A Plan For Artistic Practice

Minneapolis

In The Central Corridor

Saint Paul

Central Corridor Public Art Plan

A Living Plan

Cliff Garten + Todd W. Bressi
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An Artistic Vision for the Urban Future of the Central Corridor

In 2010, Public Art Saint Paul gathered artists, public art curators and urban planners to talk about an artistic vision for the future of the Central Corridor. Recognizing that art would be integrated into LRT stations through Metro Transit's development process, we wondered if public art might expand beyond stations to become a new kind of connective tissue along the length and breadth of the Central Corridor. From these discussions, a Partnership emerged: Public Art Saint Paul, the Saint Paul Design Center, the City of Saint Paul, the City of Minneapolis Art in Public Places, the University District Alliance, and the Capitol Region and Ramsey Washington Metro Watershed Districts. With a grant from The Central Corridor Funders Collaborative, we set out to explore how art can unify the Corridor and reflect the way in which public artists work to effect social, civic and environmental change.

In 2011, the Partners engaged a national planning consultant team of artist Cliff Garten, Urban Planner Todd Bressi, artist Blaine Merker of The Rebar Group, and Via Partnership. A two-year planning process drew upon the knowledge and resources of public agencies, artists and the community to understand the conditions and aspirations of the Central Corridor.

This has been very challenging work. Conditions on the ground changed rapidly. Over the course of our planning, the Northern Spark Festival, Walker Art Center's Open Field, and the Irrigate! program all burst on the scene. The Minnesota Museum of American Art found its new Central Corridor home in downtown St. Paul. The City of Minneapolis initiated the Office of Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy and together with Intermedia Arts launched Creative CityMaking. Saint Paul's City Artist in Residence program expanded and Public Art Saint Paul's City Art Collaboratory began.

Through all of this, the consultants recognized an approach to public art practice in the Twin Cities that is powerful and unique. They took inspiration from artists such as Marcus Young, Seitu Jones, Wing Young Huie, Christine Baeumler, Shanai Matteson and others who move beyond commissioned work for specific capital projects and beyond temporary solutions to immediate problems to concern themselves with broad urban themes and living systems of the city.

We now present a Central Corridor Public Art Plan that is a vital Living Plan and resource. It will be tested over time and evolve as artists and communities build the urban future of the Central Corridor.

Christine Podas-Larson, President
Public Art Saint Paul

on behalf of the Central Corridor Public Art Plan Partners

Table Of Contents

Context Map ..... pg. 1

Dreaming Fearlessly ..... pg. 2-3

Creating a Commons Along the Corridor ..... pg. 4

Executive Summary ..... pg. 5-8

A Corridor In Flux ..... pg. 9-10

The Ecology of Public Art Practice ..... pg. 11-14

Art Organizations Along the Corridor ..... pg. 15

A Living Plan ..... pg. 16-17

Urban Languages

Urban Language - Lenses for Artists ..... pg. 18-20

The Bedrock of the Plan ..... pg. 21

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Click Here

Table Of Contents - "Urban Language + Fantastic Futures"

Urban Languages: The Material City

Food Systems ..... pg. 22

Food Process, A Short Story in Icons ..... pg. 23

Food, Art Reference Projects ..... pg. 24

Fast Food Along the Central Corridor ..... pg. 25

A Food Access Map ..... pg. 26

Food, Together We Can Improve the Food Shed ..... pg. 27

Artist Demonstration Project ..... pg. 28-29

Water Systems ..... pg. 30

Water Systems, A Short Story in Icons ..... pg. 31

Water Systems, Art Reference Projects ..... pg. 32

Artists Collaborate on Stormwater Infrastructure in the Central Corridor ..... pg. 33

Zero Waste ..... pg. 34

Zero Waste, A Short Story in Icons ..... pg. 35

Zero Waste, Art Reference Projects ..... pg. 36

Urban Languages: The Social City

Gathering ..... pg. 37

Gathering, A Short Story in Icons ..... pg. 38

Gathering, Art Reference Projects ..... pg. 39

Identity, In a Time of Information and Choice ..... pg. 40

Identity, A Short Story in Icons ..... pg. 41

Identity, Art Reference Projects ..... pg. 42

Table Of Contents

Fantastic Futures

Fantastic Futures ..... pg. 43

Fantastic Futures Bike Ride ..... pg. 44

Community of Practice ..... pg. 45

Community of Practice Components ..... pg. 46-47

Letters to the Central Corridor Community

Letters Title Page ..... pg. 48

Cliff Garten's Letter to the Core Artists, June 2011 ..... pg. 49

Ashely Hansen ..... pg. 50

Seitu Jones ..... pg. 51

Shanai Matteson and Colin Kloecker ..... pg. 52-53

Wing Young Huie ..... pg. 54

Tim Griffin ..... pg. 55

Peter Kramer ..... pg. 56

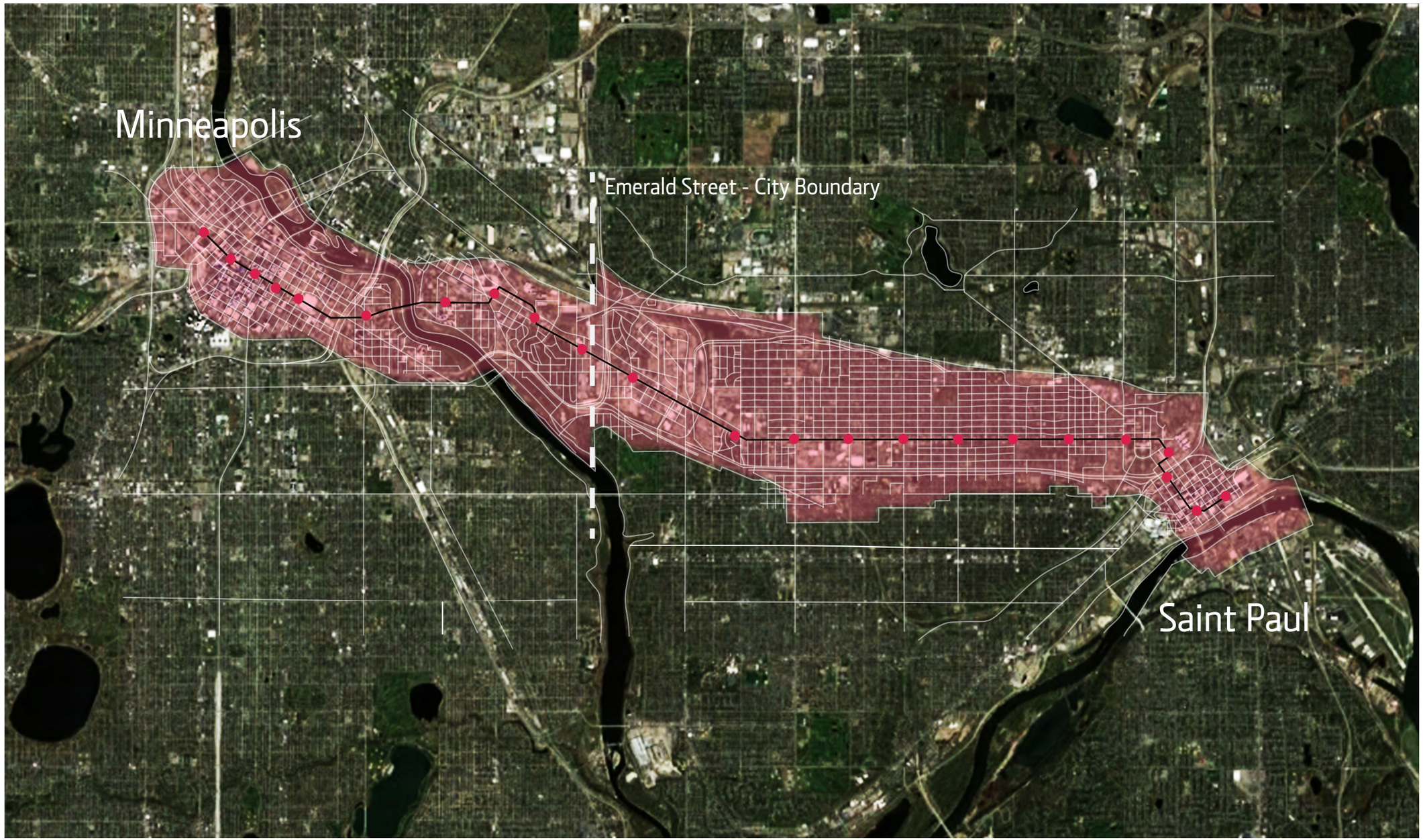
Index

References ..... pg. 57-58

Individuals Consulted ..... pg. 59-60

Credits ..... pg. 61

Context Map



> "Everything I say is Art. Everything I do is Art. We have no Art, we try to do everything well."
> – Balinese saying, as quoted in Mierle Laderman Ukeles, *Manifesto for Maintenance Art*, 1969.
>
> "With cities, it is as with dreams: everything imaginable can be dreamed, but even the most unexpected dream is a (form) that conceals a desire or, its reverse, a fear. Cities, like dreams, are made of desires and fears, even if the thread of their discourse is secret, their rules are absurd, their perspectives deceitful, and everything conceals something else."
> – Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*

For the Central Corridor Public Art Plan, *A Living Plan*, everything that could be imagined as art is a possibility, because we have given ourselves permission to dream a new dream for the Central Corridor. If we succeed in *doing everything well*, everything will have real value.

Within the open field of contemporary art practice, this plan provides a thinking framework that does not perpetuate divisions between the design disciplines and art nor the division between professional service and artist citizen action. Artists are independent thinkers. We honor their place not only in museums and galleries, but within what Michel de Certeau called "the practice of everyday life."

We wish all action to be important because we have provided ways to be thoughtful in our decisions, before we act. We wish every place to be sacred because we see the possibilities for every place to become something more than what we see before us. Art and artists help us overcome the fear we sometimes feel when we dare to find the great things that Italo Calvino says are concealed in the city. We dream fearlessly because there is no other way.

This is not a plan about how to make things and where to put them, though we certainly hope that great things will be made and accomplished as a result of this plan. This is a plan about artistic practice in the city, in this case the communities along the Central Corridor, a new light rail line that connects downtown Saint Paul with downtown Minneapolis.

The connection of the two cities by the light rail is a great gift and an important urban moment. However, it has not come without some social and economic disruption. The single charge to *A Living Plan* might be: How do you give the nearly billion dollar investment of the Central Corridor transportation project a soul, a tangible aesthetic form, new urban stories and human values?

We understand of course that the answer to this question involves many different values, given by many people and cultures, and expressed in many places along the Central Corridor over the next several decades. However, *A Living Plan* gives us a boost by making a more generous space for artists to participate and for the Central Corridor's communities to interact and to dream without the fetters of class, gender, geographic, economic and institutional constriction.

The framework for dreaming this new course of action sees the Central Corridor not primarily as a series of discrete places in time but as overlapping layers of ongoing urban processes that will sustain the communities along it now and in the future. The bedrock of *A Living Plan* is a set of *Urban Languages*, which are lenses that artists and communities can use to examine the urban and social processes and fabrics of the Central Corridor, and which offer insights into the issues that confront its communities.

We travel on the light rail, eat in a restaurant, visit a park or coffee shop, go to the library, the farmers market, turn on the tap, use the rest room, turn off the lights, make love, write a poem, watch people and travel home on a street that is well illuminated, drained and cleaned, because there are urban and social systems that make our urban life possible. Typically, public art plans pay much less attention to the expressive potential of these urban systems than they do to the idea of making art in the traditional sense. Yet, these urban systems – like infrastructure, food and water – need to be engaged in order to do everything well.

When our cities work, it is because their urban and social systems function well. However, function is a double-edged sword. In America, we do not generally understand that in satisfying our base functional urban needs, we can also satisfy our desires for beauty and urban and social engagement at the level of poetry. The *Urban Languages* outlined in this plan are structures that offer large-scale urban systems to artists as possibilities for artistic expression. Some of the *Urban Languages* outlined in the plan are food networks, water systems, waste processes, gathering places and cultural identity. The categories of these *Urban Languages* are broad because the *Living Plan* is open in order to offer artists a means of calculating their actions towards the urban issues that confront their communities.

The human value of a place cannot be dissociated from its intangible qualities such as light, form, materiality and space. It is these qualities, not necessarily bricks and mortar, that hold our broad and intimate social relationships. If a place

is successful it will clarify the life it accommodates. To call a place worthwhile and enjoyable is to recognize that its fabric is imbued with a special energy that we can see, hear, touch, smell or taste.

Artists understand this and are generally the first to settle in abandoned or underutilized terrain, when human values of the city have become decrepit and hidden. Real estate development follows art because artists feel and recognize the soul of a place and gravitate towards quality space no matter how worn down it may appear. In many cities around America, including Saint Paul and Minneapolis, artists have pioneered the revitalization of former industrial neighborhoods. *A Living Plan* uses a specific *Urban Language* to make this re-population, re-appropriation and reigniting of urban space possible by extending to other urban systems and infrastructures.

This document is an interactive .pdf, and it is constructed so that it can seamlessly slip into the Internet. The Central Corridor is a dynamic urban form that is changing and will continue to change. *A Living Plan* addresses this condition by providing an equally dynamic communication forum on the web.

The Corridor is not only a local community, but also a global one. It is as connected to Thailand and Somalia (through recently established communities in the Central Corridor) as it is to downtown Minneapolis and Saint Paul. This plan is *A Living Plan* and it will have a local as well as global audience on the Internet.

My colleague Todd Bressi is an urban thinker – a writer, teacher and city designer – with profound experience in exploring the relationship between urban systems and public art. Whereas my materials are urban space, steel, wood and stone, his material is the city itself. He has brought tremendous clarity to this work and we have dreamed this dream together. When Todd and I began our work, we saw the artistic community surrounding the Central Corridor engaged in a form of artistic practice called "social practice", and we realized that this called upon us to develop a dynamic plan.

Blaine Merker, a partner in San Francisco-based Rebar Group, served as our artist in residence for this *Living Plan* and he brought the spirit of a new generation of art making to our work. Rebar's involvement helped us consider the role that tactical urbanism is playing in shaping urban agendas and how it is creating new pathways for the practice of public art. The Fantastic Future bike ride that Blaine and his team organized was a touchstone of energy and enthusiasm for this planning process.

Public Art Saint Paul, its partners and a core group of artists from the community inspired us to dream big. We hope that what we have done here will in turn enable and inspire all artists to dream big for the Central Corridor.

Cliff Garten, Lead Artist for *A Living Plan*
Venice, California
February, 2013

Creating a Commons Along the Corridor

Creating good cities is a complex undertaking that requires thinking across disciplines and across space and time, using the imagination, reaching out to and including diverse cultures, and understanding the interconnected web of human and natural ecologies.

But ultimately, the moment when cities are reshaped is forced by the building of new infrastructure. The cycle of investment for infrastructure can be 25, 50 or 100 years, but culture has a half-life of years, or months. Increasingly, we turn to artists to be the bridge between the cycles of culture and the cycles of investment. We turn to artists to imagine what our cities can be. We turn to artists to interpret change, to teach us, to show us what's possible, and to guide our imaginations to a vision of a better city. Creating good cities is a complex task, but artists help us make sense of complexity.

The Central Corridor is undergoing one of those forcing moments that comes along every 50 or 100 years, maybe the most important one for the district in our lifetimes. The light-rail infrastructure will trigger changes in the urban pattern, the social fabric and the practice of every day life. We created a public art plan because the Central Corridor needs to seize this opportunity to use its imagination.

The Twin Cities have an opportunity to use their imagination to make a real connection between them that is represented by this Corridor, which includes some of the most interesting urban fabric in the nation. It is important for us to connect in this particular type of community and this particular type of corridor because of the diversity that can be found here – the cultural and demographic range of the people who live and work here.

I am an outsider. I am from the West Coast. When I started coming here, I naively thought that the purpose of this plan was to make a creative connection between your two cities. I have come to understand in the last two years that the relationship between Saint Paul and Minneapolis is layered and complex; there are aspects of it in tension, but I still naively think that is what this plan is about: creating a territory of the imagination for the city of the future.

That territory is a human creation but it contains slices of many types of infrastructure: social, natural, utilities, and cultural infrastructure. This plan proposes not a set of sites but a set of artistic practices for exploring those infrastructures.

To create public artwork in the Central Corridor, artists need networks to support and encourage them, spaces and sites where their work can take shape, access to funding and administrative help, and ongoing conversation about the meaning of their work and how it relates to the work of others. To illustrate how this might work I'll tell a short story about a project I organized as the Plan's artist in residence.

The Central Corridor is full of practicing artists and other people I would call "creative urbanists." Some of them know each other but many don't. There is very little sense of a physical commons organizing their work because the Corridor is so spread out. What do I mean by commons? I mean some kind of geographic territory where we work on things together. That commons isn't there — yet, but it could be.

In the summer of 2011, Rebar set out to create a visceral experience of that potential commons that artists and creative urbanists who are thinking about the Central Corridor could share. That experience became the Central Corridor Roadside Attraction Bicycle Tour of Fantastic Urban Futures. Over two days and fourteen miles, the tour traversed the Central Corridor by visiting sites and places where people were imagining a new city, whether by farming in Frogtown, establishing an arts district on Selby, designing public spaces for immigrant communities in Skyline, or building an artist workspace on the West Bank. With dozens of riders—some joining for all of the rides, some dropping in for a few miles—we zigzagged across the corridor with a bike boombox to keep the groove going as we rode. We were a temporary community bonded by sweat and sore legs as we traversed a new commons, a shared mental roadmap that we'd created together.

This whole endeavor has been about creating community, conversation, a sense of the commons – what do artists have to offer the city? Why are artists being asked to help shape the city and not just create objects that populate and decorate? Because we think that artists have something important structurally to give the cities and to tell planners by engaging in a conversation that is going to shape reality.

We need to keep this commons going. I keep thinking of something like a Wiki structure online, where the commons we have created becomes an ever-widening circle and it can start to crowd source authorship. Though this plan represents the completion of one phase of work, there are gaps that we haven't been able to fill in, and which will only come into focus over time.

Blaine Merker, Artist in Residence, *A Living Plan*
San Francisco, California
February, 2013

"The Central Corridor Public Art Plan is a collaborative venture to develop a long-term, far-reaching vision for creativity along the Central Corridor.

"The vision should excite artists, spark community initiative and action, and provide direction and an enduring foundation for bringing public and private resources behind implementation of art projects.

– The vision of the Central Corridor Public Art Plan

The billion-dollar investment in the Central Corridor light-rail line offers a once-in-a-generation opportunity to promote cross-cutting, community-building initiatives along this vital connection between downtown Saint Paul and Minneapolis.

The Central Corridor Public Art Plan is one such initiative.

The plan identifies major questions about the future of the Central Corridor, and it outlines a new strategy for addressing those questions by tapping into the collective energies and talents of artists and people from broad segments of the community. The plan has the potential for deep and long-lasting impact – along the Central Corridor as well as more broadly throughout Saint Paul and Minneapolis – and for establishing a new paradigm for how public art practice and community revitalization can advance in a symbiotic manner.

This vision for the practice of public art along the Central Corridor involves three fundamental concepts: *A Living Plan, Urban Languages* and *Communities of Practice*. The plan is designed to draw from and build on the many public artmaking resources that are already doing productive work along the Central Corridor. It suggests a curatorial focus, an overarching view of urbanism and an integrated network of strategies for supporting this expanded view of public art practice.

The planning itself was an experiment in this type of practice. It included the artist-organized Fantastic Futures bike ride and an artist-created video series that allowed community members to lead conversations about their visions for the future. Key ideas are already being tested though a two-year demonstration project, *Create: The Community Meal,* that will culminate in a major public art event in fall, 2014.

The Process

The Central Corridor Public Art Plan was initatied with funding from the Central Corridor Funders Collaborative. Public Art Saint Paul assembled a partnership team – from Saint Paul and Minneapolis city agencies, the Saint Paul Riverfront Corporation, the University of Minnesota and regional watershed districts – to conceptualize and guide the plan. Their first task was to develop the scope for a visionary public art plan that would be "expansive in its multi-jurisdictional scope, in its vision for art in multiple media, in its caring for the voices of the community, and in its sustainability within a dynamic urban environment."

A year later, the partners engaged our team of renowned artists and public art experts (artist Cliff Garten, urban designer Todd W. Bressi, artists Rebar Group and art consultant Via Partnership) to lead the process. A core team of regional leaders in public art practice was engaged to advise the planning team.

The process, which began in early 2011, involved lengthy engagement with hundreds of stakeholders over the course of two years. Our planning team met with members of the community, practicing artists, cultural leaders, planning and development specialists, funding partners, and elected and appointed officials. We held numerous open roundtable meetings, and we invited everybody who participated to join a two-day bike ride that visited places where artist–community collaborations might flourish. Since fall of 2011, everything was documented online. Drafts of the plan were reviewed by partners, core stakeholders, and funders.

The Corridor: What We Found

As our planning team worked along the Central Corridor, we found two key conditions.

First, we found a place poised for long-term change. The foundations of that change had been laid through infrastructure investment and development policy, but the texture of that change and its ability to embrace the needs and aspirations of the community were yet to be determined.

Second, we found a place with a vigorous and expanding public art practice — a practice grounded in city governments, cultural organizations, and major art museums; a practice experimenting with and learning from them new modes of work.

Together, these conditions offer the potential for a public art practice that can evolve, symbiotically, with the investigation of the future of urbanism[1].

The Model: *A Living Plan*

The Central Corridor Public Art Plan proposes an organic process for the practice of public art, relying upon ongoing and iterative activity to generate the networks, institutions and resources that will be necessary to sustain a new approach to public art along the Central Corridor.

This organic, networked, iterative model – this *Living Plan* – is based on ideas about how public art is practiced and how that practice can be sustained for the long time-frame in which the urban changes set in motion by the new light-rail line will play out.

The plan is also driven by aspirations that will allow the creative process to flourish while keeping in mind meaningful community outcomes. These aspirations include:

- the aspirations of communities to engage artists in meaningful, long-range thinking about creating healthy, sustainable neighborhoods in the future;
- the aspirations of civic leaders to focus public art resources on profound questions about the future of urbanism in the Central Corridor;
- the aspirations of artists to grow – individually and collectively – a body of artistic practice that is deeply engaged with people and place;
- the aspirations of arts and culture leaders to develop in the Central Corridor a body of multiple media public art of exemplary quality.

Together, these aspirations reflect and require a commitment to explore artmaking that is sustained, sequential, and iterative; one project building on another; projects constantly informing communities and artists in an evolving body of art and place-making.

The What: *Urban Languages*

The Central Corridor Public Art Plan suggests that artists, designers and communities working in the organic process described above should focus on exploring the broad urban systems (cultural, economic, environmental and infrastructural) that are essential to the healthy functioning of the city. We call these systems and their physical and social manifestations in the city *Urban Languages*.

Through community outreach and review of existing planning documents, the planning team identified several *Urban Languages* most urgent and important to the community: food networks, water systems, waste processes, gathering places and cultural identities.

Each of these *Urban Languages* will be a focusing mechanism for public art practice along the Central Corridor. This practice will be directed outward and embedded in a network of relationships among artists, experts in the field, and members of the community. Specific ideas for projects will emerge from the interaction of artists with these networks. Over time, these projects will become the platform for new rounds of community engagement, inform proposals for new art projects, and, ultimately, result in unique bodies of work that will collectively transform everyday experience of the city.

The How: *Communities of Practice*

The *Urban Languages* that are the heart of this plan are dynamic and highly integrated into many aspects of living and working in the city. They cross geographic, institutional, administrative, socioeconomic and cultural boundaries, and they even interact with each other. They constantly reconfigure themselves over time. A wide variety of people have interest and involvement in each of these topics.

This leads to the plan's third important tenet, the *Community of Practice*, an idea that has been evolving in academic, artmaking and organizational management circles for more than twenty years. The *Community of Practice* recognizes that

1 In this plan, *urbanism* means the way that social, cultural, economic, political and environmental processes are manifest in the physical form and patterns of activity in the city over time.

artists must become embedded within a broad collaborative network of communities – experts in the field, scholars, public officials, advocacy groups, businesses and funders – to build a practice that is effectively engaged with the urban future. This artist involvement should be long-term, transcending the duration of a single project, in order to produce a body of work that is grounded in context and that has a public impact.

The idea of the *Community of Practice* is important.

- It connects artists with people who can offer insight, inspiration, guidance and grounding to their work.
- It connects artmaking to an ongoing community discourse about issues that are important to a healthy urban future.
- It allows a wide range of people, not just artists, to be involved in artistic projects that shape the public realm.
- It transcends a specific project, artist or place.
- It engages and builds upon existing resources, expertise, institutional capacity, and funding sources.

Conclusion

The Central Corridor Public Art Plan recognizes the many creative assets that already exist along the Central Corridor. It offers a vision for gathering and extending them to build a collaborative, cross-cutting practice of public art that is grounded in creative explorations and broad-based conversations vital to the Central Corridor's future.

The plan suggests that the Central Corridor's underlying values and emergent concerns about the urban future can provide the basic curatorial directions for public art projects and public art practice. Those curatorial directions offer a context in which artists, arts organizations, city agencies and funders can operate. They offer a framework in which these entities can develop projects, chart their programs, consider their funding premises, and evolve their thinking about how they impact the Central Corridor.

In the end, the plan will lead to a public art practice that is equal to the scale of the urban systems that will shape the Central Corridor's future and that is of the highest level of artistic achievement. The plan will offer a new paradigm for community engagement in shaping the future of urban communities, a new approach to creating an urban commons that sustains visioning, discourse, creativity and group action to build a healthy urban future. It will be a model for a public art practice that is conceived of and executed at a citywide and regional scale, offering a new level of legitimacy for artist involvement in the design and management of urban environments.

A Corridor in Flux

How will the investment in new light-rail infrastructure transform the Central Corridor?

The long-term plans for the Central Corridor embody ambitious aspirations. They imagine a place that will be the major focus of public and private investment in Saint Paul for the foreseeable future, as well as significant new development in the University, West Bank and Metrodome areas of Minneapolis. They envision the transit line as the spine of new pedestrian- and transit-oriented communities, which will be developed with housing, retail, offices, community institutions and public spaces.

At the moment, these plans have a broad and general feel. They outline bands of development, swaths of open space, zones of change and stability, areas of focus for pedestrian mobility, even opportunities for public art. However, the texture of these changes – how places will look and feel, who will use them, what will happen there – cannot really be known at the moment. The urban character of the Central Corridor will be determined in the years to come, as projects are planned and built, each responding to the context of its own times and circumstances and as people carry out their daily lives in the transformed spaces.

In reality, it is likely that the Central Corridor will be characterized by a state of flux for the foreseeable future; it may never be complete in the way that the plans imagine it will be. Change will come incrementally, driven by cycles of private, institutional and public investment, and the Central Corridor is likely to remain an interstitial, dynamic space, always with gaps that need to be filled and always with a new wave of change looming on the horizon.

In short, there is ample opportunity to fill the broad template that has been laid down with ideas and actions that reflect the life of the communities along the Central Corridor and to chart a healthy, equitable urban future. The Central Corridor Public Art Plan provides a framework for artists to play a leading role in this vital and urgent conversation.

Investigations along the Corridor

The Central Corridor is defined most readily as an eleven-mile transit line, but how is it understood as an urban space?

One of our first challenges was to establish a geography of focus for the plan. Early on, we concluded that our energies would be best spent on the section of the Central Corridor between the Metrodome and Lowertown, which is where new infrastructure investment has been focused and where the most dramatic changes would occur once the line is in operation.

We concluded that the plan should look beyond the immediate transit corridor deep into the neighborhoods along it. That meant, for example, considering the historic Rondo neighborhood, which was cut in half decades ago by freeway construction and which is now partly separated from the heart of the Central Corridor. It meant considering Frogtown Farms, located many blocks north of the transit line, yet emerging as a key component of the future vision for Frogtown, which will be served by the transit line.

We developed a methodology for learning about the Central Corridor. We understood that the neighborhood has experienced more than its share of planning processes over the last few years. We recognized that during the two years of our planning process residents, businesses and public officials were mobilizing to manage a disruptive construction process and to minimize and mitigate its impact on businesses, the social fabric and everyday ways of life.

Therefore, our team's investigation of the Central Corridor over the course of two years took many forms, some typical, some not.

We reviewed volumes of reference materials, every plan and study that we could find pertaining to the Central Corridor. We read the adopted plans for areas along the Central Corridor, including Saint Paul's Central Corridor Development Strategy and Minneapolis's Downtown East / North Loop Master Plan. Some of these plans already included traditional recommendations for public art, such as gateway, anchor and streetscape projects, and we inventoried them. We also reviewed community-generated studies, such as the Action Plan for Creative Enterprise Zone 2011-2013 and the Western Park Neighborhood Assessment. And we reviewed foundational research, such as Healthy Corridor for All. The list of references we consulted is included in an appendix.

We interviewed people in formal and informal settings. We met with elected leaders at the city and county level, city staff, community leaders, scholars and businesspeople. One day, we talked with high school students over lunch. Another time, we visited the Somali mall in Cedar–Riverside and talked with merchants there. In 2011, We roamed throughout the first presentation of Northern Spark and we talked with the artists. In cafes, we struck up informal conversations with local artists, proprietors and other guests.

We toured the Central Corridor extensively. We visited shopping districts, community facilities, religious institutions,

arts facilities, vacant buildings, parks and businesses. Over the course of the project, we biked and walked most areas of the Central Corridor.

We organized seven public meetings and observed other public meetings. These meetings included community conversations in each segment of the Central Corridor, exploring how different themes, such as water and cultural identity, would shape the corridor's future. We held three roundtables specifically exploring the *Urban Languages* of water, food systems, and creative spark. Reports on all of those meetings can be found on the plan web site.

Finally, we asked the people we met to lead us on tours of Central Corridor neighborhoods, so they could show us places they felt we needed to see and tell us stories they thought we needed to hear. This process laid the foundation for the Central Corridor Fantastic Futures Bike Ride, which was led by the artist collaborative Rebar Group and which identified twenty locations that were emblematic of the possibility of artist–community collaborations around critical issues of urbanism in the Central Corridor. It was encapsulated in a series of videos by the artist collaborative Works Progress that documented community stories of gardening and creative enterprise along the corridor. Links to these videos can be found on the plan web page.

Lessons from the Corridor

Our assessment of the Central Corridor and of the potential for public artmaking to play a vital role in its future is drawn from these experiences. Our goal was to look beyond the immediate impacts of light-rail construction and to search for emerging conversations about life in the Central Corridor after its completion.

