OPEN ENGAGEMENT

Making Things Better

May 14 to 17, 2010

Portland, Oregon

Conference Program
BETWEEN DETROIT AND HOME

Between DETROIT and HOME is a collective of artists from the School of Art & Design, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor who are building reciprocal engagements with Detroit. This group is developing alternatives to institutional “problem solving” as outsiders to their neighboring city. They are devising ways that Detroit’s resources will engage with, educate, and enrich a University town.

Danielle Abrams, Emir Alibasic, Michael Borowski, Erica Buss, Sean Darby, Ashley Lieber, Amanda Lilleston, Charlie Michaels, James Rotz, Emilia Javanica, and Brad Wicklund

We have learned from Detroit by seeing how its citizens are responding to its “problems”. In vacant areas crops are being planted. Neighbors and artists are gathering to reinvent communities. Organizations are collecting abandoned houses for reuse. In the streets, renewal is found in art, theater, electronic music, and block parties. Detroit possesses robust methods for sustainability. As artists, we see the potential for devising exchanges between our local town and Detroit. How might Ann Arbor and Detroit share and exchange riches and resources? As artists who are “outsiders”, how can we simultaneously engage the problems in Detroit as well as in our very own homes? We will present ways for Ann Arbor and Detroit to experience and learn from one another. We are creating interactions that entail reciprocal viewing, mutual learning, simultaneous improvements, and collective action between Detroit and our hometown.

KATY ASHER

Katy Asher investigates how artists and audiences create shared meaning through her work in groups, participatory art and facilitative practices. She is a former member of the arts group The M.O.S.T. and currently runs Stock, a Portland area dinner event which funds artist projects, with Ariana Jacob and Amber Bell.

BAD AT SPORTS

Founded in 2005 by Bad at Sports (B@S) is a weekly podcast and daily blog produced in Chicago that features artists and “art worlders” talking about art and the community that makes, reviews and critiques it. B@S consists of a volunteer collective of arts professionals with an interest in arts coverage. With its primary hub in Chicago, B@S exists as an international art podcast thanks to contributors stationed in San Francisco, New York City, London and Zurich, and stands as the Midwest’s most trafficked art blog.

Bad at Sports will be kicking ass and taking names as they perform “arts journalism.” They will report on the conference to the world at large as embedded “kinda-journalist/maybe artist type folks.” They will also play a supporting roll in moderating discussions at Open Engagement.

JILL BAKER

Jill Baker is an interdisciplinary artist currently living in Brookings on the southern Oregon coast where she collaborating on a semester long project with a group of students at Brookings–Harbor High School. This summer she will be an artist-in–residence at UT–Dallas. Jill received her MFA in Intermedia at the University of Iowa in 2009.

A COLLABORATION THAT BEGINS WITH WALKING is a series of projects, conversations and experiences by the ‘Basic Necessities of Life’ class at Brookings–Harbor High School, their teacher, Cindy Babcock, and artist, Jill Baker. The project began with the idea that walking can be a creative action and that creative activities can make change in those places where they occur. Over the course of a semester at school, the group connects walking to citizenship, interacts with community members, plans critical walks around Brookings and maps their experiences.

SOUP & COMEDY

Crystal Baxley is a firm believer that everything will be okay. Ally Drozd wants to do and make things that help people relate to and respect one another and therefore not hurt each other. Ally believes that in an atmosphere of cynicism, apathy, and fear, demonstrating and representing how to be nice to people is a highly critical gesture.

Soup & Comedy examines America’s real favorite pastime: watching television. Collaborators Crystal Baxley and Ally Drozd believe that television brings people together, both in their living rooms and anywhere favorite shows can be discussed with friends, colleagues, or cashiers. While mainstream television is often times seen as Making Things Worse, television has a built–in captive audience, and the majority of people in America are much more invested in television than fine art. Crystal and Ally agree that a lot of programming isn’t constructive or intellectually stimulating, but do believe that there is programming that portrays amazing representations of human relationships and interactions. To be active viewers instead of passive consumers, the artists will facilitate activities during commercial breaks. Participants of Soup & Comedy are invited to bring their sense of humor, enjoy a hot meal, and explore the extraordinary power of prime time television in bringing people together.

