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Tremaine Foundation

KNOWLEDGE RESOURCE MODULE #2: ASSET BUILDING FOR ARTISTS

Prepared by Pave Program in Arts Entrepreneurship at Arizona State University for The Emily Hall Tremaine Foundation (last updated 12/7/16)

What is Asset Building?

This module focuses on tools and training for individual artist to build financial assets, while acknowledging that asset building can be defined in many ways depending on the field and who is doing the defining. Asset building can be understood here to be the accumulation of savings, reserving of emergency funds, buying of a home or other real estate, retirement planning, estate planning, archiving work and other related ways of building up financial assets with the goal of long-term financial stability.

Why is Asset Building Important?

Many artists do not have a steady income that is the same month to month; many are freelancers and don't have employer initiated and matched retirement funds, nor have they done any estate planning. A study of professional artists in New York age 62 and over found that "A whopping 97.1% have no estate plan and, while nationally only 44% [of adults] have wills, only 22.9% of artists do. Another 70.8% have no life insurance" (Jeffri et al, 2007, p. 44). Artists of all genres own homes at a lower rate than the total population, although the differential varies widely based on specific occupation. Drawing on data provided by the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series: Version 5.0,¹ a research team asserts that in 2012, 64% of Americans owned their own home. Musicians and artists come close to that national average (62 and 63 percent respectively), but the lowest rate of homeownership based on occupation was dancers and dance instructors, at just 23%; 37% of actors own their own homes (Ancestry.com, 2014).

According to the Midas Collaborative, "Asset-building programs help people to learn, plan, grow their personal savings, and safely invest in life-changing assets." (2011). The Ford Foundation's Building Assets report states, "Control over assets gives low-income people the independence necessary to resist oppression, pursue productive livelihoods, and confront injustice" (2002, p. 9). The Ford Foundation outlines three areas of benefits of asset building:

¹ Steven Ruggles, J. Trent Alexander, Katie Genadek, Ronald Goeken, Matthew B. Schroeder, and Matthew Sobek. Integrated Public Use Microdata Series: Version 5.0 [Machine-readable database]. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2010.

- **Economic Benefits.** Assets can provide household stability, the capacity to weather changes such as the loss of a job or household income triggered by business cycles, restructuring, or a family crisis. They also can help to develop other assets, for instance, building a business that generates revenues and employs others or equity in a home that can be invested in further education. Assets provide a head start for the next generation.
- **Psychological Benefits.** [Assets] provide a sense of security, control, confidence, and a belief that one can take advantage of opportunities. They can provide an incentive to reduce risky behavior. Assets engender a desire and ability to look toward the future, make plans, and take an interest in additional steps toward independence. Assets support action on behalf of oneself and the next generation.
- **Social Benefits.** Assets can increase commitment to a shared vision and community action. The sharing of individual assets and building of community assets can contribute to broader social well-being. Assets create stronger families and communities for the next generation. (2002, p. 10)

For artists, assets translate into not only financial stability, but also into the ability to take artistic risks, to pursue a dream project, to put down roots in a community, and to assure both their solvency and their legacy.

How to Use This Module and How it was Created

Our goal in creating this resource is to better connect artists, teachers of artists, and anyone else interested in asset building for artists with currently available resources. The annotated resource list that follows is aimed at helping artists, arts organizations, and others learn *how to do* this work. We make no claim that this list is exhaustive of all the resources available; we include as many as we could find that we believe will provide practical knowledge to readers. This includes stories of specific projects, case studies, toolkits, blogs, books, and more. We have not included academic writing on the topic, as it is mostly theoretical rather than practical, and written for an audience of academics rather than practitioners.

We sometimes use an organization's own words to describe a resource, while for other entries we synthesize the available information to craft our own description. For print publications, we have relied primarily on material provided by the publisher.

This module is broken into three main sections: [print publications](#); [web-based resources](#); and [toolkits, workshops, and other resources](#). Print publications are formally published books on a topic related to asset building. Web based print resources include blogs, articles, research papers, stories from artists, and searchable databases of additional resources. The toolkits, workshops, and other resources section includes how-to guides, in person or online workshops, webinars, toolkits and more. If you are an individual artist looking for guidance on building

assets, we recommend starting with the "Workshops and Toolkits" section. If you represent an artist services organization seeking to expand the training you offer to artists, you may want to begin with the "Print Publications" section.

