



To our Art Center community and colleagues,

We are honored and humbled to take up the mantle of executive directorship at Hyde Park Art Center. With a history of supporting artists of every age and stage while nurturing the development of some of Chicago's most important artists and art movements, the Art Center is a place like no other. As co-Executive Directors, we are excited to welcome all of Chicago to take art classes, visit exhibitions of innovative artists, meet resident artists from around the block and around the world, experience something new at public programs, and share their creativity.

With the Board's decision to hire us for this ever-important role, they continue the practice of supporting long-term growth from within the organization. Like our predecessor Kate Lorenz and others, Jen Tremblay Chambers began as an intern at the Art Center more than 12 years ago and has held positions of increasing responsibility throughout those years, building relationships and learning the organization from many different angles along the way. Likewise, Aaron Rodgers has dedicated nearly a decade to the Art Center, nurturing deep roots in the varied communities we serve and fostering growth at unprecedented levels for the institution so that we may support Chicago art and artists in increasingly meaningful ways. We are proud to continue the tradition of staff investment and leadership growth that has brought us here.

We are indebted to our predecessors for their wisdom, courage, and tenacity in making Hyde Park Art Center what it is today, and bettering all of the Chicago arts along the way. They leave us big shoes to fill. At the same time, we acknowledge that this hire continues a legacy of white executive leadership at Hyde Park Art Center. After many discussions with and among the staff, we believe we're in a position to earn trust and continue the very real and tangible equity work currently underway at the Art Center. We are committed to learning together and working together—with all of you—to interrogate the power systems of our organization and field. We intend to act holistically, creatively, and purposefully to provide opportunities within and outside of our walls for artists, students, and community members, as well as our staff. In particular, we pledge to uphold the Art Center's commitment to dismantling barriers and fostering pathways for those who have historically been underrepresented in our organization and the Chicago art world due to factors such as racism, ageism, and ableism—to name a few.

We look forward to engaging you—our community of peers, collaborators, and colleagues—in continuing the messy and vital work of creating a more just arts community in Chicago and nationwide. We are incredibly grateful for this opportunity, and we hope you will visit soon to say "hello," share your thoughts, and experience what's happening here at Hyde Park Art Center.

With humility,
Aaron and Jen