JOHN PREUS & SARA BLACK

IF IT AIN’T BROKE

Three options are available with each instance of brokenness: Return: re–approximate the state prior to brokenness. Concession: landfill, death, surrender. At this point, we relinquish control to biology.
Transformation: material and/or functional qualities are diverted. We seek or uncover an object’s novel capacities.

As a contribution to Open Engagement, Sara Black and John Preus will invite individuals to engage in a dialogue with us over a “broken” object. Together, with the object’s owner, we will consider its condition, and work to determine the appropriate “repairs.” Each object provides a vehicle for considering what it is to be broken, and what it might mean to be repaired. “If It Ain’t Broke” undertakes a kind of watchfulness, that in this moment of rupture, when a thing transitions in state, we might intuit what it could become. The world is as much created as it is found. These objects become vehicles for conversation and exploration of the nature of things, and our nature in relation to them.

I FEEL MUCH MORE LIKE I DO NOW THAN I DID BEFORE
As a contribution to Open Engagement, Sara Black and John Preus will present an A/V project as part of the OE Resource Center. This project will present the responses of various individuals whom have been asked a series of questions regarding interdisciplinarity, political/social activism, democracy and/or ethics within contemporary art practices. Respondents are were selected from various disciplines including art, art history, sociology, ethics, philosophy, and theology.

BROKEN CITY LAB
Danielle Sabelli is a visual artist and filmmaker, finishing her MA in Communications and Social Justice at the University of Windsor. She has a BA (Hons) in Communication Studies and Visual Arts from the University of Windsor. She is a senior research fellow at Broken City Lab.

Justin A. Langlois has an MFA in Visual Arts and a BA (Hons) in Communication Studies from the University of Windsor. He is currently an instructor at the University of Windsor, the Executive Director of the Arts Council Windsor & Region, and the research director of Broken City Lab.

Broken City Lab is an emerging artist collective that tactically disrupts and engages the city, its communities, and its infrastructures to re-imagine the potential for action in the collapsing post–industrial city of Windsor, Ontario. Research Director, Justin A. Langlois, and Senior Research Fellow, Danielle Sabelli will discuss the work of Broken City Lab as a model for collaborative cultural production and an experiment in tactically infiltrating the institutions of the city.

FRANCES BRONET
Currently collaborating on courses, curricula and grants on the topic of Interdisciplinary Pedagogy, Frances Bronet has been developing and publishing work on multidisciplinary design curricula between architecture; engineering; science, technology and society (H&SS); dance; and electronic arts for the past 17 years. She has collaborated in interactive full–scale architecture, construction and dance installations with world renowned dance and action companies in tandem with community participation.

Bronet will show installation projects based on the unpredictable, specifically addressing the concept of SPACE–IN–THE–MAKING, evolving space through the movements of action artists. In these performance pieces, there is no ready–made design (predetermined blueprint,) a ready–made procedure for construction, or a ready–made model for occupancy. The designers work intimately with the situation at hand and the design emerges from the full–scale conditions on the site, no preconceptions, no precedents, and dependent on face–to–face interaction. Here, people decide for themselves what is meaningful, what actions are desirable, with less of the manipulative influences produced by conventional physical set–ups or architecture.

SEAN JOSEPH PATRICK CARNEY, FEATURING MICHAEL REINSCH
Sean Joseph Patrick Carney is an interdisciplinary artist navigating between performance, music, stand–up comedy and written manifestos. Michael Reinsch’s elaborate performances employ birthday party aesthetics and a healthy dose of the absurd. Both received their MFA from Pacific Northwest College of Art and live/work in Portland, OR.

