

New Urban Arts

# PLACEMAKING

A PROGRAM RESOURCE GUIDE



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Summer Art Inquiry

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Cover Photograph by Jori Ketten

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## ABOUT NEW URBAN ARTS

New Urban Arts is a nationally recognized interdisciplinary arts studio for high school students and emerging artists in Providence, Rhode Island. Our mission is to build a vital learning community that empowers young people as artists and leaders, through developing creative practices they can sustain throughout their lives. We provide studio, exhibition space, and mentoring for young artists who explore the visual, performing, and literary arts. Founded in 1997, New Urban Arts is housed in a storefront art studio, located in the West End neighborhood of Providence. Our facilities include a gallery, darkroom, screen-printing studio, tabletop printing press, resource library, kitchenette, administrative offices, computer lab and 4,000 square feet of open studio space. We serve over 300 high school students, 25 emerging artists and over 2,000 visitors through free youth programs, professional development, artist residencies and public performances, workshops and exhibitions each year.

### NEW URBAN ARTS

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## ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

“Placemaking” is a program resource guide based on New Urban Arts’ Summer 2011 Art Inquiry. This interdisciplinary summer program brought together twelve high school students with community scholars and artists for a critical and creative exploration of the human impulse to build shelter. Together, they spent four weeks building forts, exploring local art studios, making site specific installations, and asking questions like “What does it mean to call a place home?”

In the following pages, you will find activities, ideas, conversations, questions, and curriculum for arts workshops that guided our collective inquiry. You will also find additional resources that were used to generate and expand our understanding of placemaking practices.

We hope you find this resource guide useful as artists, educators and young people in sparking new ideas for your own creative practice, individually, collaboratively or even in the classroom. The publication’s format allows readers to adapt, combine or alter the activities to your liking to best meet the needs of your specific environment.

This publication is one of a series produced annually. The Summer Art Inquiry Program Resource Guide series is available in full color print for purchase at cost value. Visit the “New Urban Arts” store at Lulu Press. They can be downloaded for free by visiting [www.newurbanarts.org](http://www.newurbanarts.org). Send your feedback to [info@newurbanarts.org](mailto:info@newurbanarts.org).

## FOREWORD

You're walking along a busy city street, passing storefronts, windows gleaming, shouting, tempting you to come inside. Buy something! Eat something! You didn't even know you were hungry until you saw that five-foot tall mouth-watering burger, or those big red letters advertising Bubble Tea. Storefronts are designed to tantalize; to project what's inside, out.

On the stretch of Westminster Street, just west of Interstate 95 in Providence, Rhode Island, you'll notice something different on display. Walk past on a typical evening and you're likely to see breakdancing in the windows of 705 Westminster, young people talking together in the windows of 743, or art on display in 745. This particular stretch of storefronts sits directly across from three of the largest public high schools in the city and, increasingly, after-school programs are occupying the commercial spaces here.

New Urban Arts was the first. True, when they started out a dozen or so years ago, commercial space was easily had. But putting the creative voices of young people on display, in a space that would typically privilege commerce, was a small act of transgression nonetheless. They were actively defying the trend that youth programming be relegated to the margins, to the basements and third-floor walk-ups that are otherwise empty of commercial potential. And they've been an active part of making this place what it is, ever since. In recent years, organizations like Youth Pride, Inspiring Minds, and West Side Arts have moved to this block as well—each one focused on building relationships, not revenue.

Make no mistake about it, though, these storefronts are still designed to draw you in. It was through the windows of the old 743 studio that I caught my first glimpse of the creative chaos that is New Urban Arts. From the big orange letters bisecting each window, to the light shining out from the colorful papier-mâché lanterns suspended from the ceiling, to the way students would gather in the windows to talk. I was new to Providence at the time, and I remember thinking as I drove past, craning my neck for a closer look: *this is my kind of place*. When I became an artist mentor a few years later, one of the first projects I was involved in was creating a window display for Dia de los Muertos. Colorful paper flowers dedicated to relatives and pets were scattered in heaps on a three-tiered altar, spilling down, filling the front window. Here I was suddenly in the middle of it, making connections with new friends by sharing stories of important people in our lives. It was a powerful moment. For the first time, I had a hand in crafting the stories that were projected out on to the street.

This year, when New Urban Arts moved to its new home at 705, they doubled their street exposure. I couldn't help but wonder, what stories would these windows tell? The entire facade of their 1930s art-deco building is glass—two enormous, three-sided windows flank the front door, each one spilling onto raised platforms inside. The window on the left, has become what students call The Zen Zone—a place to hang out and to chill out; to talk or to read in what is still a chaotic, messy and energetic art studio. Given the zen-like atmosphere that students hoped to create, full street exposure on this side was not ideal, but no one was willing to obstruct the view completely. As part of my role as Artist/Scholar in Residence for the Summer Art Inquiry, I teamed up with fellow designer and friend, Emily Sara Wilson, to design a window treatment that would provide privacy, while still allowing light to shine in and glimpses of the studio to project out.

We got hold of a roll of etched glass vinyl (something like a giant semi-transparent sticker) and started cutting. Three hundred strokes of the blade later, we had a pile of strips to play with—30 inches long and 1 1/2 inches wide. Over the course of several weeks, during an unseasonably warm November, we composed a pattern on the surface of the window—a musical, vibrating screen meant to mirror the energy that is always unfolding on the other side. Students lingered on their way in to see what we were up to or to offer a hand, and countless others stopped to ask questions or offer bits of advice.

When the installation was complete, we simply sat back and watched—the way light moved across its surface during the day, becoming a backdrop for shadows, or the way people moved past it on the other side, transformed into gliding planes of color. Some thought the installation looked like bamboo—entirely appropriate for a zen-like space, though the reference was pure coincidence. Others, like our friend Rick Benjamin (poet, and previously a Summer Art Inquiry Artist/Scholar himself) saw this:

*A brilliant, a hyped-up cityscape, skyscrapers like a multi-generational stand of trees reflecting the asymmetrical masonry of the facade. It is a simple, elegant, poignant design. It drops a plumbing line into that something that makes New Urban Arts so special.*

The pattern was abstract enough that people might find their own place in it, and subtle enough to provide a backdrop for other creative moments to spring up around it. Soon after the start of programming, a string of hand-stitched banners strung themselves across the doorway offering W-E-L-C-O-M-E, and scattered index cards projected messages outward onto the street: We Embrace Failure! I Am Alive!

New Urban Arts offers a window into what they do everyday. Like I was, people are drawn in. The place transforms. It becomes something new and, that too, is projected back out. In this way, placemaking at New Urban Arts is always evolving—a reflection of a community that is always in the process of being made, and that is always making its place within this city.

Jane Androski  
2011 Summer Studio Resident Scholar/Artist



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# INTRODUCTION

## WHAT IS PLACEMAKNG?

Think about your favorite place, one that has special meaning just for you. It might be your bedroom, your neighborhood, the home you grew up in, a quiet place by the water, or a busy restaurant where you meet friends. No matter where it is, you know that “place” is more than just a location on a map.

Placemaking is a social practice through which we build identity and meaning in relationship with our geography. And it can happen in the most mundane ways. Look around you while you’re waiting for the bus sometime. You’re likely to see graffiti on nearby walls, bikes chained to the sidewalk, a passersby walks down the street (maybe you wonder where they’re going), the sounds of traffic motoring by. Everything you see and hear there makes a mark on that place—including you. Even if you’re just standing there, watching it all go by, you have an effect on that place, and that place has an effect on you.

Sometimes, we’re more active in our practice of placemaking. Think about your room at home. Every year (or every day for that matter!) the things in your room change, the furniture is rearranged. Posters go up and come down. People come in and go out. But this place, your place, is a reflection of who you are and who you are becoming.

Placemaking explores the ways in which we enter, leave, respond to, create and sustain meaningful human habitats. During the 2011 Summer Art Inquiry, it was our chance to revert back to our most basic childhood impulses—tearing cushions off couches, tying bed sheets together, building forts. Collectively, we were reigniting our first creative instincts of placemaking. We explored the theme further through the following ideas, using art and art-making as both a prompt and a response to each:

- Home / Personal space
- Departure / Displacement
- Moveable/ Impermanent place
- Collectives / Communities

The 2011 Summer Art Inquiry took place during a big moment for New Urban Arts. All summer long, the studio was busy packing up its contents, getting ready to leave our home of 14 years to move down the street to our brand new 4,000 square-foot, building! The cover image for this publication was taken on Moving Day. The anticipation of putting down new roots in strange soil was a critical part of our time together.

So on the first day, we shared our hopes and fears for the Art Inquiry (see Appendix for description of this activity) and built a collaborative fort in which to work together—a place that could support our hopes and ease our fears (and keep us removed from the hustle and bustle of packing!). It created community identity for the Art Inquiry group and a sense of place and possibility for our summer together.

You'll notice a lot of question peppered throughout this guide. Did we find the answers? Sometimes. But mostly we simply found more questions, a lot of inspiration, and a community of asking and making.

## **WHAT IS AN ART INQUIRY?**

The Art Inquiry program at New Urban Arts was started in 2006 to provide high school students a learning experience distinct from our programming during the school year. Summer schedules allow us to offer a more structured, intensive, humanities-based work readiness program. Students explore a common theme from a multi-disciplinary standpoint including research, collaboration, art-making, creative writing and personal inquiry. Themes change each summer and explore the human experience as it intersects with creative practice.