Our process was not so much to synthesize or tease out a consensus, as it was to search for sources of passion, vitality, inquiry and commitment that artists could embrace. Our understandings were informed as much by our reading of visions and strategies articulated in city planning documents as they were by specific moments – a glimpse of a spray-painted plywood sign advertising a Hmong arts festival, a comment at a public meeting by a gardener about reconnecting people with processes of growth, a demographer's study of the distribution of ethnic populations in the city. These moments revealed the nature, rituals and aspirations of the community. Our findings can be likened to a painting or a mosaic, a studied translation of what we experienced and learned.

These are some of the key impressions we gathered about place-making issues along the Central Corridor:

- There is a deep desire for creative, cultural and life-sustaining activities – the arts, civic and cultural rituals, food and water systems, entrepreneurialism – to be embedded holistically in the design, programming and management of urban space.
- There is tremendous energy around the idea of building a future around creative enterprise. In Cedar–Riverside, Prospect Park, Lower Saint Anthony, Rondo and Lowertown, there is a desire to recognize pre-existing creative culture and build policies and infrastructure that allow it to flourish.
- Although it cannot be treated as a unified place, the aspiration for connections among communities located along the Central Corridor resonates strongly. We saw this aspiration when we talked to people active in gardening, and when we talked to the Somali communities in Cedar–Riverside and in Skyline Towers.
- As east-west circulation settles into the new patterns enabled by the light-rail line, north-south connections will become the next focus of attention. Existing plans consider how greenways can connect to regional parks and recreation resources – completing the Grand Rounds in Minneapolis and connecting to Como Park along Lexington Parkway, artist Seitu Jones has proposed connecting Frogtown Farms to the Mississippi River along Victoria Avenue. Other plans address north-south bike connections.

These are some of the key impressions we gathered about social and economic issues:

- There is a growing recognition, among people from all walks of life, of the complex, scaled geography of urban systems. We saw this when we talked with people about urban gardening, urban food systems, water systems, and the expansive international networks in which many recent immigrants live.
- The Central Corridor is marked by cultural diversity, and in that way is emblematic of many areas of Saint Paul, such as the neighborhoods northwest and northeast of downtown, but in the Corridor different cultural

groups are more segregated from each other, in terms of residential patterns, than they are in other culturally diverse areas of Saint Paul.

- In many communities along the Corridor, people are focused on establishing economic security for themselves and their extended families. Some are pursuing entrepreneurial routes; others are working to obtain job skills and professional certifications that will allow them to obtain stable work.
- There is a special concern for youth, the resources that are available to them now, and the future that will be accessible to them. Education, recreation facilities, jobs and meaningful engagement with community processes and institutions are some of the concerns we heard.
- There are many processes of cultural adjustment occurring in communities along the Central Corridor, as different groups adapt their traditions to the circumstances of the neighborhoods where they have settled, while maintaining cultural ties to their homelands. These processes, however, do not seem to be well-documented or well–known, at least outside of these communities.

These are some of the key impressions we gathered about development issues:

- After the light-rail line is complete, there is not likely to be substantial public sector capital investment along the Central Corridor for the foreseeable future, except for the $1 billion public-private redevelopment of the Metrodome for a new multi-use stadium.
- There is confidence in Minneapolis about market-driven investment after the light-rail line is completed, particularly around the Metrodome and the University of Minnesota, and the city has tools for negotiating developer contributions to public amenities such as art. While Saint Paul considers the Central Corridor as the city's major growth area for the next few decades, there is less confidence about whether development will reach desired densities, and there are fewer tools for negotiating developer contributions to public amenities.

All of this means there is urgent work for artists to do along the Central Corridor.

There is an opening for artists to lead conversations about the broad social, cultural and economic forces at play in the Central Corridor, and there is an opening for artists to demonstrate how the intrinsic assets of the community, and the infrastructures that support urban life can create a vital public realm. Through this work, artists can help communities develop ongoing narratives about urbanism that will lead to a sustainable future.

The Ecology of Public Art Practice

There is a vigorous practice of public art in Saint Paul and Minneapolis, along the Central Corridor and beyond. That public art practice that has taken root in city government, non-profit arts and culture organizations and artist collaboratives, and it is supported by teaching at higher education institutions.

During the two years we worked on the Central Corridor Public Art Plan, we observed new energy, new ideas and new resources flowing into the ecology of public art. Public Art Saint Paul expanded the Saint Paul City Artist in Residence program. Guidelines for implementing the Saint Paul Public Art Ordinance were drafted and approved. Northern Spark, Irrigate! and the Minneapolis Creative CityMaking initiative were launched. Forecast Public Art expanded its grantmaking to mid-career artists. The Walker Art Center organized two summers of Open Field and published a retrospective book.

Each of these initiatives represents a crucible of innovation and brings a unique set of values, missions and capacities to the ecology of public art along the Central Corridor. Together, these initiatives offer a body of work that has informed the direction of this plan and can in turn be a resource for implementing the vision of public art practice embodied in this plan.

Percent for Art Modes of Practice

One mode of public art practice stems from of the "percent for art" model, in which small amounts of budgets for public capital projects are given over to artists to create site-specific artworks — on their own, in collaboration with design teams or in collaboration with communities. This approach has a fifty-year tradition in the U.S. and has been adopted widely, in many variations, by hundreds of cities, states, universities and other public agencies.

In the traditional model percent for art model, much is determined before the artist arrives on the scene. Fiscal resources are spread among many projects, rather than concentrated to maximize artistic, social and urban goals. The scope for the public art within the context of each capital project and the budget for each project are generally established before the artist arrives. The artist for each project is selected by an independent panel through a public process. Often the emphasis is on commissioning a variety of artists so a city can build a "collection" through its capital building program over time. The selected artist works in collaboration with the design team, as necessary, and engages with community stakeholders, to the extent possible. The outcome of this process is often a group of single projects, each capturing a single place and time, and a single moment in an artist's career. The process has been less successful at establishing fruitful paths for groups of artists to develop the knowledge and resources necessary for an ongoing place-based practice.

The Cities of Saint Paul and Minneapolis use a percent for art model, but incorporate important procedural variations. For example, Saint Paul's Public Art Ordinance also requires that artists be included as members of consultant teams for planning studies and design of capital projects. This allows artists a significant role in shaping the urban future and the overall shape of buildings, landscape, and infrastructure. Saint Paul's vision is explained in the preface to its ordinance:

"... planning and development decisions should give aesthetic and social value equal weight with any project's functional and economic values... therefore, the council wishes to implement a process and provide funding to involve artists in the design, implementation and integration of art in public projects."[1]

In both Cities, the financial resources for public art can be pooled and allocated to projects that are carefully considered in regard to their broader urban scope and artistic potential. Neither City's program prevents artists from obtaining a eries of comissions, providing more support for artists who want to grow their careers through ongoing engagement with a place.

Both Saint Paul and Minneapolis have stong histories of citizen partcipation and each City brings its distinct municipal government structure and civic engagement protocols to bear in the public art process.

Artist in Residence Modes of Practice

A second mode of public art practice is to immerse artists into the everyday workings of city government, public agencies or other organizations through an artist-in-residence model.

Generally, residencies allow artists to explore their practices in the context of another community, a different place, or using new methods and materials for their work. They allow for research and reflection as well as stimulate creative exchange and immersion.

1 City of Saint Paul City Codes, Chapter 12 §§ 12.01, "Legislative Purpose and Intent"

The public art residencies described below all have a focus on the public – the mechanics of city government, specific planning processes, or community-based explorations. In addition to providing artists with opportunities for growth, they aim to influence the course of public decision-making and to model new collaborations and processes. All of these ongoing programs can be models for the implementation of the Central Corridor Public Art Plan.

Saint Paul City Artist in Residence

In Saint Paul, the City Artist in Residence is a program of Public Art Saint Paul realized in a strategic alliance with the city of Saint Paul. The City Artist in Residence is immersed in the basic systems and operations of the City as are other design and public administration professionals. According to Lead City Artist in Residence Marcus Young:

"Our program addresses the important question: what can happen when artists are at the big table of city-making, alongside the other professionals who are already there—the engineer, the planner, the architect, the maintenance staff, etc. How can the fundamental practice of envisioning, building, and maintaining a city be improved if artists are allowed to contribute significantly, far upstream, to that master work?"[1]

Unique among artist residencies, the engagement is long-term (Young has been Saint Paul's CAIR for six years). Activities range from initiating works of art dreamed up through the process of immersion, to advising the City on its operations and planning, to involvement with capital projects through the City's Public Art Ordinance. *Everyday Poems for City Sidewalk* is among the long-term projects created within the living systems of the City that has emerged from the CAIR program.

The CAIR program engages a team rather than a single artist: it recently expanded to three artists. Amanda Lovelee and Sarah West joined Young to form a cohort that works across city agencies in collaboration with each other and with other city professionals.

The CAIR program is cited in Saint Paul's Public Art Ordinance: CAIRs advise on Ordinance-funded artist activity and may serve as curators of specific Ordinance projects. For example, Marcus Young has served as the curator and artistic lead with artists Lisa Elias and Brad Kaspari on a series of works commissioned for Saint Paul's citywide Residential Street Vitality Program.

The CAIRs are employed by Public Art Saint Paul and provided with demonstration project funding from private sources. The City provides fully equipped work stations in the Public Works Department and access to City staff and processes across agencies.

Watershed Districts Artist in Residence

The Artist-in-Residence for the Capitol Region and Ramsey Washington Metro Watershed Deistrics that serve Saint Paul, was launched in 2010 and engaged artist Christine Baeumler in the resident capacity. The broad goals of this collaboration between the Watershed District and Public Art Saint Paul were to open a dialogue with water resource managers about how artists might make "the invisible visable" to achieve water quality improvement and to identify initiaties. A lecture by Cliff Garten on "The Expressive Poetntial of the Watershed" inspired this initiative. It was followed by a Public Art Saint Paul-convened workshop that engaged a broad cross-section of water quality experts, environmentalists, social scientists and artists. Thus was formed a *Community of Practice* that provides the foundation and ever-expanding cohort for Baeumler and other artists engaged in water quality.

Bauemler produced recommendations for action in 2012 and continues her work by organizing conversations called "hydrosocials," which gather artists and watershed management professionals to explore how this work can be advanced. She also advises on the Central Corridor Watershed Management Plan.

Creative Citymaking Institute

Minneapolis recently launched the Creative CityMaking Initiative, a one-year pilot program to include artists as members of teams working on city planning projects. According to a project description:

"The partnership of artists and planners is intended to forge, enhance, or develop new strategies for working through the creative processes inherent in visionary planning and city making. It is intended to engage artists in critical thinking and art making around City and urban issues and to increase artists' and planners' ability to facilitate community interaction and work collaboratively with the public to foster positive change in the quality and trajectory of social discourse about the city's urban future."[2]

1 As quoted on the Artplace America web site: http://www.artplaceamerica.org/articles/city-artist-in-residence-3/

2 As quoted on the Intermedia Arts web site: http://www.intermediaarts.org/Creative-CityMaking.

The selected projects and artists are Penn Avenue North Small Area Plan (city planner Jim Voll with artists Ashley Hanson and Wing Young Huie), Southwest LRT Station Area Planning (city planners Beth Elliott and Paul Mogush with artist Diane Willow), Southeast and Southwest planning (city planners Haila Maze and Brian Schaffer, with artists Caroline Kent, Roger Cummings and Samuel Ero-Phillips), and capstone evaluation of the city's 10-year Historic Survey efforts (city planner Joe Bernard with artist Witt Siasoco).

The project is a partnership of Intermedia Arts and the City of Minneapolis, including the Long Range Planning Division of the Minneapolis Department of Community Planning and Economic Development (CPED).

Springboard for the Arts

Springboard for the Arts is embedding artists-in-residence in four community-based organizations along the Central Corridor, beginning in 2013. These "artist organizers" will provide skills, coordination and creative thinking to engage community, local artists, and organizational stakeholders to create new innovative paths for the organization to achieve its goals. Each artist receives both a stipend and funding for a demonstration project.

Selected artists and organizations are: Soozin Hirschmugl, with Trust for Public Land; Vong Lee, with Frogtown Neighborhood Association; Oskar Ly, with Project for Pride in Living; and Kristen Murray, with Saint Paul Public Schools.

Curated Modes of Practice

By curated modes of practice we mean approaches to commissioning public artworks that are guided by the engagement of curators (both institutionally based and independant) with specific places, communities or issues that occur outside the umbrella of city capital processes.

Organizations like Creative Time and the Times Square Alliance in New York follow a curated model, with their own curators and art initiatives. They curate specific public spaces (such as Doris Freidman Plaza in Central Park) and work with artists to realize complex projects in the public realm.

Public Art Saint Paul follows this model, seen over its 26-year history with production of significant placemaking projects citywide. Public Art Saint Paul comissions artists from Minnesota as well as nation and world-wide, and goes on to serve as cultural produer of their projects. Examples include *Minnesota Rocks!*, *The University Avenue Project* (Wing Young Huie), Western Sculpture Park (on-going since 1998), the City Art Collaboratory, and *Create: The Community Meal* (Seitu Jones).

A second curated model is the festival model. Precedents include Toronto's Nuit Blanche, 01SJ in San José, Glow in Santa Monica, Prospect in New Orleans (various years), and 5x5 in Washington, D.C. (2011).

Northern Spark, produced in the Twin Cities by Northern Lights.mn, is a free, all night, multidisciplinary, multi-venue annual arts festival launched in 2011. Each year, the festival focuses on different areas of central Minneapolis and downtown Saint Paul. Northern Spark is a curated exhibition focused largely on Minnesota-based artists. Some of the projects are organized by the festival's sponsoring organization; others are selected competitively (and provided with modest seed funding) from responses to a call for artist proposals that is issued each spring; and others are presented by collaborating cultural organizations. Each year about 100 projects are presented, featuring the work of more than 200 artists.

Crowdsourcing is an emergent model of of curation through which sponsors provide frameworks, ground rules, infrastructure and (in some cases) seed funding for artists and others to define and present creative projects in public space.

Open Field was a summer-long project of the Walker Art Center that adopted the commons as a philosophical and programmatic framework to imagine a new kind of public gathering space. Each summer from 2010-2012 the Walker opened its four-acre lawn, inviting anyone and everyone to bring their best creative self forward as a producer or participant. The project challenged the notion of a museum as the primary author of artistic content and cultural experience. It resisted the idea that creativity is an individual pursuit belonging primarily to the artist and operating outside the realm of everyday life. Rather, grounded in the belief that creative agency is a requirement for sustaining a vital public and civic sphere, it nurtured the free exchange of ideas, experimentation and serendipitous interactions. In 2011, more than 100 individuals and groups contributed to the summer-long festival of community-sourced activities.[1]

The curated mode of public art practice suggests that curators can play a role in determining the artist's engagement with public space and public issues, independent of city agencies. They also shed light on a range of short and long-term tactics for supporting work of significance, in terms of artistic merit

1 Text adapted from the introduction to Sarah Schultz and Sarah Peters, eds., Open Field: Conversations on the Commons (Minneapolis: Walker Art Center, 2012)

and their importance to supporting sustainable urbanism. The Twin Cities initiatives noted above are attempting to build an iterative practice that involves a range of artists over the course of several years. For all of these reasons, the curatorial mode of practice provides an important foundation for the implementation of the Central Corridor Public Art Plan.

Intermediaries

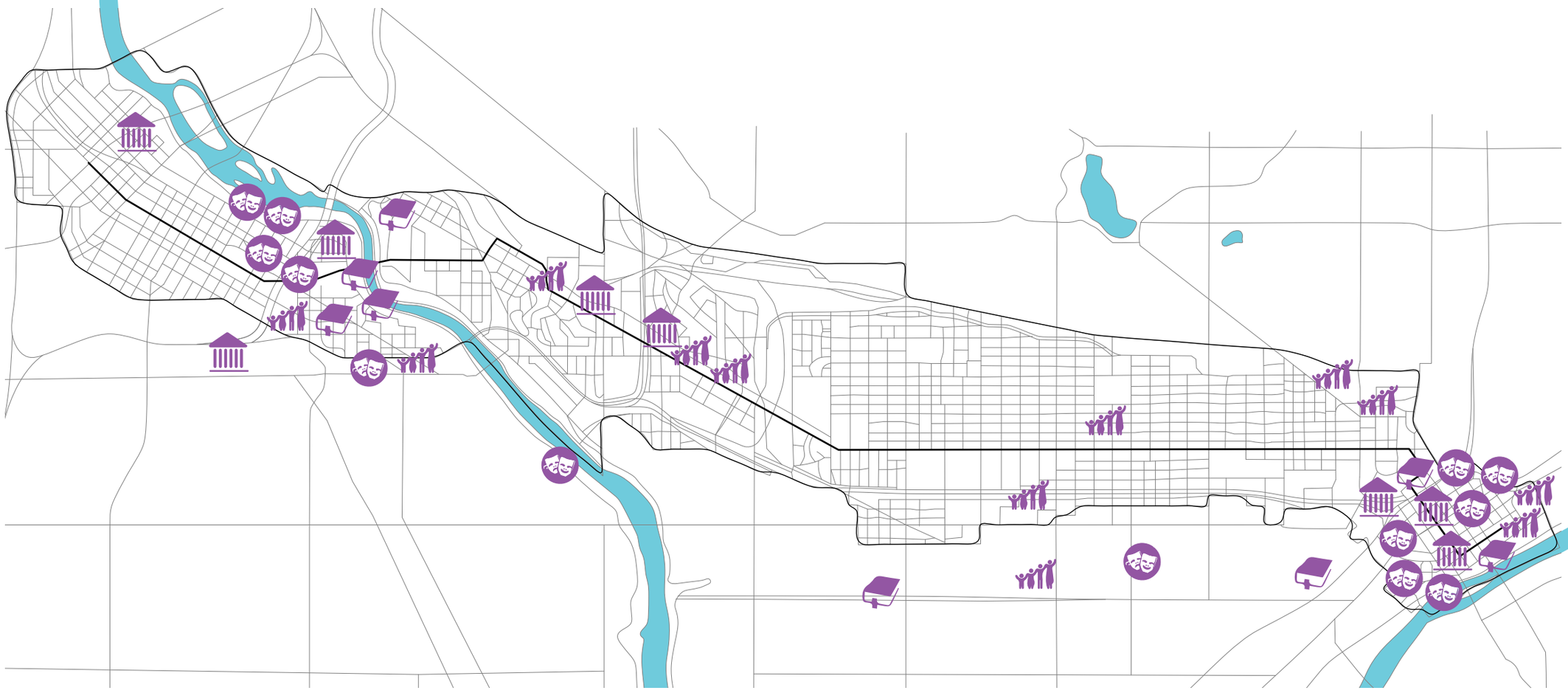
There is a well-developed network of intermediaries that support public art practice along the Central Corridor.

Forecast Public Art provides grants for independent projects by both emerging and mid-career artists, provides training for artists and public art tool kits for communities, and also publishes the *Public Art Review*, the nation's premier public art journal.

Springboard for the Arts is an arts service non-profit that provides leadership and professional development training. Its Irrigate! creative placemaking initiative spans the Central Corridor during LRT construction. This economic development approach mobilizes artists to engage in their community to fill the construction zone with color, art, creativity and fun. It provides artists place-making workshops, micro-grants to seed projects, and a "Doers" artist squad to help businesses address problems.

Intermedia Arts uses arts-based approaches to solve community issues and provides financial and production support for artists. Its Creative Community Leadership Institute trains community-engaged artists. It is a partner with the city of Minneapolis in the Creative CityMaking Initiative.

Arts Organizations Along the Corridor



Theatre

Museum

Institution

Community

"Practices, not principles, are what allow us to live together in peace."

– *Kwame Anthony Appiah*

The first key component of the Central Corridor Public Art Plan is the concept of *A Living Plan*.

A Living Plan is a concept that reflects how the interaction of public art and urbanism have been evolving over the last several decades.

In the simplest terms, both fields have been moving away from an emphasis on form-making and towards an emphasis on process. In addition, the field of public art has been characterized by a vigorous expansion of the organizations that stage public art projects as well as of the practitioners who consider themselves to be public artists. These trends are reflected as public art is being practiced in Saint Paul and Minneapolis.

Urban Systems and Process

While urban designers are ultimately interested in shaping the large-scale form of the city, in recent years they have become much more engaged with exploring how broad urban processes – from ecological processes to the migration of populations to the management of resource streams – provide frameworks for incremental decision-making about urban form. The visual representation of the city has shifted from ideal design propositions, such as the crisp, Modernist visions of the Ville Radieuse or the gauzy, romantic depictions of New Urbanism, to abstract diagrams of the city as an overlay of multiple systems and flows, evolving through incremental inputs and responses to those inputs.

Artists are confronting a similar change in their approach to urbanism. Over the past few decades, theories about relational aesthetics (which examine how artistic engagement is less about the artistic object than the way that viewers interact with what artists create), have given impetus to a public art approach called social practice. In this body of work, artists focus less on creating physical objects and more on setting up situations in which viewers are participants.

Through this approach, artists are exploring an almost infinite range of interests. In Minneapolis and Saint Paul alone, their projects have included re-imagining public spaces as settings for group play (*Mobile Creative Outpost,* Ben Garthus), to creating events that celebrate how cultural food traditions are passed from generation to generation (*Create: The Community Meal*, Seitu Jones), to probing the boundaries of private thoughts and public expression (*Wishes for the Sky*, Marcus Young).

The Agency for Public Art

At the same time, the agency for public art – that is, the range of organizations that have taken the initiative to commission artists to work in the public realm – has become widely dispersed. The approach to working with artists in public space has expanded far beyond the traditional percent for art model. Throughout the U.S., museums, business improvement districts, developers, botanical gardens and even crowd-sourced do-it-yourself initiatives have joined traditional city public art programs and arts non-profits in presenting public art projects. The presence of these new public art presenters has resulted in an ever-expanding range of tactics for involving artists in public-realm projects and in a vigorous discussion about the visions and values these entities bring to artmaking.

The convergence of public art and urbanism and the explosion of public art agency have gained a footing in Saint Paul and Minneapolis, as described in earlier sections. Already, we see the work of artists whose practices are embedded with the place; entwined with community organizations, public agencies, universities and arts organizations; defined by public works and engaged public actions; and characterized by a steady sequencing of investigation and artistic production. We see a variety of platforms that artists have been using to advance their work; percent-for-art programs, Public Art Saint Paul's initiatives, the Walker's Open Field, the Irrigate! program and the Northern Spark festival. We see artists developing their own public platforms; Works Progress' "Give and Take" forums and Wing Young Huie's Third Place Gallery.

A Living Plan

The Central Corridor Public Art Plan takes an approach that is different from that of a typical public art master plan.

The plan does not emphasize the identification of specific projects through conventional perspectives such as place-making, urban design or capital program strategies. Identifying specific projects is difficult in a place as vast and dynamic as the Central Corridor and for the long time-frame in which the urban changes set in motion by the new light-rail line will play out. Nor does the plan emphasize the development of specific programs, policies or procedures, because there is already a variety of foundations in place.

Rather, the plan offers an aspirational vision that sets a context for focusing the ongoing practice of public art in the Central Corridor, and it outlines broad frameworks for connecting and supporting that practice. This vision includes aspirations that have been expressed in past planning processes, and expressed to our team in conversations and public meetings that were organized as part of this planning process:

- the aspirations of communities to engage artists in meaningful, long-range thinking about creating healthy, sustainable neighborhoods in the future,
- the aspirations of civic leaders that public art resources should be focused on profound questions about the future of urbanism in the Central Corridor,
- the aspiration of artists (individually and collectively) for gowing a body of artistic practice that is deeply engaged with people and place, and
- the aspiration of arts and culture leaders that the Central Corridor should develop a body of public art that is of exemplary quality, across all media.

The Central Corridor Public Art Plan proposes that this vision can be advanced by an organic process that is guided by two fundemental components of *a Living Plan*: one is a series of *Urban Languages* that reflect systems of urban infrastructure (physical, social and cultural) that will have a powerful impact on shaping the future of the Central Corridor; and the other is a support system called a C*ommunity of Practice*, which connects artists with each other and with stakeholders whose involvement provides a supportive platform for long-term creative success and community impact. Both of these frameworks are explained in more depth in subsequent sections of this plan.

This organic, networked, iterative model is called *a Living Plan* because it is focused on shaping a dynamic process of imagining and making public art in public space. *A Living Plan* is networked because it involves artists, community members, public agency staff, field experts, designers, curators and others. It is organic because the artistic outcomes are influenced by the ongoing interaction of these various parts. It is iterative because it draws upon experience with past work to generate a base of knowledge and inspiration for future ideas.

This model is focused on the long run to provide a strong context for shaping urban futures, build a coherent body of artwork, and provide artists with opportunities for their own creative and professional growth. This model is kept alive through the production of substantive work and it is kept vibrant through constant engagement with urban issues of the day.

A key component of the Central Corridor Public Art Plan is the concept of *Urban Languages*.

As our planning team began its work along the Central Corridor, construction of the new light rail was imminent. We sensed the disruption that the process of threading a multi-billion dollar infrastructure project through a busy urban corridor would pose to businesses and everyday life. We followed the extensive efforts on behalf of the community, public agencies, and non-profit organizations to mitigate the impacts of the construction.

We also looked beyond the immediate circumstances and asked, what kinds of changes will occur along the Central Corridor once the new light-rail line begins operation? How can we describe the role that artists can play in shaping the new patterns of urbanism that will emerge along the Central Corridor in the decades to come?

The City of Saint Paul's Central Corridor Development Strategy maps out a general development strategy for the station areas along the Green Line; similar planning efforts were completed or underway for Minneapolis Central Corridor neighborhoods such as Cedar–Riverside, Stadium Village and Prospect Park. These plans outline long-term opportunities for incorporating public art into open spaces, gateways, streetscapes and other civic investments proposed along the Central Corridor.

The Central Corridor Public Art Plan offers a broader and deeper point of view. It suggests that artists, designers and communities should focus their explorations on the underlying urban systems (cultural, economic, environmental, infrastructural and so on) that are essential to the healthy functioning of the city. By looking at these systems and understanding where they intersect with the public realm, artists can create a new paradigm for artistic engagement with the urban environment and play a front-end role in the exploration of issues that will shape the Central Corridor's urban future.

The Concept of *Urban Languages*

The term *Urban Languages* encapsulates this idea.

The straightforward definition of *language* is "the method of human communication ... consisting of the use of words in a structured and conventional way."

For the purposes of the Central Corridor Public Art Plan, an *Urban Language* is mechanism for prioritizing, focusing and organizing public art practice along the Central Corridor, and has these fundamental characteristics:

- An *Urban Language* encapsulates an issue of urbanism that is important to the future healthy functioning of the Central Corridor, and by extension the entire city.
- An *Urban Language* embodies an idea that transcends any particular place, project or point in time.
- An *Urban Language* provides a frame of reference into which artists can immerse themselves and enables them to locate their work in the context of a broader artistic practice and set of urban systems. These urban systems manifest themselves in various ways — physical infrastructure, the flows of material and information resources through the city, politics and social networks. These urban systems also transcend the territory of any one entity in the city – they involve the resources of city government, public utilities, private businesses, institutions, community organizations, and others.
- An *Urban Language* is, intrinsically, a network of relationships – functional and conceptual – that can help artists generate ideas, strategies and resources, and to connect with audiences.
- An *Urban Language* can lead to a coherent body of artwork that is produced by many artists who are working over a long period of time, and in loose collaboration with each other, and with communities and a range of supporting individuals and organizations. The connectedness of this body of work will heighten its impact on people's experience and memory of the city.
- An *Urban Language* provides a context for an iterative, reflective creative process. It provides a context that informs the work that is underway and, once that work is completed, sets the stage for evaluation, critique and the absorption of learning into subsequent projects.

There are many *Urban Languages* that could be defined in a city. The Central Corridor Public Art Plan identifies as initial priorities those topics that are already the focus of attention and energy for community organizations and public agencies active in the area: food networks, water systems, waste processes, gathering places and cultural identities.

As this is an organic plan, other *Urban Languages* can be advanced as they become higher priorities for the community. An artist, a curator, a city agency, a funding organization, or other entity could take the initiative to organize a new *Community of Practice* and develop the resources to put a

new *Urban Language* on the public agenda. For the Central Corridor, the topics of information resources and energy come to mind as possible future priorities.

Precedents in Public Art Practice

The concept of the *Urban Language* as the foundation of a viable approach to public art practice has its roots in both the intersecting trajectories of public art and urban design.

In recent decades, urban design thinking has been expanded by the consideration of how ecological and cultural landscape systems shape the physical and visual environment. Some of the most important precepts of this thinking were laid at the University of Minnesota, in the Design Center for the American Landscape, led by William Morrish and Catherine Brown two decades ago. In 2008, Kazys Varnelis explored in *The Infrastructural City* how not only landscape, water, energy and transportation infrastructure but also cell phone networks, data systems, consumer distribution systems and even the movie production landscape resulted in urban systems that shaped urban form.

It can be seen in the work of visionary artists such as Mierle Laderman Ukeles and Cliff Garten, who have been successful at building substantial bodies of work based on the continued exploration of discrete urban systems. Ukeles, artist in residence to the New York City Department of Sanitation since 1977, has developed a series of performative artworks and installations that draw people's attention to the management of waste in the city. Garten, throughout his career, has studied the expressive potential of infrastructure, with particular focus on the movement of water through cities.

An early expression of this idea in a planning process was the Phoenix Public Art Master Plan, prepared by William Morrish, Catherine Brown and Grover Mouton in 1988. This plan posed a basic question – how can public art have an impact on a city that is 400 square miles? – and outlined a series of urban layers or systems that could be used to provide a relational basis and focus for a body of works that would have an outsized cumulative impact on the city. Later, Morrish and Brown, working with art consultant Jessica Cusick, refined these ideas for The Houston Framework. Artist Lorna Jordan, taking the ecosystem as her point of departure, mapped a public art strategy for Broward County that was related to habitat, water flows and other ecological features that were being erased by urbanization.

For nearly a decade, the Alphabet City artist collective in Canada has been publishing monographs that document artist work that reflects investigation of cultural and physical landscapes – from security and suspicion to food, water, waste, energy and air. The artist collaborative Broken City Lab has spent several years organizing projects that investigate the consequences of the international boundary between Detroit, Mich., and Windsor, Ontario. The projects often involve communities and government agencies involved with this issue, and the body of work has recently been inventoried in a book.

This urban and cultural landscape thinking has begun to have practical impact on how public agencies approach their work. The Unified Port of San Diego, a public agency, has experimented with this approach for several years. Its public art resources are now managed through specific multiyear curatorial strategies that set the stage for artists to engage with the *Urban Languages* – environment, working port and civic spaces – that are fundamental to the Port's mission and most important to its engagement with the public. In 2006, the Calgary Urban and Environmental Protection Department set aside the city's traditional percent-for-art for a multi-year curatorial strategy that directed funds into specific projects that provided artists with a range of opportunities to explore the meaning of "a river in the city, and a city in a river."

