

Artist-Run Spaces is an assemblage of ten independent arts organizations, non-profits, and collectives based throughout Ohio and Northern Kentucky. Sometimes known as artist-run, alternative, DIY, or independent spaces, they have historically been hubs of experimentation and community-building organized by artists for artists. Often rejecting more commercialized or institutionalized platforms, they privilege interdisciplinary exchange, grassroots organizing, and learning. Circumventing the bureaucracy, gatekeeping, and loaded histories of the sterile “white cube” or contemporary gallery, they create experiences and spaces that foster mutual exchange and collectivism.

Artist-run spaces take on different formats—a book fair, a farm, a home, an archive, a radio program—to respond to the urgencies of hyper-local creative communities. Some of the participants featured here, including **Basketshop**, **The Neon Heater**, **Rainbow**, and **Storefronts**, organize regular exhibitions and gatherings in reclaimed storefronts or office spaces. Others, such as **Akhsótha Gallery (ATNSC)**, **The Blue House**, **The Lodge KY**, and **PIQUE**, have transformed their residences into hybrid live/work areas that create safe spaces and blur the boundaries between life and art. The remaining participants refuse the notion of a conventional “exhibition space” altogether and devise alternative approaches. **Park and Pool** transforms swaths of farmland into concepts for new forms of living and leisure, and the **Cincinnati Art Book Fair** holds an annual gathering and trade fair of independent publishers.

This multifaceted exhibition features installations that have been developed by the selected organizations to highlight their mission and works by artists or makers who are part of their networks. Although there are no overarching themes, the plurality of approaches, styles, and perspectives encapsulates the modus operandi of artist-run spaces and the value they bring to the communities they serve—an ever-changing counterpoint or reflection of the now.

- Amara Antilla, Senior Curator at Large at the Contemporary Arts Center, Calcagno Cullen, Co-Founder and Executive Director of Wave Pool, and Stephanie Kang, Assistant Curator at the Contemporary Arts Center

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