

C& Center of Unfinished Business at The New School*

April 1-May 28, 2023

The Vera List Center for Art and Politics and multimedia platform Contemporary And (C&) present the C& Center of Unfinished Business at The New School, a roving reading room and exhibition that speaks to the persistence and presence of colonialism in contemporary life. Conceived by Contemporary And's Julia Grosse, Yvette Mutumba, and Mearg Negusse, the project offers a selection of key, and, at times, unexpected texts that spark discourse on the enduring structures that continuously undergird colonial legacies in modern society. "Unfinished," here, subtly echoes the "post" in postcolonial—hinting at an incomplete reckoning with colonialism and its evident and insidious aftermaths.

The Vera List Center iteration of the exhibition features a curated selection of books, including titles from The New School faculty, alumni, and the VLO Fellows Library. Inaugurated during the 2022 VLO Forum and 30th anniversary celebration, the VLO Fellows Library is a collection of publications by each of the forty-four fellows the Vera List Center has hosted over its thirty-year history, celebrating and making available their research and work.

Both the installation and accompanying broadsheet publication are designed by New School students. As with previous iterations, the reading room upends traditional forms of display in both content and form. Books meander through angular shelves next to, above, and across from each other in challenging, experimental, unconventional ways to mirror the tension and discomfort historically embedded in discourses on colonialism. To this end, the C& Center of

Unfinished Business occupies The New School's Social Justice Hub, an interstitial space designed and designated for conversations on equity and solidarity across communities.

The reading room plays host to public programs that inscribe the VLO's 2022-2024 Focus Theme *Correction** into colonial legacies and postcolonial realities. Conversations with local and international librarians as well as a public reading series explore libraries as sites of intervention, liberation, and repair.

The C& Center of Unfinished Business

The Vera List Center for Art and Politics

The C& Center of Unfinished Business is a reading room that offers visitors an extraordinary, and also disconcerting, selection of books that are connected to the topic of colonialism in various ways—from the German colonies to Congolese fashion to 21st century capital markets, the reading room stretches the subject to the many different areas that are affected by it. However, it is not about creating a library on colonialism that is consistent and complete, because: when would it ever be? Colonialism is an unfinished business that continues to exist in many ways.

Launched in 2017, the reading room has traveled to art spaces and museums around the world, connecting in various ways with institutions such as IFA (Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen), Transmediale in Berlin, school in Vienna, Musée Les Abattoirs in Toulouse, Para Site in Hong Kong, or for its first US iteration the Contemporary Arts Center in Cincinnati.

The Vera List Center for Art and Politics is a non-profit research center at The New School in New York. Through its dynamic interdisciplinary programs, conferences, artist fellowships, residencies, exhibitions, and publications, the VLO imagines and supports new forms of politically engaged art, research, public scholarship, and community around the world.

The 2022-2024 Vera List Center Focus Theme: *Correction** and the program's fellowship projects, publications, and exhibitions dedicated to it explore the tension, discomfort, and

potential it inspires to pose questions about the metaphorical, political, and social dimensions and implications of *correction*.

The VLO Fellows Library is a collection of publications by each of the forty-four fellows the Vera List Center has hosted over its thirty-year history and counting. It celebrates and makes available the rigorous research and wide-ranging work of the Center's fellows.



C& Center of Unfinished Business (detail), Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, May 8-September 11, 2022. Photo: Wes Butcolette, 2022.

New School New Books

A Reading Series

Hosts: Re'al Christian, Assistant Director of Editorial Initiatives; Carin Kuoni, Senior Director/Chief Curator; and Eriola Pira, Curator and Director of Public Programs, Vera List Center for Art and Politics.