As a part of the Art Inquiry, students develop the ability to determine their own course of study through a four-week independent exploration. A project often veers from its original conception as the program progresses, which is celebrated as an indication of a more powerful and complex artistic voice emerging. Students receive stipends for their participation and acquire in-depth thematic knowledge and job-readiness skills.

The program model reflects research from the National Summer Learning Association, which describes that the most effective summer learning environments allow students “freedom to digress from a prescribed curriculum” through project based learning and encourages sustained in-depth exploration of one theme.

You can see photos from the 2011 Summer Art Inquiry here:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/newurbanarts>



Where is home?

What makes a space

yours? How can physical

places reflect personal-

ity, emotions, experiences

and history? How do

places serve needs?

How do you create safe

and welcoming places?

# HOME & PERSONAL SPACE

## HOMEMADE SKETCHBOOKS

Artists' sketchbooks are a lot like homes. They are where all our thoughts, ideas and inspirations live. When a house is built by the people who are going to live in it, it can feel more personal and meaningful. When you make your own sketchbook, it can be whatever you want it to be—the perfect home for your art.

Check out the book and website *The 1000 Journals Project*, a collection of art by many different people in over a thousand blank sketchbooks that are randomly circulating across the world. Try binding your own sketchbook or journal. Some binding styles easier for beginners are accordion books, pamphlet binding, and Japanese stab binding. You can also use staples or duct tape! Decorate the cover of your book any way you like. These homemade sketchbooks can be useful for recording thoughts and ideas for many of the other projects in this guide.

## TINY OASIS

One of the first steps to building a house is staking out the foundation by marking the four corners of the location on which it will be built. Make a kit containing four twigs, four ribbons, and the following instructions. You can make this kit for a classroom of students or for your friend or family member. How many different ways do people think about and experience the idea of home? Thanks to artist mentor alumnus Zachary Clark for this project idea!

### Kit Instructions:

1. Answer the following question: Where is home? Bring these materials to wherever this place is.
2. Tie a ribbon to each of the four twigs. Use these as stakes to mark out the four corners of your home. This area can be as large or as small as you want it to be.
3. Move to the center of this space. You are home. Stay as long as you'd like.
4. Document this experience in any way you want. This includes – but is not limited to – a photograph, journal entry, poem, drawing or any other medium you find suitable.

## GIFT SPACES / POCKET FORTS

A space can say a lot about a person. Often the kinds of spaces we choose to inhabit, and the way we decorate or otherwise manipulate those spaces, reflect important aspects of

our personalities. It's one thing to create a space for yourself—you know what you like—but what does it mean when someone else creates a space for you, and gives it to you as a gift? Create a miniature space, or "pocket fort" for someone secretly. What can you represent about this person? How can you honor what they love or what they wish for?

## PAPER NESTS

Visit a natural history museum or wildlife sanctuary near you, to see some different kinds of nests, and discover more about how they're made. Bird nests are made from many different materials gathered together into a whole. Think about the people, animals, objects, and ideas in your home and the way they fit together.

Cut many strips of paper, and write, draw, or collage onto these strips using waterproof materials. Dip these strips into a paper maché mixture (half Elmer's Glue and half water) and paste them onto blown-up balloons, using different shapes and sizes of balloon to make whatever kind of nest you want. Allow the paper maché to dry overnight, then pop the balloons.

## SAFE SPACE MAPS

Where do you feel safe, respected, and able to be yourself? Why do you feel safe there? Or where might you feel safe? Create a map of safe spaces. Remember, these maps don't only have to show physical things—they can represent relationships, ideas, and other abstract concepts too! Look at some examples of artist's maps in the books *You Are Here and The Map As Art* by Katharine Harmon. Create a map of your ideal safe space. What would make this place comfortable, welcoming and supportive? This can be a real place you want to change to feel safer, or an imaginary place you make up completely!

## A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN

Our bedrooms are the places where we go to sleep, where we go to be alone or with people we're close to—they're private spaces, and often we have more control over how they look and feel than anywhere else. How do these places reflect our personalities and needs? Inspired by Rania Matar's photo series *A Girl and Her Room*, which shows teenage girls from both the United States and the Middle East posing in their bedrooms, create a self-portrait through photographing your own room, with you in the photograph.



Gift Fort by Mandara Arnold

What does it mean to  
leave home? How do you  
say goodbye to a place?

What is the difference  
between departure and  
displacement? When you  
leave a place, what do  
you take with you?

# DEPARTURE & DISPLACEMENT

## SOUNDS ABOUND: A MOVING CHORUS

New Urban Arts' move from 743 to 705 Westminster Street, even though it was only a very small distance, has had a very large presence in our hearts and minds. From the excitement of gaining a new and bigger space, to the sadness of leaving behind our old home, the studio this summer was full of hopes, fears, memories and questions about the future all mixed together in our minds. We wondered, what would it sound like if we could listen to this chorus of voices?

Modeled after subway and cityscape sound projects that breathe in the many sounds of the city to create a collective piece of work, record an oral history of the places we leave behind. Create a list of questions and prompts on the topic of moving (this could pertain to a specific move, or could be general). Sitting in a circle, with several audio/video recorders spaced out evenly among the group, each person responds to every prompt, whether they are holding a recorder or not. Pass the recorders around the circle every 20-30 seconds. The result will be an audio and visual collage of many thoughts, feelings, and personalities!

## BINDLES

An iconic image from Great Depression-era hobos is bindles, sticks with cloth sacks on the end that hold only the most essential items necessary for the journey ahead. When leaving a place, what are the most important things you'd want to take with you?

Imagine a place you want to leave—this “place” can be a physical location, a time period, a relationship, a mental or emotional space, etc. Write down an inventory of the important things from this place you would want to take with you. Create bindles with large sticks from outside and scraps of cloth or a pillow case to carry representations of these things, which can be written, sculpted, drawn, collaged or gathered.

## GOODBYE PLACE LETTERS

There are many reasons why we leave places. Sometimes we choose to go, and sometimes we don't. Sometimes we're ready, excited and hopeful, and sometimes we wish we could stay more than anything else. Sometimes we're both. Say goodbye to a place you have left or are going to leave, by writing a letter that addresses these places directly. Write, draw and/or collage to explain your thoughts, feelings, and reasons for leaving. You might write a bitter break-up letter, or a more regretful, romantic goodbye; they can be as specific or vague as you want.

## DOCUMENT POUCHES

In the film *Everything Is Illuminated*, the main character obsessively documents his life and the lives of those close to him by collecting items that hold memories and hanging them on a wall in plastic bags. Even the smallest object might be important, might have personal significance. Then, when the people, places and events are long past, those little items remain. Inspired by this collecting and saving of memories, you can create your own document pouches filled with little pieces of any place you might have to leave behind. Consider dust from a favorite corner, gravel from the street, a bit of flaking wallpaper, anything that may remind you of the time you've spent in this place. Store them away in a small cloth or plastic bag.

The Art Inquiry made pouches filled with pieces of our old art studio, and when it came time to decide what to do with them, we were divided. Some wanted to keep their pouches as a memento of our beloved corner on Westminter Street and the years we shared there together. Others wanted to bury them somewhere in or around the new building, as seeds to grow a new studio that could be as much of a home for us as the old. After the move to a new studio, we decided to hang three of these document pouches on the door to the basement—the door to our underground, as a way to symbolically plant them, as a way to remember what was and what will be.

## DISPLAYING DISPLACEMENT

Displacement is defined as the removal of someone or something by someone or something else that takes its place. When we talk about displacement in relation to people and communities, it often means the forcible removal of a person or group—by natural disaster, war, economic struggle, or other crisis. When people or communities are displaced by other people, for reasons like colonization or gentrification, sometimes all traces of the displaced people are erased. This erasure denies the history of a place and further alienates the people who originally lived there.

We can make displacement visible and increase awareness. Research the history of the place you live. Was this place ever called something else? Who lived there before? Where are they now? Can you find any trace of these people or communities? Think about ways you could use art to educate your community about those who may have been displaced from your area: guerilla art actions like posting signs, creating memorial sculptures, public performance art, etc. Documentary films like *Some Funny Kind of Porto Rican*, which tells the story of the Cape Verdean community's displacement from the Fox Point neighborhood in Providence, can be both a great source of information and an inspiration to take action.

## PARACHUTE POEMS

Parachute Poems is a concept created by Art Inquiry student Legend Lowell, inspired by the soldiers deployed overseas. In honor of them, write a poem for someone who is not home. Think about how it feels not to have that person around anymore. Think about how you feel about why they left. To avoid clichés, write about how YOU feel, not how people expect you to feel. Your poem doesn't have to rhyme. Your poem can be one word, even. Capitalization can be used to emphasize feelings. Punctuation is not necessary. It can also be misused – the rules are up to you. Roll up the piece of paper. Tie string around it to keep it closed. Attach the string to all four corners of a square piece of fabric or felt. Try dropping your Parachute Poem by pinching the center of the fabric and then letting go. Does it drift the way you want it to? If not, retie the strings to be shorter or longer.



What brings us together?

What keeps us apart?

What does it mean to have

completely different

people in the same room?

How are we a reflection

of each other? When is a

place yours? What makes

a place ours?

