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2023 CITY OF DENVER MAYORAL CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE ARTS & CULTURE

Released February 1, 2023

Compiled by Colorado Business Committee for the Arts (CBCA)

Colorado Business Committee for the Arts (CBCA) is a 38-year-old 501(c)3 nonprofit organization headquartered in Denver, Colo., with the mission to advance Colorado's creative economy by connecting business and the arts. CBCA leads arts advocacy efforts in the state.

In January 2023, CBCA crafted a questionnaire, with input from local arts leaders, for all the candidates running for Mayor of the City of Denver about their arts, culture and creative industries platform. The online questionnaire was sent via email on January 12 to 27 candidates at that time. Candidates were given until January 25 to submit responses via the online questionnaire. CBCA has compiled the responses received by the deadline. Those unedited responses are presented here in alphabetical order by the candidates' last name.

Abass Bamba

- 1. What is your arts and culture platform for the City of Denver? If you are elected, what are the most important parts of your agenda that will impact artists, cultural nonprofits and the creative industries?**

Make Denver a global art and cultural destination with world-class annual events. By the end of my first term we should be part of the first 20 art cities in the world. Help our artists participate in world-class events to promote what the city has to offer.

- 2. How will the arts play a role in your community planning and investment, and overall economic development agenda for the city?**

Arts and culture by definition are the only belt that wraps us together as one community by helping us define our common identity with our diverse view points, beliefs, and ethnicity.

In 2020, according U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, arts and cultural economic activity accounted for 4.2 percent of gross domestic product (GDP), or \$876.7 billion of United States of America. During my first 90 days in office we will have a 3 day summit for Arts and Culture to find a way to make Denver one of the world's capitals of arts and culture.

- 3. What is the role of arts and culture in the city's recovery, including the revitalization of downtown, while simultaneously preserving and supporting historic neighborhoods with a rich arts and cultural heritage, including Latino, Black and other diverse communities?**

If we all agree on the basic fact that art can be one of those healing medicines that fills that empty space, turns our weakness into strength, turns our division into unity, makes our diversity a treasure, and brings joy to our soul. We then are well equipped to allow our beautiful city to recover with the brand " Denver La Belle - Denver The Beautiful". The beauty of our city, the revitalization of Downtown will be based on our diversity. That will be one of the key points of the 3 day summit we are going to have with all the stakeholders.

- 4. In the face of rising cost of real estate, gentrification and displacement, affordable infrastructure including venues, housing and workspaces are a critical issue for artists, cultural workers and cultural nonprofits. How will you address the shortage of space and rising cost of living for artists and the creative workforce?**

In my campaign manifesto, I said I would put a price cap on foods and rents. This is not for artists only; this is for the majority of our citizens. We cannot continue ignoring that fact, which is pushing many to leave our city or just become homeless.

- 5. Equity and racial justice are critical conversations across Denver and Colorado, including in the arts and cultural community, which has been a leader in this work. How will you leverage arts and culture to advance equity and racial justice?**

As I mentioned in my answer to question 2, arts and culture by definition are the only belt that wraps us together as one community by helping us define our common identity with our diverse view points, beliefs, and ethnicities. Let us all be denverites by using our differences to advance our common good.

- 6. Denver Arts & Venues is the local arts agency for the city of Denver. How do you propose supporting the agency to maximize the public value of its mission: Arts & Venues enriches and advances Denver's quality of life and economic vitality through the advancement of arts, cultural, and entertainment opportunities for all."**

As mentioned in my answer to question 2, art and cultural production should be part of the economy boom and income increase of citizens.

Matt Brady

- 1. What is your arts and culture platform for the City of Denver? If you are elected, what are the most important parts of your agenda that will impact artists, cultural nonprofits and the creative industries?**

We need art classes in all of our recreation centers and creative arts mounted on the walls inside the recreation centers and some on the outside. A good friend of mine painted that mural you see on the outside of the La Alma rec center in Lincoln Park, just a block from my home.

- 2. How will the arts play a role in your community planning and investment, and overall economic development agenda for the city?**

We will continue with the Mayor's annual design awards and have the Office of Economic Development review and promote arts in all geographic areas of Denver and ask City Council members to develop arts and culture events in their districts regularly each year.

- 3. What is the role of arts and culture in the city's recovery, including the revitalization of downtown, while simultaneously preserving and supporting historic neighborhoods with a rich arts and cultural heritage, including Latino, Black and other diverse communities?**

Provide space for each ethnic group to display their artwork and put on entertainment events downtown and in all areas of Denver. We have good examples in my neighborhood with Youth on Record and Arts Streets, both within a block of my home.

- 4. In the face of rising cost of real estate, gentrification and displacement, affordable infrastructure including venues, housing and workspaces are a critical issue for artists, cultural workers and cultural nonprofits. How will you address the shortage of space and rising cost of living for artists and the creative workforce?**

I was a longtime board member of NEWSSED and we developed the First Friday Arts Walk on Santa Fe Drive. Now, much of this street is being stripped of its old buildings and replaced with new large apartment buildings. We should request action by City Council to require affordable and low-income housing in new buildings, 25% set aside including ground floor building fronts for our arts workers.

- 5. Equity and racial justice are critical conversations across Denver and Colorado, including in the arts and cultural community, which has been a leader in this work. How will you leverage arts and culture to advance equity and racial justice?**

To advance equal opportunities, make sure persons of all racial and ethnic groups be supported equally by our non-profits and the pertinent public social agencies. Also, work with our local schools and colleges to make sure they provide academic development to all of our diverse groups to encourage artistic expression.

- 6. Denver Arts & Venues is the local arts agency for the city of Denver. How do you propose supporting the agency to maximize the public value of its mission: Arts & Venues enriches and advances Denver's quality of life and economic vitality through the advancement of arts, cultural, and entertainment opportunities for all."**

Be a leader in fundraising for Denver Arts and Venues and promote several events a year to bring in public support for artists and established and aspiring artists and entertainers. In other words, raise public awareness of the contributions and benefits of enjoying artists and entertainers and how it enriches our City.

Kelly Brough

1. What is your arts and culture platform for the City of Denver? If you are elected, what are the most important parts of your agenda that will impact artists, cultural nonprofits and the creative industries?

Arts and culture are a driving force in a City's identity and contribute to many aspects of its success, including economic vitality, quality of life, safety and education. I will nurture and grow Denver's vibrant arts and culture sector by:

- Ensuring continued success of the SCFD. I was proud to work on the 2016 reauthorization of this invaluable public funding stream. Regional collaboration will be a hallmark of my administration.
- Investing in city-owned assets. Denver is home to renowned cultural venues and an extensive public art collection. These treasures must be maintained and enhanced through bonds and other public investments.
- Elevating the arts and celebrating culture for all Denver. Arts and culture should be embedded throughout the City – in our parks, schools, libraries, transit stations, buildings.
- Addressing the high cost of living, particularly housing, to ensure Denver is a community that artists and non-profit employees can afford to call home.

2. How will the arts play a role in your community planning and investment, and overall economic development agenda for the city?

CBCA's recent economic analysis shows that arts and culture is responsible for \$2.3B of economic activity regionally. It is a significant driver of our economy and should be a strategic asset that we leverage in all our planning, investment, and development decisions. Embracing and elevating Denver's rich and diverse cultural history will help us in several ways. First, it will help Denver distinguish itself from peer cities, as we compete for businesses, jobs and convention and tourism activity. Second, arts and culture are critical to engaging our students and getting them to and through school. Denver Public Schools is struggling today with declining enrollment and alarming achievement gaps. Arts should be one element of our strategy to strengthen DPS. Finally, we need to be mindful about all the ways we can incorporate art, culture and design into City owned places and policies – public art in parks, murals to activate alleys, architectural design standards.

3. What is the role of arts and culture in the city's recovery, including the revitalization of downtown, while simultaneously preserving and supporting historic neighborhoods with a rich arts and cultural heritage, including Latino, Black and other diverse communities?

