

# **Moving Project Conclusion**

Online meeting - March 19th 2024, 6:30 PM - 8 PM

*This document was written by the Rainbow Committee and Administrative Coordinator of articule to summarize the views of participating members during the TownHall meeting about articule's proposed move to the 4001 Berri building that took place on February 24, 2024. This document also presents next steps and a final resolution, which members are invited to contribute to, to be adopted by the Board of Directors.*

## **Meeting Agenda:**

1. Introduction + Ice-breaker (15 mins)
2. Review of Summary Document + Q&A (20 mins)
3. [Presentation of Moving Project Webpage](#)
4. Discussion on Accessibility Needs in Breakout Groups (15 mins)
5. Group Discussion (30 mins)
6. Conclusion (5 min)

## **Meeting Objectives:**

- ★ To bring together the results of the TownHall and survey
- ★ To announce the final resolution to be adopted by the Board of Directors
- ★ To invite final comments and contributions to the resolution
- ★ To present next steps

## **Summary of Process and Results of Consultations:**

1. **Survey:**
  - a. Among all the participants in articule's ecosystem, there is almost unanimous agreement that articule should move and become owner of a property for the long-term health of the organisation. 34 members and friends of articule, out of 75 members, responded to the survey.
  - b. The opinion of the membership was less clear when trying to determine whether the 4001 Berri location was suitable versus finding a different location with different co-owners.
2. **Process Design:**
  - a. A facilitator was hired to help design the process of consulting effectively with the community. The objective was to thoroughly address, with as many members as possible, the question of potential conflicts in working collaboratively with other organisations and sharing resources.
3. **TownHall:**
  - a. When asked specifically about the option of 4001 Berri versus finding a different location, attendees were in favour of continuing with the 4001 Berri project. From the 30 people who attended, a final 7 expressed yes, 2 were in-between, and 4 preferred to look for another space.
4. **Conclusion:**
  - a. The importance of involving a member representative in all meetings with the 4001 Berri group was emphasised. The staff will invite a member of the Rainbow Committee.
  - b. So far, a total of approximately 64 people have been engaged in this process. Given that articule's current membership is around 75, we're confident we've been able to reach as many people as possible before announcing this final resolution

## **Accessibility and Inclusivity:**

- Discussions around accessibility for the building, ensuring inclusivity in decision-making processes, and securing space for marginalised communities highlighted a strong desire for creating welcoming and accessible art spaces.
- Although there is currently a lack of universal accessibility in the 4001 Berri building, **the space will be renovated to be completely accessible. This is a non-negotiable for the centre, and our participation is contingent on this demand being fulfilled.**
  - ◆ If these conditions are not met, we have opportunities to leave the project without risking any financial investment or legal issues.
  - ◆ The idea to request that one seat on the Board for 4001 Berri building be reserved for someone who can represent accessibility needs was proposed. We've adopted this as a condition of our involvement (see below).
- With regards to inclusivity, there were concerns expressed about the potential for bullying in the building, as members cited past experiences of harassment in the 4001 Berri spaces (specifically at OBORO, who did not act to address these concerns).
  - ◆ The attendees felt that despite this potential for conflict, articule members are a strong force who are very hard to bully. We are very persistent and committed to our anti-oppression work in the face of white-led organisations.
- COVID safety was a concern, as it implicated the other occupants in continuing to enforce strong mask mandates, work together in improving air quality, and provide enough sick days for staff. Members expressed that some of the potential partners in the group will be allies in this work, while others may need to be convinced and regularly encouraged.

## **Autonomy and Identity:**

- Maintaining the organisation's autonomy and legal rights emerged as a recurring concern.
- Floorplan of galleries & offices:
  - ◆ articule staff presented plans for the 4001 Berri building, which included mutualized spaces. The spaces being discussed in the renovation are a multifunctional meeting room, a shared cafeteria, atelier/studio spaces, and a cinema/projection room.
  - ◆ The importance of dedicated gallery space and separate office areas for the occupants was emphasized. Maintaining individual identities felt possible while sharing some spaces, but with separate areas for articule's gallery and office.
- A second floor plan was presented, with more intertwined spaces. This plan would place all the galleries of many organizations on the ground floor (with separate rooms for each gallery), and all of the offices moved to the second and third floors (again, with distinct and private offices for each organization). The attendees did not like this plan because they felt it could lead to less autonomy.
- There were concerns about maintaining the organisation's mandate and culture when working with other organisations, particularly those that are more white-centric.

## **Challenges and Feasibility:**

- There are practical challenges, such as the exhausting work of building trust and unity while also advocating for our values in the building.
- There are feasibility issues with moving to a new location and navigating legal agreements, specifically if we wish to step away from our agreement and move out of the space in the future. We will need to build policies which address what happens when an occupant decides to leave and sell their portion of co-ownership.

## Decision-making Processes for 4001 Berri's Umbrella Board:

- An umbrella board would manage the building (with **no** power over articule's internal work), and each organisation occupying the building would have a seat on this board. Most of the policies for this emerging board have not been created or discussed yet.
  - ◆ The membership felt this was an interesting opportunity for articule to come in at the beginning stages to shape building-wide guiding values (similar to our [Basis of Unity](#)), conflict resolution protocols, and HR policies which would expand our commitment to anti-oppressive spaces beyond the walls of articule.
  - ◆ However, we can not gauge how receptive our fellow tenants will be to these values and how hard articule will need to push for policies which align with our Basis of Unity. Specifically, the membership would like to ensure there are consequences to organisations or staff who harass or discriminate against our members or anyone in the building. How can we manage toxic work environments?
  - ◆ The decision-making processes of the 4001 Berri board must prioritise transparency, consent, and inclusive participation. Members discussed how to involve artists in decision-making and seek community input. Could articule have two seats on the board, one for our membership and one for the staff? Alternatively, could we ask for designated seats on the board which represent specified demographics (queerness, disability, varying ethnic minorities) and are occupied by individuals who **do not** work in the building.
  - ◆ Discussion revolved around recurring themes of how we address implicit biases within the group, trust, fostering unity, and the importance of creating a supportive and inclusive environment for all members.

## Next Steps:

1. A member of the Rainbow Committee will be invited to join the Administrative Coordinator in all of the 4001 Berri meetings.
2. The final resolution will be passed to articule's Board of Directors, who will sign a formal resolution.

## Proposed Resolution:

***articule agrees to move to the 4001 Berri building and join the artistic hub, based on the following conditions:***

- ★ articule is provided a ground floor space with a gallery, which includes a front-facing vitrine visible to the outside of the building, and an office space which is connected to the gallery.
- ★ The building as a whole is completely wheelchair accessible and has automatic doors at the main entry.
- ★ Accessibility for many other disabilities is included in the design of the building, including but not limited to: dimmable lights in all spaces, automatic doors inside of the building wherever possible, and HVAC air filtration systems.
- ★ The building's Board of Directors implement a Charter of Values which outline anti-oppressive commitments, and which each occupant must adopt as an organisation.
- ★ The building's Board of Directors must create policies which address conflict resolution, mediation, and outline clear consequences should any occupant be in violation of the Charter of Values.
- ★ The building's Board of Directors must reserve one seat for someone who represents the disabled community and has a respected voice in shaping the building's accessibility policies.