## COLLECTIVES & COMMUNITIES

### VISIT AN ART STUDIO

Do you know of someone creative who makes art work inside their home or at a separate art studio? Ask if you can visit. Before you go, research their work online through their website or flickr page. Artists' studios can be like pieces of artwork themselves, with walls curated like sculptures that let you inside this person's experiences, thoughts and ideas in a way that looking at a computer screen or in a book never will. Notice EVERYTHING on this visit. Look to see what's suspended from the ceiling, what is kept on a window sill, which books are stacked on a desk or table, and what objects the artist collects. Don't forget to send a thank you card after your visit, and bring a small gift with you that you made yourself.

### AN URBAN FAIRY TALE

In Ann Arbor, Michigan, you will find miniature doorways inside libraries, schools, markets, book stores, and cafés throughout the city. There is even one at the Google Offices! Developed by Jonathan B. Wright, these unexpected tiny doorways are meant for fairys, and each one coordinates with the environment they inhabit. Find more information here: <http://urbanfairies.blogspot.com>

Make your own public art series in your city or neighborhood. Building small forts that you can secretly hide in public places. Get a shoe box or a glass jar and recycle it into a magical home using found objects. Put it on a library shelf, newsstand, bus seat, or a street corner to add something special, interesting, and surprising to someone's day. Create a map of these locations and publish it online. Invite others to document and share sightings, creating an urban fairy tale of your own!

### BLINDFOLD TOUR

Visit a friend's home, art studio or workplace for a detailed tour of a familiar environment to them, but one that is new to you. Wear a blindfold during this tour, whether it be a scarf, handkerchief or a piece of fabric, anything that covers your eyes. When hearing about a new place that you can't see, you are able to imagine what the place looks like, and it makes the reality of it that much more special. Later, look around without a blindfold. What do you notice now?

If you go on a group tour, half should remain without a blindfold. In pairs, they can describe the place which you are visiting to someone who has a blindfold. Narrators

describing should include small details, like the empty animal cracker box on the bookshelf, alongside larger structural elements of the interior, like the ruby red antique couch and the winding staircase.

#### GRAFFITI AND STREET ART

A park invites people to spend their time leisurely. A library entertains a quest for knowledge and discovery. A train station wants people to go from point A to point B. A place is an expression, and graffiti takes public space and turns it into a public place that someone is expressing. Watch the films *Wild Style* (1983) and *Exit Through The Gift Shop* (2010) to learn more about the history of graffiti and street art.

Street Art can include traditional graffiti tagging, but also wheat pasting digital photographs, public sculptures, stickers, or even sidewalk chalk. Design a street art project and develop your own street tag name. Often, small businesses welcome street art on their property, when discussed in advance. You can ask places in your neighborhood to support your street art project.

#### CROWD-SOURCED PLACEMAKING

Have you ever witnessed a flash mob dance at the mall or a barn raising? When a large group of people do something in unison, they transform a place to send a message. Make a list of 15 people you know. Contact them via flyer, mail, email, phone or text. Invite them to a common destination at a specific time. Once together, everyone should all say the same phrase aloud, something like ALL YOU NEED IS LOVE 3x in a row. You can also plan something more complex to do together, such as change the lyrics to your favorite pop song and sing and dance to it in the train station. Or have 40 people dance the robot in a high school cafeteria as the bell rings. People will stop in their tracks to know what you are up to, and in this way they participate in making a space into a place of questioning, interaction, and spontaneous yet organized chaos.

#### IMAGINARY CITY

Cities are made up of many moments, dreams, realities, sounds, bikes, businesses, parks, trains, and brains, which all come together in one place! Use recycled materials like egg cartons, empty soda bottles, cereal boxes and other scrap cardboard, along with lots of tape, to create the city that you want to see. It can be a city from the future, a floating city, or even an upside down city!

For inspiration, research "New Your City," a participatory city-building project developed by Ian Cozzens, founder of Secret Door Projects, and Ann Schattle, children's specialist at Providence Communitie Libraries Fox Point branch. Find more details here: <http://www.secretdoorprojects.org/newyourcity/>



*New Your City at Fox Point Library, 2007  
image courtesy of Ian Cozzens*

How can spaces be temporarily

redefined? What remains

from impermanent places?

What kinds of places exist

temporarily (is a hug a place...

is a conversation?) How does

culture create place? How

does place create culture?

What does it mean to carry

your home with you?

## MOVEABLE/ IMPERMANENT PLACE

### HOME ON THE CURRENTS

Placemaking doesn't have to be a fixed, stationary experience. Have you heard about Miss Rockaway Armada? Over thirty performers and artists floated down the Mississippi River on rafts they built entirely from recycled and salvaged materials. Along their journey, they hosted musical performances and vaudeville theater in the evenings, and workshops and art skill-shares during the day. Miss Rockaway Armada takes "cues from Johnny Appleseed, traveling medicine shows, nomadic jewel box theater, and of course that old radical Mark Twain." Check out the fantastic images of these rafts and find more info at <http://www.missrockaway.org>.

Make a series of floating homes for a body of water near you, whether it's a creek in your neighborhood, or simply a bathtub! Who lives inside them? Perhaps your worries dwell inside, relaxing.

### RADICAL CARTOGRAPHY

Typically, maps chart out cities, streets, public institutions or landmarks. Try making a map that plots out locations of pinball machines or outdoor murals instead. Redefine latitude and longitude however you want! Whether you measure a room in square feet, or in gummy bears, remember that scale is a key element to map-making.

### WALKING AS ART

Go for a twenty minute walk. When you return, map places where people smiled back at you. The simple act of walking can explore relationships between place, locality, time, distance and measurement. Richard Long is an artist well known for his recorded physical interventions within natural landscapes. For *Line Made By Walking*, he walked backwards and forwards until the flattened grass in a field caught sunlight and became visible as a distinct line. Find more information at [www.richardlong.org](http://www.richardlong.org).

### LOCATION AWARE MUSIC ALBUMS

Wearing headphones, start up the iPhone app by the musical duo Bluebrain and walk into Central Park or the National Mall. A soundtrack accompanies your stroll, reacting to your surroundings. The path you take determines what you hear, like a choose-your-own-adventure album! Synced with a GPS system, new musical themes play every few dozen steps as you pass through the park.

What if you were to record your own soundtrack for a space near you? You could select a recent song rendition from the television musical *Glee* as you walk by your high school, and switch to a contemporary noise band when you walk along the school's concrete parking lot. A cello concerto could begin to play if you walk past a waterfall. You can download online free audio editing software for this project, like Audacity.

#### COMMEMORATIVE PROCESSION

Throughout history, long before streets were ever crowded with cars, people gathered in the street in order to celebrate, mourn, protest or remember. In New Orleans, jazz funerals invite call-and-response style of music and chant, coupled with tambourines, drums, costumes, dancing and brass bands, to parade down streets beginning at the deceased's birthplace.

Think of someone or someplace you would like to commemorate. It could be a public school or library that was recently closed, for example. Make puppets, masks, or costumes, as well as banners, signs and flags. March near the location you are commemorating, banging pots and pans or alongside live musicians. Invite others to join in, and have special items such flowers, informational flyers, or photographs to give out to people. Document the procession with cameras, video recorders, sketches, or maps of where you went.

#### PUBLIC SKILL SHARE

Do you know how to make origami animals? Do you have a friend who knows how to break dance? Do you have a family member who knows how to knit or do calligraphy? Take back public space of public placemaking!

Transform a public place into a skills share market. Ask people walking by if they would like to learn a new skill, which can be anything from how to wrap a burrito properly to drawing a portrait. In thinking of what skills you'd like to share, brainstorm a list of things you could easily teach someone one in a few minutes, with few supplies needed.

Make signs advertising your skills share. Set up foldable tables, boxes or blankets with your supplies in a nearby park or public plaza. You can form a circle with rocks around each skill share station, similar to the placemaking efforts in the children's book *Roxaboxen* by Alice McLerran and illustrated by Barbara Cooney.



*Public Skill Share at Kennedy Plaza*





self-directed inquiry

projects

# GHETTO PHOENIX

This house represents a destroyed, broken house in a ghetto, which looks normal on the outside but can be like a trap. I used sharp, dangerous things on the inside to show how dangerous the ghetto is, but on the outside of the house each side represents a different future. One side is looking up to a brighter future, and the other one is falling into a darker past.

My name is on the positive side, because I want to show that you shouldn't let your past control your future, even if it's a broken past. Even though the ghetto might be like a fire, and it could burn you and control you, like a phoenix you can rise from the ashes. My dad says, "When life closes the front door, it opens the window, and if the window's still locked, you break a hole through the wall."



I broke a hole through the roof. I used foam board, plastic beams, scissors, hot glue, x-acto knives, measuring tape, box cutters, saws, broken glass, nails, pencils, markers, duct tape, paint, along with blood, sweat and tears!

I was inspired by a video we watched where someone drew a boom-box on a wall and it would play music with a code on an iPhone. It reminded me of back in the 90s when people would walk around carrying boomboxes and cardboard boxes and would use what they had to have fun—they danced because they wanted to, not because they had to. Now, people dance for a competition and for the prize money. I was also inspired by the movie *Gypsy Caravan*. They didn't even have a home, and still found ways to dance and spread their culture. I was thinking about how if you have nothing, and you're not as privileged as other people, you can still achieve great things and have fun doing it.

Divine Smith



## HOME-SEARCHING

I was inspired by the idea of finding a home, or searching for one. A majority of people in the Art Inquiry were talking about how they have a home or a place they feel comfortable being in, but I feel like I don't necessarily have a place like that.