I will approach the revitalization of downtown with urgency and focus. The opening of the convention center expansion and the improvements to the 16th Street Mall are two opportunities to capitalize on. To do so, I will address community safety and homelessness-policies on my site-and make investments in the infrastructure (transit, parking, pedestrian access) that enhance downtown. While downtown is essential, it is not sufficient. We're missing opportunities to strengthen and enhance cultural destinations across the City that would drive economic activity, elevate our City's rich cultural heritage and enhance neighborhood vitality. For example, investing in South Federal to make it a true destination for Asian and Latino culture and elevating the art and culture on Santa Fe Drive. I love San Diego's Chicano Park and see it as a model of how to create a culturally relevant space over which the community feels ownership. I will do more to create places of meaning in our parks.

4. In the face of rising cost of real estate, gentrification and displacement, affordable infrastructure including venues, housing and workspaces are a critical issue for artists, cultural workers and cultural nonprofits. How will you address the shortage of space and rising cost of living for artists and the creative workforce?

The affordability crisis is impacting almost all aspects of Denver's success. As Mayor, building more housing – for rent and for sale, market-rate and subsidized – will be a top priority. My housing plan focuses on using city-owned property to develop housing, increasing density in strategically selected parts of the city, including along major transportation corridors, and fundamentally changing the City's approach to development review, approval and permitting. I believe that the large and growing amount of vacant office space, particularly downtown and in surrounding neighborhoods, represents a tremendous opportunity to think creatively about rezoning and repurposing, either as housing or for other commercial uses, potentially including artist workspaces and venues. Finally, we know artists are often pioneers in up-and-coming neighborhoods. We should be thinking creatively about how we help artists take an ownership position in their properties to protect against displacement.

5. Equity and racial justice are critical conversations across Denver and Colorado, including in the arts and cultural community, which has been a leader in this work. How will you leverage arts and culture to advance equity and racial justice?

Art and culture are powerful tools to educate, engage, challenge, and change our thinking about ourselves and our community. As such, it is essential that people see themselves in our public art and cultural organizations and that Denver's collections and institutions are all welcoming and accessible to people of all backgrounds. The 1% for Art fund is a tremendous opportunity for under-represented artists to gain exposure and share their perspective with a broad audience. SCFD is also an important contributor to arts equity. By providing sustained public funding to smaller-scale but equally important arts organizations, SCFD has diversified the arts in Denver and helped to preserve and elevate our diverse cultural heritage. My administration will focus on leveraging the 1% for Art fund and our partnership with SCFD to celebrate and elevate our diverse community of arts and cultural organizations and help our City address equity and racial justice.

6. Denver Arts & Venues is the local arts agency for the city of Denver. How do you propose supporting the agency to maximize the public value of its mission: Arts & Venues enriches and advances Denver's quality of life and economic vitality through the advancement of arts, cultural, and entertainment opportunities for all."

Denver Arts & Venues is a dynamic and effective agency thanks to great leadership and strong community engagement. My priority will be to support and continue their good work through the appointments I make and political capital I expend on their behalf.

My unique set of personal experiences (fun fact - my parents once owned Grace Gallery at 9th and Santa Fe - my girls and I spent countless hours there and have many fond memories of it!) and professional positions (both at the City and with the Chamber) have given me a unique perspective on the interconnected relationship between the City, its cultural institutions, Denver's economic success and cultural vitality. I understand that our fates are tied together and that we are all mutually dependent on each other's success. My collaborative leadership approach is what's needed to nurture, sustain, and grow Denver's vibrant arts and cultural sector. I look forward to the opportunity to work alongside you to do just that.

Lisa Calderón

1. What is your arts and culture platform for the City of Denver? If you are elected, what are the most important parts of your agenda that will impact artists, cultural nonprofits and the creative industries?

My platform is rooted in equity, investing in proven solutions, and getting at the root cause to stop cycles of poverty and crime. My three primary focuses are on housing, affordability, and our environment which intersects with our arts community in many ways.

By focusing on deliberate, dense development in our gray and brown spaces we preserve our greenspace, allowing for more community space to share the arts. This will also help stop artists from being displaced by rising rents and preserve community culture and diversity. Building affordable housing is an opportunity to retain Denver's diverse arts and cultural heritage by involving local artists and community members in the process.

Furthermore, when we look at investing in the root causes of poverty and crime, our city as a whole thrives and we can invest in beautification programs with the arts. Art "makes space" and strengthens communities by demonstrating our shared values, and stronger communities are safer communities.

2. How will the arts play a role in your community planning and investment, and overall economic development agenda for the city?

Public art creates desirable, vibrant communities where we want to work, live and connect. I will involve the arts community directly in plans for our downtown business and arts districts, increase tourism, and play a role in all new development. I will also expand the city partnerships with DPS FACE Family and Community Engagement department for equitable art programming deeply needed in our public schools.

Incorporating public art in new development, we not only ensure local artists are showcased and compensated but create innovative spaces in functionality, business improvement, and livability. Public art is a marker of a community's culture and values.

I will improve our low-interest loan programs for artists and small businesses to add public art to their spaces and am exploring the impacts public banking could have in making this happen. When I'm mayor, small businesses, property owners, and artists will have access to city funding to build new creations

3. What is the role of arts and culture in the city's recovery, including the revitalization of downtown, while simultaneously preserving and supporting historic neighborhoods with a rich arts and cultural heritage, including Latino, Black and other diverse communities?

Thank you for this question. As a fourth-generation Denverite and an Afro-Latina, blending the conservation of our history while modernizing our city is essential. As mayor, I will center and celebrate our city's heritage by investing in grant and loan programs to ensure artists in historic neighborhoods are able to create art that represents the unique culture of each part of Denver.

Because art is a catalyst for economic development, and not the other way around, I prioritize the creative economy in strategies to promote business growth and development. We can also achieve both modernization and cultural celebration through innovating the public art space by encouraging unconventional, temporary, and digital public works.

4. In the face of rising cost of real estate, gentrification and displacement, affordable infrastructure including venues, housing and workspaces are a critical issue for artists, cultural workers and cultural nonprofits. How will you address the shortage of space and rising cost of living for artists and the creative workforce?

It's not enough to cultivate artists, Denver has to work to retain our artists, as many are leaving for surrounding, more affordable cities. Santa Fe Drive was the first art district in Colorado, created under the Colorado Creative Industries, but that hasn't been enough to keep property taxes from tripling, which gets passed onto small businesses and artists.

To keep artists in Denver, I will work with Denver's 8 arts districts to create incentives to keep artists and art-related businesses. For example, I will create program partnerships with local businesses to subsidize low-cost housing and studio space for artists living and working in those districts.

Finally, I will encourage the creation of hybrid spaces and artist co-ops that combine both retail or restaurant space with artist studios and galleries by working with developers to create cultural hubs to directly connect artists and their communities in intimate ways.

5. Equity and racial justice are critical conversations across Denver and Colorado, including in the arts and cultural community, which has been a leader in this work. How will you leverage arts and culture to advance equity and racial justice?

Racial and gender equity are not only two centerpieces of my campaign, but of my entire life. I believe that art can provide essential healing spaces for communities to come together, unpack our histories, and reimagine a more equitable future. Many of our iconic cultural and arts communities are being rapidly gentrified and displaced, and I will work to build and redevelop affordable, permanent housing in these neighborhoods to retain their culture.

We also must ensure that the artists already living and working in Denver are given priority in arts funding programs, especially marginalized communities who are historically shut out from these opportunities. When making calls for artists, I will ensure that Denver's legacy arts communities are engaged and that community members are involved in the selection process of public art programs. Public art should always be used to celebrate culture, not replace it.

6. Denver Arts & Venues is the local arts agency for the city of Denver. How do you propose supporting the agency to maximize the public value of its mission: Arts & Venues enriches and advances Denver's quality of life and economic vitality through the advancement of arts, cultural, and entertainment opportunities for all."