Urban Lanugaes for the Central Corridor

Through our team's investigation of the Central Corridor, we identified several *Urban Languages* that are most urgent and important to the community, giving them particular immediacy and potency: food networks, water systems, waste processes, gathering places and identity.

Each *Urban Language* cuts across geographic and socio-economic lines, involves a network of organizations; touches on economic, cultural, social and political issues; and provides ample opportunity for artistic exploration. Later in the plan, each *Urban Language* is explored in more depth, with references to ongoing initiatives in the Central Corridor, opportunities that were uncovered by the Fantastic Futures bike ride, resources in the community and reference projects from the Twin Cities and beyond.

- *Food Systems* consider the economic, cultural and environmental aspects of urban food production and consumption.

- *Water Systems* consider how the water cycle interacts with the design, operation and experience of urban places. The initial focus is on stormwater management.

Water supply and usage are equally important issues to consider in the future.

- *Zero Waste* considers waste, collection, recycling and landfill distribution. While making art from recyclable materials is a common practice in contemporary art, deeper investigation of waste systems offers rich opportunity for artist intervention.

- *Gathering Places consider* the notion that people need physical places to get together – and recognizes that the activities that are shared in these spaces are increasily diverse.

- *Identity* reflects the layered identity that people in the Central Corridor experience – group identity (cultural or religious identity), civic identity (a citizen of a city, state and nation), and neighborhood identity (home territory).

These *Urban Languages* extend the conventional notion of incorporating public art into infrastructure systems in several ways. The first three concern the material city and urge artists to consider the aesthetic and expressive potential of entire systems. The final two concern the social city, or how people interact with each other, how they behave in public, how civic and cultural rituals anchor communities and places. The *Urban Languages* include centrally controlled infrastructure that is the responsibility of public agencies (water systems), complex, market-based systems that are operated by many entities (food systems and waste processes) and decentralized networks related to how people organize their social lives in the city (gathering and identity).

The *Urban Languages* are not meant to be silos, dividing the public realm into components that are isolated from each other. There are obvious overlaps and interplays between the languages; a food project might naturally be influenced by cultural identity issues, involve the reconceptualization of gathering, reflect on the consumption of water resources, or consider the implications of food waste streams. They simply suggest additional territory for collaboration among artists and *Communities of Practice*.

The *Urban Languages* are also not meant to be static. They are issues of primary importance along the Central Corridor right now, but the concept is dynamic and can grow to include other topics such as youth resources, energy systems and information networks as the interests of the public and artists evolve.

There are also issues or values that might transcend all the *Urban Languages*, such as economic equity, social justice, creative economy, and sustainability. These issues are inherent to and embedded in the *Urban Languages*. It is expected that artists would bring their values, these and others, to the projects that they do.

To some degree or another, artists and community organizations have already begun to organize initiatives around the five *Urban Languages* described here, and some of them have been supported by broader city plans and polices. The Central Corridor Fantastic Futures Bike Ride in October, 2011, amounted to a tour of artist and community projects that contain the seeds for the development of these *Urban Languages*.

Specific ideas for projects will emerge from the ongoing interaction of groups of artists who are working in loose collaboration with each other and with the community. Over time these projects will result in unique bodies of work that will become the platform for new rounds of community engagement, inform proposals for new art projects, and be a focal point for civic engagement over the, future of the Central Corridor.

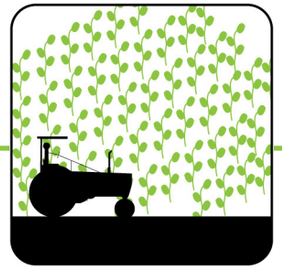
Back to Table of Contents

Food Systems

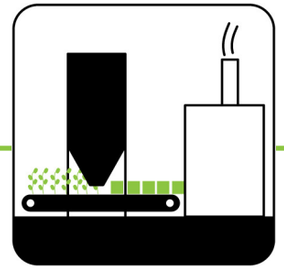
The Urban Language of Food Systems considers the cultural, health, environmental and economic justice aspects of urban food production, distribution and consumption. It can involve the sourcing and distribution of food (food shed, markets, restaurants, food pantries), public health (food choices and cooking practices), and community traditions (cultural practices and rituals).

Food Water Waste Gathering Identity Fantastic Futures

Large Scale Farming



Whole Food Processing



Big Box Distribution

Transportation

Supermarket

Fast Food

Food Process, a Short Story in Icons

The reorganization of the Twin Cities' urban food system to support localized source, production and distribution has an untapped potential to shape land use and economic activity, to transform the texture of residential and commercial neighborhoods, and to reconnect people to community and their cultures.

Many people along the Corridor are exploring new approaches to urban food systems: community gardeners and nascent farming companies; the Frogtown Farm project; people interested in food justice, health and nutrition; and food businesses. Minneapolis has adopted an Urban Agriculture Policy Plan, and Saint Paul has completed an Urban Agriculture Zoning Study. The Saint Paul Public School System's Nutritional Services department is a microcosm of how major institutions can reinvent their food practices.

Opportunities for Artists

Artists can bring new thinking about urban food systems to life along the Central Corridor – reminding people of critical issues like food equity, health and nutrition, economic development and environmental management. Urban food landscapes are still dominated by industrial food production and distribution systems that can't be approached by public artists through traditional means. Therefore, artists should focus on three broad strategies.

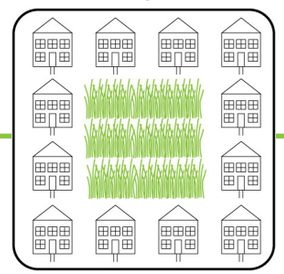
- Continue to reveal the workings of the industrialzed food system.
- Help communities develop alternative, place-based infrastructure systems.
- Highlight or create food rituals that respond to the culture and the place of people along the Central Corridor.

Questions for Artists to Address:

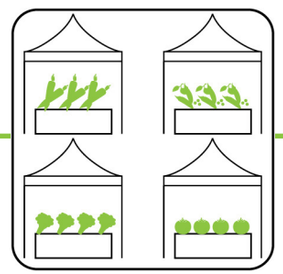
- How can the food system – growing collecting cooking eating – be re-linked to place and cultural traditions?
- How can the city be structured to provide more healthful/ nutritional food options?
- How are food processes and traditions a factor in creating and maintaining family, community bonds?
- How can a localized food system strengthen local economies?
- How are food traditions and habits passed on throughout the community, and from generation to generation?
- What is the history of sustenance / food in this area?
- What are the stories of the food that is consumed in this region?

Local Urban Agriculture

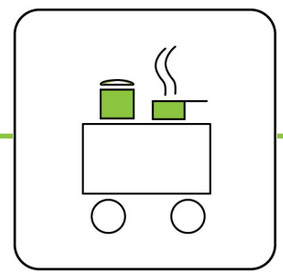
Community Gardens



Farmers Market

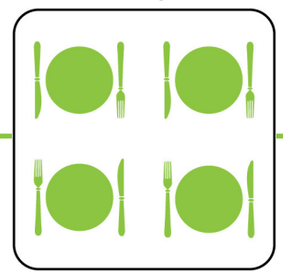


Mobile Food Carts

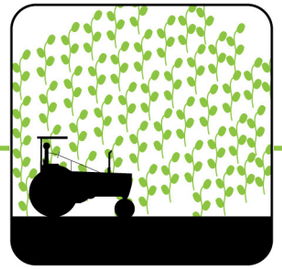


Kitchen

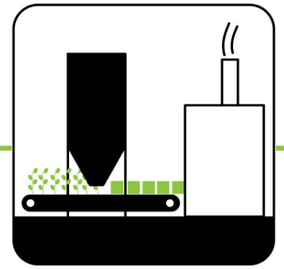
Community Meals



Large Scale Farming



Whole Food Processing



Big Box Distribution

Transportation

Supermarket

Fast Food

Cook Pod

Stones Throw

Soil Kitchen

Tacoshed

Victory Gardens
Bikebarrow

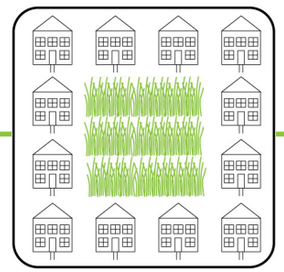
Public Farm 1 (PF1)

Conflict Kitchen

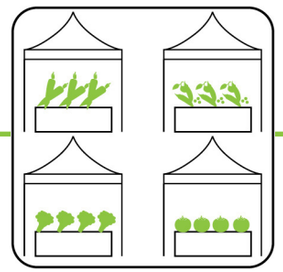
Nature Matching
System

Local Urban Agriculture

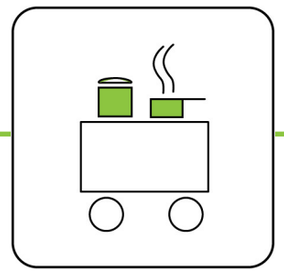
Community Gardens



Farmers Market

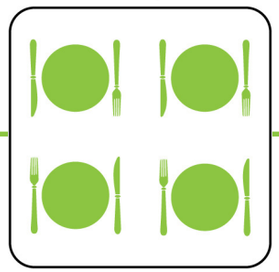


Mobile Food Carts



Kitchen

Community Meals



Back to Table of Contents

cookKIT

Emily Stover, various locations in Saint Paul and Minneapolis, 2012-2013

The public cooking of food is a multi-sensory experience that has the potential to be both educational and a spectacle, pulling people in to share space, stories, and supper. Created as a platform for food-based community programming, the cookKIT is an object that unfolds into a mobile kitchen for preparing and consuming meals in public space. Its open-source plans allow community groups, private citizens, and non-profits to inexpensively build and modify their own mobile kitchen to use for cooking demonstrations, special events, or other activities.

The cookKIT serves as a prototype for a larger vision to create publicly accessible mobile kitchens along the Central Corridor. By using the everyday act of cooking and eating to activate space and engage neighbors, a system of mobile kitchens can support community programs addressing food access, healthy living, cultural awareness, and creative skill development. A community garden can preserve produce at the end of a season, or a youth education non-profit can teach basic kitchen skills. The mobile kitchens will be both art and infrastructure, encouraging curiosity and promoting activity along the length of the Central Corridor.

Images © Kristen Murray

Click Here To Go To Project Web Page

Click Here to Go Back To Reference Projects

Tacoshed: Tracing the Global Network of Food Flows

Rebar Group and David Fletcher
California College of Art URBANlab, San Francisco, 2009

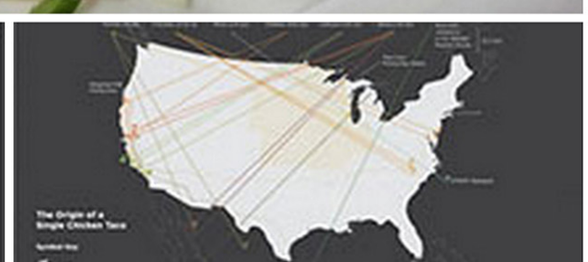
In the fall of 2009, a group of CCA architecture students, led by Rebar and Landscape Architect David Fletcher, shared a meal together at a local taco truck for a class assignment. The semester-long research seminar, part of CCA's URBANlab, was intended to explore San Francisco's food and wastesheds. The premise was that a seemingly simple, familiar food like the taco truck taco could provide visceral insight into the connections between the systems we were exploring. By thoroughly learning the process of formation and lifecycle what it takes to make a taco, we would be better able to propose and design a speculative model of a holistic and sustainable urban future.

What resulted was a diagram of a richly complex network of systems, flows and ecologies that we call the global Tacoshed.

Tacoshed was presented at a public event at the Studio for Urban Projects in February 2010, and further explorations and applications of the data are in the works. Project progress was documented on the @tacoshed Twitter account.

The Tacoshed project was collaboration between Rebar and David Fletcher, with the students of the "Brave New Ecologies" course taught in fall, 2009, as part of URBANlab, an innovative curriculum component of The California College of the Arts architecture program.

Maps and graphics by Rachael Yu and Annie Aldrich, Teresa Aguilera (Rebar), and Fletcher Studio. © Rebar Group.



Click Here To Go To Project Web Page

Click Here to Go Back To Reference Projects

Conflict Kitchen

Jon Rubin and Dawn Weleski, Pittsburgh, ongoing

Conflict Kitchen is a take-out restaurant that only serves cuisine from countries with which the United States is in conflict. The food is served out of a take-out style storefront that rotates identities every six months to highlight another country. Each iteration of the project is augmented by events, performances, and discussions that seek to expand the engagement the public has with the culture, politics, and issues at stake within the focus country.

Photos: © Conflict Kitchen

Click Here To Go To Project Web Page

Click Here to Go Back To Reference Projects

Stones Throw: Urban Form

Alex Liebman, Emily Hanson, Eric Larsen, Klaus Zimmermann,
Robin Major, John Seitz
Twin Cities, Ongoing

Stone's Throw Urban Farm is redefining local, sustainable food in the Twin Cities. The organization converts vacant lots in Saint Paul and Minneapolis into beautiful, productive micro-farms and grows food for local use. Stone's Throw is working hard to strengthen the Twin Cities' local food system

The farm is run by a partnership of six farmers, with help from neighbors and volunteers. As an agro-ecologically minded small business rooted in community values, we strive to transform unused urban spaces into vibrant farmland. The group farms on more than sixteen formerly vacant lots in both South Minneapolis and the Frogtown neighborhood of Saint Paul. The veggies that are harvested are sold through a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program, at Mill City Farmers' Market, and to several local restaurants.

Images: Stones Throw Urban Farm

Images © Emily Hanson

Click Here To Go To Project Web Page

Click Here to Go Back To Reference Projects

Victory Gardens Bikebarrow

Futurefarmers, San Francisco, 2007

Bikebarrow is a custom bike built within the context of a utopian urban gardening proposal for the city of San Francisco. The wheelbarrow detaches from the bike.

Photos: © Amy Franceschini, Futurefarmers

[Click Here To Go To Project Web Page]

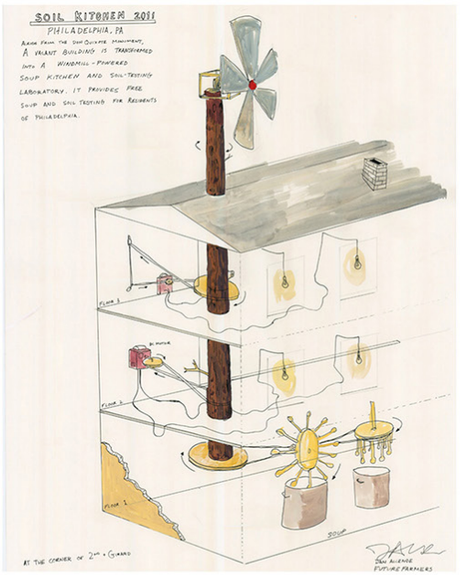
Click Here to Go Back To Reference Projects

Soil Kitchen

Futurefarmers, Philadelphia, 2011
Commissioned by the City of Philadelphia Office of Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy

Soil Kitchen was a temporary, windmill-powered architectural intervention and multi-use space where citizens could enjoy free soup in exchange for providing soil samples from their neighborhood. In addition to serving soup and testing soil, the building served as a temporary hub for exchange and learning, with free workshops on topics such as wind turbine construction, urban agriculture, soil remediation and composting; free lectures by soil scientists; and cooking lessons.

Images: © Amy Franceschini, Futurefarmers



Click Here To Go To Project Web Page

Click Here to Go Back To Reference Projects

Public Farm 1 (PF1),

Work AC, Queens, New York, 2008
Commissioned by MoMA/PS1 Young Architects Program

Public Farm 1 is a project designed by WORK Architecture Company for MoMA and P.S.1's Young Architects Program. Public Farm 1 was be on view in P.S.1's outdoor courtyard beginning June 20, 2008 for the 2008 WARM UP music series. Public Farm 1 functioned as an urban farm while providing an outdoor social space for the summer.

P.F.1 combined playful programs with educational ones, creating a sense of community around the shared experience of growing food. Bringing sustainable construction together with sustainable agriculture, P.F.1 was be built entirely of recyclable materials, be 100% solar-powered and utilized rain collection for irrigation. P.F.1 is formed as a folded plane made from cardboard tubes, designed to hold planters for vegetables, herbs and fruit. While most of the tubes create an elevated canopy for shade, some tubes extend to the ground to become columns. Each column holds a different program, from seating to sound environments to a mobile phone charging column and even a juice bar at the farmers market.

P.F.1's intent is to educate thousands of visitors on sustainable urban farming through the unique medium of contemporary architecture. The P.F.1 project received tremendous attention and a number of New York institutions participated. The Queens County Farm Museum (QCFM) provided guidance and green house space, the Horticultural Society of New York (HSNY) grew additional plants through its GreenHouse program on Rikers Island and its Green Team will assist with the maintenance of the farm throughout the summer. The Council on the Environment of New York (CENYC) assisted with the design and installation of the water collection system and organizing a weekly farmers market at P.S.1 to accompany the Warm Up parties on Saturdays.

Images: © WorkAC

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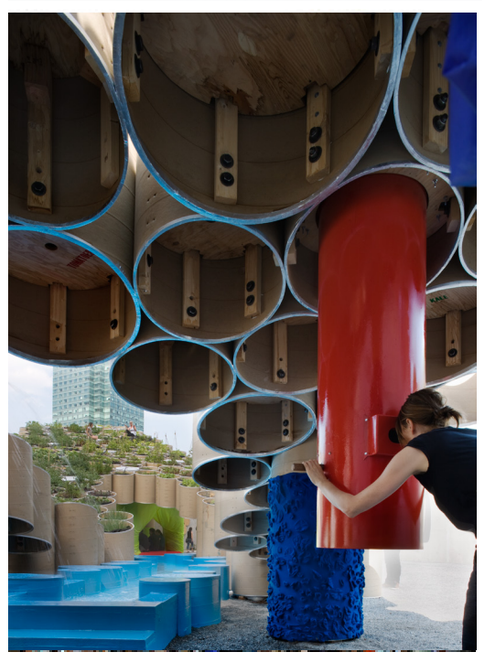
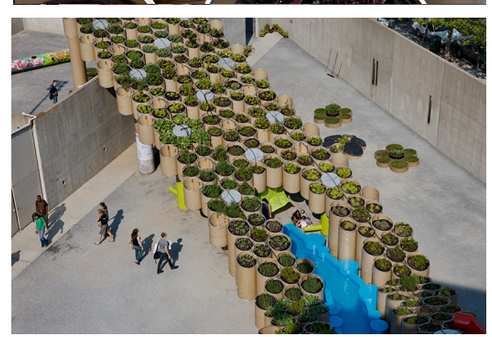




Click Here to Go Back To Reference Projects

Nature Matching System

Tattfoo Tan; murals, workshops, products; ongoing

NMS/Nature Matching System was developed by Tattfoo as a reminder to consume their daily recommended doses of color. The shades of color on the skin of every fruit and vegetable contains phytonutrients, compounds that play key roles in health and reduce the risk of heart disease and cancer. The more colors come together at a meal, the better. The Nature Matching System is activated by deploying murals, placemat and workshops that engage the public to cultivate a healthy eating habit through psychological habits, rather than analytical methods like counting calories.

Images: © Tattfoo Tan

Click Here To Go To Project Web Page

Click Here to Go Back To Reference Projects

Food Along the Corridor

Back to Table of Contents

Click Here To See All Food Maps

Click Here To See Fast Food Map

Click Here To See Food Store Map

Food Access, Districts 7&8 - Saint Paul, MN

Restaurant

Grocery Store

Convenience Store

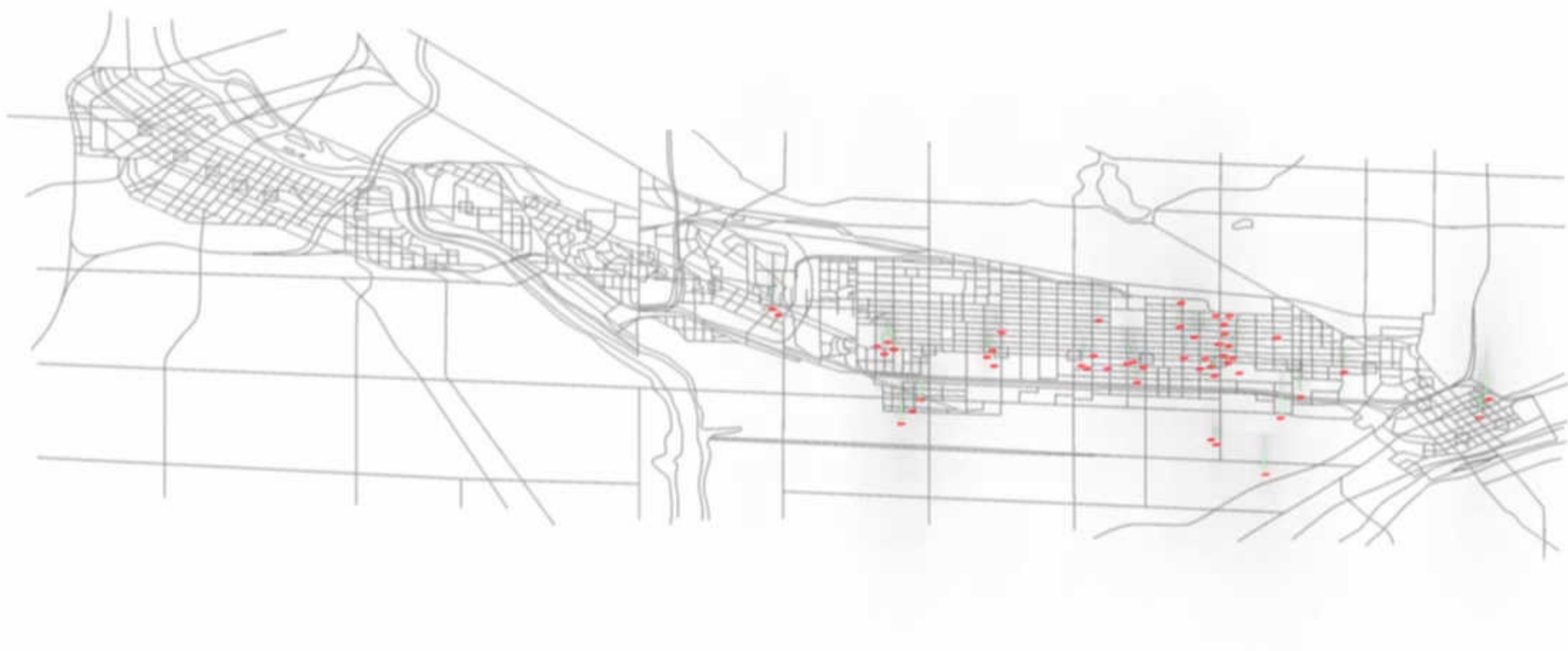
Fast Food

Community Garden

Farmer's Market

Working Together We Can Improve the Quality of Food in the Food System

The points on the map are the locations of organizations and businesses who might support Create: The Community Meal.
Click the video at the bottom to activate the energy released by an artist inviting the community to dream with them.



Locations of Food Organizations Serving the Central Corridor

AfroEco 771 University Ave W
St Paul, MN 55104

Asian Economic Development Association 379 University Ave W #213
St Paul, MN 55103

Aurora St. Anthony Neighborhood Development Corporation 774 University Ave W
St Paul, MN 55104

Center for Hmong Arts & Talents 995 University Ave W #220
St Paul, MN 55104

College of Food, Agriculture and Natural Resource Sciences (UofM) 1420 Eckles Ave
Falcon Heights, MN 55108

Concerned Asian Business Owners 712 University Ave W
St Paul, MN 55104

District Councils Collaborative 1080 University Ave W
St Paul, MN 55104

Frogtown Gardens 537 W Charles Ave
St Paul, MN 55103

Frogtown Neighborhood Association 685 W Minnehaha Ave
St Paul, MN 55104

Frogtown Square University Ave W & Dale St N
St Paul, MN 55104

Gordon Parks High School 1212 University Ave W
St Paul, MN 55104

Lao Family Community of Minnesota Metropolitan Council 320 University Ave W
St Paul, MN 55103

Macalester College 1600 Grand Ave
Macalester, St Paul, MN 55105

Model Cities 839 University Ave W
St Paul, MN 55104

Midway Chamber of Commerce 1600 University Ave W #4
St Paul, MN 55104

Neighborhood Development Corporation 663 University Ave W #200
St Paul, MN 55104

Rondo Community Library 461 Dale St N
St Paul, MN 55104

Springboard for the Arts 308 E Prince St
St Paul, MN 55101

St. Paul NAACP 375 N Oxford St
St Paul, MN 55104

Summit University Community Council 627 Selby Ave
St Paul, MN 55104

Urban Studies Program (UofM) 267 19th Ave S
Minneapolis, MN 55455

University Bank 200 University Ave W
St Paul, MN 55103

U-Plan 712 University Ave W #105
St Paul, MN 55104

Western State Bank 663 University Ave W
St Paul, MN 55104

Western Sculpture Park
Marion Avenue between Interstate 94 & University Avenue

Wilder Foundation 451 Lexington Pkwy N
St Paul, MN 55104

Heartland 289 E 5th St
St Paul, MN 55101

Ngon Vietnamese Bistro

Flamingo

Big Daddy's Old Fashioned Barbeque

Taihoa BBQ

Cultural Exchange Project: Model Cities Family Development Center

Aurora St. Anthony Peace Garden 774 University Ave W
St Paul, MN 55104

City Backyard Garden CSA 668 Victoria St S
St Paul, MN 55102

Farmer's Market 290 5th St E
St Paul Farmers Market, St Paul, MN 55101

Fran & Glady's Community Garden 680 Dale St N
St Paul, MN 55103

Greenhouse Garden 533 Dale St N
St Paul, MN 55103

House of Hope Garden 797 Summit Ave
St Paul, MN 55105

Mississippi Market Garden 1500 7th St W
St Paul, MN 55102

Oxford-Dayton Community Garden 1035 Dayton Ave
St Paul, MN 55104

Pig's Eye Farm CSA 1005 Sherburne Ave
St Paul, MN 55104

Three Ring Park and Farm University Ave W & N Griggs St
St Paul, MN 55104

Unity Unitarian Church Garden 733 Portland Ave
St Paul, MN 55104

Stone's Throw Farms 391 Maryland Ave W
St Paul, MN 55117

Daily Diner 615 University Ave W
St Paul, MN 55103

Frogtown Pop-up Tree Nursery Dale St N & W Lafond Ave
St Paul, MN 55103

Frogtown Farm & Park W Minnehaha Ave & N Victoria St
St Paul, MN 55104

Youth Farm & Market 128 W 33rd St #2
Minneapolis, MN 55408

Sun Foods

Shuang Hur Supermarket

Hmong International Marketplace 217 Como Ave
St Paul, MN 55103

Ashama Grocery & Meat

Victoria Theater 825 University Ave W
St Paul, MN 55104

Irrigate 308 E Prince St #270
St Paul, MN 55101

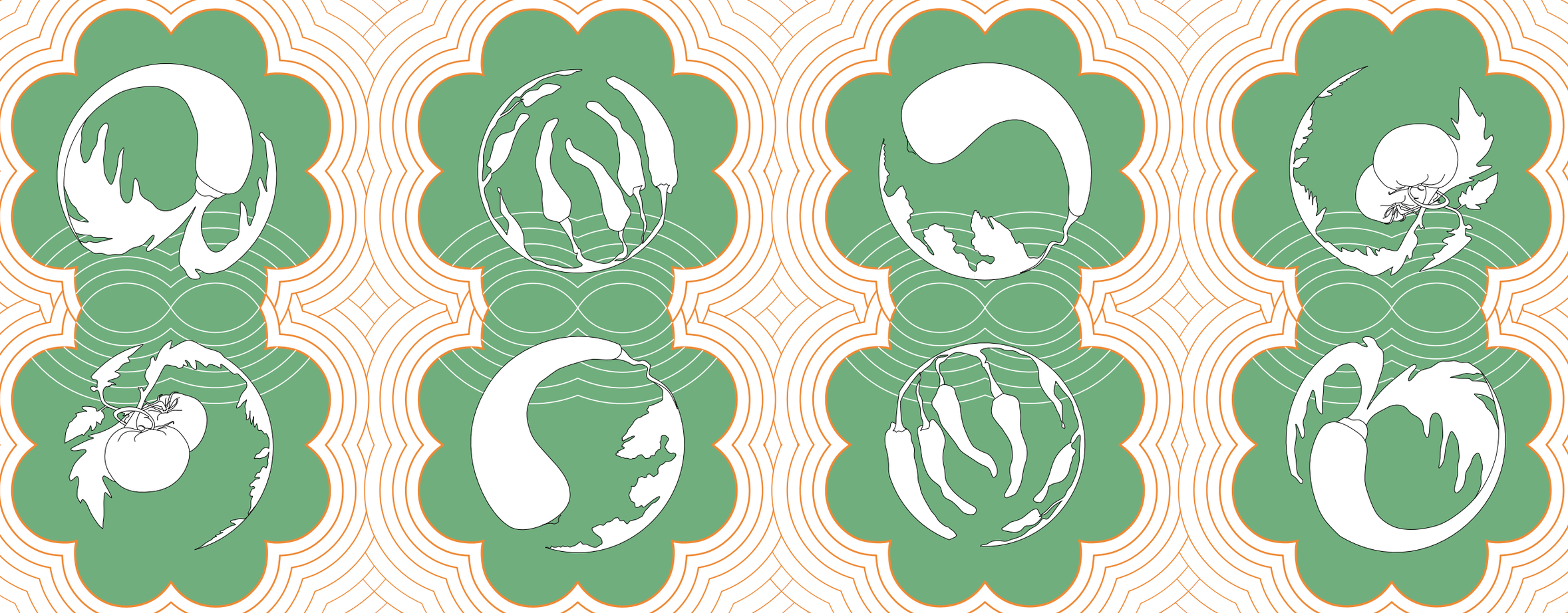
Historic Rondo Business District 712 University Ave W
St Paul, MN 55104

Little Mekong University Ave W & Western Ave N
St Paul, MN 55103

World Cultural Heritage District University Ave W
Saint Paul, MN 55104

Click Here to Go To Food Shed Map

Artist Demonstration Project for the Living Plan
Create: The Community Meal



Lead Artist: Seitu Jones

Artmaking Informing the Planning Process

An important methodology of *A Living Plan* was to embed the work of artists within the planning process itself.

During the course of the planning process, Rebar Group organized the Central Corridor *Fantastic Futures Bike Ride* and Works Progress produced a video series that explored community gardening and creative enterprise. These projects provided effective means for building connections to the community into the planning process; both resulted in profound insights that shaped the recommendations of the plan.

