

Commentary/Op-Ed - April 2017

Op-Ed: Time to Let New York Dance

New York City's vibrant DIY music venues are creating opportunities for emerging artists and new voices, offering a first show, a supportive crowd, and a sense of community. However, archaic laws and a punitive bureaucratic mindset are stifling these small, local spaces that are already struggling to cope with skyrocketing rents.

by Eli Dvorkin

New York City's diffuse network of DIY arts spaces are cultivating the next generation of musicians. These fiercely independent venues exist to create opportunities for emerging artists and new voices, offering a first show, a supportive crowd, and a sense of community. However, archaic laws and a punitive bureaucratic mindset are stifling small, local venues that are already struggling to cope with skyrocketing rents. Given a severely lacking support structure for the city's DIY music and art spaces, a single misstep can prove disastrous. In this environment, the selective enforcement of current rules and regulations serves to criminalize nightlife—dampening economic opportunity and making New York less safe.

In this *Gotham Gazette* op-ed, published on April 24, 2017, Center for an Urban Future Managing Editor Eli Dvorkin assets that New York should take steps to cultivate its grassroots music and nightlife venues, or risk undermining the foundation of its creative growth.

Read the op-ed here.

This op-ed is a continuation of nearly two decades of CUF research on the importance of New York's creative economy. Most recently, CUF published *Creative New York*, which asserts that New York City's creative sector is one of its most important economic assets.

Photo credit: Yvette de Wit/Unsplash

General operating support for the Center for an Urban Future is provided by the **Clark Foundation** and the **Bernard F. and Alva B. Gimbel Foundation**. CUF is also grateful to **Fisher Brothers** and **Winston C. Fisher** for supporting the Middle

Class Jobs Project.

Center for an Urban Future (CUF) is an independent, nonprofit think tank that generates innovative policies to create jobs, reduce inequality and help lower income New Yorkers climb into the middle class. For 20 years, CUF has published accessible, data-driven reports on ways to grow and diversify the economy and expand opportunity that are anchored in rigorous research, not preconceived notions about outcome. Our work has been a powerful catalyst for policy change in New York City and serves as an invaluable resource for government officials, community groups, nonprofit practitioners and business leaders as they advocate for and implement policies to address some of New York's biggest challenges and opportunities.



CENTER FOR AN URBAN FUTURE
120 Wall Street, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10005

cuf@nycfuture.org © All Rights Reserved.