Denver Arts and Venues will play a critical role in revitalizing downtown Denver with our performing arts center. This downtown gem will be a key component in my plan to bring downtown's vibrancy back to pre-pandemic levels.

I support more funding for programs specifically supporting local artists and more community outreach in myriad languages to ensure every community can take advantage of these opportunities.

I will also encourage the department to pay more attention to our own communities with diverse and iconic cultural areas in the city. Our venues are world-class, and we need to celebrate local artists alongside those venues to emphasize tourism and the creative economy in other neighborhoods as well.

Finally, I recognize that all policies are intersectional. By investing in more public transit and bike paths, we will make it safer and more accessible for patrons to traverse the city to visit our arts districts and performing arts centers.

Paul Noel Fiorino

1. What is your arts and culture platform for the City of Denver? If you are elected, what are the most important parts of your agenda that will impact artists, cultural nonprofits and the creative industries?

I as a Candidate for Denver Mayor on the Ballot as a Write In has the name that has carried the Arts to its rightful place since 2006. The story the history is on the FiorinoForDenver.com with dates when the Arts education was taken from DPS and I ran Unaffiliated for Governor, and finally meeting the nemesis in the 2016 US Senate Campaign where we celebrate first position in Arts Participation and kept the Incumbent to 49%. Today arts are ESSENTIAL for physical, mental health and education must make all the Arts be base curriculum teaching for the 21st century. I kept the Arts in every campaign, fighting for music first, dance as physical fitness and visual, writing arts to be implemented into educational institutions and Districts that need this ESSENTIAL service. Artist in Residence can be first Responders to the crisis of post pandemic depression, anxiety and youth preservation from drugs and suicide, which takes way to many. Small nonprofits need support of the larger Orgs.

2. How will the arts play a role in your community planning and investment, and overall economic development agenda for the city?

Denver is a National leader and I'm the Perennial Candidate that carried the Arts in every campaign, saving the 1% for Art that I Instituted when a City Commissioner for Cultural Affairs for Pena Administration & DIA, Convention Center etc. for Webb Administrations Office of Art, Culture and Film. The latter will be embellished in my administration and highly encouraged for the next Mayor and Council. Denvercoloradotelevision.com along with other domains DCTV.TV & DCTV.WORLD are currently held for the establishment of production and development of programs that would cover the diversity of Denver. Broadband is to be completed and Denver will be able, as the Capitol City to reach out to the Rural communities and schools for Civic Arts and Health sciences education. Investments in Artists to be student engaged during or after school, yet serve the larger community as well, with classes, performances and tutorials for further research and discovery. Royalties from published work.

3. What is the role of arts and culture in the city's recovery, including the revitalization of downtown, while simultaneously preserving and supporting historic neighborhoods with a rich arts and cultural heritage, including Latino, Black and other diverse communities?

Fiorino for Denver Mayor is the Emeritus of Arts with the transitional action from Arts District to Creative Districts, these are places that have been established over the last 20 years. The Art Bus was (Civic Center by Phil Goodstein) and could again connect the various Creative Districts, moving our citizens and excursionist through our great works of art, inside and out. The murals need attention along the Cherry Creek pathways and other areas. The growth in the ethnicity in various neighborhoods has great potential for the cultural education, cooperation and development of character, design that reflects those who call it home. Five Points for one, must survive the gentrification as the rich music of the Local 20 Union brought the best to town and that legacy not be lost. Good to see Cleo, who hired me in 1974, finally get a facility that will continue to serve her community, as she has for 52 years. I have worked and supported Latino Arts by saving the Denver Civic Theater. Vote

4. In the face of rising cost of real estate, gentrification and displacement, affordable infrastructure including venues, housing and workspaces are a critical issue for artists, cultural workers and cultural nonprofits. How will you address the shortage of space and rising cost of living for artists and the creative workforce?

Su Teatro will own the Denver Civic Theater once and for All. Once deemed dead and abandoned by the City. Ballet Arts Theatre, a resident company, with financial assistance from John Fiorino, of Brookvale, fixed up the preforeclosure, while working with me to make the transaction back to community use. After calling another place home, I knew the history of the theater and was with Henry Lowenstein, Mayor Pena when the place was given to him, in place of the Bonfils Theatre, which was named after him, and kept closed until sold to a Book Store, never to be again. Like greenspace, once gone...gone for ? These organizations need to open their doors that get the big amounts from public sector and SCFD, tax. New and emerging artists need affordable spaces for all Abilities. Artists in Residence means to support in every way possible the work has a chance to develop. Denver has plenty of space, yet may not really value the Artists for what they offer to all. All Abilities are able.

5. Equity and racial justice are critical conversations across Denver and Colorado, including in the arts and cultural community, which has been a leader in this work. How will you leverage arts and culture to advance equity and racial justice?

Saving facilities like the State Theater I have dubbed, when promoting the Historic Tabor Opera House, now in full fledged restoration along with Loretto Heights Theater, amongst the new development. Theater for live performances has a way of bringing everyone together into the dark to show in the light the magnificent diversity of expression, thought, movement of the human spirit. Arts and the artist has a VOICE that has a platform to say something that is not easily said. We can see ourselves in the performance, a character, dancer or merely taken away with the muse or music. The Foreclosure Blues was a song that the Musicians Journal of AFL-CIO featured when it was the Best of Denver/Westword award for the "Best Next Official State Song" as Colorado was number one in the silent epidemic of losing a home. This song reflects those feelings through the music. Article also mentioned "his song will encourage future philanthropic activities among musicians and artists." REVERBNATION

6. Denver Arts & Venues is the local arts agency for the city of Denver. How do you propose supporting the agency to maximize the public value of its mission: Arts & Venues enriches and advances Denver's quality of life and economic vitality through the advancement of arts, cultural, and entertainment opportunities for all."

Temple Hoyne Buell brought me to Denver in April 1955, as my father was an Architect. Mother's search for the best Artists as she was a Singer of classic and specialist in Gregorian Chant, led to Dr. Antonia Brico. I studied piano and sang soprano in her chorus i.e. annual Verdi's Requiem and recitals at the International House. All State Choir, Madrigal groups and High school musical i.e. Man of La Mancha, Fiddler which led to first Nutcracker with Denver Symphony at Auditorium Theater. A full career of touring and performing, returning in 1993 as Director of Ballet Arts Theatre. Everyday Hero award for establishing dance for all abilities. BAT helped many other cultural groups get started in the facility (recently demolished) I continue to this day the annual Nutcracker, my 51st and offer the Olympic training course CHORECALS and advocate for a strong art education for all DPS; STEM must have STEAM, to bring me back to my home theater. You know that I am the best Candidate for Art

Chris Hansen

1. What is your arts and culture platform for the City of Denver? If you are elected, what are the most important parts of your agenda that will impact artists, cultural nonprofits and the creative industries?

As a former board member of the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (second largest cultural funding mechanism in the US), Chris knows how important funding is for supporting the creative industries. He will work with SCFD and other community organizations to ensure that the arts are funded as much as possible. Denver is the cultural capital of the state and Chris is excited about helping support the artists, venues, and organizations that make Denver vibrant.

2. How will the arts play a role in your community planning and investment, and overall economic development agenda for the city?

A key part of Chris' economic development agenda is increasing transportation and housing along key corridors, like Colfax Ave. Colfax Ave. is home to some of the city's most celebrated venues, like the Fillmore, Blue Bird, Ogden, and Charlie's and Hansen will work to make Colfax a more accessible and safe place for Denverites and visitors to see shows and enjoy nightlife. He supports the city's addition of bus rapid transit along Colfax, and he will devote a significant amount of public safety resources to the area so that folks feel safe walking around there at night again. Chris is also interested in connecting the different islands of the city to one another better, such as RiNo, so that it is easier for folks to get to new venues and galleries that are popping up across the city.

