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# The Year in Review

This year Urbano reached a big milestone celebrating ten years of socially engaged programming!

We began the year energetically with the participation of **Nathalia JMag's** class **Sustainable Fashion** in the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum's Annual Block Party. The Summer 2019 project closed with a fashion show of youth's creations at Urbano.

Our new theme, **Creative Conditions**, set the tone for the year's projects and residencies. We posed different questions to our artists such as: What toolkits are artists creating to change the conditions we live in? What conditions do artists need to create? This led us to select three exceptional female Artists in Residence (AiR), which explored this topic with our youth artists throughout the year.

First, **Erin Genia** (Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate), delved into storytelling with our Fall 2019 youth to explore a variety of narratives, particularly those of Native American indigenous peoples in the Youth Artist Project (YAP) **Stories of the Land**. She did this through a variety of artistic methods: painting, printmaking, sculpture, performance, sound, and public art. Genia also worked on her first solo exhibition **Okonwanžidan** (oneness) at our exhibition space. Her installation looked to answer how can we create Okonwanžidan as we seek to address the issues of climate change and mass ecological destruction.

Following this line of inquiry, our next AiR, **Rachel Allen** (Nez Perce) worked with our students in the project **Art, Land, and Storytelling** to create place-worlds, or stories upon close examination of the land and their environment. Focusing on the local to research its recent and ancient history from a variety of viewpoints. Her residency concluded with **airplay**, a site-specific interactive installation where she invited us to intentionally interact with air, understand its agency, and recall our interconnectedness.

In Spring 2020 we welcome AiR **Paloma Valenzuela** who developed a Youth Artist Project on **Scriptwriting and Production** based on her web series *The Pineapple Diaries*. Participants had the opportunity to experience and practice writing, producing, and editing their own web series. Students recorded their creative process guided by Scholar-in-Residence and Ford Foundation Fellow at Harvard, **Raquel Jimenez**, Ph.D.

And then, it hit us. The global health crisis pandemic due to the COVID-19 virus, changed the way the world interacted and how we worked together. Paloma wasn't able to finish her project in person, but with extreme resilience adapted the curriculum with tools students would have accessible to them. We introduced new methodologies to help youth track of their projects, insights, and reflections, and connect deeply with each other at a distance. The final celebration was an online screening of the artist's and youth's work followed by a discussion held on Zoom, a new word in our vocabulary at the time.

The steps that followed were challenging for Urbano as we closed our space and moved to a fully digital platform that would keep our students, audiences, and our staff safe during this unprecedented and uncertain time. Due to all this we had unfortunately cancel our plans for our 10th anniversary. But programming continued. We are still full of ideas, projects, and gratitude toward our community and supporters that have shown us that not even a world crisis can stop art and civically engaged practices.

We look forward to a new year of adaptability, hope, and new modes of gathering. Your endorsement, support and participation are and will continue to be critical, and greatly appreciated, to fulfill our mission and continue to serve our community.

In gratitude and solidarity,

**Stella Aguirre McGregor**  
Founder + Executive Artistic Director

# Guiding Principles

# Mission

Urbano is a community art non-profit that fosters public and participatory art as a vehicle for personal transformation, community cohesion, and social and environmental change.

We bring together professional artists, local youth, and community members to learn and experiment through place-based multidisciplinary projects.