SOCIAL MALPRACTICE: A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO MAKING SOCIALLY IRRESONSIBLE WORK
Town crier of what not to say, Sean Joseph Patrick Carney, Portland’s bete noire performance artist, actor, player, hater, lighting rod—speaks for himself. Carney’s edited anthology of essays, lessons and projects Social Malpractice: A Practical Guide to Making Socially Irresponsible Work builds on the irascible style usually allotted public airing through his alter ego Tanner Dobson. The xenophobic and obscene, run–a–muck quality of his prose and performance reaches at the moral and ethical codes that design our social interactions and perceptions. As a political cartoonist Carney aligns and assails the powerful and the common in a mix of James Gillray and Jose Guadalupe Posada–like graphic characterizations: free for the taking and reading on your own time and in your own space in your own words. For Open Engagement, Carney will present selections from the text in a performance with Portland artist Michael Reinsch.

BD COLLIER
BD Collier is a re–naturalist, educator and artist. As Founder and President of the Society for a Re–Natural Environment he give presentations, creates exhibitions, and engages in sanctioned and unsanctioned public works to increase understanding of and connection to the non–human natural world. He also strives to educate people about how humans dramatically shape the ecosystem around them.
The presentation will be given in his capacity as president of The Society for a Re–Natural Environment or SRNE. The presentation will: describe what unintentional greening is, briefly talk about the SRNE our history and mission, discuss why and how exploiting unintentional greening can be beneficial, talk about programs the SRNE has undertaken to exploit and enhance unused or underutilized green spaces, and offer simple strategies to ‘beautify’ weedy areas.

Collier will also talk about projects he has done based on current news stories for a panel chaired by Linda Weintraub.

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**BRUCE CONKLE**

Bruce Conkle loves snowmen, coconuts, fairy tales, crystals, burls, and meteorites. His work often deals man’s place within nature and frequently examines what he calls the “misfit quotient” at the crossroads.

Bruce Conkle envisions a future of sailing agricultural behemoths—retrofitted oil tankers that are highly adaptable to temperature fluctuations, rising sea levels and changing precipitation patterns. Crops, orchards and forests could be grown on these ships by resident arborists, horticulturists, beekeepers and others. For this event, Conkle will present his ideas and then host a conversation to brainstorm possible applications and amenities for these vessels.

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**THE MIRACLE BOOKMOBILE**

The Miracle Bookmobile is a redistribution unit project of Kelly Besser, an archivist at Tom of Finland Foundation and Irina Contreras, an artist and writer. They joined forces in 2007 at a feminist revival, where Irina wrote her # in Besser’s lavender–cover gay porn entitled I Want It All.

The Miracle is a Los Angeles /Oakland based bookmobile project which activates redistribution while addressing personal capacity—an action which makes the “where and who” the redistributed moves to visible after it sits with the givers. Books are donated to The Miracle; they take them on the road, pull up in neighborhoods across Los Angeles/Oakland etc and then give them to community members. Besser and Irina are thirsty for providing and facilitating a physical connection; a moment if you will, between bookmobile and visitor/participant.

The first bookmobile, actually called a book wagon was established by librarian Mary L. Titcomb in western Maryland. Her life project upon her, practical distribution, she believed and proved was truly about extending the book to the home. TitComb marveled in 1905, “The Book goes to the Man, not waiting for the Man to come to the Book!”

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**ROBIN CORBO**

Robin Corbo is a collaborative artist whose creations tend to be larger than life and just as colorful. Best known for her work as a muralist in Portland, OR, Corbo has facilitated art activities for nonprofits and community groups for over a decade. She is currently earning an MFA in studio art at PSU.

THE HUMAN TAXIDERMY PROJECT is a site specific installation for participants to act out their inner beast, whether predator or prey. Costumes provided include clothing and masks created to represent exotic carnivorous animals and grazing vegetarians. Participants are invited to dress up and strike a pose with other people in front of a 6 ft by 12 ft painted landscape. This faux natural history museum diorama allows participants to create any type of taxidermy scenario imaginable. Will you be the lioness stalking a gazelle on the open plain, or the zebra keeping an eye on a lurking hyena? Will your animal represent a scientific study or a mythological chimera? What does it feel like to enter the world of big game, only to end up posed for an action scene for a group of perpetual onlookers? “The Human Taxidermy Project” creates the opportunity to ask and answer these questions and many more.