The next phase of *A Living Plan* will be launched with a demonstration project based on the *Urban Language* of food systems. Saint Paul-based artist Seitu Jones will lead *Create: The Community Meal* – a shared meal and civic conversation about food, food access and food justice. Produced by the non-profit Public Art Saint Paul, the project has been launched with funding from the Joyce Foundation.

Create: The Community Meal will demonstrate the principles of *A Living Plan* in the following ways:

- It will demonstrate how artists can develop a practice that is oriented around the *Urban Languages* and city systems articulated in *A Living Plan* and will foster civic dialogue about those profound questions of urbanism;
- It will demonstrate that this type of practice can lead to significant outcomes -- both aesthetic and those that arise from artist-driven, socially-engaged practice;
- It will demonstrate how this type of artmaking can be an iterative process for artists working in a variety of media and at various stages in their careers. As they work collaboratively or in parallel, it will inform the work of artists overall.

Create: The Community Meal

Developed over two-years, *Create: The Community Meal* will culminate in an extraordinary public event. Seitu Jones will bring together 2,000 people – transcending differences, distances and boundaries – to sit together for a meal at one long table set in the middle of a city street. He will collaborate with sculptor Cliff Garten, spoken word artist Tou Saiku Lee, architects Peter Kramer and Emily Stover, paper artist Mary Hark, producer Ashley Hanson and others on various aspects of the project. He will engage urban farmers organic chefs, city agencies, and citizens. The meal will be prepared from artist-designed mobile ArtKitchens and it will be served on a table with a 3,000-foot tablecloth artwork that maps urban food systems and incorporates patterns and imagery associated with food of many cultures.

The meal will follow a year-long listening project, through which Seitu will explore the traditions, attitudes, rituals, marketing, sale, preparation, presentation and consumption of food. He will stimulate conversation with questions such as "What do you talk about over dinner?", "What is healthy food?", "Where do you buy food?" and "What is your favorite recipe?" These video-documented dialogues will inform the menu for the meals and the designs of table, tablecloth, and mobile kitchens.

Spoken word artists from the multi-cultural communities along the Central Corridor will work with Seitu in this exploration, mentoring youth in the process and creating a piece to be performed at the event. They will learn about world food and food traditions from elders within new immigrant populations in order to create this piece. Seitu will also collaborate with artists and designers to create the ArtKitchens and a larger outdoor kitchen operated by local chefs who, as performance artists, will prepare the meal.

The mobile ArtKitchens will be designed for use during spring/summer/fall and tested throughout the community in the months leading up to the 2014 event. Long after The Community Meal is over, these functional sculptural elements will continue to serve as vehicles for teaching healthy food and nutrition concepts and techniques in neighborhoods where food security is an issue.

Consistent with Public Art Saint Paul's and the artist's environmental values, *Create:The Community Meal* will be a zero waste event. It will be creatively documented, broadly publicized and thoroughly evaluated to illuminate understanding and inform the ongoing work of the artists, urban farmers, and organizations active in urban food issues.

Create: The Community Meal manifests public art as a socially based practice that is deeply engaged with people and place with an intention of effecting change. It will help participants and citizens in our increasingly multi-cultural city to understand and visualize their neighborhood food system. It will engage the entire city in a civic dinner table conversation about food, food access and food justice. It will bring people together for a discussion of their common and sometimes divergent values, ideas and visions around food and, through the act of sharing a meal, begin to embrace those differences and further advocate healthy eating habits.

Water Systems

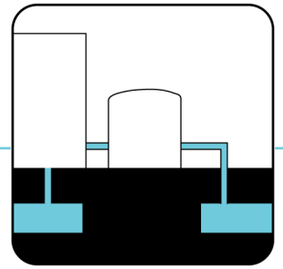
The Urban Language of Water considers the way that urban watersheds are managed. The harvesting of drinking water, treatment of wastewater and management of stormwater require overlapping networks of infrastructure that are generally hidden from the public view, and which occupy territories or geographies that are very different from the city as it is defined politically or experienced everyday.

The Language of Water asks, first and foremost, how the systems of managing water can also become systems of organizing and experiencing the city, and how that can inspire people to be better managers of this resource. The initial focus of this broad language should be on stormwater, because it is already an urgent matter of infrastructure design, capital investment and artist investigation along the Central Corridor. Artists can help explore how innovative stormwater management can extend beyond the Corridor and inspire people to re-engineer their own neighborhoods. This is ever more urgent as changing weather patterns result in more and more severe storms, which strain infrastructure already in place.

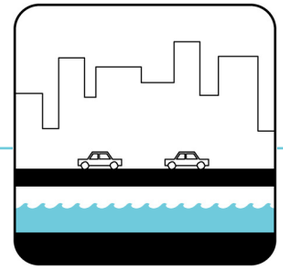
Reservoirs & Rivers

Aqueduct Delivery

Processing

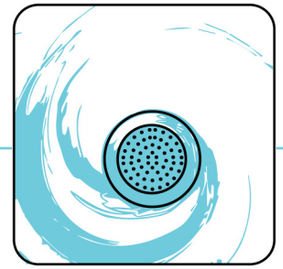


Underground Delivery



Faucet

Drain



Water Process, a Short Story in Icons

Urban areas consist of enormous amounts of impervious and hard-to-drain surfaces, such as roads, parking lots, roofs and lawns. Stormwater management is important to minimize the accumulation of peak rain volumes and flooding and the pollution that results from chemicals on roads and and managed landscapes that drain, untreated, into waterways. Extreme weather events, driven by climate change, pose new urgency and challenges for rethinking stormwater infrastructure.

Stormwater is managed in the Central Corridor by agencies organized along the lines of sub-watersheds that feed into the Mississippi – the Capitol Region Watershed District and the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization. Currently, Saint Paul, Minneapolis and the watershed districts are collaborating on a plan that will result in policies and demonstration projects for integrating stormwater management features into streetscape and urban design along the Central Corridor. As Saint Paul's public art ordinance requires, an artist has been included on that consulting team. The Saint Paul Design Center has published a design tool-kit for stormwater management design at the city, district, block and site scales.

Opportunities for Artists

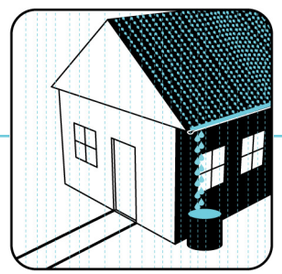
Major stormwater infrastructure is built by public agencies, but Minneapolis and Saint Paul are mature cities and most of what they need is in place. Still, there are several strategies artists could look into:

- Map the 100-year replacement cycle of stormwater infrastructure, from street drain to outfall, and opportunities inherent in re-imagining and reconstructing this infrastructure.
- Create a vocabulary of replicable small-scale functional elements, that could be use by private property owners (homeowners, commercial landlords, large institutions) who manage stormwater where it falls.
- Create a vocabulary of symbolic elements that could be used to mark important aspects of the infrastructure system that are not normally visible, such as outfalls.
- Imagine rituals that are related to the management of stormwater, as well as fresh water and wastewater.

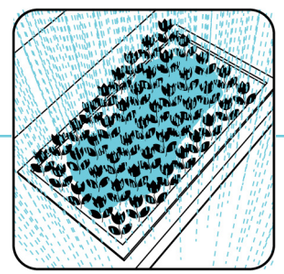
Questions for Artists to Address

- How can invisible natural processes and infrastructure system be made visible, tactile, experienced in and regonizable in everyday life?
- What emotional capital is invested in our water resources? What are our emotional and cultural connections to our lakes, rivers, rainfall?
- How can art help inspire and motivate the public to adopt water-sensitive practices and behaviors?
- How can art help the public understand that what they do on the river impacts the river and the public's use of it?
- How do personal behaviors and choices affect the water cycle and infrastructure systems? How can people be encouraged to approach their interaction with natural systems and resources in a mindful way? For example, how can the act of touching a faucet connect people to the broader idea of the watershed?

Roof Runoff

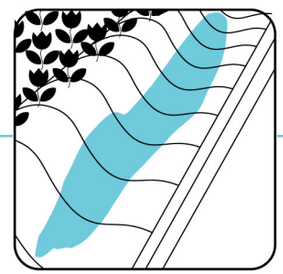


Rain Garden

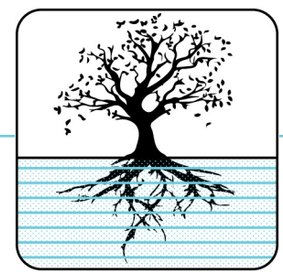


Stormwater Runoff

Swale



Infiltration Planter

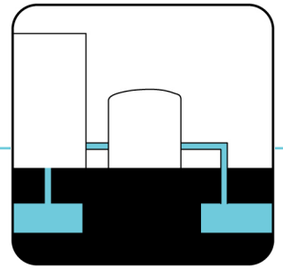


Mississippi River Water Quality

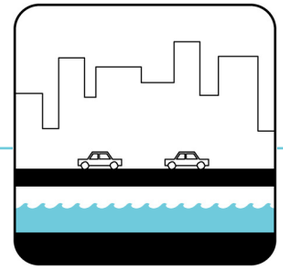
Reservoirs & Rivers

Aqueduct Delivery

Processing

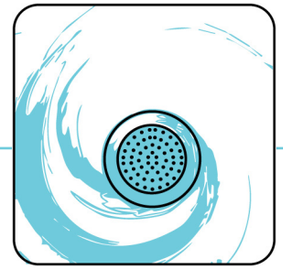


Underground Delivery



Faucet

Drain



Tamarack Rooftop Restoration

Dendritic Decay Garden

Escaped Infrastructure

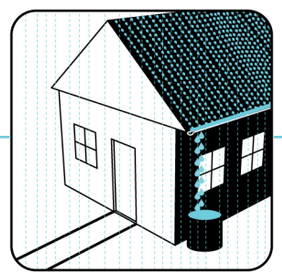
Water Pollution Control Plant

Undercurrents

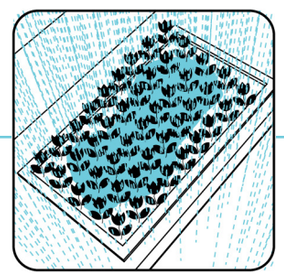
A Public Art Plan for Utility Infrastructure

No Beginning No End

Roof Runoff

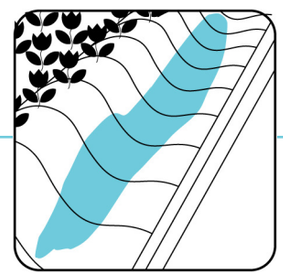


Rain Garden

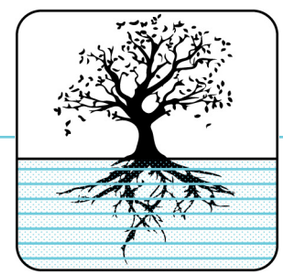


Stormwater Runoff

Swale



Infiltration Planter



Mississippi River Water Quality

Back to Table of Contents

Reconstituting the Landscape: A Tamarack Rooftop Restoration

Christine Baeumler, Minneapolis, 2012

Christine Baeumler's tamarack wetland restoration project on the roof of the main entrance to MCAD calls attention to these fragile and unique ecosystems and presents an artistic reimaging of green roof infrastructure. The project, a collaboration with engineer Kurt Leuthold and ecologist Fred Rozumalski, reminds residents how we might "reconstitute" the landscape by capturing water where it drops. Rainfall is re-circulated from a cistern back onto the roof, using solar power to generate the pump. During the Northern Spark Festival, an adjacent outside wall featured a large-scale video projection of spectral tamaracks. A "field station" was set up in the second floor galleries where the rooftop is especially visible through floor-to-ceiling windows. Visitors looked at the installation through binoculars, learn about the animals that inhabit this unique and often inaccessible landscape, and record their own observations. Maps of local remnant tamarack ecosystems and information on how people might explore these unique places will be available. During the Northern Spark event, two naturalists from the Bell Museum of Natural History were also on site answer visitors' questions.

Presented by MCAD Gallery at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design with support from the McKnight Foundation, Barr Engineering, the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization and the Smaby Foundation

Photo credits: Rik Sferra and Christine Baeumler

Documentary of the project:

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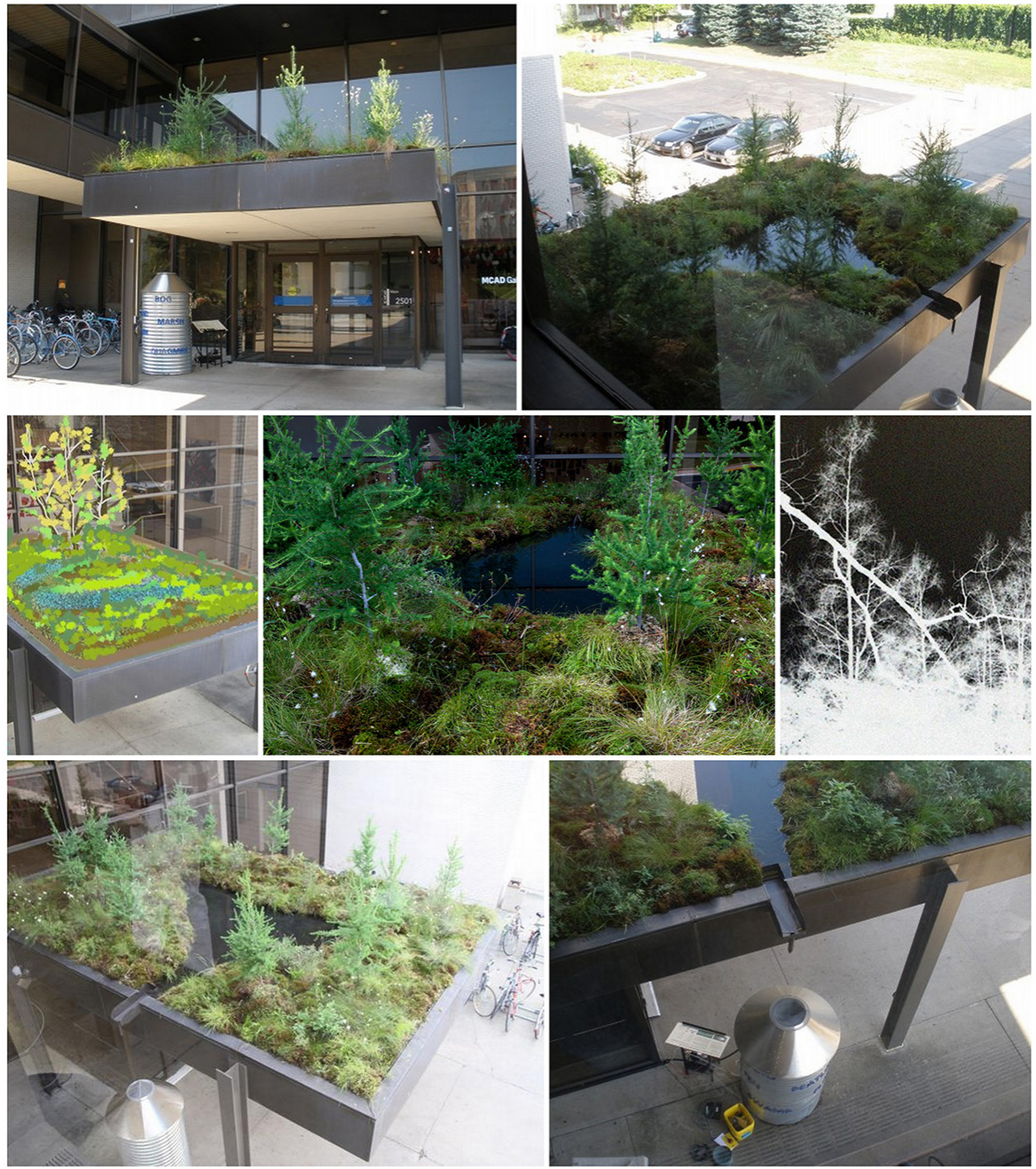


Click Here to Go Back To Reference Projects

The Conscience of the City: Treating Wastewater in Silicon Valley

Robert Dawson, San José, CA, 2010
Commissioned by the City of San José Public Art Program.

Robert Dawson worked for one year with the City of San Jose's Cultural Affairs Office and the Environmental Services Department. He was the city's first photographer-in-residence at its Water Pollution Control Plant. Dawson's photographs show the changes over the fifty-year History of the Water Pollution Control Plant. Three exhibits came out of this work. One was at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Library in San Jose, CA in 2010. A long-term exhibit was shown at City of San Jose's City Windows Gallery from 2010 to 2011. A permanent exhibit of the work is on display at the City's Water Pollution Control Plant. A catalog from the project is being planned.

Photos: © Robert Dawson

Click Here To Go To Project Web Page

Click Here to Go Back To Reference Projects

A Public Art Plan for the Expressive Potential of Utility Infrastructure

Via Partnership, Cliff Garten, C2HM Hill; City of Calgary, Alberta; 2007

What is a Watershed? It is "that area of land, a bounded hydrologic system, within which all living things are inextricably linked by their common water course and where, as humans settled, simple logic demanded that they become part of the community."

– John Wesley Powell, explorer of the Colorado River, 1869

Though many North American cities grew because of their geographic relationship to a river, few of these cities enjoy a connection with a river whose ecosystem is as intact as the Bow River, which passes through Calgary on its path from the Continental Divide to Hudson Bay. A source of drinking water, recreation, and a world-class trout fishery, the Bow has long been the lifeblood of Calgary. Tucked into the foothills that roll out from the Rockies, the Bow River is a quiet, steady force in the landscape.

A Public Art Plan for the Expressive Potential of Utility Infrastructure, commissioned by the City of Calgary's Utilities and Environmental Protection department, represents a groundbreaking approach to public art and water infrastructure. The plan conceived of public art as a series of linked events within the landscape and watershed of the Bow River, and commissioned as interdisciplinary collaborations.

The plan responds to the water department's goals of citizen education and stewardship concerning water resources. The expectation was that art projects could create a visible, visceral understanding of the notion that not only is the Bow a river with in a city, but that Calgary is a city within a river – the Bow River watershed – and that the health of the watershed is vital to the health of the city.

The plan included numerous place-based projects, the launching of an artist-led project to develop a visual language for the entire system of infrastructure managed by the water department, and an exhibition of temporary projects called Watermarks.

Click Here To Go To Project Web Page

A Public Art Plan for the Expressive Potential of Utility Infrastructure - The City of Calgary, January 2007

Click Here to Go Back To Reference Projects

Dendritic Decay Garden

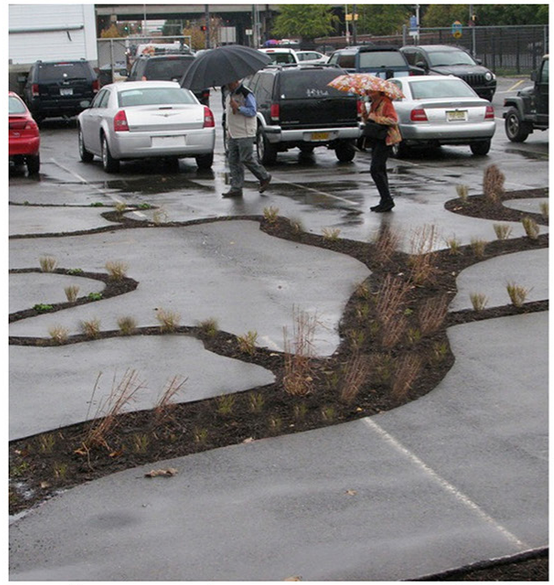
Stacy Levy, Philadelphia, 2012
In collaboration with Biohabitats, Inc.
Commissioned by the Delaware River Waterfront Corporation

The destructive power of plant roots is harnessed to create different ways to breakdown the remnant industrial hardscape of the park. Removal of the entire surface of the concrete and asphalt would have used up the entire design/build budget for the park, so we used the freeze & thaw cycles and the power of roots to do the job of decaying the concrete and asphalt over time. The native plants took three seasons to really grow in, supporting the adage for plants growth patterns during the first few seasons after planting: sleep/creep/leap.

The patterns of hardscape removal and planting depicts the watershed of the site and functions as a rain garden which allows the storm water runoff to be captured and then slowly infiltrate the rain garden landscape, preventing it from entering the river.

Washington Avenue Green is the first of a long line of parks planned for the bikeway running along Philadelphia's side of the Delaware. It is the beginning of restoring the shoulders of the river —bringing back the verdant biodiversity that once shrouded them before industrialization. This project does many things: it brings native riverine plants back to the shore, creates better storm water management through rain gardens and swales, prototypes a series of floating wetlands; and as it grows, it will make a shady respite along a rather hot urbanized bike trail.

Photos: © Stacy Levy



Click Here To Go To Project Web Page

Click Here to Go Back To Reference Projects

Undercurrents

Laura Haddad, Seattle, 2003/2010

Artist Laura Haddad served on the design team for the The Denny Way/ Lake Union Combined Sewer Overflow project, which safeguards the water quality of Lake Union and Elliott Bay by significantly reducing untreated stormwater overflows.

Haddad's goal was to ensure that the site architecture and landscape reveal the processes of the system in visually poetic ways and promote awareness of wastewater treatment as green infrastructure. There are several components of the project. A pictogram of storm water conveyance is etched on a stainless steel wall that leads to the plaza. The plaza is graded to divert storm water runoff over paved surfaces and into the center swale, which then flows out to Elliott Bay. The swale reveals what happens in the underground pipes during heavy rains. The fencing design is derived from reeds and other shoreline grasses that naturally filter estuaries. The plaza provides an overlook for Elliott Bay and reinforces our important connection to the waterways of the region.

Photos © Laura Haddad

Click Here To Go To Project Web Page

Click Here to Go Back To Reference Projects

...no beginning no end/circle of life/blessed water/ blood of life...

Jane Tsong, King County, Wash., 2005 -

Jane Tsong's artwork is installed in three locations at the Brightwater Wastewater Treatment Plant and actively blesses the three elements processed by the plant: water, air, and biosolids (earth). Blessings are activated as each element departs the treatment process and continues its life cycle in the natural world. The biosolids and water blessings were written by poet Judith Roche. The blessing for the air was written by the artist.

Images:

Top, lower right © Jane Tsong

Lower left © Fabrication Specialties

Click Here To Go To Project Web Page

Click Here to Go Back To Reference Projects

Escaped Infrastructure

Lucy Begg and Robert Gay (Thoughtbarn), Philadelphia, 2012
Commissioned by the Philadelphia Mural Arts Program for the Manayunk Development Corporation

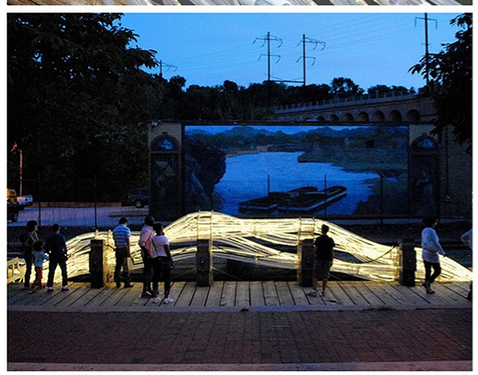
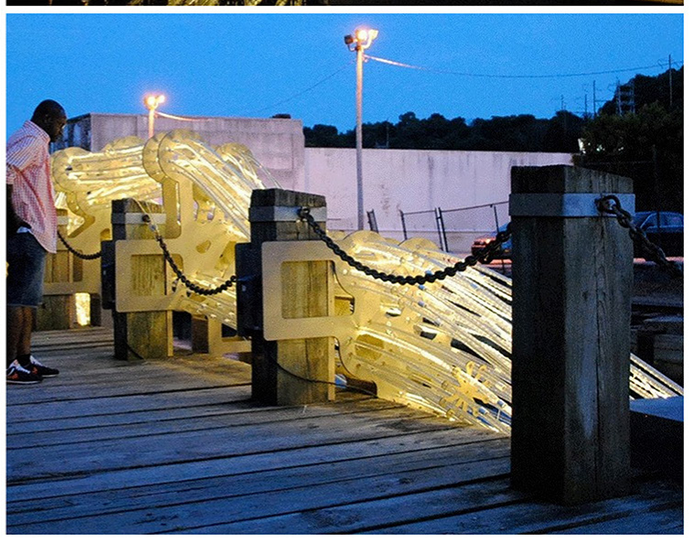
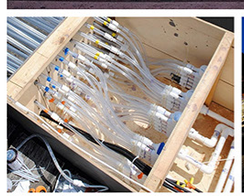
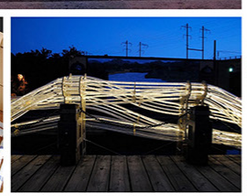
Escaped Infrastructure was a site-specific temporary installation that brings a new dimension to the Manayunk Towpath and Canal, a remnant of Philadelphia's nineteenth-century industrial past.

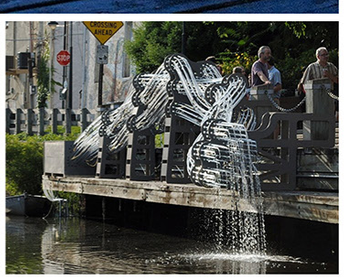
As visitors walked along the towpath, a series of water pumps in the canal were activated by motion sensors. The canal water, usually hidden from view on Main Street, was drawn through the 50-foot-long bundle of clear tubes. As it poured out of the other end, it also lent the canal a new audible quality – the water could be heard for the first time.

Escaped Infrastructure was inspired by the networks of pipes, tubes, and wires that existed along the Manayunk Canal and an idea of this infrastructure "breaking loose" to create unexpected experiences along the towpath. Long-term plans are currently underway to restore the canal to its original navigable condition, to improve environmental and recreational opportunities.

Photos: © Thoughtbarn

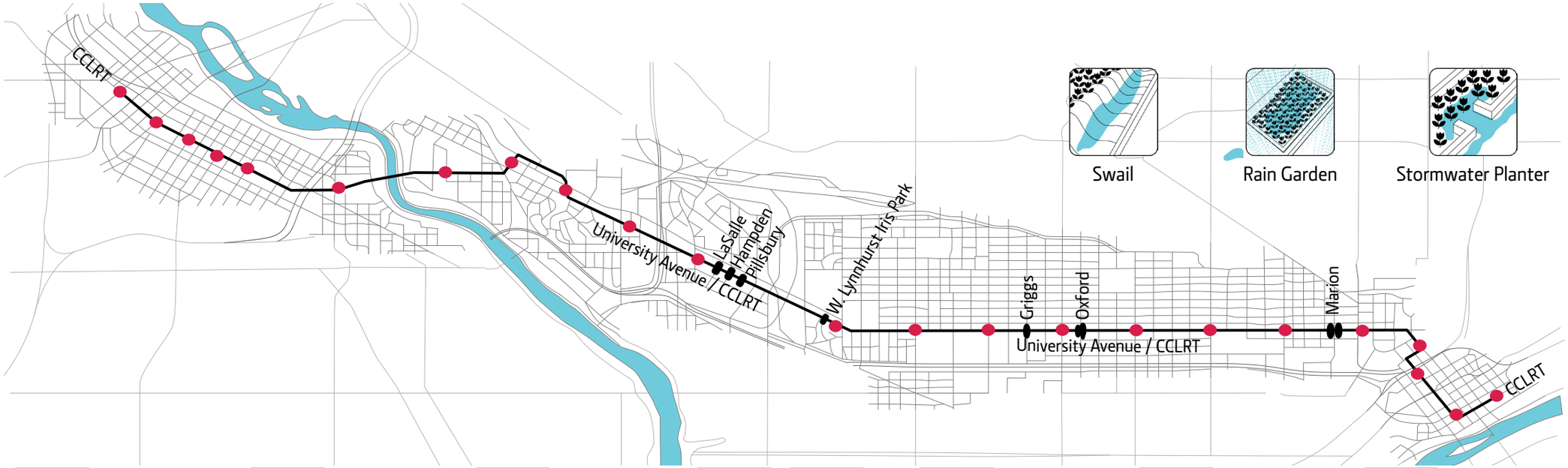
Click Here To Go To Project Web Page

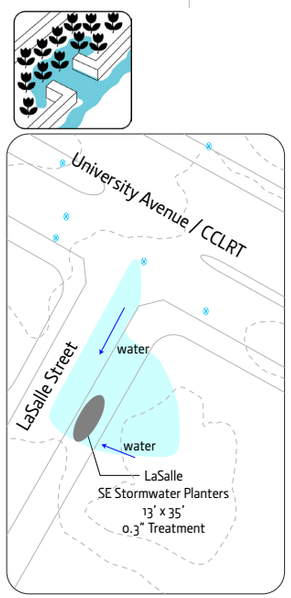







Click Here to Go Back To Reference Projects

Artists Collaborate on Stormwater Infrastructure in the Central Corridor





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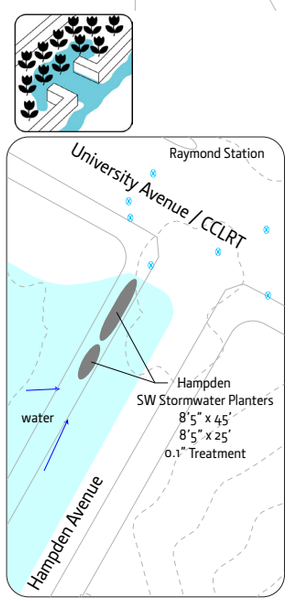

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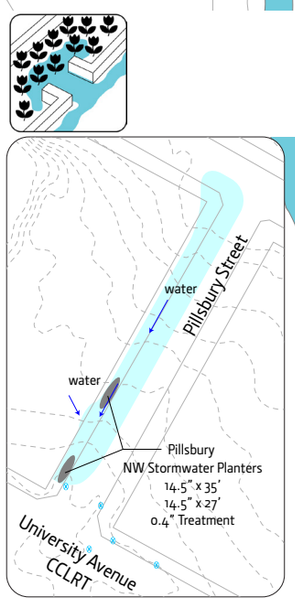

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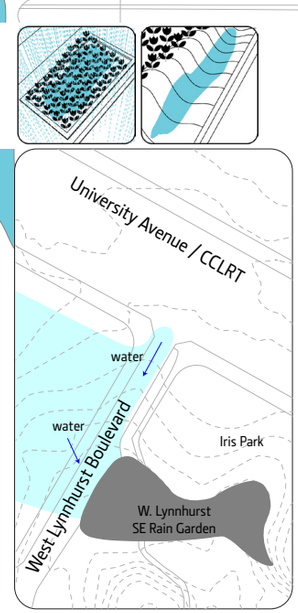
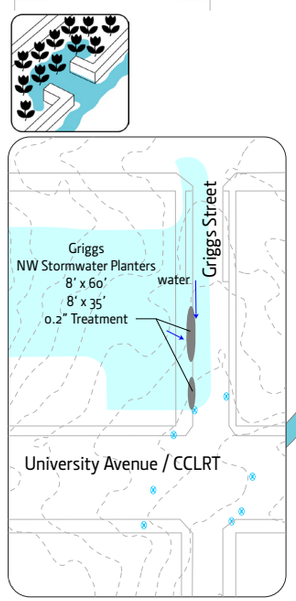


W. Lynnhurst
Iris Park



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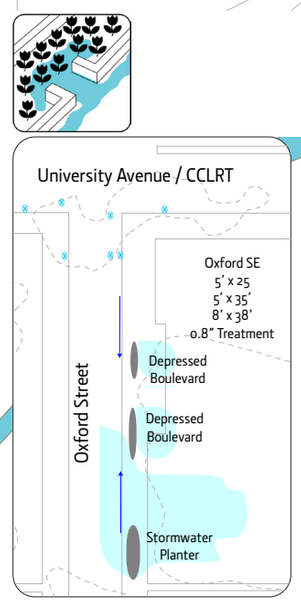

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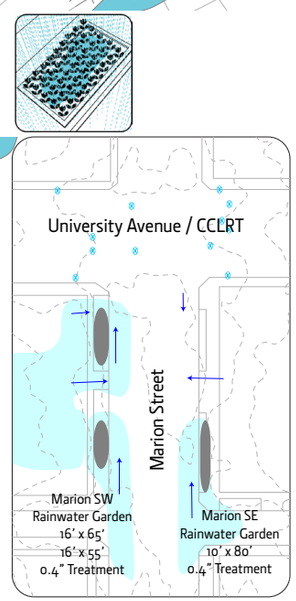


Marion

Back to Table of Contents

Zero Waste

Zero Waste is encourages the redesign of products so that all materials are reused, and the amount of material sent to landfills and incinerators is minimized. The Urban Language of Zero Waste considers how healthy and sustainable human systems are like natural cycles, where the outputs are used as an input for another process.