# Guiding Principles

|                   |   |   |   |  |
|-------------------|---|---|---|--|
| Target Population | <b>Participating Youth</b><br>High School Students (majority are BPS, all students attend public schools)<br><br>Live in the Greater Boston area, with over 90% residing in Boston (primarily from Dorchester, Roslindale, Roxbury, Hyde Park, and Jamaica Plain)<br><br>Ages 14 - 18<br><br>Often from low income families<br><br>Interested in creating art<br><br>Interested in social change<br><br><br>Interested in future job possibilities in the arts  | <b>Program Alumni</b><br><br>Post-High School<br><br><br>Apprenticeship opportunities<br><br><br>Job Training   | <b>Community Members</b><br><br>Audience and participants   | <b>Socially Engaged Artists</b><br><br>Interested in social justice issues and participatory art practices   |
|                   | <b>High-Quality Contemporary Arts Experiences</b><br><br>Offer high-quality arts experiences, including opportunities to develop an awareness and appreciation of contemporary arts and the role the arts play in society and to effect social change   | <b>Artists as Engaged Citizens</b><br><br>Challenge artists to express a strengthened identity as active, powerful, and engaged citizens of the city of Boston<br><br>Engage youth with difficult subjects in hopeful ways  | <b>Creative Youth Development</b><br><br>Support youth to explore and pursue their passions and develop as young people with the greatest chance for social and personal success<br><br>Develop a corps of positively engaged youth who serve as leaders in their communities | <b>Community Cohesion</b><br><br>Promote civic engagement through participatory and publicly sited works of art that address the major issues of our time, and develop synergy among diverse groups  |
|                   | <b>Artists' Projects, Exhibitions, &amp; Workshops</b><br><br>Year-long Project Theme provides conceptual connections among concurrent projects and programs  | <b>1. Youth Projects</b><br><br>Youth learn to create collaboratively through studio exploration and experimentation guided by professional artist(s)<br><br>Youth and lead artists work in partnership, contributing to the conception, production, and  | performance or exhibition of final works<br><br>Youth attend class twice weekly, 6 hours/week<br><br><b>2. Workshops</b><br><br>Urbano's Teaching Artists' introduce cohorts of 10-15 teen artists to art-making  | <b>3. Artists in Residence</b><br><br>Identified by calls for artists, provide diverse perspectives on Urbano's yearly theme through exhibitions, workshops, and public participatory projects<br><br><b>4. Public Events &amp; Artistic Interventions</b><br><br>Socially engaged practices to create dialogue with diverse audiences a |
|                   | <b>Youth will:</b><br><br>Develop skills and understanding related to Contemporary Arts Practice and issues of social change<br><br>Hone professional attitude towards work with an emphasis on quality<br><br>Participate in process to develop the narrative of an idea<br><br>Engage and gain proficiency in creating and thinking critically about contemporary art<br><br>Gain public speaking and presentation skills; empowerment to speak, create, be heard<br><br>Engage in personal reflection on work and participation in critique<br><br>Show openness to interact and collaborate with those who are different from themselves  | <b>Artists will:</b><br><br>Engage in the studio and community as empowered agents of social change<br><br>Communicate ideas of change through commissioned works in collaboration with youth artists<br><br>Explore the visual, social, and political language of contemporary art<br><br>Identify as artists who are a part of the larger global contemporary art community<br><br>Develop understanding of issues across racial, social, and cultural barriers<br><br>Enhance relationship building skills | <b>Community will:</b><br><br>Participate in events and tertulias, and make connections between contemporary art and social change<br><br>Come together to appreciate diverse perspectives and cultural expressions   |  |
|                   | <b>Impact</b><br><br>Urbano Project inspires a new generation of leaders in urban communities who are compassionate, explorative, civically engaged, creative thinkers actively committed to breaking down social barriers (of language, race, gender, religion, etc.) through art<br><br>Urbano Project creates high quality arts learning experiences that are cross-disciplinary and collaborative, resulting in publicly sited and participatory art works. These works challenge assumptions about contemporary art, education, and art's role in creating social change<br><br>Urbano Project contributes to Boston's civic and cultural life by building bridges between urban communities and the contemporary arts |   |   |  |

## Guiding Principles

# Theme

## Creative Conditions

Each year Urbano's programs are united by an annual theme. The theme for 2020 was Creative Conditions. What toolkits are artists creating to change the conditions we live in? What conditions do artists need to create? Artists-in-Residence worked closely with youth artists to explore this theme by means of storytelling, scriptwriting, journaling, research, and production.



# Programs

Artist in Residence (AiR)

Youth Artists Projects

Artists' Exhibitions

## Programs

# Artist-in-Residence

**Each year Urbano invites 3-4 Artists in Residence, emerging mid-career practicing artists recognized for their innovative, critical, socially engaged practice. Each residency lasts 10-12 weeks and opens with the AiR's exhibition at Urbano's studio that serves as a tool for teaching and community dialogue.**

**In conjunction, resident artists create a concurrent youth art project and a series of events open to the public, all related to each artist's work.**

## Programs

# Artist in Residence



### **Nathalia JMag**

Nathalia JMag is a professional fashion designer with a degree from Framingham State University. She has participated in shows including Helsinki Fashion Week, named by Vogue as the first sustainable fashion week; and was part of the Emmy-nominated show Project Runway. Born in Colombia, JMag emigrated to the US when she was 7 years old. Her perspectives is a blend of cultures: she fuses her Colombian heritage with her American upbringing to create one-of-a-kind designs. Her garments are fresh and new but also functional and comfortable. She prides herself in her eco-friendly and ethical designs; using a zero-waste design approach, choosing the most sustainable fabrics available to her, using

all natural dyes such as turmeric, avocado peels, cabbage, and cochineal, and upcycling old clothing to give them new life. She has a Master in Nature-Culture-Sustainability Studies from Rhode Island School of Design, and was a Neighborhood Salon Luminary at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum.

### **Learn more**

[Webpage](#)

[Instagram](#)

# Programs

## Artist in Residence



### Erin Genia

Erin Genia (Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate) is a multidisciplinary artist whose practice follows various strands, merging cultural imperatives, pure expression, and exploration of materiality, with a response to past, present and future matters. Erin is concerned with creating a powerful presence of Indegeneity in the arts and sciences to invoke an evolution of thought and practice aligned with the cycles of the natural world and humanity’s potential.

Erin has a Master of Science in Art, Culture, and Technology from MIT and studied at the Institute of American Indian Arts and The Evergreen State College. Her work has received attention from diverse audiences and been exhibited nationally

and internationally, most recently at *Personal Structures - Identities*; in the context of the 2019 Venice Art Biennale, the Swamp Pavilion, Lithuania Pavilion, La Biennale Architettura di Venezia 2018, the Harvard Museum of Natural History, and the Weisner Gallery at MIT. Erin is the award recipient of the 2019 MIT Solve Indigenous Communities Fellowship, the Harold and Arlene Schnitzer Prize - 2nd place, and the AAF/Seebacher Prize for Fine Arts. She received her first public art commission for *Resilience: Anpa O Wicahnpi* from the City of Seattle Office of Arts and Culture, and is currently an Artist-In-Residence for the City of Boston.

