

Artists'  
Cooperative  
Residency &  
Exhibitions

# ACRE Annual Report

Year in  
Review  
2025



i.	Introduction	(p.08)
ii.	Summer Residency	(p.12)
iii.	ACRE Kitchen Partnerships	(p.20)
iv.	Exhibitions	(p.24)
v.	Chicago Arts Census	(p.28)
vi.	Events	(p.36)
vii.	Income and Expenses	(p.40)
viii.	Staff, Board, and Supporters	(p.42)
ix.		(p.44)





# section i

# Introduction



Building on the vision articulated by ACRE's community through our strategic planning process, we focused this year on strengthening the structures, relationships, and systems that allow artists to lead together over time. 2025 marked a year of intentional stewardship as we moved from planning into practice, making meaningful progress toward long-term sustainability.



This work builds on the foundation laid over ACRE's first 15 years and reflects our shared commitment to evolving and strengthening our cooperative structure. This year we invested in the conditions that support care, equity, and shared leadership—deepening staff capacity at the residency, clarifying program structures, and bringing greater cohesion across our programs in Wisconsin and Chicago.

Across the residency, exhibitions, and public programs, we felt artists holding tightly to moments of joy, experimentation, and transformation. In a period shaped by uncertainty and contraction across the arts sector, the opportunity to gather, learn, and practice small acts of collective world-building with others felt especially meaningful. This year affirmed our belief that artists already hold the knowledge needed to shape more just, sustainable, cooperative futures—and that ACRE's role is to help build the conditions where that leadership can take root.



section ii

# Residency Program



## Our 8 Studio Areas



Ceramics  
*Fibers*  
Woodshop



High Fire  
Screen Printing



A/V Tech

Sound

Performance Stage

Over three sessions in the summer of 2025, the Residency Program hosted 53 visual artists, performers, musicians, and writers at our community in Steuben, WI. During their residency, participants had access to a variety of materials, equipment, expert guidance, conscientiously sourced food, and numerous opportunities to share their work. Alumni artists also played a crucial role at ACRE, returning as staff mentors to

lead studios, offer demos and workshops, and help shape the residency experience. Workshops and presentations included: wild clay foraging, weaving, rug tufting, natural dyeing, sand mold and lost wax casting, screenprinting, modular synthesis, clay throwing and hand building, 3D printing, guided movement, and performances and screenings of time-based work.





15

ACRE

16

Year in Review



16



17

Residency Program

17

2025

*"My time at ACRE Residency was a life-affirming experience. The staff and residents together cultivated a community atmosphere rich with emotional safety, compassion, kindness, and generosity with skill sharing and intellectual exchange. The facilities staffed with knowledgeable and skilled artists made so much possible for people seeking to expand their artistic practices through workshops, individual guidance, experimentation, and play."*

—Juvana Soliven,  
2025 Resident



section iii

# ACRE Kitchen



20

Year in Review

The ACRE Kitchen provides healthy and creative meals while supporting sustainable food producers in the Driftless region of Wisconsin. Shared meals anchor residency life, creating time and space for connection, rest, and informal exchange alongside studio work.



20

21

✳ *150 Locally-Sourced Meals Served*

**Thank you to our Wisconsin Farmers and Vendors ♥**

1. Kickapoo Exchange
2. Natural Foods Coop
3. Coop Partners Warehouse
4. Liberty Ridge Farm
5. Mountain Lane Farm
6. Renae Krause
7. Tortilleria Zepeda
8. Sam Stoltzfoos
9. Mississippi Meats
10. Eastman Meat Locker
11. Bagels Forever
12. Wisconsin Cutlery

ACRE

21

ACRE Kitchen

2025



# section v Partnerships



23

Partnerships extend ACRE's residency model by expanding access while strengthening the broader arts ecosystem. Each residency season, seven weeks are dedicated to collaborations with value-aligned organizations. By providing affinity space, hospitality, and shared resources, ACRE invests more than 60% of the cost of participation, prioritizing collaboration over competition and creating opportunities for alumni and staff to co-design and facilitate programs.



24

## \* In 2025, we partnered with

- ① University of St. Francis
- ② WILD YAMS
- ③ GAMA (Gathering All Muslim Artists)
- ④ ICI (Independent Curators International).



