METRO NASHVILLE
PUBLIC ART COMMUNITY INVESTMENT PLAN
Benchmarking Study

Metro Arts Commission

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Introduction / Methodology

This benchmarking report examines program and project models that can inform the three main program goals for Metro Arts: Stronger Creative Workforce; Deeper Cultural Participation; and Vibrant, Creative Neighborhoods.

To prepare this report, the consulting team scoured dozens of examples of program and project models, drawing from their own practice as well as examples documented through intermediary organizations such as Americans for the Arts Public Art Network, the National Endowment for the Arts and Artplace America. This research is not meant to be comprehensive, but rather illustrative of public art approaches that can inform discussions and recommendations for the Nashville Public Art Community Investment Plan.

The reports are drawn from primary and secondary documentation of the projects, the authors’ own experience with the projects, and follow-up interviews where necessary. The concluding observations are the author’s own, based on their own understanding of the projects.
Stronger Creative Workers

Nashville will expand its network of talent in creative industries in order to achieve both artistic and economic success. This means increasing the number, stability and income levels of arts and culture jobs, and creating an environment of access and opportunity for workers and entrepreneurs.

The creative workforce specific to public art, or the public art ecosystem, encompasses the wide range of individuals, businesses and organizations essential for creating and producing public art. This includes artists, arts administrators, curators, fabricators, designers, developers, educators and critics. It also includes the institutions they work for, such as businesses, arts organizations, public agencies and other organizations that collaborate on art projects. The efforts of the Metro Arts Public Art Program can support this ecosystem, and conversely a strong public art ecosystem can build a robust Public Art Program for Nashville.

Programs benchmarked below explore different ways that public agencies, nonprofits and private businesses have supported local artmaking and capacity building. Programs include:

- Mapping and Marking 2010, Vancouver, British Columbia
- TEMPO, Austin, Texas
- University City Sculpture Series, University City, Missouri
- Zahner + Kansas City Art Institute Design Competition, Kansas City, Missouri
- Allied Artist Program, El Paso, Texas
- Seattle Public Art Boot Camp, Seattle, Washington
- Regional Arts Commission: Community Arts Training Institute, St. Louis, Missouri
- Mural Arts: A2O and LEAPs, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- Visiting Curator’s Initiative, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- City Art Collaboratory, Minneapolis–St. Paul, Minnesota
Stronger Creative Workforce

Mapping and Marking 2010, Vancouver, British Columbia

During consultations for the City of Vancouver’s 2008 Public Art Master Plan, local artists and curators pointed out the disconnect between the local artistic practice and the interests of the local arts community, and the types of works that the City’s program was commissioning. As a result, the Master Plan recommended that the City add a program element: artist-initiated public art projects that invited artists to propose ideas based on their own interests and ideas, at public places of their choosing.

Mapping and Marking was conceived as pilot projects for artist initiated proposals specific to the time of celebration of the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games defined a unique moment in time in the City of Vancouver. Artists were asked to capture this moment through works of art that seek to record and map the city at that time and place in history. For Mapping and Marking, the Public Art Program developed an open call to artists to propose artworks based on their own ideas and art practices at public sites of their choosing. Emerging and established artists with an art practice based in Vancouver were invited to submit their ideas. Both permanent and temporary projects were considered. Approximately 150 artists submitted for the project.

Project artwork budgets could be up to $150,000 inclusive of all costs and fees. The total Mapping and Marking budget, including all costs of selection, proposal development, invited commission, promotion and contingencies, was $800,000.

Eight projects were selected. Three were permanent: Monument for East Vancouver, by Ken Lum; Kingsway Luminaries, by David MacWilliam; and Surface, by Fiona Bowie. Five were temporary/event based: “5” by Paul Wong, Blue by Project Rainbow, Every Letter In The Alphabet by Geoffrey Farmer, Vancouver Vancouver Vancouver by Vanessa Kwan, and Sensory Maps of Vancouver by Anna Ruth.

Based on the success of Mapping and Marking, additional artist-initiated opportunities have been incorporated as part of the Public Art Program.

Impact: The driving force behind artist-initiated projects such as Mapping and Marking is to engage local artists in creating work for the public realm based on their own interests, knowledge of the community, and artistic practice. Mapping and Marking was limited to artists whose practice was based in Vancouver.

Sponsor: City of Vancouver Public Art Program

Funding: Special allocation from City Operating Fund
**Stronger Creative Workforce**

**TEMPO, Austin, Texas**

TEMPO was established by the City of Austin Art in Public Places (AIPP) program to attract new and emerging artists to the City’s public art program, as well as to enrich civic dialogue, cultivate tourism, and engage public space in a unique way.

TEMPO invites artists in the Austin area (the city and seven counties) to submit proposals for temporary public art projects in Austin. Selected artists are awarded a minimum of $3,000 and a maximum of $10,000 to realize their projects. The program has now commissioned two rounds of projects.

TEMPO allows artists to explore a range of themes and results in a body of innovative, thought-provoking artwork that impacts the way people experience their environment. Projects must be on City-owned sites. A list of pre-approved sites is included in the RFP, though artists are able to propose other City-owned sites. The exhibition period is July through December, through individual works may vary in duration.

AIPP staff conducts application workshops, and also provides tools such as a budget worksheet for artists new to submitting public art proposals.

The funds for TEMPO are derived from the City’s Hotel Occupancy Tax.

In 2015, TEMPO rolled out 10 new temporary projects, transforming various land and cityscapes around town. Artist Juan Deleon unveiled various constellations of ten foot, inflatable white vinyl spheres across Austin. The spheres were rearranged on different sites throughout the length of the exhibition. Annelize Machado offered public workshops for “creating short dance phrases, crafting and storytelling” at the Old Bakery & Emporium, which were recorded and projected onto the exterior wall of the Bakery to “celebrate the older adult as a gifted, contributing member of our society.” Ethan Azarian created large murals in the Rosewood- Zaragosa neighborhood, interpreting the history of area.

**http://austintexas.gov/tempo**

Impact: Through TEMPO, the AIPP program in Austin has created opportunities specifically for local artists that are interested in breaking into public art practice, but may have little experience working with public agencies or building something in the public realm. It also is bringing a new group of local artists to the attention of AIPP staff.

Sponsor: Austin Art in Public Places

Funding: City Hotel Occupancy Tax

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1 Williamson, Travis, Bastrop, Caldwell, Hays, Burnet and Blanco counties
Stronger Creative Workforce

University City Sculpture Series, University City, Missouri

Since 1986, the Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Arts at Washington University and The Municipal Commission on Arts and Letters of University City have partnered to present “University City Sculpture Series,” a program that fills the parks, plazas, schools, galleries, libraries and community centers in University City with design and art work by students.

The University City Sculpture Series gives Sam Fox School students the opportunity to propose and execute temporary site-specific installations in University City. As part of a fall semester Arts Practice course, under the guidance of faculty in the sculpture department, students gain valuable hands-on experience developing concept proposals for projects in University City. They choose locations, estimate costs, and design models. They then make professional presentations before the City’s Municipal Commission on Arts & Letters. The projects selected by the Commission on Arts & Letters receive funding to be executed and installed from University City, with support from the Regional Arts Commission and private donors.

Washington University boasts that “for students, the University City Sculpture Series has become a rite of passage, a chance to explore the social aspects and civic responsibilities of being an artist. Since the project’s inception in the fall of 1986, more than 200 students, 17 professors, 4 deans, 2 chancellors, 60 commission members, and 2 mayors have collaborated on it. The series is the longest-running partnership of its type in the United States and has produced almost 200 temporary public works. Throughout the years, projects have represented any number of mediums, from traditional sculpture to highly interactive works forged through community participation.”

http://samfoxschool.wustl.edu/ucity-sculpture

Impact: Through a partnership between a university and a public agency, the University City Sculpture Series provides university art students with a real-world experience of creating a public artwork, including working with a client and taking a project through approvals. The final projects provide students with built public work to add to their portfolio.

Sponsor: Washington University Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Arts, Municipal Commission on Arts and Letters of University City

Funding: Washington University, Regional Arts Commission, private donors
**Stronger Creative Workforce**

**Zahner + Kansas City Art Institute Design Competition, Kansas City, Missouri**

Zahner is an internationally acclaimed engineering and fabrication company best known for the use of metal in the world of art and architecture. Headquartered in Kansas City, Missouri, USA, Zahner employs nearly two-hundred craftsmen and engineers in its offices and two plants in Kansas City, Missouri, and Dallas, Texas.

Every other year Zahner sponsors a sculpture competition for the Kansas City Art Institute (KCAI). Entries are initially reviewed by Zahner experts. Entries are narrowed down and the semi-finalists present their sculptures to a panel of judges. In 2015, for the first time, the contest was open to students as well as alumni of the Kansas City Art Institute, and featured an open format and popular vote. Twelve finalist’s entries were selected by the general public. These twelve finalists were reviewed by a jury consisting of representatives of Zahner, KCAI, local designers and arts professionals.