### Learn more

[Webpage](#)  
[Instagram](#)

# Programs

## Artist in Residence



### Rachel Allen (Nez Perce)

Rachel Allen is an artist, curator, and Ph.D. student interested in cross-cultural understandings of air, atmosphere, and sky in Native American and American Art. She has dual citizenship with the United States and her Native nation, the Nez Perce Tribe of Idaho.

She has worked as an Assistant Curator at the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Assistant Professor at Michigan State University, and Assistant Preparator at the Eli and Edythe Broad Art Museum. While there, she co-founded the Emerging Museum Professionals Chapter of Michigan and earned a Certificate in Collections Care at the International Preservation Studies Center.

Allen received her M.F.A and M.A. from Michigan State and her B.F.A from the Cleveland Institute of Art. She is currently a Ph.D. student at the University of Delaware Department of Art History. She also spends her time serving on the Open Door Immigration Services board, an immigration clinic in Salem, Massachusetts, and on the advisory board for the Center for Collection Care at Beloit College in Beloit, Wisconsin.

### Learn more

[Webpage](#)  
[Instagram](#)

Programs

Artist in Residence



Paloma Valenzuela

Paloma Valenzuela is a Dominican-American writer, director, and actress originally from the city of Boston. She is the creative director of La Gringa Loca Productions’ production operation based in Boston and the Dominican Republic. She is the writer, producer, and creator of the comedic web series *The Pineapple Diaries*, which is now in its Third Season.

In 2017, the show was featured in the Latina Magazine’s “5 Web Series Every Latinx Needs to Watch Right Now.” In 2019, Valenzuela was featured in Boston’s Magazine *Boston’s New Creative Guard* and selected as one of the WBUR The Artery 25, a series highlighting millenials of color making an impact in the Boston arts scene

Paloma has collaborated with the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum as a 2018-2019 Neighborhood Salon Luminary and co-hosted a Neighborhood Night in July 2019 titled *Viewfinder*. She works as a teaching artist at GrubStreet in Boston, teaching classes in Dramatic Writing and Screenwriting.

Learn more  
[Webpage](#)  
[Instagram](#)

Programs

Artist in Residence



Sheila Novak

Sheila Novak is an interdisciplinary artist and arts administrator living and working in Boston. Her projects create spaces and opportunities for others to explore how we can grow and connect, how vulnerability can bring us into more authentic relationships with each other, and what healing looks like on individual and communal levels. Currently, Sheila serves as the Public Art Project Manager for the Greenway Conservancy. She has eight years of experience in the nonprofit arts sector intersecting creative practice with public art, creative placemaking and arts equity. Novak is committed to producing and creating art in social and public spaces.

In 2018, Sheila was awarded the New England Fellowship with National Arts Strategies shortly after arriving in Boston from Minneapolis. Beforehand, she served as Artist in Residence at Hennepin County Medical Center (2015 - 2017), as well as Artist in Residence in Ecology, Spirituality, and Community at Holden Village (2014). She received her B.A. in Studio Art from St. Olaf College in 2012.

Learn more  
[Webpage](#)  
[Instagram](#)

## Programs

# Youth Artists Projects

Youth Artists Projects are ten to twelve week-long explorations of social issues through art, led by an Artist in Residence. Throughout each project, students receive high-quality, in-depth contemporary arts and studio classes modeled on college-level seminars taught by practicing artists selected through a call for artists' process.

These projects range across a broad spectrum of visual and performing arts practices. Curricula are developed in response to national and state art education standards and emphasize conceptual exploration, experimentation, revision, collaboration, and technical skill. Students participate in selecting themes, concepts, and designs for their art, and take responsibility for the process.

At the end of each semester, students present their projects at culminating public events, exhibits, and art festivals involving mixed-media, collective theater, spoken word, creative writing, and visual arts installations, including public participatory interventions.

