



New Urban Arts

# COLLECTIONS & ARCHIVES

A PROGRAM RESOURCE GUIDE



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Summer Art Inquiry

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## 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 the West End neighborhood of Providence, Rhode Island. Our mission is to create and sustain a vital community that supports young people as artists and leaders toward a lifelong creative practice. Founded in 1997, our free, year-round out-of-school programs build sustained mentoring relationships between professional artists and urban high school students. These programs promote leadership, risk taking, collaboration, and self-directed learning. The Summer Studio at New Urban Arts offers paid opportunities for over 30 high school students during critical summer months. The majority of youth served are from low-income, underserved communities with little to no previous experience in the arts. New Urban Arts is housed in a 2,000 square foot storefront arts studio. For more information visit [www.newurbanarts.org](http://www.newurbanarts.org).

## ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

“Collections & Archives” is a program resource guide based on New Urban Arts’ Summer 2009 Art Inquiry. This interdisciplinary summer program brought together fifteen high school students and three artists in a critical and creative exploration of archiving as a creative practice fueled by the human impulse to collect, accumulate, categorize, arrange, and document in our daily lives. 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 a new understanding and appreciation of archiving and related 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. We encourage you to alter, combine, or adapt these activities to your liking to best meet the needs of your specific environment. Check back to [www.newurbanarts.org](http://www.newurbanarts.org) for progress on this and other projects and send your feedback to [info@newurbanarts.org](mailto:info@newurbanarts.org).

Activities and thematic exercises are divided into three categories in relation to their general length and complexity. While each project may be altered to incorporate it into any workshop, the general guidelines are as follows:



exercises that may be completed in 15 to 20 minutes and require little construction and/or materials



activities generally lasting between 30 minutes and 1 hour and may be more collaborative in nature



projects that may last for a large portion of a single workshop or stretched over several days and often require a larger selection of materials

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Art Inquiry program at New Urban Arts was started in 2006 as an opportunity to provide programming to students throughout the summer months that offers a distinct experience in art making and learning. In contrast to the organization's primary school-year program, the Art Inquiry is a five-week focused exploration of an overlooked genre of art that combines a scholarly approach to the theme with rigorous creative production. Over the course of the summer, students collaborate with mentors and visiting artists on various projects, ranging from one-time group activities to long-term and often highly conceptual independent work.

While a theme is provided and artist mentors and a scholar-in-residence facilitate the conversation, the nature of the program aims to support students in finding the best way to approach the material. As a part of the Art Inquiry, students develop the ability to determine their own course of study through their independent exploration. Every Tuesday students were given open studio time to work on an independent project of their design (see page 30 for examples of these works). Success is often achieved when students are able to challenge their preconceptions and elevate their skills as makers. A project often veers from its original conception as the program progresses and is consequently celebrated as an indication of a more powerful and complex artistic voice emerging. Themes selected for the annual Summer Art Inquiry raise questions on the human experience as it intersects with creative practice.

In addition to group activities and the larger trajectory of the independent project, students are required to facilitate public workshops within the community. These workshops allow students the opportunity to teach the material to a group of participants, ranging in age from child to adult, through short interactive activities and a follow-up discussion. The experience provides students with a unique sense of ownership and investment in the material that is achieved through teaching it to others. Relevant artists, historical works and group exercises that are incorporated within the Inquiry are often included in students' public workshops.

This summer's theme was titled the "Art of the Archive" and explored the various ways in which archival procedures are intimately related to a wide range of creative disciplines. 15 students were selected to take part, each receiving a modest stipend for their commitment to the program. Mentors Julia Gualtieri and Zachary Clark joined scholar-in-residence Peter Hocking to develop a basic structure to the program that divided the study of archives into the following topics:

- What is an Archive?
- Collecting / Accumulating / Possessing
- Categorizing / Arranging / Curating
- Personal v. Historical / Truth v. Fiction / Remixing
- Tangible v. Intangible / Ephemeral.

Dialogue, reading and activities were supplemented by weekly visits by local artists who shared their artwork and often provided an exercise based on that week's theme. In addition, this year's program incorporated four out-of-studio visits to sites that related to the Inquiry. These field trips included the Providence Athenaeum, the RISD Museum, Providence City Hall Archives and Tillinghast Farm, where students created temporary installations in nature.

The program concludes with a full gallery exhibition of student work in early October. The completed independent projects are joined by examples of small-scale group activities as well as artist statements from each participant. The body of work represented in the exhibition represents the ways in which students were able to transform the program's theme into something extraordinarily complex and varying, telling a story that could not be imagined in any other way.

## THE ART OF THE ARCHIVE

We are all archivists in our everyday lives. This notion – that archiving is an accessible, relative and multifaceted artistic practice disguised within our daily activities – is among the main principles guiding this inquiry. A core mission of this project, then, is figuring out how to challenge the traditional preconceptions of what an archive is without dismantling them completely. That an archive often exists as a respected yet vaguely distant and unknowable system through which articles of importance are preserved is certainly true. Institutions including museums, town halls and libraries are all valid and essential resources in our exploration of archiving practices – but they are also only the beginning.

Imagine, as we have, the space beneath your bed. Under ours you will often find junk. This junk commonly includes receipts from the mall, old notes passed during last year's math class, a book report, clothing tags, your dog's obedience school diploma, food – the possibilities are limitless and outlandish. They are also an archive, one that is every bit as interesting and telling as the archives that house a Whitman poem or Goya print. This space beneath our beds – the accumulation of ephemera that reveals our very selves – is our contemporary personal archives, cultivated and made legitimate in the absence of our consent. Now ask yourself: If someone were to collect the items that have accumulated in the corners of my existence, what kind of story would it tell about me?

Around us, we've discovered, is a culture of collection and documentation that is thriving and overlooked. As a generation of self-broadcasted, confessional-crazed virtual packrats, we both generate and accumulate status updates and Twitter feeds with a rapid-fire efficiency. We are digital sound-bite junkies, narrating our days with endlessly nuanced play-lists that are punctuated by the "dings!" of our buddylist activities. These fragments of digital living, a practice with which we've all become so proficient, chronicle our lives like rambling journal entries. Glancing at your iTunes or Facebook statuses from months ago can cause a wince, but this awkwardness only occurs because what we see reveals so much truth about our former selves. And what good is an archive if it doesn't make us confront that which used to be?

A further layer was added to the project by investigating the ways in which this practice relates to legitimate forms of art making. Though the connection seems difficult at the outset, the importance of concepts like obsession, documentation, organization and accumulation relate very directly to the visual arts. While some projects involve the mass collection of unlike objects organized by a single shared feature, others explore the ways in which our daily consumption can be represented visually. Still other artists opt for archive-influenced work that deals exclusively with intangible objects. Stories, thoughts and unwritten data have found their way into the work of contemporary artists who develop their own archival language to maintain and present their work.



We've become obsessed with archiving. As a device through which we can better understand ourselves and our culture, it's thrilling to explore. But in uncovering the ways in which this Inquiry inspires projects that are visually potent, with an aesthetic value that matches its intellectual heft, we've reached a new appreciation for its study. We invite you to take inventory. Tell a story with what you find around you. You may be surprised, as we were, by where it takes you.

why do people  
archive? what  
do our collec-  
tions say about  
us? what mat-  
ters to us? what  
is valuable?

