

# planting seeds

2019 ANNUAL REPORT



The Salt Tree  
Charitable Trust





**IN 2019**, with global ecology at the forefront of public consciousness, Salt Tree Art found a unique demand for our art as a tool for education, inspiration, and activism on addressing environmental challenges. At airports and waterfronts, in gardens and classrooms, on farms and in cities – through performances, exhibitions, workshops, lectures, and public events – Salt Tree Art spent our second season bringing environmental art to new partners in diverse places.

As this increasing interest opened new opportunities and broadened our program range, Salt Tree Art adopted a refined mission statement to “create rich community spaces that unite arts and ecology in unexpected, educational, and inspiring ways.” We have been privileged to deliver on this mission in collaboration with an amazing community of support. Through your generosity and through new avenues of public and foundation grant funding, Salt Tree Art was able to support work from dozens of new eco-artists while continuing to build towards a permanent space dedicated to environmental art.

We are excited to share this 2019 annual report with you. Our journey over the past two seasons has demonstrated the radical and eye-opening creativity that environmental art brings to our communities, and we are thrilled to embark upon a third season of continued creation and growth!

Looking forward with excitement and gratitude,

The Board of Trustees for the Salt Tree Charitable Trust

Michael Hollis

A stylized, handwritten signature of Michael Hollis in black ink.

Liz McCabe

A stylized, handwritten signature of Liz McCabe in black ink.

Brian Soliwoda

A stylized, handwritten signature of Brian Soliwoda in black ink.



## 2019 Milestones



# 48

public programs.

Salt Tree Art produced an abundant season of public activations. With participatory sculpture projects, STEAM-based youth arts education, dance and improvisational comedy performances, and more, we made community-driven, environmental art more present than ever in New York City and beyond!



# 36

engaged artists.

With so many new programs, Salt Tree Art also expanded on the opportunities available to our growing collective of artists. This included engaging artists working in new creative mediums – in addition to the talents of visual artists and performers, we also brought the voices of sound artists, storytellers, and literary artists to our projects.



# 1,815

volunteer hours.

Volunteers of all skillsets came together in force for Salt Tree Art this past year! They took photos at our events, managed information and registration tables, found space for our projects, planted seeds, built large-sale immersive art exhibits, sang, danced, played music, and shared their voices. As we continue as a volunteer-led and operated organization, this outpouring of goodwill allowed us to achieve such a phenomenal season of art!



# 10,050

program participants.

Thousands of participants joined in creating, performing, learning, and celebrating with us this year! This exponential growth in the impact of our programs demonstrates the strong interest in regenerative art as a compelling response to environmental issues, giving us new ideas, hope, and power in our rapidly changing world.







## Waggle It!

Back by popular demand, our Earth Day celebration of the honey bee returned for its second season with a much larger community footprint! The event still centered around our participatory, choreographed dance performance of the "waggle," a series of movements that bees use for communication. This year also included a pop-up visual arts walk, games, information tables, and beekeeping discussions with the local honey producer Astor Apiaries, all taking place on the beautiful New York City waterfront in Hunters Point Park South. Salt Tree Art was excited to produce this expanded event through funding from the Decentralization Program, a regrant program of the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Cuomo and the New York State Legislature and administered by the Queens Council on the Arts.



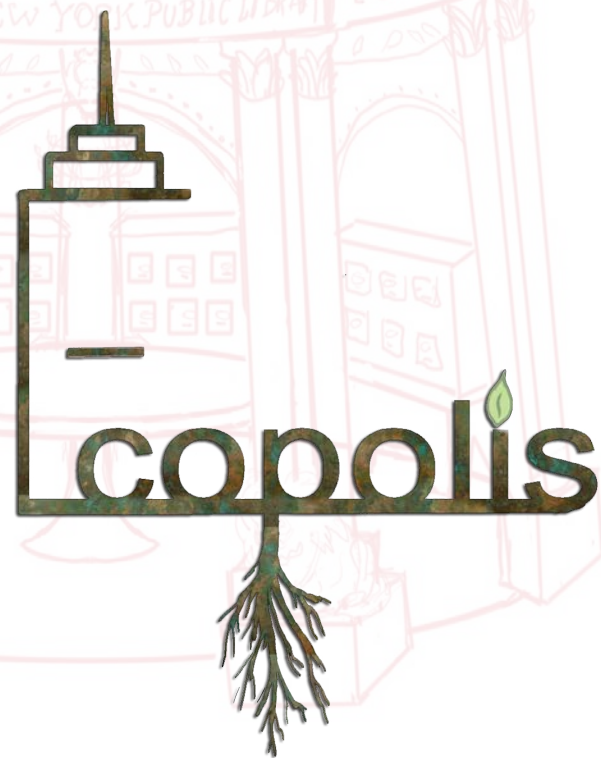
Left: Salt Tree distributed seed packets at information tables and discussed beekeeping. Top: Visitors to our pop-up art exhibit at Hunters Point Park South Right: Highlights from the Waggle It dance performance and activities.