## Programs

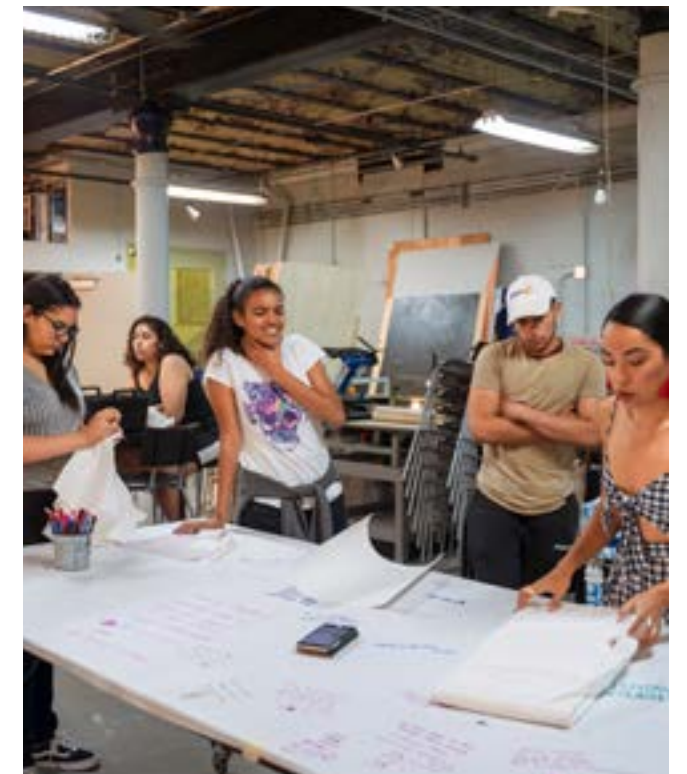
# Youth Artists Projects

### Map This: Sustainable Fashion



Teaching Artist:  
Nathalia JMag  
Jun - Aug, 2019

*Map This: Sustainable Fashion* touched on themes and practices of sustainable fashion. Students learned and applied textile design and techniques including: patterns, sewing, embroidering, and block printing design. Classes used mapping data from project partner Olin College and connected their work to the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum's Big Plan exhibition. The class was part of the ISGM: *Map This*, developed in collaboration with the museum. Students designed and produced textiles to participate in the Annual ISGM Block Party, and a fashion show of their creations at Urbano.



Programs

Youth Artists Projects

Stories of the Land



Teaching Artist: Erin Genia  
Oct - Dec, 2019

Artist Erin Genia’s youth project revolved around **storytelling**. The workshop began with stories from Native American peoples and investigated the history and work of Indigenous peoples of our region. Students explored stories through a variety of artistic methods: painting, printmaking, sculpture, performance, sound and public art. They brought a story from their own heritage, background, or life experience that connected them to the land, and produced a final collaborative piece, combining elements of commonality into a vision for the future, a shared story that then they told together using the materials and techniques they had learned.



Programs

Youth Artists Projects

Art, Land, and Storytelling



Teaching Artist: Rachel Allen  
Nov - Dec, 2019

Students worked with Allen creating **place-worlds**, or stories upon close examination of the land and their environment. They chose a local location and looked into its recent and ancient history from a variety of facets, including municipal, social, geological, and its current condition through documentation and spatial experiences. As a result, youth artists developed a story about their chosen place and shared it through oral tellings, performances, and artists books.



# Programs

## Youth Artists Projects

### Pineapple Diaries



Teaching Artist: Paloma Valenzuela

Jan - Jun, 2020

Youth artists had the opportunity to gain hands-on experience and practice **writing, producing, and editing their own web series**. They learned the basics of script writing and scene writing, as well as how to write a solid script on several accessible writing programs. Participants developed skills in pre-production: script breakdown, scheduling and storyboarding, hands-on production and filming, and the basics of reviewing dailies and editing. As a final place-based project, the entire group worked as a team to create a pilot episode for their desired web series or short film, including draft and review. It was showcased virtually via zoom.



# Programs

## Youth Artists Projects

### CoVictory Gardens



Teaching Artist: Sheila Novak  
Jun - Sept, 2020

Youth Artists explored many aspects of a socially engaged art practice, as well as the methods and tools to cultivate their own garden. From **exploring the history and implication of social art practices and creating their own garden**, to engaging with specific skills such as logo design and interviewing, **Youth Artists built tools for creating their own socially engaged art projects**. The final presentation of the YAP: "From Our Garden to Yours," was showcased virtually.



## Programs

# Artists' Exhibitions

Urbano invites artists to showcase their work as part of their residency. They host workshops, talks, and performances that engage the community around the themes of their project.

This year's *Creative Conditions* included interactive installations and storytelling programs developed by two female Native American artists during Fall 2019 and early Spring 2020.

## Programs

# Artists' Exhibitions

### ***Okonwanžidan***



Artist: Erin Genia  
Oct 15 - Dec 21, 2019



***Okonwanžidan*** means oneness, being of one mind in Dakota language. How can we create ***Okonwanžidan*** as we seek to address the issues of climate change and mass ecological destruction? In Dakota philosophy, all things exist within a continuum of life, and the concept of *mitakuye oyasin* - we are all related, extends not only to other people, but to animals, plants, minerals, electricity, air, objects, and everything in existence. As we operate within political and economic systems that divide us, people have forgotten that we are not separate from the earth, we are the earth. With this in mind, how can we respect the agency of the inherent life in everything around us?

To explore these concepts, Genia created an installation of sound vessels, paintings, and a video projection of her performative character, "Earthling."

Additionally, Genia moderated the panel "Sound, Air, Earth," with artists Rachel Allen (Nez Perce), Nicole L'Huillier (Tegucigalpa, Honduras), and Nancy Valladares (Santiago, Chile), which took place on November 14, 2019. Artists talked about their processes in working with unconventional materials and pushing the boundaries of the creative process in engaging with air, sound, and earth in their work.

# Artists' Exhibitions

### *airplay*



Artist: Rachel Allen  
Jan 23 - Mar 14, 2020

Urbano was proud to feature *airplay*, a site-specific interactive installation by Rachel Allen, and the culmination of her Fall 2019 residency. With this project, the artist aimed to unsettle the air we breathe and otherwise manipulate. If we consider the ubiquitous material we are suspended in, then we can begin to contemplate what seems invisible, like beliefs we uncritically accept. We might examine the political, cultural, and environmental implications of the atmosphere and sky.