New School New Books: A Reading Series brings together faculty from across The New School in recognition and celebration of milestone publications in the fields of film studies, fashion, musicology, design, environmentalism, and philosophy. Hosted in conjunction with the C& Center of Unfinished Business, this multimedial event launches a series of programs that activate the reading room. With books housed within the installation and other recent publications, the readings cover topics ranging from punk aesthetics to primatology and are divided into three sections:

11 am–12 pm: Material Identities

- * Amanda Bellows, Eugene Lang College of Liberal Arts, *American Slavery and Russian Cevdüm in the Post-Emancipation Imagination*, 2021
- * Evan Rapport, Eugene Lang College of Liberal Arts, *Damaged: Masculinity and Race in American Punk*, 2021
- * Ricardo Montez, Schools of Public Engagement, *Keith Haring's Lines: Race and the Performance of Desire*, 2021
- * Genevieve Yue, Eugene Lang College of Liberal Arts, *Girl Head: Feminism and Film Materiality*, 2021
- * Owendan-lin Gweal, The New School for Social Research, *Fashion / Sense: On Philosophy and Fashion*, 2022
- * Terry Williams, New School for Social Research, *The Soft City: Sex for Business and Pleasure in New York City*, 2022

1–2 pm: Sounding Democracy

- * Ricky Tucker, Eugene Lang College of Liberal Arts, *And the Category Is...Inside New York's Vogue, House, and Ballroom Community*, 2022
- * Claire Potter, The New School for Social Research, *Political Junkies: From Talk Radio to Twitter, How Alternative Media Hooked Us on Politics and Broke Our Democracy*, 2021
- * Simon Cottobley, The New School for Social Research, *Said: 36 Philosophical Short Cuts*, 2021
- * Julie Beth Napolin, Eugene Lang College of Liberal Arts, *The Fact of Resonance: Modernist Acoustics and Narrative Form*, 2021
- * Pablo Helguera, College of Performing Arts, *"When Institutional Attitudes Become Form," 2023*
- * Brittnay Proctor, Schools of Public Engagement, *Winnie Riperton's Come to My Garden*, 2022

3–4 pm: Public(s) and Common(s)

- * Lauren Redniss, Parsons School of Design, *Oak Flat: A Fight for Sacred Land in the American West*, 2021
- * Radhika Subramanian, Parsons School of Design, *"Notes for a Giddy Politics," Maria Theresa Aises: Seeds of Change*, 2023
- * Nicolas Langlitz, The New School for Social Research, *Chimpanzee Culture Wars: Rethinking Human Nature alongside Japanese, European, and American Cultural Primatologists*, 2021
- * Ann Stoler, The New School for Social Research, *Interior Frontiers: Essays on the Entrails of Inequality*, 2021
- * Jill Traganou, Parsons School of Design, *"Girl with Maquette: A Memoir of Proliferative Imaginaries at Work," ARSNA Journal of Architectural Research*, 2022

Friday, April 21, 2023
11am–4pm EDT
Social Justice Hub,
University Center
The New School,
65 5th Avenue, 5th Floor,
New York, NY

Libraries as Correctives*

C& Center of Unfinished Business, Keleketla! Library, and Sister Library with Asia Art Archive

Monday, April 24, 2023
10–11:30 am EDT
Online

How do libraries act as correctives? How do they become sites of intervention, gathering, and radical storytelling? This event—co-presented with Asia Art Archive, Hong Kong—brings together the C& Center of Unfinished Business in Berlin, Keleketla! Library in Johannesburg, and Sister Library in Mumbai to explore the transformative potential of libraries in the cultural field. The C& Center of

Unfinished Business discusses how an itinerant reading room highlights the traces of colonialism in the holdings of existing institutional libraries. Keleketla! Library introduces how a library initiates advocacy programs to bring stakeholders in the fields of culture, heritage, and governance. Sister Library investigates the tension between temporary and semi-permanent reading sites to contribute to discourses of feminism.

Participants

- * Maloee Malahela, Keleketla! Library, Johannesburg
- * Mearg Negusse, C& Center of Unfinished Business, Berlin
- * Aqi Thani, Sister Library, Mumbai
- * Moderator, Oge Eracy, Senior Curator, Asia Art Archive, Hong Kong
- * Host, Eriola Pira, Curator and Director of Public Programs, Vera List Center for Art and Politics

Libraries in Practice

Tending Toward Liberation

Thursday, May 18, 6:30–8 pm EDT
Social Justice Hub, University Center
The New School, 65 5th Avenue, 5th Floor
New York, NY

Libraries in Practice: Tending Toward Liberation explores the unequivocal relationship between books, libraries, freedom, and liberation. Hosted within the C& Center of Unfinished Business, this program brings together organizers from local independent artist-run libraries, non-circulating collections, reading rooms, and small presses to consider

the role of libraries in making space for freedom-work. At a time when libraries in the United States are under threat by right-wing legislation, the program explores the crucial ways in which these spaces shore up education and literacy and expand personal and collective narratives toward liberation.