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**PAUL DRUECKE**

Paul Druecke’s projects have been exhibited at the Outpost for Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, the Contemporary Art Museum Houston, and the Kölnischer Kunstverein, Cologne, Germany. His work has been featured in Camera Austria and InterReview, and written about in, among other publications, Metropolis, Artforum, Art in America, and Art On Paper.

A PUBLIC SPACE will be presented in the Conference Library during Open Engagement. Project texts by Dr. Christopher Kelty, Dan Wang, Stephanie Barber, and Tim DuRoche will be available in the Media Resource Center.

“P A N D A S” takes place in five cities: Chicago, Houston, Baltimore, San Diego, and Portland. Each installment focuses on a single public space, inviting six participants from different backgrounds to photograph that space and recommend another participant to do the same. These participants repeat the process, recommending six new participants, and so on. The result is a group of twenty–four images for each city. The images are unique, marginally overlapping, or at times, redundant; the project’s micro–cosmic structure extols the pragmatic side of utopia. Dan Wang writes, “Because [Druecke’s] project combines the two—specters of
possibility and pleasure—in a single gesture, it further erodes the gulf separating public and private.”

JOHN B. FENN III

John Fenn is a folklorist and ethnomusicologist on faculty in the Arts and Administration Program at the University of Oregon, where he coordinates the media management area of concentration for the master’s program. His research and teaching span popular music, transmedia culture, technology, and public programming in arts/culture sectors.

Ethnographic investigation entails robust, iterative inquiry into cultural structures through which people live, make meaning, and navigate social life. In many ways, ethnography parallels processes often coded as ‘creative’ and constitutive of art practice—emergent, dynamic, and intimately concerned with the unexamined. Through this presentation Fenn will explore ways in which ethnographic thinking and practice help illuminate and/or serve to foster relationships between community engagement, social practice, and art. He intends to approach questions of ethics, involvement, planning, and praxis as manifest in the process of conducting art in/with/through the public.

RACHEL FERBER

Rachel Ferber, originally from Portland, OR is a student at Pacific Northwest College of Art, having previously attended the University of San Francisco and California College of the Arts. Her work varies in media and reflects nostalgia in the everyday and a need for human connection. Everyone knows something worth sharing. There is a lot to be said for the knowledge we so often take for granted as something unremarkable. There is so much that we can learn from each other and exposing this may also enlighten an understanding between those with whom we would not expect to find commonalities.

Words of advice and wisdom will be projected onto the wall, one at a time, for one minute each. These words come directly from the public—Portlanders of all ages, from all walks of life. Statements of advice, wisdom and knowledge have been collected prior to the conference and an area will be provided where those attending can contribute. Thus, the material will be continually growing and changing based on the participation of viewers. The responses will be set on a loop so that there is a constant stream.

CECI N’EST PAS UN CADEAU (THIS IS NOT A GIFT) is a project motivated by the artist’s ambivalent relationship to gift theory and its application in contemporary art practice. Her attempt to give a “pure” gift, one that demands no reciprocation or return on the part of the recipient, troubles the notion of the gift itself, for the very function of the gift is to create and reinforce social bonds through the expectation of return. A gift is supposedly given without condition, and yet the etiquette of receiving a gift requires an exchange that belies this unconditionality—the recipient is expected to show thanks, and in some way return the favor. These cannot be gifts, for they are obligations, indebting the recipient to the gift–giver.

The artist doesn’t care if you like what she’s given you, and doesn’t expect you to say thank-you. You do not have to keep it. You aren’t necessarily friends now. It is not a gift. It is an artwork.

BRETTE GABEL

While avoiding schoolwork in university Brette Gabel began embroidering, quilting and watching horror movies. Following school, Brette moved to Toronto where she is a contributing member to the White House Studio. Currently Brette is working on a series of low-tech videos and photographs for her blog at www.brettegabel.blogspot.com.

SHOW US YOUR PORTLAND!

In the days and mornings before the second incarnation of the Open Engagement conference we will be extending an invitation to community members of Portland to have breakfast with us. Over breakfast we will share friendly and informal conversations and learn about what living in Portland means to some of the residents. We will focus on learning what the guests consider to be their favorite places in the city, their favorite things to do and the hidden joys and gems the city holds.