Buttons throughout the installation could be pressed to move air around the space. The inflated forms referenced stories from Allen's Nez Perce culture. Indigenous cosmologies can teach us how to attend to the air and reaffirm our connections to nonhumans. The artist invited the audience to intentionally interact with air, understand its agency, and recall their interconnectedness.

Urbano's creative placemaking approach through critical pedagogy and studio training works as a catalyst for developing artistic skills central to stimulating students' curiosity for exploring the issues in their communities through art.

Urbano's offerings are unique, and for the majority of students, our programs represent the only arts or after-school opportunity available to them. Our students go beyond learning studio skills, to build a collaborative project with practicing artists and civic leaders to have a positive impact on their communities.

# Evaluation & Data

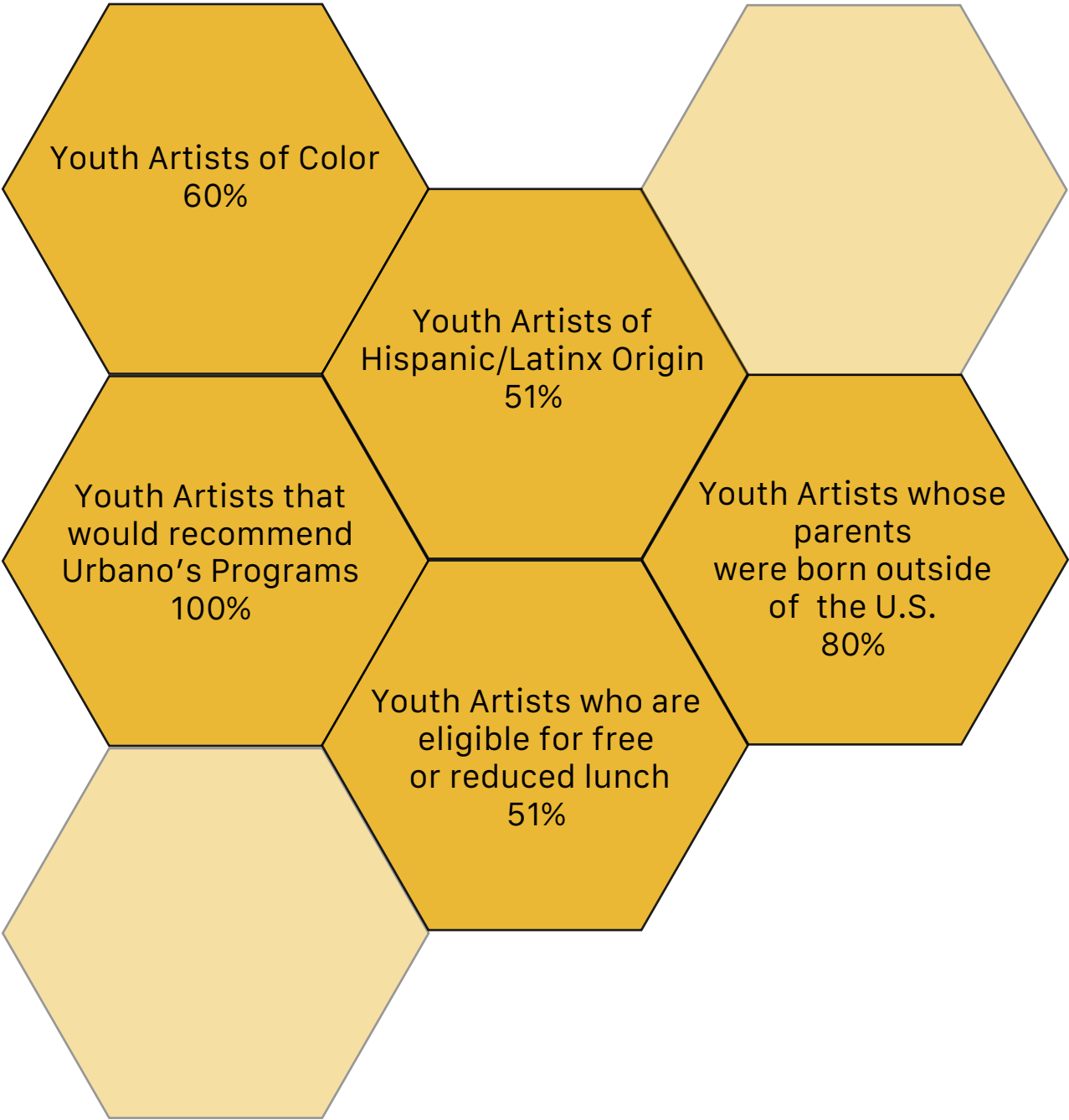
## Demographics



- 21 Public Schools
- 11 Neighborhoods

# Evaluation & Data

## Demographics

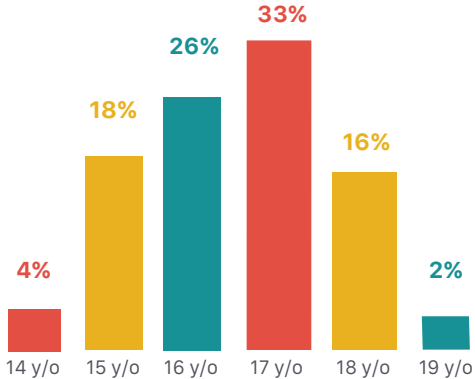


# Evaluation & Data

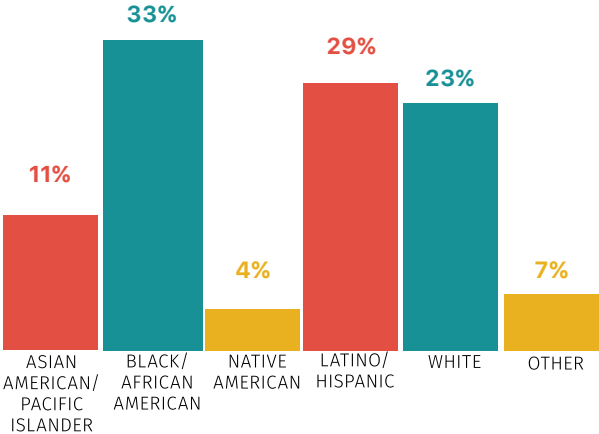
