

**The Jerome L. Greene Performance Space
New York Public Radio
A New Dimension; A New Destination**

A White Paper Presented to The Corporation for Public Broadcasting

1. OVERVIEW: THE JEROME L. GREENE PERFORMANCE SPACE

The Campaign for New York Public Radio

With 2 million weekly listeners, New York Public Radio (NYPR) is the umbrella brand for WNYC (93.9FM, AM820 and wnyc.org), WQXR (105.9FM and wqxr.org), and The Jerome L. Greene Performance Space (The Greene Space and thegreenspace.org), a state-of-the-art, multi-media, multi-purpose performance space and broadcast studio on the ground floor of NYPR's new Lower Manhattan home at the corner of Charlton and Varick Streets in the burgeoning district of Hudson Square. The Greene Space, which opened to the public in April 2009, is the outgrowth of a five year strategic plan and a \$57.5 million Capital Campaign – The Campaign for New York Public Radio – that was initiated by the NYPR Board of Trustees in 2005 and was designed to provide for a new publicly-accessible home and investments in new programming and infrastructure.

It was generously funded, and was so named, to recognize a leadership gift from the Jerome L. Greene Foundation, a foundation committed to fostering new, emergent, and experimental work across artistic disciplines. NYPR also received generous leadership funding from The Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the City of New York, and other foundation and individual donors for The Greene Space.

The “Green” in The Jerome L. Greene Performance Space

The Greene Space strategically takes the “green” in The Jerome L. *Greene* Performance Space to heart in order to embrace two core concepts. First, The Greene Space is about new and emerging growth, providing fertile ground for the development of new and unique dialogues and conversations; new viewpoints; and new/emerging artists, artistic journeys and hosting talent. Second, The Greene Space has “gone green,” continuing NYPR's commitment to a healthy environment: from recycling to using recycled paper to programming that supports this eco-friendly mission. The Greene Space was awarded a Gold LEED Certification. In the construction of the space, we have installed LED theatrical lighting and a bamboo stage, made use of natural light with an open window plan and installed a climate control system that is over 53% more efficient than code.

Relationship with Parent Company

This new public space – the only radio broadcast studio of its kind in Lower Manhattan – was at the core of NYPR’s Capital Campaign, and continues to be central to NYPR’s vision of re-imagining the relationship a public radio station has with its home community.

Thank you for the honor of sharing in a golden moment tonight. Each performance was exquisite. Radio—live and in-person—transported me to another planet!

-Donna Walker Kuhne, President, Walker Communications

Programmatically, The Greene Space aims to be a place to convene face-to-face conversations, a destination for civic engagement and collaboration, and a venue to present emerging and world-class artists and artistic work that represents the cultural diversity and landscape of New York City.

The Greene Space embodies NYPR’s mission “to make the mind more curious, the heart more tolerant, and the spirit more joyful.” It provides an unprecedented opportunity for NYPR to transform the “public” in public radio, reflecting the full range of the city’s cultural diversity, literally—through the Space’s street-level walls of windows – and programmatically, by designing and producing culturally responsive news and public affairs programming that speaks to the interests and needs of our audience.

Moreover, The Greene Space serves as an organic extension of WNYC and, now—since its acquisition in October 2009—WQXR. WNYC and WQXR have, thus, embraced the opportunity presented by The Greene Space to connect with New Yorkers—their public—in new and ground-breaking ways: inviting them into the process of radio-making and experimentation with what radio means to a 21st century audience and serving as a catalyst for NYPR’s shift from a radio station to a media company. The Greene Space presents and produces live radio and video broadcasts and tapings of WNYC and WQXR’s signature radio programs in front of a live audience, including *The Brian Lehrer Show*, *The Leonard Lopate Show*, *Soundcheck*, *Radiolab*, *Studio 360*, *On the Media*, *The Takeaway* and WQXR Intimate Performances and chamber music festivals. The goal for each of these radio programs is not simply *business as usual*, but rather to experiment with their formats to create multiplatform experiences that engage their audiences in new ways.