## WHAT IS AN ARCHIVE?

Our objective is to encourage a long-term conversation in which the preconceptions of “archives” are discussed and/or challenged. Many of these activities refer to personal collections, the gathering of material objects and preliminary inventory procedures. These activities serve as an introduction to new ways of understanding archives and collections, preparing participants to behave as keen-eyed field archivists in their daily lives.

*small*

### GUESS THE COLLECTION

Materials: pens, index cards, nametags, a container

As “collection” is among the ideas that most readily emerge in the first days of this project, this activity is an appropriate start to a conversation about archives while serving as an appropriate icebreaker game.

Students and artist mentors sit in a large circle. Be sure to wear nametags – this activity secretly doubles as a great way to learn one another’s names. The facilitator asks the following question: What do you collect? Each participant documents his or her personal collection onto an index card in any way they choose. This may be a drawing, poem, list or description. Cards are collected and shuffled inside the container, which is then passed around, allowing each of the students to select a random card. Moving around the circle, each card is read, after which the reader must guess the identity of that collection’s owner. If an incorrect guess is made, the group is invited to guess until the collector is revealed.

*med*

### SCAVENGER HUNT AND INVENTORY DRAWING

Materials: large ream of paper (preferably the size of the table), crayons, scavenger list, a large bag

Divide students randomly into groups of three. Provide each group with a scavenger hunt list. The following is the list used during this activity (it may be altered depending on the nature of the space in which the hunt is held):

Find something...

1. Impermanent
2. Strong
3. Comprised of more than one part
4. From nature (no more than 3 feet)
5. That is used to assist in eating
6. In the shape of the letter “C”
7. That looks out of place
8. That may be used as a container
9. Square
10. You think is an interesting shape (2 to 3 feet)

Allow students 15 minutes to collect these items as a group. Once time is up, pile objects together onto the paper-covered table. Spend a few moments discussing the relationship of objects to one another: Are all of the strong objects easily recognizable? Is there one color more prominent than another? How did we define “out of place”? Once observations have been sufficiently discussed, ask students to collaboratively arrange the objects in any way they see fit. Ideas include arrangement based on like objects, using the materials to construct a scene or creating the most dynamic shapes by juxtaposing dissimilar pieces. When this is done, trace the shapes of the arranged objects onto the paper with crayons – this may remain a uniform color or be embellished with further shades. Remove and return the objects. Hang the paper on the wall – this is the group’s first work of art.

*med*

### POCKET INVENTORY

Materials: paper, writing implements, large surface

Ask each student to place 5 objects from their pockets (or purse, backpack or handbag) onto the table. Spend time discussing the nature of the objects. What do we notice about the items that we carry with us every day? How might we categorize these objects? As a group, rearrange the objects in different ways, discussing the ways in which intentional organization changes the story that the collection tells. Repeat a few times, allowing for less apparent categories to emerge. Next, ask students to document the categorized objects in a manner of their choosing. Possible options include mapping, using the objects as a still-life, storytelling/cartooning based on the objects, list-making, etc. Share the documents before dismantling the inventory.

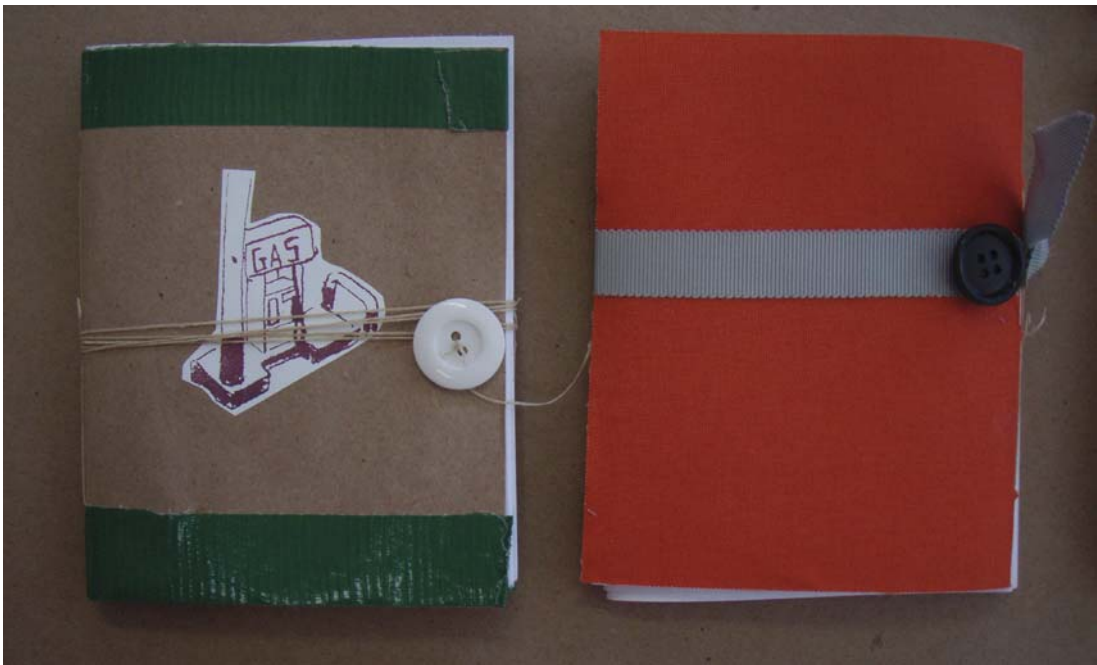
*large*

### FIELD GUIDE CONSTRUCTION

Materials: paper, cardstock, bookmaking supplies (bone folder, waxed thread, needles)

Inspired by the work and writings by artist Keri Smith, this activity provides students with a personal, two-part field journal. Once completed, encourage the students to bring their journals to each workshop, documenting group activities and notes in one half and personal journal entries in the second. These books are a great way to encourage self-directed thought collection both within and outside of the workshop.

How to make a notebook: Prior to beginning, cut 20 – 30 pieces of standard letter paper in half (measurements should be about 5.5 x 8.5 inches). Divide the pile into two equal parts and fold each sheet in half horizontally. You should have two separate and unbound packets (5.5 x 4.25 inches). Next, cut a single piece of cardstock with the same height as the packets (5.5 inches) and slightly more than three times its width (about 13 inches). Fold the cardstock strip into three, such that a “Z” shape is made. Tuck each of the unbound packets into the two separate sections of the cardstock. They should each have a cover and share a middle section of cardstock that divides them. Using the bookbinding needle and thread, sew each packet into the cardstock cover separately. Your dual-part field notebook is complete!



*students documenting pocket inventories, sample field guides*

what are dif-  
ferent ways we  
can document  
and remember?

what is an  
artists' "raw  
material"?

## COLLECTING/ACCUMULATING/POSSESSING

Underscoring the difference between intention and accumulation suggests a value hierarchy inherent within the process of archiving. As a result, the legitimacy of archives are called into question – is a purposely arranged stamp collection more valuable than the receipts and straw wrappers that accumulate under our car seats? The following activities are designed to allow us to explore the ownership of our possessions as well as the point at which they transcend collection and become an obsession.

*small*

### SHORT STORY: THE MAN WHO NEVER THREW ANYTHING AWAY

Materials: Copies of story for each student

As a group, read the short story “The Man Who Never Threw Anything Away” by Ilya Kabakov. This is a story that addresses the issues of obsession, hoarding and value within the process of collecting.

Play up the story-time aspect of this activity with snacks and dim lighting (bean-bag chairs are a plus). After, discuss the ways in which the story relates to an exploration of archives. Create a word-web or list that highlights key phrases and important buzzwords that may be incorporated into later discussions. Allow this story to serve as a space in which students reflect on their own obsessions and the ways in which this may relate to possible art practices. Document any further project ideas or notes in the field notebooks.

