



For immediate release:

Artists' Television Access to stay at 992 Valencia Street

Film and arts organization eludes death-by-gentrification

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (November 16, 2015) As the rental market continues to skyrocket and San Francisco's artists and show spaces are replaced by tech workers and boutique barbers, one staunchly independent arts organization in the heart of the Mission district is breathing a sigh of relief.

On Friday November 13, Artists' Television Access (ATA) signed a new five-year lease that guarantees continued tenure at 992 Valencia Street—the nonprofit's home since 1986—for another five years.

With a current lease expiring at the end of the year, ATA was feeling the pressures of exploding rental rates and changing demographics on the increasingly-upmarket Valencia Street corridor. And with almost a quarter of San Francisco's nonprofits forced to leave the city or shut down since 2011, ATA's all-volunteer staff were worried they'd be next on the chopping block.

"ATA is a fixture of the underground film and art scene in San Francisco, as well as being a long-time haven for artists, weirdos, and film lovers" says board president Kelly Pendergrast, "but with zero commercial rent control and a totally insane market, cultural value can't trump capitalism."

With support services from the Northern California Community Loan Fund via the city's new Nonprofit Displacement Mitigation Program, ATA was able to negotiate a new lease with acceptable terms. While Pendergrast says the new rent will be "a considerable increase from our current rate, and definitely a stretch" it is still well below market valuation, thanks to the landlord's willingness to cut a small break to a group that has brought film and art to the neighborhood for almost thirty years.

ATA isn't the only organization that makes its home at 992 Valencia. Artist collective Right Window curates exhibitions in the right storefront window and filmmaker Craig Baldwin, whose legendary Other Cinema screenings have run on Saturday nights for decades, also share the space.

"ATA continues to defy expectations about its ability to navigate complex negotiations with the Establishment," says Suki O'Kane, board treasurer. "To say we don't look like a conventional arts organization is putting it rather mildly, so we learned how to build bridges that catalyzed support without compromising our character."

The next five years won't be a cakewalk, with increased rent meaning more fundraising and appeals for member support. For the moment, though, ATA is happy to take a moment to relax and celebrate. "The next thing on our list is to plan a huge party to celebrate and say thanks to our friends and supporters" says staff member Linda Scobie.

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About ATA

Artists' Television Access is a San Francisco-based, artist-run, non-profit organization that cultivates and promotes culturally-aware, underground media and experimental art. We provide an accessible screening venue and gallery for the presentation of programmed and guest-curated screenings, exhibitions, performances, workshops and events. We believe in fostering a supportive community for the exhibition of innovative art and the exchange of non-conformist ideas. Visit atasite.org for more.

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Note: photos are available on request