

# Artists' Proposals - 2009 Season

## Proposal Deadline (for all funding):

Tuesday, June 17, 2008, 5:00 pm

At the Eastern State Penitentiary Administrative Offices:

Attn: Sean Kelley, Eastern State Penitentiary, 2124 Fairmount Avenue,  
Philadelphia, PA 19130

## Contact:

Sean Kelley, Program Director, [sk@easternstate.org](mailto:sk@easternstate.org), (215) 236-5111 x13

## Types of Funding:

Eastern State Penitentiary now provides funding on two tracks: *Exhibition Approval* and *Proposal Development*. Proposals and deadlines for the two types of funding are nearly identical. Exceptions are noted below.

**Exhibition Approval**: Maximum \$7,500.00 per project, includes approval to exhibit during the proposed exhibition cycle. It is not necessary to have applied for or received *Proposal Development* (see below). Must be for current exhibition cycle. No artist installations are approved to exhibit on the property without approval through this process. All projects that are approved are for exhibit during one full tour season (April through November), unless otherwise discussed. Artists whose work is currently on exhibit can apply through a separate process to extend their installation by one tour season.

**Proposal Development**: Maximum \$2,500.00 per project, for development of an *Exhibition Approval* proposal. Proposal Development cannot be applied to the current exhibition cycle. This funding is designed to develop an idea or body of work that will later be submitted as an *Exhibition Approval* proposal in a later cycle. It is intended to offset travel costs and artist materials for ambitious projects that may require extensive work to develop. It is not necessary to name which year an *Exhibition Approval* proposal will be submitted. Receipt of *Proposal Development* does not guarantee later *Exhibition Approval*, nor that the work will ever be exhibited.

## Important Dates & Times:

**Orientation:** We strongly recommend that artists begin the proposal process by attending an art orientation tour. This will give the artists a chance to walk through the space, discuss what makes a successful proposal, ask questions, and observe visitors' viewing the current art installations. There is no need to call in advance. Simply check in at the historic site ticket office at least ten minutes prior to the start of the orientation tour. There is no charge to attend.

Artists who cannot attend an orientation can make arrangements with Sean Kelley to discuss the proposal process by phone. Please allow at least two weeks when scheduling a phone discussion.

No artist has yet submitted a successful proposal without attending an orientation, and the review committee strongly recommends against skipping the orientation.

Winter 2007 Orientation Dates:

Thursday, December 13, 2007 at 2:30 p.m.

Spring 2008 Orientation Dates:

Saturday, April 5, 2008 at 1 pm

Saturday, May 17, 2008 at 10:00 am

Wednesday, June 4, 2008 at 6:00 pm

Wednesday, June 11, 2008 at 6:00 pm

**All Proposals Due:** Tuesday, June 17, 2008, 5:00 p.m.

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Philadelphia, PA 19130

**Artists Notified Via Email By:** Tuesday, September 2, 2008

**Installation Completed By:** Monday, March 23, 2009

(for *Installation Approval and Funding* awardees only)

**Removal of Work:** To be completed by Friday, January 1, 2010

(unless the installation is extended  
with consent of the Review Committee)

Eligibility:

- Collaborative proposals are permitted; however, each artist may only submit one proposal per year.
- Artists who have previously exhibited at the site must wait five years before submitting a proposal for a new installation.
- Currently enrolled undergraduate students are ineligible to apply

- All proposals must be for a site-specific installation.

#### Exhibition Conditions:

Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site is a National Historic Landmark, the highest designation for an historic property under Federal Law. It is also a ruin, abandoned in 1971, and stands today as an architectural shell. The building has no running water, no climate control, and limited electrical service. These conditions can be destructive to many types of materials. Most artists working at Eastern State build their work for the space and incorporate the inevitable deterioration into the piece.

Because of the building's condition, neither Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site, Inc. (the organization that administers the historic site) nor the City of Philadelphia (the owner of the site) can be responsible for damage to art work on site. The historic site carries insurance for the safety of the public while in the complex, and of the artists during the installation process, but not for the value of the art installations on display.

Electricity is available in several places. However, most locations do not have electric service and artists may wish to include electrical installation in these areas of the penitentiary as part of their proposal and budget. Please contact us about soliciting cost estimates for this work. Electrical installation must meet strict guidelines and be completed by the historic site's electrical contractor. Extension cords are limited to one 9-foot cord from the outlet to the unit requiring power. No exceptions.

