



**National  
Public Housing  
Museum**

**MEDIA CONTACTS**

Acacia Consulting Group

Morgan Harris

[morgan@teamacacia.com](mailto:morgan@teamacacia.com)

Tom Elliott

[tom@teamacacia.com](mailto:tom@teamacacia.com)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

November 21, 2024

**NATIONAL PUBLIC HOUSING MUSEUM SELECTS NATASHA  
FLORENTINO AS 2024-25 ARTIST AS INSTIGATOR**

*Documentary Filmmaker Natasha Florentino Explores Housing Justice  
and Community Resilience in New Project About the Demolition of  
Fulton, Elliot-Chelsea Homes in Manhattan, New York*

**Chicago, Illinois (November 21, 2024)**—The **National Public Housing Museum**, the first museum in the United States dedicated to telling the stories and sharing the history of public housing in the country, today announced **Natasha Florentino** as its **2024-25 Artist as Instigator**. This competitive year-long residency program combines art and advocacy to shape public policy and promote equity, a key goal at the museum, opening in Chicago in early 2025. An artist talk open to the public will be held virtually on **Thursday, December 5, 2024**, from **6 - 7:30 p.m. Central Time**, where Florentino will discuss her artistic vision, community collaboration, and goals for the residency.



*Natasha Florentino, The National Public Housing Museum's 2024-25 Artist as Instigator; photo credit: Eugene Krasnaok.*

A documentary filmmaker raised in New York and based in San Francisco, Natasha Florentino has dedicated her career to amplifying the stories of housing justice and displacement. Her prior work includes two independently produced documentary films, *Rezoning Harlem* and *Abundant Land: Soil, Seeds, and Sovereignty*, which are being distributed by Third World Newsreel, Alexander Street, Cinepolitica, and Kanopy. In 2019, she was commissioned by Larkin Street Youth Services to produce a 25-minute documentary about the lives of three formerly unhoused young adults.

Through her Artist as Instigator Residency at the National Public Housing Museum, Florentino will produce *The Public Record* (working title), a 30-minute documentary examining the proposed demolition of the Fulton and Elliot-Chelsea public housing developments in Manhattan's Chelsea neighborhood. The project will document the perspectives of residents facing an uncertain future as the New York City Housing Authority and private developers push plans to replace these historic public housing sites with a "mixed-income" community.

"New York City's push to privatize and demolish the Fulton and Elliot-Chelsea developments is a critical turning point that risks more public housing demolitions throughout the City," said Florentino. "My residency with the National Public Housing Museum will support producing a documentary that captures this historic moment and amplifies the voices of residents and

advocates fighting to stop the demolition and keep NYC home to the largest public housing stock in the United States.”

Drawing from the mass displacement of public housing residents in the wake of HOPE VI demolitions—despite similar promises that new mixed-income developments would become available for displaced tenants—the documentary shares important historical context, including from the perspective of public housing residents in Chicago who were promised the right to return to a mixed-income community but have mostly seen vacant land instead.

Florentino’s documentary project is particularly timely as NYCHA is undergoing a shift towards privatization, which is transforming the public housing landscape in New York City, the largest remaining public housing stock in the United States. As exemplified by the proposed demolitions of the Fulton and Elliot-Chelsea homes, which NYCHA has repeatedly said should be replicated throughout New York City, this documentary captures a unique and historical moment for public housing across the country.

“We believe Natasha Florentino’s vision and dedication to housing justice will bring fresh insight to one of the most urgent issues facing public housing communities today,” said **Tiff Beatty**, Associate Director of the National Public Housing Museum. “We look forward to supporting this timely documentary with research, including through our Oral History Archive, and by connecting Natasha with public housing residents and historians to help complete this project and provide further context for the demolition of the Fulton, Elliot-Chelsea homes and the displacement of their residents.”

The competitive selection process for this year’s Artist as Instigator Residency resulted in three finalists: Florentino, storytelling producer **Lydia “Lily Be” Lucio**, and interdisciplinary artist and writer **Renee Reizman**. As the museum’s sixth Artist as Instigator, Florentino joins a distinguished roster of past Artists as Instigators, including **Dr. ShaDawn “Boobie” Battle** (2023), **Marisa Morán Jahn** (2022), **Tonika Lewis Johnson** (2021), **Jen Delos Reyes** (2020), and **William Estrada** (2019). Each of these artists has used their residency to foster social change and bring visibility to issues impacting public housing communities. With funding from Mellon Foundation and the Illinois Arts Council, the program supports these artists with a \$10,000 honorarium, a \$10,000 project budget, exhibition space, and additional support to help develop their work.

For more information on Natasha Florentino and her documentary, the Artist as Instigator program, or to register for the virtual artist talk on December 5, 2024, please visit <https://nphm.org/program/artist-as-instigator/natasha-florentino>.

###

Images Available at National Public Housing Museum [Media Center](#)

**ABOUT THE NATIONAL PUBLIC HOUSING MUSEUM**

Over the past century, more than 10 million people across the United States have called public housing home. In the late 1990s, as thousands of public housing units across the country were being demolished, public housing residents began to dream about creating a museum to preserve their collective voices, memories, and the histories of public housing across the nation. They wanted their children and grandchildren, and the public at large, to know more about their place in the American experience and to understand the public policies that helped to shape their families. In 2007, civic leaders, preservationists, historians, cultural experts, and many others joined with residents to help incorporate the National Public Housing Museum, which has since then offered transformative programs that connect the past with contemporary issues of social justice and human rights. The Museum's permanent home is under construction at the historic Jane Addams Homes at 919 South Ada Street in Chicago's Near West Side, and is set to open to the public in January 2025. For more information: <https://www.nphm.org/>