Back to Table of Contents

Raw Materials

Secondary Materials

Rethink Design & Stewardship

Manufacturing

Retail

Zero Waste, a Short Story in Icons

Zero Waste means designing and maintaining material and resources in ways that conserve and recover them. It means eliminating discharges to land, water, or air that do not contribute productively to natural systems or the economy. It means preserving the resilience and long-term health of the natural systems that supply the resources and materials upon which our economic prosperity and well-being depend.

Cities across the U.S. are exploring ways of exploring the philosophy of Zero Waste into their waste management cycles. Generally, Zero Waste involves two basic strategies. One is called "pre-cycling," which means reducing the amount of extraneous material in a product stream (such as eliminating superfluous packaging). The other is designing products with an eye to their after-use, so more material can be recycled.

At a broader level, the concept of Zero Waste could be expanded to resource systems such as energy, water, data and physical infrastructure. Each of these resources has a system of production, consumption and disposal that could be evaluated for efficiency, resiliency and minimal impact on the environment.

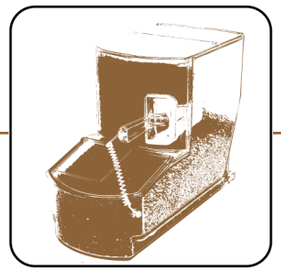
Zero Waste is an emerging issue in the Central Corridor. Saint Paul has a goal of becoming a zero-waste city by 2020.

Opportunities for Artists

- I*nformational awareness projects* can offer provocative view on how the waste stream works and what its components are. Often these projects are co-located with places where waste is found or where it is processed. Usually they are staged as temporary interventions.
- *Waste infrastructure project*s can inject artful design into elements of the waste processing system, bringing them to the forefront of people's awareness and attention.
- Waste ritual projects humanize product cycles and waste management processes. *Touch Sanitation* (Mierle Laderman Ukeles) is a nationally prominent model.

Use

Reduce



Reuse & Repair

Recycle

Compost

Back to Table of Contents

Concept art work for story icons: Lynn Hamilton and Eureka Recycling

Raw Materials

Secondary Materials

Rethink Design & Stewardship

Manufacturing

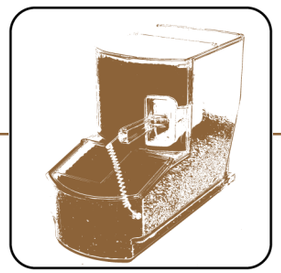
Retail

Mear Park
Trash Cans

Urban Beautification

Use

Reduce



Reuse & Repair

Recycle

Compost

Back to Table of Contents

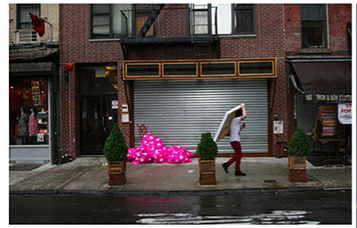
Concept art work for story icons: Lynn Hamilton and Eureka Recycling

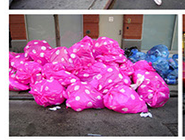
TRASH

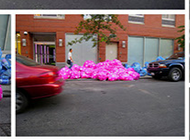
Adrian Kondratowicz, New York, ongoing

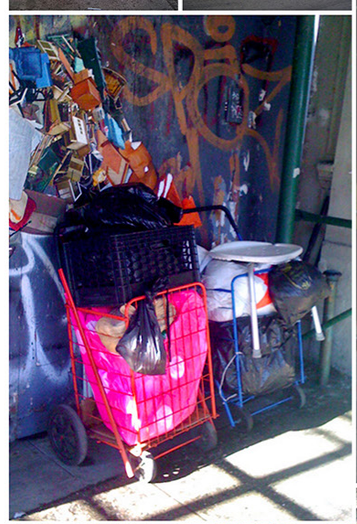
In 2008, artist Adrian Kondratowicz came to his Harlem neighborhood with an interactive concept: swap standard black trash bags for an alternative with chromatic volume. Working with biodegradable plastic, he produced the first TRASH bags and distributed them throughout his community. At Harlem's next collection day the local businesses and residents used the bags - creating a vibrant, unexpected remix for passers by. TRASH's appeal was infectious, spreading its synergy from Harlem to other districts such as LES, SOHO, West Village, Brooklyn and the Meatpacking district, resulting in 4,000 examples of urban beautification and collective expression. It was emotional and efficient, the ultimate case study for public art.

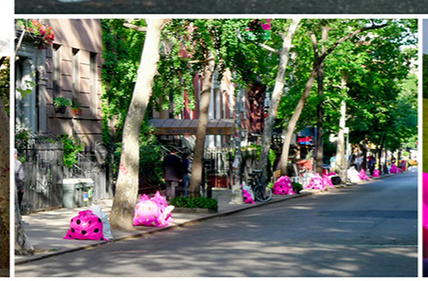
Images: Gina Santucci for Adrian K Studio











[Click Here To Go To Project Web Page]

Click Here to Go Back To Reference Projects

The Art of Recycling, 2009

Seitu Jones, Saint Paul, MN
Commissioned by Public Art Saint Paul
in partnership with Eureka Recycling

The Art of Recycling grew out of questions about environmental stewardship and public space design. Mears Park is a unique space, designed by artist Brad Goldberg and landscape architect Don Ganje and recognized by the American Society of Landscape Architects in 2000 with a Centennial medallion as a national landmark for outstanding landscape architecture. Generic bins that work elsewhere would be unworthy here. Public Art Saint Paul and Eureka sought a way to reflect the values of the place where recycling happens. For Mears Park it was only fitting to commission artful recycling containers that rise to the standard of this national landscape design landmark.

Seitu Jones was commissioned to design the recycling bins. He focused on the sculptural integrity of the bins and was concerned with their ability to withstand the harsh Minnesota climate and surviving the rough realities of the "Load 'N Pack" pick-up method to which all bins are subjected. As a companion piece, Marcus Young, Saint Paul City Artist-in-Residence, concentrated on the more abstract aspects of the project. A conceptual artist, he was interested in what the bins communicate to the neighborhood about art and sustainability, and how park-goers are educated by these objects. Young created a whimsical ritualistic "gift" designed to engage citizens -- to circulate throughout the neighborhood and thus bind residents to the place and to each other.

The Art of Recycling invited a robust dialogue -- how do the aesthetics and ritual of recycling affect public behavior? Jones and Young saw the recycling bin as a behavioral device that will ultimately disappear when behavior changes and nothing is left behind on the ground or in the bin.

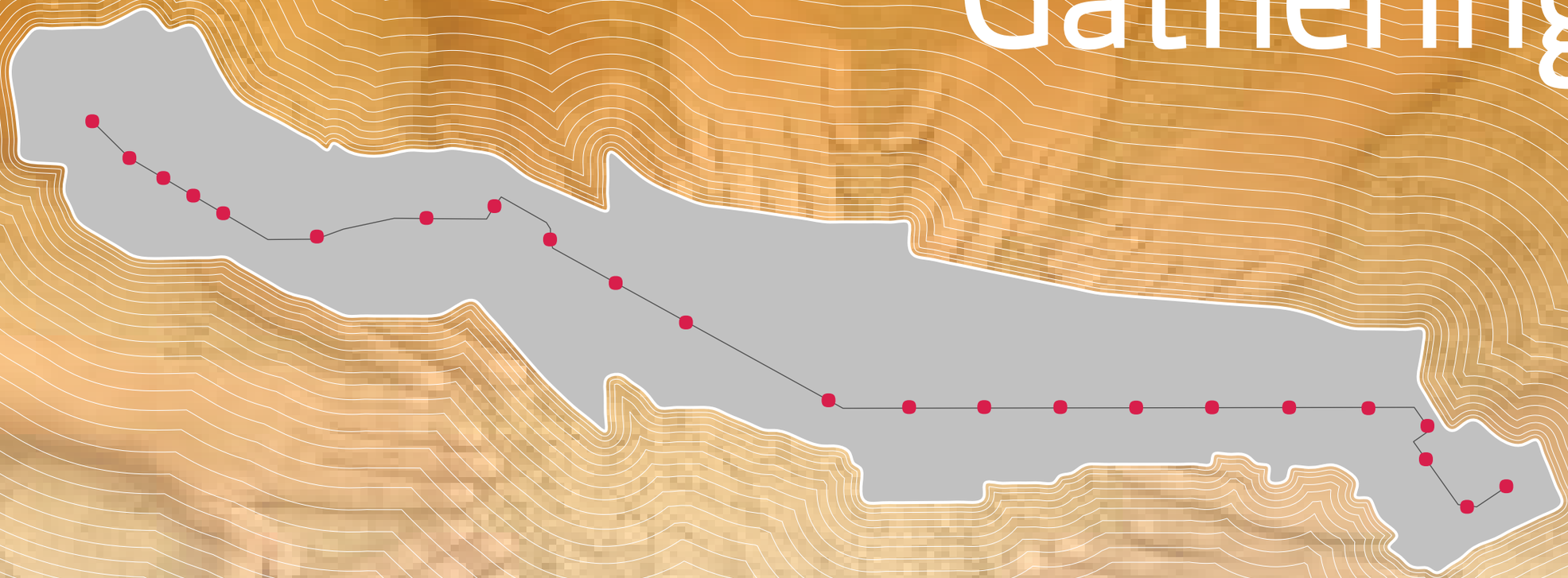
The Art of Recycling was supported by Public Art Saint Paul's 20th Anniversary Fund, the Lowertown Future Fund, and Saint Paul Cultural STAR and by Eureka Recycling through a grant from the Environmental Protection Agency.

Images: © Seitu Jones

Click Here To Go To Project Web Page

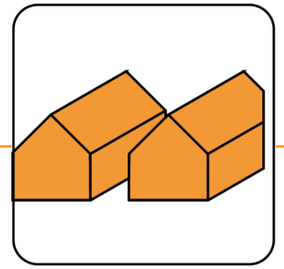
Click Here to Go Back To Reference Projects

Gathering



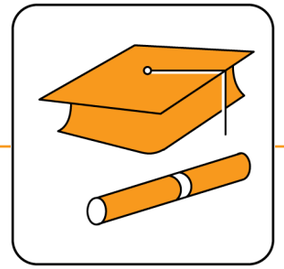
The Urban Language of Gathering Places is based on the conviction that people need physical places to get together – while acknowledging that the activities that are shared in these spaces, and the spaces themselves, are endlessly diverse and constantly being reinvented as our communities evolve.

Neighborhoods

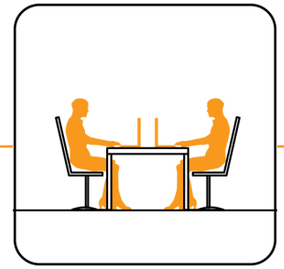


Cultural History

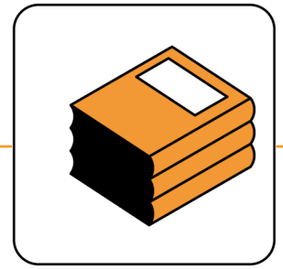
Education



Social Media



Literature and Media



Gathering, a Short Story in Icons

Gathering places are a key feature of the visions that have been expressed for the Central Corridor. Many already exist: Dickerman Park, Horton Arboretum, Western Sculpture Park, residential blocks in Frogtown and Midway transformed by Livable Community projects. These places will be invigorated with new ideas that reflect people's evolving ideas about living in the city.

Some are fondly remembered: the vacant outdoor space on University Avenue that was transformed into a hub for projecting and discussing Wing Young Huie's University Avenue Project photographs. Still others are still taking shape: Pedro Park, an open space corridor proposed for the Midway area, an anchor space for the creative zone around the Textile Center, the Washington Avenue transit/pedestrian mall through the university campus, a new community cultural spot in Cedar–Riverside.

Opportunities for Artists

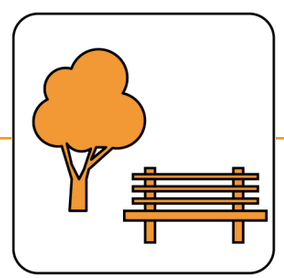
Artists will play a key role in helping the community imagine what types of gathering and what types of places will be important to the community's future, and to demonstrate the importance of those places to the vitality of the Corridor. The challenge for a *Community of Practice* is to examine how a diverse network of Gathering Places can be supported by public and private decisions about how the public realm is designed, built and managed.

- Temporary prototypes such as festivals can test new uses for public space.
- Community micro-infrastructure projects can insert special features that anchor communities to place. The desire for Cedar-Riverside residents for an outdoor spoken-word performance space is an example.
- Repurposing projects can explore multiple-use gathering spaces. Can parks or plazas be used for stormwater management, urban agriculture or food distribution? Interpretive projects can explore crosscurrents of culture and identity in gathering. The proposal for an "herbarium" in Horton Arboretum is an example.

Questions for Artists to Address:

- How, when, where and why do people gather in the Central Corridor?
- How does gathering take on a life of its own, as an episodic/temporal fabric/infrastructure?
- What types of connection and gathering will the essential for healthy urban life five years, ten years, from now? What types of rituals, places should be created?
- How can gathering places be built into future urban form?
- What social benefits can be gained from strengthening gathering?

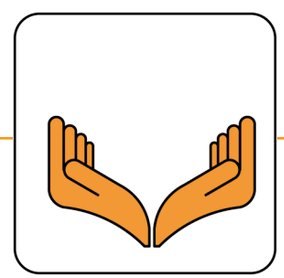
Parks



Coffee Shops + Restaurants

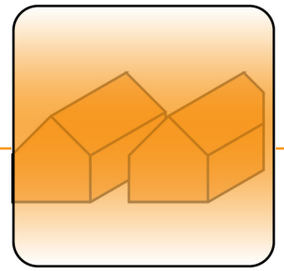
Public/Common Space

Public Events



Impromptu Gathering

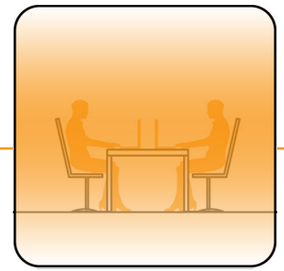
Neighborhoods



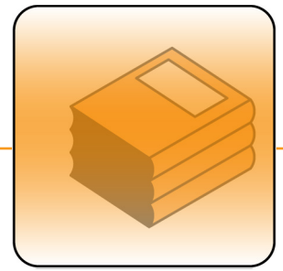
Cultural History

Education

Social Media



Literature and Media



Shared Commitment

Garden Passage

Open Field Square

Air Forest

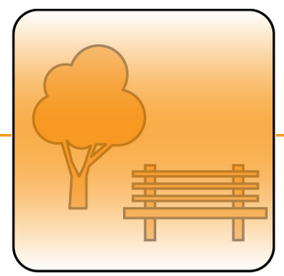
Give and Take

PASPider

Nappening

Third Place Gallery

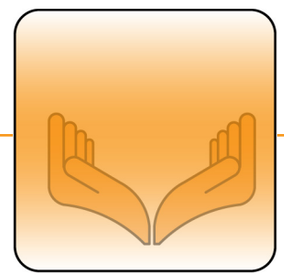
Parks



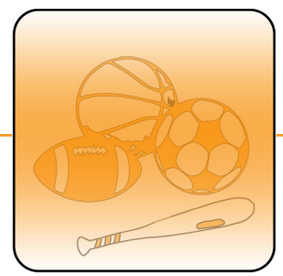
Coffee Shops + Restaurants

Public/Common Space

Public Events



Impromptu Gathering



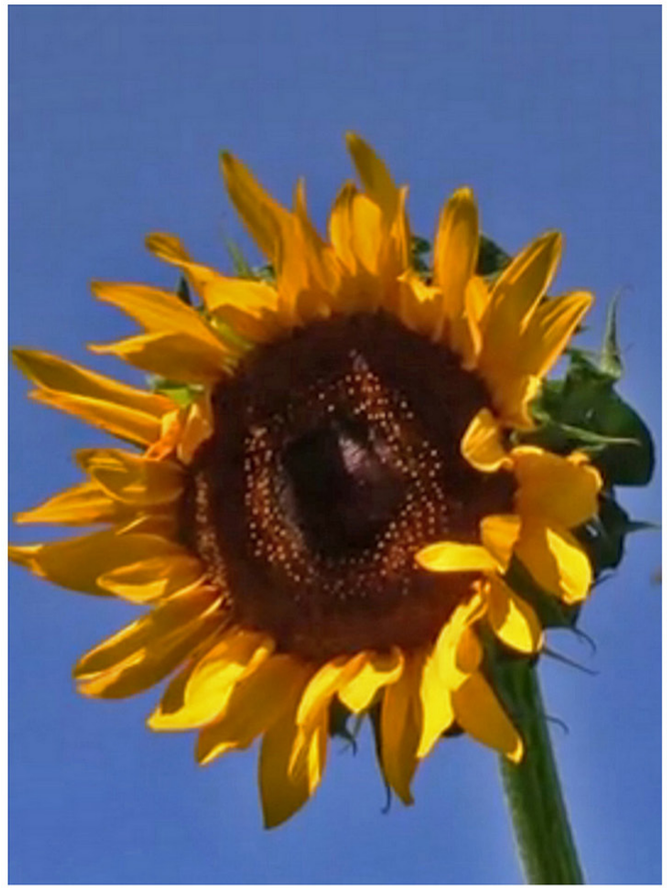
Back to Table of Contents

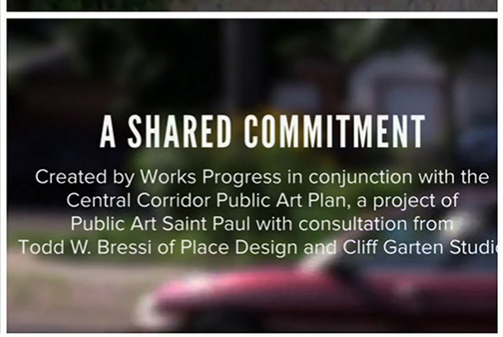
A Shared Commitment

Works Progress, Saint Paul, 2011
A project of Public Art Saint Paul

The artist collaborative Works Progress (Colin Kloecker and Shanai Matteson) create this and other videos created using a participatory process. They asked community gardeners from the Hamline–Midway neighborhood of Saint Paul to lead a walk around their gardens and to tell their stories along the way. The video was edited from footage shot during the walk, and the narrative was constructed from the words of these gardeners, who described not only the places and processes involved in gardening, but what it means to inhabit those places - to create new public futures for their neighborhoods in gardens and green spaces. Featured gardens include the Hamline-Thomas Community Garden, the Horton Park Native Plants Garden, and the Midway Greenspirit Community Garden.

Images © Works Progress





Click Here To Go To Project Web Page

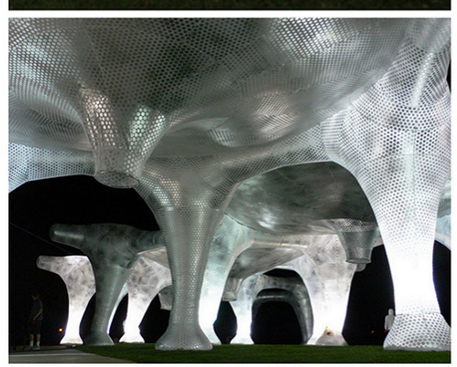
Click Here to Go Back To Reference Projects

Air Forest

Mass Studies, Denver, 2008
Commissioned by the Denver Office of Cultural Affairs as part of Dialog:City

Air Forest was a temporary public pavilion installed in City Park, Denver, for Dialog:City, an arts and cultural event organized during the Democratic National Convention in 2008. The event invited ten artists and architects to design or exhibit site-specific projects at various locations of the city, and for the public to converge and spark dialogue across the city through innovative cultural initiatives. Mass Studies was invited to create a temporary public space to be utilized in a vast array of scheduled events (such as the Yoga Health Festival, a cocktail party for the convention, a high school play, Dialog:City closing party) as well as for the general public to enjoy.

Photos by Sungpil Won, © Mass Studies



Click Here To Go To Project Web Page

Click Here to Go Back To Reference Projects

Garden Passage

Walter Hood / Hood Design Studio, Pittsburgh

Artist Walter Hood, commissioned to create a sculptural garden adjacent to Pittsburgh's new hockey rink, designed sinuous screen in which images from the community would be embedded to glass block. Residents were invited to bring their photographs to a series of community gatherings, such as barbecues, at which they were scanned and the stories behind the photos were recorded.

Photos: © Hood Design Studio

Click Here To Go To Project Web Page

Click Here to Go Back To Reference Projects

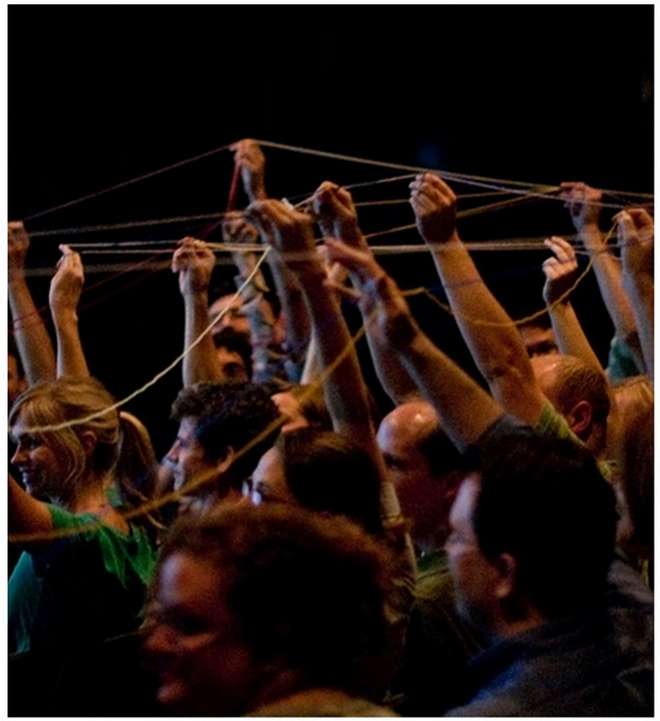
Give and Take

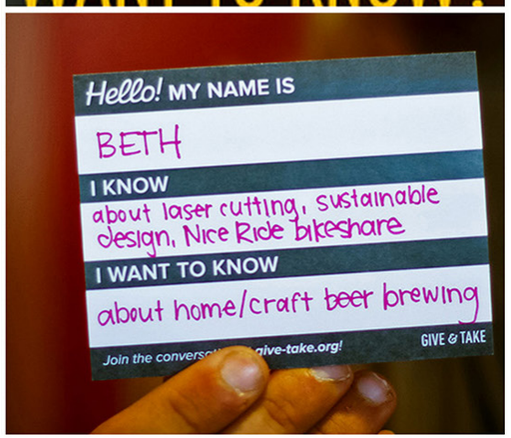
Works Progress, Minneapolis, ongoing

What do you know? What do you want to know? These two questions are the catalysts for Give and Take, a public project that Works Progress began in 2009 to encourage teaching, learning, and face-to-face social interaction in our community. Give & Take is an open platform based around custom-designed nametags asking attendees to share one thing that they know, and one thing they want to know. These two questions launch an interactive program of presentations on diverse topics, hands-on activities, and socially-focused games. Give and Take taps the know-how of participants, sparking conversation and building relationships across disciplines and social silos.

Images © Works Progress

Click Here To Go To Project Web Page





Click Here to Go Back To Reference Projects

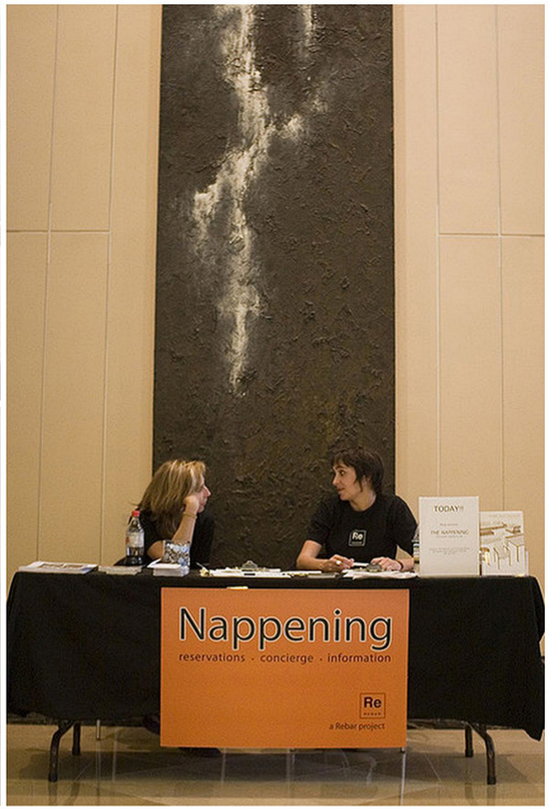
Common Space

Rebar, San Francisco, 2007

Starting in May 2006, Rebar set out to map, document and probe the explicit and unspoken rules of San Francisco's privately-owned public spaces. First, Rebar gathered vital data on the fourteen sites and created a web-based forum for publishing field reports from anyone visiting the sites. Next, in partnership with performance arts group Snap Out of It, Rebar activated the fourteen privately owned public spaces with a series of "paraformances": performance actions inspired by the field reports and designed to probe the spaces' implicit social codes. The paraformance – an intentional reframing of reality –often begins subtly, as a playful, "plausibly deniable" action by a single individual, and can culminate in full scale, "flash mob"-style occupations that engage the participation of their accidental audiences.

The Nappening created a safe and comfortable indoor snoozing environment with attendants standing by to wake you for your next meeting, fostering an emergent sleep event in the midst of the workday. By repurposing architectural spaces designed around economic activity, the Nappening broadens the definition of prosperity and initiates a grass-roots claim on new spatial and social territory.

Photos: © Rebar Group



Click Here To Go To Project Web Page

Click Here to Go Back To Reference Projects

Call and Answer Project

Amanda Lovelee, Minneapolis, 2011
Presented as part of the Northern Spark festival and the Walker Art Center Open Field program

In 2011, artist Amanda Lovelee set up the Call and Answer Project to encourage the kind of face-to-face connection, hand-holding, and pure pleasure that come from community-oriented folk dance. She organized the project in several venues, including Northern Spark festival (2011) and the Walker Art Center Open Field program (2011).

Photos: © Amanda Lovelee

Click Here To Go To Project Web Page

Click Here to Go Back To Reference Projects

PASPider

Christopher Lutter-Gardella, Saint Paul, 2008-ongoing
Commissioned and owned by Public Art Saint Paul

The PASPider is a mobile art center that seeks to foster curiosity, imagination and appreciation of public art by engaging the community in creative interactive workshops. This tent-like shelter itself is a giant artwork – a kinetic spider puppet, created by artist Christopher Lutter-Gardella. Installed atop a custom-built 13-foot Scamp trailer, the PASPider is mobile – even its mandibles are animated! With its eight googly eyes rolling and winking and a small megaphone in its smiling lips, the PASPider creeps through the neighborhood streets to announce its arrival. Once in Western Park, PASPider's eight legs stretch out 25 feet, providing a webby sun canopy to shade artmaking below!

Images by Andy King

Click Here To Go To Project Web Page

Click Here to Go Back To Reference Projects

Third Place Gallery

Wing Young Huie, Minneapolis, 2011- ongoing

"The third place" is a term used in the concept of community building to refer to social surroundings separate from the two usual social environments of home and the workplace. Ray Oldenburg (The Great Good Place, 1989) argues that third places are important for civil society, democracy, civic engagement and establishing feelings of a sense of place. Oldenburg calls one's "first place" the home and those that one lives with. The "second place" is the workplace, where people may actually spend more time than anywhere else. "Third places," then, are anchors of community life and facilitate and foster broader, more creative interaction.