3. What is the role of arts and culture in the city's recovery, including the revitalization of downtown, while simultaneously preserving and supporting historic neighborhoods with a rich arts and cultural heritage, including Latino, Black and other diverse communities?

To Chris, arts and culture are central to the city's recovery and it is crucial that resources are devoted to protect the cultural heritage of diverse communities. Denver has experienced rapid gentrification in recent years. Chris recognizes it has impacted Latino communities on the west side and Black communities in Five Points alike. As Mayor, he would work with developers to make sure that historic, diverse businesses still have a place in their neighborhoods while changes occur. He supports the use of community benefit agreements, among other tools, in order to ensure that folks who make up the cultural fabric of the city are not left out or left behind when development occurs. Chris knows that folks who have made Denver the cultural hub that it is deserve a seat at the table and a voice when decisions are made that impact their businesses and neighborhoods.

4. In the face of rising cost of real estate, gentrification and displacement, affordable infrastructure including venues, housing and workspaces are a critical issue for artists, cultural workers and cultural nonprofits. How will you address the shortage of space and rising cost of living for artists and the creative workforce?

Chris is serious about making Denver more affordable for everyone, including artists. He understands that venues and artists are struggling since the pandemic and he will seek out funding opportunities for collaborative workspaces and venues. He supports creative co-use of space and will help remove barriers to innovative uses of space throughout the city in order to open up more square footage for the arts.

5. Equity and racial justice are critical conversations across Denver and Colorado, including in the arts and cultural community, which has been a leader in this work. How will you leverage arts and culture to advance equity and racial justice?

With Chris as the next Mayor, Denver will commission local artists to draw attention to equity and racial justice by designating areas for their murals and other visual art that promotes these important themes. The connection between art and social justice is strong and Chris welcomes and supports this dialogue between the art world and the broader community.

6. Denver Arts & Venues is the local arts agency for the city of Denver. How do you propose supporting the agency to maximize the public value of its mission: Arts & Venues enriches and advances Denver's quality of life and economic vitality through the advancement of arts, cultural, and entertainment opportunities for all."

As a leader in allocating public resources at the state legislature (Chris served on the Joint Budget Committee for years), Chris knows that the best way to support this mission is to fund it. He wholeheartedly agrees that venues enrich quality of life and economic vitality in Denver and recognizes that many Denverites moved here because of our amazing venues. We need to support our venues because they keep Denver vibrant, exciting, and interesting. People come from all over the world to see shows at Red Rocks because it is such a special place to experience music, nature, and community. That is part of who we are as Denverites and every venue deserves the next Mayor's support from Red Rocks and the Fillmore to the Black Box and Hi Dive.

Leslie Herod

1. What is your arts and culture platform for the City of Denver? If you are elected, what are the most important parts of your agenda that will impact artists, cultural nonprofits and the creative industries?

The shortest distance between two people is their stories, and art tells those stories. Arts and culture make Denver vibrant and special, and ensuring that we retain and attract creatives is critical. Arts can transform a city. We created the Urban Arts Fund as a graffiti prevention program, and now Denver's street art is a cornerstone of our cultural identity.

Artists need places to live, work, and create. We will establish housing and creative spaces that are accessible and affordable for the creative community. We will remove barriers so that being creative in Denver is easy, using resources that already exist and promote cross-industry collaboration to support creatives in every sector.

I will be a champion for the arts in Denver by investing in affordable housing, studio, and performance spaces, funding arts education and development opportunities, creating local incentives to promote creativity in the city, and amplifying creative voices in every aspect of city planning.

2. How will the arts play a role in your community planning and investment, and overall economic development agenda for the city?

The arts play a critical role in Denver's economic development. The Denver metropolitan region's creative industries support 96,358 jobs. Denver has long acted as an incubator for innovation and creativity, and I plan to continue to expand arts incubation spaces to support the arts and creative industries in Denver and make this a city that creatives want to work in and that people want to visit for the arts scene.

The arts need to be at the forefront of community development and planning. As a major player in a vibrant Denver economy, creative industries must be invested in by the city to ensure they are able to thrive.

I have championed the efforts to bolster the film industry in Colorado, and I believe that we can do even more at the local level. City-level incentives for film and other creative industries can transform our creative landscape and be a boon for Denver's economic development.

3. What is the role of arts and culture in the city's recovery, including the revitalization of downtown, while simultaneously preserving and supporting historic neighborhoods with a rich arts and cultural heritage, including Latino, Black and other diverse communities?

Arts and cultural activity set records for economic impact in 2019, but the sector lost a decade of growth due to the pandemic, according to CBCA's Economic Activity Study. I have worked hard to prioritize the creative economy in our recovery. The arts are the backbone of Denver's vibrancy and the character of our neighborhoods. When we talk about recovery and revitalization, that advocacy is more critical than ever.

Securing funding for the creative industries is one of my top priorities. I championed HB20B-001, Colorado's small business recovery bill and ensured much-needed financial support for artists, arts businesses, organizations, and venues. I was also the primary champion of HB21-1285, which included a total of \$23 million for the creative industries. I have always supported more funding and have fiercely defended existing funding for the arts through my positions on the Joint Budget Committee and Business Committee. I will continue this work as mayor.

4. In the face of rising cost of real estate, gentrification and displacement, affordable infrastructure including venues, housing and workspaces are a critical issue for artists, cultural workers and cultural nonprofits. How will you address the shortage of space and rising cost of living for artists and the creative workforce?

Denver is full of unused space and, as a city, we can work with owners to open these spaces up for housing and creative spaces. We can ensure that the creative community is involved and supported in every effort to revitalize downtown and all Denver neighborhoods.

During the pandemic, I created a number of programs to support individual artists. I also prioritized things like the Community Revitalization Grant, bringing back our theaters and venues so that they are strong-- acknowledging that they are core to our communities.

We must ensure that we are able to bring down the cost of living to keep our creatives in Denver. We must continue to push forward on projects like the MCA's Holiday Theater to allow artists to live and create within the same neighborhood. I will prioritize affordable, accessible studio, rehearsal, and performance spaces across the city. I will also continue to invest in arts and cultural activity to bolster capital projects, employment growth, and events.

5. Equity and racial justice are critical conversations across Denver and Colorado, including in the arts and cultural community, which has been a leader in this work. How will you leverage arts and culture to advance equity and racial justice?

Art has always been a tool to advance social justice and diversity, and I believe that supporting artists is critical in efforts to advance these causes throughout the city. Arts and culture signal our values as a city, and we can do more at this level. We must invest resources into ensuring historically marginalized communities and voices are leading conversations and decision-making, and that these communities are supported.

I helped OEDIT ensure that the city is engaged with diverse communities and reaching BIPOC-owned businesses with resources, including those in the creative industries. We must recognize the immense value of smaller arts institutions, like the Bug Theater and Su Teatro. These institutions are community hubs and tell stories that need to be told, and they need the city's support.

6. Denver Arts & Venues is the local arts agency for the city of Denver. How do you propose supporting the agency to maximize the public value of its mission: Arts & Venues enriches and advances Denver's quality of life and economic vitality through the advancement of arts, cultural, and entertainment opportunities for all."

Denver Arts & Venues is uniquely capable of partnering with, supporting, and investing in organizations throughout the city in ways that its counterparts across the nation are not. As mayor, I will encourage Arts & Venues to be bold and innovative to make Denver THE Arts City. Whether through collaboration between different arts sectors and organizations, establishing new festivals and opportunities for Denver, or formalizing creative exchange between cities such as Austin and Nashville, Arts & Venues will have the freedom and resources to transform our city through arts and culture.

We will expand on the work that Denver Arts & Venues has begun through its Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiative. We will also prioritize funding for arts education and development opportunities in schools so that every student can envision themselves in Denver's arts and culture sector.