## Demographics

\* For the demographic data below: 53 students were enrolled in Urbano's FY20 Youth Artist Programs (Summer 2019, Fall 2019, Spring 2020, Summer 2020).

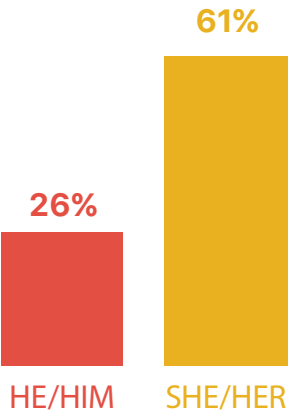
### Age



### Race & Ethnicity



### Gender Pronouns



# Evaluation & Data

## Youth Programs

**"I hope to gain experience in art and not only to make a change in my community but the whole world. Action speaks louder than words." – Youth Artist Spring 2020**

**We use entry and exit surveys for participants to gather demographic information, self-reported development in the arts, social skills, plans for the future, and community involvement.**

**The entry and exit surveys are only given to participants in programs that take place over multiple days. Teaching artists use rubrics and tools to assess each individual youth artist's artistic and personal growth relative to his/her/their starting point.**

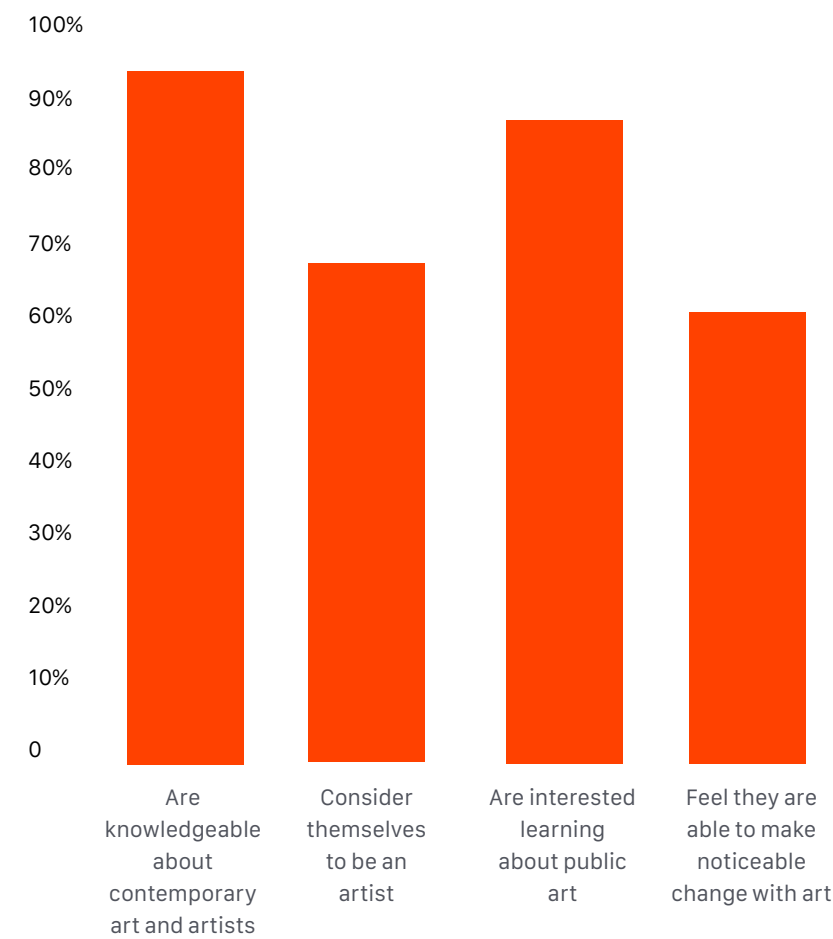
**\* The following stats are based on 28 responses corresponding to Summer 2019 and Spring 2020 surveys.**

# Evaluation & Data

## Youth Programs

### Goal

Offer high-quality arts education experiences, including opportunities to develop an awareness and appreciation of contemporary arts and of the role the arts can play to effect social change.