*med*

### COLOR SEARCH

Materials: paint swatches from hardware store, lots of space

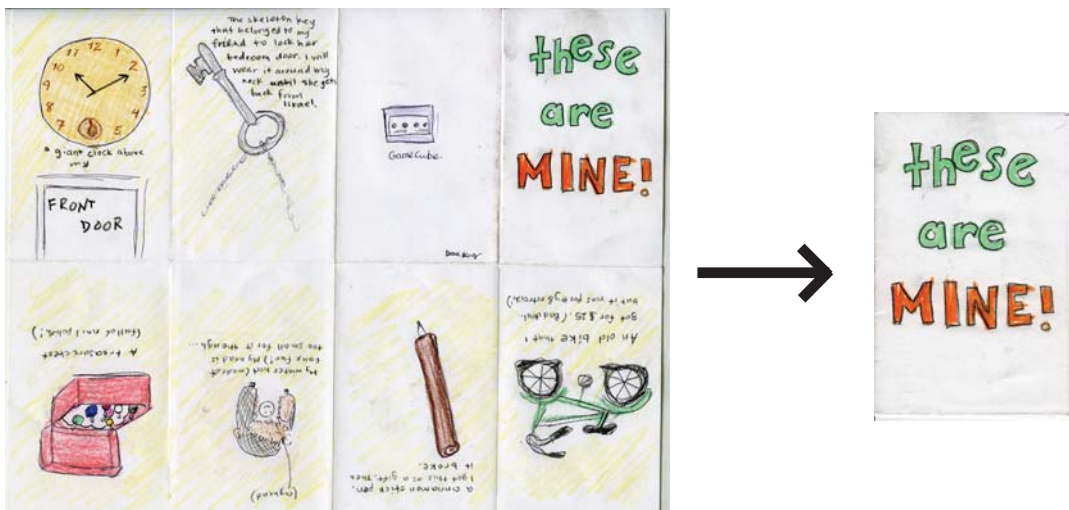
Place overturned paint swatches of differing colors on the table and instruct students to select a color at random. Once selected, allow 15 to 20 minutes to collect as many objects of that color as possible. Stay as close to the hue as possible – the more nuanced the swatches are, the more difficult the search becomes. Once time is up, arrange the objects in piles of like color. This exercise provides an exciting visual impact based on categorizing otherwise dissimilar objects together within a single color. Use this installation to demonstrate the ways in which categorization relates to aesthetics and collections exist as a specific and legitimate form of art. (See page 16.)



## SINGLE-PAGE ZINES / DRAWING OUR POSSESSIONS

Materials: standard printer paper, scissors, drawing implements, container  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xh1W15BWCUK> (instructional video)

Provide each student with one piece of paper. Make an 8-page zine out of the single sheet of paper. Visuals are helpful, as this is a tricky feat at first. Once this is complete, instruct students to document 8 of their possessions within the book – one per page. They can be drawn, collaged or written. The possessions may be determined by value or selected at random. When each possession zine is finished, collect and shuffle them inside the container and allow each student to choose a book other than their own. This activity is a great way to investigate the objects that are valued as possessions versus those that are perceived as accumulation.



*single page zine by Dana Heng*





*color search*

how does the arrange-  
ment of objects tell  
a story? what is the dif-  
ference between an artist  
and a curator?  
what do you do with  
a vast amount of  
information and limited  
space? what does data  
look like?

## CATEGORIZING/ARRANGING/CURATING

An archive is, at its core, the teller of a story. These stories can be fantastical, sober, legitimate or false, influenced, redemptive and thrilling. They are limitlessly adaptable. When objects are arranged in a certain way, by a certain hand, a narrative is imposed onto them. The juxtaposition of pieces, the selection of specific pieces over others, the number of items shown – these are all curatorial decisions manipulating the story that the archive tells. This allows for the opportunity to edit, curate and rearrange. The power to arrange objects in order to express an idea is exciting to explore, and the following activities happily encourage us to do so.

*small*

### LIST POEMS

Materials: writing prompts, field guides, writing implements

A list poem is created by responding to prompts that are revealed in a rapid-fire manner. Begin by asking students to write “Cabinet of Curiosities” across the top of the page. (Cabinets of Curiosities are, after all, one of the earliest forms of carefully displayed collections dating back to the 16th century.) The facilitator asks participants to respond to the following inquiries, pausing for just a moment between each one.

1. What is on the top shelf of your closet right now?
2. Name something that is currently under your bed.
3. What lives in the corner of your basement?
4. What was the first thing you heard this morning?
5. List one thought you had on your way to NUA this morning.
6. What was the last thing you bought?
7. What was the last thing you threw away?
8. List something you recently overheard.
9. What was the hardest thing you’ve ever had to lose?

Ask students to share their answers, reciting the answers without pausing, as if one were reading a poem. The lists become an assortment of idiosyncrasies – random and apparently dissimilar, they are bits and pieces of our everyday lives that become related through their arrangement in a single, revealing and surprisingly poignant list.

*med*

### THE WORKSHOP OBJECTS

Materials: selection of objects from a specific and unknown site, field notebooks, writing utensils

Collect an assortment of objects from a mysterious place. In our exercise, objects were unearthed from an old workshop that had been unused for years. These objects included rusted bolts, tin cans of paint thinner, beams of splintered wood, unrecognizable tools, dolls, and dustpans adorned with flowers.

Arrange these objects formally, as one would see in a history or ancient art museum (placing them atop a ream of white paper is a nice touch). Invite students to investigate the objects. After some time, ask them to develop a story – either realistic or fantastic – relating to the place from where they imagine these pieces were removed. Once the stories have been shared, reveal the true identity of the mystery space. Use this activity to encourage a conversation relating to the ways in which arranged artifacts both inform and mislead the viewer.

*large*

### MINI MUSEUMS

Materials: foam core, rulers, cutting mats, hot glue, glue sticks, cutting blades, mixed media

The purpose of this activity is two-fold: it both introduces students to safe and effective cutting and measuring techniques while allowing them the freedom to curate a miniature show of their choosing. The idea for this activity came from mock-up model galleries used by curators in preparation for arranging and installing an exhibition.

Before beginning, demonstrate safe cutting and measuring techniques to the entire group. Next, provide a sheet of foam core board to each student and instruct them to create their own miniature gallery space that includes a floor and at least three walls. The development of construction skills is an important aspect of this activity, so be sure to pay particular attention to gluing, cutting and accurate measurement. Once the galleries are constructed, ask students to curate a show using any media they choose. Vampires, sneakers, textiles, watercolors and wire sculptures were among the exhibitions created in our workshop. Remind students that as curators, the arrangement of the chosen objects influences the way in which it may be perceived by the viewer.





*mini museum by Chantelle Tanguí*

how do artists use  
the archive to subvert  
“truth” and “history”?

what is historical-  
ly reliable? how does  
an archive allow us  
to reinterpret over  
time? what do we  
publish? what do we  
keep private?

## PERSONAL V. HISTORICAL, TRUTH V. FICTION, REMIXING & TRANSFORMING

The differences between a journal entry and census catalogue speaks to the broad spectrum across which this theme stretches. Once again, the question of value assignment is integral – when do the doodles and scrapbooks of our youth transform from clutter to artifact? Exploring the ways in which this transition implies falsification or reimagination is essential to this study. Learning to understand an artist’s studio through the same framework that we approach our state archives is a complicated investigation. It also serves as a necessary challenge for any emerging archivist.