Debbie Ortega

1. What is your arts and culture platform for the City of Denver? If you are elected, what are the most important parts of your agenda that will impact artists, cultural nonprofits and the creative industries?

Revitalizing Downtown is a major component of my overall platform, in addition to working with Arts Districts and BIDs to create space for artists and funding for art including street festivals, concerts and equitable opportunities for artists to live in our city and get their work out into the public.

Denver's Safe Creative Space Fund, which I supported on City Council, is a model for how we can invest in arts placemaking. We can build on this type of funding and pair it with outreach to identify needs and best support our local artists.

I want to revisit a revenue and growth opportunity that I spearheaded in 2011 for Denver to regain its place as a regional hub for film production through rebates that complement Colorado's statewide efforts. These rebates include but are not limited to reimbursement for targeted-hire on films produced in Denver that employ local musicians, production crews and support an entire ecosystem of restaurants, hotels, and services.

2. How will the arts play a role in your community planning and investment, and overall economic development agenda for the city?

One of my priorities will be the creation of the Office of Social Enterprise, which will serve to foster the entrepreneurial and creative sector.

In addition, Denver needs a proper public market, similar to Pike Place Market in Seattle, that serves as a home for the arts and a destination for locals and visitors to our city. This will provide meaningful opportunities for artists to run successful businesses through selling their work.

We also need to ensure that the 1% compliance for any city-funded projects is going to local artists.

While these are just a few examples of how the arts can help advance the city's economic development, I'd also look to the arts community and the Colorado Business Committee for the Arts to help provide insight on recommendations for reappointments and appointments to the Scientific & Cultural Facilities District Board for the Arts.

3. What is the role of arts and culture in the city's recovery, including the revitalization of downtown, while simultaneously preserving and supporting historic neighborhoods with a rich arts and cultural heritage, including Latino, Black and other diverse communities?

I'd ensure that the Herman Malone Fund would provide innovative resources for minority-owned businesses, that could include the arts, in an effort to support historic neighborhoods these businesses call home.

The arts community is remarkable in its ability to adapt in unique spaces and make them something special. I'd work to incentivize this kind of approach and jumpstart our minority-owned businesses by utilizing vacant spaces throughout Denver, especially on the 16th Street Mall. The arts would help activate these spaces downtown in a more comprehensive way, and the Downtown Denver Partnership has funds to help assist with this activation.

4. In the face of rising cost of real estate, gentrification and displacement, affordable infrastructure including venues, housing and workspaces are a critical issue for artists, cultural workers and cultural nonprofits. How will you address the shortage of space and rising cost of living for artists and the creative workforce?

Many of our business corridors have vacant spaces that represent untapped opportunities for the creative sector.. I will create a fund to assist artists to lease spaces that can be co-shared to keep costs affordable.

I will start with revising Denver's permitting process and zoning code to ensure we address any barriers that prohibit the co-existence of live/work housing. Not everyone can afford storefront rental space, and this model supports our creative community.

5. Equity and racial justice are critical conversations across Denver and Colorado, including in the arts and cultural community, which has been a leader in this work. How will you leverage arts and culture to advance equity and racial justice?

When elected, I will prioritize collaboration between the Herman Malone Fund and the arts and culture community to advance equity and racial justice through an arts and culture lens.

Additionally, I will appoint people who reflect the diversity of our broader arts and culture community to the Denver Commission on Cultural Affairs, the Scientific Cultural and Facilities District and the Denver Special Events Office.

The Five Points Jazz Festival, the Cinco De Mayo Festival on Santa Fe, the Far East Center, and Levitt Pavilion are examples of the burgeoning music and street festival scene in Denver - the largest concert-attending city in the country (more than Austin and Nashville!). Voices of Black, Latino, and diverse communities should reverberate from every stage by supporting these festivals to include pop-ups and recurring events organized, headlined, and performed within minority and low-income communities.

6. Denver Arts & Venues is the local arts agency for the city of Denver. How do you propose supporting the agency to maximize the public value of its mission: Arts & Venues enriches and advances Denver's quality of life and economic vitality through the advancement of arts, cultural, and entertainment opportunities for all."

We have cherished facilities for the arts, including the Denver Performing Arts Complex, the Colorado Convention Center, and the Red Rocks Parks & Amphitheatre - all of which need staff to keep these incredible venues running. My administration will work to ensure that the demand for employees is met by job seekers through stronger communications including outreach to our arts community.

Annually, through Imagine 2020, Arts & Venues provides City Council offices with funding to pursue arts projects in each district. I would expand this program beyond City Hall, providing other city agencies and neighborhood organizations with resources to engage with the arts community - further strengthening these connections and bringing more visibility to our arts landscape.

Terrance Roberts

1. What is your arts and culture platform for the City of Denver? If you are elected, what are the most important parts of your agenda that will impact artists, cultural nonprofits and the creative industries?

I have been lucky enough to be the protagonist of an award winning book and documentary film made here in Colorado. I am an artist myself. I am a witness and a recipient of the power of the arts. I think bringing the film industry and music here to Denver in a highly visible and big way could add jobs, bring revenue to our city, and make our city a safer place as well because of the work, activity, and comradery, especially concerning the youth. I also am platforming on saying Denver needs to be a 24 hour city, which will directly tie into our entertainment, music, and film industries. This also goes for conventions and tradeshow that bring hundreds of jobs, thousands of visitors, and millions of sales tax and permitting dollars in revenue to our city. Creating a Public Banking System, will also help create more revenue for our nonprofit community, and housing for artist or industry workers if needed.

2. How will the arts play a role in your community planning and investment, and overall economic development agenda for the city?

One of my platform items is making Denver a 24 hour city. This will also greatly benefit anyone in the in the Arts Industry. We need to bring the film, and music industry here in a real and more meaningful way. There is too much revenue in the arts and culture industry for Denver to not have a mayor in office who does not understand the importance of the healing and peace making of the arts, but also the tourism and revenue that will go directly back into our general fund and small businesses. I have worked in Los Angeles, Haiti, and here in Denver where youth stopped violent wars because we brought a particular artist in to speak to them. I grew up in the 1990's Hip Hop, Visual Arts era and I am an artist myself, I am running on bringing more Public Housing into the city of Denver and Rent Controls. As mentioned I am also implementing a Public Banking System, which will greatly help anyone in the industry who needs more capital to create, and have a more comfortable life.

3. What is the role of arts and culture in the city's recovery, including the revitalization of downtown, while simultaneously preserving and supporting historic neighborhoods with a rich arts and cultural heritage, including Latino, Black and other diverse communities?

The Arts are what can and will save the Downtown area for a revitalization. With a robust Arts Industry here in Denver, and having more events on 16th Street Mall, we can make it a hub for business and art dealers and performers. I feel the 16th Street Mall and the 5 Points should be designated Arts Districts like we have on Santa Fe. With this focus and emphasis we can generate the excitement, and vision, and influx of people and businesses needed to sustain the area. Making Denver a 24 hour city will also keep the area more lit and protected for businesses who choose to stay open through the day and night and have performances, serve customers, etc. This will definitely make Denver a more forward thinking and future ready city with our size and growth.

4. In the face of rising cost of real estate, gentrification and displacement, affordable infrastructure including venues, housing and workspaces are a critical issue for artists, cultural workers and cultural nonprofits. How will you address the shortage of space and rising cost of living for artists and the creative workforce?

Denver needs a Public Banking System in place to generate the extra income needed for additional housing. A Public Banking System will also help get those who need it the most get a bank account, which is needed for transactions these days. Not having a bank account is equal to being illiterate in some places these days. A Public Banking System will also help small businesses and community based nonprofits grow by receiving loans (many forgivable), and grants given. A system like this is owned by tax payers, and feeds back into our city and infrastructure. Denver needs more Public/Social Housing, which is owned by tax payers, not just "affordable housing" which is owned by developers. Nobody is moving from homelessness, into "affordable housing" with a wad of cash, people need banking accounts. Land Use Reform is definitely needed to achieve these goals. Development ties into environmental justice, which ties into Land Usage laws.