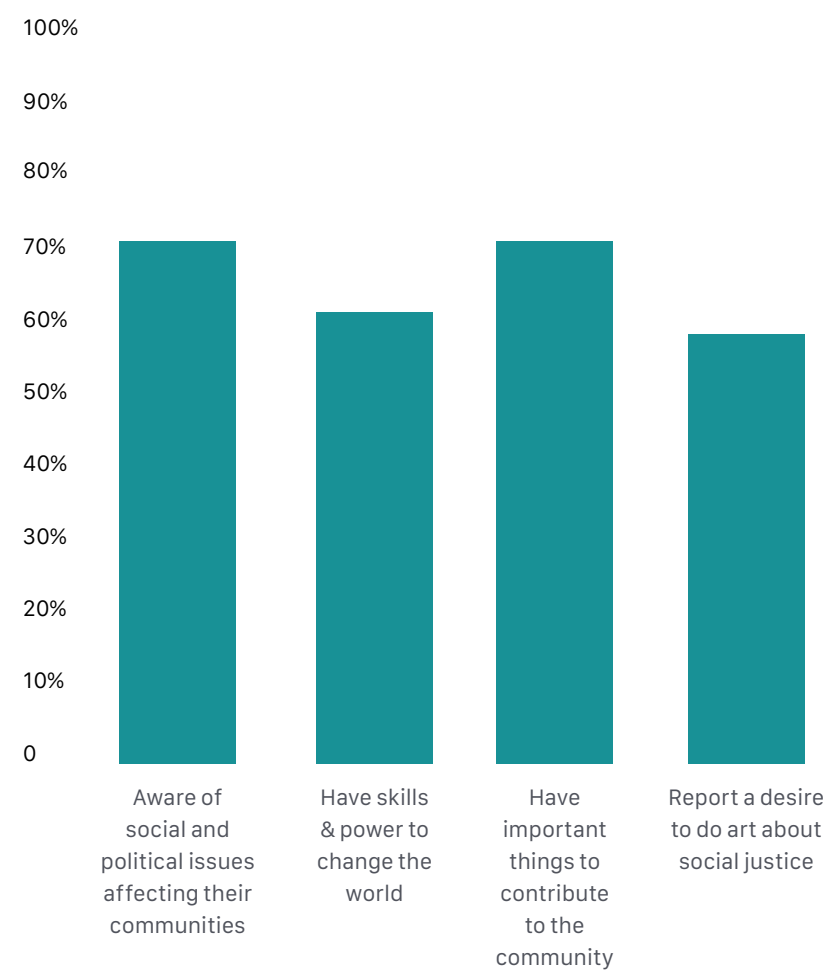
**"I always found Urbano as a safe space where I felt comfortable sharing my art with others even if I wasn't the most confident in it. And to me, that means everything"**  
– Youth Artist Summer 2019

# Evaluation & Data

## Youth Programs

### Goal

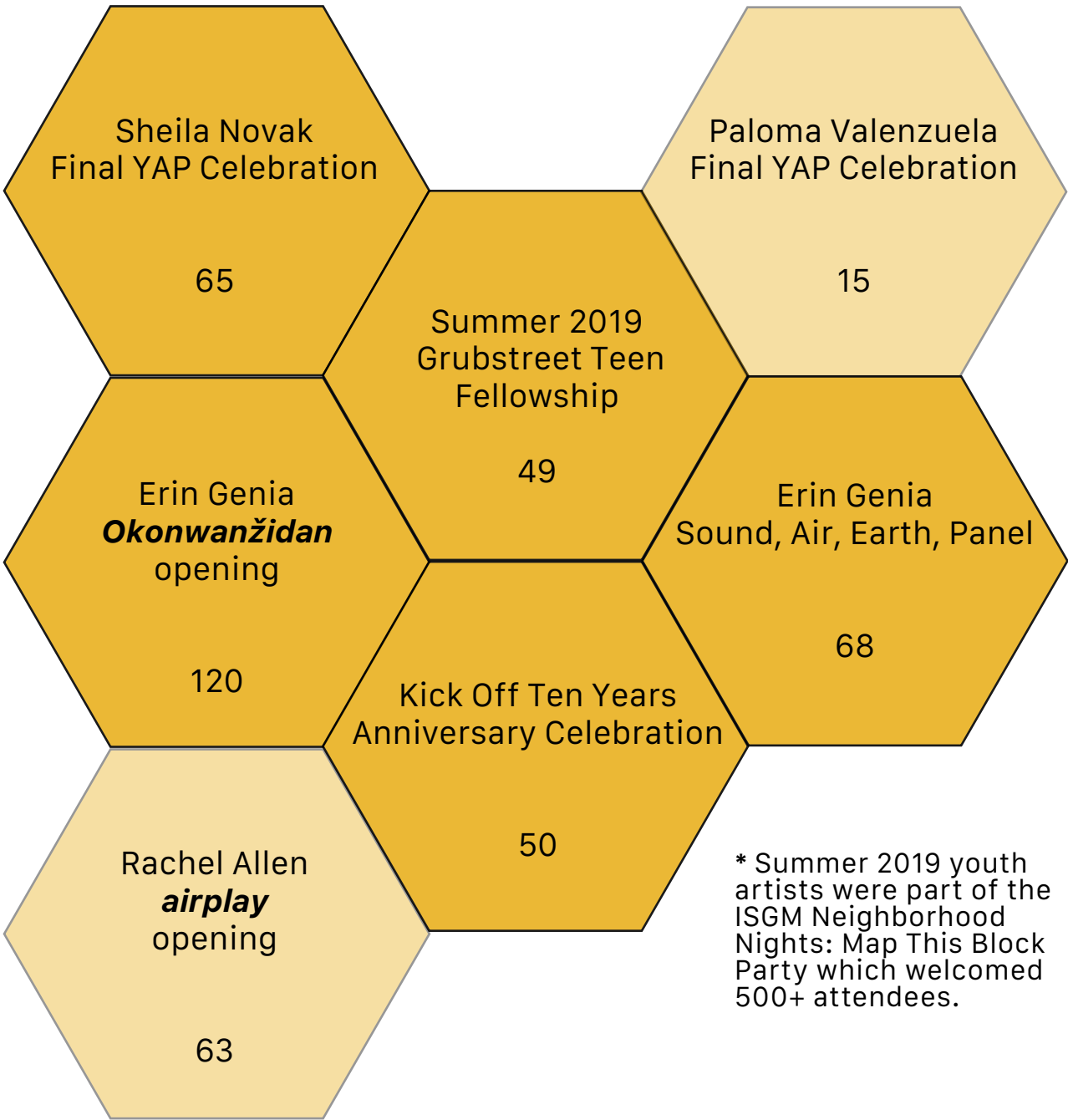
Promote civic engagement through participatory art that address the major issues of our times, and develop a corps of positively engaged citizens who serve as leaders in their communities.