*small*

### TIME CAPSULES

Materials: box, rope or lock, save-the-date cards, objects both found and made, emails sent to your future-selves ([www.dearfutureme.org](http://www.dearfutureme.org))

Participate in a tradition! Ask the following question: If you could provide future generations with something that tells them about yourself, what would it be?

Invite students to ponder their contributions for a few days and encourage them to add more than one object. Pictures, letters and artwork are obvious and meaningful components, but items such as trash and receipts may attain unexpected value over time. Incorporate a closing ceremony. Once the capsule is closed, decide on an appropriate hiding spot and day on which it will be reopened (for us, it was five years in the future, to the day and hour). Pass out hand-made save-the-date cards and utilize modern technology by sending future-me emails that will send a reminder to your inbox the week before the opening ceremony. Make future car-pool arrangements as necessary. This project idea was adapted from “The Warhol: Resource and Lessons”, an online curriculum archive developed by the Education Department at the Andy Warhol Museum.

*large*

### TABLE INTAGLIOS

Materials: small press, basin filled with water, printmaking paper, intaglio ink, tarlatans, Plexiglas cut into 5 x 7 inch sheets, scribe, an old table

Prior to starting, cut sheets of paper about 8 x 10 inches and submerge them into the basin. This will help the ink adhere to the paper during printing.

Place a Plexiglas sheet onto a table, floor or wall that has interesting markings. The tables used in our experiment were embellished with scratches, spills and markings from more than ten years’ worth of messy art projects. This provided plenty of dynamic lines. Use your instrument to trace the markings by carving them onto the Plexiglas. The deeper the cut, the darker the line will be. Next, apply ink to the carved Plexiglas, wipe off the plate with a tarlatan, place it face-up on the press. Blot the paper and place it on the plexi plate. Run this through the press and watch your very own table intaglio emerge! While the table will certainly change, these prints serve as a hand-made archive of what was once there. See page 24.

large

## MEMORY REMIX

Materials: a lifetime's worth of scraps, maps, drawings and journal entries (memories), paper, scissors, gluesticks

While we were extremely lucky to have such an impressive resource of collage material provided by visiting artist Andrew Oesch, this activity can certainly be accomplished on a smaller scale. Compile a collection of scraps that have been kept over a period of time – old report cards, notes from your high school sweetheart and photocopied math worksheets are all great examples. Cut plain paper into long strips (about 5 x 24 inches) and make an accordion by folding the paper in half several times. Cut and collage the collection of scraps into a new work of art, gluing the pieces into your chapbook as you go. The process of cutting up old and often meaningful documents can be both difficult and liberating. Reappropriating the objects gives them new life and a unique purpose – archiving them in a way that allows for the artifacts themselves to change entirely.



*students collaging the personal documents of visiting artist Andrew Oesch*





*table intaglios*

what is

ephemera?

what do we

preserve?

what do we let

disappear?

## EPHEMERAL, TANGIBLE V. INTANGIBLE

Discussing the archival quality of objects that do not physically exist is the most conceptual of the topics outlined within this program. However, the idea that one can archive the intangible is richer with possibility than it might initially appear. Breathing, memory, ideas, stories and choreography are all a part of this discussion, and the attempt to represent the intangible through artwork is a unique challenge for any archivist. Alongside this exploration, a continued investigation into the ephemeral nature of the objects around us provides another facet to our study, further blurring the line between what is real and what is imagined.

*small*

### MAPPING AND RECORDING SOUNDS

Materials: field notebooks, writing instrument

Go outside and find a place to sit away from one another. For 10 – 15 minutes. Listen closely to the sounds you hear. Record them in your notebooks and provide a map that illustrates the places from which these sounds came. The longer you listen, the louder these sounds seem be! Collect as many sounds as you can and be as specific as possible – did the rustling leaves come from the ground or the tree? Was the horn from a truck or car? Share your findings with the group after gathering back together.

*med*

### TEMPORARY SCULPTURES / NATURE RUBBINGS

Materials: conte crayons, paper, objects found in nature, camera

This activity requires a field trip to nature! The beach, a city park or forest work best, but anywhere that natural objects are found may be visited. For the first half, provide each student with a sheet of paper (thinner paper works best) and crayon. Allow time to explore the site, placing found natural objects beneath the paper and rubbing its contours onto the paper with the crayon. Continue until a small collection of rubbings has been collected. Next, ask students to create an Andy Goldsworthy inspired sculpture using only objects from nature. Arrange the found objects in an interesting or sculptural way. Document this with a photograph and leave it as a gift to nature.

*large*

### 10-SECOND STORY COLLECTION

Materials: recording device, computer, blank cds

As a final group activity, visiting artist Walker Mettling facilitated a 10-second story exercise in which each student was given 10 seconds to tell a story about any memory they want to share. While our story guideline was fairly open-ended, a more specific prompt may certainly be provided for this project. Drawing names from a hat to determine the order, each student speaks into the device (in our case, a computer) and shares their short story. The collection is then recorded as a shared archive of memories – our collective story. For best results, listen to the entire collection just once before locking it in a time capsule to enjoy in years to come.





