providing a global community
the time, space and freedom
to create and inspire
Founded in 1992 by avant-garde visionary and theater director Robert Wilson, The Watermill Center is an interdisciplinary laboratory for the arts and humanities situated on ten acres of Shinnecock ancestral territory on Long Island’s East End.

With an emphasis on creativity and collaboration, Watermill integrates performing arts practice with resources from the humanities, research from the sciences and inspiration from the visual arts.

The Center is unique within the global landscape of experimental artistic practice and regularly convenes the brightest minds from across disciplines to do, in Wilson’s words, “what no one else is doing.”
Searching for a new artistic base and incubator for his work, theater director Robert Wilson found a former Western Union research facility in 1986. Abandoned since the 1960s, the building was in terrible condition, but it had the potential he had been looking for.

By 1989, Wilson’s mind was made up and he was convinced that there was magic in the old and obsolete buildings, and purchased the deed for the building and land.

In 1992, The Watermill Center was founded by Wilson and The Byrd Hoffman Water Mill Foundation, with the first International Summer Program being held in collaboration with the Trisha Brown Dance Company.
artist programs
Since 1992, The Watermill Center has hosted the International Summer Program, uniting over 80 artists from more than 25 countries for a five-week creative intensive.

The Summer Program provides a unique opportunity to work with established professionals in the international arts world; to forge an international community of artists from a broad range of experience levels and disciplines; and to investigate what it means to be a “global artist.”

Summer Program participants receive access to an extensive collection of resources central to the Watermill experience: lectures on the arts and humanities led by international cultural luminaries; opportunities to propose and develop work for public presentation during The Annual Summer Benefit & Auction; 20,000 square feet of multi-purpose interiors and outdoor stages; and ten acres of landscaped grounds and sculpture gardens.

Participants also have an opportunity to work with Artistic Director, Robert Wilson and participate in early staging rehearsals as well as take part in research and design workshops with his collaborators.
The Artist Residency Program is process based, without the expectation or promise of a final exhibition of the work or performance.

Watermill provides artists with time and space to focus on developing their practice in a communal environment that encourages experimentation.

Artists-in-Residence share their creative process with the community through open rehearsals, workshops and artist talks.
Created with a generous gift from philanthropist Inga Maren Otto, the fellowship provides support for artists who have demonstrated exceptional creative ability in the arts.

The Inga Maren Otto Fellowship represents the depth and breadth of Watermill’s commitment to supporting projects that integrate genres and art forms from diverse viewpoints and that break from traditional forms of representation.

This program is invitation-only and curated by Noah Khoshbin and Micah Bozeman.
The Watermill Center combines performance and rehearsal sites with working and communal living spaces.

Its flexible and multi-purpose interiors house formal and informal performance, studio and working spaces; an extensive reference library; kitchen/dining facilities and a dormitory.

The Watermill Center Collection of art and artifacts is exhibited throughout the 20,000+ square foot building.

The Center is situated on over ten acres of wooded and landscaped grounds in a unique, rural setting.
the first floor

The Summer Office
- 16 workspaces + desks
- ideal for visual artists

The Study Library
- 8,000+ titles
- 4 workspaces
- 2 Apple desktops

The Collection Archive
- 3,000+ works
- curated by Noah Khoshbin

The Kitchen
- fully equipped
- 6 range gas stove + oven
- ice machine

The Dining Room
- seating for 16
- table expands to sit 40

The Picnic Tables
- outdoor seating for 100
The Main Studio
• large open studio
• ideal for performers
• marley available

The Winter Office
• desk space for 2
• east facing windows
• ideal for visual artists

The Donald Judd Room
• desk space for 2
• east facing windows
• ideal for writing + research

The Paul Thek Room
• small gallery
• dedicated to the late Paul Thek

The Dorms
• 4 cubicles, with 2 beds each
• 2 full baths
• 1 work space

The Knee Building
• covered outdoor space
• river-stone flooring

the second floor
The Frank Lloyd Wright Room
• desk space for 2
• east facing windows
• ideal for visual artists

The Douglas Fir Room
• large table for desk use
• ample wall space

The Windsor Bench Room
• small gallery space
• room for desk if needed
• east facing windows

The Apartment
• Robert Wilson’s apartment
• for staff use only
additional buildings

The Africa House
• large wildflower garden
• grassy terrace

The Garage
• 2 car garage, used as storage

The “Summer Kitchen”
• large shed with sink
• ideal for visual artists

The Woodshed
• modest woodshop
The West Terrace
• expansive gravel lawn
• dotted with sculptures

