

# Free Columbia



Dear Friends of Free Columbia,

It has been a wild ride this year!

First, Nathaniel leaving last December, to take up leadership of the Youth Section at the Goetheanum in Switzerland. I like to think that the 14 years of Free Columbia supporting and being supported by his creative impulses, helped him to develop the capacities that the Goetheanum recognized. Then Stefan leaving to take on the ceramic studio at Triform, and to continue a leadership position with the Youth Section in North America. I like to think the three years of the MC Richards program helped to prepare him for this. Triform is lucky to have him.

It seems that Free Columbia's work is to support people finding their task in life and taking it up. I continually find it to be a transformative experience to take interest in others and to support them in their work, and we are excited to continue creating new social and economic forms for doing so.

**Incubating:** This year our space at 11 Maple Ave. in Philmont is incubating the Philmont Clay Collective, envisioned by Mark Rowntree. It is a ceramics project that includes classes, open studios and firing our woodfired kiln that was built during the second year of the MC Richards Program. The MC Richards Program has run its course and for now Free Columbia is not offering a residential program. At the same time the ceramics studio is bustling with activity and inspiration, and we hope to offer an internship to a local Philmont youth to be a studio assistant.

**Music:** I'm excited to share that music has been finding its way more actively into our community and programming. We have recently hosted and supported music performances, recording, and workshops, and Free Columbia will offer three music residencies this year:

**Revolving Parlor:** Soren Dietzel started his residency at Free Columbia in October of 2023 and will continue through April of 2024. During this time he will write a series of six songs following questions of personal growth, social justice and spiritual transformation. He intends to invite collaborators to these songs with diversity in mind, in the hopes of working with people outside of his cultural comfort zone. Every Tuesday he brings his work to an informal performance so we can see how it is progressing.

**Love Bravely:** Love Bravely is a cross-genre music project and creative community founded by rapper / singer-songwriter, Matre, in collaboration with a wide network of musicians, artists and creatives. Seth Jordan and I have collaborated with Matre for the past three years to bring Love Bravely into the world. New songs will be released in 2024, along with live performances.

Earth and Sky: Free Columbia is incubating a music initiative run by Jen Zimberg. Earth and Sky offers singing lessons, ensembles, and performances for individuals, families and community. The aim is to bring more heart-sung singing into our lives.

**Collaborations:** We are also engaging local community and artists through several inspiring collaborations. We are collaborating with Amelia McIsaac and the village of Philmont to offer fiber arts both for children and adults. Our collaboration with Lightforms Art Center continues, and has realized our goal of creating an art space based in anthroposophy that is truly diverse in its reach. Lightforms provides a venue for music as well as visual art and hosts space for residencies. This winter, Martin Summer will be in residence in the back gallery working on a project focused on designing and assembling small mobile houses to address the housing crisis in our world in a beautiful way.

In the midst of all of this I am teaching both in-person and online art classes in relation to color, composition, nature observation and the Revelation of John. I have students in Vietnam, Malaysia, Turkey, Germany, Sweden, Mexico, Canada, Romania, and India as well as many parts of the U.S.

For 14 years Free Columbia has successfully run a free cultural initiative where everything we do is financially accessible to everyone. We have been able to do this because of **you**, our supporters. Thank you so very much! For this we are deeply grateful!

Please consider being a part of this very exciting time at Free Columbia by taking a class, attending an event, and making a donation to support the work. We hope this year to raise \$15,000 to make all of this possible!

Donations can be made in the following ways:

Check to Free Columbia and sent to 651 Harlemville Road, Hillsdale, NY 12529

Online at <https://www.freecolumbia.org/support-1>

PayPal at [https://paypal.me/freecolumbia?country.x=US&locale.x=en\\_US](https://paypal.me/freecolumbia?country.x=US&locale.x=en_US)

Venmo @Freecolumbia 518 653 2350

Thank you so very much for your support of this work creating new forms for the future.

Laura Summer

(for the board of Free Columbia: Angela Foster, Alison Fox, Pete Lemire, Kai Naor, Matt Sawaya)

Free Columbia is a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization. Contributions are tax deductible to the fullest extent as allowed by law.