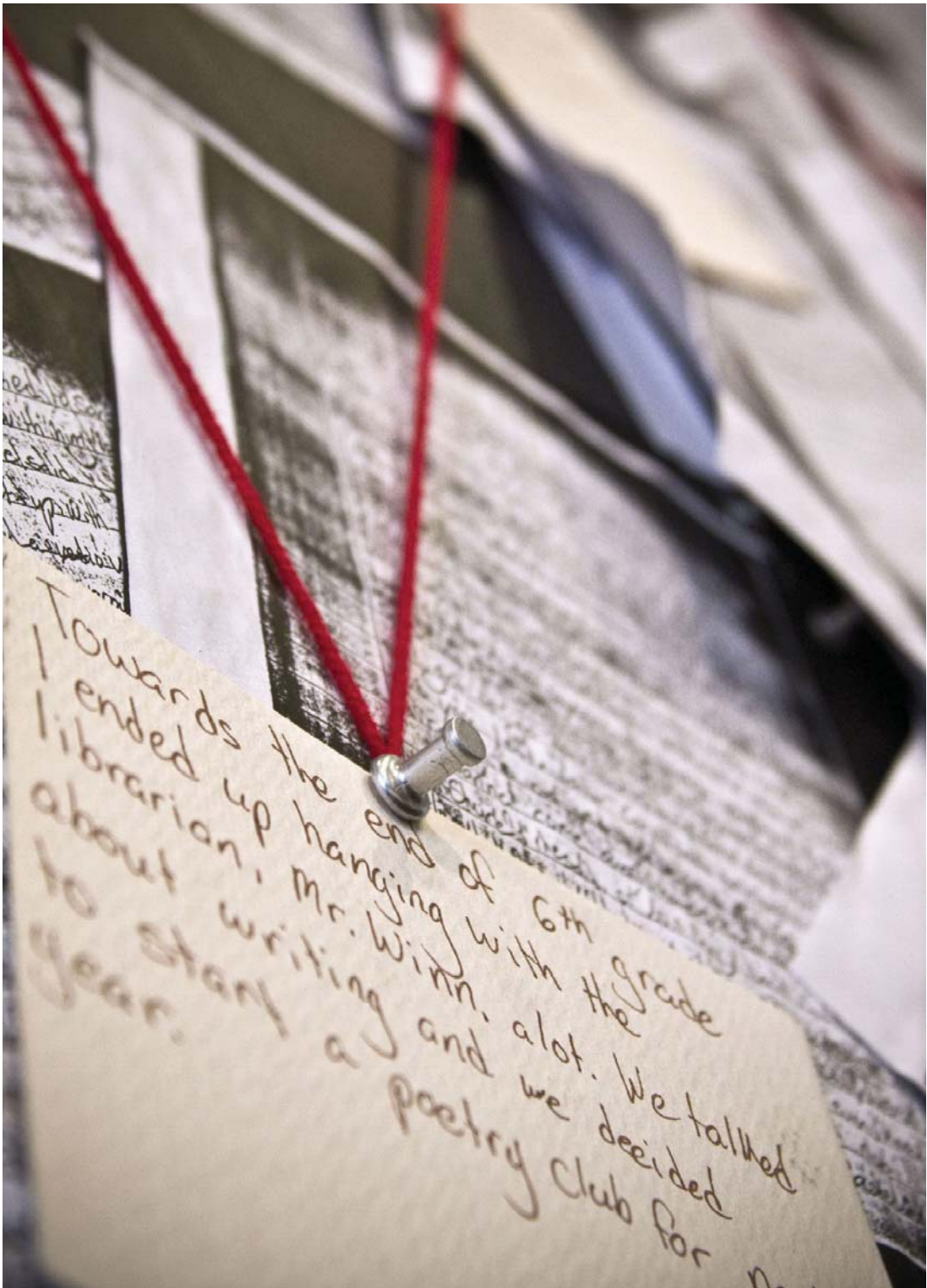
*Temporary installations in nature*

*self-directed inquiry*  
*projects*

## BLACK AND WHITE AND RED ALL OVER

This project for me was about growing up and facing my past. The black and white photocopies are pages from my personal journals from 6th grade until senior year. Here before you are my personal thoughts in the form of poetry. The idea for this project came from the need to end my high school career with something very personal becoming very public. I also incorporated the idea of archiving and collecting something you can't physically hold. This is a map of my history of writing and of issues that I have or still dealing with. The size I know is huge but that is the point, dealing with growing up is a big issue. The yarn is not cut off at the end because I am still growing. I have made comments about each part of my life on card attachment to the board. Everything is color coded. I have also included a manuscript of each board, so the viewer can actually read what I wrote. I would like to thank all the students that I worked with. I would also like to thank Julia, Zack, Jesse and Jason, who made my summer before college memorable.

-Ashley Escobedo



Towards the end of 6th grade I ended up hanging with the librarian, Mr. Winn, and a lot. We talked about writing and we decided to start a poetry club for next year.

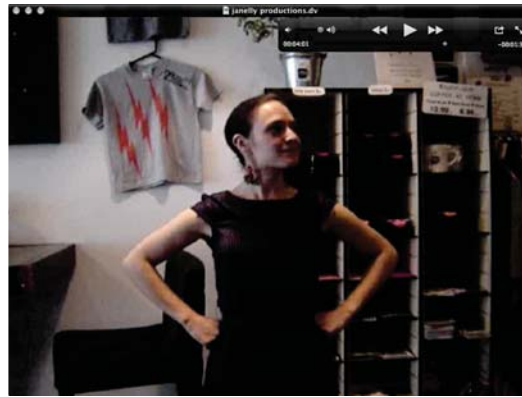
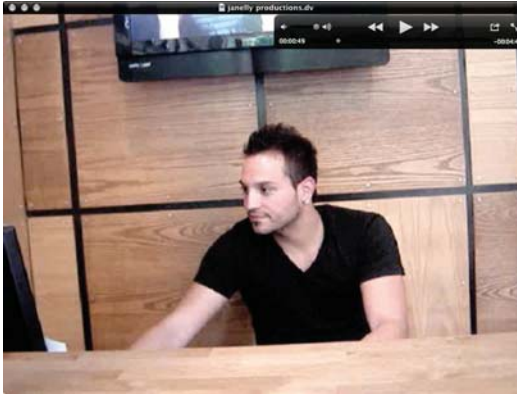


## JANELLY PRODUCTIONS

My name is Janelly DeJesus, the name for my independent project is Janelly Productions. This film is the independent project of the Art Inquiry Program. The reason I chose to do film for my project was because in my opinion I feel I can express myself better in film. The inspiration of the film is to not imitate but to pay homage to Andy Warhol who gave me the inspiration to do this film. Andy Warhol is an artist who took video of people in a warehouse for about an hour. His screen test shots are great but they are too perfect and they don't relate to how art is today. My film is archiving because it is a collection of one minute recordings of people in their own environment. I left out the sound because i thought it would be better for some one to try to interpret the video without knowing what it was about.

-Janelly DeJesus





## SIGNATURES

Originally, this project of mine was to simply be about collecting signatures and organizing them into categories, as I had learned earlier in the Inquiry. I began to make copies and copies of my tiny index cards (to put into different categories), soon enough I was cutting and cutting these copies into “perfect” replicas of the original. Of the 100 signatures that were ultimately collected, I developed a series of categories that divided them by types: male versus female, smallest to largest, legible versus illegible, etc. Eventually I realized that this project was evolving and expressing more than just categorization and organization. Like some of the artists I learned about this summer... I was becoming obsessed; something I never thought would occur. Honestly, I didn't really care about the signatures themselves anymore. All I cared about was copying and cutting, copying and cutting, analyzing and organizing... I found peace in this practice of collecting and organizing and the monotony of my ritualistic project... \*feeling crazy\*

-Chantelle Tangui



## MY FONDEST MEMORIES

When I was told to do a project on archiving, I had no clue what to do. When I think of archives I think of historical documents and preserving knowledge. I didn't feel like there was any project I could accomplish in about a month that would live up to my expectations of an archive, until my archiving epiphany happened one night. I was going through my "alibi box" (a shoe box that has movie stubs, play programs, newspaper articles, concert flyers and tickets ect.) when I came across a stack of postcards from every exhibition that New Urban Arts had hosted in the last three years that I had been invited to. This is what sparked the idea to archive my fondest memories of New Urban Arts. I won't get into detail about those specific events because they are in the box for you to look through.

Julia and Zack helped me develop the project. I wasn't sure if I was going to collage the post cards or if I was just going to put all of my work into a shoe box. What we came up with was better than a shoe box and will live longer than I. My memories were archived in an archival box, using archival ink, on archival paper, put into clear archival slits then placed into archival envelopes. In order to organize stories that took up more than one envelope, I made a table of contents. The most exciting part of my project was every time I finished a story I got to put it into the clear slits and the envelope, then place it into the box. It was amazing to me how fast the box started filling up. Also it was a lot of fun for me to share some of the memories with the people who were there. I remember showing Tamara a story about me and her and she just laughed. The Buttons on the outside of the box are also very important. It ties into one of the memories in the box.

-Heather Vieira





## THE WALLS OF MY BEDROOM

The walls of my bedroom are crazy, loud, colorful, and a little overwhelming. I choose to archive my walls because they reflect my personality and how i've changed over the years. My walls are covered in chalk, marker, sharpie, printed raindrops, posters, stickers, drawings, notes, photographs, etc. So i decided to make my independent project ironic. To do this, i made a mini-version of my room in black and white. I mapped out exactly where everything was, kind of like a crime scene, so it was neat and straight-forward. The box is not neat, the superglue was messy, but ignore that.