The South Lawn
• large grass lawn
• ideal for performers or visual artists

The Large Platform
• large outdoor wooden stage
• ideal for performers

The Long Platform
• narrow outdoor wooden stage
• ideal for performers

the grounds
The Formal Entrance
- wooded garden featuring the grassy terraces leading up to The Knee

The Meditation Garden
- small flower garden behind the woodshed

The Wildflower Garden
- terraced garden
- leads to the Africa House

The Woodland Garden
- large wooded paths
- wraps around property
- sculptures scattered throughout
It is integral to Watermill’s programming that artists live and work with other Artists-in-Residence.

The Artist Residency Program and Inga Maren Otto Fellowship are communal programs, with anywhere from 3-15 artists on site at a given time.

The International Summer Program is focused on building an artistic community, with 60-100 artists on site during the course of the program.
the living expenses

For all programs, The Watermill Center provides
• local transportation
• housing accomodations
• workspace

During the course of the Artist Residency Program, residents are responsible for living expenses such as food, travel to and from Watermill, production expenses and equipment rentals.

During the course of the International Summer Program, meals and approved production expenses will be covered. Residents are responsible for travel to and from Watermill, and any personal items.

Inga Maren Otto Fellows receive coverage for all costs, including travel, meals, and equipment.
The Watermill Center is located in rural Long Island, and it is highly recommended that an artist or one of their collaborators have a valid driver’s license.

The Watermill Center is just a short car ride away from many activities, including the beach, local museums and galleries, as well as many shopping centers. We also have a large on-site library at your disposal, as well as beautiful gardens and outdoor spaces. The Watermill Staff is happy to recommend activities for your down time.

Grocery stores, supply shops, and recreational centers are not within walking distance from The Center. Taxi services, including Uber and Lyft, are available.
frequently asked questions
Can I interact with The Watermill Collection?
Yes! The Watermill Collection is available as a source of inspiration and for you to engage with. Artists-in-Residence can re-curate their work space with the objects of their choosing. The collection includes textiles, visual artworks, outdoor installations, as well as a large assortment of chairs, not all of which are appropriate for sitting. Please consult The Watermill staff before moving or utilizing an object from the Collection.

Can I view what’s in The Collection before I arrive?
The Watermill Collection is constantly being re-curated as new pieces are added, objects on view are rotated with objects in storage, and some pieces are exhibited across the globe; as such, we are unable to provide an accurate list of what will be on view during the course of your residency.
Housing and bed arrangements vary based on the needs and number of Artists-in-Residence. The Watermill Center has several different housing accommodations, including an on-campus dorm and separate living quarters. Most bedrooms are shared (2 beds) and all bathrooms are communal. Artists coming alone will not be expected to share a bedroom. Artists coming with collaborators may be expected to share sleeping quarters.

What is the housing like?

The building is generally accessible by wheelchair (with a few exceptions) and the building is equipped with an elevator. The Watermill Center grounds and gardens are not wheelchair friendly and include rough or rocky terrain that can be difficult to navigate. Special arrangements for accessibility, including audio/visual impairments, can be made with advance notice.

Is The Watermill Center handicap-accessible?
Can I bring my family or children?
As life at The Watermill Center is communal, we don’t allow families or children due to the inconvenience or strain it may cause other Artists-in-Residence, as well as it’s impact on your own residency.

Is there a black-box?
The Watermill Center does not have a black-box, or any work area without windows. We are able to shutter windows in certain workspaces, but there is often bleed of light from other rooms.

How is studio space allocated?
Space at Watermill is allocated as-needed. Artists are asked to note in their application what type of space they require. The Watermill Center’s artist programs are communal experiences, and artists may have to share spaces. The Watermill Center staff makes all efforts to schedule residencies in a manner that reduces the stresses of space sharing.
2020 residency times

**Artist Residency Program + Inga Maren Otto Fellowship**

Session #01  February 3 - February 28, 2020
Session #02  March 4 - April 3, 2020
Session #03  April 8 - May 8, 2020
Session #04  May 13 - June 12, 2020
Session #05  September 23 - October 16, 2020
Session #06  October 21 - November 23, 2020
Session #07  November 30 - December 18, 2020

**International Summer Program**

July, 13 - August 15, 2020

**Application Dates**

2020 Residency Program  March 5, 2019 - May 13, 2019
2020 Summer Program  December 2, 2019 - March 6, 2020
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