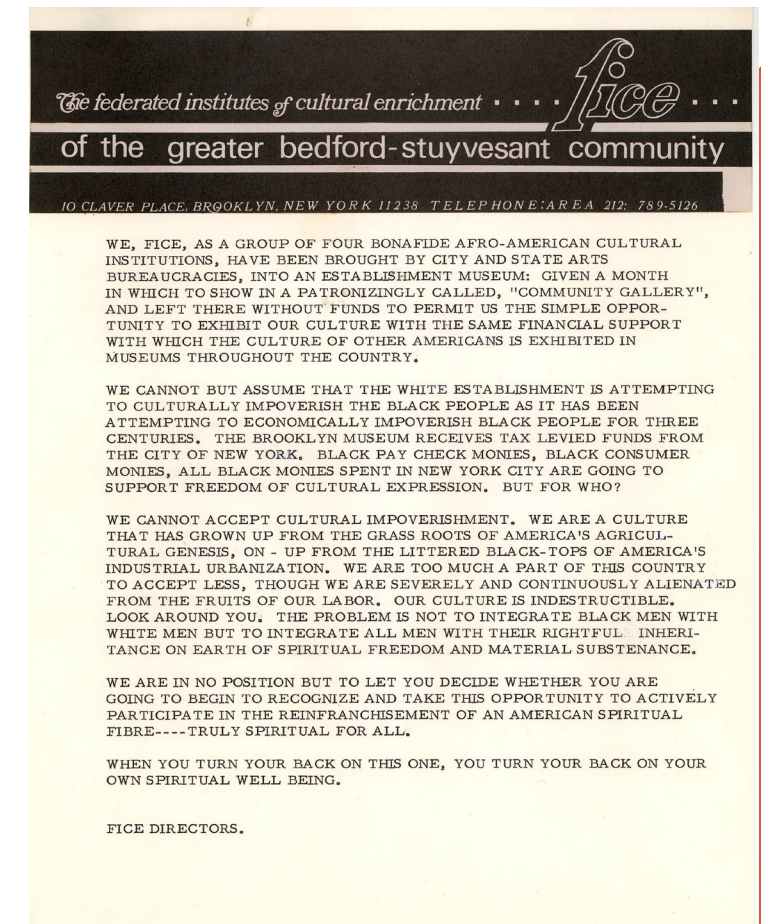


## THANK YOU

To the people who lived these events and left institutional traces behind for us to learn a portion of the histories. To the people who made it possible: BKM Teens, Public Programs, Security, Visitor Experience and Engagement, Andy Hawkes, Ashley Hinshaw, Ashley James, Ella Miliken-Detro, Jennifer Neal, Sam Levin, and the people who attended the programs.



photo: Kolin Mendez

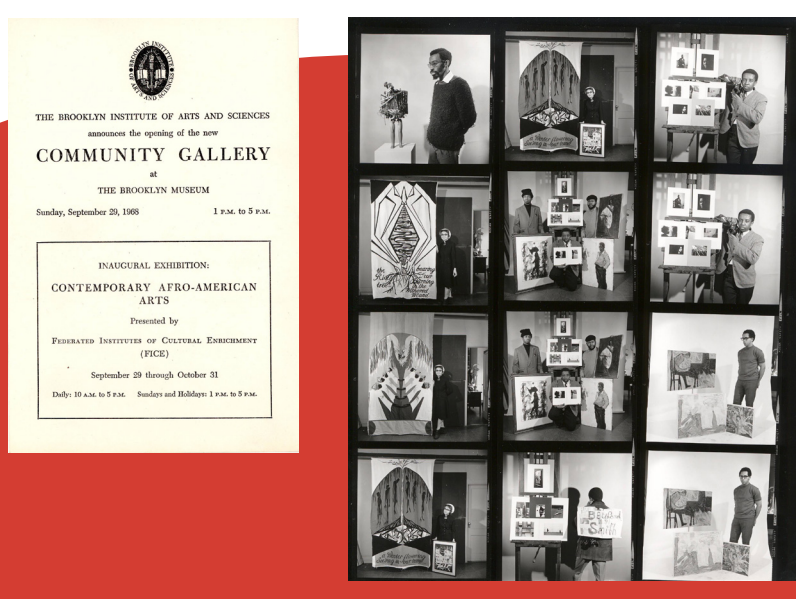
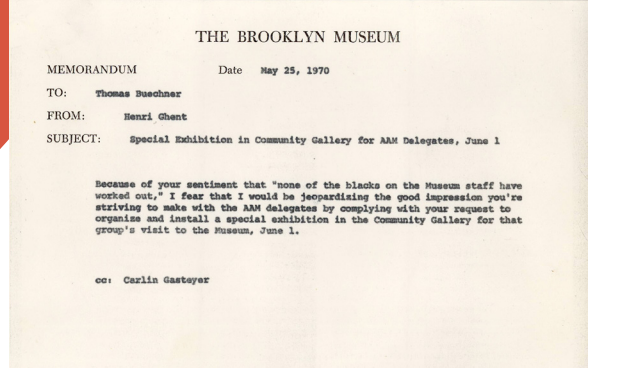


## THE GENESIS

The exhibition *Soul of a Nation: Art in the Age of Black Power* included a case of materials from the Archives that covered the Community Gallery, a gallery space which opened in 1968 as a direct result of community demands for inclusion. Since only a few items from the Archives were on display, I wanted the public to have time outside of a research appointment to be able to view the entire folders and see the items in their context. So much more of the relatively untold story is contained therein.



# 2



# 3

## THE PITCH

Asked the Acting Chief Curator and Curator of Public Programs if they'd be open to having such an event. Once approved, the title came from the concept of framing Archives as raw history, open to each person's interpretation, rather than the dominant historical narrative that is prepackaged and dictatory. Making the Archives available in this new format was a concerted effort to make the Museum's history more transparent and accessible in addition to turning the archival research paradigm on its head.