I feel like I leave pieces of myself in places, and I bring pieces of those places with me when I go, like the hominess of New Urban Arts or the creativity of Providence in general. I haven't found my home yet, so that was my inspiration for this project—I wanted to look at different places that people consider home, because there was to be something magical about that place.



I chose places based on how people I know felt about those places. I was also looking at a few documentaries about how people live their lives, and like the gypsies in *Gypsy Caravan*, some people move around a lot. It came to me that some people might take Providence for granted, but if you leave it you might appreciate it more.

I used watercolor paint and paper, pen, cardboard, lots and lots of tissues, and photo reference. I chose watercolor paint because it is the most comfortable medium for me. I love the way it flows and seeps into the paper. It also leaves cool textures. I find it the most calming paint around!

With this project, I wanted to say that anywhere possibly could be a home, or is a home to something or someone. I'm hoping when I'm done with this I can find my own home.

**Sara Tolbert**



## HOUSEWARMING GIFT

I found inspiration from when Art Inquiry went to visit Witch Club. I saw how they made a home out of virtually nothing. That really surprised me, because if it were me I wouldn't have thought of that. Seeing them so happy with this space brought me back to a time where I had to make different places home.

For a point in my life, I had moved a lot from house to house because my mom and I had gotten evicted. I was around the age of three or four, but I always noticed that in every house I went to I saw a "Home Sweet Home" sign—on a poster or even a welcome mat—and every time it reminded me of my home that I had left, and that made me feel secure.

So now, in my own home, I noticed that I didn't have one, so I decided to make one. At first I wanted to make a collage but then I remembered I wasn't any good at collages, so I decided to screen-print it on to glass, plastic, and cardboard. It was a good change because I am really good at screen-printing so it worked to my advantage.

Welcome signs are usually on people's front doors. I originally wanted to hang my signs on the front doors of New Urban Arts, but I realized that then people would have to touch them, so I decided to paint my own door in the back and put my signs on there. I painted the door red and black because they are my favorite colors.

Normally I would make screens with only one color, and it was kind of bland, but for this I wanted to make a screen that would transition between two colors. The blue represents my past and the red represents my future—the blue is a dark color, because it was a dark time in my life, and the red is bright for a bright future. This relates to placemaking by showing people that no matter what your circumstances are you can make a home out of nothing pretty much.

**Tremell Lincoln**



## LIVE THE LIFE YOU LOVE

The idea came from a small sketch I made about a week before. I was pretty much just doodling, but there was a lot going on at home and I decided to draw the word love using a street art method (graffiti) because I felt there wasn't enough love at home. I was thinking about how love can connect to home, which is a part of placemaking, and when I think about the word love I think about home. What is a home without love? Would it still be a home?

I started to make street art when I was living in Florida. There's not that much graffiti in Florida, but there are legal graffiti walls where people can go to make art, and I liked looking at it. I liked to watch the artists making the art. I liked the bright colors and the ideas behind the words.

I chose to work with graffiti for this project because it makes me feel at home. I used a canvas, spray paint, acrylic paint, paint brushes, masking tape, x-acto knives, pencils and paint markers. The hardest part was choosing the colors to go together. I like how the background looks foggy, and then the bright colors look even brighter on the dark surface. I would like to dedicate this piece to everyone who has ever had love in their life.

**Dakota Brown**



# HOME SWEET HOME

I feel like most people would describe their home as a terrible place to live in and a terrible atmosphere to belong to. I think that people have different ideas about what is the perfect home. For me, my perfect home has awesome people, good vibes. It's a place where you have people looking after you and what you are doing and what you might do after that.

When I started drawing, I would use a lot of little pieces of paper and I became used to drawing basic, simple drawings. Recently, when driving around with my parents, I would see a lot of graffiti on street signs, fences, walls, and on the bottoms of highways. It gave me the idea of expanding my artwork and making it bigger. I shouldn't have any fear of making things big where people can actually see it. Making art is like owning a home, because as soon as you walk in, there is a big mess to clean up, but then you clean it up and you put work into it and you can say, "wow, it looks nice now."

I used a large canvas that a friend gave me. I feel like using a canvas is a lot more stable than a sheet of paper and is a lot more sturdy. I wanted it to look like a real painting on a canvas meets graffiti. A lot of graffiti artists might not paint on a canvas, and I think they should think about using different materials. If you think about it, there are many different types of homes like mansions, apartments, projects, and the country. Graffiti artists could try out different forms of spaces or "canvasses," which are like their homes in a way.

For me this was a risk. It's something that I am really not used to doing, but making a place isn't easy. It's like taking a new pair of shoes and breaking them in. It's uncomfortable at first, but once they really fit you, you like them and can deal with it. That is like home, you gotta make home fit for you.

**Naomy "SloMo" Gutierrez**



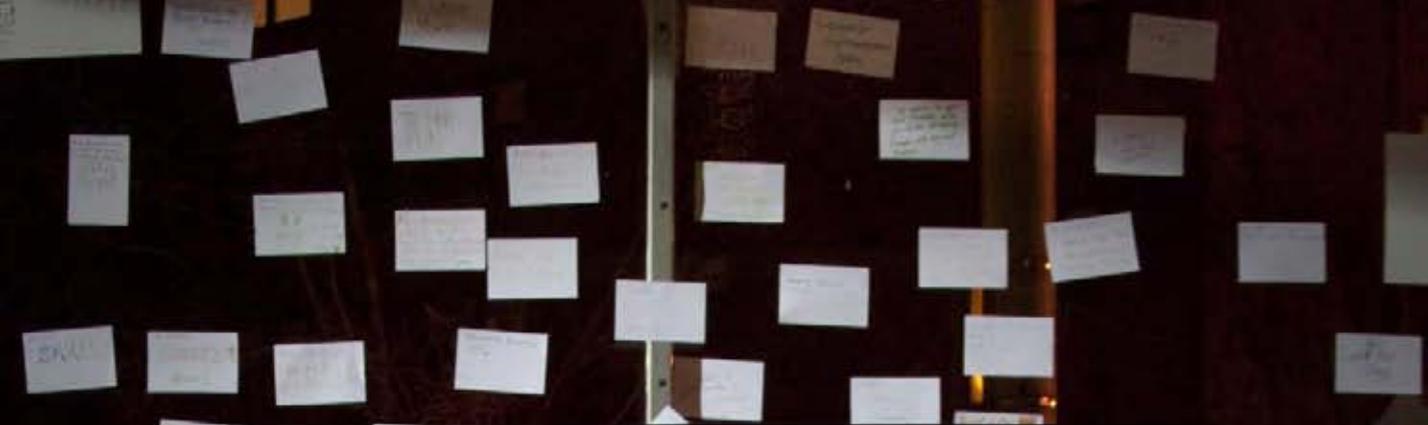
## HOME AWAY FROM HOME

The piece that I created is a 3-sided box with an open entryway. At first it was going to be a dollhouse and inside the dollhouse were going to be rooms that expressed my dream house, but everyone wanted to sit inside my house, so I decided to let my piece become something different. You can sit inside of it and experience some of my thoughts and things that I see. It's like a box cozy.

I have been thinking a lot about gift spaces; I think this is a gift to myself, but also something for other people to interact with and take something from. Watching the way that people interacted with it made me realize it had a lot of creativity and meaning put behind it, which is so much more than just building a dollhouse. Being able to take bits and pieces of someone and build something based off of that person, putting people's personalities into a space is something that is very hard to do, but I challenged myself to do that. It is completely different from the other artwork that I have made.

I used scrap wood, screen-printing frames, fabric, paint, and found objects from my room. I picked these materials because I wanted to do some type of carpentry. The Witch Club inspired me, because like myself, they didn't have carpentry experience, but were able to build so many amazing spaces. So, I wanted to be the same. Last year, my project was pretty flat, and this year I wanted to challenge myself to do something 3D that I could make really known. I have really loved it and want to integrate it into my art from now on.

**Maddie Lennox**



## SHOUT OUT TO PUERTO RICO

I was born in Puerto Rico. I decided to make a statue of the 500 year old fort in old San Juan. It is both about place and about history. It mentally and physically represents what place means to me. Mentally, Puerto Rico is home to me, and this represents home. Home doesn't have to be a house, it can also be a memory or a thought. Physically, it is a place where you can walk inside and think in a different way.

I used wood, chicken wire, and paper maché. I've never used wood before, and I wanted to explore carpentry. I think it's really useful. I wanted to experiment with new materials and see if I was capable of something big, something a human could interact with and be in a completely new place.

**Sherly Torres**



## INVISIBLE CITY

I got the idea very randomly. The question came into my head, “What if people were homes?” People can make you feel at home and you can find refuge in people. You can make place within a person.

I decided to create a collection of letters describing people as if they were places. I use personification a lot in my writing. I like giving things a voice that normally wouldn’t have one.

The people I wrote to represent times in my life where I have felt at home, or were supposed to make me feel at home. These letters represent extreme emotions; it was a way for me to write and explore my feelings. I do creative writing because it is the best way for me to explain my feelings.

For the exhibition, I placed five books on five chairs, with five letters in each handmade book. I wanted there to be a feeling of balance. I intentionally didn’t use color, because I wanted to create a serious mood. This is very different from other art pieces I have done.

I feel like a memory of a person, or something about them, lives inside of me. All of these feelings and memories live together in harmony like a big city no one can see, not even me, which is why I call this piece *Invisible City*.