25

Through these collaborations, we hosted an additional 75 artists and curators and hired 15 alumni as support staff, reinforcing ACRE's commitment to shared leadership, paid labor, and cyclical engagement across programs.



section iv

# Exhibitions Program



27



28

## About ACRE Projects

*"I can't think of another moment in my life in which such a purposeful and intentional community was built. ACRE cared for me in ways I didn't know I needed all while allowing me the freedom to both explore within my medium and to experiment outside of it. The relationships I made during this session will undoubtedly last far into the future and I am thankful for the many wisdoms offered by my fellow residents and staff alike."*

—Hunter Whitaker-Morrow,  
2025 Resident

ACRE Projects is the exhibition and public program space of ACRE. The gallery provides artists with opportunities to expand their practices, develop professionally, and build community within a thriving nationwide network of peers and arts professionals. Since its founding in 2010, ACRE Projects has served as a platform for experimental programming and dialogue.

Programming at ACRE Projects is shaped by an open call process and an emerging curatorial fellowship, inviting alumni and community members to propose projects and test ideas. A rotating studio residency further extends resources to alumni, encouraging sustained engagement beyond the summer residency.

In 2025, we realigned the exhibitions program to meet our current capacity, while prioritizing long-term sustainability. This shift allowed us to deepen curatorial support, strengthen relationships with artists and audiences, and plan new programming with our national network of artists. Through this process, we scheduled 15 exhibitions through 2026 and engaged two new curatorial fellows to support exhibitions at ACRE Projects and partner galleries.

By centering artist-led initiatives within a cooperative structure, ACRE Projects strengthens connection across disciplines and supports artists in building relationships over time. The exhibitions program reflects ACRE's broader commitment to stewardship by creating collaborative, supportive, and experimental conditions for artists to develop their work and engage audiences.

#### In 2025, we presented seven exhibitions at ACRE Projects:

*I Am a Thing That Holds Something Else*  
Ray Madrigal  
January 17 - February 28, 2025

*In Remembrance of Us*  
Lehna Huie  
March 7 - April 14, 2025

*Home, Place and Positionality*  
Haerim Lee and Fatima Laster  
April 25 - May 30, 2025

*hiccup*  
Tess Oldfield  
June 14 - July 28, 2025

*Positive or Zero: Long Distance Collaboration*  
Frey Michael Austin, Matthew Austin (For the Birds Trapped in Airports), Lois Bielefeld, Andi Crist, Camila Leiva, Liz Roberts, Jamie Robertson, and lee rae walsh  
Curated by Zach Clark & Sara J. Winston  
August 8 - September 19, 2025

*Committee of Six*  
Fred Schmidt-Arenales  
September 26 - October 26, 2025

*Fixing the Baroque*  
Carlos Salazar-Lermont  
November 7, 2025 - January 4, 2026



*I truly rarely use the word "transformative" to describe my own experiences. However, I would wholeheartedly describe my experience at ACRE as incredible and transformative on many different levels. ACRE allows you to imagine what true community and liberation grounded in art and care can look like. My practice feels enriched and nourished through the care, warmth, and ingenuity of the community of staff and residents, the land, and the resources available during the residency. I am walking away from the residency feeling deeply inspired with a new far-reaching community of peers and friends!*