References

- Ancestry.com. (15 October 2014). *Surprising connections between occupation and homeownership from 1900 through 2102*. Retrieved from <http://blogs.ancestry.com/ancestry/2014/10/15/surprising-connections-between-occupation-and-home-ownership-from-1900-through-2012/>
- Ford Foundation. (2002). *Building assets to reduce poverty and injustice*. Los Angeles: Laufer Green Isaac
- Jeffri, J., Spiller, M. W., Heckathorn, D. D., & Simon, J. (2007). Above ground: Information on artists III: Special focus new york city aging artists.
- The Midas Collaborative. (2011). *Building Assets*. Retrieved from <http://www.massassets.org/ourwork/buildingassets>

PRINT PUBLICATIONS

Artists' Estates: Reputations in Trust

By Magda Salvesen and Diane Cousineau

<http://rutgerspress.rutgers.edu/product/Artists-Estates,2264.aspx>

"*Artists' Estates* offers a fascinating journey into the complex and competitive art world through the distinctive lens of those who deal with the paintings, prints, and sculpture that artists leave behind after their deaths. Bringing together interviews conducted by Magda Salvesen, the widow of the second-generation Abstract Expressionist painter Jon Schueler, this unique book provides a window into the goals and desires, the conflicts and frustrations, and the emotional and financial strains that confront widows, companions, sons, and daughters as the heirs to artists' estates. The judiciously arranged and edited interviews also address the benefits and liabilities of foundations and trusts through the insights of lawyers, gallery dealers, and foundation directors.

Readers will explore well-known estates, including those of Roy Lichtenstein, Mark Rothko, Adolph Gottlieb, Milton Avery, Romare Bearden, and David Smith, as well as the equally intriguing legacies of lesser-known artists whose work came to the fore in the forties and fifties."²

The Art Studio/Loft Manual: For Ambitious Artists and Creators

By Eric Rudd

http://www.ericrudd.com/rudd_book.htm

"Three million creative people in this country need adequate studio space. Almost all of them have limited funds. Eric Rudd has written the first practical book to help creative people find, secure, fix up and finance great studio space. No one graduating

² Source: <http://www.amazon.com/dp/0813536049/?tag=artisthelpnetwor>

from art, design, music or theater school should go out into the real world without absorbing the information in The Art Studio/Loft Manual. Seasoned artists and creators will welcome the ideas revealed in this manual.”³

Creating Space: A Guide to Real Estate Development for Artists

By Cheryl Kartes

<http://www.americansforthearts.org/by-program/reports-and-data/legislation-policy/naappd/creating-space-a-guide-to-real-estate-development-for-artists>

“This publication is a collaborative project of Artspace Projects, the Bay Area Partnership and the American Council for the Arts. Designed specifically for arts groups, this comprehensive, practical guide is for artists who want to act as their own developers of space for living and working. Aimed primarily at the visual artist who wants to secure suitable space affordably and legally, the same principles can be used to develop rehearsal and performance space for use by performing artists.”⁴

Legal Guide for the Visual Artist

By Tad Crawford

<http://www.amazon.com/Legal-Guide-Visual-Artist-Crawford/dp/1581157428>

Now in its fifth edition, Crawford’s book offers entry level legal guidance on the myriad issues faced by a visual artist, including: copyright, artist-gallery relationships, first amendment rights, contracts, taxation, licensing, collections, and more. It includes one chapter on estate planning.

Strategies of Serious Older Artists

By Eric Rudd

https://www.facebook.com/RuddArt?sk=app_251458316228&app_data

“Retooling your studio methods. Protecting your Legacy. What will happen to your art when you are dead? How to keep your art in view and known, it is not too late! Long-term art and studio planning! Ideas for art collectors and art professionals, too! Younger artists would be wise to read this now! Creating and aging, for success! Artists don’t retire; they work until they drop. Aging will affect how you work and how much you produce successfully. Equally important, most serious artists accumulate artwork that is not sold. How do you preserve your work and what will happen to your work after you die? The truth is that most of the art made by the majority of artists will end up in the attic, basement, dumpster or flea market. Spouses and children can not successfully handle a lifetime of artwork. If you care about your later years and giving your art the respect it deserves, this book will show you how to upgrade and adjust your studio methods, how to get ahead of the

