

Press release

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Acme Studios and Southwark Council award a studio residency worth £13,000 to develop art in the borough

A Peckham artist has been awarded a one-year studio residency worth £3,000 together with a £10,000 grant by Acme Studios and Southwark Council as part of a new initiative to support the development of art within the borough.

Local artist Isa Suarez will spend a year working in one of 50 new-build studios at The Galleria in Peckham, which are owned and managed by Acme Studios, the key strategic development agency for artists' studios in England. Developed in partnership with Barratt Homes, the studios opened in January and are part of a larger mixed-use development which includes private and affordable residential apartments.

Residency artist Isa said: "This award gives me the chance to develop my work as a composer, performer and sound artist within the Southwark community. A free studio plus £10,000 means I have peace of mind financially and am able to experiment with new ideas.

"I now have an ideal studio space within the lively and vibrant community where I live and work, together with financial help and support from Acme Studios, Southwark Council and The South London Gallery – it is the perfect scenario."

The Galleria is one of the first mixed-use planning gain projects to include cultural facilities within larger residential schemes, as outlined in the Mayor of London's 2004 cultural strategy. It represents the successful continuation of Acme's capital development programme supported by Arts Council England.

Acme's Co-Director Jonathan Harvey said: "The Galleria is a fantastic example of the private sector helping to create cultural infrastructure, providing studio space for many local artists at a price they can afford. The residency programme will help to make our new building more visible and forge real and lasting relationships with our local community".

This major new programme is supported by Southwark Council. Anya Whitehead, arts manager at Southwark Council, said: "We're delighted that Southwark now has its very own artist in residence. As well as developing her own practice, Isa will be working with local community groups to create work that is all about the people in Southwark, which we believe is a great way to support enjoyment of arts in the borough."

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The South London Gallery, one of London's major independent public galleries for contemporary art, will provide the artist in residence with four studio visits throughout the year by the curator and director.

There is a huge demand from artists for affordable space in London with thousands of artists on waiting lists. Recent Acme-led surveys show that commercially available studios are up to three times more expensive than studios in the affordable provider sector. 430 studios are at risk over the next 10 years from rising land values and new development schemes.

In partnership with private developers, Acme plan to increase the number of much-needed affordable and permanent studios for artists. Mixed-use planning gain projects such as The Galleria in Peckham could offer a significant source of finance for future studio developments.



Notes for Editors

- The Galleria Studios have been part-funded by Arts Council England's Grant for the arts – capital programme, which has made £2 million available to Acme for this and future projects
- 430 studios managed by other studio organisations in London are at risk over the next 10 years from rising land values and new development schemes
- The Galleria Studios is one of only nine permanent studio buildings out of over 90 in London, four of which are owned by Acme Studios

Press Information

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