Following each breakfast, we will travel to the parts of the city we have learned about and experience a bit about Portland from an insiders perspective. Along the way we will document our explorations and following the conference a travel book/zine will be made documenting “Show Us Your Portland!” This zine will be published and distributed in three separate ways: photocopies available at the conference, copies shared with Travel Portland and finally a digital downloadable version will be made available online.

BLAIR FORNWALD

Blair Fornwald is an interdisciplinary artist living in Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada. She holds an MFA from the University of Western Ontario (2007) and a BFA from the University of Regina (2002). She works both independently and collaboratively with the artist’s collective Turner Prize® and has presented projects across Canada and the United States since 2002.

JONATHAN PAUL GILLETTE

Upon graduating from school Jonathan Paul Gillette made a wise family
between art and psychology; which provoke opportunities for others to look inward instead of asking them to look at art. Recent events include: the birthday funeral, half birthday party half memorial service. The birthday funeral provided an opportunity for attendees tell this certain person what they meant to them before it was too late. Instead of bringing gifts party goers prepared elegies, which were read during the service as the birthday boy laid in a casket. By occupying the terrain between art and psychology, Jonathan hopes to foster possibilities for new experience and interpretation within that which is ordinarily overlooked.

THE WHAT ARE YOU RUNNING FROMATHON

Why is it that cheers always ring loudest for marathon runners finishing last? Could it be because, for these participants, it is evident the race is more about a mental battle than physical duration? What if a marathon simply asked runners; 'what are you running from?' The what are you running fromathon does just this! To complete registration participants are asked to answer a questionnaire which orientates a further look into their quest for completing a marathon. Race day will begin with each participant writing what they are running from on their race bib instead numbers. The what are you running fromathon is ran on a track with participants determining how far they need to run in order to 'run from' their internal woes. The continuous track signals the cyclical nature of constant psychological battles and the repetitive act of therapy for renewal. Counselors and psychologists will be on hand in the 'warm up' and 'cool down' zones: offering water, a chair, a mirror and conversation. The what are you running fromathon is unique because if no one shows up for the day of the race, it will be a total success.

LORI GORDON

As artist and curator, Lori Gordon creates projects that attempt to decipher both humanity’s and her own connection with the universe. Oftentimes she is more interested in providing the organized framework around which potential interactions may occur. Gordon is always more interested in the journey than the destination. Gordon is an associate curator at Ampersand International.

GROTTO GALLERIE

Grotto Gallerie is a collective free-floating exhibit space, usually staged in people’s homes, basements, garages and backyards. Grotto founders Al Bersch and Leslie Grant share a critical documentary practice. Leslie teaches photography at Parsons The New School for Design in NYC and Al studies folklore at the University of Oregon in Eugene.

For Open Engagement, Al Bersch and Leslie Grant curate a non-show with the title Outsider, an exhibit as a collection of experiences and notes on experiencing those experiences. In a world of objects—from the designed to theerry-rigged, from the brand new to the obsolescent—the artists in this non-show imagine new ways to look at and interact with the world, places, people, things. Pairs of artists work together, and each artist writes instructions for the other to follow that describe an experience. Each artist “experiences” the experience their partner creates for them, and writes a short narrative about it. The final result is a printed pamphlet/sheet with all instructions on one side, and all narratives on the other. People who take a pamphlet can choose to do the experiences, or read about them, or both. Participants include David Horvitz and Mylinh Nguyen, Ian Chang and Earle McCartney, Kristin Gallerneaux Brooks and That Evil Mess, Nina Pessin-Whedbee and Tyson Bertone-Riggs, Stephanie Diamond and Adia Milliett.

LORI L. HAGER
Assistant Professor, Arts and Administration Program
University of Oregon, School of Architecture and Allied Arts

Lori Hager is an assistant professor in the Arts and Administration Program at the University of Oregon. She teaches graduate courses and conducts research in the areas of arts education policy and practice, community youth arts, and community arts development. She coordinates co-curricular learning for undergraduate and graduate students in community arts and arts management, and as Associate Director of Community Arts for the Center for Community Arts and Cultural Policy, she founded and directs the portfolio project, which focuses on digital documentation and connecting curricular and co-curricular learning in the graduate curriculum. She is a member of the advisory board of the Community Arts Convening and Research Project, and serves as co-delegate with Frances Bronet for Imagining America. She regularly presents research on community youth arts and civic engagement, and portfolios, both nationally and internationally.