Participants

- * Emmy Catedral, Filipinx American Library
- * Julia Grosse, C& Center of Unfinished Business
- * Yusuf Hassan, BlackMass Publishing
- * Moderator, Re'al Christian, Assistant Director of Editorial Initiatives, Vera List Center for Art and Politics

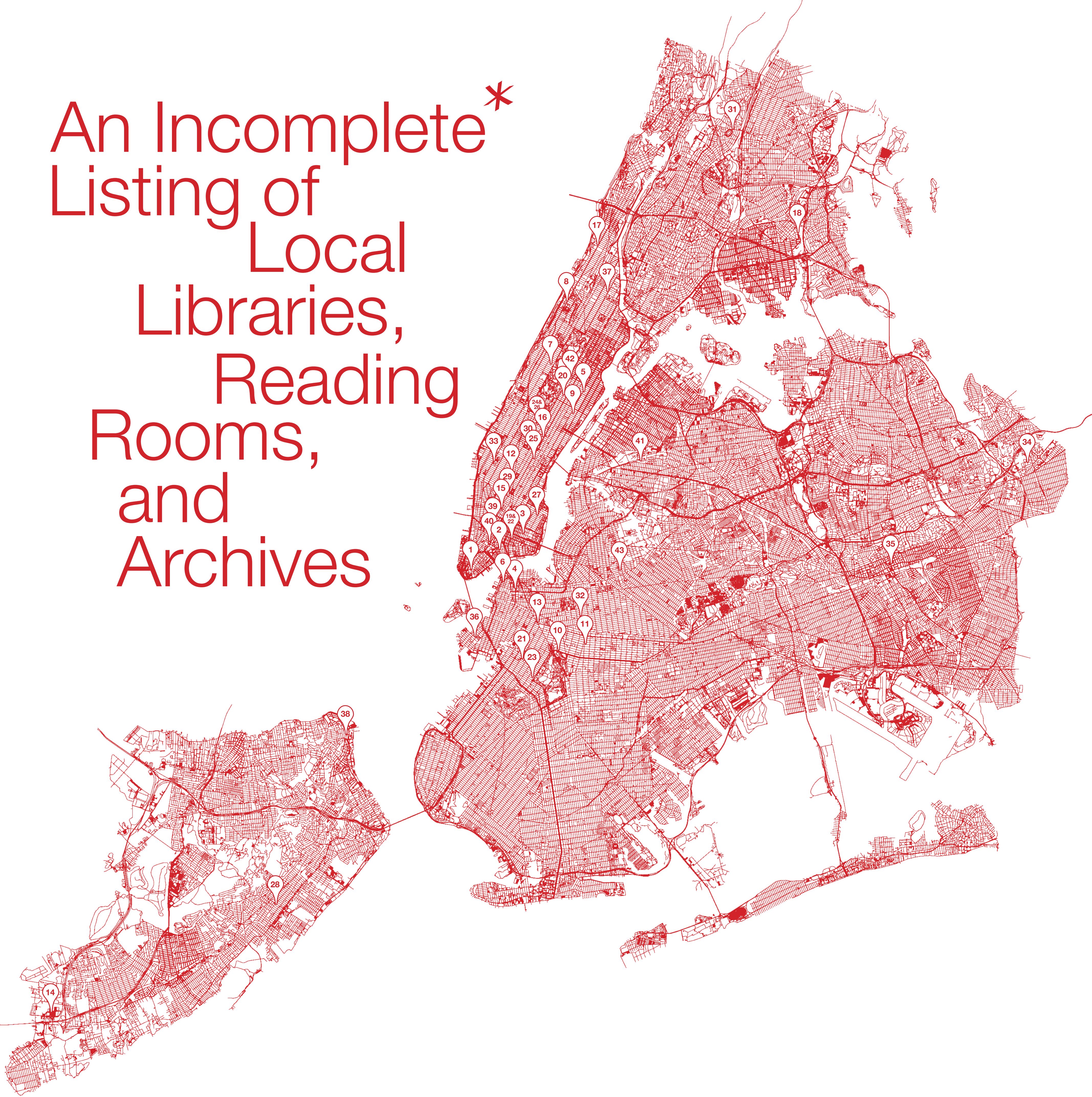
This publication includes the winning essay of the 2023 Vera List New School Art Collection Writing Awards, which are bestowed on New School students for the best essays inspired by works in the university's art collection. The 2023 edition, reflects on The New School Art Collection's 2024 commission of Alfredo Jaar's iconic *Searching for Africa in LIFE*, permanently installed in the seventh-floor reading room in the University