Yolibel Gonzalez

I DON'T WANT TO TELL YOU WHO THESE PEOPLE ARE, I DON'T WANT TO SAY THE EVENTS  
THIS IS WHAT I HAVE BEEN SEARCHING FOR, A VOICE SCREAMING FROM DEEP WITHIN THE  
SENSES, THIS IS MEANT TO PROVOKE DEEP THOUGHT, TO IGNITE FIRE IN YOUR VEINS. POSSIBLY A RUDE  
AWAKENING, POSSIBLY A REBIRTH, POSSIBLY A DEATH, ALL AT THE SAME TIME, WRAPPED WITH A RIBBON  
COMPOSED OF THOUGHTS, FEELINGS MATERIALIZED INTO BUILDING BLOCKS AN ATTEMPT TO  
ADDRESS EVERYTHING LARGER THAN ME. CHAOS, LOVE, PEACE, LIVING IN HARMONY. THIS IS THE  
INVISIBLE CITY.



## INSIDE LOOKING OUT

This summer was the best spent summer I've had. The Summer of 2011 was the very first summer that I had some sort of freedom in what I did and where I was. It was an empowering feeling and I loved working in the way that I did. The time that I was with my fellow Inquiry members made any struggle that I had in the past worth it.

My piece is all about the places I have gone, the spaces I have been forced to depart from, the rooms I've chosen to leave, and the memories that will always stay. The rooms are as follows:

Childhood: A short period of time where ignorance was bliss.

Inside Looking Out: It was a learning space. I had time and room to grow, craft, and adventure.

Beauty of Breaking: An escape and a prison, this place provided a reason to relax and be on guard.

Rest Your Mind: One of the most magical rooms I ever had the pleasure of sleeping in. I would daydream for hours about the droplet ballet shoes on the top of the walls.

Niche: Connections were made in this home. It was a safe spot worth fighting for. It was a home that was torn from our clutches.

Cage: What could have been a final destination became my battleground.

Finale: Escape.

This project was brought to you by foam board, white paint, an arsenal of hot glue, and a few minor injuries. Travel safely and merry crafting!

**Mandara Arnold**

Get up  
close  
&  
personal



## REALITY VS. VIRTUAL

I wanted to create a place that people could walk into and feel like they were in a new world. I played around a lot with the idea of screens and thinking about Facebook and the computer screen as representing a society that is separate from real life, but at the same time shows a portrait of real life through things like pictures, comments, and statuses.

This piece was originally a box and has been transformed into a hanging piece that you can walk under and turn around in and be in a different world, but the feelings and comments written on the piece are seen both by the outside world and by the "inside" world. I was challenged by how it is difficult to explain physically the difference between real and virtual space, but I wanted to create this model of a place that helped communicate that message.

I wanted to create a space that you could enter and exit at many points, and something that was also suspended in time. I decided to make a 3D mobile that I could hang. This model is made from tissue paper, wooden sticks, and string.

**Ashley Dominguez**

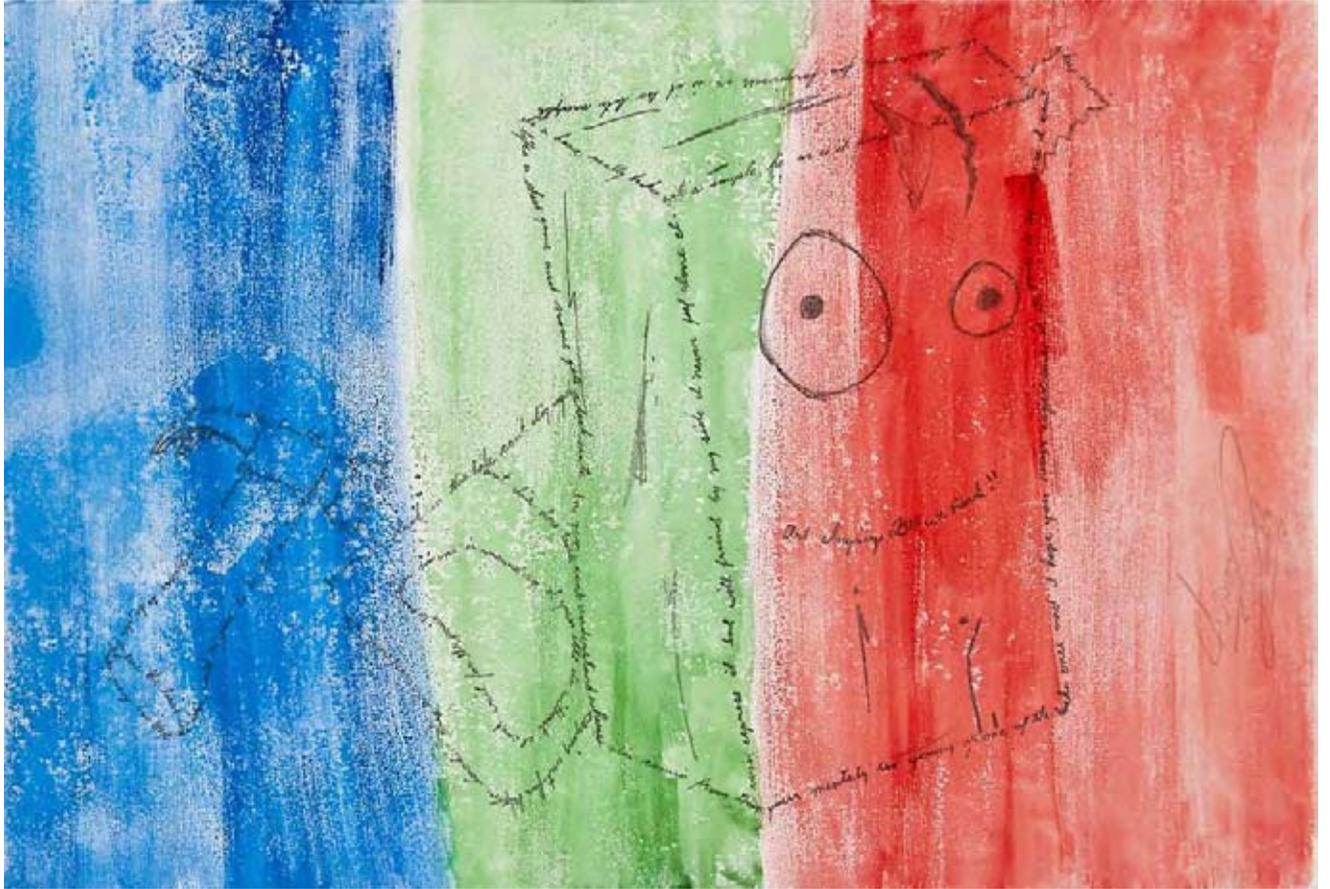


## HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS

My piece is a song. I have been moving around a lot this summer and I find a home in my voice and my words. I have been working all summer with poems that I write in certain shapes. I have always wanted to explore singing and my voice. A song can really make a place and that is what I wanted to do, I wanted to fill a physical space with a voice and make a new place of listening feeling, and time. I think that voices in a house can make it a home. We get our voice from our heart. A home is so much more than a house.

I worked and reworked the lyrics many times! I think that this is very representative of homes, we work and rework, whether it is the physical space or our relationships with each other.

**Aaron Daniels**



# A HOUSE IS NOT A HOME

I got the idea for this piece after my first three ideas turned up null. The first idea was based off the old children's television show *Out of the Box*, which was centered in a clubhouse made of cardboard boxes where children would gather and have all sorts of adventures. Unfortunately, idea one failed because there were not enough large boxes to make a clubhouse out of. Next came idea number two, a mini apartment which was named after my mom's favorite passage in the Bible, Psalms 25. The mini apartment could not be moved here due to its enormous size. The third idea was making a fort, but due to a shift in display space, I immediately grew frustrated with it.

Fueled by the disappointment of the first three ideas, I took a hint from the Roma people, a.k.a. Gypsies. I've created a space that can be rolled up and moved wherever it needs to go. I feel very comfortable in this space that I've created in my home away from my house, New Urban Arts, which only brings forth the theme of "home is where the heart is." My heart is very much inside New Urban Arts.

All of the items used in this piece are from my house and mostly are irreplaceable childhood items. I invite you to sit on the blanket, don't be shy! Read the books from the shelf, my journals and notebooks are also on display to read so don't feel as though you're invading my privacy! The only other rule I have for this piece is do not let your shoes touch the blanket, if they're mucky please leave them on the potato sack rug!

**Legend Lowell**







additional resources

## 2011 SUMMER ART INQUIRY VISITING ARTISTS



ERIC RICE is an artist and designer living in Providence, RI. Since 2008 he has been providing creative retail, product, and display solutions to area businesses and nonprofits. His own art has appeared in various group shows and public installations throughout the city, and as far away as Hong Kong. He may be best know for his winning submission to "Forts!" a design competition held by director Spike Jonze and Booooooom! to celebrate the opening of "Where the Wild Things Are."

Eric visited the Art Inquiry to talk about the process of creating his award-winning fort (would you believe it was entirely held together with string?), as well as to show images from other placemaking projects like traveling shrines, transformable galleries and his installation for Providence Art Windows. We discussed the theme of moveable and impermanent place in his work, and then he helped us brainstorm and build for our own placemaking adventure—the (Free) Arts Skill Share Market at Kennedy Plaza.