Zahner donates the design support, fabrication, and installation of these sculptures at the Kansas City Art Institute for their biannual fundraiser and auction. The sculpture is auctioned off to the highest bidder, and all auction proceeds are donated to the KCAI scholarship fund.

In 2015, 47 entries were submitted by students and alumni. 827 voters collectively selected the top 12 artist/teams. It was the goal of KCAI and Zahner that the openness would provide visibility to the works which didn’t get selected, so that they could be fabricated by Zahner from a different funding source. Many of those who voted are collectors, gallery owners, philanthropists and other people involved in the art world.

The winner received $1000 plus their work fabricated by Zahner. Second and third prize winners also receive a cash award ($750 and $250 respectively). Zahner works closely with the winner to engineer and fabricate their work.

In addition to weighing each entry’s aesthetics, uniqueness, and conceptual nature, the jurors also looked at feasibility of concept, from costs, flexibility of installation methods, and whether the works were constructible within the project’s budget-window. Finally, the jurors also looked at whether the artwork selected would be a challenge to manufacture (a challenge is perceived as a positive attribute).

http://www.azahner.com/kcai.cfm

Impact: Zahner’s collaboration with KCAI provides artists with the opportunity to work with one of the world’s leading fabrication shops to realize a large-scale artwork. Artists get exposure to their work through the competition process, and the finalist has one of their works sold into a collection.

Sponsor: Zahner and Kansas City Art Institute

Funding: Zahner
Stronger Creative Workforce

Allied Artist Program, El Paso, Texas

The City of El Paso Allied Artist Program provides local artists the opportunity to assist experienced artists commissioned for major projects of $50,000 or more by the Public Art Program, in order to gain the technical and administrative expertise needed to compete within the field of public art.

Artists are invited to apply to be an allied artist through an open Request for Qualifications, issued by the City of El Paso on a periodic basis. If an artist is pre-qualified, then his or her qualifications are shared with commissioned artists seeking an Allied Artist to work with on their project. The commissioned artist will generally also interview prior to selecting an Allied Artist. Artists who are chosen for a specific project are compensated for their service as an Allied Artist.

To be eligible, artists must be emerging or mid-career and have resided in the City of El Paso for a minimum of three years. Artists must have a strong interest in gaining expertise in the public art process, but no prior public art experience is required.

The responsibilities of Allied Artists include, but are not limited to, coordination and attending community and agency meetings, conducting research regarding materials, design issues, and building codes; assisting in the coordination and installation of artworks; writing reports, and any other duties requested by the commissioned artist that relate to the design, fabrication and installation of the artwork.

Most commissioned artists have worked with Allied Artists in a collaborative manner, and have shared the credit for the resulting project. In 2013, commissioned artist Vicki Scuri selected El Paso artist Mike Rivera as an Allied Artist for an overpass project at Airway Boulevard. His role on the project was to create designs for different aspects of the project, and ultimately his designs for a 27’ x 8’ sculpture in the median was approved as part of the project. During the design development process, Mike had the opportunity to go to Seattle to work with Vicki in her studio. The biggest thing Mike felt he learned was the roles of various government and public bodies in projects like this, and the decision-making process. At the end of the project he felt that he was ready to take on a project of his own. That same year commissioned artist Catherine Widgery selected local photographer Patrick Walker as an Allied Artist for 20 Bus Rapid Transit shelters. The project, called Leaves of Wind, incorporates Patrick’s photography on custom fabricated metal screens.

Impact: Allied Artists gain access to professional artists working at the top of their field. When Allied Artists are well-matched with willing mentors, there is an opportunity for experiences that transcend mentorship and move into full collaborative partnerships.

Sponsor: City of El Paso public art program

Funding: Public art program capital funds
*Stronger Creative Workforce*

**Seattle Public Art Boot Camp**

The City of Seattle’s Office of Arts and Culture (ARTS) offers local artists the opportunity to attend a free two-day intensive workshop each May to “demystify and simplify the process of creating publicly commissioned artwork.”

The boot camp provides basic training on how to work successfully in the arena of commissioned public artwork. Topics and presentations include submitting a competitive application, selection process, contracts, navigating design teams, public presentations, fabrication and installations and dedications. Artists are always required to apply for the workshop, and once accepted to the 2015 boot camp, were eligible to apply for an opportunity to create a temporary artwork in one of two sites later that year.

http://artbeat.seattle.gov/2015/03/25/public-art-boot-camp-training/

Impact: Public Art Boot Camp is a professional development opportunity that provides artists with basic background about the process of competing for and developing a public art project.

Sponsor: City of Seattle, Office of Arts and Culture

Funding: Percent for Art
Stronger Creative Workforce

Regional Arts Commission: Community Arts Training Institute, St. Louis, MO

The Community Arts Training (CAT) Institute, founded in 1997, is a five-month training program for artists and community leaders interested in learning how art can be a tool for social change. One of the primary goals of the training program is to foster partnerships between artists of all disciplines, social workers, educators, community and social activists, and policymakers with the goal of creating relevant, impactful arts programs particularly in under-resourced community settings, e.g. neighborhood organizations, social service agencies, development initiatives, and after-school programs.

There are 16 CAT Institute fellows selected for each cohort — 8 artists of all disciplines and 8 community organizers/social service professionals/social activists/policy makers. Fellows are selected through a nomination, application, and interview process and are considered not only for their individual qualifications but also with respect to cohort, as a whole.

CAT Institute Fellows are provided with more than 60 hours of training, which occur during intensive two-day sessions and in lab team assignments. The five-month curriculum (one weekend per month) includes training on partnership and survival strategies, mediation and conflict resolution, learning styles, teaching strategies, public relations, identifying funding sources, legal and liability issues in the arts and social services, assessment techniques and advocacy.

http://racstl.org/art-community/community-arts-training-cat-institute/

Impact: The CAT Institute has stimulated a growth in cultural activism in St. Louis and an increased number of social service and non-arts organizations developing art-based programming, and arts organizations doing community-engaged projects. The Brown School of Social Work at Washington University has seen an uptick in the number of Masters of Social Work (MSW) students that are pursuing careers in the arts and fulfilling their practicum requirements at arts institutions.

Sponsor: Regional Arts Commission

Funding: Hotel-Motel Tax
**Stronger Creative Workforce**

**Mural Arts: A2O and LEAPs, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**

The Philadelphia Mural Arts Program has created a range of opportunities for younger artists to obtain modest commissions that enable them to develop their public art and community engagement skills under the guidance of experience project managers and program directors in the Art Education Program.

The “A2O” resident (Artists and Artworks Outdoors) is a collaboration with the Department of Parks and Recreation. Twice a year, cohorts of up to four artists are assigned to work at neighborhood recreation centers to work with youth ages 10-14 in twice weekly workshops that result in site-specific public artworks (permanent or temporary) that highlight environmental issues. The A2O artists work under the direction of a dedicated Art Education project manager. Artists are selected by Mural Arts staff on the basis of applications.

A2O provides a platform for emerging artists who want to create work that pushes beyond the traditional notion of muralism, while employing an environmental lens. A2O prides itself on cultivating a unique mix of artists whose work ranges from paper-making to photography, social practice to silk-screening, providing a rich experience to participants every session.

LEAPs (Local Emerging Artists Projects) offers local artists opportunities to create small, unconventional projects in partnership with students. The students visit artists’ studios and work side-by-side with them to create collaborative, temporary works of art. Each project is unique and exposes students to contemporary art practices. The time and duration of the workshops have varied, but the resulting works have consistently been innovative and exciting. Mural Arts staff selects artists through a curatorial process, considering both the uniqueness of the artist’s work as an art education experience, and their assessment of how the artist would benefit from the teaching and project opportunity.

Impact: A2O and LEAPs provide artists stepping stones for developing their skills in public art and community engagement, and opportunities to test project ideas or art-making processes. They provide an opportunity for artists to prove themselves within a large public art organization, with the prospect of obtaining future commissions if they are successful.

Sponsor: City of Philadelphia, Mural Arts Program; Department of Parks and Recreation; Department of Human Services.

Funding: Department of Human Services, project funds from various sources.
**Stronger Creative Workforce**

**Visiting Curator’s Initiative, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**

The Philadelphia Mural Arts Program launched its Visiting Curators Initiative to help the organization chart new artistic directions and build its capacity to pursue them. Over the course of two years, it employed three part-time curators with backgrounds in contemporary art, public art and urbanism as curatorial residents.

One of the most important impetuses for the initiative was that Mural Arts was reaching a plateau. Over thirty years, it had built a highly successful track record in community-based public art. Its projects have expanded the practice of muralism, in terms of aesthetics, media and community engagement. It had involved audiences in some of the most urgent civic and social issues of the day, and provided paths forward for countless youth, communities and artists.

But as a dynamic organization, Mural Arts knew that it needed to evolve and decided that it had to lead a broad internal and external conversation that situated its evolving body of work (and the practice of mural-making in general) in the context of contemporary art, public art and American urbanism. Through this conversation—which engaged artists, leadership, staff, community stakeholders and funders—Mural Arts hoped to strengthen both the conceptual and pragmatic basis of its work.