Because of Eastern State's historic designation, art installations may not permanently damage or alter the building or artifacts inside the penitentiary complex in any way without written approval from the City of Philadelphia Historical Commission. This approval process must include what might seem to be relatively minor damage, such as nailing into plaster, taping or painting surfaces, brushing paint from the walls, or removing debris. Failure to account for this requirement eliminates many proposals for artist installations. Many artists have found creative ways to install work that creates an illusion of permanence, but is reversible.

#### Installation/Maintenance:

Artists are responsible for the installation and removal of their work. Artists will have access to the building for planning and installation once their proposal has been accepted and they have signed a letter of agreement. Our tour staff can perform very limited maintenance (turning on and off power, sweeping, monitoring the condition of the work, etc.). Artists should assume, however, that the staff at the historic site will not be able to monitor the spaces with art work during all public hours.

### Funding:

- A maximum of \$7,500.00 is available for *Exhibition Approval* ; a maximum of \$2,500.00 is available for *Proposal Development* .
- Artists wishing to receive an artist fee should include their compensation in the budget.
- Selection and funding are contingent upon a signed letter of agreement.
- Twenty-five percent (25%) of the total budget will be withheld until the exhibit has been completely removed and the space returned to its condition prior to the installation.
- Many artists are able to secure additional funding for their project at Eastern State. Sometimes the historic site has acted as the fiscal agent for an artist who has received additional funding from an outside foundation.
- Most funding is provided from our Halloween fundraiser — *Terror Behind the Walls*. Additional funding is provided, indirectly, by foundations and other funding organizations to support programming at Eastern. We may ask artists to recognize these funders in any printed materials or wall texts associated with their exhibition.
- The historic site produces press photos, a two minute audio tour stop, up to two exhibit signs for each artist, and mails press releases about the installations and invitations to the opening reception; it is not necessary to include these expenses in the exhibition budget.

## 2009 Proposal Guidelines

### General Guidelines:

Proposals will not be reviewed if they are submitted after the deadline, are incomplete or do not follow the requirements listed below.

- All pages, including illustrations, must be printed on letter sized paper (8.5" x 11")
- All pages must be typed in 10 point font or larger, 1.5 line spaced and have at least one inch margins.

- The artist's name must appear on every page.
- All submitted proposals become the property of Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site, Inc. and may be published even if the proposal is not accepted.
- Nothing will be returned to the artist. All proposals, compact discs, illustrations etc will be either kept by the historic site, or destroyed, at the end of the review process. We apologize for the inconvenience.
- Proposals should not include artist statements or letters of support. Please do not submit any additional materials, as they will not be forwarded to the committee. Cover letters will not be forwarded to the committee.

### Section 1: The Proposal

- Please provide twelve (12) copies of the proposal. The proposals should be collated and each packet should be paper clipped together. (Please do not staple the proposals, punch holes in the proposals or place the proposals in binders, folders etc., as it will prohibit them from being bound for the committee).
- The total proposal should be no longer than six pages of text, including resume/vita, excluding illustrations.

Part A: A sketch or computer illustration of the completed installation (one page)

Part B: Name the type of proposal you are submitting.  
Write simply "Exhibition Approval "  
or "Proposal Development ."

Part C: A Physical Project Summary (50 words)  
A physical description of your piece naming materials and placement.  
See the "Helpful Hints" section for an example. Can be very abstract and general if submitting for "Proposal Development "

Part D: Narrative (one - three pages)

1. Project Description, including a literal explanation of the project (materials involved, installation techniques, amount of space required, etc.), and location in the penitentiary complex for the installation (see "Helpful Hints.")

2. "Why Eastern State Penitentiary?"
3. List of the types of maintenance the piece will require
4. Did you attend an artist orientation? Did you discuss the proposal process with our staff by phone? If so, what date?

Part E: Requested Funding/Budget – \$7,500.00 max for Exhibition Approval or \$2,500.00 max for Proposal Development.

Part F: Two-page Resume/Vita/Exhibition List (Additional pages will not be forwarded to the committee. For collaborative works please submit no more than two pages for each artist.)