³ Source:

<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0970995911/artisthelpnetwor>

⁴ Source: <http://www.americansforthearts.org/by-program/reports-and-data/legislation-policy/naappd/creating-space-a-guide-to-real-estate-development-for-artists>

curve for your later years, and offer alternatives for preserving and exhibiting your lifes work even after you die. No matter what your current situation, the ideas and problems presented in this book should be understood and considered as early as possible.”⁵

The Thriving Artist: Saving and Investing for Performers, Artists, and the Stage and Film Industries

By David Maurice Sharp

<http://www.focalpress.com/books/details/9781138809178/>

“*The Thriving Artist* provides valuable advice for the performing artist, whether you’re an actor, dancer, lighting guru, costumer, or stagehand, on investing, saving, and building a diversified and stable financial portfolio. Written specifically for artists who have fluctuating, uncertain, and sometimes limited streams of income, this book promotes an understanding of finances and the investment world for the artist by offering clear, basic explanations of how finances work and instruction on how to participate in them as an investor. It also provides unique strategies for integrating financial awareness and planning into your life as an artist, and how that can help to provide a better sense of financial security. With *The Thriving Artist*, author David Maurice Sharp guides you with unflappable good humor through the tricky financial waters that come with following your passion.”⁶

A Visual Artist’s Guide to Estate Planning

<http://www.sharpeartfdn.org/estateplnbook/estateplanning.htm>

“*A Visual Artist’s Guide to Estate Planning* is a comprehensive handbook designed to assist artists in planning their estates. The book has two main parts and an appendix. Part I introduces general estate planning concepts and offers practical advice and a discussion of legal issues raised by artists at an estate planning conference. Part II consists of an in-depth discussion of policy and law on selected issues of estate planning and administration for visual artists...The Marie Walsh Sharpe Art Foundation and The Judith Rothschild Foundation co-sponsored a Visual Artists Estate Planning Conference in New York. Artists, accountants, archivists, art dealers, curators, lawyers, writers, and representatives from foundations, government, museums, and other nonprofit organizations attended. During the two day conference they discussed practical and legal issues related to artists’ estates both in planning and in administering an artist’s estate. *A Visual Artist’s Guide to Estate Planning* is a result of this project.”⁷

The Visual Artists’ Guide to Estate Planning

Published by CARFAC Ontario

<http://www.carfaontario.ca/The-Visual-Artists-Guide-to-Estate-Planning>

⁵ Source: <http://www.amazon.com/dp/0970995946/?tag=artisthelpnetwor>

⁶ Source: <http://www.amazon.com/The-Thriving-Artist-Performers-Industries/dp/1138809179>

⁷ Source: <http://www.sharpeartfdn.org/estateplnbook/estateplanning.htm>

“The Visual Artists' Guide to Estate Planning examines the steps that you can take towards generating a strong artistic legacy that has persistent visibility and protection. It is meant as a guide to maximize the potential of your work, and to minimize the complications that come with the process. Creating an estate plan is not a simple task, but the long-term benefits of a plan will prove, in the end, to be very helpful to you and to those you care about most. Includes six chapters on estate planning; a glossary; additional resources; a sample inventory sheet; warranty regarding entitlement form; a sample gifting agreement and basic will, and a will information checklist prepared by Iler Campbell LLP.”⁸

WEB-BASED RESOURCES

ArtHome

<http://www.arthome.org/>

Resources- <http://www.arthome.org/resources>

A page of resources, most of which provide information about home buying. These include handbooks on home buying, foreclosure prevention, and mortgage qualification in multiple languages, as well as outside resources in home buying and financing.

Assets for Artists

<http://assetsforartists.org/>

Report on Data Collection and Impact Findings-

<https://assetalmanac.files.wordpress.com/2012/03/assets-for-artists-2013-massachusetts-evaluation-report1.pdf>

Written in 2013, this document is a longitudinal evaluation of the Assets for Artists program thus far. This is a good model for evaluation, and also discusses what is working in the program and how well.

Craft Emergency Relief Fund

<http://craftemergency.org/>

Get Ready Now- http://www.craftemergency.org/get_ready_now/#prep

With resources for three areas of preparing for emergencies and disasters, Craft Emergency Relief Fund (CERF) provides step by step, artist specific guides to protecting artwork and artist's livelihood. CERF provides last minute emergency preparations in Disaster Alert; a guide to planning ahead for an emergency in Smart Prep; and a guide to making sure an artist is fully insured in Get Insured.