# Archives as Raw History

## Archives to the People: Piloting a New Public Program at the Brooklyn Museum

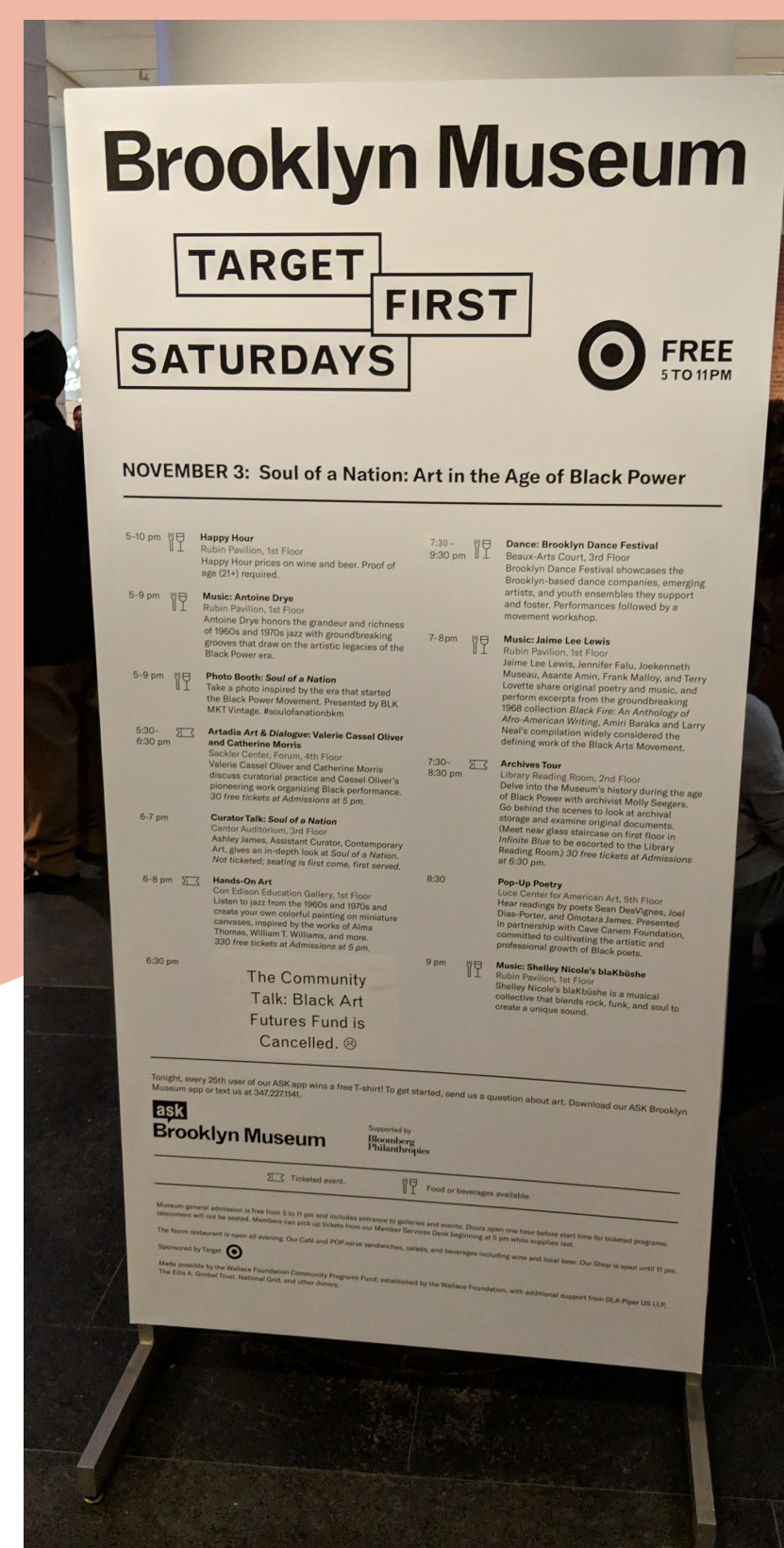
J.E. Molly Seegers, Museum Archivist

# 1

## WHAT

Created a new public program, "Archives as Raw History," for 20+ First Saturday visitors to peruse Archives materials from the Brooklyn Museum's history:

1. During the age of Black Power - November, December, February
2. Of accessibility and working with disabled visitors and artists - April
3. Of past LGBTQ+ employees and the AIDS crisis - June



# 4

## THE EVENTS

The group met in galleries, and I gave them a short intro and brought them to the Reading Room where they sat down. I spoke to them about the topic, folders, and demonstrated how to handle archival materials. NYARC Kress Fellow, Ashley Hinshaw, selected books for those who were not as familiar with Archives--very helpful point of engagement. They read materials for 40 minutes and ended with a tour of the stacks and Archives office. The first program was over capacity because, even though there were a limited number of free tickets, we didn't turn anyone away. A slight logistical challenge was that the Archives is currently in a staff-only area; if anyone left, they had to be escorted which left one less staff member on hand.

# 5

## CONCLUSIONS

The epitome of what I hope to do with my work is to expose historical injustices to facilitate contemporary conversations about the issues encompassed within exclusionary practices, racism, activism, and the potential power of Archives to hold institutions and the people within them accountable. The first three events I hosted were more comprehensive because I had already researched the topic for six months; the next two were subjects I had to look into for the first time, and a month was not long enough to feel prepared. Everyone was respectful of the materials. Overall the events were a huge success. The attendees asked for more to occur. I recommend the program model of pulling folders based on a theme and having the public come through!

