

The Floor: Rocket Grant Application

Project Summary (One paragraph, maximum 100 words. Please include brief information about concept, form/media, audience, how you will use the money and venue – anything that will make a jury member see your project as a good fit for this opportunity and want to learn more. Be especially clear about why your chosen venue will be surprising, meaningful, experimental, and accessible or some other criterion that meets funding priorities for this grant. Try writing the longer description first and then making a summary from that.)

- The Floor is a visual multimedia immersive art engagement that explores repetition as a catalyst for change in Black community and individual identities. The series is in conversation with how cultural difference and similarities have created unique community histories since the U.S. Great Black Migration of the 20th century. Rocket Grant funds for The Floor cover artists fees, installation materials, exhibition marketing, and public engagement. This series will be held at 31st & Brklyn: a new performance venue for emerging and adventurous contemporary artists of color, that supports avant-garde and under-heard voices in Kansas City, Missouri.

Ongoing Projects (One short paragraph, 100 words maximum) If this is a continuation of an existing project, or is a project proposed by an already existing program or group, please explain briefly how this proposal would open up significant new directions in the work you do.

- The Floor is about renewal of individual and community identity, and since its conception has undergone significant transformation. This new direction pivots on widening collaboration and further deconstructing divergent aesthetic perspectives and creative structuring. The floor is process-making that unfolds within a new space dedicated to emergent art of Black voices. Audience participation is geared to residents east of Troost in supporting art experiences. The Floor's mission is transformational interaction through difference as an engagement with change.

Project Description (maximum 500 words/ 3000 characters): (participant - who and how)

- The Floor is a multimedia immersive art project conceived by movement artist Cat Mahari, opening mid-July 2016, at 31st & Brklyn in Kansas City, MO. 31st & Brklyn is a new venue and community space that actively prioritizes avant-garde emerging artist of color. The process and installation unfolds over a month into a 'steppers night', African American partnered social dance-evenings held in late night bars, juke joints, and ballrooms. The Floor is an overlapping engagement in

experiential tracing of repetition and Blackness in relation to the Great Black Migrations of the 20th century. KC-Style steppers nights are gatherings that strengthen bonds and expose tension between individual expression, shared experiences and memories. The Floor presents and remixes personal narrative anecdotes from experiences that are carried around, but find no space of articulation or sharing - at the expense of linkages and solidarities in sex, gender, land, love, community, and individual creative identity. The Floor installation begins with a 2-part exhibition of writing and theatrical story telling. The installation involves rear image projection, video trigger mapping, and live video delay software. The events of words, sounds, and self-imagery are experienced as art objects, intangible stimuli, and public mediated negotiation. The Floor continues its immersive art making with still and animated visual imagery projected inside and outside 31st & Brklyn. This visualization encompasses lore of folk journeys, arrival points, and future possibilities with archetypical stylizations of trajectories of Blackness. Presenting on the east side of Troost, 31st & Brklyn, is part of shifting boundaries and current cross-hairs of diversity, gentrification, innovation, tradition, and art making elitism in Kansas City. The Floor engages in structural connection, individual aesthetics, and re-enforcement in creating experiential determining's of repetition and change for the audience-participants and artists. Integral to The Floors active construction a series of mini-sonic sessions are held. A DJ will engage in site-specific creative meditation, each set is recorded live and replayed as a looped auditory addition to the installation for that day. The Floor explores repetition as a catalyst for transformation to further communication between individual and communal choices, events, and persons. This kaleidoscope is a facet within Kansas City, with localized and kinfolk spanning perspectives. The Floors final process is a KC-Style Steppers lesson and accompanied KC-Style 'steppers party'. KC-Style Stepping is a partnered form of dance whose variation is linked to the population surge of Black people from Southern U.S to Kansas City contributing to the shifts in culture and socio-politics of The Great Black Migration. The steppers party creates fields of intimacy and physical interconnectivity amongst the audience-participants and with the mediated imagery, sounds, and objects. KC-Style Stepping-based choreography is developed in dialogue with the installed animated visual imagery and DJ curated music, which broadens the historical and contemporary remix of this live call and response form of multi-disciplinary arts integration. Presenting The Floor: a journey through sound, movement, and visual imagery about the 21st century.

Project timeline (100 word paragraph or bullet point list):

- May 2016 - Begin marketing campaign: blog, radio
- June - weekly blog updates: interviews with artist-participants; flyers, postcards
- July 2016 - the floor begins programming at 31st & Brklyn
- August 2016 - The Floor ends programming at 31st & Brklyn

Project mechanics (100 words - How and Where):

the floor will be held at 31st & Brklyn, an arts and community venue founded by Cat Mahari. Ad space will be taken out in The Call newspaper, and regular updates posted to the Rocket Grant Blog; post card distributions will be at varied institutions, organizations, and independent community locations, including particular focus on LGBTQ+ organizations of color. An on-line site with pictures, video, and project stories will be created, and is hoped to spark inspiration for similar projects to new audiences and catalyst venues around the world.