## Ecopolis

Salt Tree Art closed its season with its most ambitious project yet! The Ecopolis Project created an immersive art installation presenting five urban environmental systems: climate, soil, water, food, and energy. Each system was explorable through an interactive visual arts vignette throughout the grounds of the Smiling Hogshead Ranch in New York City. Live performances accompanied each vignette, during which artists guided participants through the exhibits, making otherwise daunting urban environmental issues creatively accessible. Ecopolis was funded through grants from the Queens Council of the Arts, the the Puffin West Foundation, and the generous support of many individual patrons.



Right: An explorable "subway station" highlighting NYC's water system.

Right Page: Artists and attendees explore the interactive environments of Ecopolis.





# Other 2019 Highlights

## Queens Green Day

Salt Tree Art was honored to become an artistic partner for the annual Queens Green Day event at the Socrates Sculpture Park in Astoria, Queens. We premiered our “Roots” program during the event, with storytelling and illustration used to share the tales of heritage plants important to local community history.



## NOFA

Salt Tree Art was delighted to again bring our innovative concepts to Northeast Organic Farming Association events for New York State and for the region. In addition to pop-up galleries and community art activations, Salt Tree Art co-founder Mike Hollis also spoke at the annual regional conference on the use of regenerative agriculture concepts in urban design.





## Other 2019 Highlights

### Underwater Urbanites

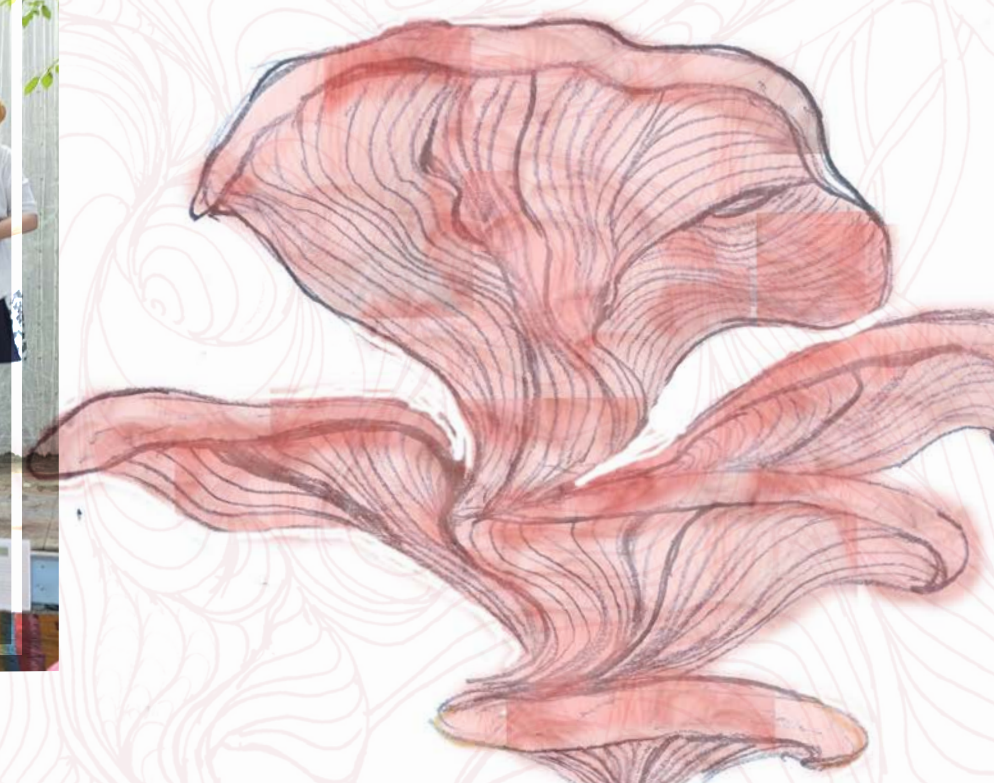
Salt Tree Art introduced youth programs at New York City's Travers Park and Socrates Sculpture Park in which young artists (aged from 1 to 17) created biodegradable sea creature sculptures based on the many aquatic animals found in the New York Harbor.

Below: Youth artists holding their aquatic creations.



### Fungi Festival

Myco-Rise, our year-long exhibition of experimental “living” sculptures, concluded with a fungi-themed festival celebrating the mushroom world! With live performances curated by Hallet's Cove Theatre, the festival featured musicians, dancers, an improvisational comedy troupe, and other artists, as participants learned more about the sculptures and their citizen science components.