While The Greene Space is strategically informed by WNYC and WQXR’s mission, values, positioning, and attributes, its individuation is in its own unique brand, mission, goals and strategies. The core strategic advantage of The Greene Space is in its content, identity and transparency. It is an outgrowth of the organizational and cultural paradigm established by WNYC which, in its 85 year history in New York City, includes a deep loyalty and credibility with radio listeners and civic, educational, artistic, political, and community leaders, as well as corporate partners. Yet, since launching in 2009, it

has also endeavored to develop its own voice through original signature multiplatform series and initiatives that are specifically targeted towards younger and more ethnically diverse audiences – including *The NEXT New York Conversation*, *Battle of the Boroughs*, *A Piano and Literary Global Salon*, and *A New Theater of Sound* – while independently establishing relationships with local and world-class cultural organizations throughout the city and beyond.

As a distinctly multiplatform space, The Greene Space lives as vibrantly in the virtual arena as in its physical home. The venue is fully outfitted with cutting-edge digital audio and HD robotic video systems. The video set-up includes multiple high-definition robotic cameras and a control room fully equipped for live webcasting, as well as a sophisticated post-production facility. Thousands of visitors a year experience the 120-seat/200 standing venue firsthand. More are able to stream audio and video of live events and download podcasts created in the space.

2. LAUNCHING THE GREENE SPACE

The Executive Producer of The Greene Space, Indira Etwaroo, was hired in September 2006 and drove the pre-launch phase, which included a comprehensive intake process to include diverse points of view from within and outside the organization.

Below are a few of the ideas that emerged in initial brainstorming sessions to deepen the process and express some of the hopes and dreams for the new space, inspiring additional direction.

- *The space should be a key part of our strategy as a content provider;*
- *It should be a “catalyst for content”, in conjunction with other stations;*
- *The space should be a “NYCentric” destination – well known to New Yorkers;*
- *It should be iconic and illuminate the WNYC brand. This includes being “brave”, “experimental”, and “of high quality”;*
- *The space should present new types of programming, which will open us up to new audiences and help provide us with a national footprint.*

Meetings with architects, designers and WNYC Facilities and Design Team were held weekly and more frequently based on construction timelines. Content and multiplatform goals emerged, informing the architectural details and decisions, as a reciprocal process between architectural and conceptual design.

Staffing Structure

The Pre-Launch phase also included extensive planning and research for developing an appropriate staffing structure and talent base. In the hiring process for The Greene Space, NYPR sought out highly qualified candidates that had expertise in more than one

content platform, such as audio and live events, or video and live events, to support the multiplatform nature of the content; and that brought a knowledge base and experience base in working with culturally diverse constituents. The Executive Producer has direct oversight of programming, production, and technical staff, including a full time Technical Director; Production Manager, Technical; Production Manager, Operational; and a Multiplatform Producer. The Executive Producer and her team have oversight over a group of programming and partnership consultants, freelance producers, studio technicians, and administrative support. The Executive Producer reports to Noreen O’Loughlin, the Vice President of Integrated Marketing and General Manager, The Jerome L. Greene Performance Space, and, due to the collaborative nature of Greene Space programming, also has a direct line to Dean Cappello, the Chief Content Officer/Senior Vice President for Programming.

Board of Trustees Task Force

During the Pre-Launch phase, a committee of fourteen New York Public Radio trustees was established as The Greene Space Task Force to foster awareness and deepen commitment within the Board, and assist in the financial development and oversight of The Jerome L. Greene Performance Space. The task force meets approximately four to eight times per year to review the progress of the Space and contribute valuable strategic contacts to expand sponsorship, rental revenue and major donor support.

Opening Festival (April 28 – May 9, 2009)

A dynamic, interactive, and 24/7 array of eighteen live events with WNYC’s local and national signature shows, musical concerts, performing arts programming, community events and other special events marked WNYC’s transformation from an invisible dimension into a visible one. The Jerome L. Greene Performance Space opened a ten-day festival on Tuesday, April 28, 2009, with the following messaging: “The Greene Space bursts onto the New York landscape with an explosion of experimentation and innovation as three platforms collide – radio, digital and live – to create a synergistic evening of sight, sound and experience.” There were special events for donors and board members, while most of the events were for the general public through free online reservations or via online ticket purchases.

Following are excerpts from the press release for the launch:

“The Greene Space perfectly expresses WNYC’s impulse to continue to innovate public radio and inspire people in new ways,” said **Laura Walker, WNYC President and CEO**. “As we produce live events and audio and video programming streetside on Varick Street, we love the fact New Yorkers will be able to see our hosts in action, participate in political dialogues, and enjoy cultural

performances. We become a part of the New York City and Hudson Square community in a tangible, visible way. WNYC has tremendous assets: its people, its ethos, its technology, its listeners and the city itself. Finally we have a way to combine them all.”