Studio Protector- <http://www.studioprotector.org/OnlineGuide.aspx>

Consisting of a wall guide and an online “companion multi-media digest with supplementary information to help artists tailor their readiness efforts.”⁹

Studio Protector Blog-

<http://www.studioprotector.org/TipoftheMonth/Blog.aspx>

⁸ Source: <http://www.carfaontario.ca/The-Visual-Artists-Guide-to-Estate-Planning>

⁹ Source: <http://www.studioprotector.org/About.aspx>

Studio Protector Blog is a series focusing on disaster recovery for artists. Entries include discussions of specific recovery projects, resources for artists in recent natural disaster areas, and upcoming events.

Joan Mitchell Foundation- CALL Resources

<http://callresources.org/>

Career Documentation- <http://callresources.org/career-documentation/>

A workbook and guide to documenting an artist's career of work. It includes information on: importance of documenting and archiving your work; working with assistants & legacy specialists; setting manageable goals; physical inventory; record-keeping system; databases; photographing work; and budgeting.

Estate Planning Workbook- <http://callresources.org/estate-planning-workbook/>

Created in partnership with the Arts and Business Council of Greater Boston and Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts of Massachusetts, the Estate Planning Workbooks is a practical introductory guide to estate planning specific to visual artists. Topics covered include: legacy vehicles; wills, trusts, power of attorney, healthcare proxy and living will; choosing your personal representatives; copyright; elements of your estate; and talking with an estate planning attorney.

CALL Stories- <http://www.studioprotector.org/TipoftheMonth/Blog.aspx>

Case studies and interviews with artists about preparing for large exhibits, cataloguing work, and the tools provided by CALL Resources.

Money Crashers

<http://www.moneycrashers.com/>

Financial Planning Guide for Musicians & Performing Artists-

<http://www.moneycrashers.com/financial-planning-musicians-performing-artists/>

An article that gives basic financial planning advice specific to performance artists, including taxes, insurance, and retirement plans. Designed to help prepare in advance of an emergency, prepare in the last few minutes before an impending disaster, and guide clean up and recovery, this guide is a hands on resource.

Professional Artist

<http://www.professionalartistmag.com/>

Retirement Plans for Artists-

<http://www.professionalartistmag.com/news/2014/jan/16/preview-retirement-plans-artists/>

Part of the February/March 2014 issue focusing on making, spending and saving money, this magazine article focuses specifically on retirement savings. It explains interest, does some basic math, and discusses various retirement plans including the traditional IRA, Roth IRA and SIMPLE plan.

Senior Artists Initiative

<http://www.seniorartists.org/>

Publications- <http://www.seniorartists.org/publications.html>

Previously this resource was a series of articles written by experts about preparing your artwork and your estate for your death, all of the articles have now been combined into one white paper. Specific topics include estate planning, approaching museums, and what will inheritors do with art work.

TOOLKITS, WORKSHOPS, AND OTHER RESOURCES

ArtHome

<http://www.arthome.org/>

Low Income Artist Homeownership Program-

http://www.arthome.org/projects/Low_Income_Artist_Homeownership

Partnering with local and regional organizations, ArtHome works to assist low and moderate income artists in the home buying process. This assistance includes counseling, workshops, and region-specific homebuyer handbooks. Programs are available in New York City, Minnesota, and Cleveland. Nationally, ArtHome provides a handbook on mortgage qualifications that can be downloaded from

<http://www.arthome.org/projects/homeownership-NW>.

Low Income Artist Peer Loan Programs-

http://www.arthome.org/projects/Low-income_Artist_Peer_Loan_Programs

ArtHome is partnering with Project Enterprise to offer business training and a peer-lending program to New York artists. The program provides small loans, with credit levels rising on successful repayment of loans, evaluated and approved by the artists' peers. These loans are to assist artists and arts entrepreneurs with accessing credit, by replacing collateral and credit history with peer accountability and participation in business training programs. Loans start at \$1,500 and go up to \$12,000.