Mural Arts sought to engage curators who had the ability to facilitate this conversation and create a proposal for a project. Curators were given an opportunity to work side-by-side with Mural Arts’ staff, leadership and stakeholders in activities such as research, project consultation and development, artist recruitment, and public programming. Indeed, as the program evolved, curators were asked to choose one department or program that would be their home base. Each curator received dedicated workspace, a stipend of $25,000, and additional funds for research and travel.

The independent curators worked with Mural Arts. Elizabeth Thomas eventually went on to curate projects with Katharina Grosse and Michael Ratkowitz. Lucia Sanroman went on to curate Playgrounds for Useful Knowledge, with Cohstra, and Pedro Alonzo went on to curate the Open Source exhibition.

**Impact:** The Visiting Curator’s Initiative had a significant impact on the creative aspirations and internal decision-making processes of a well-established public art organization. It opened the organization to engagement with a broader range of artists and helped the organization create models for artist and curator initiated projects.

**Sponsor:** Philadelphia Mural Arts Program

**Funding:** Pew Center for Arts and Heritage
Stronger Creative Workforce

City Art Collaboratory, Minneapolis–St. Paul, Minnesota

City Art Collaboratory is a cross-disciplinary research and development fellowship for artists and STEM professionals who share a desire to collaborate on publicly oriented, environmentally focused projects that will enhance the way cities are built, experienced and sustained. Launched by Public Art Saint Paul in 2011, City Art Collaboratory is evolving as a nationally unique and vital space for individual and collective inquiry, direct experience of our urban environment, critical reflection on ecologies of place, and conceptualization of environmentally focused public art projects.

The program arose from Public Art Saint Paul’s environmental art initiatives of 2008-10, including the Sustainable Artmaking Fellowship and Hunting and Gathering Walks. Environmental artist Shanai Matteson is the program’s director; Olive Bieringa and Marcus Young serve as curators. The initial City Art Collaboratory cohort was comprised of eight public artists and eight scientists and expanded in 2013 to include new members. Through open-ended field trip experiences, collaborative workshops and public conversations, the cohort explores unique places and projects in the City of St. Paul where ecological, physical, political and social systems converge.

While the City Art Collaboratory program has primarily focused on the development of a cross-disciplinary cohort and their joint research, the relationships and connections made among the cohort have given rise to new work, such as “The Plume Project,” which consists of multiple art installations on a District Energy plan in 2015 and 2016. While these projects are not presented or supported directly by Public Art Saint Paul, they do show that the program has had a collective impact, leading to new possibilities for public art and environmental engagement across the city. Public Art Saint Paul is currently at work on a book that will document and share highlights from the first three years of City Art Collaboratory, profiling field trip sites, research and related projects that have been developed by members of the fellowship cohort.

The Collaboratory is now seeking funding to expand its vision to engage artists with cities in “radically rethinking how they plan, build, and maintain systems that sustain and shape urban life ... through City Art, or artist-led work made from and to the scale of City systems; by artists working collaboratively with other city-making professionals (i.e. planners, developers, engineers, organizers, designers).

http://publicartstpaul.org/project/collaboratory/

Impact: Public Art Saint Paul is currently working on an evaluation of the Collaboratory. The program has resulted in new opportunities for artists through connections that have been forged between artists and science and environmental organizations. It has provided support for artist learning about environmental issues and history, which has also inspired independent artist projects.

Sponsor: Public Art Saint Paul

Funding: National Endowment for the Arts, Minnesota State Arts Board
Deeper Cultural Participation

Deeper creative participation means that everyone in Nashville, regardless of cultural, racial or socioeconomic background, should have access to cultural life and experiences.

Deeper creative participation relates to public art in several ways. The first is how and where people encounter public art in their everyday lives and experiences, how they connect with it, and how it gives meaning. The second is how people are involved in shaping art projects. The third is how public art becomes an inspiration for lifelong learning, for stimulating people’s own creative activity, and for participation in civic dialogue.

Public art can increase people’s access to and inclusion in the creative ecosystem. The programs benchmarked focus on bringing art to underserved areas and audiences, encouraging direct participation in the arts, inspiring creative agency, expanding participation in the arts by telling important community stories, and the role of the arts as a catalyst for civic participation or entry-point for expanding access to social services. Programs include:

- Funk, God, Jazz, and Medicine: Black Radical Brooklyn, Brooklyn, New York
- Project Row Houses, Houston, Texas
- East Macon Arts Village Initiative, Macon Artist Alliance, Macon, Georgia
- Studio in the Park: The Queens Museum – ArtBuilt Mobile Studio Residency Program, New York
- Open Field, Minneapolis, Minnesota
- Southeast by Southeast, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- ArtPrize, Grand Rapids, Michigan
- 5x5, Washington, DC
Deeper Cultural Participation

Funk, God, Jazz, and Medicine: Black Radical Brooklyn, Brooklyn, New York

In 2012, public art powerhouse Creative Time launched Funk, God, Jazz, and Medicine: Black Radical Brooklyn in conjunction with Weeksville Heritage Center, exploring “the free and intentional community established in 1838 by Black citizens just eleven years after emancipation in New York.” Black investors and abolitionists, including founder James Weeks, grew this intentional community to more than 500 households. This vibrant neighborhood—which included schools, churches, newspapers, and activist organizations such as the African Civilization Society—was subsumed over time by the growing city of Brooklyn. In 1968, three historic houses were “rediscovered” by prop plane thanks to a team that included artist and activist Joan Maynard. As Weeksville Heritage Center’s first Executive Director, Maynard led critical archeological digs and a community-based movement for preservation and landmarking.

For this exhibition, Creative Time invited four artists to explore the history of Weeksville in close collaboration with four community-based organizations.

One artist, Xenobia Bailey, along with a nearby Boys and Girls High School reimagined the ground floor of one of the houses as a 21st century studio of two struggling immigrant designers. In an effort to save money, the imaginary couple creates their own furniture and décor, in a style referred to by Ms. Bailey as “funk aesthetic,” which has a history in 19th century African-American patchwork quilts.

Artist Simone Leigh transformed a house that once belonged to Dr. Josephine English (1920-2011), the first African American woman in New York to have a private OBGYN practice, into a walk-in health center modeled after those opened by the Black Panthers in the 1960s, but with a 19th century finish. “Free People’s Medical Clinic” is a layered and thoughtful project pairing medical issues of the Civil Rights Movement with that of the Civil War.

Two other installations were featured as well by artists Bradford Young and Otabenga Jones & Associates.

http://creativetime.org/projects/black-radical-brooklyn/curatorial-statement/

Impact: Funk, God, Jazz and Medicine: Black Radical Brooklyn acknowledged and resurrected an important community history while engaging contemporary community groups. Programs like this promote a deep understanding of a place’s history, and continue to build bridges for people today to connect with the past and grow current community ties and engagement.

Sponsor: Creative Time (independent arts organization)

Funding: ArtPlace America and additional philanthropic sponsors.
Deeper Cultural Participation

Project Row Houses, Houston, Texas

Project Row Houses (PRH) is a development in the Third Ward area of Houston, Texas created by artist Rick Lowe. Project Row Houses includes a group of shotgun houses restored in the 1990s. Eight houses serve as studios for visiting artists. Those houses are art studios for art related to African-American themes. A row behind the art studio houses single mothers. PRH now operates as a community-based arts and culture non-profit organization with the mission “to be the catalyst for transforming community through the celebration of art and African-American history and culture.”

In 1990, according to Lowe, a group of high school students approached him and asked him to create solutions to problems instead of creating works that tell the community about issues it is already aware of. Lowe and a coalition of artists purchased a group of 22 shotgun houses across two blocks that were built in 1930 and, by the 1990s, were in poor condition. The group used seed money funds from the Elizabeth Firestone Graham Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts to restore the houses. The company Chevron renovated the outside of several shotgun houses. Volunteers numbering in the hundreds fortified porches, removed trash and used needles from lots, and hanged wallboards. Several individuals and families from the area and one local church "adopted" individual houses. The houses first opened in 1994.

Since its founding, PRH has sought to engage artists in a process that connects them directly with residents, neighborhood institutions, and the environment of a low-income neighborhood. The result is artistic production informed by authentic experiences interacting with community residents creating work about these encounters and situates the conversation in a local-national context, related to contemporary art practice.

The programs of PRH are built around Five Pillars: Art and Creativity, Education, Social Safety Nets, Architecture and Sustainability.

Programs include the Public Art Program, Artist Rounds, Monday Night Tutoring, U.R.B.A.N Kids, the Young Mothers Program, Affordable Housing, Community Markets, the Incubation Program, and Architecture workshops.