5. Equity and racial justice are critical conversations across Denver and Colorado, including in the arts and cultural community, which has been a leader in this work. How will you leverage arts and culture to advance equity and racial justice?

Yes I definitely will. I am an artist of color myself. My campaign staff is majority women of color who are mothers to children of color. I am also a father, a community organizer for racial, social, gender, and immigration justice. I understand the exploitation of the Cultural Arts that has historically occurred even until this day, and also the current financial backing aspect in the funding sources that are discriminatory towards artist of color, women, and other marginalized communities. No forms of discrimination will be tolerated under my administration. The importance of art is one of the reasons why I am running for office, to give more of a voice, and real resources to the many forms of the industry to move our city forward. Making sure there is available funding and safe creative space for artist is important. Venues, galleries and nonprofits need an an administration is in place who understands this and will work to make sure the resources are there to sustain it.

6. Denver Arts & Venues is the local arts agency for the city of Denver. How do you propose supporting the agency to maximize the public value of its mission: Arts & Venues enriches and advances Denver's quality of life and economic vitality through the advancement of arts, cultural, and entertainment opportunities for all."

As mayor I will be not only be a proponent and major supporter of the Denver Arts & Venues, but I will also be a participant in the many activities organized and hosted by the department. My nonprofit organization received support from the agency to do much needed mural projects in NE Denver where none had ever existed. This really helped gather the youth and community together in very positive ways. Local artist and recipients of the department's resources will be inviting and including my administration to be in support of many activities and venues throughout the city. This is something I think will help boost the revenue and positive energy of the city.

Andy Rougeot

- 1. What is your arts and culture platform for the City of Denver? If you are elected, what are the most important parts of your agenda that will impact artists, cultural nonprofits and the creative industries?**

As Mayor, I will create space for our arts and culture to thrive by increasing the safety of our city. I will add four hundred police officers, increase police funding to allow for more training, and aggressively enforce the camping ban. By making our city safe again, we can revitalize downtown and other venues suffering from declining attendance due to safety concerns.

- 2. How will the arts play a role in your community planning and investment, and overall economic development agenda for the city?**

Denver is the greatest city in the country, in part because of our art and culture. Music venues like Red Rocks are nationwide draws, and the economic impact of artists on neighborhoods like the Santa Fe and River North art districts are obvious. That will continue under my administration.

- 3. What is the role of arts and culture in the city's recovery, including the revitalization of downtown, while simultaneously preserving and supporting historic neighborhoods with a rich arts and cultural heritage, including Latino, Black and other diverse communities?**

Art and culture are critical drivers of visitation to downtown. However, rising crime and homelessness are discouraging trips downtown. As Mayor, I will add four hundred police officers, increase police funding to allow for more training, and aggressively enforce the camping ban to bring back office workers, residents, and visitors downtown.

- 4. In the face of rising cost of real estate, gentrification and displacement, affordable infrastructure including venues, housing and workspaces are a critical issue for artists, cultural workers and cultural nonprofits. How will you address the shortage of space and rising cost of living for artists and the creative workforce?**

Housing is unaffordable in our city, especially for blue collar workers, first time home buyers, young families, and artists. As Mayor, I will fix a broken permitting department, reduce regulations that are adding to the cost of affordable housing, and get money and corruption out of the building process to build more housing.

- 5. Equity and racial justice are critical conversations across Denver and Colorado, including in the arts and cultural community, which has been a leader in this work. How will you leverage arts and culture to advance equity and racial justice?**

Arts and culture are critical tools for improving the lives of all Denverites. As Mayor I will build a safer, more affordable city, creating a space for arts and culture to drive important conversations.

- 6. Denver Arts & Venues is the local arts agency for the city of Denver. How do you propose supporting the agency to maximize the public value of its mission: Arts & Venues enriches and advances Denver's quality of life and economic vitality through the advancement of arts, cultural, and entertainment opportunities for all."**

The Mayor is Denver's biggest cheer leader, as Mayor I will always highlight the contributions and successes of Denver's arts and venues to a broad an audience as possible.

Kwame Spearman

1. What is your arts and culture platform for the City of Denver? If you are elected, what are the most important parts of your agenda that will impact artists, cultural nonprofits and the creative industries?

As mayor, my top priority will be to integrate arts and cultural programming into every neighborhood plan as part of my overall Neighborhood Agenda. This will ensure that every neighborhood has access to the arts and that the arts can thrive in every neighborhood, especially in areas where the arts are underrepresented. As CEO and co-owner of the Tattered Cover, I understand the importance of the arts in our community. I believe that Denver can and should be a hub for the arts not just regionally, but a cultural center for the arts in the Western half of the United States and known internationally. Through my Neighborhood Agenda, I will work closely with Denver Arts & Venues, community leaders, and local artists to create vibrant and inclusive cultural spaces in every neighborhood. The arts are a vital part of our community and I am committed to ensuring that all Denver residents have access to them.

2. How will the arts play a role in your community planning and investment, and overall economic development agenda for the city?

As mayor, I will ensure that the arts are fully integrated into my Neighborhood Agenda and community planning efforts. My administration will make the Performing Arts Neighborhood a key focus, investing in the necessary infrastructure to support the arts and creative industries. This includes funding for new art initiatives, increasing access to affordable housing for artists and cultural workers, and providing resources to support local cultural nonprofits. I believe that investing in the arts is not only important for the cultural and creative vibrancy of our city, but also for economic development. Arts and culture are a key driver of tourism and a major contributor to Denver's economy. By making the arts a central focus, we can attract and retain talented people, create jobs and drive economic growth.

People want to live in communities where art and culture isn't an afterthought, but central. The next mayor of Denver must make support for the arts must be central to our planning.

3. What is the role of arts and culture in the city's recovery, including the revitalization of downtown, while simultaneously preserving and supporting historic neighborhoods with a rich arts and cultural heritage, including Latino, Black and other diverse communities?

As the CEO of Tattered Cover, I have experienced firsthand the issues and challenges facing our downtown, and I know personally how vital and important it is that we turn downtown around for everyone, but especially for local artists. When office work will never be the same again, artists are critical to the path of revitalizing and renewing Denver's downtown.

The role of arts and culture in Denver's recovery is crucial. As part of my Neighborhood Agenda, I will work with communities to ensure there is enough housing for everyone, including artists and long-term Denverites, to keep Denver affordable. This will include developing public art programs, supporting the growth of arts districts, and creating more affordable space for artists and arts organizations. My Neighborhood Agenda is key to this, which will require Denver government agencies to operate according to neighborhood priorities, and for the arts, this means ensuring that they can thrive in Denver.

4. In the face of rising cost of real estate, gentrification and displacement, affordable infrastructure including venues, housing and workspaces are a critical issue for artists, cultural workers and cultural nonprofits. How will you address the shortage of space and rising cost of living for artists and the creative workforce?

Many artists are renters. We need neighborhoods that work for renters, and Cap Hill is a great example of this. But to keep Denver affordable for artists, we need to expand housing options as Denver grows. There is a huge opportunity to do this in upper downtown, where adaptive reuse can turn existing unoccupied buildings into new housing via smarter zoning. The best part is that this area is adjoining the Performing Arts Neighborhood - which means no car is needed for people who live and work there. We're going to go neighborhood by neighborhood to find solutions that work.

As mayor, one of my top priorities will be to address the shortage of affordable space for artists, cultural workers and cultural nonprofits through my overall Neighborhood Agenda. We will work closely with communities to increase housing options for artists and long-term Denverites, to keep Denver affordable for all.

5. Equity and racial justice are critical conversations across Denver and Colorado, including in the arts and cultural community, which has been a leader in this work. How will you leverage arts and culture to advance equity and racial justice?

