



**Brooklyn Public Library Partners with Curator
Laura Raicovich and *Hyperallergic* to Conduct Public
“Art and Society Census”**

Soliciting Public Opinion on More Relevant Ways to Present Art Across
Cultural Institutions Starting Today Through February 1, 2021

Survey Results to Be Analyzed and Transformed into Free Tools for Museums and
Cultural Institutions Across the Country

Brooklyn, NY— December 7, 2020— **Brooklyn Public Library** (BPL) today announced the launch of the **Art and Society Census**, a new project soliciting public opinion and group visioning designed to evolve the role of the arts and culture in contemporary life, developed in collaboration with independent curator and Leslie-Lohman Museum of Art Interim Executive Director **Laura Raicovich** and in partnership with *Hyperallergic*. Live and open for public comment [at this link](#) today through February 1, 2021, the Art and Society Census aims to invite a collective rethinking that would dissolve the boundaries of canonized art and institutions, in the hopes of finding new approaches, values and actions that would restructure the cultural field based on what audiences deem most important or overlooked, inviting a grassroots transformation of the arts sector. As museums, performing arts institutions, libraries, and other cultural organizations nationwide need to reassess how they are serving their communities, BPL’s Art and Society Census aims to be a leading organizer of a public referendum on culture.

"In the face of unprecedented racial justice, climate, economic crises currently reshaping our country, and for that matter the entire world, Brooklyn Public Library turns to a broad range of people to ask them to think together with us to recalibrate what we expect from art and how the curatorial work of cultural spaces might be restructured. Together with Laura Raicovich and our partners at *Hyperallergic*, through the Art and Society Census we are tapping into the wisdom and imagination of the participants of the survey to generate a new platform and tools that can be adapted and applied by cultural institutions nationwide," said **László Jakab Orsós, Vice President of Arts and Culture at Brooklyn Public Library**.

Laura Raicovich added, “Within cultural institutions the mode of communication is overwhelmingly outward-facing; museums broadcasting to their audiences. This project solicits an exchange with the public, providing a way for them to present their knowledges to institutions. Undertaking the Art and Society Census is a step towards making institutions more equitable via a more practical understanding of what people might actually want from culture.”

Following the close of the census in February 2021, BPL will host a series of public working groups over winter and spring 2021 to examine and make actionable the public responses to the census. Following this period of analysis, BPL will organize a public presentation of the resulting tools in a summer 2021 convening of New York City residents, artists, art-appreciators, national and international arts workers, museum and public institutional directors and staff. Continuing BPL’s commitment to designing and implementing arts and cultural programming that relies on and responds to public needs and desires, the Art and Society Census follows original BPL programs including the nine-month-long *28th Amendment Project*, through which Brooklyn residents discussed, debated, and proposed the next amendment to the U.S. Constitution; *Democracy Lab*, a seven-day convening of Brooklyn

residents focused on civic engagement, social justice, public space, utopia and democracy; and *University Open Air*, a free series of classes taught by professors, researchers, and academics who were trained outside of the U.S. developed in collaboration with the Prospect Park Alliance.

BPL's Art and Society Census expands on the Library's mission to redefine libraries as centers for ideas and exploration through more than 60,000 free programs each year, and is part of a fall season of in-person and online programming that aims to strengthen community ties and provide access to the highest quality arts and cultural programming at a critical time for Brooklyn and the nation. A complete calendar of upcoming programs can be found [here](#) along with information about how to log-in and register for specific events.

About Brooklyn Public Library

[Brooklyn Public Library](#) is one of the nation's largest library systems and among New York City's most democratic institutions. As a leader in developing modern 21st-century libraries, we provide resources to support personal advancement, foster civic literacy, and strengthen the fabric of community among the more than 2.7 million individuals who call Brooklyn home. We provide nearly 60,000 free programs a year with writers, thinkers, artists, and educators—from around the corner and around the world. And we give patrons millions of opportunities to enjoy one of life's greatest satisfactions: the joy of a good book.

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