The Public Art Program provides opportunities for artists to take risks and experiment in their practice while exploring new ways of working outside of the studio. Through learning the complex history of the neighborhood, connecting with Third Ward residents, and understanding the changes that come with working within this context, artists create site-specific installations that live inside the art houses or the public spaces of the neighborhood.

Artist Rounds are a biannual event, with openings in March and October. Each session lasts approximately four months. During this time period, seven row houses are opened to visiting artists to display their works. Either individual artists or art collectives are welcome to apply.

Project Row Houses offers free Monday Night Tutoring to students of any age who need assistance in their studies. Through a pool of dedicated volunteer tutors, aid is available in a wide variety of subjects.

U.R.B.A.N. Kids, which stands for Ultimately Responsible for Broadening Arts Now, was founded by two local Houston artists (Harrison Guy and PRH’s Education Director Walter Hull) in response to a lack of art programming for low-income communities. The program provides comprehensive and progressive arts instruction to youth in grades 3-8. The program uses youth development practicum and creativity to
promote individuality, character, wellness and cultural awareness. *U.R.B.A.N. Kids* offers intensive instruction in visual arts, dance, music, and creative writing while encouraging academic excellence.

Through the *Young Mothers Program*, PRH provides support for members of the community as they pursue education, fulfill careers, and improve their families and their community. The *Young Mothers Program* provides housing and counseling on personal growth and parenting skills, allowing these mothers to raise their children in a creative, nurturing community. This program offers up to two years of subsidized housing in one of seven refurbished, fully furnished row houses.

PRH and Rice Building Workshop collaborated to create a series of row house-inspired duplexes to provide *Affordable Housing* for people in the community. In 2003, Row House CDC was created to act as a sister organization of PRH to manage the Affordable Housing Program.

PRH hosts regular *Community Markets* for local creatives to reach a new audience and houses an *Incubation Program* that provides space, time, and mentorship for artists and creative individuals working in the early stages of developing a sustainable project.

Through a partnership and collaborative efforts with Danny Samuels, Nonya Grenader and the Rice Building Workshop, PRH is able to expand its view of the design of the shotgun house and the community that it creates. Through this *Architecture* workshop, students are allowed to explore two key elements of PRH: 1) the beautiful form representative of a specific style, spirit, and society, and 2) the need for social action in our community that gives life to the project.

http://projectrowhouses.org/

Impact: Project Row Houses supports deeper cultural participation because it is alertly responsive to the needs of the neighborhood, as articulated through people’s voices and actions, and construes the artists’ role as conceptualizing responses that add value and meaning.

Sponsor: Project Row Houses (independent arts organization)

Funding: Project Row Houses is funded by a wide variety of philanthropic, government, corporate and individual sponsors at the local, state and national levels.

Background: http://creativetimereports.org/2013/10/07/rick-lowe-project-row-houses/
Deeper Cultural Participation

East Macon Arts Village Initiative, Macon Artist Alliance, Macon, Georgia

The East Macon Arts Village Initiative (or Mill Hill Initiative) is a neighborhood revitalization effort that seeks to develop approximately four blocks of the historic Fort Hawkins Neighborhood in East Macon into an arts village in order to address blight and foster economic opportunity. The effort is a partnership between neighborhood residents, Macon Arts Alliance, the Macon-Bibb County Urban Development Authority, and many community stakeholders.²

Macon Arts Alliance hopes that the Mill Hill initiative will empower visiting artists, local artists, and neighbors to fight blight, identify and develop existing creative assets, and create a plan based on a shared vision for the future of the neighborhood as a creative place to live, work and play.

Macon Arts Alliance has developed a steering committee for this project, and is working alongside the Macon Roving Listeners. The Macon Roving Listeners hire residents from the neighborhood, youth and adults with and without disabilities, to listen to the stories of their neighbors and to identify their passions and gifts. A Roving Connector then engages neighbors by connecting them to projects that align with their passions and gifts. The Roving Listeners worked in the Mill Hill neighborhood in the summer of 2015 to begin development of a creative assets map.

One current project the Arts Alliance is undertaking is the Mill Hill Visiting Artist Program. Macon Arts Alliance has envisioned a two-year visiting social practice artist program as the catalyst for the proposed arts village. Social practice artists use art as a tool to build and strengthen communities. Visiting artists will increase civic engagement by mobilizing neighborhood residents as volunteers, artists, and in other civic activities. They will empower youth by working with local artists to engage youth in arts-based activities and attract artists and makers by offering workshops and resources for creative entrepreneurs.

Macon Arts Alliance is also working with partners to renovate blighted houses on the designated blocks adjacent to the proposed community center. These homes will become live/work space for artists.

http://www.maconartsalliance.org/
http://www.maconartsalliance.org/mill-hill-east-macon-arts-village/

Impact: This project is still in process. Its approach to supporting creative, vibrant neighborhoods is to recognize as much as possible the creative agency inherent in each and every person in the neighborhood, and to connect that to neighborhood improvement projects.

Sponsor: Macon Arts Alliance (Local arts agency, independent non-profit)

Funding: Our Town

² The Macon Arts Alliance, founded in 1984 as a 501(c)(3), is the designated local arts agency of Macon-Bibb County in Georgia. Its mission is to “foster and support the advancement of arts and culture in Central Georgia. We strive to be an innovative leader of a diverse and thriving arts community as well as a strategic partner in creating an open, inclusive, and vibrant place for artists, arts organizations, residents, businesses, and tourists.” The Arts Alliance is supported by public investments from Macon-Bibb County, Georgia Council for the Arts, National Endowment for the Arts, and through generous private support from foundations, corporations and individual contributions.
Deeper Cultural Participation

Studio in the Park: The Queens Museum – ArtBuilt Mobile Studio Residency Program, New York

In the summer of 2015, the Queens Art Museum, along with ArtBuilt and NYC Parks, launched its first iteration of Studio in the Park, offering visual artists the opportunity to be embedded within the museum and Flushing Meadows Corona Park. Two, one-month residencies were offered over the course of the summer, and each allowed for unique access to both the museum and park. The first residency was awarded to Patrick Rowe who collaborated with the People’s Design Laboratory to research and create unique navigational signage for the park. Using open studio hours and participatory events, the public was involved in this collaborative art-making to highlight the “diverse vernacular aesthetics” of Queens.

The second residency was awarded to Matthew Jensen who, as part of his series “A Collection of Walks,” walked through the park to gather “objects, ephemera and natural detritus” which were curated and arranged inside the mobile studio. Park-goers were offered the opportunity to experience the collections from the local landscapes, and Jensen created a “walker’s guide” for the public to offer inspiration and guidance for seeing their neighborhood in a new light.

http://www.queensmuseum.org/the-worlds-park-2

Impact: Studio in the Park not only empowers artists to interpret and engage with Flushing Meadows Park, but also offers residents a chance to participate in reimagining and rediscovering the park through the artists’ eyes. This project highlights public access to the park, and gives visitors a new lens through which to view a place they may have seen before.

Sponsor: Queens Museum (independent arts organization)

Funding: Unknown
Deeper Cultural Participation

Open Field, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Open Field, organized by the Walker Art Center, adopted the idea of the commons as a philosophical and programmatic framework to imagine a new kind of public gathering space.

Each summer from 2010 to 2012 the Walker opened the four-acre lawn next to its galleries to the general public, inviting anyone and everyone to bring their best creative self forward as a producer of or participant in cultural activities.

The space was designed “to explore what happens when people get together to share and exchange skills and interests, to create something new, or delve into the unknown.” Each year more than 100 individuals and groups contributed to the summer-long festival of community-sourced events with everything from poetry readings, music and yoga on the lawn to skill-share lessons with a twist. In addition, each year, artists and collaboratives were supported with residencies in which they developed and offered original programming based on their own creative interests. Guest artists included Red76, Futurefarmers, Machine Project, ROLU and Kitchen Lab.

People could engage with Open Field in several ways:

- Create their own scheduled Open Field activity to share with others – anyone could submit an application for review and approval by Open Field staff.
- Join in on the activities generated by the community, or take part in programming created by artists in residence, or show up for special programming from the Walker (Acoustic Campfire, Internet Cat Video Festival) or collaborating organizations (Northern Spark Festival).
- Hangout and meet friends for Thursday night beers, surf on the lawn with free Wi-Fi, check out recreational equipment at The Hub to use on the field, or sprawl out on a picnic blanket with friends or a book.

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 operates outside the realm of everyday life. Rather, it was grounded in the belief that creative agency is a requirement for sustaining a vital public and civic sphere, and it nurtured the free exchange of ideas, experimentation and serendipitous interactions.