“It is perhaps not a coincidence that ‘The Greene Space’ sounds like a place of growth,” said Indira Etwaroo, Executive Producer for The Greene Space, “because that’s just what it will be: a kind of hothouse for artists, thinkers, and newsmakers to reimagine and cultivate new ways to relay information, report news, and tell stories. Politics, culture, ideas—everything listeners associate with WNYC’s radio programming—will benefit from an environment designed to reflect the exquisite diversity of New York City and to reach through and amplify the collision of terrestrial radio, digital technology and live content.”

3. THE GREENE SPACE STRATEGIC GOALS

Goals and Measures for The Greene Space

We have three major goals for the Space: 1) to extend the impact of our on-air content through programming extensions for a live audience and digital media audience with live radio broadcasts and live collaborative events; 2) to create new content in partnership with both nonprofit and commercial entities; and 3) to promote our brand platform and programming to the New York audience.

We measure our success in achieving these goals as: 1) an increase in listening, loyalty and financial contributions in our current radio audience and an expanded reach to new audiences both in the New York area and globally; 2) an increase in new listeners and donors after contact with the Space; and 3) that the Space is financially self-sustaining by the end of year four.

These goals have been refined over a five-year period and are currently stated, as such:

- Bring a new and diverse audience to public radio
- Expand the WNYC and WQXR brands
- Build new revenue streams
- Extend impact of current multi-platform content

4. CONTENT CRITERIA

Approach

At the core of our strategy, our creativity, and our pursuit is the tenet of *experimentation*, led by NYPR President and CEO, Laura Walker. We see The Greene Space less as a fixed “space,” than as a process: a process of discovery, a learning process, and a means to share and expand our unique story. The Greene Space is particularly open to surprise, innovation, and spontaneity.

Criteria for Content Selection for The Jerome L. Greene Performance Space

Even as *experimentation* remains a cornerstone of our live space programming, The Greene Space has tactically established the following core criteria to direct content selection in its initial planning stages:

- Institutional Programming Priorities
- Audience Development
- Diversity
- Multi-Media Platform
- Collaboration (internal and external)

After two years of assessment, the core criteria have been refined to engage the touch points of The Greene Space and NYPR’s growth and transition as a media company. The criteria state:

The Greene Space presents (____), because...

- It reinforces The Greene Space’s seasonal programming vision and strategy;
- It is developed as multiplatform content, providing strategic online, on-air, live space and community reach;
- It drives press opportunities;
- It elevates and expands The Greene Space, WNYC and WQXR brands;
- It is committed to unmatched and unexpected content;
- It is a hothouse for development and growth of emerging shows and talent;
- It supports and energizes diverse voices from the angle of perspective, race and ethnicity, age, and topic, etc.;
- It is collaborative, building on internal and external partnerships and replicable models;
- It builds loyalty with existing audiences and reaches out to new audiences;
- It is a content asset that contributes to the greater body of work over time; and
- It drives the financial viability and health of NYPR.

Audience Development

The Greene Space aims to deepen the loyalty of WNYC and WQXR's current listenership and online audiences. WNYC conducted a comprehensive study in 2007 (Smith & Geiger research) upon which we built our strategy for audience loyalty and development. These findings were coupled with the premise that "by serving larger audiences with more engaging programs, arts organizations become more vital, visible, and financially viable institutions." (*Increasing Cultural Participation*, 8). The Greene Space approaches audience development from a framework that, like WNYC, emphasizes the specific groups of listeners that we aim to reach and grow and includes (but is not limited to) the current listenership. This allows The Greene Space to focus its efforts on new audiences in ways audiences will find aspirational and appealing, without alienating the current audience and expansion audience. The Greene Space process incorporates comprehensive research, strategic planning, creative marketing, innovative program design, and thoughtful evaluation.

The Greene Space has developed its audience development strategy through the following segmentation and lens:

- Level of cultural participation with various events: How engaged is our current audience in attending events and what type of events do they attend? What types of events are of interest to our audiences?
- Relationship to the organization: How loyal are our audiences; why are they loyal; and how do we build loyalty with our target audiences?
- Characteristics: Who is our current audience and what audiences do we aim to develop?
- Geographical: What potential audience is specifically in the Hudson Square/Lower Manhattan area?