Artist Pension Trust

<http://www.apglobal.org/en>

Open to contemporary visual artists, Artist Pension Trust is a unique retirement plan. Artists contribute artworks, which are then sold off over a 20 year period and the resulting funds are pooled and distributed to the artists in the group. Currently, there are approximately 2,000 artists and the collection is comprised of 10,000 artworks. Artists can apply, and are selected by an international curatorial team made up of arts professionals.

Assets for Artists

<http://assetsforartists.org/>

Assets for Artists- http://assetsforartists.org/page_id6647/

A collaborative program administered by MASS MoCA, the Midas Collaborative and Arthome, Assets for Artists is a matched savings grant program. Participating artists complete financial and business training, and make monthly deposits into a savings account. At the end of the program, the money the artist saved is matched by the program. Currently the program is available in four areas: Massachusetts, Portland, Maine, New York City, and Rhode Island. To be eligible for the program, you must:

be a working artist (part or full time); be under household income thresholds; and have fewer than \$10,000 in net household assets.

Bronx Council on the Arts

<http://www.bronxarts.org/>

BCACALL- <http://www.bronxarts.org/bcacall.asp>

A partnership with CALL Resources, the program provides “12-week training modules and accelerated intensives in art handling, collections, preparedness and emergency risk management – all vital professional development skills-sets for aspiring art handlers, teaching artists and Legacy Specialists. Workforce initiatives enables trained specialists to provide hands-on support and in turn, to train CALL artists in creating and maintaining safe studios and storage, plus providing clear methods and systems for organizing exhibitions, documenting and ultimately archiving their careers and life-work.”¹⁰ This program is only open to artists living and working in the Bronx, NY.

Craft Emergency Relief Fund

<http://craftemergency.org/>

Grants and Loans-

http://craftemergency.org/artists_services/emergency_relief/grants_loans

CERF provides emergency grants and loans to professional artists working in craft disciplines after “career-threatening emergencies.”¹¹ Grants do not need to be repaid, and are for amounts up to \$5,000. Recovery loans are available “to re-establish, improve, or possibly expand his/her work capacity after an emergency,”¹² and are for amounts up to \$8,500.

Joan Mitchell Foundation- CALL Resources

<http://callresources.org/>

Unique Inventory Number- <http://callresources.org/unique-inventory-number/>

A webinar and article introducing options for a system to identify and track works of art.

Creating Condition Reports: <http://callresources.org/condition-reports/>

Three webinars outlining how to create and complete condition reports for three dimensional objects, works on paper, and paintings.

Storage Solutions- <http://callresources.org/storage-solutions/>

Descriptions and pictures of storage solutions for visual art, including large canvas, works in progress, and work documentation.

Senior Artists Initiative

¹⁰ Source: <http://www.bronxarts.org/bcacall.asp>

¹¹ Source:

http://craftemergency.org/artists_services/emergency_relief/grants_loans

¹² Source:

http://craftemergency.org/artists_services/emergency_relief/grants_loans

<http://www.seniorartists.org/>

Educational Videos- <http://www.seniorartists.org/educationalvideos.html>

A recorded panel discussion called Preserving the Artist's Heritage, hear from seven experts on archiving, valuation, working with museums, and the legal aspects of preserving your life's work. Also available in audio only format at

<http://www.seniorartists.org/educationalaudios.html>.

Defunct Resources

The Estate Project for Artists with AIDS

<http://www.artistswithaids.org/index4b.html>

future safe- <http://www.artistswithaids.org/planning/future/index.html>

Written for artists living with HIV or AIDS, these guides can be of use to any and all artists. This publication is a starting point to begin thinking about intellectual property, individual needs and the uncertainties of an unplanned future. It includes sections for artists of specific genres (visual arts; literature and theater; music; dance; film and video) and a section called legal and planning, which touches on estate planning, legal issues including naming executor of your estate, copyright, will creation and signing, and designating benefactors.

Queens Council on the Arts

<http://queenscouncilarts.org/>

How to Retire as a Well Fed Artist- <http://queenscouncilarts.org/financial-management-retirement-planning-for-artists/>

A two hour workshop that is part of Queens Council on the Arts' Build Your Own Business series. During the How to Retire as a Well Fed Artist workshop, participants will "learn and discuss options for financial management and retirement planning" and the workshop covers "savings and investment strategies to the fundamentals of insurance coverage."¹³

¹³ Source: <http://queenscouncilarts.org/financial-management-retirement-planning-for-artists/>