—Gemma Kim,  
2025 Curatorial Fellow

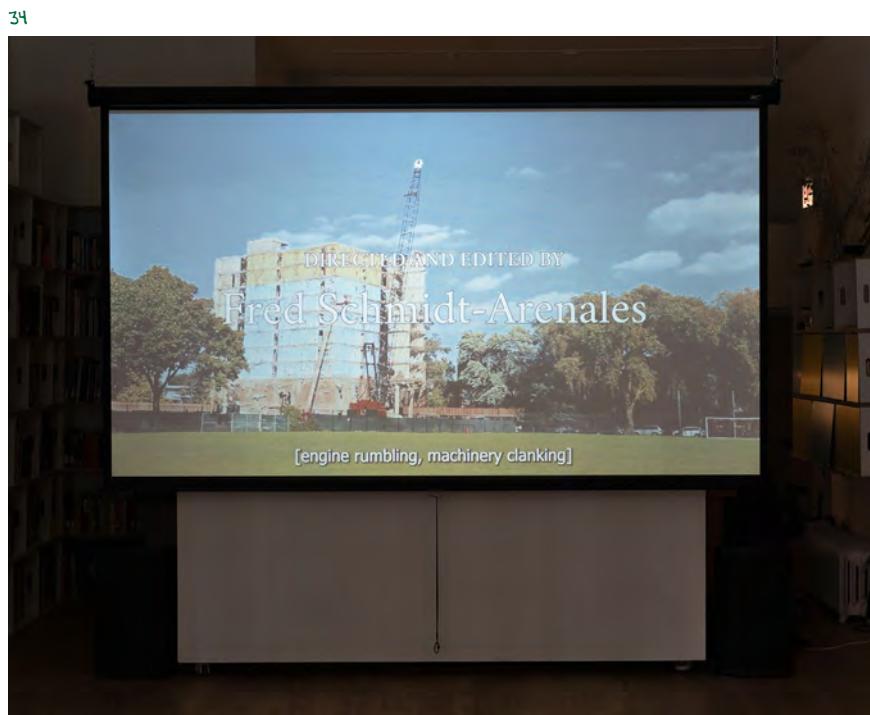




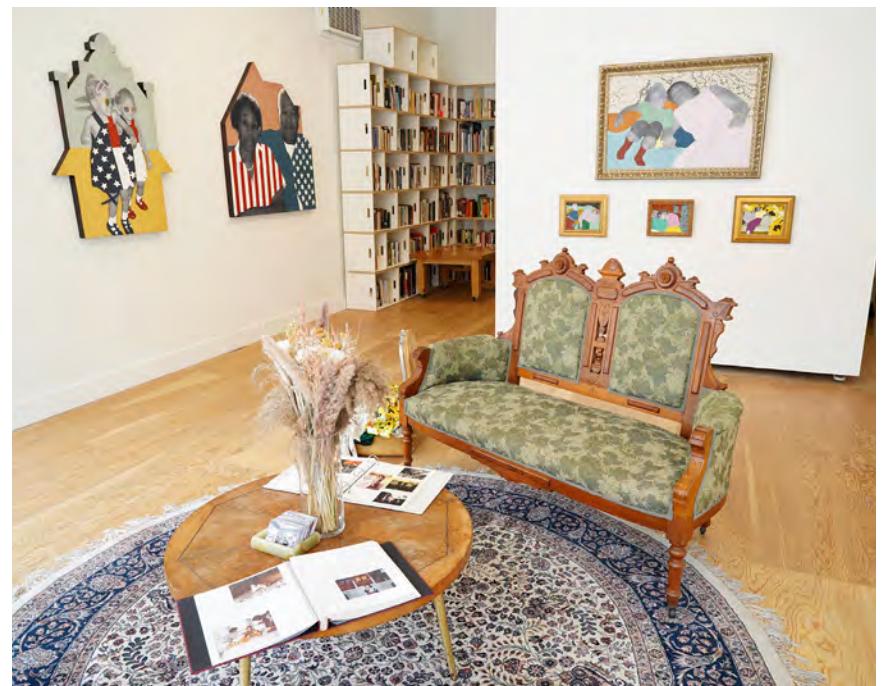
33



35



34



36

ACRE

34

Year in Review

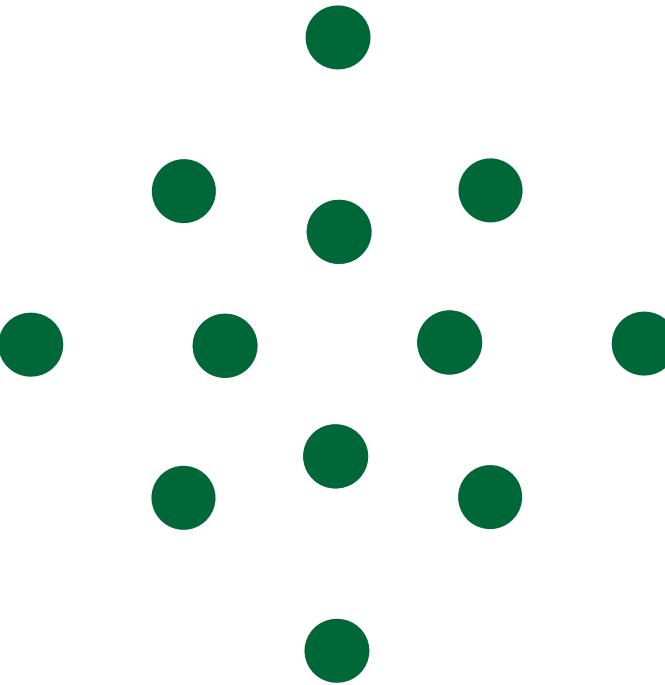
Exhibitions Program

35

2025

section vi

# Chicago Arts Census



The Chicago Arts Census is a cross-discipline data collection effort created by and with the art workers of Chicago.

## ① Data Report & Dashboard

In 2025, the Chicago Arts Census team completed and refined both the written report, *Our Work, Our Worth: The Lives and Labor of Chicago's Arts Workers*, and an interactive data dashboard. Together, these tools mark a transition from data collection and analysis toward public reporting and programming in the coming year.

The report is organized into three parts:

- ① A brief overview designed for accessibility,
- ② A set of key observations that examine patterns across the data,
- ③ A series of recommendations developed in response to feedback from artists, organizers, and partners.

The interactive dashboard presents more than 100 charts and graphs, along with filtering tools that allow users to explore the data in greater depth. Alongside the report, these tools are intended to support artists, organizations, and advocates in making informed cases for change.

