

The Francis **KITE CLUB**

Collective Launches New East Village Space for Culture, Activism, Play:
The Francis Kite Club

New York, NY, January 15, 2024 —The Francis Kite Club is a bar and cultural forum; a site of fellowship and a shared space in the East Village of Manhattan founded by friends and co-conspirators. The Kite hosts a range of activities, including live music, art, performance, workshops, and special convenings in a bar setting. The effort reflects a desire to come together, think, share, have a good time, and escape the norms of our professional and social trenches.

The founding group comprises people working in film, music, art, political organizing, and publishing. Members who are shaping the space include artist and organizer Laura Hanna (Debt Collective), film stunt coordinator John McEnerney, curator and writer Laura Raicovich (Culture Strike), musician Kyp Malone (TV on the Radio), arts fabricator and community organizer Alice McGillicuddy, artist and organizer Nina Nichols, writer and musician Will Meyer, organizer and writer Astra Taylor, economist Caitlin Kline, painter Rommel R, musician Hannah Marcus, artist Lauren Bon, and literary agent Mel Flashman. Artists and new members move through the space daily, building the Kite with their performances and programming ideas.

John McEnerney built the bar and stage from repurposed and salvaged materials. Nina Nichols created a suite of paintings that feature flora and fauna native to the region with recycled canvas and used oil paints. While the paintings imagine the re-wilding of the East Village, they also capture the earliest myths and stories about spirits that populated New York's forests. Kyp Malone started our music program last summer and we have extended an invitation to the community for performances. In cahoots with the collective, a dedicated group of seasoned bartenders, creative fabricators, and do-it-all-ers got our doors open.

The club's membership program launched in November 2023 with a roster of residencies featuring artists and cultural producers including Bread and Puppet Theater, Chlöe Bass, Rashida Bumbray, Khaled Jarrar, Larry Krone, and Hilma's Ghost. They have recently or have upcoming dates to perform, present live music and DJ; and organize talks, workshops, conversations, and film screenings. Each cycle of programming will be loosely thematically linked, the first being The

InBetween, which reflects activities and interests that irreverently cross classical boundaries and categories. As many of us have struggled with being categorized within our work and creative lives, The InBetween makes space for all the things that don't seem to make sense, but are essential to how we want to live.

The Francis Kite Club is open Wednesday through Sunday nights, 5 pm to 12 am on Wednesday and Sunday, 5 pm to 2 am on Friday and Saturday. Inspired by Nichols's paintings, the Kite's current cocktails are Annie's Sprinkle, Creeping Juniper, The Naked Bear, and The Burning of the Merchant's House. Food offerings point to bar snacks, ranging from smoked mussels potato chips to a charcuterie and cheese plate, as well as new menu items for fall and winter.

Come out for music, variety shows, comedy, or entertaining educational rants. Tuck yourself into a booth to sew a costume, dye some clothes in an indigo bucket, join a drawing class or draw on your own, and show, sell, or share what you make during the forthcoming festivals planned at the Kite. Meet for conversation with friends and comrades; work on an exquisite corpse with random bar mates; or read a book in the late afternoon light.

Laura Hanna commented: "Visit the Kite for mixed drinks and mixed social ranks and orders; become a regular!"

About the Collective:

Laura Hanna is an organizer and artist. She serves on the board of Powerhouse Arts and the Rolling Jubilee fund. She's a co-Founder and former Director of the Debt Collective.

Kyp Malone is a musician and multimedia artist. He has played in the bands TV On the Radio, Ice Balloons, Iran, and many more. His first solo exhibition of paintings, Dream Articulations, was recently on view at Snow Gallery.

John McEnerney is an avid cyclist, stunt coordinator and NYC street historian.

Alice McGillicuddy is an arts fabricator, doula, and community organizer. She ran The Foundation Gallery, helped build the Music Box Village in New Orleans, and most recently ran the community outreach program at the Edinburgh Tool Library.

Laura Raicovich is a New York City-based writer and curator. In addition to serving as Director of the Queens Museum and Leslie Lohman Museum, she was a Rockefeller Foundation Fellow, and the Tremaine Curatorial Fellow for Journalism at Hyperallergic.

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