As a black man and the CEO of Denver's largest independent bookstore, the Tattered Cover, I have seen firsthand the power of art, specifically literature, to bring diverse groups together and foster understanding and empathy. As mayor, I will prioritize equity and racial justice in all aspects of my administration, including arts and culture. I will work closely with communities of color and other marginalized groups to ensure their voices are heard and their needs are met in the development of arts and cultural programming. Additionally, I will use my Neighborhood Agenda to focus on community-driven solutions that address issues of gentrification and displacement, which disproportionately affect communities of color.

6. Denver Arts & Venues is the local arts agency for the city of Denver. How do you propose supporting the agency to maximize the public value of its mission: Arts & Venues enriches and advances Denver's quality of life and economic vitality through the advancement of arts, cultural, and entertainment opportunities for all."

As mayor, I will ensure that Denver Arts & Venues has the resources and autonomy necessary to achieve its mission of enriching and advancing Denver's quality of life and economic vitality through the advancement of arts, cultural, and entertainment opportunities for all. Under the Neighborhood Agenda, I will work to give Denver Arts & Venues more latitude to provide localized solutions across Denver's 78 neighborhoods, so that every community can benefit from the agency's programs and services. Additionally, I will work with the agency to identify and address any barriers that may be preventing underserved communities from accessing and participating in the agency's offerings. Overall, I believe that a strong and well-funded Denver Arts & Venues is essential for a thriving and equitable city, and I am committed to supporting the agency in any way I can.

Ean Tafoya

1. What is your arts and culture platform for the City of Denver? If you are elected, what are the most important parts of your agenda that will impact artists, cultural nonprofits and the creative industries?

I'm an artist myself (DJ Mr. Denver) and I founded, co-hosted, and scouted artists for the Denver Loft Sessions on Channel 8 and co-hosted Metro on KGNU community radio. I have worked for decades to promote the arts (see #2 and #5) and my passion will carry over into the Mayor's Office. I intend to invest as much as possible in our local artists—and in making the industry more equitable and accessible for all. This includes:

- Providing incentives and requirements for sustainability for artistic events, including providing recycling/composting and priority tickets for public transit riders/bikers
- Expanding electric public transportation to Red Rocks
- Investing in diverse artistic cultural events and businesses
- Addressing our housing crisis so artists can afford to stay in Denver and afford studio space, and addressing the cost of events
- Working with CBCA, Visit Denver, and other artistic and cultural organizations and workers collectives to shape policy

2. How will the arts play a role in your community planning and investment, and overall economic development agenda for the city?

A big part of my platform for the arts is increasing tourism for Denver, while simultaneously ensuring accessibility for the residents who actually live here. Expanding transport to Red Rocks is one piece, but we need to be incorporating the arts and beautification into every public works project and use of federal dollars. We need to increase funding for cultural events and small businesses, especially to lower-income communities who deserve to display and enjoy their own artistic productions. I founded Ruby Generations, a group of local industry professionals and artists who successfully fundraised for the now-constructed Levitt Pavilion at Ruby Hill Park. This was an amazing experience and we need to support projects like this initiated by the arts community. We have to use the 1% requirement for public works to prioritize local artists.

3. What is the role of arts and culture in the city's recovery, including the revitalization of downtown, while simultaneously preserving and supporting historic neighborhoods with a rich arts and cultural heritage, including Latino, Black and other diverse communities?

As a fourth generation Chicano and indigenous Denverite this issue is a passion of mine. First, we need to make venues and rent more affordable so smaller artists and businesses can afford to stay downtown to be a part of that revitalization. I support landmark designation and worked on the first Chicano Cultural and Heritage District in the country. I believe through a combination of community engagement, local funding for artists of color, and supporting workers' unions and collectives, we can generate exciting ideas for downtown Denver and the entire city. Latine, Black, and working class communities need to lead the way on policies that let us stay in our neighborhoods to enjoy the "revitalization" processes. This could include everything from community land trusts, to reparations. At the start of the pandemic I also produced, with Cultural Workers, a comprehensive plan to rapidly house folks currently living on the street downtown.

4. In the face of rising cost of real estate, gentrification and displacement, affordable infrastructure including venues, housing and workspaces are a critical issue for artists, cultural workers and cultural nonprofits. How will you address the shortage of space and rising cost of living for artists and the creative workforce?

First, we need to pass rent control and a vacancy tax. Then, we need to expand low-income and affordable options by: infilling parking lots; allowing commercial conversion to residential zoning; prioritizing the construction of group living; and easing permitting for the construction of property additions to homes. We also need to invest in affordable commercial space for events.

For a decade, I have been an advocate on housing rights and was named Who's Next in Housing by the Denverite for my work staffing the Denver City Council Land Use and Transportation Committee, my advocacy for tenant rights at the legislature, and my dedication to the Inter-neighborhood Cooperation Zoning and Planning Committee. I championed Group Living Reform, served on the 20 year Zoning and Transportation Planning effort known as Blueprint Denver, and most recently served on the Taskforce implementing the first inclusionary housing ordinance in the state of Colorado.

5. Equity and racial justice are critical conversations across Denver and Colorado, including in the arts and cultural community, which has been a leader in this work. How will you leverage arts and culture to advance equity and racial justice?

I want to develop funding streams for new, local artists of color, LGBT+ artists, indigenous artists, and immigrant artists. For public works in low income neighborhoods, we need to contract artists and businesses from our neighborhoods. I'm grateful to be able to build on work I've done throughout my career, including hosting dialogues with the Colorado Music Business Organization on this very topic.

Accessibility goes both ways: how can we compensate diverse artists for murals, free concerts, and public performances that our communities can afford to access? I've served in leadership for City Park Jazz, the People's Fair, and Denver Cruiser Ride, and served as the Community Engagement Director for the Underground Music Showcase. Colorado Music Buzz awarded me the Backyard Hero Award for this work. I believe free artistic events are crucial for our community to be able to enjoy.

Finally, disability accessibility at venues, for both artists and patrons, is crucial.

6. Denver Arts & Venues is the local arts agency for the city of Denver. How do you propose supporting the agency to maximize the public value of its mission: Arts & Venues enriches and advances Denver's quality of life and economic vitality through the advancement of arts, cultural, and entertainment opportunities for all."

I have worked extraordinarily well with Denver Arts & Venues over the course of my many years advocating for the arts in Denver, and I believe my policies for sustainability and accessibility (both for artists and patrons) will strongly contribute to their mission. I served on the Imagine 2020 Cultural Plan and Denver Music Strategy, so I'm excited to work with the community to implement all the ideas we've generated over the years.

Robert Treta

1. What is your arts and culture platform for the City of Denver? If you are elected, what are the most important parts of your agenda that will impact artists, cultural nonprofits and the creative industries?

- Double art budget for public buildings .
- Support traveling artists and musicians traveling thru Denver by working with local artists that have airbnbs throughout the city . Biggest challenge for traveling artists and musicians is finding places to stay .
- offer property tax discounts for home studios for qualified artists .
- city contributions towards art events through advertising. Eg travel magazines
- more local public art at DIA .

2. How will the arts play a role in your community planning and investment, and overall economic development agenda for the city?

City wide accessory dwelling unit use of space approval for ground floor art studios instead of 80% required parking . I will rewrite zoning code on ADUs to cater to artists .

3. What is the role of arts and culture in the city's recovery, including the revitalization of downtown, while simultaneously preserving and supporting historic neighborhoods with a rich arts and cultural heritage, including Latino, Black and other diverse communities?

City needs to revitalize performance spaces and allow more grant money available for these revitalization plans to succeed .

4. In the face of rising cost of real estate, gentrification and displacement, affordable infrastructure including venues, housing and workspaces are a critical issue for artists, cultural workers and cultural nonprofits. How will you address the shortage of space and rising cost of living for artists and the creative workforce?