To see more of Eric's inspiring work, visit him online at [www.ericricedesign.com](http://www.ericricedesign.com)



Andrew Oesch's Secret Birthday House

WALKER METTLING teaches sequential art and co-runs the Providence Comics Consortium, an organization that teaches comics in the Providence Community Libraries and publishes the work of kid artists and professional artists alike. He also ran a secret restaurant, directs plays written by kids, curates ultra-short story events and prints posters. He lives in Providence.

He visited the Art Inquiry to tell us about a birthday present made for his friend Andrew Oesch. "Birthday House" was secretly constructed on the support beams under the old I-195 bridge, using plywood for walls and wrapping paper as wallpaper. Other friends contributed handmade presents and furniture. On the night of Andrew's birthday, candles were lit and the door was padlocked. Andrew was given only the key and a map, with no explanation of what he would find! We talked about the themes of home, shelter and personal space in the Birthday House project, as well as the act of giving space as a gift. Afterwards, Walker stayed to help us create our own miniature "gift forts" for each other!

For more stories, gifts, thoughts and artwork, visit [walkerthepedestrian.blogspot.com](http://walkerthepedestrian.blogspot.com)



WILL SCHAFF is one heck of an artist, musician, friend, and whacky/brilliant human being! He is an artist based out of Warren, Rhode Island. He currently performs as the drumming ape "Chop Chop" in the Providence marching band, What Cheer? Brigade. He is well known for his illustrations, especially for the band Okkervil River.

We visited Will to check out his amazing mail art collection. He has sent thousands of pieces of mail to people, especially his Grandma, all over the world! We wanted to learn more about how to mail the messages of a place and in a sense make your own place through mailed envelope, letter, or 3 foot cardboard cutout. Visiting his studio, we discovered even more about placemaking... his studio is adorned with numerous treasures from teeth to bibles to letters sent to him by Grandma Schaff.

To see his work, visit [www.williamschaff.com](http://www.williamschaff.com).



DANIEL SCHEIFER is a founding member, Sousaphone player, and composer in the What Cheer? Brigade, an 18-member brass band that has toured internationally. Daniel Schelifer joined the New Urban Arts community in the fall of 2007 to pilot our Studio Study Buddy program, which combines academic tutoring with the structure and principles of New Urban Arts' Artist Mentorship. He is now the Development Associate for New Urban Arts.

Dan and NUA roll deep, which is why we knew Dan could give us the low down on touring with such a grand and sweet band that transforms a space with their music - whether it be a bar, alley way, or even Time Square - into a place connected to a long history of energetic, nomadic brass bands. It was great to learn more about the history of traveling musicians and how "gypsy caravans," come in many shapes and forms.

Please visit the What Cheer Brigade website to learn more!  
[www.whatcheerbrigade.com](http://www.whatcheerbrigade.com)

## MORE ARTISTS WHO ENGAGE IN PLACEMAKING

Abigail Anne

<http://www.abigailanne.com/statement>

Louise Bourgeois

[www.pbs.org/art21/artists/bourgeois/](http://www.pbs.org/art21/artists/bourgeois/)

Beverly Buchanan

[www.beverlybuchanan.com](http://www.beverlybuchanan.com)

Liz Burgess

[www.ginkogallery.net/residents/lburgess/lburgess.html](http://www.ginkogallery.net/residents/lburgess/lburgess.html)

Patrick Dougherty

<http://www.stickwork.net/bio.php>

Andrea Zittel

[www.zittel.org](http://www.zittel.org)

Krzysztof Wodiczko, particularly Homeless Vehicle

<http://www.medienkunstnetz.de/works/homeless-vehicles/>

Luke Jerram

<http://www.lukejerram.com/>

Morgan di Pietro

[www.morgandipietro.com](http://www.morgandipietro.com)

<http://morgan-mcallister.blogspot.com/search/label/it%27s%20just%20thesis>

Ann Hamilton

[www.annhamiltonstudio.com](http://www.annhamiltonstudio.com)

JR

[www.jr-art.net](http://www.jr-art.net)

Rania Matar

[http://www.raniamatar.com/portfolio/recent/girl-room\\_statement.php](http://www.raniamatar.com/portfolio/recent/girl-room_statement.php)

Jonathan Wright  
[www.urban-fairies.com](http://www.urban-fairies.com)

Michael Rakowitz, particularly "paraSITE"  
[www.michaelrakowitz.com](http://www.michaelrakowitz.com)

Marie Lorenz  
<http://www.tideandcurrenttaxi.org/>  
<http://www.marielorenz.com/>

Juliana Santacruz Herrera, particularly knitted potholes in Paris  
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/39380641@N03/>

## COLLECTIVES & PROJECTS RELATED TO PLACEMAKING

Adventure Playgrounds  
<http://adventureplaygrounds.hampshire.edu/>

Art Shanty Projects  
<http://www.artshantyprojects.org/>

Bluebrain  
[www.bluebra.in](http://www.bluebra.in)

Burning Man  
[www.burningman.com](http://www.burningman.com)

Detroit Demolition Disneyland  
<http://www.thedetroiter.com/nov05/disneydemolition.php>

Electric Projected Reboot  
<http://www.electricprojected.com/>

Heidelberg Project  
<http://www.heidelberg.org/>  
<http://www.agilitynut.com/h/heidelberg.html>

Howeler & Yoon Architects

White Noise/White Light Sound installation for 2004 Olympics

[www.hyarchitecture.com](http://www.hyarchitecture.com)

[http://www.mystudio.us/dbm/files/1001.WNWL\\_PrjctSht\\_081407.pdf](http://www.mystudio.us/dbm/files/1001.WNWL_PrjctSht_081407.pdf)

Miss Rockaway Armada

[www.missrockaway.org](http://www.missrockaway.org)

New Your City

[www.secretdoorprojects.org/newyourcity/](http://www.secretdoorprojects.org/newyourcity/)

Place Matters

[www.placematters.net](http://www.placematters.net)

Project Row Houses

<http://projectrowhouses.org/>

Salvation Mountain, Los Angeles

<http://www.salvationmountain.us>

Street Art Utopia

<http://www.streetartutopia.com/>

The Watts Towers

<http://www.wattstowers.us/>

Trummerkind,

who built a 750 square foot secret apartment inside the Providence shopping mall

<http://www.trummerkind.com>

Wooster Collective

[www.woostercollective.com](http://www.woostercollective.com)

The Yellow Arrow's Secret New York project,  
revealing secrets of NYC in all boroughs

<http://yellowarrow.net/secretny/>

## BOOKS AND MOVIES ABOUT PLACE & PLACEMAKING

*Lure of the Local: Senses of Place in a Multicentered Society* by Lucy R. Lippard

*One Place After Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity* by Miwon Kwon

*Treehouses of the World* by Pete Nelson

*Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* by Yi-Fu and Steven Hoelscher Tuan

*Roxaboxen* by Alice McLerran and Barbara Cooney

*Local* by Brian Wood and Ryan Kelly

*Children's Geographies: Playing, Living, Learning* edited by Sarah L. Holloway and Gill Valentine

*The Interventionists: User's Manual for the Creative Disruption of Everyday Life* edited by Nato Thompson and Gregory Sholette

*belonging: a culture of place* by bell hooks

*Design Like You Give a Damn: Architectural Responses to Humanitarian Crises* edited by Kate Stohr and Cameron Sinclair

*How to Be an Explorer of the World: Portable Life Museum* by Keri Smith

*Geographies of Children, Youth and Families: An International Perspective* edited by Louise Holt

*Graffiti World: Street Art from Five Continents* by Nicholas Ganz

*An Atlas of Radical Cartography* edited by Lize Mogel and Alexis Bhagat

*When the Road Bends: Tales of Gypsy Caravan*, a musical documentary directed by Jasmine Dellal with cinematography by Albert Maysles <http://www.gypsyncaravanmovie.com/>

*Some Kind of Funny Porto Rican: A Cape Verdean American Story*, a documentary film directed by Dr. Claire Andrade Watkins

PBS Art21 Episode "Place" <http://www.pbs.org/art21/watch-now/episode-place>





appendix

Summer 2011

Stay involved,  
or get involved!

## New Urban Arts

### **ART INQUIRY:**

12:30-4:30pm; Monday-Thursday  
July 11 – August 4

Applications Due Monday June 13  
12 paid positions for high school students

What does it mean to call a place home? Where do we truly belong? Working with artist mentors, Victoria Ruiz and Sarah Greenfield, create new work around this summer's theme of "placemaking." Spend your summer building forts, inventing hideouts, exploring local art studios, and making site specific installations. Youth receive a \$400 stipend for their participation.

### **UNTITLED PROJECT**

1:00-5:00pm; Monday-Friday  
July 11 – August 5

Applications Due Monday June 13  
12 paid positions for high school students

Explore relationships, identity, stereotypes, and body image, through creative writing and conversation. This summer program, taught by artist mentors Jamila Woods and Jorge Vargas, uses the power of the spoken and written word to raise our consciousness and explore inequities around language, privilege and power. Students who identify as female attend Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Students who identify as male attend Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Youth receive a \$400 stipend for their participation.

### **NUA ON THE MOVE**

5:00-7:00pm; Monday-Thursday  
July 11 – August 4  
1:00-4:00pm; Monday-Thursday  
August 8 – August 18

Applications Due Monday June 13  
6 paid positions for high school students

Participate in a historical moment at New Urban Arts! Work closely with New Urban Arts staff and artist mentor Julia Gualtieri to lead conversations, organize events, document and plan logistics of our move this summer to a new studio space. We will consider the emotional as well as the physical inventory of New Urban Arts. Students will meet for longer sessions in the last two weeks of the program during the move itself.