## ② Conference

In late 2025, the Census team shared project insights and methodology with peers at the Artist Communities Alliance Conference, contributing to broader conversations about data, labor, and advocacy across the field.

## ③ Public Programs

As the project moves from analysis into public engagement in 2026, we will present public programs focused on themes that emerged in the Census findings, including retirement, homeownership, community-level investing, and employment prospects for art workers within the sector.

While many individual data points may feel familiar, the collective weight of more than 1,200 artists speaking together creates new possibilities for action. Through this project, ACRE has been reshaped in ways that deepen our ability to support artists and collaborate across sectors.

07

## Life & La

7.4 Conditions of work

I am compensated for my artistic work

I can take time off without negative consequences

I have access to resources to create my work

Maternity, paternity, or parental leave

Vacation days or other PTO (paid time off)

Flexible work hours

09

## Networks & Support

9.4 Benefits

Flexible work hours

Maternity, paternity, or parental leave

Vacation days or other PTO (paid time off)

11

## Interactive Data Charts

This page re-presents key data visualizations with an enabled filter function.

You can select elements from the eight categories listed at the top of the page to filter out or highlight the responses you are most interested in.

Refresh this webpage to reset the filters.

Filters

Gender

Degree

Discipline

Disability

Age Range

Occupation

Race & Ethnicity

Race & Ethnicity

Demographic

Race and Ethnicity

Race	Arts Workers
White	848
Black/African-American	151
Hispanic/Latino/Latina/Latinx	149
Multiracial	146
Asian	97
Indigenous American/First Nations	36
Southwest Asian/North African	25
Decline to identify	25
Pacific Islander and Native Hawaiian	10

Note: These figures represent every time someone selected one of these categories as part of their response. For instance, a respondent who identified as Black/African American as well as Hispanic/Latino/Latina/Latinx is represented in the count for both of these categories.

Gender Identity

Disability

Occupation

# Events



38

40



39



40



41

## ➊ Summer Daze

We kicked off the summer and our 16th residency season with Summer Daze at McKinley Community Play Garden, featuring music performances, clay activities with GnarWare, and a picnic lunch by ACRE Kitchen.

## ➋ Friends + Family Weekend

We hosted our fourth annual Friends + Family Weekend up at the farm and residency in Steuben. ACRE supporters witnessed the beauty of the Driftless landscape, enjoyed delicious farm-to-table dining, and experienced firsthand our multifaceted residency environment. This year's weekend included lots of kids activities and a screenprinting cocktail hour.

## ➌ Hearth Benefit

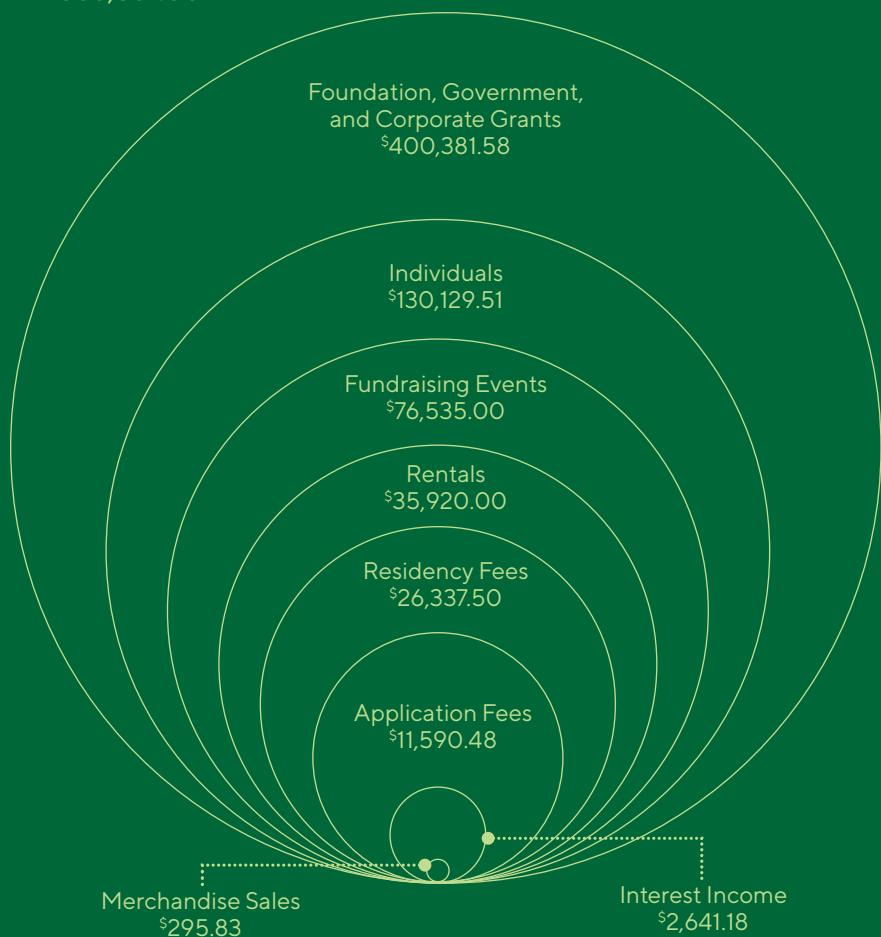
We hosted our annual Hearth Benefit at a new venue, Hoste, in Pilsen. Countless artists contributed their work and talents to creating a special evening evoking the spirit of our collective organization. Together we raised \$95,000 in support of ACRE's residency program and ongoing resources for artists—our highest level of support to date!

