 30 people - but I felt like I was meeting the ghosts of 300. There are so many stories yet to be told."

[Laura Nova](#) was matched with DFTA through the Department of Cultural Affairs's Public Artists in Residence (PAIR) program, which embeds artists within City agencies to address pressing civic and social issues through creative practice. Artists focus on community engagement and social justice issues while working at City agencies.

Spiels on Wheels Performance Schedule:

- Friday, October 18, 4:00 – 5:00 p.m. Along 14th Street, from 2nd Avenue to Union Square.
- Saturday and Sunday October 19 - 20, 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. Along 14th Street from 10th Avenue to Union Square.

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About NYC Department for the Aging

The New York City Department for the Aging (DFTA) works to eliminate ageism and ensure the dignity and quality of life of New York City's diverse 1.6 million older adults. DFTA also works to support caregivers through service, advocacy, and education. DFTA is the largest area agency on aging in the U.S. For more information, visit www.nyc.gov/aging

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About NYC Department of Cultural Affairs

The New York City Department of Cultural Affairs (DCLA) is dedicated to supporting and strengthening New York City's vibrant cultural life. DCLA works to promote and advocate for quality arts programming and to articulate the contribution made by the cultural community to the City's vitality. The Department represents and serves non-profit cultural organizations involved in the visual, literary, and performing arts; public-oriented science and humanities institutions including zoos, botanical gardens, and historic and preservation societies; and creative artists at all skill levels who live and work within the City's five boroughs. DCLA also provides donated materials for arts programs offered by the public schools and cultural and social service groups, and commissions permanent works of public art at City-funded construction projects throughout the five boroughs. For more information, visit <http://www.nyc.gov/culture>

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