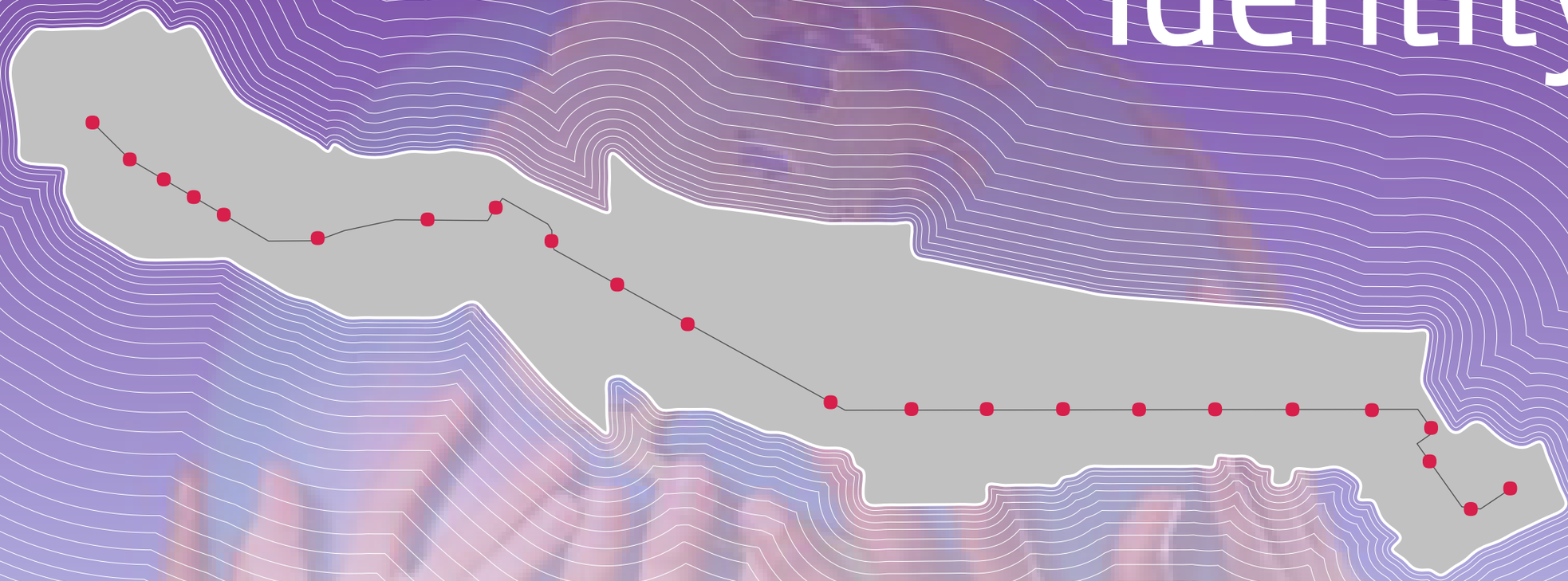
All societies already have informal meeting places; what is new in modern times is the intentionality of seeking them out as vital to current societal needs. Oldenburg suggests these hallmarks of a true "third place": free or inexpensive; food and drink, while not essential, are important; highly accessible: proximate for many (walking distance); involve regulars - those who habitually congregate there; welcoming and comfortable; both new friends and old should be found there.

Photos: © Wing Young Huie

Click Here To Go To Project Web Page

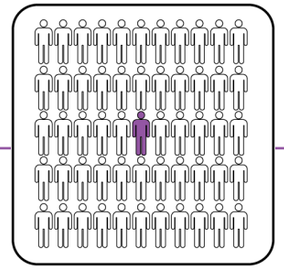
Click Here to Go Back To Reference Projects

Identity

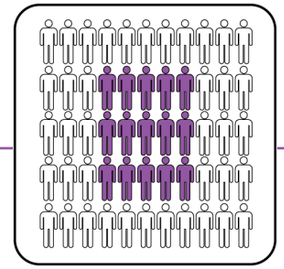


The Urban Language of Identity is a reflection of the overlapping identities that people in the Central Corridor, or any urban community, construct for themselves – individual identity, group identity, and civic identity. The future of the Central Corridor will be shaped in large part by how each person who lives and works there decides how they will define themselves, define their community, and define their participation in political life.

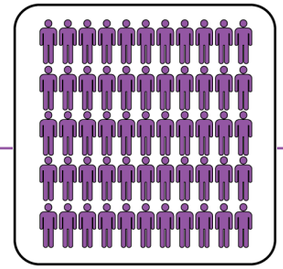
Individual Identity



Collective Identity



Civic Identity



Identity, a Short Story in Icons

The Urban Language of Identity recognizes that our personal identity transcends our ethnic background, religious identification, sexual orientation, recreational interests, how we dress or how we engage in community and civic politics. Our identity includes all of those things and more.

Most importantly, how we express our identity is our choice. Individual identity asks, how do we present our selves to the rest of the world? Collective identity asks, what groups of people (neighborhood, ethnic group, religious group, interest group) do we affiliate with, and how do we behave in that group? Civic identity asks, how do we construe our role politically, as a citizen of a city, a state and a nation?

The future of the Central Corridor will be shaped in large part by how each person who lives and works there answers these questions. Who will they be? What groups will they associate with? How will they take part in civil society?

Opportunities for Artists

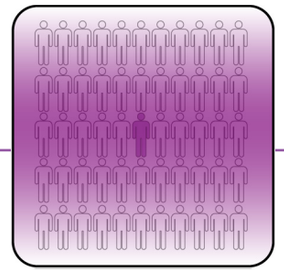
Artists have a well-established track record for exploring identity along the Central Corridor. Most notably,

- Wing Young Huie's epic exhibition *The University Avenue Project* prompted people to reveal something about their individual identity that might not be evident from factors like their age, their appearance or their ethnicity, bringing both aspects of identity into focus, and contract.
- Marcus Young's projects often imagine civic rituals as a zone where individual, group and civic identity interface.
- The Works Progress video series on gardens and creativity along the Central Corridor explore how identity, shared activity and shared territory are bound together.

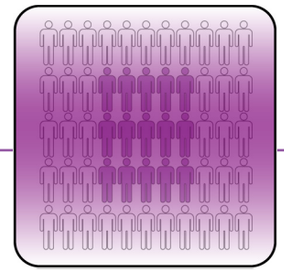
Questions for Artists to Address:

- How do people present themselves to the rest of the world? How does one's identity become a basis of social interaction with others?
- What groups (neighborhood, ethnic group, religious group, interest group) do people affiliate or associate with, and how do they behave in that group? How do these groups present themselves in the public realm?
- How do people construe their roles politically, as citizens of Saint Paul and Minneapolis?

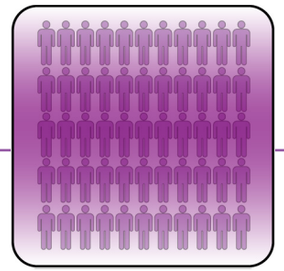
Individual



Groups



Everyone



University Ave

St Paul
Cultural Garden

Confessions:
What Happens
in Vegas

Travel in Spirals

Or Does it Explode

Journeys South

The University Avenue Project

Wing Young Huie, St. Paul, 2011
Commissioned and produced by Public Art Saint Paul

Wing Young Huie's University Avenue Project: The Language of Urbanism, a Six-Mile Photographic Inquiry, transformed a major urban thoroughfare in Saint Paul, Minnesota, into a six-mile public gallery of over 400 photographs. Wing's images revealed the dizzying socioeconomic, cultural, and ethnic realities of the citizens who work, live, and go to school along this corridor that is jammed with storefronts, taverns, big-box retailers, blue-collar neighborhoods and condominium communities.

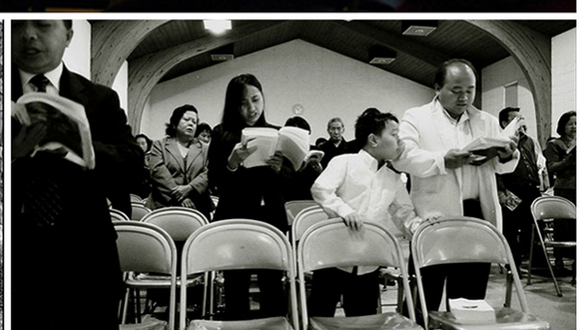
Built and still sustained by immigrant populations of the late 19th century, the University Avenue corridor is now home to one of America's highest concentrations of new immigrants. Blending documentary photography with revelatory statements by his subjects, Wing created a tapestry of images and words that raised complex issues of race, class, gender, sexual preference, immigration, religion and cultural disconnection. The University Avenue Project was a chronicle the colliding and evolving American experience.

More than 70 store windows and surfaces formed the gallery and stretch through Saint Paul - from the Minneapolis border to the Minnesota State Capitol. Large-scale mural images on building walls were visible for over 1/2 mile. A spectacular Project(ion) site, designed by new media curator Steve Dietz, nightly projected Wing's images onto billboard-size screens, accompanied by recorded soundtracks from local musicians. Weekly "Wednesdays with Wing" opened dialogue with the community and monthly cabarets featured live performances and new media presentations by amateurs and professionals alike.

The Minnesota Historical Society Press published a 2-volume book documenting the project.

Photos: © Wing Young Huie

Click Here To Go To Project Web Page



Click Here to Go Back To Reference Projects

Travel in Spirals

Tousaiko Lee and Justin Schell, film, 2011

Travel In Spirals, named after the tell tale spiral patterns in traditional Hmong paj ntaub (needlepoint/embroidery work), tells Tou's story of journeying back to his birthplace and the source of his heritage in 2008, almost 30 years after he had left it. "I chose Thailand because I was born there and my family is from there," he says. Tou and his grandmother, Youa Chang, made the trip in order to document the art world in the Hmong communities of his homeland. Chang, noted for her abilities in the Hmong art form of kwv txhiaj (Hmong poetry chanting), opened Tou's eyes into a world where Tou made the connection of art running through his veins. Reconnecting with Tou's aunt—his grandmother's daughter, also noted for her kwv txhiaj skills—further aided Tou in evolving as an artist. In fact, he found that the traditional Hmong song calling and chanting art forms reminded him a lot of what he was doing himself: "the ability to improvise poetry...there's a freestyle element there that connects to hip-hop," Tou says. "I was really inspired." So inspired that in fact, Tou SaiKo is known for featuring his grandmother in many of his live performances.

Click Here To Go To Project Web Page

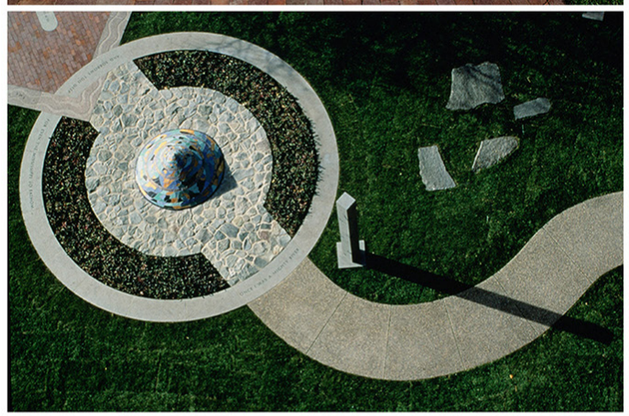
Click Here to Go Back To Reference Projects

Saint Paul Cultural Garden

Cliff Garten and collaborating poets and visual artists,
Saint Paul, 1993

The Saint Paul Cultural Garden is a collaboration of sculpture and poetry built overlooking the Mississippi River. It consists of a number of natural and man-made elements which celebrate the cultural differences in the city and honor the diverse backgrounds of St. Paul's early pioneers. Commissioned in 1993 from artist Cliff Garten by the Saint Paul Foundation to celebrate the City's 150th anniversary, the Garden speaks of the world's people who journeyed to settle and build this city on the Mississippi River. Incised into the Garden's railings overlooking the river are the words of poets Soyini Guyton, John Minczeski, Sandra Benitez, David Mura, Robert Hill-Whiteman, and Xeng Sue Yang, poet. Collaborating visual artists: Armando Guiterrez, Ta-Coumba Aiken and Xiaowei Mei.

Photos: © Cliff Garten



Click Here To Go To Project Web Page

Click Here to Go Back To Reference Projects

...Or Does it Explode??

Dread Scott, Philadelphia 2009
Commissioned by the Philadelphia Mural Arts Program

...Or Does it Explode? consisted of twelve light-boxes with life-sized portraits of teenagers, as well as spoken word audio of each of the adolescents describing their hopes and dreams that viewers heard as the looked at the artwork. The project was installed in Logan Square in the heart of Philadelphia's civic and business center, directly in front of Philadelphia Family Court.

...Or Does it Explode? was part lament, part hope embodied in the faces and aspirations of the adolescents, and part indictment of a society that hasn't done better for our youth. The work revealed a potentially explosive contradiction. Viewers confronted the faces, full of life and beauty as well as their insight and hopes and must position themselves in relation to the future that is being buried.

A wry smiling teen-age boy on a vibrant yellow background grabs your attention. Next to him, is a portrait of a strong young woman, full of potential. Their voices literally speak to you. Their placement is tragically wrong — unexpected. They are horizontal to the ground, coffin like. There is an uneasy tension between the illuminated life-sized photographs of 12 Philadelphia youth and their presentation. The soundscape heightens this friction: the collection of voices articulate their dreams and reveal obstacles and challenges to those aspirations. "My dream is to be a social worker. That's my dream. I'm not going to go to college because it would be too hard for me." It mirrors the lives of so many youth whose promise is squandered and often suppressed.

Photos: © Dread Scott

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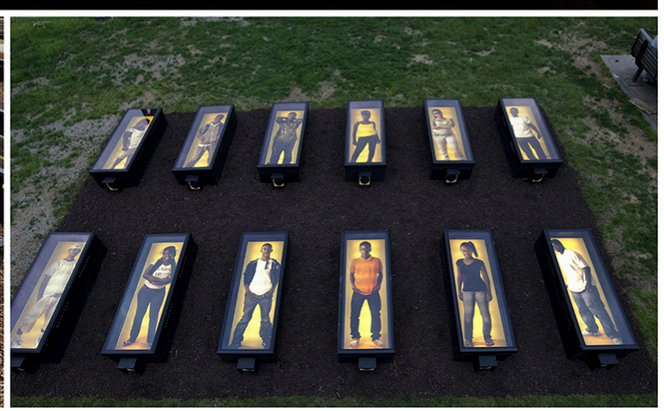

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Journeys South

Multiple artists, Philadelphia, 2011
Commissioned by the Philadelphia Mural Arts Program

Journeys South was a temporary exhibition that invited viewers to examine the richly layered and evolving immigrant histories of South Philadelphia. The exhibition featured four interactive, site-specific community-based public art projects and free public tours that celebrated the stories of immigrants and their descendants—both long-time and new residents—to South Philadelphia.

Seven artists, five of whom were born and raised and/or currently reside in South Philadelphia, worked individually or in collaborations to create projects exhibited in Journeys South. They worked with community members, historians and folklorists to gain a deeper understanding of the culture and history of South Philadelphia's legendary neighborhoods.

Pictured above is "Start Here," Miro Dance Theatre's series of five footprint journeys installed on the sidewalks of the 1700 block of East Passyunk Avenue. The footprints trace choreographies of immigration to South Philadelphia and are accompanied by a video and audio installation a barber shop. Miro is a collaboration of Amanda Miller, choreographer, and Tobin Rothlein, video artist.

Photos:

Left, right: Start Here (detail)

© 2011 miro/Amanda Miller and Tobin Rothlein, the Philadelphia Mural Arts Program and the Mural Arts Advocates. Photo by Steve Weinik. All rights reserved.

Click Here To Go To Project Web Page

Click Here to Go Back To Reference Projects

Confessions: What Happens in Vegas ...

Candy Chang, Las Vegas, 2012
Presented by The Cosmopolitan Hotel

As they say, what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas, but what if we could share with full discretion? Confessions is a public art project that invites people to anonymously share their confessions and see the confessions of the people around them in the heart of the Las Vegas strip.

As Art Production Fund Artist-in-Residence at The Cosmopolitan in Las Vegas, Candy lived in the The Cosmopolitan for a month and turned its P3 Studio gallery into a contemplative place for people to anonymously share their confessions. Inspired by Post Secret, Shinto shrine prayer walls, and Catholicism, she created a place where people could write and submit their confessions on wooden plaques in the privacy of confession booths. Candy hung the anonymous plaques on the gallery walls each day and painted select responses on large canvases. The space also featured original, contemplative music by Oliver Blank.

By the end of the exhibit, over 1500 confessions were displayed on the walls (more photos to come) and responses reflected a range of emotions:

Your name is tattooed on my ass

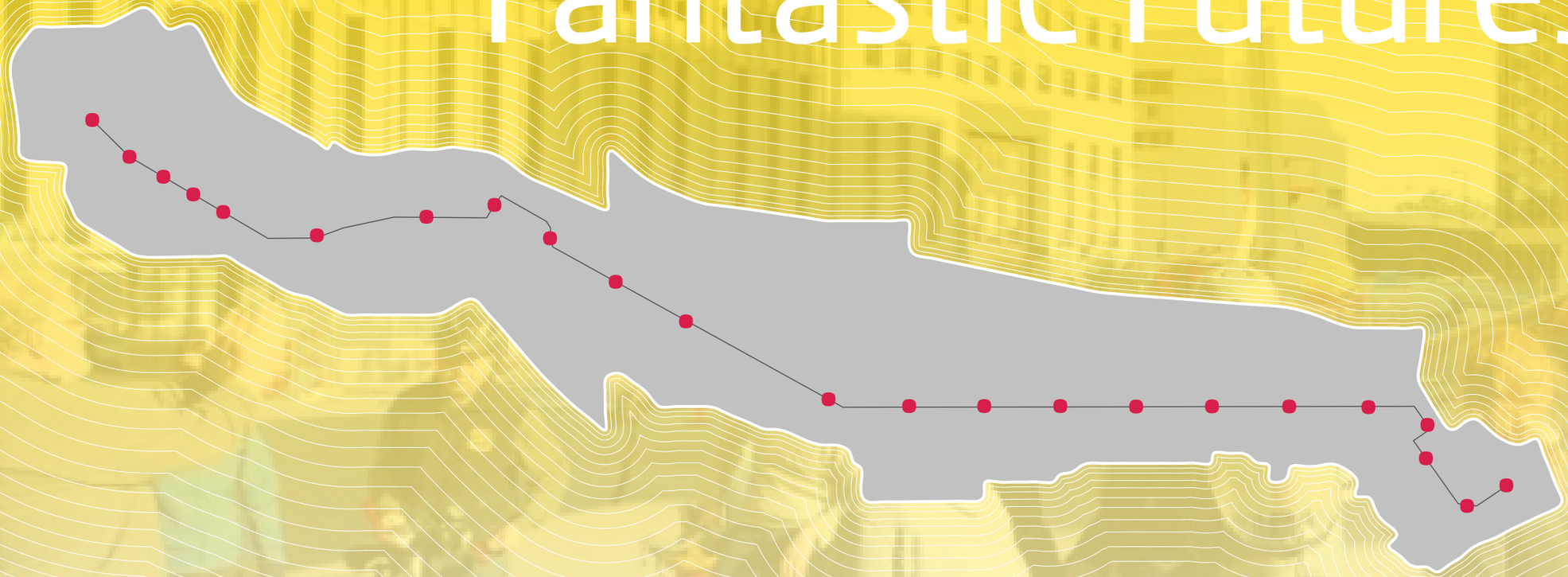
I still love her two girlfriends and five years later
I eat too much cheese
Came here married to one girl and left married to two girls
I sold heroin to my friend and it ruined his life
I'm in love with my best friend
Too bad he's married
I like porn more than my husband does
I'm afraid I'll die young just like my mother
I'm 30 and I've never had an orgasm
I stole over 15,000 from the company I work for
I feel some days that I'm socially unacceptable
I don't know what I am doing and I'm running out of time

Photos: © Candy Chang

Click Here To Go To Project Web Page

Click Here to Go Back To Reference Projects

Fantastic Futures



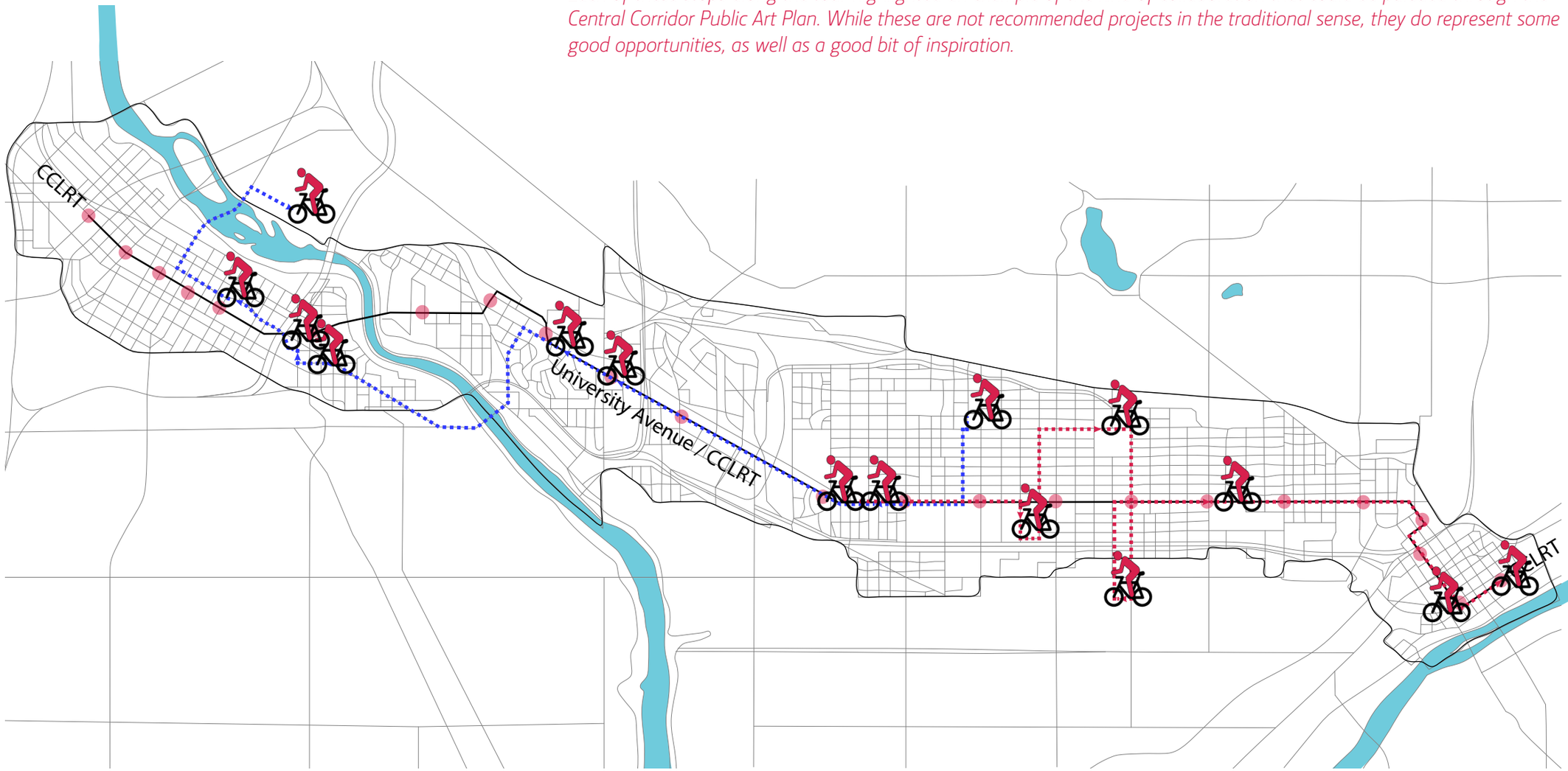
Over the next decade, the Central Corridor will change dramatically. But even today, artists, designers and residents are testing out new ways to live in the city. From growing food for their families in vacant lots to establishing social hubs for art and performance, the urban future is being made here and now. We call this the Fantastic Urban Future.

Over two days in October 2011, Rebar led a public bike tour across the Central Corridor as a part of the Central Corridor Public Art Plan. We wanted to make connections between the many people doing good work. These are some of the stops and stories we found along the way.

Back to Table of Contents

Fantastic Futures Bike Ride

Each of these stops along the tour highlighted an example of the kind of collaboration that could be pursued through the Central Corridor Public Art Plan. While these are not recommended projects in the traditional sense, they do represent some good opportunities, as well as a good bit of inspiration.



Ecological Infrastructure | Skyline Tower | Golden Thyme Cafe | Frogtown Farm | Horton Park Arboretum | The Power of the Temporary, St. Paul | Sun Foods | Union Depot

The Soap Factory | The Metrodome | Ceder Riverside -Currie Park | Cedar Riverside - Nomad World Pub | The Textile Center | The Border | Dickerman Park

Gathering

Union Depot

Light rail in front of Union Depot? Great, except...Marcus Young does not hide the fact that he is disappointed with what's become of the front of the Union Depot. It is, in his estimation, an incredible missed opportunity and one that won't come around again for decades, maybe even a century or more. In deadpan fashion, he describes what went wrong: the light rail, with its clunky and bulky shelters, boxed out the view of the historic station from across the street. Instead of creating an "urban room"–the type of public space that many European train stations elegantly define, this treatment isolated the station and clumsily mashed up two pieces of transportation architecture, one old and one new. This, he says, "is the bloody battlefield of ideas" that has left the station "forsaken and foregone". It could be that someone thought it might not be a good idea to use the bulky, standardized metal transit shelter in front of one of Saint Paul's most precious landmarks. But then, the system isn't really designed to let a good, clear idea carry a process through to the end, Marcus says. It's a rather depressing assessment, but still funny in a gallows humor kind of way. 2081 will be the 200th anniversary of the station, Marcus notes. There's a future we can still prepare for, if we can handle the wait.

Marcus Young is a behavioral artist, which may not be a real term. He first studied classical music conducting, then theater directing, and now has found himself in the world of public art. Here's an example of his behavioral art: in the year Sarah Palin was introduced to the world, he introduced a form of purposefully self-embarrassing public dance and quasi-spiritual practice called "Don't you feel it too?" Since 2006, he has been Saint Paul's City Artist in Residence, a program of Public Art Saint Paul, and is responsible for the City's sidewalk poetry program.

Photography: Rebar Group

Fantastic Futures 1st Stop On The Web

Click Here to Go Back To Fantastic Futures

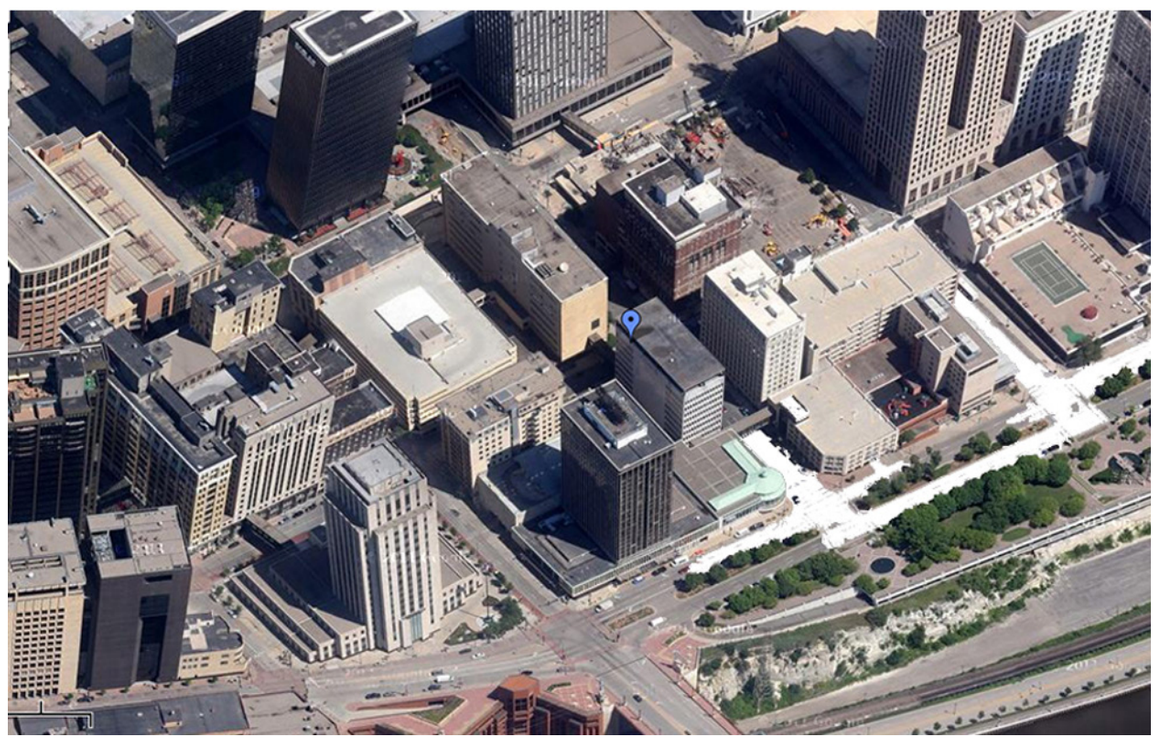
Gathering

The Power of the Temporary in Downtown Saint Paul

About the Saint Paul Design Center *The Saint Paul Design Center is a champion of urban design for Saint Paul and always enthusiastically participates in these fantastic future exercises. We then work to make the individual pieces happen in the spirit and intent of the vision. We are one of the partners in the Central Corridor Public Art Master Plan.*

About Peter Thompson *Peter Haakon Thompson is an artist based in Minneapolis, MN whose primary mediums are participation, interaction and conversation. Some of his works include: The A Project, an effort to create solidarity among artists in their neighborhoods; Art Shanty Projects, a participatory, temporary community on frozen Medicine Lake; Teach Me Your Language, is a work designed to ask passers-by to teach the artist their language with the aid of a chalkboard-sidewalk sign. Currently he is his neighborhoods' Unofficial Official Artist in Residence. He is also Project Coordinator for Irrigate, a partnership between the City of Saint Paul, Twin Cities Local Initiatives Support Corporation and Springboard for the Arts. Irrigate is an artist-led creative placemaking initiative spanning the six miles of the Central Corridor Light Rail line in Saint Paul during the years of its construction.*

Photography: Rebar Group



Fantastic Futures 2nd Stop On The Web

Click Here to Go Back To Fantastic Futures

Food

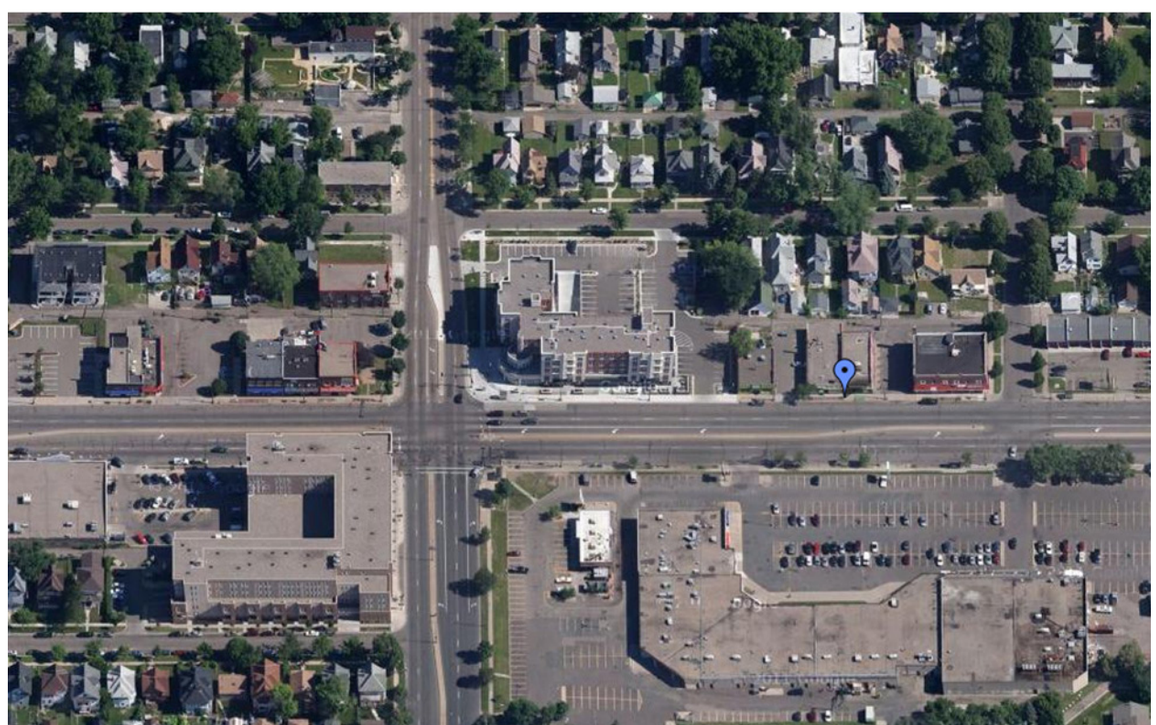
Sun Foods

On being an environmentalist in two cultures

Foung Hawj met the bike tour in the parking lot of Sun Foods, one of the most interesting and diverse places to buy groceries in the Central Corridor. Although mainly themed as a pan Asian grocery, Sun Foods carries foods from Africa, South America and Europe. The store underscores the diversity of the Corridor. For Foung, it also brings up questions about environmentalism across cultures.