Impact: Based on interviews with participants and community surveys, artists Shannai Matteson and Colin Kloecker found that Open Field successfully tapped into profoundly tapped into people’s “desire to create something meaningful together, something that was not based upon the exchange of money, but rather, of ideas, skills, or even simple conversation” and that it acted as a microcosm (or macrocosm) of similar efforts that were taking place informally throughout the Twin Cities.³

Sponsor: Walker Art Center

Funding: Foundation and corporate donors

³ http://www.walkerart.org/magazine/2012/commons-census-surveying-field
Deeper Cultural Participation
Southeast by Southeast, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Southeast by Southeast is a neighborhood-based public art studio that serves Bhutanese, Burmese and Nepalese refugee communities who have been resettled in Southeast Philadelphia. It operates through a partnership of the Philadelphia Mural Arts Program, the City of Philadelphia Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services, and Lutheran Children and Family Services. Its goal is to build a safe and supportive community space for immigrant and refugee families to learn about one another, gain access to important social services, and lend their voices to public art projects planned for the neighborhood.

The studio was initiated by artists Shira Walinsky and Miriam Singer in 2012. Rather than begin with a public art project, they began with a series of community events, workshops and a photo elicitation project. These processes help build trust with the refugee communities, helped the project team understand the refugee’s journeys, and surfaced the creative talents – ranging from tattooing to weaving – that people brought with them.

Over the last four years, Southeast by Southeast has resulted in numerous public art projects, mostly murals, in the neighborhood. Beyond that, community members have taken ownership of the studio, which is busy nearly every day with numerous events such as cultural food nights, sari-making classes and fashion shows, day care, ESL classes, and art therapy and art classes. It has served as a base for guest artists, such as Tatfoo Tan, who organized community projects around nutrition. This year, the collaborative team has been expanded to include experts in microenterprise.

“One of the most impressive things is that the creative process has been an open exchange between artist and participant. All of the projects draw from the strengths of new refugees – their proud history, culture, and relationships with each other,” said Melissa Fogg, MSW, Coordinator for the Philadelphia Refugee Mental Health Collaborative and services coordinator for the project.

Impact: Southeast by Southeast has become an ongoing, multifaceted platform for the creative voice of refugees from Southeast Asia, and has connected participants to numerous resources, from social services to business development to nutritional guidance. It has also provided a resource for the growth of artists interested in working with this community.

Sponsor: City of Philadelphia Mural Arts Program
Funding: City of Philadelphia, Department of Behavioral Health, National Endowment for the Arts
Deeper Cultural Participation

ArtPrize, Grand Rapids, Michigan

Art Prize, an annual large-scale international art competition run and hosted in the city of Grand Rapids, Michigan, is a highly unique festival in which the public votes on artists to receive large prizes. The entire festival is free to the public, spans about 19 days. The basic concept of Art Prize is “that it accepts artists of all backgrounds, and anyone who shows up has a vote to decide the winner. The method of choosing the prize-winner has been compared to American Idol. No one on the ArtPrize staff selects a single artist or directs them where to show their work.”

The first iteration of this festival was in 2009, and since then it has grown exponentially. The festival is independently organized by venues and artists through the ArtPrize website. In 2014, ArtPrize boasted two $200,000 grand prizes and eight category awards, awarding more than $500,000. The prizes are half decided by public vote, and half decided by a jury of art experts.

Voters must register in person (but can use a smartphone app) and can vote on their phones as well, via text messages or the ArtPrize website. The festival is sponsored by a mix of private and public partners, including airlines, banks, and the City of Grand Rapids and the state of Michigan. It is largely funded through corporate sponsorships (33%) and grants (54%)-- city, state, and federal make up a small portion but matching grants make up one third of revenue. Foundation grants make up nearly 20% of revenue.

Its goals include art education for the public, critical discourse and professional opportunities for artist development and growth, and increased artist sales. So far, ArtPrize has seen fantastic results. The 2014 festival brought in over $4 million dollars, and netted over a million in profits.

http://www.artprize.org/

Impact: ArtPrize supports deeper cultural participation by allowing anyone to enter and anyone to vote.

Sponsor: ArtPrize is a nonprofit, 501c3

Funding: Corporate, philanthropic and government sponsors at the national, state and corporate levels.
Deeper Cultural Participation

5x5, Washington, DC

As the result of a comprehensive public art master planning process, the DC CREATES! Public Art Program, helmed by the DC Commission on Arts and Humanities (DCCAH), created the 5x5 Temporary Public Art Project. 5x5 offers the opportunity for artists to engage with public spaces in DC and to invigorate them with new energy and work. A five-week festival, the first iteration of 5x5 was installed in the spring of 2012, alongside the National Cherry Blossom Festival. Five curators were asked to each select five artists or artist teams to collectively create the 25-piece installation of artworks throughout public spaces in DC. Such sites included the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Meridian House, several recreational centers, the Library of Congress, and the National Zoo.

The participating artists created a collection of diverse works such as artist Charles Juhasz-Alvarado who built “The Cherry Blossom Cloud,” a large-scale public sound sculpture made into the shape of a xylophone and positioned outside the Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater. The piece is accompanied by drumsticks that were available to passers-by to activate the work by playing a note or song on the sculpture. Another piece entitled “Butterfly Bridge” was explained by curator Amy Lipton as “a literal bridge that will suspend and span across a roadway. The bridge will be made of a high-tech material that contains a plant medium and an irrigation system to water those plants. The plants will attract butterflies, the point being to help them to cross busy streets filled with traffic.” Other pieces included a love motel for insects, various performances, and an installation made out of collected recycled and discarded materials from across the country.

A second 5x5 festival was installed in the fall of 2014, and again five world-class curators were tasked with selecting artists to create work to span the city. The sites for 5x5 ranged from the Southwest Waterfront to Southeast’s Capitol Riverfront, Uniontown and St. Elizabeth’s campus and on to Northeast’s NoMa, H Street, Brookland and Fort Totten, highlighting less developed parts of the city. One artist, Cameron Hockenson, said his set of sculptural birds nests honor “a home threatened, yet resilient, in the face of displacement and climate change.” LAND (Los Angeles Nomadic Division), represented by Shamim M. Momin, presented “Alter/Abolish/Address” to “confront and explore the evolving landscape of Washington, D.C. by highlighting the dichotomous notion of historical permanence and temporality, where innovative contemporary art can have impact in concert with this formidable history, allowing past and present to live together.” Stephanie Sherman, Justine Topfer and A.M. Weaver also curated installations throughout the city.

http://www.the5x5project.com/

Impact: In D.C., the “monumental core” is the place where most visitors expect to find art and culture, but D.C. also has many unique neighborhoods, rich in culture. One of the primary goals of 5x5 was to bring public art projects to Washington, D.C., neighborhoods and commercial areas, encourage tourism throughout the City, and encourage an exploration by artists of the richness of the city.

Sponsor: District of Columbia Commission on the Arts and Humanities

Funding: District of Columbia Commission on the Arts and Humanities
Vibrant Creative Neighborhoods:

More dynamic, creative neighborhoods recognizes that policies for arts access, creative workforce development and arts education succeed best when they are intertwined with the economic, physical and social fabric of neighborhoods.

When cultural programs and amenities are located in neighborhoods, they can fuel social capital, identity, quality of life and economic vibrancy. Conversely, focusing on only on arts and cultural amenities without also addressing public and private investment in housing, jobs and work spaces, transportation access and education is a recipe for repeating the past failures of revitalization.

The Public Art Community Investment Plan will investigate how to align public art investments with other public and private investments that are aimed toward neighborhood revitalization and at establishing dynamic, creative neighborhoods throughout Nashville Metro. It will identify priorities for areas of Nashville and for the types of public art projects, and models for engaging artists, that can build on community-based initiatives, public infrastructure and private development.

- P.S. You are Here, Denver, Colorado
- City Artist, St. Paul, Minnesota
- Flint Public Art Project, Flint, Michigan
- SPACES: Artists in Residency Program at the Village of Arts and Humanities, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- Creative CityMaking, Minneapolis, Minnesota
- Playgrounds for Useful Knowledge, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- Neighborhood Time Exchange, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

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4 Nashville Next, chapter on arts, culture, creativity
P.S. You are Here (PSYAH), launched in 2014 is a city-wide creative placemaking and neighborhood revitalization program that cultivates collaborative, community-driven, outdoor projects in Denver, Colorado’s public spaces. Denver Arts & Venues department partners with The City of Denver’s Budget and Management Office to provide PSYAH grants through capital improvement funding.

PSYAH looks to foster community collaboration, accelerate economic vitality, cultivate local talent, demonstrate diversity, create a sense of place, and animate and rejuvenate public spaces. As part of its mission, PSYAH encourages “place-based, grassroots involvement from residents, artists, neighborhood associations, non- and for-profit organizations and businesses to claim, initiate and drive the creation of temporary, authentic demonstrations and activation of outdoor public spaces. These creative, short-term, physical improvement projects in public spaces like parks, alleys, streets, and sidewalks can transform our underutilized spaces, increase collaboration, honor heritage, build civic engagement, beautify neighborhoods, enrich communities and foster healthier, more social and economically viable communities that inspire long-term change.”

To be eligible, primary applicants must be place-based entities such as Registered Neighborhood Association (RNO) or neighborhood-based group, Business Improvement District, Maintenance District, Business Association or Chamber of Commerce, etc., art or creative district or business or placed-based organizations (non- and for-profit).

