

CEPA GALLERY

CONTEMPORARY PHOTOGRAPHY & VISUAL ARTS CENTER

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Buffalo, NY (October 29, 2022) - CEPA Gallery announced today that CEPA's Education Director, Lauren Tent, will retire at the end of 2022. Tent has served as Education Director since 1999. Under her leadership, CEPA has received countless awards for its Arts Education programming, including the 2013 National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award from the Obama White House (the highest award for Arts Education programming in the country) and, most recently, a 2021 Special citation from the New York State Art Teachers Association (NYSATA) for ongoing support of art teachers and their students.

Tent leaves a lasting impact on the hundreds of students she has mentored throughout the years, many of whom chose to continue in the creative sector after participating in CEPA programs. Aitina Fareed-Cooke, one of Tent's early students, says of her: "Lauren is the prime example of what an Educator/Mentor should be. I walked into her classroom as a teen in need of support and care and what I left with was a new found value in self. She met me where I was and gave me the tools to elevate my strengths. Her gentleness, patience and compassion gave me a sense of purpose. I became committed to capturing stories through the camera and I never let go. CEPA Gallery was my safe haven and after so many years it is still a place that I call home."

Nate Ely, CEPA's Education Coordinator, will take over as Education Director in November. An MFA graduate of the University of Buffalo, Ely will spearhead all of CEPA's Educational Programming, including workshops, school partnerships, and CEPA's hallmark programs including Alternative Perspectives, Photography Works and the Mobile Darkroom.

"It's with tremendous pride and excitement that I accept the appointment of Education Director at CEPA," says Ely. "As the gallery will soon look to its 50th anniversary, I look forward to being a part of the legacy here, and continuing the tradition of educational excellence Lauren has worked so tirelessly to create. It's been an honor and privilege to work with her, and to have her trust in carrying the torch. I can't wait to see what the future holds for CEPA, as well as our community in Buffalo and beyond."

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“CEPA has been a vital part of my life since an internship in 1985. It has been an honor serving as the education director for the past 23 years,” says Tent. “I’ve made countless friends with fellow educators and students from all parts of Western NY. The opportunity to watch them grow and know that CEPA has had a positive role in that has affected me as much as them. My heart will never be far from CEPA. I couldn’t be happier with Nate as my replacement! Watch for exciting things coming from the new leadership!”

Tent will be celebrated at CEPA’s Member Exhibition Opening on December 9th, 2022, from 5 to 8 PM.



Photo by Sarah Wintle