ADU for all of Denver . !!! This should have been done with blue print denver but they failed . They are trying to do it now but it's moving too slow . They messed up and are now trying to fix it .

5. Equity and racial justice are critical conversations across Denver and Colorado, including in the arts and cultural community, which has been a leader in this work. How will you leverage arts and culture to advance equity and racial justice?

Policy regarding the arts will be prioritized by how many people are affected and the history that is involved . regardless of race.

6. Denver Arts & Venues is the local arts agency for the city of Denver. How do you propose supporting the agency to maximize the public value of its mission: Arts & Venues enriches and advances Denver's quality of life and economic vitality through the advancement of arts, cultural, and entertainment opportunities for all."

McNichols building is a great opportunity to kick this into high gear. The placement is perfect and it's history gives the arts validation. I will be at most events . Can u tell I'm an artist and musician?

James Walsh

1. What is your arts and culture platform for the City of Denver? If you are elected, what are the most important parts of your agenda that will impact artists, cultural nonprofits and the creative industries?

My arts and culture platform is to expand Denver's arts community to include non-professional and activist artists who have traditionally operated on the margins of the city. I hope to make these lesser-known groups eligible for SCFD funding and use them to draw youth into city government circles in new ways.

2. How will the arts play a role in your community planning and investment, and overall economic development agenda for the city?

Eighteen years ago, I founded the Romero Theater Troupe, an all-volunteer troupe for non-actors without any formal theater training. The troupe's mission is to use the stage to highlight important and lesser known human rights and social justice issues in our city. In my administration, the arts would be a central vehicle for bringing ignored or unknown social issues to the forefront of the city's consciousness. This includes sponsoring spoken word artists, sculptors, painters, actors, and musicians to perform for city policy makers, opening a new window for artists to act as a liaison between the people and public spaces. This practice will also bring voices from the margins into city government and open a portal whereby the arts might act as a mouthpiece for larger issues being brought before city leaders.

3. What is the role of arts and culture in the city's recovery, including the revitalization of downtown, while simultaneously preserving and supporting historic neighborhoods with a rich arts and cultural heritage, including Latino, Black and other diverse communities?

The arts are in many ways the most important repository of the histories that are slowly eroding in central Denver communities. Let us not forget that the arts thrive on controversy and are in many ways the only avenue that ignored social issues have in reaching a larger audience. Therefore, the arts must be reinforced and strengthened in order to serve this higher purpose, not simply to preserve neighborhood history, but to create dialogue and highlight disagreements within the community. The Romero Troupe has members from every imaginable community in Denver and thus has earned the respect of elders in all corners of our city. As Mayor, I will do everything that I can to preserve and support this work.

4. In the face of rising cost of real estate, gentrification and displacement, affordable infrastructure including venues, housing and workspaces are a critical issue for artists, cultural workers and cultural nonprofits. How will you address the shortage of space and rising cost of living for artists and the creative workforce?

Good question. In many ways, artists moving into low income communities act as the tip of the spear for the gentrification that follows. So, firstly, we wish to use artists as a tool for gentrification and instead focus on telling stories that lead to a higher dialogue and serve to make our city a healthier and more diverse place. I would focus my efforts on empowering artists who are already from certain communities and working in those communities with the resources that they need to continue their work.

5. Equity and racial justice are critical conversations across Denver and Colorado, including in the arts and cultural community, which has been a leader in this work. How will you leverage arts and culture to advance equity and racial justice?

I will highlight the 18 year work of the Romero Theater Troupe and create grants and resources that might lead to similar community arts organizations opening with the mission of equity and racial justice. I will invite the Romero Troupe to perform a play about the city's history, encouraging other groups to contribute in their own way and about their own issues. In short, inviting local arts groups and artists to act as spokespersons for their larger communities and institutionalizing this support is critical.

6. Denver Arts & Venues is the local arts agency for the city of Denver. How do you propose supporting the agency to maximize the public value of its mission: Arts & Venues enriches and advances Denver's quality of life and economic vitality through the advancement of arts, cultural, and entertainment opportunities for all."

I would support this agency by ensuring that it has roots in as many communities in Denver as possible, and that outreach to unknown artists is never-ending.

Thomas Wolf

1. What is your arts and culture platform for the City of Denver? If you are elected, what are the most important parts of your agenda that will impact artists, cultural nonprofits and the creative industries?

My wife's great grandfather was a sculptor and painter and made the statue in front of the castle in her hometown, Oslo. That said, he struggled financially, so we have made it our cause to support and encourage starving artists. I served for six years on the MCA|D board and helped orchestrate some financial gymnastics in order for us to move from Sakura Square and build our own building on Delgany, no small feat when coinciding with the DAM addition and the Clifford Still. So my platform is to maintain thus momentum, which I have recently witnessed first hand via my wife's board membership with the Biennial of the Americas. A practical way to invest in our creative classes is by allowing them access to our municipal health insurance and other benefits, subsidized or fully covered based on need. For a more vivid feel to my platform I would love to host your committee to see and discuss our modest collection.

2. How will the arts play a role in your community planning and investment, and overall economic development agenda for the city?

The Kunsthalle format of the MCA|D of venue rather than collection, I think is applicable to the city's land and buildings as well. I have become familiar with NYC's public art commission and I think a number of their successes could be replicate here. It solves the scarcity/finite wall space of our museum capacity and gets more art out of storage. As Mayor, I am Denver's number one fan, booster, and ambassador, being able to do this with a compelling world class backdrop of art makes it much more likely to succeed and enjoyable.

3. What is the role of arts and culture in the city's recovery, including the revitalization of downtown, while simultaneously preserving and supporting historic neighborhoods with a rich arts and cultural heritage, including Latino, Black and other diverse communities?

Again, I fall back on MCA|D mission and format prioritizing contemporary and regional is not local, and where possible micro-local. Fortunately we have some rich micro pockets that are doing well but can always benefit from additional support, I have mentioned above via health insurance and benefits, but here with regard to capital improvements I can bring bring the city balance sheet to bear. Additionally, new and rehabilitated parks and greenways are great opportunities to showcase our arts and cultural heritage.

4. In the face of rising cost of real estate, gentrification and displacement, affordable infrastructure including venues, housing and workspaces are a critical issue for artists, cultural workers and cultural nonprofits. How will you address the shortage of space and rising cost of living for artists and the creative workforce?

I have already stated two above, health insurance benefits and balance sheet for buildings. I think another opportunity is to repurpose surplus city land and buildings for artist living and working space. I am aware of land trusts that have had these stipulations that have been successful, SOHO obviously comes to mind, I can clearly envision that success here as well.

5. Equity and racial justice are critical conversations across Denver and Colorado, including in the arts and cultural community, which has been a leader in this work. How will you leverage arts and culture to advance equity and racial justice?

I am a big fan of Georgia O'Keefe and I believe her quote about her art was that in art she was able to express herself or say things that she couldn't with words but could with shapes and colors. I think this unique perspective can build bridge and provide insight to right injustices, in the same way a Dylan song does or a Hughes poem, so fostering arts in all forms can help us remedy our situation. As a financial professional equity in mind is always personal stake or means, and we want all citizens to have clear and fair opportunity towards their individual goals.

- 6. Denver Arts & Venues is the local arts agency for the city of Denver. How do you propose supporting the agency to maximize the public value of its mission: Arts & Venues enriches and advances Denver's quality of life and economic vitality through the advancement of arts, cultural, and entertainment opportunities for all."**

As portrayed above arts are a part of my being, full disclosure I am an aspiring folk artist, and of late my wife and daughters even tolerate my works. As a civic leader who exudes the arts in a hyper-passionate way, I think will more than exceed the loftiest expectations you could possibly have for you next Mayor.

Last thought, I have interacted somewhat with the Golden Triangle creative district of late and I think there is a great opportunity with the 5280 trail on Acoma street to draw the Evans school into the museum and civic center footprint, and create something like the enclave mentioned above.