Hager will describe “principles of engagement” emerging from the contemporary community arts field. Frameworks for community-based arts practices from recent research with the Community Arts Convening and Research Project will serve as guides for examining the frequently unexamined ethics of community engaged scholarship between universities and community-based organizations. The role of cultural organizations in arts-based civic engagement will be further examined.

LEIF HEDENDAL

Leif Hedendal lives in San Francisco and is involved in many food-related projects, including underground restaurants, a dinner series called Din-
GROUP DINNER on Saturday night will be a collaborative project between San Francisco-based chef and artist Leif Hedendal, other artists, urban gardeners, foragers, and local farmers. The dinner of exquisitely prepared seasonal vegetables will be served family-style and accompanied by Eric Steen’s home brew and other artisanal products made just for the event. Group Dinner is an extension of Dinner Discussion, a monthly dinner party meant to facilitate collaborative projects between food movement activists and socially-engaged artists.

HIDEOUS BEAST

Hideous Beast is a collaborative effort between two artists, Josh Ippel and Charlie Roderick. Through organizing structured participatory events we attempt to encourage cultural activity outside the bounds of mainstream entertainment and fabricated desire.

Critical of the audience as a passive participant, Hideous Beast seeks to coordinate events in which an acknowledged exchange between the event (as entertainment) and the spectator (as collaborator) can generate meanings beyond traditional formalized modes of entertainment.

It is our intent as artists and beings in common to shift perceptions of authorship and participation within the realm of constructed entertainment and art generated activities.

This might change though.

At the time we began our collaboration as artists we were also working together to support ourselves monetarily by doing odd jobs. This service mentality has always existed in our work to a certain degree—from giving support to other artists by maintaining a collectively run art space, to creating projects that provide spaces for others’ creative activity.

For Open Engagement we will return to our initial role as service workers by making our energy and skills available to the Open Engagement organizers and any of the artists involved in the festival. We are both resourceful individuals with a range of abilities, including carpentry, general construction, graphic/web design, and creative advising. We are qualified to execute various art methods, including but not limited to photography, painting, sculpture, new media, performance, print making, installation and social practice. The character and degree of our service will be determined through conversation with each artist.

In exchange for our assistance we will document our services and any associated activities. This documentation will be presented as our own work. We will also negotiate with each artist a means by which to acknowledge Hideous Beast’s role in the production of the project.

ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS OF SOCIAL ART

The Ethical Implications of Social Art is a panel discussion comprised of artists, writers, social researchers, and activists. The panel will engage a conversation about ethical participation, the difference between participation as a means vs. participation as an end, accountability, the effectiveness of art as a vessel for social change, the potential for art to redefine social change ideology, and current strategies for community engagement in social art projects.

Constance Hockaday (Moderator), Matthew Rana, Sarah Biscarra & Jackie Davis, and Jo Nelson & Anna Lise Jensen, Ted Purves, Rachel Hardesty.

MATTATHW RANA

Matthew Rana is an artist and writer living in Oakland, CA. His most recent project, "The Autobiography of Ernest Patrick Butler: His Battles with God, Life and Self," is a comic book co-authored with Rick Butler, a man who sells crocheted hats at the MacArthur BART station in Oakland, where he lives with his dog. Matthew contributes to the online journal Art Practical and his writing has appeared in the books There is No Two Without Three and I’m a Park and You’re a Deer. He is currently in the final year of a dual MFA/MA in Social Practice and Visual & Critical Studies at the California College of the Arts.