All cultures have a tradition of environmental awareness, says Foung, but translating that through diaspora and migration to a new country can require some cultural translation. For example, as highland people, the Hmong don't generate "trash"– they are disciplined "re-users", as everything they use or make comes from the environment around them. So looking at a Hmong garden, he notes, is like looking at a bunch of sticks sometimes because that's what the Hmong are using to train their vegetables. To a western eye, it might look messy, unkempt. But to the Hmong, many of whom are new to cities, the idea of trash is an urban invention. We talk about the ways of understanding the environment in Hmong culture crossed over into mainstream American environmental consciousness in a city like Saint Paul, MN, where the Hmong represent one of the largest minority cultures. What about practices like recycling, composting and reducing waste in commercial activities? How about wetland restoration? Ecological awareness must become a cross-cultural issue if we are to survive in the city together. Foung has been trying to get Hmong-owned businesses engaged in sustainable practices. Paradoxically, even with their traditional cultural orientation to sustainability, life on the move has developed some conservatism in the community. Always having had to move around, many Hmong now are wary of more change, so introducing different business practices that might take away customers isn't always an easy sell. We talk about reaching out across other cultures–like inviting people from China Town to talk about sustainable business practices. Ultimately, says Foung, environmentalism is not a white or Asian or any racial issue. It's an issue of living together.

Photography: Rebar Group



Fantastic Futures 3rd Stop On The Web

Click Here to Go Back To Fantastic Futures

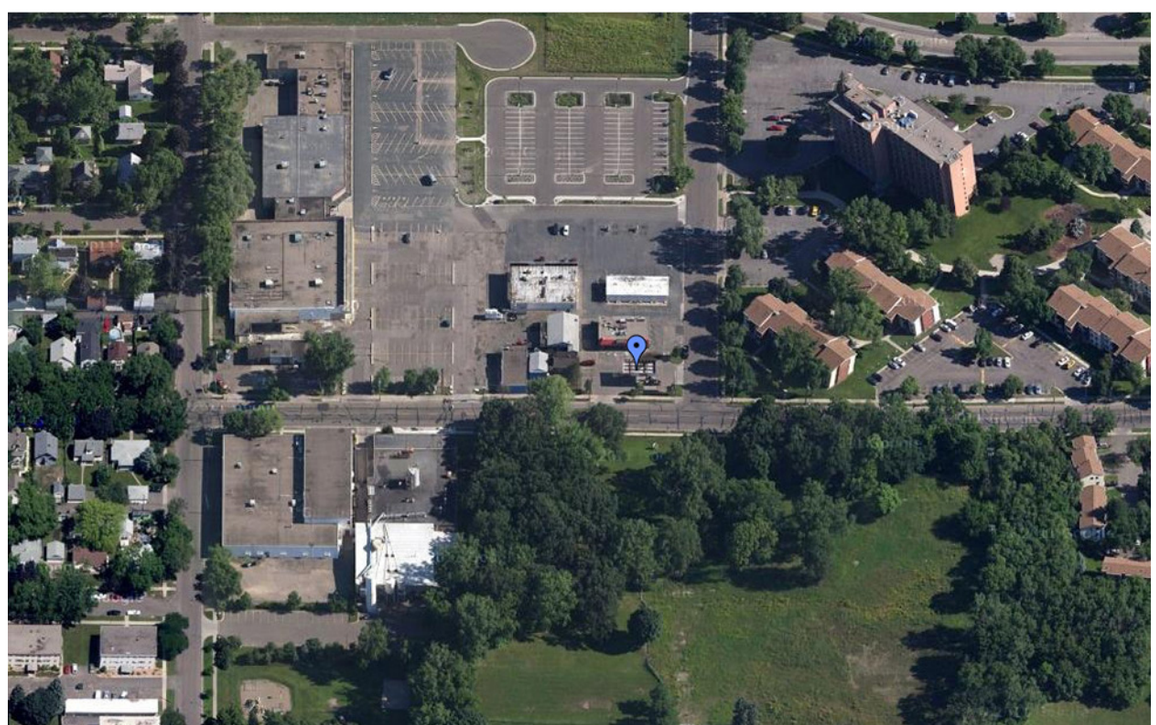
Frogtown Farm

Patricia Ohmans, one of the leaders of Frogtown Gardens and an advocate for the vision of a large urban farm on the site of the former Wilder Foundation complex in Frogtown, gestures at the top of the hill where the most commanding view is. We are in the middle of an urban landscape, yet from the top of the hill the view is an open field, ringed by hardwood trees. It feels as if you could be in the countryside. Someone pulls out a bag of apples, and the riders begin passing it around, crunching on fresh sweet fruits. The site has become a stopover for wildlife, nesting birds, and has the potential to become part of a wildlife corridor across the city. Frogtown Farm offers a space to move, breathe and commune with nature. It is the largest vacant space within the city limits. The many ethnic groups that call Frogtown home include some 40% African-Americans, 30% Asian-Americans, and 30% white and Latino residents. Many of them come from farming traditions, and Patricia would like to help preserve what they already know.

What will it take to achieve the vision of a large-scale urban farm on this site? It starts as a community organizing effort, an educational campaign, and a political effort, long before the first vegetables can go in the ground. Next month, the organization will send an option letter to the owners for $30,000 in an effort to keep the land for a farm. Neighbors, donors, and friends are putting their money together, bit by bit. Patricia says the design of an area like this is something that could directly benefit low income residents, the kind of people who live all around the site. It could be “a new kind of park, a space to exercise, meditate, get back in touch with yourself, learn how to grow healthy food in your own backyard without having to spend so much money in the grocery store.” It could be a place to educate children about how to eat, and grow what they eat.

Photography: Rebar Group

Fantastic Futures 4th Stop On The Web



Click Here to Go Back To Fantastic Futures

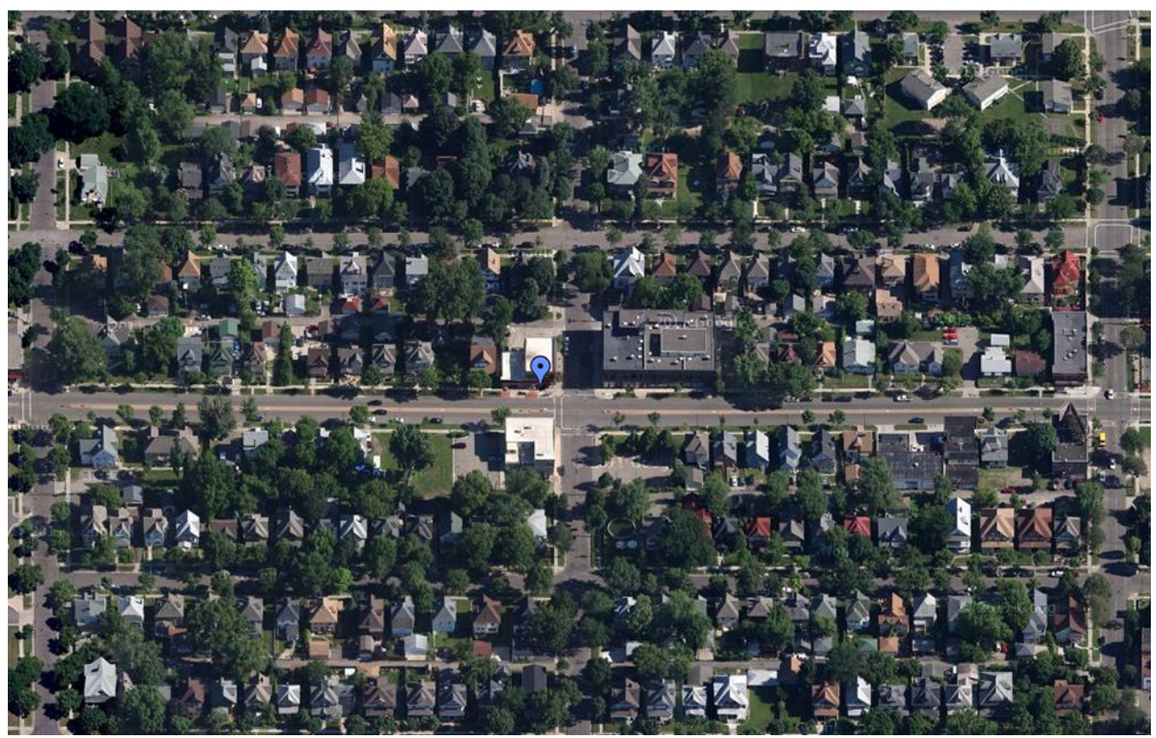
Gathering

Identity

Golden Thyme Café

The bike tour caught up with Mychael Wright and Toni Carter at Mychael's cafe on the corner of Selby and Milton. The bike riders ordered sandwiches and coffees from the counter, and Mychael gathered the group in the adjoining meeting room, where he told the story of the cafe (which has been going strong for ten years now) and his time in the neighborhood. Toni Carter joined the discussion as well, and talked about the potential links between an emerging Selby "arts hub" and the Central Corridor. With long histories in the Rondo neighborhood, our hosts talked about what has been, what is, and what could become. At Golden Thyme, said Mychael, everyone is welcome. It's a place to "find each other" in the neighborhood. It's also a place to connect different cultures and traditions. With music, this includes jazz (of course!) but also Carribbean, Latin, African and European music. The dream here is that Selby Avenue can become a truly walkable green corridor, with sidewalk cafes, and street life that connects between each hot spot. Golden Thyme is just the beginning.

Photography: Rebar Group



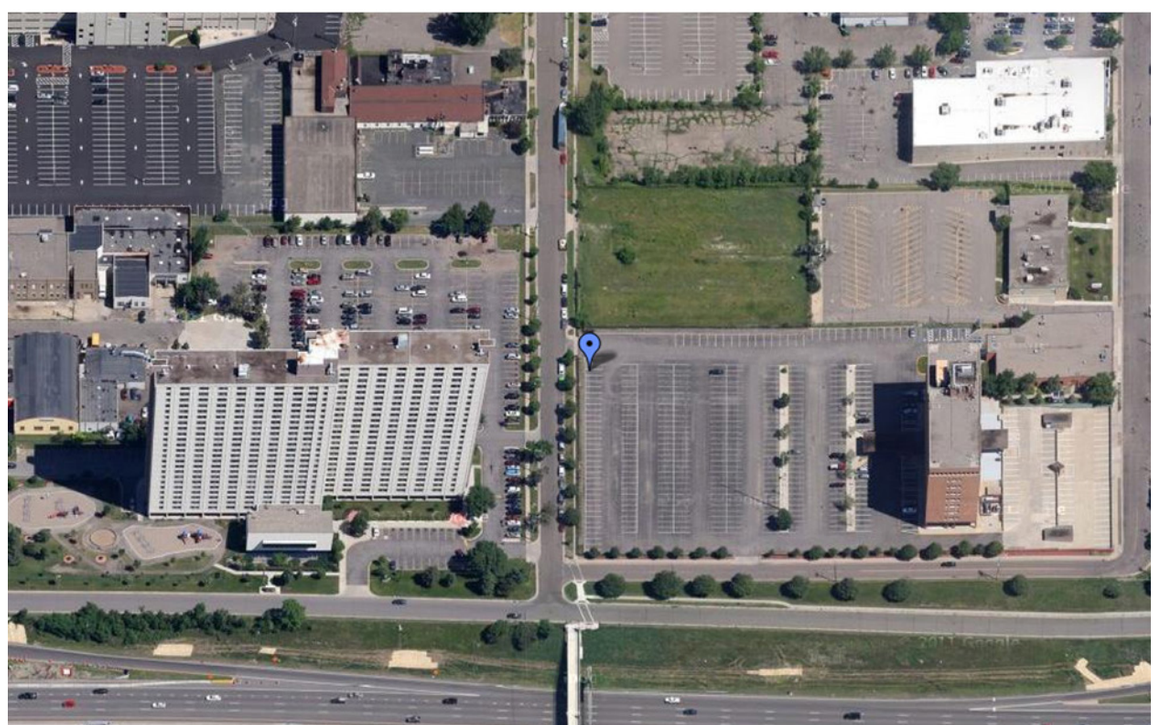
Fantastic Futures 5th Stop On The Web

Click Here to Go Back To Fantastic Futures

Skyline Tower

The main thing residents of Skyline Tower said when they came out to meet the group of riders and design students who had converged on a vacant lot across Griggs Street from the housing complex, was that they needed a place to gather, to meet each other, to hang out–that wasn't just in the Tower. Jessie Lieb, a community organizer with the Union Park District Council who's been working with residents echoes this: residents need a "third place", somewhere to be social that's comfortable and informal. Surrounding Skyline Tower is a vast landscape of mall parking lots, fast food restaurants, wide streets, and the desolate construction site of University Avenue. It does seem hard to find a place to hang out. Students for Design Activism has been working on a proposal for a community garden and park next to the Tower, and in a ranging conversation (some of it through translators), community elders, young design students and community organizers began discussing the possibilities. An international market? This was something the residents were interested in. They wanted a place to get a cup of coffee and chat with friends. You need somewhere to go that's warm, inside, during the winter. How do you integrate Skyline Tower better with the rest of the city? Could this gathering place be a point of crossover between residents and non-residents? How do you break down the barriers associated with large housing projects?

Photography: Rebar Group



Fantastic Futures 6th Stop On The Web

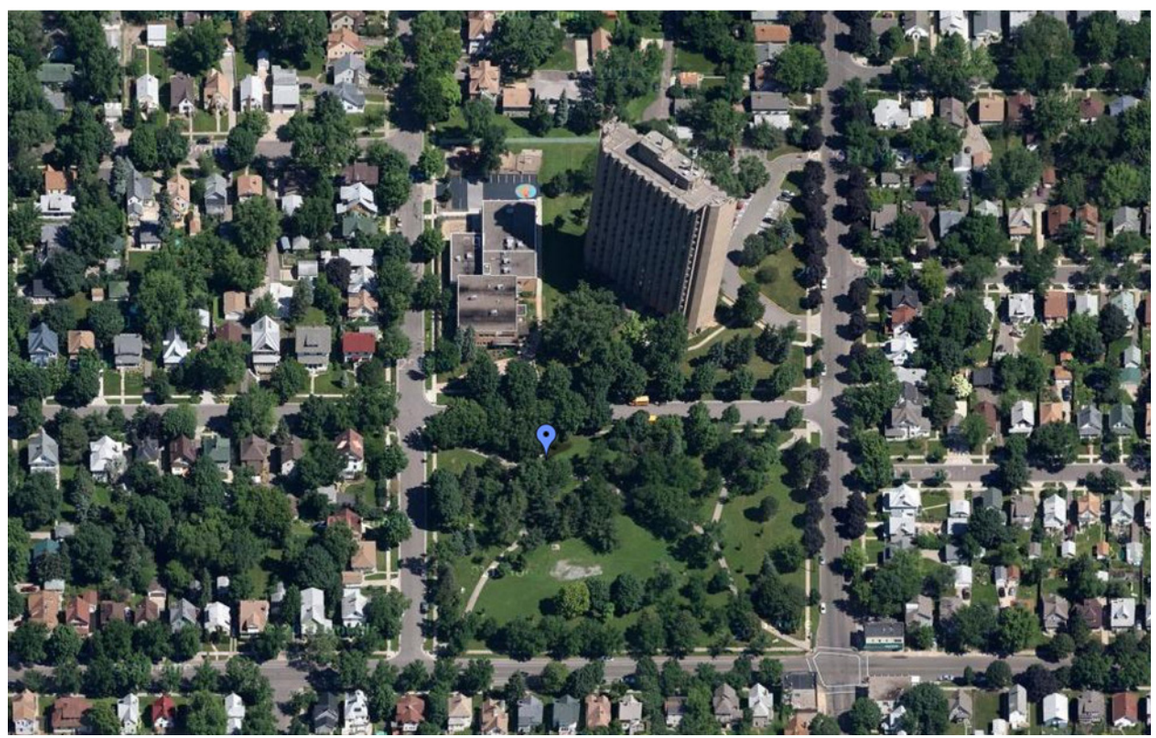
Click Here to Go Back To Fantastic Futures

Horton Park Arboretum

Contemporary ecological research indicates that greater biological diversity corresponds with increased ecological health, productivity and resilience. Our civic structures can be understood similarly; culturally diverse regions are more healthy, productive and resilient as a result of the range of creative contributions, skill sets, and perspectives of inhabitants; as well as myriad interconnections among people both inside and outside the region.

Works Progress, in partnership with community gardeners from the Hamline Midway neighborhood, will explore these ideas by taking a closer look at the connections between plants and people in our contemporary urban context. Neighborhood community gardeners will share their visions for an ecologically and civically engaged corridor by inviting tour participants to dream a future for the Horton Park Arboretum, and to begin enacting that future by pressing the first plant specimens for City Herbarium, a new collaborative public art project.

Photography: Rebar Group



Fantastic Futures 7th Stop On The Web

Click Here to Go Back To Fantastic Futures

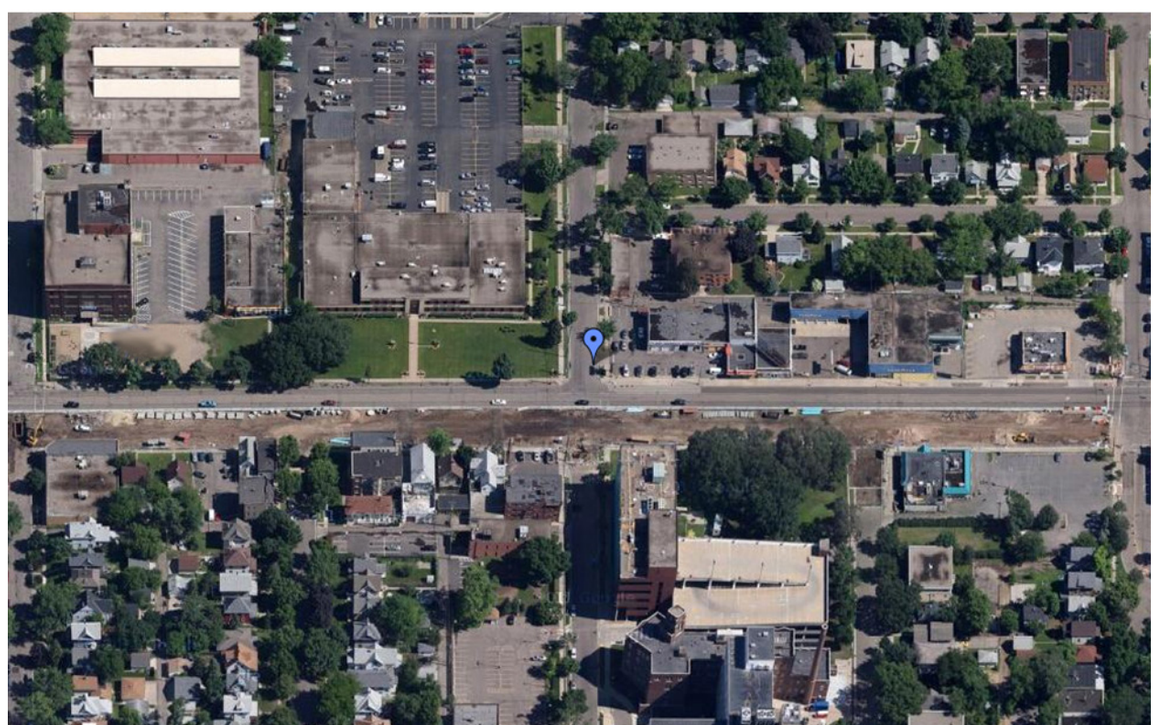
Water

Eco-Infrastructure

the bike tour pulls up in an unassuming lawn in front of a medical building to meet Christine Baeumler, the Capitol Region Watershed District Artist-in-Residence, who is there to explain what is going on in a concrete box set in the earth next to the street.

This is a 'BMP'–or best management practice–Christine tells us, and it helps runoff slow down and infiltrate into the ground before it charges into the Mississippi River during storm events. While it's not the most aesthetically pleasing solution just yet, she says, these rain gardens have the potential to be great artistic projects that integrate infrastructure with installations that educate and create a sense of poetry around the weather, wind, and water. Material that is found in the ground–old paving stones or streetcar rail, for example–could even be reused in the installations. We look at graphics Christine has brought as she explains the engineering behind the rain gardens. While the Corridor itself is not known as a green space, these small gardens have the potential to transform one small part at a time, all while slowing down water and sediment on its way to the rivers, lakes and streams of the Twin Cities.

Photography: Rebar Group



Fantastic Futures 8th Stop On The Web

Click Here to Go Back To Fantastic Futures

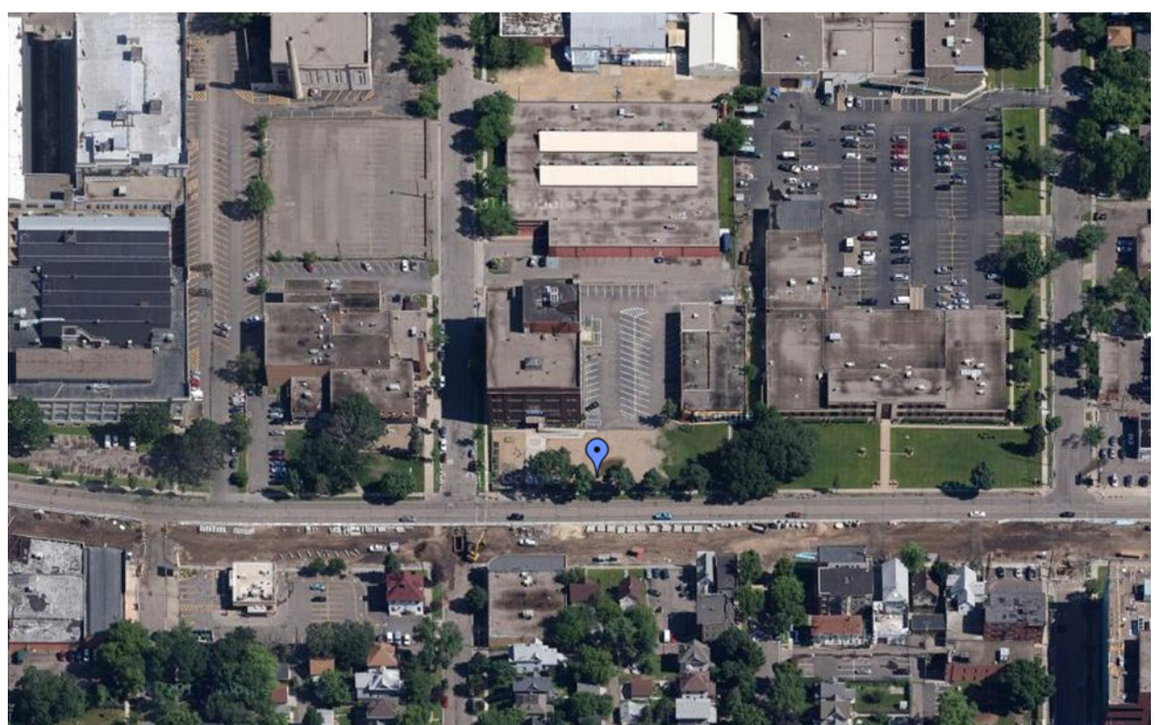
Gathering

Identity

Dickerman Park

It would be easy to mistake this strip of grass next to University Avenue as a leftover median, but it hardly looks like the "destination" park its envisioned to become. Coen + Partners, the landscape architecture firm working on the design of the park, has a vision that looks forward but also back to the original idea that created the space when University Avenue was still a long stretch of empty space connecting Saint Paul and Minneapolis. In the late 1800's, the City of Saint Paul embarked upon an early redevelopment of the industrialized corridor with the intent to remake University Avenue into a Midwest version of the Champs-Elysées, complete with wide boulevards, gardens and art. For Dickerman Park, the intent was to recapture pieces of this early dream for University Avenue and present the park as a 21st Century model for collaborative and contextual urban design. Our goals for the Central Corridor are to employ a context-driven design process that pulls from local ecologies, histories and communities to create projects that are inherently place and people-specific. A holistic collaboration between designer, artist, and community is one that can best reveal important layers of meaning and add richness to the urban environment along the Central Corridor.

Photography: Rebar Group



Fantastic Futures 9th Stop On The Web

Click Here to Go Back To Fantastic Futures

Identity

The Border

According to Amanda Lovelee, it started with trying to figure out how to get people to hold hands. This turned into teaching people to square dance. And that, into making small books that explained the dance steps. Now a group of strangers was standing — straddling, actually, literally — the border of Saint Paul and Minneapolis in front of the KSTP station at University and Emerald Street. Amanda and Colin, easy and familiar with leading a group of square dance newbies, were about to demonstrate how to reel across the border. A city of the river, a city of the railroad. East and West. Old and New. Flat and Hilly. The adjectives that could be used to compare Minneapolis and Saint Paul are many, and comparison is a matter of pride and prejudice for residents of both places. But what of the difference really? For a Corridor that bisects (and connects) both cities, what should we make of the border straddled by the KSTP tower?

Photography: Rebar Group

Fantastic Futures 10th Stop On The Web

Click Here to Go Back To Fantastic Futures

Textile Center

In the middle of a room in the Textile Center there is a large scale model of the Prospect Park neighborhood, with buildings of different form and volume that can plug into the blocks that will likely undergo redevelopment when the light rail comes. This is a long term vision, says Dick Gilyard, who describes a kind of flexible urbanism that doesn't lock in uses that may not be around several decades. For example, we might need parking garages today, he says, but why build them with sloped ramps? If the floors are level and the ceiling heights are sufficient, someday the garage can be redeveloped into something else, say housing. This is visioning to "shape the tsunami of development" that light rail will bring. Dick and the Textile Center are bringing designers, but also landowners and other stakeholders to the table to think creatively about how to shape all this development before it arrives. How can the emerging arts focus of this area be intensified, not inundated?

Photography: Rebar Group

Fantastic Futures 11th Stop On The Web

Click Here to Go Back To Fantastic Futures

Cedar Riverside - NOMAD World Pub

A history of capturing people and places through photographs

When the bike tour arrived at Nomad World Pub, the place was nearly empty except for a projector set up on the stage at the back of the room. Wing Young Huie had a slideshow set up to show us the photographic history of his explorations in telling the story of places and people around the Twin Cities.

From Wing Young Huie:The University Avenue Project (UAP) furthers Wing Young Huie's photographic inquiries into revealing private realities in public spaces. For six months in 2010 over 450 photographs that reflect the everyday realities of the surrounding neighborhoods, populated a six-mile stretch of University Avenue in our Capital City of St. Paul, peering at us from store windows and building surfaces and projected five nights a week on an outdoor movie-sized screen in a vacant car dealer lot.

The photographs are the result of three years by Huie, wending his way through nooks, alleys, and living rooms, capturing on 35mm film the colliding kaleidoscope of life along this jammed stretch of mom and pop storefronts, big-box retailers, blue-collar homes, and burgeoning condominium enclaves—in the midst of one of the most diverse concentrations of international immigrants in the country. There are, of course, already thousands of images visible in that corridor, just as there are in any metropolitan area, but how many of those countless marketing and media realities that we consume on a daily basis really reflect all of us? How do they form what we think of each other and ourselves? Do we in fact become what we see? How do we represent our authentic selves in this Photoshop era? These are some of the questions that this project considers.

Photography: Rebar Group

[Fantastic Futures 12th Stop On The Web]

Click Here to Go Back To Fantastic Futures

Gathering

Identity

Cedar Riverside -Currie Park

You notice two things immediately about Cedar Riverside. First, it's an incredibly friendly place–you get smiles from strangers, and before long someone may be talking to you. Second, it's amazingly diverse.

In 2004, ninety-seven spoken languages were documented by walking door to door through the Cedar Riverside neighborhood. Yet this is a neighborhood that most outsiders never find a reason to visit, and that is something that Abdulkadir Warsame, hailing lately from London and manager of the 1,300 units at Riverside Plaza, would like to see change. Along with Abdulkadir, we met up with Ifra Mansour (a performer), Abdi Phenomenal (a young poet who lives at Riverside Plaza), Chaltu Berento and Hamdi Mohamed. Despite its reputation as "off the map" in many Twin Cities residents' minds, this is a place of friendly, smiling people who are anxious to find a way to share their cultures with outsiders.