Denver Arts & Venues announced that in its second year, PSYAH will provide $66,000 to fund its 2015 grantees. Included in the projects is the Birdseed Collective, Sun Valley Dumpster Beautification Community Art Project, which was awarded $9,000. Birdseed Collective, a group of Denver artists of a variety of media, was awarded $4,000 in 2014 to work collaboratively with various local groups and community residents to beautify six bus stops. Another 2014 grantee, the Athmar Park Neighborhood Association, was awarded $6,500 to create custom solar-powered “sound totems” featuring site-specific music, poetry and oral history selected by the neighborhood. PSYAH awarded $40,000 in grants to eight community-led groups in Denver in 2014.

http://artsandvenuesdenver.com/imagine-2020-creating-a-future-for-denvers-culture/psyah/

Impact: PSYAH directly supports community-based groups in doing small-scale, placemaking projects throughout Denver. Projects are based on community-identified interests and needs. Given the smaller budget of many of these projects, they seem to fit into the “lighter, quicker, cheaper” category of projects advocated as “tactical urbanism.”

Sponsor: City of Denver, Denver Arts & Venues

Funding: City of Denver
**Vibrant Creative Neighborhoods**

**City Artist, St. Paul, Minnesota**

Since 2005, Public Art Saint Paul’s (PASP) City Artist program has created artist residencies in various City of Saint Paul departments and agencies. Through a deeper understanding of City government, and an opportunity to collaborate on City programs and initiatives, artists are creating a new artistic, social and civic practice. Artists advise on major city initiatives and lead their own artistic and curatorial projects and have dedicated workspace within the Department of Public Works so they can freely collaborate across city agencies. Saint Paul is unique in that City Artists work within the walls of City Hall and ensure that art is considered as an integral part of nearly every civic discipline: parks, planning, public works and libraries; from early conceptualization of the City’s urban future through planning studies, capital project design, on-going street and sidewalk maintenance, and the programming of public places.

Some of the projects resulting from the City Artist program include:

*Everyday Poems for City Sidewalks*: Everyday Poems for City Sidewalks re-imagines Saint Paul’s annual sidewalk maintenance program as an ongoing publishing entity for a city-sized book of poetry. Piggybacking onto this unassuming yet essential city service—a $1 million program repairing 10 miles of sidewalk each year—the sidewalk poetry program reaches all corners of the city. Since 2008, the program installed more than 700 poems from a growing collection of 46, written by St. Paul residents. PASP hosts an annual citywide poetry contest to build the collection. The work aspires to pave all of St. Paul’s streets with poetry and to claim poetry as an essential city service. As of 2014, approximately 17 percent of city land is within a two-minute walk of a poem created by this ongoing work of art.

*City Choir*: Saint Paul City Choir seeks to create a more “singable” city by exploring the concept of civic singing and investigating the limits of what a city choir can be. The project poses these essential questions: How is singing a practice of civic joy and belonging? How can an innovative concept of choir be a model of inclusivity and engagement? What new singing practices will emerge from this interplay of city and choir? Public Art Saint Paul and City Artist Marcus Young conducted a series of experimental workshops, created civic singing etudes, formed a temporary wellness choir with the City’s Human Resources Department and produced an Election Day sing-along at City Hall, each demonstrating the Choir’s motto: “Sing truthfully and live!”

*Pop Up Meeting*: Pop Up Meeting seeks to increase diversity and participation in Saint Paul’s urban planning process. From an artistically retrofitted city truck, Pop Up Meeting dynamically unfolds as Saint Paul’s front porch to engage communities and customize civic meetings based on place and stakeholder needs. Pop Up Meeting visually and comprehensibly shares the ideas and responses of community members. In exchange for their thoughts, survey responses, or handwritten love letters to the city, participants will receive a locally made St. Pops ice pop from the brightly designed truck. Through playful engagement, Pop Up Meeting will bring the city to the people and creatively invite residents into community conversations.

Impact: This residency program employs several methods of collaboration and engagement, all to the benefit of the city and public. By situating an artist within the city government, St. Paul can capitalize on that artist’s thoughts and processes at a pivotal point in planning, rather than trying to blend art into pre-existing plans. This residency allows an artist to identify opportunities that are embedded throughout across the city and create interventions that are special and site-specific.

Sponsor: Public Art Saint Paul, City of St. Paul
Funding: City of St. Paul public art ordinance and multiple private sources.
**Vibrant, Creative Neighborhoods**

**Flint Public Art Project, Flint, Michigan**

The Flint Public Art Project (FPAP) brings artists, designers and community residents together to inspire residents to reimagine the city, reclaim vacant and underutilized buildings and lots, and use innovative tools to steer Flint’s long-range planning. It is produced by Amplifier, an independent arts organization, in collaboration with Flint’s planning department.

FPAP is a platform for cultural production and public engagement. It aims to transform the public image and identity of Flint through spectacular events, revealing new stories about the city, providing new sources of inspiration to local producers by facilitating ground-breaking collaborations with visiting artists and designers, and assisting in master-planning processes underway in the city through community events, strategic urban interventions, site-specific actions, and large-scale public art festivals.

FPAP focuses on four main activities:

- Every summer, FPAP organizes **Free City**, a large-scale public art festival that temporarily reclaims the former Flint-Chevy manufacturing site along the Flint River for public use.

- Every summer, FPAP organizes monthly **Neighborhood Art Parades** that bring together Northside residents with artists and performers for monthly walks and gatherings to help reclaim the streets.

- FPAP offers residencies at its **Stone Street Coop**, supporting students, artists, designers, community leaders and teachers with free or affordable housing in order to allow residents time and space to pursue their crafts and to produce artistic projects in Flint. This helps FPAP connect local residents, artists and organizations with regional, national and global movements to revitalize neighborhoods and cities through art and design.

- It is renovating a former funeral home into **Spencer’s Center for Art & Architecture**, envisioned as an alternative art space and design incubator situated on the edge of downtown. With a ground floor planned for exhibitions, meeting space, and a performance stage, an outdoor screening area and garden, and studios for visiting artists, the Art House will be a Midwest regional center for contemporary public art initiatives organized by FPAP

http://flintpublicartproject.com/

**Impact:** Flint Public Art activates underutilized and other public spaces, bring neighbors together, and acts to improve the overall identity of Flint. Some of Flint Public Art’s efforts are to get a broader group of community members, including artists, involved in community planning.

**Sponsor:** Amplifier, a non-profit corporation founded in 2013 that uses art and design as tools of urban transformation and city-making. Amplifier creates programs that connect public and private groups with the global art and design field to bring innovative artwork to under-served groups and smaller cities around the country.

**Funding:** Artplace, NEA, Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs, Ruth Mott Foundation, other funders
Vibrant, Creative Neighborhoods

SPACES: Artists in Residency Program at the Village of Arts and Humanities, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

The Village of Arts and Humanities grew out of the artistic and activist work of choreographer Arthur Hall and visual artist Lily Yeh nearly 30 years ago.

The Village initiated SPACES, an artist residency program, in which artists live and work in three row homes, bringing visibility to artists as neighbors and highlighting the artistic and creative processes (in addition to the products or commodities artists produce). The five-month residencies allow for both formal and informal interactions among artists and other residents, and each residency culminates in the execution of a transformative project that is rooted equally in artistic practice and community.

SPACES invites artists from around the world to live and work rent-free in a creatively renovated rowhome in North Philadelphia. Projects last anywhere from 5 months to a year. Artists are selected by a committee composed of community members, stakeholders and artists from around the city.

Creative research is a key part of any SPACES project. Instead of a project proposal, they ask every team to begin with a design question. Rather than assuming what our neighbors think and need, SPACES teams create room for community members to share their experiences and insights through art. The teams examine the resulting content for themes, and turn these insights into media to evoke yet more community response and conversation. Through this approach, they ensure the creation of relevant, community-informed programming and infrastructure. Their creative research methodology evolves with each project, as we learn new tactics from our artist teams.

One project, Village Table, explores the “feasibility of creating an alternative currency in the neighborhood in an effort to eliminate barriers to civic engagement and increase access to healthy foods, recipes and nutritional information.” Village Table, a sit-down, four-course dining experience in The Village’s Meditation Park, thereby activating this under-utilized art park at The Village. There they served local recipes collected from people in the neighborhood. Community members earned VIP tickets to the meal by volunteering to build tables and other furniture to outfit the open space, or by contributing a personal recipe to a neighborhood recipe collection.

Over the course of the summer, the team created four Village Tables, held seven tasting dinners and six community barbeques, and served home-cooked food to over 460 community members. Their events featured two jazz quartets, an emcee and a Brazilian drumming group, performing for the first time in the neighborhood. Their artists’ residence is now outfitted as a full community kitchen facility, currently being used by our youth program to teach culinary arts. In Phase 2 of The Village Table, one of the neighborhood artists is working at The Village’s storefront on Germantown Avenue to sell affordable soup, bread, and coffee, and to continue to collect local recipes for a Village cookbook.”