TED PURVES

Ted Purves is a writer and artist based in Oakland. His public projects and curatorial works are centered on investigating the practice of art in the world, particularly as it addresses issues of localism, democratic participation, and innovative shifts in the position of the audience. He produces socially-based projects in collaboration with Susanne Cockrell under the umbrella name of Fieldfaring (www.fieldfaring.org). Their recent project The Meadow Network, was initiated as a part of the exhibition The Gatherers, Greening our Urban Spheres, at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in San Francisco. He was the founder of the MFA concentration in Social Practice at California College of the Arts in 2005, and is currently the Chair of the MFA Fine Arts Program. Purves’s book, What We Want is Free: Generosity and Exchange in Recent Art, was published by SUNY Press in 2005.

RACHEL CUNLIFFE HARDESTY

Rachel Cunliffe Hardesty is a faculty member from the Conflict Resolution program at PSU. Her teaching time is shared between that department, criminology and criminal justice and the certificate program in interpersonal neurobiology. Her particular research interests are in restorative justice and the death penalty. She has been participating in a compassionate listening project with those in the capital punishment system for the past 12 years. A transplant from England, she has lived and learned in the US for 20 years moving from Minnesota via Arizona to Oregon where she now lives with her two children.

CONSTANCE HOCKADAY

Constance Hockaday is a raft builder, social artist, and educator. Her interests lie in the ethics of participatory community projects, communication...
Anna Lise Jensen's work is project based and frequently involves investigations and realizations of spatial and social possibilities. She holds an MFA in Visual Arts from Hunter College, NY, an MA in International Relations from University of Chicago and is the 2010 recipient of the Manhattan Community Arts Fund grant.

Jo Q. Nelson lives and works in New York. Her work is a hybrid of narrative built environments, fantasy proposals and collaborative projects. Recent projects include Softbox, a live/work warehouse space in Queens, New York that hosted short-term residencies for artists, exhibition, screenings and performances.

Sarah Sass Biscarra is, according to her mother, half-Mexican and half-criminal. A queer Chicana of Chumash and Yaqui descent, she is constantly exploring the spaces between the worlds; between ancestral lines, between gender and gender roles, between past and present, between sacred space and living space, between personal authority and collective responsibility. A nanny and card reader by trade, she occupies her spare time weaving baskets out of hair, creating culinary spellwork and overcoming the fear of her own power. You can find her work at saxtalaqway.tumblr.com

Jackie Davis is a queer Ashkenazi Jew, an image producer, a curator and an aesthetic appreciator. She enjoys tinkering with old and (newly) new machines, thinking long and hard about LIFE and getting good sleep.

David Horvitz was born in Los Angeles, and currently resides in New York. He will attain his MFA from Bard College this year. He works in a variety of media, with a heavy interest in the internet. Much of his practice is collaborative and involves "curatorial" approaches.

Brenda Hutchinson is a composer and sound artist whose work is based in her cultivation and encouragement of openness in her own life and in those she works with. Project Grow is dedicated to enriching the lives of adults with developmental disabilities through art, farming, music, and yoga by creating community awareness about the value of arts, relationship with one's food source, and promoting integration.

Brenda Hutchinson will work with the artists, farmers and staff at Project Grow to produce an afternoon of TINY OFFERINGS AT SEA CHANGE GALLERY. “Tiny Offerings” is a collaborative performance event where each person who attends is invited to make an offering to everyone else. In addition to production management, participants from Project Grow may also engage in the performance. However, the ultimate success and pleasure of the event depends on members of the audience stepping up to make their own spontaneous offerings.

These offerings are often, but not exclusively in the form of a perfor-
mance. An offering can be anything people like to do (tell jokes, stories, sing, draw, things we often think of as “talents”, etc.) or something they know how to do (a weird trick or genetic tic for instance) or want to “show and tell” (a drawing, photo, sculpture, found object of interesting or sentimental value, etc.). There’s a time limit of 3 minutes (less is more).

M. MICHELLE ILLUMINATO

M. Michelle Illuminato's practice begins with dialogue and develops into listening stations, photo-stories and public events that explore the relationship between people and places. Recipient of the Key to the City of Aliquippa and Best Event in Pennsylvania, her project, Ruralscape, invites artists and locals to explore rural western New York through tours and salon discussions this summer. http://www.nextquestion.org

THE WILD FOOD COOK-OFF will give the public the opportunity to taste, share and judge the best of the best in foraged and wild foods of Portland! Individual home cooks, chefs, foragers, and cart owners are invited to submit their best ‘dish’ using local foraged and wild foods available for free in the parks, waters and wild lands of Oregon. This event will provide an opportunity for discussion about local foods, cooking and health, while allowing people to experience tantalizing food sensations like: dandelions, wild leeks, mushrooms, morels, fiddleheads, huckleberries, or even shellfish or trout.