Part G: Additional Illustrations of Proposed Work  
Show how your piece will look/be presented at the penitentiary. These visuals should clearly depict how the art will be displayed in the space you have chosen.

Part H: Contact Information  
Include name, address, telephone number and email address. (Artists will be notified via email).

## Section 2: Support Materials

It is only necessary to submit one copy of these materials. The artist's name should appear on all support materials.

- Examples of Previous Work (up to 12 images):  
Please submit photos or a compact disc with digital photos. Please clearly label all photos with your name and sequence number. Digital photos should be save as jpgs. The file name should include the artist's last name and the sequence number (i.e. Cardiff1.jpg, Cardiff2.jpg). Please note: Slides will not be accepted.
- Audio or Video Sample (2 min. max)  
If appropriate for your piece, an audio or video sample may also be included. Must be submitted on a compact disc or dvd. Video cassettes and audio cassettes will not be reviewed. Any standard format (.mov, .wav, quicktime, real Audio, mp3, etc.) will be accepted
- Photo List or Audio/ Video List (one page, summarizing the materials above)

## Helpful Hints:

- You may apply for any public area in the penitentiary complex, except Cell Block Two and the audio tour route (indicated on our site map/ brochure with a red line). If you are applying for a specific area, please identify this area by its correct historical name (i.e. Cellblock 2) and not by a map symbol (i.e. A2) as these may change from year to year.
- The Project Summary section of the narrative should be as literal as possible. Avoid interpretation of your work, and simply tell us what you plan to install. Example: "My project consists of thirty-nine white plaster castings of cats posed in various natural positions. Castings will be dispersed throughout the prison (primarily outdoors) located in areas they can be seen by the public on self guided tours."
- Be realistic. How much will you be able to accomplish with available funding and installation time?
- Avoid using materials that will not hold up in Eastern State's environment. Assume your installation will be outdoors for eight months.
- Do not use Eastern State solely as an architectural backdrop. The site has not been preserved to make artwork look good. The work must deepen the experience of visitors, who are touring this National Historic Landmark.
- Be careful not to romanticize the prison, or make assumptions or sweeping generalizations.
- Although your proposal must be site specific, it is not necessary to incorporate Eastern State's history into your proposal. Many successful proposals, including Nick Cassway's *Portraits of Inmates in the Death Row Population Sentenced as Juveniles* and Ilan Sandler's *Arrest*, did not focus on Eastern State's history at all. They did, however, address subjects central to the subjects we hope our visitors will be contemplating during their visits. Overt political content can be good.
- Some of our best proposals did address Eastern State's history, including Linda Brenner's *Ghost Cats* and Nick Kripal's *Contemplation/Cultivation*. If you are going to include historical information about Eastern State's history, please make sure you are accurate. Artists should be sensitive to the history of the space and only include historical information in the proposal if it is relevant to the work. Our staff is available to consult on historical accuracy. An extensive history of Eastern State Penitentiary, including detailed narratives and information on

specific inmates, can be downloaded and searched electronically from our website: <http://www.easternstate.org/history/571page.php>

- When possible, the committee likes to see multiple viewpoints expressed among the artists who exhibit their work at Eastern State. Every year the committee reviews dozens of proposals for work that will express empathy for the men and women who served time at Eastern State. The committee has accepted many of these proposals, generally resulting in successful installations. These include Micheal Grothusen's *midway of another day*, Dayton Castleman's *The End of the Tunnel*, and Judith Taylor's *My Glass House*, all currently on view. The committee rarely sees proposals, however, that explore the impact of violence on families and society in general, or the perspective of victims of crime. One such installation, Ilan Sandler's *Arrest* (2000 to 2003) is widely considered among the most successful installations at Eastern State. It has been, to date, the only installation to directly address the impact of crime.
- Samples of previous installations are posted on our web site: [http://www.easternstate.org/exhibits/gl\\_installation-history.php](http://www.easternstate.org/exhibits/gl_installation-history.php)
- Samples of previous successful proposals are also posted on our web site: [http://www.easternstate.org/exhibits/gl\\_sample-proposals.php](http://www.easternstate.org/exhibits/gl_sample-proposals.php) Although some guidelines have changed since these proposals were written, the tone and directness of the proposals (and their underlying vision of a successful work) remain exemplary.