Center's Arnold Forum Library. Special thanks to The New School Provost's Office, especially Alex Caruso, as well as Paul Gottlieb, Mooki Liu, and Janice Shuman in The New School's Buildings Department.

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An Incomplete* Listing of Local Libraries, Reading Rooms, and Archives



*This by-no-means comprehensive listing is unfinished and awaits updates, additions, and corrections.

1. 16 Beaver Group
16 Beaver Street, Fourth Floor, New York, NY 10004
www.16beavergroup.org
2. 8-Ball Library
1 East Broadway, New York, NY 10038
www.8ballcommunity.club
3. ABC No Rio Zine Library
Clemente Soto Velez Cultural & Educational Center, 107 Suffolk Street, Room #305
www.abcnorio.org/facilities/zine_library.html
4. Abolition Library Commons
ALC 274 Cadman Plaza, E STE #27416 Brooklyn, NY 11202
www.instagram.com/abolitionlibrarycommons
5. American Hungarian Library and Historical Society
215 East 82nd Street, New York, NY 10028
www.hungarianlibrary.org
6. Asia Art Archive in America
23 Cranberry Street, Brooklyn, NY 11201
www.asa-a.org
7. Bard Graduate Center Library
18 West 86th Street, New York, NY 10024
www.bgc.bard.edu/library/2/overview
8. Barnard Zine Library
3009 Broadway, New York, NY 10027
www.zines.barnard.edu
9. Bohemian National Hall Library
321 East 73rd Street, New York, NY 10021
www.bohemiannationalhall.com
10. Brooklyn Public Library
10 Grand Army Plaza, New York, NY 11238
For other branch information, visit www.bklynlibrary.org
11. Cafe on Libros
724 Prospect Place, Brooklyn, NY 11218
www.cafeonlibrosbk.com/
12. Center for Book Arts
28 West 27th Street, 3rd Fl, New York, NY 10001
www.centerforbookarts.org/collections
13. Center for Fiction
15 Lafayette Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11217
www.centerforfiction.org/the-center/library/
14. Charleston Library
226 Briktown Way
Staten Island, NY 10309
www.nypl.org/locations/charleston
15. Paley Library and Special Collections
Bobst Library, New York University
70 Washington Square S, New York, NY 10012
www.specialcollections.library.nyu.edu
16. Greenacre Reference Library & MAS Archives
488 Madison Avenue, Suite 1900, New York, NY 10022
www.mas.org/about-us/greenacre-reference-library
17. Hispanic Society Museum & Library
613 West 165th Street, New York, NY 10032
www.hispanicsociety.org/library
18. Huntington Free Library
9 Westchester Square, Bronx, NY 10481
www.huntingtonfreelibrary.org
19. IOP Library
79 Essex Street, New York, NY 10002
<https://www.iop.org/facilities/library>
20. Institute for the Study of Latin American Art (ISLAA)
50 East 78th Street, New York, NY 10075
www.islaa.org
21. Interference Archive
314 7th Street, Brooklyn, NY
www.interferencearchive.org
22. International Center of Photography Library
79 Essex Street, New York, NY 10002
www.iop.org/facilities/library
23. Lesbian Herstory Archive
LHPF, Inc., 484 14th Street, Brooklyn, New York 11215
www.lesbianherstoryarchives.org
24. Library of the Printed Web
Museum of Modern Art Library, 4 West 54th Street, New York, NY 10019
www.printedweb.org
25. The Morgan Library and Museum
225 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10017
www.themorgan.org
26. Museum of Modern Art Library
4 West 54th Street, New York, NY 10019
library.moma.org