41

# Income & Expenses

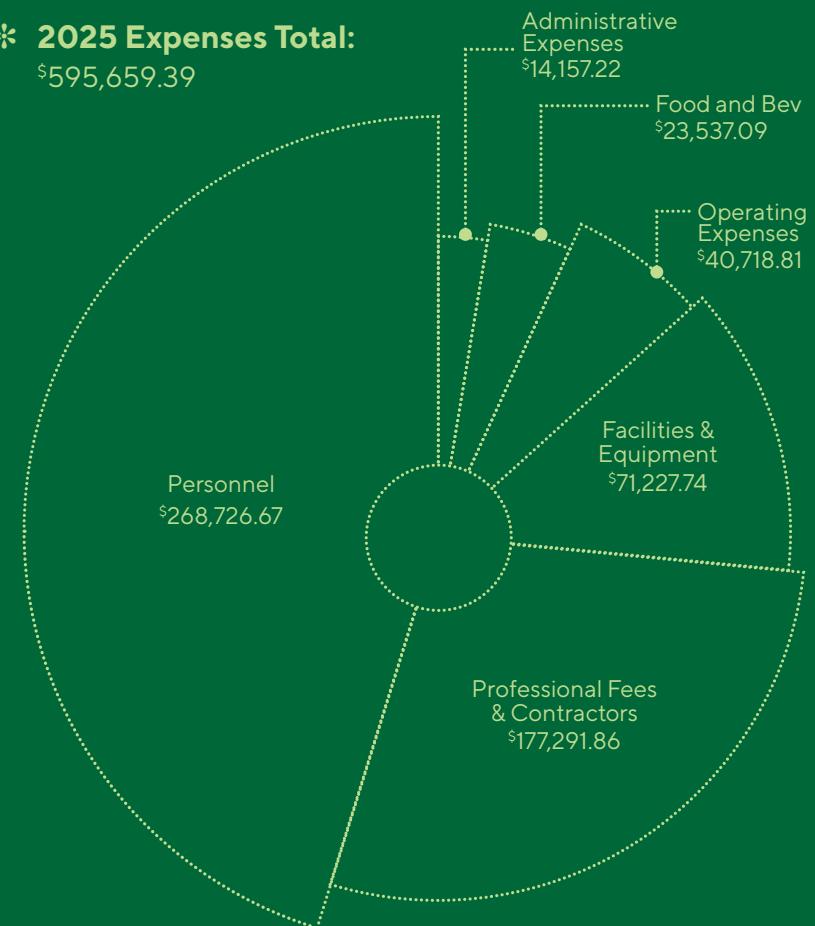
\* 2025 Income Total:

\$683,831.08



\* 2025 Expenses Total:

\$595,659.39



## Program Funders

John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation  
Good Chaos Field Foundation  
Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events  
Gaylord & Dorothy Donnelley Foundation  
Illinois Arts Council Agency

## Lead Sponsors

Patti Gilford  
Valerie Carberry and Richard Wright  
The California Clipper 710 Group  
Jay Dandy and Melissa Weber

## Special Thanks

ACRE Projects Gallery is sponsored by Supera, a proud supporter of the arts. Special thanks to John Supera.

To our farm partners at the Mother Earth Green Center and Steuben Lodge, Rosa Hendrickx and Bob Samuelson.