Photography: Rebar Group

Fantastic Futures 13th Stop On The Web

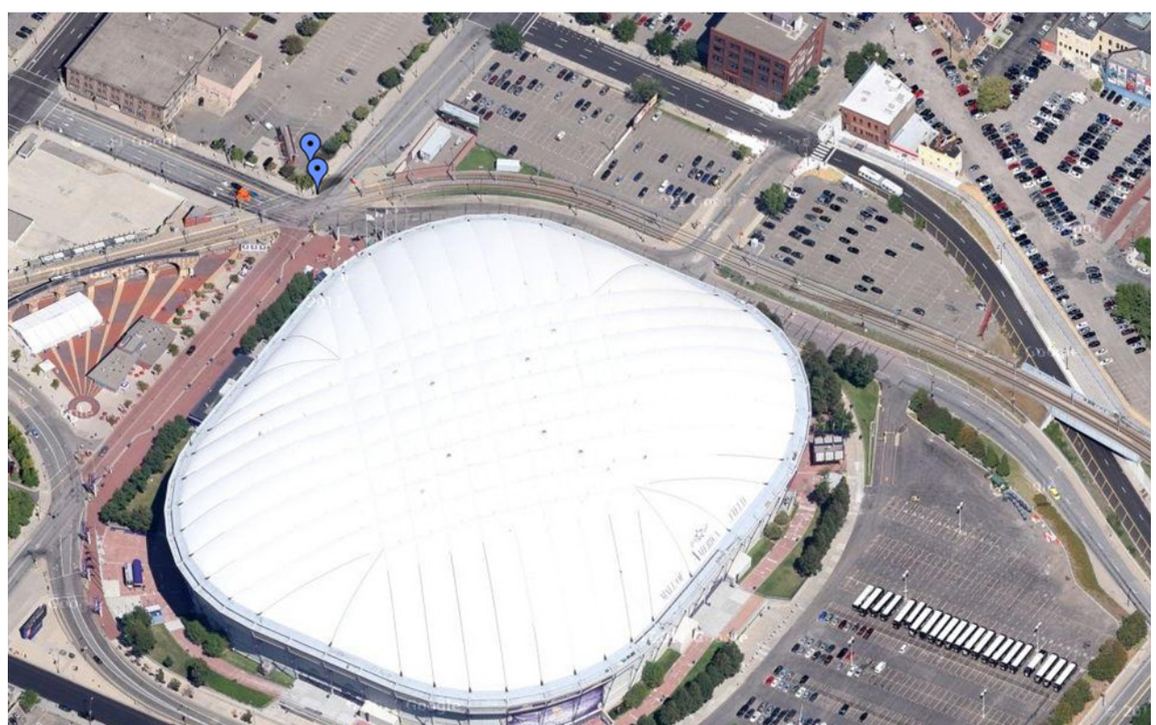
Click Here to Go Back To Fantastic Futures

Gathering

The Metrodome

Development in the Downtown East neighborhood around Metrodome took many years to materialize. For many years there were few bars or restaurants nearby for fans to gather at; tailgating was expressly forbidden in most parking areas. The City of Minneapolis was directing the development of the entertainment districts along seven corners in Cedar-Riverside, Hennepin Avenue, and the Warehouse district. Metrodome existed among a number of parking areas built upon old rail yards, along with run-down factories and warehouses. Metrodome is not connected to the Minneapolis Skyway System, although that was planned in 1989 to be completed in time to host Super Bowl XXVI. Only in recent years has redevelopment begun moving southeast to reach Metrodome. More restaurants, hotels, and condominiums have been built nearby. The Hiawatha light rail line has connected the Minneapolis entertainment district with Metrodome.

Photography: Rebar Group



Fantastic Futures 14th Stop On The Web

Click Here to Go Back To Fantastic Futures

Soap Factory

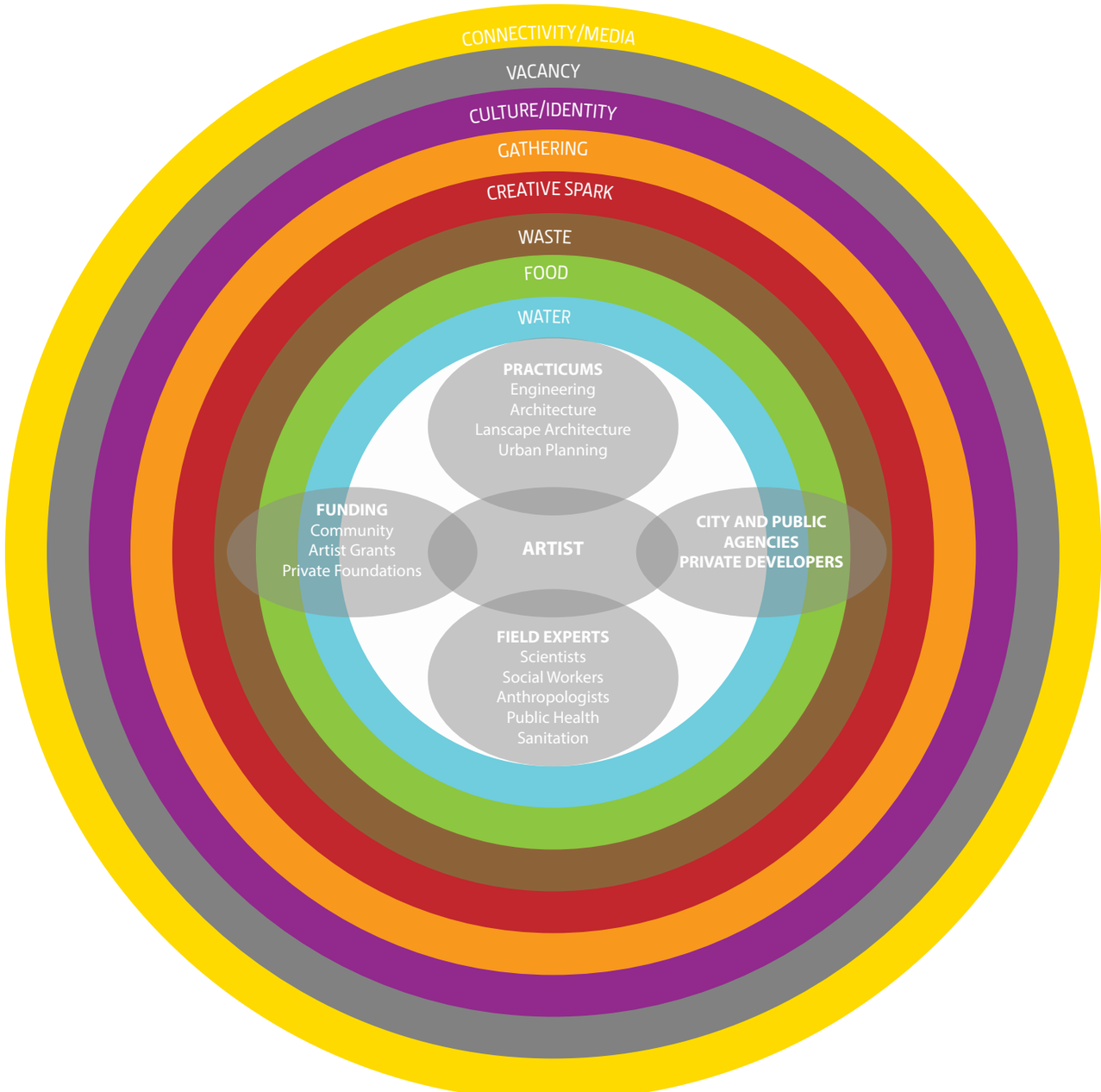
It was the ride's last stop of the second day. Ben Heywood met the riders outside–inside, the Soap Factory was preparing for another night of their annual fundraiser, the Haunted Basement–and showed the group around the building that is owned by the Soap Factory's 501(c)(3). New development is poised to spring up next door, but the Soap Factory's deed is secure. So what does it mean for an arts organization to own a huge warehouse, a piece of the urban industrial fabric? Ben mused about the mission of the organization and its unlikely role as a keeper of a historic structure. Pointing to the tall grass and small trees that had begun to colonize the vacant lot (someday to be developed) next door, he thought that nature coming back might not be a bad thing. While development waits, the trees keep growing.

Photography: Rebar Group

[Fantastic Futures 15th Stop On The Web]

Click Here to Go Back To Fantastic Futures

Community of Practice



Communities of Practice

The third key component of the Central Corridor Public Art Plan is the *Community of Practice*.

Traditional public art initiatives tend to focus on discrete projects, with the artist playing role of a visionary leader or collaborator in creating site-specific artistic elements or enhancements in conjunction with civic projects like parks, libraries, public safety facilities or infrastructure systems. Successful projects involve project-specific collaboration among project managers, designers, users and the broader community where the project is located.

The Central Corridor Public Art Plan suggests that the engagement of an artist should begin long before a discrete project has been identified, and that artists should begin by immersing themselves in broader discourses about urbanism that are essential to defining a healthy, sustainable future for the Central Corridor. Each *Urban Language* will take on a life of its own, evolving with ongoing conversation, research and work undertaken by a broad network of collaborators – artists, community members, experts in the field, scholars, public officials, advocacy groups, businesses, funders and others.

We call these networks *Communities of Practice*. They involve the many groups of people who contribute to envisioning and shaping the urban future. They reflect the idea that creative collaboration extends beyond the context of specific projects and evolves most fruitfully through ongoing practice. They can be a supportive framework within which artists can develop approaches to their work and win support to move their projects forward.

Communities of Practice are essential to the successful development of a meaningful public art practice – work that is grounded in context, has a public impact, and meets expectations of artistic excellence – in the Central Corridor.

Components of a *Community of Practice*

Each *Community of Practice* draws on a range of people who have an involvement or interest in each *Urban Language*.

- Artists are at the core of each *Community of Practice*. Their modes of inquiry and the questions they ask serve as prompts or provocations in conversations that are already going on.
- Field experts can provide insight and guidance into the subject matter, in terms of both theory and practice. They can help to bring the artists' questions and provocations to new audiences.
- Design practitioners, such as architects, landscape architects, engineers, urban designers, and planners, are essential collaborators for any artist who builds in the public realm. They can provide a variety of support, from guidance in techniques of making physical products to assistance in navigating the regulations and processes necessary to complete a project.
- City government, public agencies and private developers can provide resources and strategic guidance for research, project development, and implementation. Public officials in particular can serve as guides to grassroots community connections.
- Arts and culture organizations can provide resources, including professional development for artists in all phases of their careers, as well as access to curators, producers and audiences. They can also provide a critical context for artists to develop and assess their work.
- Civic leaders can provide essential connections to the passions of the people who live and work along the Central Corridor, help to identify opportunities for elaborating *Urban Languages* through art projects, and broad-based support for this approach to the practice of public art.

Communities of Practice can be initiated by people from any of these groups who are interested in working with this approach to public art. They can evolve organically in any number of ways and be as formal or informal as they need to be.

A model Community of Practice are the Hydrosocial gatherings organized by Christine Bauemler, artist-in-residence at the Capitol Region and Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed Districts.[1] Gatherings have engaged artist Craig David who is a member of the Central Corridor Stormwater Management Planning Team through requirements of Saint Paul's Public Art Ordinance, and artist Lisa Elias, who is working for the Watershed Districts on artistic interventions on rainwater demonstration projects, planning and water management professionals.

[1] Baeumler is Watershed Artist in Residence through a watershed district partnership with Public Art Saint Paul, which is also sponsoring these hydro-social conversations

How *Communities of Practice* Support the Practice of Public Art

Communities of Practice will support the development of public art along the Central Corridor in several important ways.

- The *Community of Practice* connects artists with a network of people who can offer insight, inspiration, guidance and grounding for their work. This network helps artists become familiar with the fields in which they are working, access to subject matter experts, leadership from the agencies they are working with, and a forum and framework for the critical evaluation of ongoing and completed work.
- The *Community of Practice* helps artists to focus their inquiries and to generate project ideas in response to ongoing community discourse about issues that are important to a healthy urban future.
- The *Community of Practice* engages a wide range of people, not just artists themselves, in conceptualizing and creating projects that shape the public realm.
- The *Community of Practice* provides a support system for artists in all phases of career development, including artists who want to transition from studio work to public art work, and facilitates the transfer of information.
- The *Community of Practice* can be an entry point for communities, public agencies, design firms and cultural institutions who wish to work with artists on projects that explore the urban future.

Artist Letters

Cliff Garten's Letter to the Core Artists

In May of 2011 a group of advisors (the Core Artists) to the planning team, met at the studio of artist Seitu Jones. The conversation was the beginning of the Living Plan idea. Shortly afterwards in June, Lead Artist Cliff Garten wrote this letter to the Core Artists.

Core Artists,

Todd and I both want to thank you for your participation in the discussion last Wednesday and your willingness to be part of this unique planning process. Thank you Seitu for providing the space for us to meet. First, we appreciate your willingness to listen as we grapple with how to provide a way to think about a framework for a plan that will be useful to the people who live in and around the Central Corridor. Second, we appreciate that none of you flinched when I spoke of how your individual projects as artists and as mentors to younger artists might become a part of this plan. Todd and I have not had the chance to discuss the meeting yet in depth, and at this point these are my individual thoughts. I think we both left the meeting with the feeling that we had arrived at something that resonated with some authenticity. For those of you who have not done anything like a planning process it is a little like when you start a new body of work, with just the seed of an idea that seems to have value. The only thing you can do is test its value and to transform its intention. We came to you to help us test our intention.

The idea that the public art plan for the Central Corridor, might be a plan, not about places, but about practice is an exciting idea. The collective strength and experience of everyone at Seitu's studio last Wednesday is evidence that something unique is happening in the Twin Cities. I believe that the success of your practices and their value for the communities and issues that are the subject of your work is an indication that we might attempt to organize the plan surrounding artistic practice. A question about this approach might be, then how does this relate to a place (to city government or to the Central Corridor)? The answer might be, because by engaging the artists and people who live and work in the corridor you have the best chance of understanding a place and creating space, both psychic and physical that will engage people and possibly become part of the built environment. My proposal for the title of the plan presently is "A Plan for Artistic Practice in the Central Corridor (*A Living Plan*, in the beginning anyway)".

The plan has to have a Language that is capable of organizing ideas about community and space in the corridor. These organizing principles will aid Public Art Saint Paul, the Cities and the planning partners in directing resources and in pinpointing projects, but should also allow artists to enter a situation where they can direct their work because the work is not prescribed, (yes, like the station art on Central Corridor). This Language is not only important because it creates a framework for how artists will respond to the conceptual and physical spaces of the corridor, but because this plan is also a critique of current planning practice and how it is evolving. As an artist I know that the best projects I do are also the ones where I am given a hand in the planning process. I want my sculpture to embrace infrastructure, to operate across space and time and to be built to the scale of the city. My being able to speak the language of engineering and to frame the problem becomes crucial to its success. It is true that good projects are initiated by artists as well as given to them.

Some of the Languages might be, water infrastructure, food infrastructure, energy, performance and music, etc., that represent ways of seeing and being in space that are not the ways that city departments organize the city. The plan ought to proceed from a point that questions our present thinking of how cities are organized and then provides artists with opportunities to show the cities how different modes of operation and artistic practice are possible. If each of you were to create a project that, 1) focused on an issue in the corridor that mattered to a particular group of people, or community 2) understood a way to make that issue a part of the refinement and focus of your practice, so that your art progressed 3)understood that selecting and mentoring younger artists in your constituent community was part of the project and 4) accepted that your project was part of a series of projects that initiated the *Living Plan*,……. then practice would inform planning and we might have a different way of beginning the plan and perceiving and working in the urban realm. The practicality of this depends on many things, your critique of the idea, Public Art Saint Paul's funding and mission, the receptiveness and role city departments and the time frame and budget within which the plan needs to be produced. We may end up in an entirely different place, but this is a good place to begin.

Looking forward to the ensuing conversation.

Cliff Garten

Ashley Hanson

Dear Artists,

The work you do is important. It has the ability to unite, shape, change, connect, re-imagine our relationship with our environment and our community. It can bring to the surface that which is unseen and shed light on areas that need our attention. You are in a unique position, which allows you to simultaneously immerse yourself and remain objective; to collect different points of view and present them back in a way that can inspire, ignite, and empower change.

I had the privilege of working with Wing Young Huie and Public Art Saint Paul on The University Avenue Project from 2009-2010. As the producer of this project, I spent much time on the Central Corridor getting to know its systems, challenges and hopes. We created maps, we connected dots, we integrated Wing's photographs of the people who live and work along the avenue into the landscape of the avenue.

Currently, I am working as the Producer of The Community Meal with artists Seitu Jones, Cliff Garten, Tou SaiKo Lee and Public Art Saint Paul. The Community Meal (a demonstration project of the Central Corridor Public Art Plan), is a public art project that seeks to engage the entire city in a civic dinner table conversation about food, food access and food justice by bringing together 2000 people to sit together for a urban farmed meal at a mile-long table along a major thoroughfare during the 2014 harvest season.

Both of these projects engage in a *Community of Practice*, as outlined in the Central Corridor Public Art Plan. There is a reciprocal relationship of artists connecting with the community and the systems existing within that community and involving the community with the artistic practice by integrating that practice with its existing systems.

The Central Corridor Public Art Plan outlines the systems at play along the Corridor and provides examples of how art can be used within these systems. The Plan can be used to inspire your practice or used as a resource for your ongoing practice. The hope is that you use this plan to integrate your work into the urban and human systems that exist along the Corridor in order to connect your practice with that of other artists and with the lives of those who live and work there. Using this *Community of Practice*, we have the potential to make deeper and more meaningful change by uniting our art with our lives and urban systems; it reminds us that we are stronger together.

Thank you for the work you do and I look forward to our paths crossing.

With gratitude,

Ashley

Ashley Hanson received her MA degree in Applied Theatre at the University of Manchester, UK, where she focused on the role of theatre in the sustainable development of communities. For the past ten years, she has facilitated, written and directed theater and arts-based programs with many different communities and organizations. Ashley's theater company, PlaceBase Productions, explores place- and issue-based work to reconnect individuals with their shared values, and in turn, inspire stewardship of their community. In 2012, she was selected as a Creative CityMaking Artist, a partnership between Intermedia Arts and the City of Minneapolis, to explore creative community engagement strategies in the city planning process. Ashley has received fellowships from the Creative Community Leadership Institute and the National Alliance for Media Arts and Culture. She is also a founding member of the Yes! Lets Collective of Twin-Cities artists, musicians and community enthusiasts, and she plays ukulele and sings in an Americana band.

Seitu Ken Jones

This is a Love Note

If you're reading my words you've made it through an exciting document. I've made an assumption that if you are reading this plan, you are either interested in or are already working to transform the urban landscape. This plan will help demystify city systems and guide you to making artistic interventions in those systems. The authors of this document (Cliff, Todd and Blaine) and the sponsors of this document (Public Art Saint Paul) are passionate in their love for creating urban spaces and experiences that can enrich our daily lives. I emphasize love, because we as artists unfortunately don't spend enough time talking about love and passion.

To follow this plan you have to exhibit and embrace a love for your self, a love for your family, a love for your communities and a deep love for humankind. You won't get rich by using this plan, you may not get much recognition, but you will change the world and achieve greatness. Martin Luther King, Jr., described greatness as your ability to serve and said that the more service you perform the greater you are. The passion that drives you to create public art comes from an aspiration to serve. By swallowing and following this plan in small bites, you will be nourished by love and you will become a member of the beloved community. So use this plan and other sources to nourish and surround yourself in love and may it be a love and passion to make our urban environment more beautiful than you found it.

love,

seitu ken jones

Seitu Jones is an artist whose home and studio are in a former cigar factory in Frogtown, where he worked with a group of gardeners for ten years to "greenline" the neighborhood. He is one of seven artists engaged in the Metropolitan Council's Central Corridor LRT public art program and is integrating art for the Lexington Parkway, Dale and Rice Street stations. He serves on the board of managers of the Capitol Region Watershed District and has been instrumental in developing the watershed public art residency.

Shanai Matteson and Collin Kloecker

Why Haven't We Seen The Whole City, Yet?

"You can't make it whole, it is whole." -Stewart Brand from the Whole Earth Catalog

In 1966 it was rumored that NASA had captured photographic images of Earth from outer space, but these images were not yet public. Activists, including Stewart Brand, author and editor of the *Whole Earth Catalog*, began to campaign for the release of those images. They wore buttons that read, "*Why haven't we seen a photograph of the whole Earth yet?*"

Brand and others thought that if people on Earth could just see the planet in its entirety, this would have a profound impact on their thinking about everything from the environment to global connections to our collective human endeavor. In many ways, they were right. Eventually NASA released its photos, now some of the most widely *seen* images on the planet. These photographs sparked a new global consciousness that played no small role in the burgeoning environmental and humanitarian movements.

When I first moved to the Twin Cities to go to college in 2000, it was around the time that Wing Young Huie was making his photos public as part of the *Lake Street USA* project. At the time I lived in a small apartment not far from Lake Street, but my travels through the city were more or less confined to the bus routes I took to and from the University of Minnesota. I had moved from a rural community of about 100 people. I knew almost nothing about cities, and even less about the city where I now lived. I didn't know what kinds of people lived in Minneapolis (or Saint Paul), what they did for work or fun, and certainly not the myriad systems - ecological, social, and economic - that we were embedded in as city residents.

One afternoon I was biking down Lake Street when I saw one of Wing's photos in a storefront window. Then I saw another, and another, each one depicting a different moment in time along a street that I was just beginning to get a feel for. I started to wonder, who were these people? I guessed, correctly, that they were my neighbors. I started to look at strangers, hoping to recognize them. I started to wonder about their experiences, the things they might know that I didn't. What did we have in common? What did it matter?

From that experience I began to see the city, and I felt a part of it. This was one of the sparks that began my own creative practice, though it would be years before I began making public art that aspired to some of the same impacts.

Those of us who live in cities are necessarily connected, though at times we may not feel that connection in tangible ways. In fact, at times we might feel its opposite, a lingering sense that we're as isolated as ever - living in neighborhoods that feel isolated, or sitting behind computers, talking to people who think just like us. Our inner and outer lives may feel broken, fragmented. It's as if we are pieces in search of a whole.

It can be helpful to ask, *what connects us?* Our rituals of culture and daily life; our sidewalks; the fact that we all drink water from the same source; our economic exchanges; our collective knowledge about this place; the stories we tell and retell, whether they are personal stories or civic ones; the creative sparks between us. Cities are more than the sum of their buildings, policies or transportation infrastructure. They're the sum of their relationships - the myriad connections between people, ideas, resources.

As artists, we spend a lot of time asking *'what if?'* questions. What if we could see those connections, the invisible ones? What if we could help others see them? What if we could make new connections where none exist? What if we could help invent new rituals, new ways of gathering, that could make our cities more empathetic, or more resilient?

I create artistic and design projects with my husband and creative partner Colin Kloecker as Works Progress Studio. Our artistic practice is not about making things or telling stories, though we do make things and tell stories all the time. At its core our work, which is embedded in the social networks and systems of the Twin Cities, is about relationships - specifically, those relationships that make a city whole.

When we were invited to participate in the conversations around the Central Corridor Public Art Plan, we immediately thought about the ways that the public art and artists we love have inspired us to see and make connections. Wing's photos, Marcus' sidewalk poems, Christine's efforts to create a *Community of Practice* around stormwater. As we talked with the other artists that were part of the planning process, we couldn't help but think of the potential such a sweeping effort had for creating a more connected and resilient city, beginning with the Central Corridor.

I say city, rather than cities, because I think that one potential long-term outcome of the new Green Line is to make us feel as though we're part of a whole - rather than isolated residents of (only) one city. During the *Fantastic Futures* bike ride that Rebar led as part of the planning process, we made a stop on that imaginary (yet very real) line that separates Minneapolis from Saint Paul. There, artist Amanda Lovelee led a square dance, which is a dance that requires we make physical connection. For us, this was another important moment, a creative spark, one

where we considered the possibilities of all of the imaginary (yet very real) boundaries between us. What if we started there?

I look forward to the conversations and connections that this Public Art Plan sparks. I look forward to the way it helps us to see what is already here, and the ways it will challenge us to dream fearlessly about what could be.
Shanai Matteson, Colin Kloecker

Artists **Colin Kloecker and Shanai Matteson** currently run Works Progress. Based in Minneapolis, it focuses on creating "collaborative projects that inspire, inform, and connect; catalyzing relationships across creative and cultural boundaries; and providing new platforms for public engagement." Matteson leads the City Art Collaboratory, a project of Public Art Saint Paul.

Connecting Across a Thousand Points of View

For more than thirty years I've collected thousands of points of view photographically, revealing intimate and public realities that are complex and open to interpretation. My intent is to confront, challenge, and inform our notions of who we are.

I'm motivated by curiosity and the basic human need for connection, in a society that is becoming more and more polarized. I'm motivated to crack out of my own cultural and personal bubble. I'm motivated by the overwhelming weight of images created by popular culture that idealizes and distorts our ideas of who we are.

My hopes for my artistic practice and for the artistic practices in the Central Corridor are to create works, concepts and (third) spaces that connect and reflect all of its citizens authentically, appearing organic rather than imposed.

Wing Young Huie

For four years, **Wing Young Huie** immersed himself in the life of University Avenue, engaging and photographing new immigrant populations. The resulting University Avenue Project transformed the corridor into an urban photo gallery, including a town square in a vacant lot. He now operates the Third Place Gallery. In 2012, he was selected as a Creative CityMaking Artist, a partnership between Intermedia Arts and the City of Minneapolis, to explore creative community engagement strategies in the city planning process.

Tim Griffin

I am truly pleased to see the launch of this artistic plan, which represents so much hard work and interesting and unexpected outcomes that could not have been predicted at the start. Most importantly it describes the opportunity for you to engage in our community's design at many different levels and timeframes. I am struck by the range of engagements between the lighter, cheaper, faster spirit of Irrigate and the 100 plus year infrastructure investment that is the complete reconstruction of University Avenue and the addition of the LRT system. Personally, I am especially hopeful that you will be excited to contribute to the envisioned green infrastructure system of parks proposed for each station area along the Central Corridor in Saint Paul. I challenge you to engage in this and two other plans: The Stormwater and Green Infrastructure Master Plan and the Complete Streets Manual, to insure that our public realm is beautiful and green.

This engagement has also brought to light a new role for artists in the community design process, which is the artist as part of an interdisciplinary design team and leading the discussion about public art as a community value to be expressed in placemaking and not just a personal artistic commission. The emergence of artists as trusted advocates who can understand and interpret community values in the city building process is a serious responsibility. The ideas and conversations contained in this piece suggest a bright future. I look forward to your efforts on our behalf.

Tim Griffin

Tim Griffin is the Director of Urban Design at the Saint Paul Riverfront Corporation.

Peter Kramer

Dear Artists:

Eighteen Stations on the green line

We all have stories of the Avenue, University Avenue 'Felicity', the mother of all central corridors, with her arms outstretched, embraces the entire line. She invites you to stand with her and tell your story.

In the 50's the hot rod guys i hung around with called University Avenue "the boulevard of broken parts" in honor of the used car dealers. My parents bought their first TV from "Mad Man Muntz" on the avenue. I worked one summer with MnDOT crews tearing up the street car tracks. I once ate 12 sliders at .12¢ each at the White Castle Drive-in. I danced at the Prom Ballroom, rode a street car, moved a house down the avenue in the middle of th night made art in Western Sculpture Park and stood in awe at Wing Young Huie's Photos on the giant screen.

Each station the avenue represents a unique and distinctly different culture, several miles and some light years separate the corridors of bureaucratic power at the State Capitol, on the one end, from the egg headed isolation of the University at the other end (only steps away from the post hippy, now immigrant, rail stop on the West Bank) and there in the middle at Victoria sits the Best Steak House, a culture onto its own...did I forget Minneapolis...oops.

University Avenue is a great river connecting our twin cities, she is at flood stage with life flowing from her tributaries. There are 18 stops on the light-rail line...each with a story.

Embrace the opportunity, practice art

Peter Kramer
Public Art Saint Paul
Board of Directors

"Practices not principles are what
allows us to live together in peace." Kwama Anthony Applah

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Osman Ahmed

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Allen Lovejoy

Amanda Lovelee

Weiming Lu

Haila Maize

Adam Maleitzke

Paul Mandell

Ifrah Manzur

Kristin Makholm

John Marshall

Jody Martinez

Melissa Martinez-Sones

Shanai Matteson

Monique McKenzie

County Commissioner Peter McLaughlin

Brian McMahon

Ellen McPartlan

Liz Meier

Howard Merriam

Margaret Miller

Steve Mirtione

Donna Molnar

Attila Molnar

Jan Morlock

Christina Morrison

Kathy Mouacheupao

Ellen Muller

Kristen Murray

Paul Nahurski

Li Nordell

Patrick O'Brien

Patricia Ohmans

Josh Olson

Michael Jon Olson

Tyler Olsin

Catherine O'Neil

Chris Osgood

Emma Pachuta

Tim Page

Katherine Pederson

Sarah Peters

Adrienne Pierce

Christine Podas-Larson

Dick Popley

Dick Poppele

Mary Pumphrey

Craig Rafferty

Janaki Ranpura

Molly Reichert

Catherine Reid

Jenna Rice

Mason Riddle

Nora Riemenschneider

Terri Ristow

Jess Rosenthal

Jonathan Sage-Martinson

Ignacio San Martin

Wesley Saunders-Pierce

Laura Savron

Michele Schermann

Carly Schmitt

Sarah Schultz

Zach Schwartz

Julie Seeber

Amy Sparks

Joe Spencer

Amy Spong

Councilmember Russ Stark

Nancy Stark

Dan Steinlew

Ellen Stewart

Emily Stover

Justin Stubleski

Andy Sturdevant

Carol Swenson

Lucy Thompson

Peter Haakon Thompson

Alicia Vap

Richard Venberg

Jim Voll

Peter Wagenious

Ben Waldo

Jun-Li Wang

Abdulkadir Warsame

Emily Weber

Beth Wegener

Anne White

Josh Williams

Jeremey Willis Hanson

Joyce Wilson

Mychael Wright

Marcus Young

Judith Yourman

Jeff Zaayer

Laura Zabel

Hahn Zan

Patrick Zeeb

Sarah Zorn

Credits

Consultant Team

Cliff Garten (Cliff Garten Studio), lead artist

Todd W. Bressi (Urban Design • Place Planning • Public Art), city designer

Blaine Merker (Rebar Group), artist in residence

Meridith McKinley (Via Partnership), public art consultant

Plan Partners

Public Art Saint Paul
Christine Podas-Larson and Peter Kramer

City of Saint Paul, Planning and Economic Development and Public Works
Allen Lovejoy and Lucy Thompson

City of Minneapolis Art in Public Places Program and City Coordinator's Office
Mary Altman

Saint Paul Design Center - Saint Paul Riverfront Corporation
Tim Griffin

University District Alliance
Dick Gilyard and Jan Morlock

Capitol Region and Ramsey Washington Metro Watershed Districts
Mark Doneux and Cliff Aichinger

Core Artist Team

Christine Baeumler

Ashley Hanson

Wing Young Huie

Seitu Jones

TouSaiko Lee

Shanai Matteson and Colin Kloecker

Marcus Young

Funders

The Central Corridor Funders Collaborative

Public Art Saint Paul and the Partners

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Back to Table of Contents