



## **A nonprofit contemporary art museum**

In 2018, 516 ARTS embraced its role as a non-collecting contemporary art museum, after 12 years of leading collaborations, presenting curated exhibitions and offering public programs and education activities. Key factors were:

- Education and public discourse about relevant issues are at the core of 516 ARTS' mission.
- 516 ARTS has undergone an organizational assessment by the national Museums Assessment Program administered by the American Alliance of Museums and the federal Institute of Museums & Library Services.
- 516 ARTS works with professional curators and partners regularly with other museums.
- 516 ARTS is a member of the American Alliance of Museums, and a museum best practices are a top priority for the organization.

### **FAQ**

#### **How can you be a museum if you don't have a collection?**

There are many non-collecting museums across the country. In the United States, there is not a word that accurately describes what we do. The German word "kunsthalle" comes closest, as it refers to a gallery or museum that mounts art exhibitions with additional activities such as symposia, studios and workshops, and does not house a permanent collection. In the English language, we have found that our role is best described as a non-collecting museum. Non-collecting museums focus their resources, funds and staff on exhibitions, educational programming and public outreach, choosing not to allot limited staff and space to collections management and storage. Not having a permanent collection allows 516 ARTS to be agile and responsive to what's happening in the world and to our local community.

#### **What are some other non-collecting art museums?**

Examples of non-collecting museums include SITE Santa Fe, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, the Craft & Folk Art Museum in Los Angeles, Dallas Contemporary, Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, the Renaissance Society in Chicago, the Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum in Ridgefield, Connecticut, Marin Museum of Contemporary Art in Marin, and California, Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland, among many others.

#### **Does 516 ARTS have to be accredited by the American Association of Museums to be called a museum?**

No, but a small percentage of non-collecting museums do achieve accreditation (10% to 20% nationwide). AAM states that among other characteristics, "The museum asserts its public service role and places education at the center of that role." Instead of using a collection as a tool for public stewardship, non-collecting museums focus on educational programming.

#### **Does 516 ARTS charge admission?**

No, 516 ARTS is committed to providing an open and welcoming space for everyone, regardless of ability to pay an entrance fee. We have a suggested donation box for those who would like to contribute.

#### **Does 516 ARTS sell art as a museum?**

As a nonprofit, charitable, 501(c)(3) organization, 516 ARTS engages in art sales as a fundraising activity to support educational programming. 516 ARTS does not represent artists in an ongoing way. We work with individual artists and collectives in relation to our project themes and fundraising events.

#### **Why did we change our descriptor from "artspace" to "museum" at this point?**

The general public is familiar with the term "museum" as a place where people are welcomed to experience curated exhibitions in an educational context, with related public programs and educational activities. We found that audiences and funders were at times been confused by the terms "artspace" and "museum-style gallery." We believe the term "museum" more clearly describes our work and is better understood by a wider audience. We are using the word "museum" to describe our work at this point in time because we want to clarify our organization's identity and embrace the role it plays in our community and beyond. We believe that the use of "museum" not only broadens our audience, but also helps us grow our membership and encourages more individual contributions and business sponsorships.