I also took black and white photographs of important things in my room. They are of my collages and artwork, my janis joplin record and various posters.

There is also a shoebox of real colorful trinkets and such of things. Feel free to leaf through them. They are bracelets, duckies, scarfs, photographs, jewelry (my favorite) and random things that describe me.

Throughout the Art Inquiry, i thought about archiving tremendously. I thought of how everything in my room is relative and related to me, growing up, and how i arrange things that are important to me. I made an alter of important childhood things, for example. This includes trolls, rubber duckies, incense, candels, play mobile dudes, boxes my dad sent to me, scarves, and pens. Everything that is important to me i put into boxes or piles. I learned a lot about we as a human race throughout this process. It's fascinating to get to know a person with only their lists or belongings/ collections.

My favorite day was when everyone dug through Andrew Oesch's boxes of his "life." I found his high school id, college essays, prints, postcards, keys. We learned a lot about him as a person. And I figured out I would rather die than have people rip apart my papers. I am very possessive of my stuff. Because everything is sentimental and i am a pack rat, so i feel the need to keep everything as a memento.

Archiving is saving, and collecting. You can tell so much about a person from their archives. The way we as people keep collecting, displaying, accumulating things, it's amazing.

-Ava Ginsburg



## SUMMER IN THE STUDIO

At first I didn't know what to do, but then I thought, "what would be simpler than archiving everyone's archive project?" I decided to make a mini NUA.

The idea to construct the studio came from one of the group projects we did during the Inquiry and from that I built on it.

I asked Jesse the measurements of the studio and I measured by using my feet and then counting my steps. When I had the measurements for the studio I shrunk them down using math (which was a bit challenging at times). I built a scale model of the studio out of foamcore. All that work took a while but as soon as I figured it out it went more smoothly.

Then I numbered each wall of my model and measured it. I kept track of the measurements on a piece of paper. The paper is covered in numbers and it doesn't make sense to anyone but me.

I took pictures of every wall of New Urban Arts (except inside the darkroom and screenprinting room). In Photoshop, I edited the picture sizes and put the pictures **together to fit my model**. I printed out the pictures, cut them out, and glued them onto to walls of the model.

My project is an archive of the people I worked with this summer. It captures summer in the studio.

-Frances Adewusi





## PORTRAIT OF NEW URBAN ARTS

Everyday of the Inquiry I did a small painting with acrylic paint on foamcore. I would paint whatever was inside New Urban Arts like the Poland Spring water cooler and the portraits by the door. I had 21 small paintings in all. The artist Dario Robleto inspired me to cut my paintings up, burn them, and destroy them. He makes new things out of the things he collects.

I destroyed my paintings and remade them into a collage that represents the outside of New Urban Arts. I felt really sad destroying my paintings, but once I noticed that it was going to become something better I got very excited and curious. I guess I'm sort of anti-archive in a way because archiving is so much about preserving objects. In my case, I destroyed everything to make it something better. I feel more daring with my work now.

I didn't really know what archives were the first week, and then I started thinking that archives are amazing and I started seeing them everywhere.

-Noel Puello



## LET'S ESCAPE FROM THE WORLD

“What is this” you ask? Well, it’s a tree of course, and as you can see, it’s not a normal tree. It’s an archival tree. This tree is an archive about me and my past. My past in the world of books. When we were told that we had to create an art project on the idea of archives, I came up with the idea of collecting leaves and book covers. I chose to collect leaves because I thought it would be interesting to see different leaves together on one tree. I chose to collect book covers because I absolutely love reading and I also love the way some book covers are designed. The design of a book cover is one of the reasons I pick up a book in the first place.

I loved every moment of making this intense tree sculpture. Every Tuesday, I would get more and more excited to finish. Considering that this was my first sculpture I’ve ever made, I’m extremely proud of how it came out. The end result is pretty amazing, don’t you think? I hope that when people look at this, they can relate to my past as well as see some of the books that they read as a kid. Don’t you love recalling great childhood memories? I hope this brings back memories for everyone.

Big thanks to Julia and Zack for being there every step of the way.

-Tina Meetran





## WALL OF ANIME

My wall of art is basically stating my love for anime. What I did was take all my anime pictures and put them on colored paper to categorize them. It contains 64 different characters from 16 different series. It shows archiving because it groups different anime together and shows the comparison between characters.

It took approximately four weeks for me to finish my wall of anime. It was pretty hard but a fun experience since it's, of course, anime. This has been a good experience for me because it gave me a good chance to go beyond anything I had ever done drawing anime.

-Chris Jorge



## CREATING MOMENTS & FAKING MEMORIES

Everyday of the Art Inquiry I took a picture at 10 a.m. and 10 p.m. The pictures are of anything in front of me at the moment. They don't look like pictures people would normally take, they aren't posed.

In order to tell a story with these pictures I asked others to make up a caption, to write something as if they had taken the picture. These pictures represent my own personal experience and memories, by including other people in this project they become part of the memory-making.

I turned the photographs and captions into a book that I self-published on lulu.com.

-Mindy Souvannalay



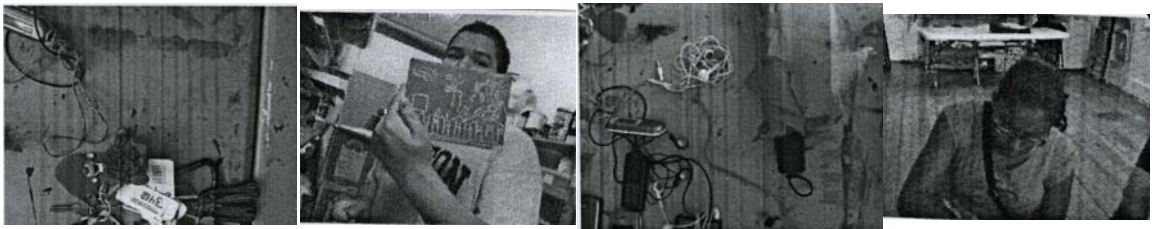
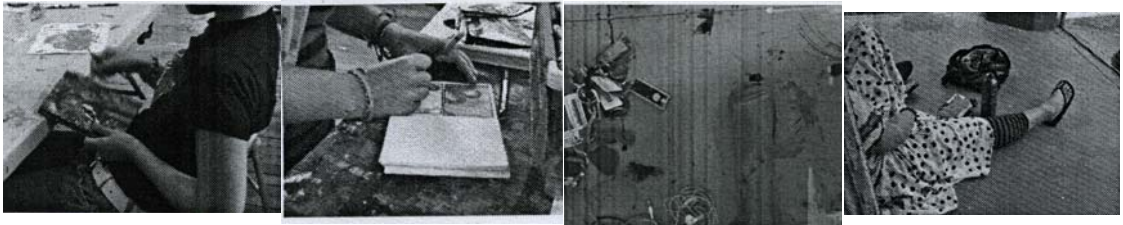
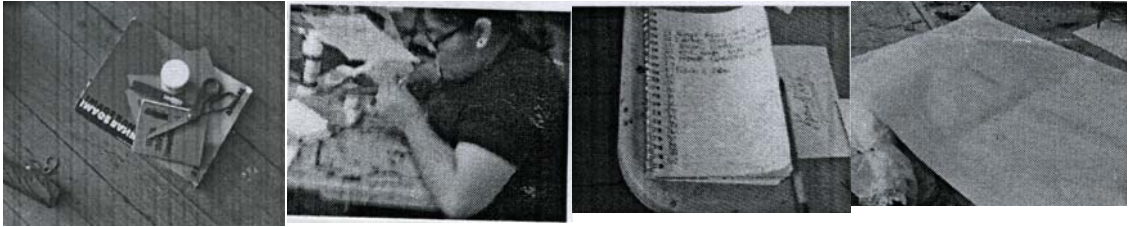


On my way home from the beach. Rained pretty bad but I'm not disappointed because my new fridge stocked with soda will be waiting for me at home! Although taking a photo while driving isn't very safe...