Impact: SPACES supports vibrant, creative neighborhoods by placing artists into the fabric of the community, where they live and work with neighborhood residents.

Sponsor: Village of Arts and Humanities (independent non-profit)

Funding: ArtPlace America
Vibrant, Creative Neighborhoods

Creative CityMaking, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Creative CityMaking Minneapolis (CCM), an endeavor by Intermedia Arts (a multidisciplinary, multicultural arts center) and The Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy program at the City of Minneapolis, is a multi-year, arts-based innovation initiative within Minneapolis City government designed to advance City priorities through in-depth collaborations between City departments and highly skilled community artists.

Creative CityMaking Minneapolis builds on the success of a one-year demonstration project in which Minneapolis city planners and artists teamed on the creation of new strategies to engage communities who are under-represented in conventional planning processes. In 2013, seven experienced community arts practitioners were embedded in the Long Range Planning Division of Minneapolis Community Planning and Economic Development (CPED). Artist-planner teams generated 22 tools that allowed planners to extend their reach to gather input about issues from long-term transportation and land use to the immediate economic and social conditions facing Minneapolis neighborhoods. These teams brought new voices into the conversations and processes that determine the City’s future. Depending upon the neighborhood engaged, 50%-95% of respondents reported not previously taking part in any City planning processes. In the Cedar-Riverside area, home to Somali immigrants, “The artists helped transform what might have been a bureaucratic information-gathering exercise into a survey that ultimately engaged more than 1,900 residents in identifying the community’s assets,” according to Nonprofit Quarterly.5

Beginning in 2015, Creative CityMaking Minneapolis is now expanding into up to four additional departments within the City, in addition to continuing within Long Range Planning. In this next phase, the aim of the program is to deepen the understanding of how arts-based engagement approaches can strengthen connections between City government and the communities the City serves. Artist and City staff teams will showcase the progress and results of their collaborative work at community events and through a culminating public exhibition. To set conditions for the success of these teams, Intermedia Arts will host convenings and training events for participants to exchange ideas and learn about navigating complexity for effective cross-sector collaboration.

Creative CityMaking Minneapolis is supported by a grant from the Kresge Foundation Arts and Culture Program, which seeks to build strong, healthy cities by promoting the integration of arts and culture in community revitalization. The 2013 demonstration year was supported by ArtPlace America.

http://www.intermediaarts.org/creative-citymaking
http://www.artplaceamerica.org/grantee/creative-citymaking

Impact: The initiative has been successful in bringing new people into discussion about city planning and development. The City of Minneapolis calls Creative Citymaking a key component of its One Minneapolis goal, which focuses on eliminating disparities among Minneapolis residents and fostering racial equity.

Sponsor: City of Minneapolis, Intermedia Arts (city, independent non-profit)

Funding: ArtPlace America, Kresge Foundation

**Vibrant, Creative Neighborhoods**

**Playgrounds for Useful Knowledge, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**

Playgrounds for Useful Knowledge was a one-year demonstration project of the Mural Arts Program’s ongoing Restored Spaces initiative, in which artists collaborate with various public agencies, intermediaries and community-based non-profits on the reclamation of abandoned lots for environmental and social uses.

Mural Arts teamed with the international art and planning collaborative Cohabitation Strategies (CohStra), which selected the South Philadelphia neighborhood around Mifflin Square after a research process that determined it had a preponderance of vacant land but a lack of capacity to insert the community in public decision-making about the future of that land. Ultimately, the project involved the temporary occupation of a vacant lot at 632 Jackson Street in South Philadelphia and repurposing it into a community space and a strategic hub for cooperative thinking, spatial inventiveness and environmental restoration.

CohStra conceived of “Playgrounds for Useful Knowledge” as a platform for elevating everyday individual and community wisdom into engines of urban change at the neighborhood scale. CohStra’s interest is in processes that involve participants in play and imagination, believing that this will lead to the emergence of the most “important and opportune” priorities, and that “the relationships, social fabric and collective efficacy created through imagination and play are themselves an important outcome of the work.”

The project included three components or “actions,” spread over four months. Each action had art-based elements including theater, visual art, and other forms. In Action 1, community members and representatives of local organization were invited to share their knowledge, experiences and vision of the area through the exchange and performance of stories and personal narratives. In Action 2, neighbors presented their aspirations for the urban development of the area. Participants shared new practices, skills, and transferable knowledge through interactive games and performance under the guidance of Philadelphia Theatre of the Oppressed. Action 3 was a community-organized celebration, inspired by a growing alliance of South Philly’s diverse cultures, featuring performances, exhibitions, and knowledge shares by all of Playgrounds’ community partners.

In addition to these actions, Playgrounds for Useful Knowledge is now organizing a follow-up project that will look at illegal dumping and waste on vacant land in neighborhoods, which was one of the priorities expressed through the Action process.

http://muralarts.org/playgrounds

Impact: Playgrounds for Useful Knowledge evolved from an artist-led effort to identify areas of a city, and issues in those areas, that could be address through community action. It engaged scores of community residents in a process that identified litter and dumping as key community problems, and established an infrastructure for follow-up projects.

Sponsor: Philadelphia Mural Arts Program (independent non-profit)

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7 “One may argue that the eventual foci on eradicating litter in the neighborhood and the improvement of Mifflin Square could have been determined more quickly given obvious needs … But would the same social cohesion to address the park issues have developed? Would the possible solutions to clean up the neighborhood and refurbish the park have been as imaginative as the ones participants ultimately proposed?” From Jackson.
Funding: Foundation (Pew Center for Arts and Heritage)
Vibrant, Creative Neighborhoods

Neighborhood Time Exchange, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

*Neighborhood Time Exchange* (NTX) was a year-long project in West Philadelphia in which artists were given studio space in return for their work on community service projects. The project was a collaboration of the Philadelphia Mural Arts Program, the Peoples Emergency Center CDC, and the city’s Office of Arts, Culture and Creative Economy. The residency was designed by a curatorial team from Broken City Lab, a Canadian artist collaborative, with input from a neighborhood advisory council.

The neighborhoods targeted for *Time Exchange* are part of the West Philadelphia Promise Zone, which is a national initiative designed to provide communities of poverty with the chance for opportunity and success. It is also an area where a community-based neighborhood plan, *Make Your Mark*, had recently been completed, setting out neighborhood priorities and desired actions. The *Time Exchange* project worked together with Promise Zone residents and *Make Your Mark* participants on revitalization projects to make a difference through art and community outreach.

Three cohorts of artists (from the neighborhood, elsewhere in the U.S. and abroad) participated in *Time Exchange* residencies between January and September 2015, working for spans of 1-3 months in a newly-renovated storefront space at 4017 Lancaster Avenue. Artists received studio space, a monthly stipend, and basic tools and supplies. In exchange, artists contributed volunteer time to work with residents on their ideas to enhance their neighborhood. NTX was overseen by project managers from Mural Arts and PED-CDC, as well as a 24-hour a week studio manager who was an artist from the neighborhood.

The studio had public drop in time for several hours every week. Residents were encouraged to come in, meet with the artists, see their work, and make requests for community projects. Once a week, the artists-in-residence would meet to review the requests and match themselves with projects for which they would be well suited. Projects ranged from beautifying vacant buildings and cleaning vacant lots, to youth art workshops and a sensory education room at a local elementary school, to photographic and video documentation of neighborhood events. Overall, artists completed 24 community projects.

Impact: The residency created a framework through which neighborhood resources (the people, the history, and the experience of everyday life) were considered highly valuable components in revitalizing that neighborhood. By providing clear intersections and negotiations of time between residents and visiting artists, NTX cultivated a dynamic role for creativity and reciprocity in a community’s rebirth and renewal.

Sponsor: Philadelphia Mural Arts Program (independent non-profit)

Funding: Government (Our Town) and foundations


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8 The sections within the Promise Zone that *Time Exchange* focused on included Belmont, Mantua, Mill Creek, Saunders Park and West Powelton.

9 From a newspaper article: “One artist took photos and put together a calendar for the St. Ignatius Nursing Home to raise money for its services. Another artist worked with a community group who wanted a banner to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Martin Luther King Jr. speaking at 40th and Lancaster.

“Another artist offered a ’zine class, a film class, and a soccer class at Martha Jefferson Elementary. As part of the film class, the artist worked with the students to write and produce a play called “More than Martin,” highlighting the contributions of other Civil Rights leaders, which they developed into a brochure the school can use to highlight its arts programs.” [http://thephiladelphiacitizen.org/neighborhood-time-exchange-art-for-change/](http://thephiladelphiacitizen.org/neighborhood-time-exchange-art-for-change/)
Summary of Findings

This summary of findings reflects on the range of case studies presented in the report to offer broad observations on approaches to public art and community investment.