The Greene Space launched on a decade-long initiative that was led and managed by Brenda Williams-Butts, Director of Community Engagement and Audience Development. The Community Engagement and Audience Development department assists in this effort by working with various cultural and civic organizations along with key community leaders to discover, understand, and address community needs and aspirations. Through these relationships, Community Engagement engages non-traditional public radio listeners on-air, online, and on the street by hosting community events around issues of concern in their respective communities, including events in The Greene Space. New York Public Radio is learning about key issues and concerns directly from the community while expanding and diversifying its audience. In this way, we are informing people of the many ways to voice their concerns and also become involved with New York Public Radio.

Theodora Kuslan, Director of Marketing for NYPR and Jennifer Houlihan, Director of Publicity, in collaboration with the Executive Producer, Vice President of Marketing, and

other members of the promotional team, have been developing a multi-pronged marketing strategy that has been essential to The Greene Space's audience development efforts. The strategy was implemented with increasing vigor during years one and two of programming by NYPR's Marketing Department in correlation with the WNYC and WQXR Program Directors and Department of Community Engagement. To that point, in its first programming season, The Greene Space realized approximately 60% of its goal for reservations and ticketing primarily using on-air promotions. In year two, The Greene Space met and exceeded its ticketing goal with the use of a multi-pronged marketing strategy with an equally aggressive and rigorous programming lineup that included topics, hosts, artists and guests appealing to younger and more ethnically diverse audiences.

Multi-Media/Platform

The Greene Space was architecturally designed to support a multiplatform content distribution structure, which includes presenting content in front of a live studio audience (invited, free online reservations, and ticketed online reservations); a live or tape to live radio broadcast with audio content that can be archived online; and a live video webcast with video content that can be archived online. The Greene Space has been a catalyst in shifting New York Public Radio from a one-way conversation to two-way deeper audience engagement and from radio content producers to multiplatform producers.

Collaboration

The Greene Space is enriched by partnerships with cultural institutions, media organizations, artists, community leaders and change-makers. The Greene Space has developed strong alliances with key media and cultural organizations to help build credibility and/or content through our services as a producing and presenting venue. These alliances will typically result in extensive co-marketing by both organizations with the goal of each company driving traffic and awareness of the other institution's offerings. Collaborative partners have included Lincoln Center, New York Philharmonic, Princeton University's Center for African American Studies, River to River Festival, PEN World Voices Festival, Royal Shakespeare Company, LA Theatre Works, Theater Communications Group, and more.

5. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT/MARKET DIFFERENTIATION

The Greene Space also supports NYPR's goal to enliven and drive economic and cultural development throughout its burgeoning home neighborhood of Hudson Square. The Greene Space hosts Hudson Square BID meetings, meetings of NYPR's Community Advisory Board, and works with neighboring cultural partners (i.e. Jazz Gallery, City Winery and more) to support community and economic development. With

programming that happens Sunday through Saturday at points between the hours of 10am and midnight, The Greene Space brings audiences from all over the New York City Tri-State region to the Hudson Square area.

At the same time, The Greene Space has the unprecedented ability to set the cultural tone for Hudson Square. The combination of interactive radio broadcasts with live music and artistic performances places The Greene Space in a unique position to attract and engage New Yorkers from all corners. The diverse set of programming offered by WNYC sets the venue apart from all the other performance spaces in the area, placing The Greene Space squarely within a niche market.

6. CONCLUSION

As Executive Producer of The Jerome L. Greene Performance Space and writer of this succinct narrative to define a complex and rigorous journey, I finish with the mission statement that was created almost four years ago, as a team of radio producers, digital producers, and event producers from all corners of the organization convened in a dance studio—an open space across from our offices—and sat around a large blank sheet of paper to follow up on the branding exercises we had been engaged in as an organization. Our hope was to find a way to lean forward and look into the future of how The Greene Space could help tell our story. The mission statement still rings true in representing the people and promise of New York Public Radio and New York City:

The Jerome L. Greene Performance Space is WNYC's [and WQXR's] open gathering place. To enter is to embark on a soul-stirring journey to connect, to inspire and to transform. All are welcome!