## AN ARCHIVE OF ARCHIVING ARCHIVISTS

I've come to realize recently that people are commonly incredibly unaware of what's going on around them, especially where they're busy doing something else. This project started out as just recording the participant's progress with their projects over the course of the program (that was a lot of "p"'s!) But it quickly turned into a record of everything going on in the studio, whether people were working on their projects or just relaxing around the studio. And a major element was the surveillance aspect, most people didn't even realize I was taking pictures of them. At times I felt like a creeper, but I kind of got used to it after a while, and another wonderful thing about it was I got to learn about everyone else's projects without them telling me anything. In a lot of the pictures (taken with my cell phone because it is light weight, easy to carry around, and I ALWAYS have it with me) you can't even tell what people are doing as a whole, just what's happenng at that exact moment in time. Some of them are hard to make out, but even those I enjoy looking at. It was everyday life and I was capturing it. I never got pictures of the finished projects, but as you can see...they are all on display now. You can see not only the finished piece, but what artists did to get to what you see in front of you. I hope you enjoy the pictures as much as I enjoyed taking them!

-Abigail Falvey



## JEWEL CASES: POP-POURI, C:, ?, QUESTIONING MY ZANE-ITY, OUMF!, AND ELECTROCOUSTIC

One Saturday morning in March, I was in a crafty mood. Throughout the whole day, I leisurely made my first jewel case: "Pop-pourri". Ever since, I have been making jewel cases as a way to express my love for crafts and music.

I had trouble thinking of what I wanted to do for my independent project. All I knew was that I wanted to incorporate music in some way. At first, I chose to use photographs to represent specific songs that I liked, but I was never entirely feeling that idea. I almost gave up on my project. Then I saw my first jewel case lying on my bookshelf, and had the greatest revelation.

Using cardboard, poster board, glue, decorative papers, blank CDs, and my iTunes music, I produced four more jewel cases and mix CDs. Each mix CD has its own flavor, which is expressed in the jewel case itself. In this world that we live in dominated by mp3 players, jewel cases provide us with a way to see our music and be able to physically feel it. It is a transformation of digital archive to an archive that you can hold in your hands.

Throughout my whole experience in the Inquiry, I learned that things don't always go the way you expect. Projects change courses, and it's usually for the better. While still working on my music-photographs project, I accidentally overexposed my film. Even though I hated the concept of my first idea, I was extremely upset that things were not going as planned, and I was worried that I would not have anything to show. However, if the film had never overexposed, I would have been working on a project that I



loathed, and the product would have been terrible. Looking back on that day, I am actually glad I ruined my film!

Before, i never really thought about what archiving meant. i only associated archiving with the button that is on my email account! after the inquiry, i saw archives everywhere. i saw archives in libraries, in city hall attics, museums, and even in nature. Archives are simply collections, and they can be collections of anything, from stickers to seaweed.

-Dana Heng



## SCAR STORIES

For the summer inquiry I knew I wanted my individual project to unite people. I wanted it to be thought provoking... personal but on a grand scale... I wanted it to be less tangible than a list or a chart...

Scars are permanent. They're tattoos that we have no control over. They're a reminder of something it's bearer has gone through. Every scar has a story to be told and a lesson that is learned after it appears. How do you react when people ask about your scars? Some people get excited and jump into the story... others coil back, embarrassed or ashamed or even just self-conscious. I'm sure you have at least one, whether it be a physical mark or the emotional impact an event had on your mind... Scars are personal and unavoidable. Everyone has them and everyone can relate to them.

I interviewed people ...different ages... with different backgrounds... at various chapters in their lives... about scars they have. I was fascinated by how many were interested in telling me their tales... I found that we all feel vulnerable about our scars and we all have a certain way we tell the stories of how we got our scars. I made this small book of scars from the stories, and the people who own them. I'd like to add to it and eventually publish it into a zine. I feel like this project could be much larger than it is right now....

-Shannon Falvey



2. 15 - a couple months ago (June)
3. In the ocean trying to climb up a rock -  
all the little creatures scratched me.  
I can't swim and big waves were coming -  
I panicked
4. no
5. Not really. Just wish they were smaller. I'm  
using a lotion to make it smaller. It didn't  
really hurt - the salt water made it feel  
like razor burn
6. I don't really have any attachment to it  
because it happened so recently so yeah I  
would.
7. I guess it depends - I don't think they need  
to be - I don't notice them much so no.
8. yeah - I think because it tells a story -  
you can change clothes put on masks -  
a scar is who you are.

## INTER-R-KIVE

I would love to say that learning about archives was great but the best part of the summer was creating the memories. In essence, this project is just that. A collection of all the great friends, wonderful experiences, and the memories I have made. My archive is simple. An archive for the 21st Century. A website of the aforementioned memories and friends. I wanted to do an archive online because archives to me were old books on a shelf collecting dust. Now I see an archive can be more than that. I would love to have been here to see your faces, to answer your questions and to express my true vision but college called early and I answered.

Thanks to Julia, Zack and Kay+Chris+Frances.

-Christian Viala



*additional*  
*resources*

## MORE ARTISTS WHO ACCUMULATE/COLLECT/ARCHIVE

The Atlas Group  
[www.theatlasgroup.org](http://www.theatlasgroup.org)

Kate Bingham-Burt  
[www.obsessiveconsumption.com](http://www.obsessiveconsumption.com)

Christian Boltanski

Karsten Bott

Catherine D'Ignazio  
[www.evacuateboston.com](http://www.evacuateboston.com)

Stephanie Diamond  
[www.stephaniediamond.com](http://www.stephaniediamond.com)

Mark Dion

Simon Evans

Carla Herrera-Prats  
[www.carlaherreraprats.com](http://www.carlaherreraprats.com)

Nicholas Feltron  
[www.feltron.com](http://www.feltron.com)

LeAlan Jones

Richard Long

Portia Munson

Danica Phelps

Dario Robleto

Simon Rodia (The Watts Towers)

Andy Warhol, "Raid the Icebox" exhibition at the RISD Museum

## BOOKS ON ARCHIVES & COLLECTIONS

Mining the Museum: An Installation by Fred Wilson by Lisa Graziöse Corrin

Figuring it Out: The Parallel Visions of Artists and Archaeologists by Colin Renfrew

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

Learning to Love You More by Harrell Fletcher and Miranda July

Milk, Eggs, Vodka: Grocery Lists Lost and Found by Bill Keaggy

To-Do List: From Buying Milk to Finding a Soul Mate, What Our Lists Reveal About Us  
by Sasha Cagen

The Archive edited by Charles Merewether

Archive Fever—Uses of the Document in Contemporary Art edited by Okwui Enwezor

Collections of Nothing by William Davies King

Collecting: An Unruly Passion: Psychological Perspectives by Werner Muensterberger