# Evaluation & Data

## Audience

In FY20, Urbano held eight in-person and virtual events at no cost, serving +600\* audience members.



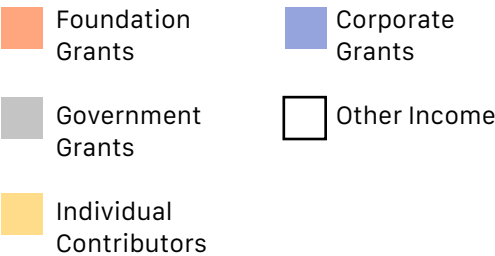
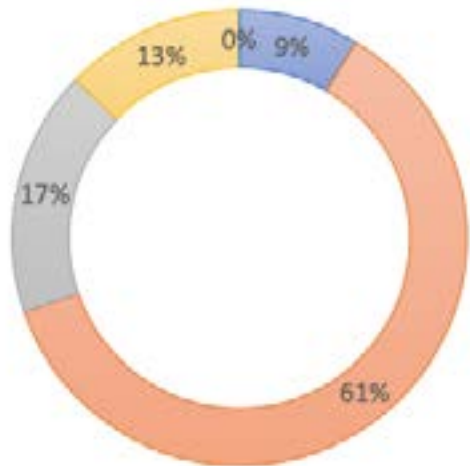
# Financials FY20

## Revenue & Expenses

### Income

|                         |              |
|-------------------------|--------------|
| Corporate Grants        | \$16,961.68  |
| Foundation Grants       | \$122,000.00 |
| Government Grants       | \$34,900.00  |
| Individual Contributors | \$25,473.32  |
| Other Income            | \$94.00      |

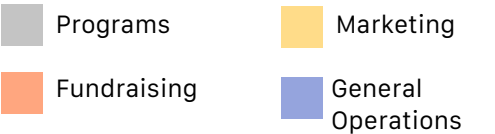
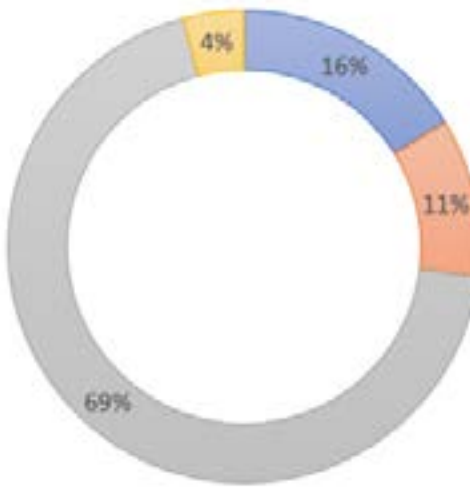
Total Income: \$199,429



### Expenses

|                                     |              |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|
| General Operations & Administrative | \$43,791.84  |
| Fundraising                         | \$27,853.99  |
| Programs                            | \$176,699.10 |
| Marketing                           | \$10,621.59  |

Total Expenses: \$258,966



# Financials

## Partners & Supporters

We are grateful to our funders, donors, partners, and dedicated board, without whose support Urbano's FY20 programs and operations would not have been possible!

### Board Members

**Todd M. Gershkowitz (Board Chair)**  
**Etty Padmodipoetro (Treasurer)**  
**Betty Fulton**  
**Nina Berger**

### Community Collaborators

**Egleston Sq.**  
**Grubstreet**  
**Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum**