### **OPEN STUDIO**

4:00-6:00pm; Monday-Thursday  
July 11 – August 4

Open Enrollment, Drop in Anytime!  
Free for high school students and alumni

Drop by New Urban Arts studio to invent creative projects only hot summer days can inspire. Learn to screen print. Make a zine for the Studio Zine Swap in August. Paint, draw, sew, it's up to you! Hide from the sun in our art studio and work independently or collaborate with student alumni.



# New Urban Arts Summer Studio 2011 Agreement Form

I, \_\_\_\_\_, am committed to the 2011 Summer Art Inquiry program on "placemaking" at New Urban Arts. I recognize that I will be working from 12:30-4:30pm, Monday through Thursday from July 11 until August 4, 2011.

Under the direction of Artist Mentors, each student will:

- Create art independently and collaboratively around the theme of placemaking through interdisciplinary art workshops led by artist mentors and visiting artists at New Urban Arts.
- Complete a thematically relevant independent inquiry project over four weeks.
- Act as a role model while co-facilitating youth-led art workshops for the public, promoting creative expression and exploration and refraining from negative attitude and action.
- Prepare artwork and artist statements for public gallery exhibition held in October 8, 2011.
- Exhibit personal process as an artist and a mentor through reflective activities.

New Urban Arts will provide free lunch from 12:00pm to 12:30pm Monday through Friday. New Urban Arts will provide also temporary RIPTA tickets for public transportation to and from the program, in addition to snacks during the program at no cost to the students.

I understand that consistent attendance and punctuality will make my experience of the Art Inquiry more successful. If I cannot attend or will be late, I will contact New Urban Arts with advance notice at (401) 751-4556. All time missed needs to be made up outside of the regular program schedule, during Open Studio Hours, Monday-Thursday from 4:00-6:00pm no later than August 5, 2011.

Upon successful completion of the program in August, students will receive 75% of a \$400 honorarium, unless repeated unexcused absences (3 or more) or failure to achieve the job description outlined above. Unexcused absences include any absence not anticipated or approved before the start of the program, including personal illness. The remainder of the honorarium will be available upon successful participation in the public gallery exhibition in October, 2011.

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Student Signature

Date

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Parent/Guardian signature

Date

## CHECK INS: A TOOL KIT

*The following is a list of community building prompts used in the 2011 Summer Art Inquiry. They are borrowed from our collective experiences and adapted for our use. We are grateful to all of the people who have developed these tools over many years. We share them here to make a small contribution to this evolving network of resources for facilitating group work.*

### NAME STORIES

This check-in is a great icebreaker for new groups, and a great opportunity to find out more about each other. Go around in a circle and share any stories or information you have about your own name (who chose it, what does it mean, where does it come from, nicknames, etc). Another variation is to break off into pairs and share your name stories with your partner, listening to each other as well as you can. Then, return to the group, and tell everyone your partner's name story as well as you remember it---no correcting!

### FROG TOSS

Sometimes, group check-ins can be a little hard to manage---deciding who gets to talk, making sure everyone gets a turn, and remembering not to talk over each other are all difficult but important parts of the activity. This is where the frog (or other suitably cuddly stuffed/beanbag animal) comes in. The holder of the frog is the speaker and has the full attention of the group. The person holding the frog can then toss it to someone else, until everyone has had a chance to speak. (We don't recommend using a real frog.)

### GREEN, YELLOW, RED

"Go, slow down, stop"---the colors on traffic lights are instantly recognizable as directions. You can also think of them as "yes, maybe, no." These categories can be useful in getting feedback on how an activity, project or program is running. Green symbolizes the positives, or things you would like to continue or expand on. Yellow symbolizes caution---things that might need work or more thought. Red symbolizes things you would like to stop or get rid of completely. Give three cards (green, yellow and red) to each member of your group. You can now each write your thoughts on the corresponding cards, or simply go around the circle holding up the cards and sharing thoughts within each category.

### MIND READER

Everybody's a little bit psychic---at least, that's what we discovered while using this check-in tool. Give every member of the group a blank index card. Each person writes down one question on the front of the card (it can be specific to the program/activity,

personal, or general), then pass all the cards to the facilitator for shuffling. Later, at the closing of the workshop, the facilitator will redistribute the cards face down so that no one can read the questions. Everyone must pick up their cards and press them to their foreheads so that the writing is facing inwards (no peeking). Take a few moments to really focus on the card---try to let the question seep into your brain! Try visualizing the question! Then, put the card back on the table, still face down, and use the blank side to write an answer to the question that appeared in your mind. After everyone has answered the hidden questions, you can flip your cards over to see how psychic you really are! Around the circle, read the question and your answer to it.

### BUS STOP

When you're stuck in one place with a group of people, sometimes really interesting conversations spring up. What if bus stops actually had conversational prompts on them? For this activity, create several numbered "bus stop" signs, and add a question at the bottom of each (specific to your program/activity, personal, or general), and put them up around the room. Everyone in the group must choose a bus stop to stand by---try to space yourselves out evenly---and a facilitator will keep track of time. When the facilitator says go, talk with your group for 5 minutes about the question on the bus stop. After 5 minutes is up, everyone must choose a new bus stop. Try to make sure you get to talk about all the questions!

### GIVE YOURSELF AN "A"

This check-in is useful as a self-evaluation tool or a motivator for projects that are still in progress. Are you still worried about getting a good grade, even if you're not being graded? Maybe it's time to give yourself the "A" you want...but you have to explain why you deserve it! Give every member of the group a blank index card, and then everyone can give themselves a nice big "A" up in the corner (or all over the front). Then, under the "A" (or on the back of the card), write about your favorite parts of your project: what is going to make you proud? What will be really exciting to you? What will you learn and how will you know you learned it?

### HOPES AND FEARS

On the first day, everyone, including facilitators, enter with hopes and fears for the workshop or program about to be embarked on together. In this activity, each participant gets a note card. On one side write down hopes they have for the art inquiry, and on the other side write down fears they have. Pass these notecards around the circle a few people down like in the game Hot Potato. This way, no one has to personally confess their own hopes or fears aloud to the rest of the group. This activity can be helpful in generating a genuine community agreement, using themes heard among hopes and fears.

## SUMMER ART INQUIRY VISITS WITCHCLUB: A REFLECTION ON OUR FIRST FIELD TRIP THIS SUMMER

Many of our students' independent projects were inspired by a fieldtrip we took the first week, a visit to a collective living art studio constructed entirely out of found and recycled materials in Providence called "Witch Club".

As the students looked around, eyes getting wider and smiles getting bigger every second, we realized what a gift we'd been given---access to a secret and magical place. We created some gift art in advance as a thank you to WC for inviting us into their home, and one of the first things I saw as I walked in the door was one of our students handing a bouquet of painted paper flowers to a WC member.

The WC members led us past rooms constructed from discarded wood and fabric, boxes full of art supplies, musical instruments, makeshift furniture, and projects-in-progress, to the center of their community space. There, they offered us tea and homemade fritters, and after we'd all introduced ourselves, WC explained the history and intentions of the space and answered questions.

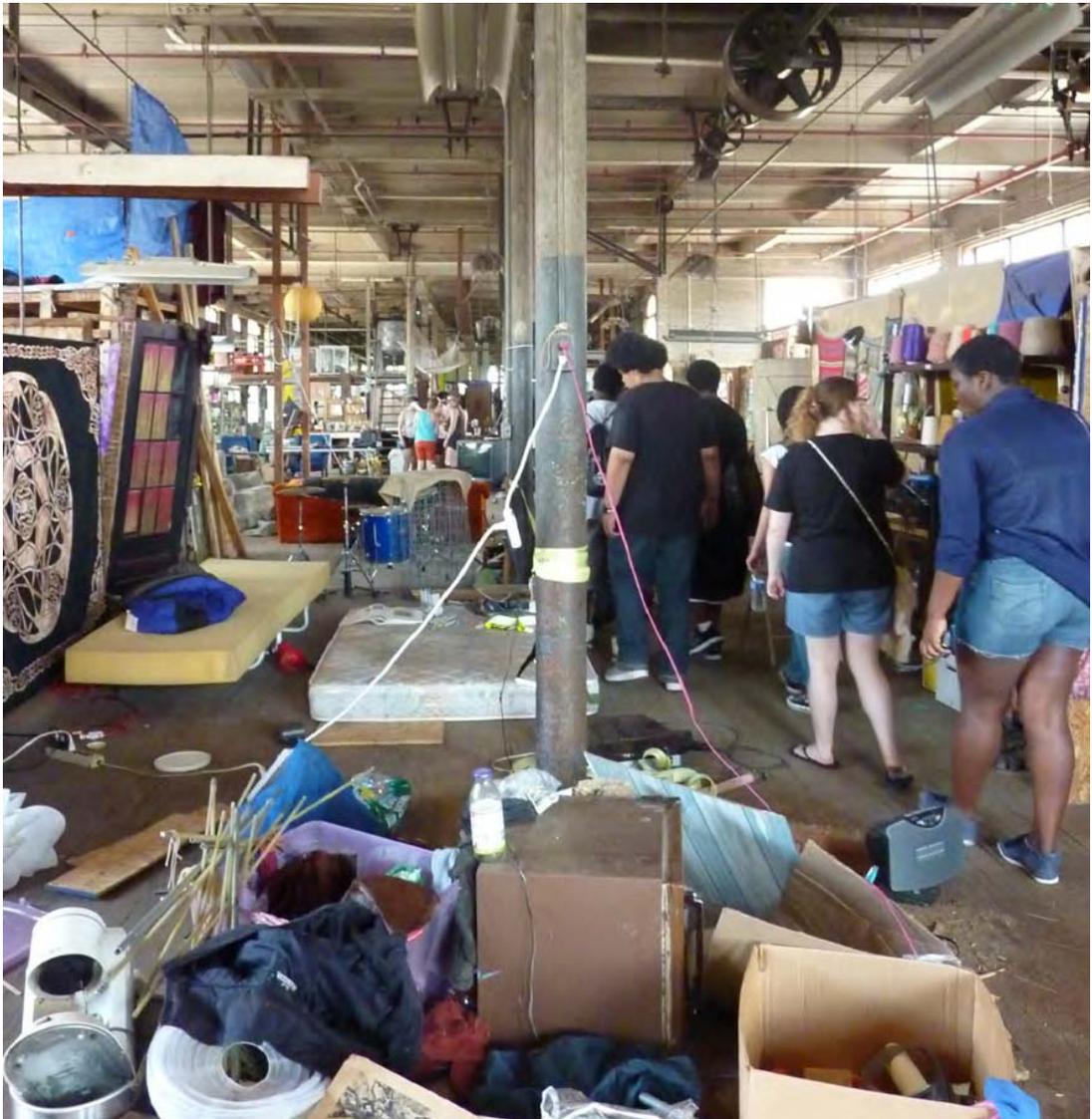
The conversation we had then---about the power of creating your own home; about people (particularly people socialized female in this culture) reclaiming the act of building, and teaching themselves the skills of carpentry and other traditionally male-centered forms of construction; about the benefits and drawbacks of living in ways that are considered outside the norm; about how hard it is to share space and how beautiful it can be to welcome people in; about making art every day; about not giving up on the dreams you had for your life when you were too young to "know better"---was a conversation I will never forget.