## ONLINE SOURCES FOR TECHNIQUES, PROJECTS AND OTHER IDEAS RELATED TO ARCHIVES & COLLECTIONS

The World's Largest Online Collection of Grocery Lists  
[grocerylists.org](http://grocerylists.org)

FOUND Magazine  
[foundmagazine.com](http://foundmagazine.com)

The Warhol: Resources & Lessons  
[edu.warhol.org](http://edu.warhol.org)

Learning to Love You More: Assignments Given by Artists Miranda July & Harrell Fletcher  
[www.learningtoloveyoumore.com](http://www.learningtoloveyoumore.com)

Collecting as Art  
<http://www.formfollowsbehavior.com/2008/06/25/collecting-as-art/>

Main Street Postcards as Muse  
[http://www.nytimes.com/2009/02/06/arts/design/06evan.html?\\_r=1&scp=2&sq=walker%20evans&st=cse](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/02/06/arts/design/06evan.html?_r=1&scp=2&sq=walker%20evans&st=cse)

The Ones We Love  
[www.theoneswelove.org](http://www.theoneswelove.org)

100 ideas by Keri Smith  
<http://www.kerismith.com/funstuff/100ideas.htm>

StoryCorps  
[www.storycorps.org](http://www.storycorps.org)



# *appendix*

# New Urban Arts SUMMER STUDIO

New Urban Arts is a nationally recognized interdisciplinary art studio where artists and high school students practice mentoring relationships and develop a creative practice they can sustain throughout their lives. The Summer Studio at New Urban Arts provides a learning experience distinct from our programming during the school year, offering paid internships in the arts for high school students and 2009 graduates. Snacks and Riptiks are provided to Summer Studio participants. Download a Summer Studio Application from our website at [www.newurbanarts.org](http://www.newurbanarts.org). Applications are due Friday, June 12th.

<p><b>ART INQUIRY: Art of the Archive</b> 12:00-3:30pm; Monday-Thursday July 13 – August 13</p> <p>Working with artist mentors Julia Gualtieri and Zachary Clark, students create new work and co-teach public workshops around this summer's theme of archives. Spend the summer collecting, discovering, exploring, examining, list making, gathering, preserving, and hoarding. Make art about what you store in your pockets, and the junk under your bed. Become an archivist. Youth receive a \$400 stipend for their participation.</p>	<p><b>ZINE TEAM</b> 12:30-4:30pm; Mon, Wed &amp; Thurs July 13 – August 13</p> <p>Students and alumni are invited to join up with artist mentor Meredith Younger to create zines and comics throughout the summer along with organizing many zine-related happenings at New Urban Arts including public workshops, the studio's Zine Library and the annual New Urban Arts Zine Swap. Youth receive a \$400 stipend for their participation.</p>
<p><b>OPEN STUDIO HOURS</b> 4:00-7:00pm; Monday-Thursday July 13 – August 13</p> <p><b>Open Enrollment, Drop In Anytime!</b> Free for high school students</p> <p>Take a break from sweating and sleeping and come by the New Urban Arts studio to invent creative projects only hot summer days can inspire. Develop photographs from your summer adventures in our darkroom. Learn to screen print posters and t-shirts. Publish a zine of your drawings and writings. Make a stop-motion animation video. Paint, draw, collage, it's up to you! Hide from the sun in our art studio and work independently on art projects under mentorship by New Urban Arts graduates.</p>	<p><b>SPECIAL EVENT: Zine Swap</b> 5:00-8:00pm; Thursday, August 6</p> <p>Traditionally lemonade trucks are signs of an approaching summer in Providence. At New Urban Arts we know summer by the emergence of a dedicated energy towards cutting, pasting and stapling. Catch the zine-making bug this summer and make your own Xeroxed publication to swap with other artists at the annual Zine Swap. New Urban Arts Mentors, alumni, staff, volunteers and students are all invited to participate in the Swap. Visit the studio during Open Studio hours to learn how to make a zine.</p>

## NEW URBAN ARTS SUMMER STUDIO 2009 AGREEMENT FORM

I, \_\_\_\_\_, am committed to the "Art of the Archive" Summer 2009 Art Inquiry program. I recognize that I will be working from 12:00-3:30pm, Monday through Thursday from July 13 until August 13, 2009.

Under the direction of Artist Mentors, each student will:

- Create art independently and collaboratively around the themes of collections and archives during interdisciplinary workshops led by artist mentors and visiting artists at New Urban Arts.
- Complete a thematically relevant independent inquiry project over five 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 on October 9, 2009.
- Exhibit personal process as an artist and a mentor through reflective activities.

New Urban Arts will provide 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 4:00-7:00pm no later than August 13, 2009.

Upon successful completion of the program, students will receive an honorarium of \$400, unless repeated unexcused absences (4 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.

---

Student Signature

Date

---

Parent/Guardian signature

Date

## PUBLIC WORKSHOP PLANNING TRAINING

### 1. DISCUSS:

- **What makes a good mentor?**

What was your most positive experience with a mentor/teacher?

What was your most negative experience with a mentor/teacher?

Recall a time you felt listened to. What were qualities that person showed?

Who was the 1<sup>st</sup> person you met at New Urban Arts?

- **What makes a learning community?**

How do I build an inclusive and supportive learning environment?

How do I encourage everyone to participate?

How should I offer feedback on their work?

- **What do I do during my workshop?**

(Review workshop structure, planning questions and worksheet)

### 2. DIVIDE:

- Separate into groups and receive your workshop locations.
- Make nametags to wear during workshops. Get creative!
- Practice warm up games and select your favorites.
- Develop workshop curriculum for the soonest workshop.
- Fill out the planning worksheet.
- Develop your supply list.

## PUBLIC WORKSHOP PLANNING TRAINING

The following is a structure projected for workshops 1 hour in length.

- |                            |            |
|----------------------------|------------|
| 1. Warm-up Games           | 10 minutes |
| 2. Introductions/ Overview | 5 minutes  |
| 3. Writing Activity        | 10 minutes |
| 4. Archive-making Activity | 30 minutes |
| 5. Wrap Up/Clean Up        | 5 minutes  |

Questions to ask when developing a workshop curriculum:

- Is there progression to the activities? Will my students be ready to do what I am asking of them? Is there transition for one thing to the next?
- What directions will they need to do an activity?
- Are we doing too much of the same thing? (ex: writing in silence)
- What supplies and materials will I need to have ready and how many of each?
- What is my back up plan in case I finish early or students don't receive the original idea like I had hoped they would?
- Consider your audience: What are my students like? How many people are in the workshops? What is the environment we are in like? Loud? Small space?
- If one student doesn't want to do what I planned for the group, then what?
- Does everyone in my group have an individual role in leading the workshop?
- Am I ready to be flexible and redirect my plan to meet my student's needs?





GUIDE TO WRITING AN ARTIST STATEMENT FOR  
SUMMER 2009 ART INQUIRY

YOUR NAME:

TITLE OF WORK:

**DESCRIBE** THE ART WORK:

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, THE ART OF THE ARCHIVE?

WHAT WERE YOU TRYING TO **SAY** IN THIS PIECE?

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

**SHOUT OUTS** TO WHO PEOPLE YOU'D LIKE TO THANK, ACKNOWLEDGE  
OR DEDICATE THIS PIECE TO:

## ART OF THE ARCHIVE: END OF SUMMER STUDENT SURVEY

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 THIS SUMMER?

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 FACILITATING PUBLIC WORKSHOPS?

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

WHAT DO YOU THINK SHOULD NOT CHANGE?