# Staff, Board, & Supporters



## Staff

Kate Bowen, Executive Director	Yejin Yoon, Events and Rentals Coordinator	Keiou Thomas, Residency On Call Co-Lead
Erin Nixon, Development Director	Kelly Carr, Residency Kitchen Director	Adia Sykes, Lead Organizer, Chicago Arts Census
Anthony Stepter, Program Director, Chicago Arts Census	Anthony E. Paterra, Residency Operations Manager, Facilities	Stephanie Koch, Lead Organizer, Chicago Arts Census
Chelsea Flowers, Residency Manager	Ricki Dwyer, Residency Setup Support	Alden Burke, Lead Organizer, Chicago Arts Census
Lauren Leving, Exhibitions Director	Maggie Wong, Volunteer Coordinator	Hannah Patterson, Residency On Call Co-Lead

## Board of Directors

In 2025, ACRE welcomed two new board members, Rebecca Beltrán and Lauren Conway Modahl, whose perspectives strengthen our cooperative leadership and long-term stewardship of the organization.

Aron Gent	Lena Singer, Co-Secretary
charles long, Treasurer	Lynnette Miranda, Co-Chair
Jenny Kendler	Raven Munsell, Co-Secretary
Latham Zearfoss, Co-Chair	Rebecca Beltrán
Lauren Conway Modahl	

## Thank You to Our Supporters ♥

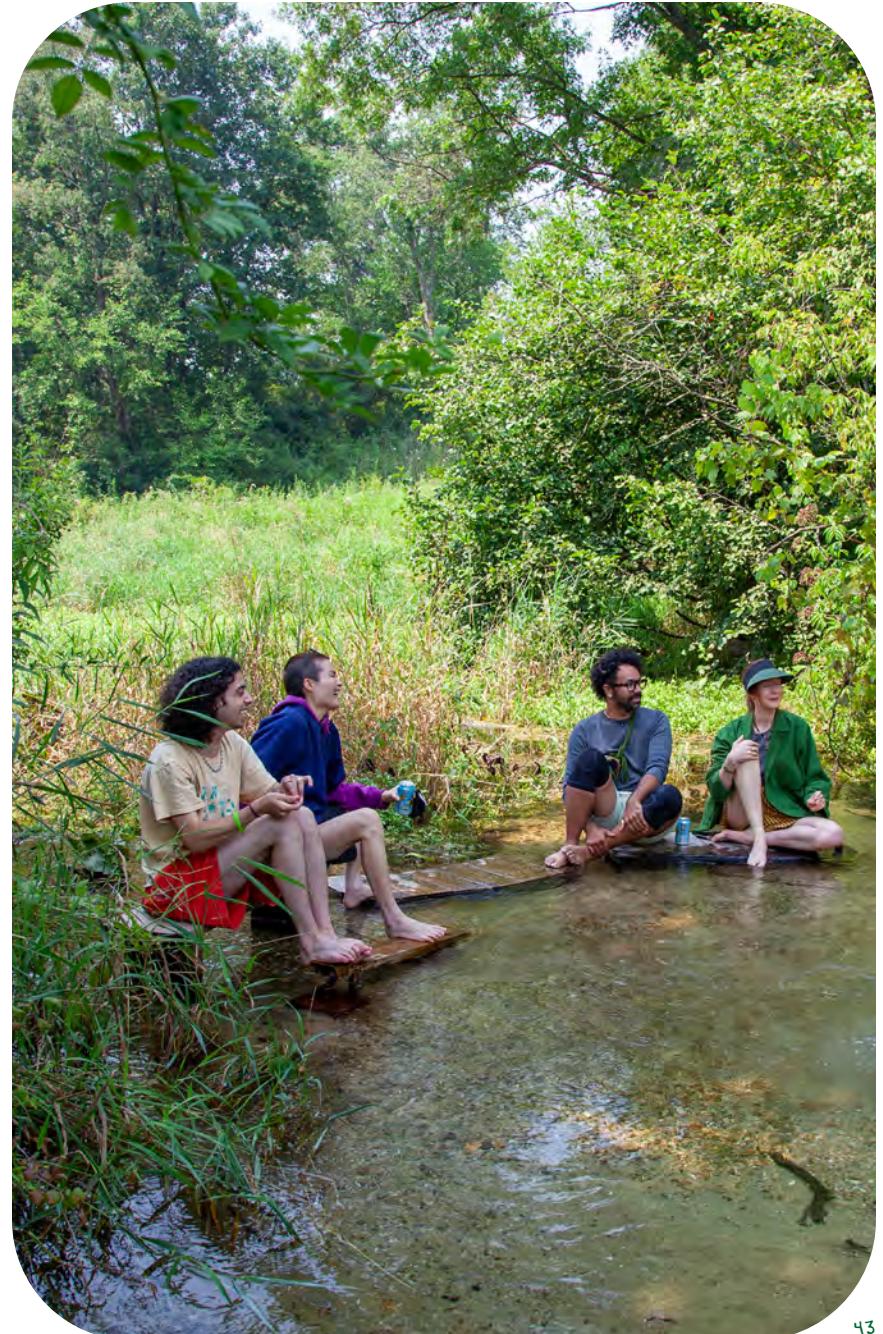
Aaron Slavutin	Anthony Paterra	Bindu Poroori
Abigail Steingraber	Aron Gent	Bonnie Stanfield
Adam Ruben	Arun Gupta	Brendan Palfreyman
Alden Burke	Ashley DiBlasi	Bruce K Modahl
Allison Burque	Benjamin Sage	Caitlin Arnold
Anastasia and GP Tinari	Benn E Williams	Caitlin Caspersen

