

Athens Banner Project

June 16, 2020

(ATHENS, GA) In late March 2020, representatives of many of the art organizations and facilities in Athens, Georgia began meeting informally online once a week to ensure that our community of practice continued to be strong as our county began to shelter in place. Dubbed the “Athens Art Alliance,” the participating organizations include the Athens Institute for Contemporary Art (ATHICA), the Lyndon House Arts Center, Creature Comforts’ Get Artistic program, tiny ATH gallery, the Georgia Museum of Art, the Athens Cultural Affairs Commission, the Athens Area Arts Council, the Athens-Clarke County Arts Division, *Flagpole* Magazine, and the Athens Downtown Development Authority. The group has worked together to identify projects and strategies that would help advocate for our shared creative community, already vulnerable before COVID-19 and moreso since.

Inspired by the public poster art of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in the mid-20th century, ATHENS BANNER PROJECT will fund members of the Athens artistic population, focusing on those working in the service/hospitality or retail industry who have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The banners will spread messages of resiliency, unity, and support for our local culture and community. Funded by the Athens Downtown Development Authority, Athens Banner Project has selected five artists to receive \$350 each for original art banner designs. These designs will be printed and distributed to the storefronts in downtown Athens for display during the summer of 2020. The artists selected are Marvella Castaneda, Jess Dunlap, Elinor Saragoussi Phillips, Maximos Salzman, and Klee Schell.

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Attached design by Elinor Saragoussi Phillips