The diversity of age, race, ethnicity, class, sexuality, gender, and general life experience in all the members of that conversation created a rare cultural exchange. This kind of learning, where knowledge is constructed through community conversation, rather than passed from teacher to student, is at the core of New Urban Arts' philosophy. To see it blossom in another space, with members of the NUA family as well as new friends, was a powerful experience.

Our visit ended with an impromptu jam session and dancing. Other students were drawn to a huge "free bin" of clothes and random items, and had a great time creating new outfits. When it came time to leave, both the Art Inquiry and the Witch Club were sad to

say goodbye. We invited them to come visit us at the studio (which several of them did at our final critique), and to come to our show in October. They gave us their new P.O. box address, and we promised to write.

Our journey to Witch Club became more than just a field trip---it created new relationships, and heavily influenced some students' final projects. Several female students were inspired to tackle carpentry and large-scale construction, and for another student, the visit to the space caused a reflection on the idea of home and welcoming that he developed into a silkscreen project.



*photo by Sarah Greenfield*

## HO HO TO KENNEDY PLAZA\* WE GO!

On August 2nd, we packed up the car, grabbed a sign and boxes o' magic, which contained various art making supplies- love, ink, parachute poems, luck, book making supplies, mystery, paint markers, excitement, chalk, and not knowing what was going to happen, but certainty that it was going to be wonderful.

After two weeks of delving into our study on "place making," which included field trips of mills turned into sacred spaces and gypsy caravan case studies, it was our turn to turn the flat grasses of Kennedy Plaza into a place of discovery, creativity, and opportunity both for the young artists of the Inquiry program, as well as the children, parents, and chillin' folks in KP.

The spices we used in cooking up our traveling skills share caravan included a special visit from Eric Rice, a local artist and designer who recently won a nationwide fort building competition held by director Spike Jonze and Booooooom! to celebrate the opening of "Where the Wild Things Are," the children's book, Roxaboxen, written by Alice McLerran and illustrated by Barbara Cooney, about a group of kids who transform an empty hill into a city, and the the documentary Gypsy Caravan, which is in the story of the nomadic offerings and experiences of Roma musicians.

Artists worked in teams to design, build, and execute various skills share stations. Tremell headed up a calligraphy station next to Legend who gracefully taught how to make parachute poems, inspired by the soldiers deployed overseas right now. Sara, Yoli, and Mandara lead people in bookmaking on a lovely cloth that they set up to look like a magic carpet! Sherly and Ashley set up an awesome chalk station with the skyline of Providence and opportunity for people to change what they wanted in the city. Naomi and Dakota strutted their skills with some sweet street art. Maddie, Aaron, and Divine took the ground to the next level with a makeshift dance floor and taught moves and grooves! A place was born. We were invited back to Kennedy Plaza and eagerly await our next nomadic skills share possibly sometime this Spring.

Special thanks to Greater Kennedy Plaza for having us!

\* the public transportation hub located in downtown Providence, RI.



*photos by Sarah Greenfield*

GUIDE TO WRITING AN ARTIST STATEMENT FOR  
SUMMER 2011 ART INQUIRY

WRITE YOUR **NAME**:

**TITLE** OF WORK:

**DESCRIBE** THE ART WORK YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT NOW:

WHAT **MATERIALS** DID YOU USE IN MAKING THE WORK?

**WHY** DID YOU PICK THESE MATERIALS?

WHERE DID THE IDEA COME FROM? WHAT **INSPIRED** YOU?

HOW DOES IT RELATE TO OUR THEME of *placemaking*?

HOW DOES THIS **RELATE** TO ARTWORK YOU HAVE ALREADY MADE?  
OR, DID YOU TRY SOMETHING **NEW**? What challenged you most?

**SHOUT OUTS** to who you'd like to thank, acknowledge or dedicate this piece to:

## 2011 Art Inquiry :: END OF SUMMER SURVEY

Please use complete sentences. Thank you!

NAME 2 NEW THINGS YOU DID THIS SUMMER AS PART OF THE ART INQUIRY SUMMER PROGRAM:

WHAT DIDN'T YOU DO THAT YOU HOPED TO DO?

WHAT ARE SOME HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE SUMMER PROGRAM?

WHAT CHALLENGED YOU MOST?

WHAT DID YOU DISCOVER ABOUT YOURSELF DURING THIS ART INQUIRY?

HOW HAS IT CHANGED HOW YOU THINK ABOUT THE WORLD AROUND YOU?

WHAT VALUE IS THERE IN ENGAGING THE PUBLIC AS AN ARIST?

WHAT DO YOU THINK SHOULD CHANGE ABOUT THE PROGRAM IN THE FUTURE?

WHAT DO YOU THINK SHOULD NOT CHANGE?

## SUMMER STUDIO RESIDENT SCHOLAR/ARTIST JOB DESCRIPTION

The Summer Studio Scholar/Artist is an independent contractor that supports the Program Director, Artist Mentors and high school students at New Urban Arts, through contributing significant knowledge, understanding and curiosity to the Summer Art Inquiry program. S/he strives to foster a rewarding learning environment that is stimulating, trusting, and student-driven, where the mission of New Urban Arts can thrive.

Contributing to workshop curriculum development and cultivating curriculum resources, working closely with the Program Director and as a support to the teaching artist mentors;

Leading an introductory workshop/ artist talk for youth during the first week of the summer program, presenting the selected theme in a larger context as both human and creative practice that occurs around the world and throughout history;

Leading a group reflection during the final week of the program and a closing art critique on students' independent inquiry project created over the course of the summer;

Contributing artwork and wall text to the public gallery exhibition in October;

Contributing to the culminating publication through writing a foreword or sharing relevant resources to include in the appendix;

Joining program staff in the program's evaluation and assessment.

# HOME SWEET HOME - A SUMMER ART INQUIRY MIXTAPE

1. HOME - Edward Sharpe & The Magnetic Zeros
2. THIS MUST BE THE PLACE (NAIVE MELODY) - Talking Heads
3. HOMEWARD BOUND - Simon & Garfunkel
4. SLOW PONY HOME - The Weepies
5. HOMETOWN GLORY - Adele
6. NEW ENGLAND - Jonathan Richman & The Modern Lovers
7. BOSTON - Augustana
8. ARMS - Christina Perri
9. DON'T WORRY ABOUT THE GOVERNMENT - Talking Heads
10. MEMORY LANE (SITTIN' IN DA PARK) - Nas
11. OUR HOUSE - Madness
12. HOME - The Wealthy West
13. SODADE - Cesaria Evora
14. ASFALT TANGO - Fanfare Ciocarlia



WHAT MAKES A  
PERSON LEAVE? //  
WHY DO SOME  
PEOPLE MOVE  
AROUND SO  
MUCH? // WHAT  
ARE MY PARENTS  
THINKING ABOUT?

HOW DO YOU  
MAKE A SPACE  
SAFE? // IS SANTA  
CLAUS HERE? //  
WHAT ARE  
COMMON SMELLS  
IN YOUR HOME? //  
WHAT'S UNDER  
YOUR BED?





WHAT CAN I DO  
HERE? // HOW CAN I  
TELL PEOPLE ABOUT  
WHERE I HAVE  
LIVED? // WHERE IS  
OUR HOME SWEET  
HOME SIGN? //  
WHAT DOES A NEW  
HOME LOOK LIKE?