## Thank You to Our Supporters ♥

Caroline Ng  
charles long  
Christian Garcia  
Claire Michelsen  
Courtney Mackedanz  
Davi Lakind  
David Alderdice  
Deborah Rudolf  
Derlyn Moronta  
E. Leonhart Shipman  
Ebba Gebisa  
Edward Wong  
Elizabeth Amundsen  
Elizabeth Lovero  
Ellen R. Sondag  
Ellen Wersan and  
Tim Sandry  
Emma Guttman-Slater  
Erin Fowler  
Esther Grimm  
Etta Sandry  
Evan Moore  
Farah Alhaidar  
Frank Casillias  
Garvey Camilien  
Gayatri Malmed  
Haerim Lee  
Heidi O'Neill  
Hillary Wiedemann  
James Dodington  
Janine Mileaf  
Jenal Dolson  
Jesse Ilhardt  
Jesse Ly  
Jesse Malmed  
Jess Yeats  
Jessica Harvey  
Jessyca Dudley  
John Jaramillo  
John Siegfried  
Jonathan Selkowitz  
Jordan Ross  
Jorge Silva

Josh Larkins  
Joshua Geltzer  
Jules Gordon  
Julia and Larry  
Antonatos  
Julie Best  
Justin Scott  
Kate Lorenz  
Kate Rhoades  
Kate Staiger  
Kate Tuthil  
Kate Zeller  
Katherine Bouvier  
Katherine Porter  
Kaylee Tock  
Lamar Gayles  
Latham Zearfoss  
Laura Farnam  
Laura Gutierrez  
Laura Payne  
Lauren and Martin  
Modahl  
Lauren Peterson  
Lea Tshilds  
Leila Tamari  
Lena Singer  
Leslie Gordon  
Lily C Andrews  
Lindsey French  
Lisa Feingold  
Liz McCarthy  
Lois Miller  
Lowell Dwyer  
Lynnea Domienik  
Lynnette Miranda  
Madeline Gallucci  
Maggie Wong  
Mariela Acuna  
Matt Begley  
Matthew Clyne  
Matthew Lane  
Matthew Showel  
Meg Leary

Meida McNeal  
Molly Conway  
Molly Kobelt  
Nayeon Yang  
Nicholas Saint  
Nicole Marroquin  
Nicole Simon  
Noor Abdal  
Patricia Conway  
Patricia Rees  
Patti Gilford  
Paul Erschen  
Penelope Cripps  
Rachael Mizuno  
Rachel Price  
Raven Munsell  
Romi Crawford  
Ronald Orr  
Ruoyi Shi  
Ryan Conway  
Samantha Reynolds  
Sara Abdel Rahim  
Scott Campbell  
Sean Conway  
Selina Trepp  
Shafeqa Hashash  
SK Kerastas  
Splinter Knight  
Stacey Gillett  
Stella Brown  
Stephanie Folkens  
Stephanie Hodges  
Stephen Pratt  
Susan E Prince  
Terry Evans  
Thomas Romero  
Tovia Siegel  
Valerie Carberry and  
Richard Wright  
Zach Smith



43

# Photo Credits

## Page 4

01. Residents in Session 3 watch a sound performance in the field at dusk. Photo by John Niekrasz

02. Residents gather on the Print Shack porch for an introductory tour of the space during Session 3. Photo by John Niekrasz

**Page 5**  
03. Session 3 resident offers an experimental sound performance at dusk using castings from the foundry. Photo by John Niekrasz

04. Print Shop tech Thom Romero works with artist Chisa Hughes. Photo by John Niekrasz

**Page 6-7**  
05. The cold creek at twilight. Photo by John Niekrasz

## Page 8

06. Session 2 residents harvest wild clay at the Kickapoo River. Photo by Ále Campos

**Page 8**  
07. Plaster molds from a hard working Session 1 foundry crew drying at sunset. Photo by Kate Bowen

**Page 10-11**  
08. Session 1 Residents hike the Hogback Prairie at sunrise. Photo by Jordan Wong

**Page 12**  
09. Session 1 Residents explore the farm on a walk before dinner. Photo by Kate Bowen

**Page 13**  
10. Session 1 Print Shop Tech Maven Kennedy demos a fabric dyeing technique.

11. Artist Alkaid Ramirez shares a reading during Session 1. Photo by Alden Burke

**Page 17**  
12. High Fire Tech Ricki Dwyer guides a Session 1 Resident through their first time pouring metal. Photo by Kate Bowen

