

Syreeta Gates

The Gates Preserve: Strategic Plan 2019 - 2023

Founded by hip-hop enthusiast Syreeta Gates in 2013, The Gates Preserve (TGP) is a multimedia experience company consisting of approximately 40 linear feet of primary archival materials related to hip-hop culture as defined as a subset of black culture. TGP is committed to forging an avenue through which hip-hop history can last forever.

Vision

A world in which hip-hop is valued and respected as a unique African American artistic innovation; originative spaces in which to learn, converse, create, and reimagine the possibilities in and for hip-hop culture.

Mission

The Gates Preserve (TGP) will house the largest collection of visual art, audio recordings, papers, videos and general memorabilia created by stewards of hip-hop culture.

What We Believe

- Hip-hop culture, history, and related artifacts are preservation worthy.
- Inspired by the late rapper Armiyas Asghedom (known to fans as Nipsey Hussle), we believe that institutions can be created and sustained in “native spaces,” i.e. the spaces where artists are born and raised.

- In recognition of hip-hop culture is a global phenomenon, we believe that materials housed in The Gates Preserve must be accessible to English and non-English speakers alike.
- Understanding the myriad ways in which race and socioeconomic status impact access to cultural and artistic capital, we believe that The Gates Preserve must be environmentally and educationally accessible to all hip-hop scholars, lovers and enthusiasts.

Goals Overview

There are four goals that have been formulated for The Gates Preserve to accomplish within the next five-year period. Our primary goal is to have a thorough needs assessment conducted by a team of professional archivists. Next, we want to acquire a physical space in which to house the collection, and in turn, hire a resident archivist to manage it. Lastly, we seek to enhance TGP through strategic acquisitions.

Goal Details

Needs Assessment

The purpose of a needs assessment is to inventory the items currently in The Gates Preserve and determine/project its future housing needs. In particular, this will include assessment of:

- All collection materials
- Acquisition/appraisal records, including receipts

- Security considerations
- Preserving Records
- Future outreach
- Disaster Preparedness

A thorough needs assessment must also include the creation of an itemized inventory and collection database, as well as the digitization of all items in the collection.

Acquisition of Physical Space

In accordance with our mission and beliefs, we seek to house TGP in Queens, New York, from where founder Syreeta Gates hails. Possible Queens locations include Cambria Heights, Jamaica Estates, Saint Albans, South Jamaica, Springfield Gardens and Hollis. The ideal location would be close to a transportation center.

Considerations related to physical space are:

- Research of housing options
- Architecture and design opportunities
- Multipurpose usage (gallery space, residential housing, meeting space, classrooms)
- Event rental
- City support (grants and subsidies)

Resident Archivist

Inspired by Art Share LA, a cooperative that offers residential living for working artists, The Gates Preserve would like to hire a full-time, live-in resident archivist to manage TGP daily operation, programming, staff, and overall direction. As resident archivist, this integral staff person will:

- Identify and recruit talented people to serve staff positions such as Digital Archivist, Audiovisual Archivist, Cinema Education Coordinator, and Curator.
- Identify and hire an accountant and lawyer.
- Identify and bring onboard volunteers and interns.
- Facilitate the creation of institutional policy around access, reference services, acquisitions, loaning, reproduction of materials, etc.

Collection Acquisitions

TGP plans to enhance its archive through the acquisition of RapZines, a collection of magazines, and other hip-hop memorabilia currently owned by Brian Nagata, a colleague and friend of Preserve founder Syreeta Gates. Collector and stake-holder in TGP, Nagata will partner with staff after the acquisition. As RapZines is currently housed in California, considerations include:

- Packing, shipping and transportation insurance
- Short term storage
- Outfitting and incorporation into TGP physical space

Potential Resources

What follows is a list of individuals and organizations that may be amenable to contributing resources, financial and otherwise, to The Gates Preserve.

- American Airlines
- JPMorgan Chase
- Bloomberg Philanthropies
- Boeing Corporation
- The French Embassy in the U.S.
- The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation
- The Kresge Foundation
- The National Endowment for the Arts
- Surdna Foundation
- ICOM