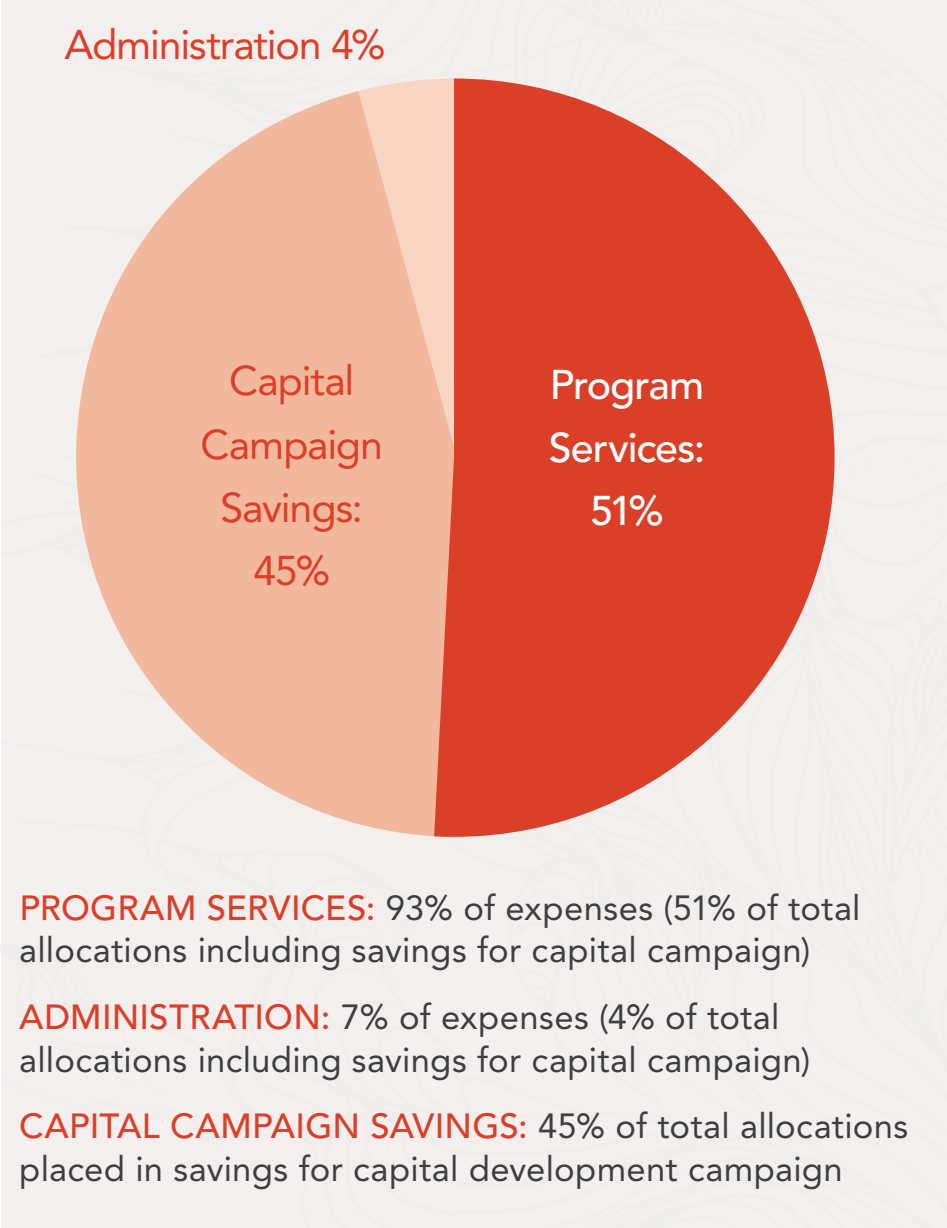


# Sticky Situations

The first slow-form sculpture from Salt Tree Art’s Sticky Situations series made its debut! The work was produced by housing a wood-carved bust inside an active beehive for one year, with our insect collaborators combing atop the bust to create a haunting and unexpected organic sculpture. The sculpture has been making rounds at New York City’s galleries, including at the Factory Gallery for the LIC Arts Open.



## Use of Funds



Our volunteer-led, program-focused operations allowed us to reduce our administrative costs to 7% of our total expenditures in 2019. 27% of our budget provided direct support for local environmental artists!





## With Gratitude to Our:

### Board of Trustees

Michael Hollis  
Liz McCabe  
Brian Soliwoda

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a gift of Joan Newman and Gail Soliwoda  
Socrates Sculpture Park  
Puffin West Foundation

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Lauren Ullrich  
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### Volunteers

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Geoff Burns  
John Burns  
Kathleen Burns  
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Emily Sun

## 2019 Partners







[www.SaltTree.art](http://www.SaltTree.art)