**Page 10-11**  
13. Artist Abhishek Narula screen-printing during Session 2. Photo by Ále Campos

**Page 14-15**  
14. Steubiennale installation of sculptures by Geornica Daniels. Photo by Kate Bowen

**Page 16**  
15. Steubiennale installation of a new weaving by Shirin Towfigh. Photo by John Niekrasz

16. Residents prepare newly harvested clay during Session 2. Photo by Ále Campos

**Page 18-19**  
17. Session 2 documentarian Ále Campos pulls a screen on the porch of the Print Shack.

**Page 14-15**  
18. Session 3 Steubiennale installation of sculpture and cyanotypes. Photo by John Niekrasz

**Page 20**  
19. Ploughman's Meal just before the dinner bell Session 3. Photo by John Niekrasz

**Page 16**  
20. Kitchen Staff Oriana Hirschberg labels food before dinner Session 1. Photo by Alden Burke

21. Session 3 kitchen staff pose before the Ploughman's Meal. Photo by John Niekrasz

**Page 22-23**  
22. Just before the dinner bell Session 2. Photo by Kate Bowen

**Page 24**  
23. Aidan Frierson hangs a piece of hand made paper from her workshop with the WILD YAMS. Photo by Kate Bowen

**Page 25**  
24. A group of regional curators from ICI's Mississippi River Basin Initiative gather on the stage for a discussion about rural arts communities during their summer convening. Photo by Kate Bowen

**Page 26-27**  
25. Artist Imrul Mazid works on a water color screenprint in Thomas Romero's workshop during the GAMA retreat. Photo by Kate Bowen

**Page 28**  
26. Artist Asad Jafri hangs a cyanotype on fabric to dry, created in a workshop by Gurtie Hansell during the GAMA retreat. Photo by Kate Bowen

**Page 29**  
27. Exhibition documentation of *Fixing the Baroque* with Carlos Salazar Lermont. Photo by Levi Shand

**Page 30**  
28. Visitors at ACRE Projects during the opening reception of *In Remembrance of Us*. Photo by Levi Shand

**Page 31**  
29. Artist Ray Madrigal hosts a stone soup meal during their exhibition *I Am a Thing That Holds Something Else*. Photo by Levi Shand

**Page 32-33**  
30. Artist Carlos Salazar Lermont speaking with visitors at the opening of *Fixing the Baroque*. Photo by Levi Shand

**Page 34**  
31. Artist Lehna Huie greets visitors at the opening reception of *In Remembrance of Us*. Photo by Kate Bowen

**Page 35**  
32. Exhibition documentation of *In Remembrance of Us* with Lehna Huie. Photo by Levi Shand

**Page 36**  
33. Exhibition documentation of *Positive or Zero: Long Distance Collaboration*. Photo by Levi Shand

**Page 37**  
34. Exhibition documentation of *Committee of Six* with Fred Schmidt-Arenales. Photo by Levi Shand

**Page 38-39**  
35. Exhibition documentation of *hiccup* with Tess Oldfield. Photo by Levi Shand

**Page 40**  
36. Exhibition documentation of *Home, Place and Positionality*, with Haerim Lee & Fatima Laster. Photo by Levi Shand

**Page 41**  
37. Excerpts from the Chicago Arts Census: *Interactive Data Dashboard, Life & Labor, Network of Support, and Interactive Data Charts*.

**Page 42**  
38. Amalia Juliane and Jonahleh perform at ACRE Summer Daze at the McKinley Park Play Garden. Photo by Levi Shand

**Page 43**  
39. Curt Oren and Chrissy Corazza perform at ACRE Summer Daze at the McKinley Park Play Garden. Photo by Levi Shand

**Page 44**  
40. Efrén Arcoiris art making with youth on the ACRE stage at Friends and Family

Weekend Photo by Levi Shand

41. Executive Director Kate Bowen gives remarks during the annual Hearth Benefit. Photo by Levi Shand

**Page 45**  
42. Participants of ICI Convening chat on the stage. Photo by Kate Bowen

**Page 46**  
43. Residents hang out in the cold creek during Session 3. Photo by John Niekrasz

**Page 50-51**  
44. Residents relax outside the ACRE kitchen before dinner during Session 1. Photo by Alden Burke



# **Artists' Cooperative Residency & Exhibitions**

ACRE Annual Report  
Year in Review 2025

