

NEWS FROM THE HAMILTON ARTS COLLECTIVE

January 2008

Hello, fellow HAC-ers! Well, I hope everyone has enjoyed their Winter Break...

Well, let me rephrase that. Many of you know that yes indeed, the Hamilton Arts Collective was once again closed by the city of Baltimore in mid-December, and a short time later they presented us with a laundry list of necessary improvements and renovations. Earlier this year, our main concern lay with the inspection and subsequent approval of our beloved fire escape, as well as numerous renovations warranted by the fire code. A public statement published by the Baltimore Sun detailed my stating that the future of the HAC as we know it rests in the hands of the results of the fire escape inspection.

Well, the good news is that the fire escape has been approved! We can stay in our current building.

Some would say that bad news inevitably follows the good, but take this how you will. Numerous repairs and renovations is needed in order to make our building safe in the eyes of the Baltimore City Fire Department. One of the other major developments is that the performance space is no longer permitted to be on the third floor.

“What? No performance space?!?!” you may be saying. But look closely...I said it wasn't permitted on the third floor. I said nothing about the *second*. That's right...we're now moving the performance space to the second floor of the building, and we'll still be allowed to have all the rollicking live music shows, fantastic film screenings, and stellar stage plays you know and love, but now they're even fewer flights up! No need to lug that huge bass amp up three floors! We're even installing some bathrooms on the second floor level to accommodate our guests.

“But wait!” you may be saying. “What about the art gallery? You're not taking that away, are you?” The answer is, ABSOLUTELY NOT! Our partners the Herring Run Artists Network will now reside and display their works in the first floor space, in the office right next to our entrance. A big window front to this renovated office will be sure to attract plenty of positive attention from our passersby. We're happier than ever that even more people will have access to the fine works created by the folks of HRAN.

“But wait!” you may still be saying. “Then what's happening on the third floor?” Ah, that's a secret. Seriously. Once we have a formal statement, you'll hear about it. Rest assured that we want to utilize our building to its fullest in fulfilling the mission of the HAC, bringing great things to our neighborhood, and serving the artists in our community. So while we can't have shows or other public assembly up on the third floor, that doesn't mean it can't still be put to good use.

So I mentioned that renovations need to take place...How much will that set us back? Well, every non-profit must wrestle with this issue, and to be frank, in terms of this wrestling match, we're a bit outclassed at the moment. Our current estimate/our current goal comes to a little over \$25,000. In an effort to address the need for sufficient funds to compensate for the essential repairs, we are making a call to our community. In order for the HAC to continue, we're looking for:

...Volunteer construction workers, plumbers, haulers, etc. of every skill level. We have two floors to fix up in time for our 2nd birthday in March (yeah, it's coming!).

...Fundraising ideas! Did you ever want to find a great cause to support, and have a creative (but still realistic) fundraising strategy? Let's hear it—we need it!

...Donations. Sure, sure, people seem to be always asking for money these days. But unlike your teenage son asking for some dinner date money, you can write off donations to us on your taxes.
...Grant writers! Are you skilled in this area? We need your help.

So we're crashing through the gates into 2008 with the dedication and drive to keep on truckin', and an open invite to those who want to come along for the ride. It's been one heck of a rollercoaster this past year, but we've persevered. In our first year alone, we hosted over 400 performers in close to 200 events, and we don't want to slow our pace one bit. The HAC is still alive, and all that's needed is a little propping-up of our "classic" venue. Can you help us? Please contact me as soon as convenient to share how you can be of assistance.

We wish you all success and great opportunities in the New Year. Thanks for reading!

--Stephen B. Thomas
Managing Director
The Hamilton Arts Collective
steve@hamiltonarts.org
443-653-2120

PS: even while we're renovating, there's still some great content on our website! If you haven't already, check out the live interviews I've recorded on our HAC Tracks page:

<http://hamiltonart.org/dhome/node/357>

Also, Jeff "The Baltimore Taper" Mewbourn has posted streaming audio of some of the live recordings he's made of music shows at the HAC. Take a listen here:

<http://hamiltonart.org/dhome/node/442>

See you at the HAC!