27. The Museum of Reclaimed Urban Space Zine Library
155 Loiseaux Avenue, New York, NY 10009
www.moruszinelibrary.org
28. New Dorp Lane
306 New Dorp Lane, Staten Island, NY 10308
www.nypl.org/locations/new-dorp
29. The New School University Center Library
83 5th Ave, 8th & 7th Floors, New York, New York 10003
For other library locations, visit www.library.newschool.edu
30. New York Public Library
478 5th Avenue, New York, NY 10018
For other branch information, visit www.nypl.org
31. Norwood Community Library
3400 Reservoir Oval East + Weekends at 189 East 9th Hill Road when weather permits
www.instagram.com/norwoodcommunitylibrary
32. Playground Annex
1114 Bedford Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11218
www.playground-annex.mshophy.com
33. Poets House
10 River Terrace, New York, NY 10282
www.poetshouse.org
34. Queens County Farm Museum Reading Room
73-60 Little Neck Parkway, Queens, NY 11004
www.queensfarm.org
35. Queens Public Library
89-41 Merrick Blvd, Queens, NY 11432
For other branch information, visit www.queenslibrary.org
36. Reanimation Library
289 Van Brunt Street, Brooklyn, NY 11231
www.reanimationlibrary.org
37. Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture
515 Malcolm X Blvd, New York, NY 10037
www.nypl.org/locations/schomburg
38. St. George's Library Center
6 Central Avenue, Staten Island, NY 10301
www.nypl.org/locations/st-george-library-center
39. Storefront for Art and Architecture
87 Kenmare Street, New York, NY 10012
www.storefrontnews.org/books/curated-books

40. Storefront for Ideas
127 Walker Street, New York 10013
www.storefrontforideas.co
41. Sunnyvale Book and Media Swap, Public Library and Donation Center
42-83 Skillman Avenue, Queens, NY 11104
www.instagram.com/sunnyvalmediaswap
42. Thomas J. Watson Library, Metropolitan Museum of Art*
1000 5th Avenue, New York, NY 10028
www.metmuseum.org
*Library includes a collection of artists' books, zines, prints, and multiples
43. Wendy's Subway
379 Bushwick Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11208
www.wendysubway.com

Roving Libraries and Open Access Digital Collections

44. The Anarchist Library
www.theanarchistlibrary.org
45. Cybernetics Library
www.instagram.com/cyberneticslibrary
46. Dark Study
www.darkstudy.net
47. dispersed holdings
www.dispersedholdings.net
48. The Free Black Women's Library
www.thefreeblackwomenslibrary.tumblr.com
49. GenderFail Archive Project
www.genderfailpress.com/genderfail-archive-project.htm
50. Greater Astoria Historical Society
www.astoriaia.org
See also www.forgotten-ny.com
51. Sketchbook Project
www.sketchbookproject.com/library
52. Interspecies Library
www.interspecieslibrary.com

53. Library of Study
www.libraryofstudy.com
54. Mobile Indigenous Library and Cultural Center
www.mobileindigenouslibrary.weeb.com
55. Museum of Reclaimed Urban Space (MoRUS)
Zine Library
www.moruszinelibrary.org
56. Philipz American Library
www.facebook.com/PhilipzAmericanLibrary
57. Project Art Distribution
www.instagram.com/project_art_distribution
58. The Rolling Library
www.therollinglibrary.com
59. Spunk Library
www.spunk.org
60. Starr Street Library
www.instagram.com/starrstreetlibrary
61. The Uni Project
www.theuniproject.org