The overarching lesson of these case studies, and a broad observation of the field of public art today, is that projects and programs are operating much more flexibly than traditional percent for art programs, in terms of time frames, creative outcomes and the roles that artists, supporting organizations, communities and partners play. Many of the case studies presented here were developed within the context of a percent-for-art program, but many others were created by other entities and through other models. A major consideration for Metro Arts will be, how can it operate more flexibly within the percent for art model that is its core activity, and what is its role in stimulating other types of initiatives – does it develop new management capacity? Does it incubate then spin off initiative? Does it fund or otherwise support other organizations? This will be a key conversation as the Public Art Community Investment Plan moves forward.

Creative Workforce

The benchmarked programs and projects focus on four areas:

1) Providing increased opportunities to artists. Programs like the Mapping and Marking and TEMPO are aimed at providing public art opportunities specifically to local artists. These programs provide direct economic gain to local artists, provide local artists with high-profile projects to include on their resumes and portfolios, and give artists experience working in the public realm, many for the first time.

2) Increasing the capacity of artists to undertake public art projects. This includes training programs such as Seattle’s Public Art Boot Camp, mentoring programs like the Allied Arts Program in El Paso, and collaborations with fabricators such as the partnership between Zahner and the Kansas City Art Institute. These programs provide artists with the variety of skills they need for successful public practice – project development, project implementation and the business side of being an artist.

3) Strengthening networks among artists and between and potential collaborators. The Public Art Saint Paul City Art Collaboratory is an ongoing “community of practice” in which artists and professionals involved in STEM fields develop mutually supportive lines of inquiry into the built environment. The Community Art Training Program in St. Louis builds networks between artists and social service practitioners and civic leaders, in addition to increasing the capacity of both to undertake community-based art projects.

4) Expanding institutional skills, capacity, practices. The Mural Arts Visiting Curators initiative sought to strengthen the curatorial capacity of its professional staff, and to provide curators with a practical base for gaining public art curating experience.

Some of the basic lessons:

It is important to define public art as a specific and valued form of artistic practice, and to ask artists to make a commitment to developing this aspect of their work, if they are interested in public art commissions.

Providing more opportunities for local artists may mean changing the way projects are framed or artists are selected. Understanding local artist’s interest in public practice, approach to public space and civic
engagement, and capacity will drive what is most successful. Successful public art programs also provide curatorial guidance and project management through the duration of the project.

There are many ways, through workshops, residencies and mentorships, to provide individual artists with opportunities to build their skills. The task for Metro Arts will be to zero in on the skills that are most needed by artists to be successful in the types of projects the public art program is cultivating, and where the current skill gaps are. Outside artists can also play a critical role in strengthening local artist practice.

Artists benefit from being part of ongoing networks. The relationships and cross-disciplinary learning that can take place among artists and between artists and other professionals can lead to interesting projects and collaborations, and meaningful artwork.

A creative workforce also requires resources for arts organizations to grow and challenge themselves. Professional development and support for organizations to plan, grow and take on more make the entire ecosystem work better.

**Deeper Cultural Participation**

Ars organizations foster deeper cultural participation in a variety of ways. The range of approaches is similar to the range of approaches to citizen participation, from providing people with opportunities to experience artworks, to allowing people to inform artworks, to allowing people to co-create artworks with artists, to giving people complete agency.

1. **Bringing art to broad audiences.** Most simply, deeper cultural participation can mean providing access to art to more people, especially those that are traditionally underserved by arts organizations and institutions, or people who do not usually consider themselves art consumers. For 5x5, the DC Commission on Arts and Humanities worked to bring art innovative and meaningful experiences to DC neighborhoods. For the Studio in the Park, park-users were able to have a unique encounter with an artist. Programs like Artprize flood parts of the community with art for a short period, and encourage engagement through “voting.”

2. **Revealing important community stories and narratives.** This can mean seeking out groups whose voices are not strongly empowered or, as with *Funk, God, Jazz, and Medicine*, uncovering hidden histories and bringing them to light in creative ways.

3. **Providing opportunities for participation in art projects.** In Macon, the Roving Listeners learn the passions and gifts that community members have, then connects them with projects that align with what they offer the community.

4. **Incubating and cultivating community-initiated creativity and creative enterprise.** Projects like Open Field and Southeast by Southeast recognize a broad range of creative efforts, and create a space for individuals and groups to generate their own creative activities

5. **Facilitating service delivery and catalyzing community change.** Project Row Houses and Southeast by Southeast have utilized the arts and a focal point for creating community and building trust. Both have grown to be a place for people to directly seek or gain information about important services such as child care, education and health services.

Some of the basic lessons:
There are a variety of barriers to cultural participation — economic, geographic, even people’s comfort level in engaging with artists or with other people are outside their circles. These all need to be considered in developing a cultural participation strategy in a public art context.

Sometimes issues of cultural participation cannot be separated from issues of economic, social and political participation in greater society, and public art projects will need to find a way to address these concerns.

All the types of cultural participation strategies described above are valid, but not all are valid in every circumstance. Arts managers, artists and collaborating organizations must be careful to apply the most appropriate methodologies to each situation.

Notwithstanding the above, some of the most powerful examples of deepening cultural participation are highly responsive to inputs that respond to people’s needs or allow for people to offer their own creative inputs (Project Row Houses, Open Field, Southeast by Southeast).

While it may be possible to give quantitative measurements of how many people participate in different aspects of art project, the qualitative outcomes of cultural participation strategies can be difficult to measure.

**Vibrant, Creative Neighborhoods**

There are many strategies that communities and arts organizations are using to develop vibrant creative neighborhoods:

1. **Creating community identity and a sense of place.** PSYAH empowers communities to bring in art projects to enliven public spaces on a small scale. Flint Public Art’s more ambitious program sees to make art part of Flint’s overall identity, through projects that address placemaking at a more fine-grained scale. The City Artist program also brings small-scale interventions into City neighborhoods, which are possible, in part, due to the relationships with City departments and understanding of the City processes that the City Artists are able to develop through their residency.

2. **Utilizing artists and art as a tool or vehicle for community planning.** Several programs benchmarked focus on neighborhood vitality by inserting artists into conversations about the long-term health of the community. Some, like Creative CityMaking, and elements of the City Artist program do so in a more formal way, by having artists participate directly in conversations about the future of the City. Also through formal relationships with City planning departments, artists are being asked to develop creative ways to engage the general public in planning topics. Playgrounds for Useful Knowledge, on the other hand, connected to a neighborhood that has seen a dearth of official City planning; there, artists invited neighbors to identify important community issues and to craft strategies for action.

3. **Bringing hubs for artistic activity into neighborhoods.** Long-term artist residencies like SPACES and projects like the Neighborhood Time Exchange and Project Row Houses make artists and artistic activity part of the overall community fabric. There begin less with specific projects in mind, and more by establish frameworks that allow artists and communities to interact with each other and develop appropriate projects.

Some of the basic lessons:
Maintaining artistic process, voice and vision is challenging in projects. The artist’s role is often constructed to be instrumental, rather than regarding the artist as a full creative collaborative participant in problem identification, resource allocation (budgeting) project design and project execution. It takes time to explain to collaborators and communities how artists work and what they can produce, and why what artists do is different from what designers do. Conversely, not all artists are automatically good at community-based projects, and many need training and support in order to be successful. This should be built into the project design.

To be effective at cultural access or neighborhood vibrancy, a public art program needs to work with a web of partners, especially community-based organizations and potentially independent arts organizations. These approaches require deep and lasting partnerships between arts organizations, city agencies, and non-profits that have deep and trusted entrée into communities. These partnerships are vulnerable changes in staffing, community leadership and funding.

Time is a critical factor in achieving these goals. The building of partnerships, the mobilization of partnerships, the getting to know a community, all takes time. Outcomes cannot always be measured within the time-frame of a project or even a funding cycle. Sponsoring organizations need to consider how they can generate ongoing funding that keeps the project going after its initiating grant.¹⁰

Sometimes public art processes that address neighborhood vibrancy can take longer to come to conclusions about priorities than professional planners might, and may reveal different priorities than planning processes might, but they have the advantage of coalescing a stronger social fabric.

Long-term projects such as residencies, neighborhood studios and planning processes need to be clear up front about expectations, and the organizations that sponsor them need clear exit strategies.

Long-term projects such as residencies, neighborhood studios and planning processes often take a lot of up front resources. Community empowerment anchored in imagination and play is an interesting and important approach to social change and, for some people, an optimal way to get engaged in social change.

The “lighter quicker cheaper” philosophy often associated with neighborhood-based “creative placemaking” can devalue the artist’s contributions by reducing fees and removing artists from control over the resourcing of projects. This is contrasted to processes like “creative research,” at the Village of Arts and Humanities “SPACES” residency, which emphasizes the gathering of community insights and experience through art, before projects are started.

¹⁰ Rick Lowe writes of Project Row Houses: “Often those [funding and institutional] structures don’t allow for the amount of time it takes to pull authentic needs out of a community, because they are more directed toward an artist’s career, or a single project within it, than what the community needs.” See http://creativetimereports.org/2013/10/07/rick-lowes-project-row-houses/