InCUBATE

InCUBATE is a research group dedicated to creating better understanding of how the art world works for those doing non-commercial creative work and imagining alternative funding models that could support them. We organize exhibitions, publications, lectures, and meals to figure out how to collectively achieve this goal.

PILOT STUDIES is a multiform research project on grassroots, community-based fundraising and organizing for creative projects. In the gallery we will be making our research public with a series of publications, dossiers, and interviews that explore art administration as a creative practice and pragmatic guides to making-do. These provide the staging ground for a fundraising cocktail party to launch the Portland Artist-run Credit League, a mutual aid society for artist-run spaces and projects, organized in collaboration with Katy Asher and others. The ARCL is a volunteer association designed to increase opportunities for collective fundraising and provide social and educational frameworks for independent art spaces and groups to support each other, share resources, and contribute to their community. The event will feature Team Trivia play, hosted by Randall Szott, and home-brewed beer by Eric Steen and herbal-infused vodka by Sam Gould.

IREUS

Andrew Blanton is a sound artist aka drummer aka UNIX user aka received his BM in Music Performance from The University of Denver in June of 2008. He is currently working with an international cultural collaboration called IRUS, where he is responsible for many things, very important, important things. In the summer of ’08 he traveled to Turkey and Iran and would love to tell you all about them. He now lives in Chicago where he does very, important, things.

Morehshin Allahyari is an interdisciplinary artist and an art activist. She was born and raised in Iran and moved to the United States in 2007. One important aspect of her work is related to the social and political issues of Iran specifically women, censorship, identity, and in general the social issues of the today Iran. Since she has moved to the U.S. she has also been working on intercultural projects, addressing her daily life as an Iranian in the United States of post 9/11.

DIALOGUE: PRESENTED BY IRUS ART

Two teams of artists, one in Tehran and another in Denver assembled under one name: IRUS (Iran –United States). By mailing incomplete artworks from Tehran to Denver and from Denver to Tehran, completing them in their respective cities and sending them back, they built a collection of completed pieces. Using the theme of “Dialogue,” they presented the perspectives of each group in a respectful, trusting and encouraging manner. In this process, they not only developed art, but also participated in a functional dialogue with each other as artists and individuals. Morehshin Allahyari has served as the organizer and one of the co-founders and artists of IRUS Art and Andrew Blanton is an artist and a part of the coordination committee.

ARIANA JACOB

Ariana Jacob makes artwork that uses conversation as medium and as subjective research method. Her work explores experiences of interdependence and disconnection, questions her own idealistic beliefs, and investigates how people make culture and culture makes people. She is an MFA candidate in PSU’s Art & Social Practice program.

SPEED IDEA-TING is a made-up social structure for quickly getting in deep and wide with a bunch of new people. This rousing and intimate event invites OE participants to share their ideas and get a feel for each other through a swift series of 2 min facilitated dates. Following the event, participants will receive contact info for their 3 most mutually compatible matches. Come get hot & heavy and bright & breathy with your potential new “collaborators”.

RSVP required.
EMILIA JAVANICA & SUDANDYO APRILIANTO

Emilia Javanica is an interdisciplinary artist who combines performance, video and sculpture. She resided in Indonesia from 2005–2009, where she worked with the political arts collective, Taring Padi, and engaged in artistic and social projects. Emilia is a current graduate student at the University of Michigan, School of Art and Design.

Sudandyo Aprilianto was born in Central Java, Indonesia. He attended the Indonesia Institute of the Arts Yogyakarta, and is a core member of the political arts collective Taring Padi. Sudandyo’s paintings have been exhibited in Indonesia, Australia, Hong Kong, Taiwan and the U.S. Sudandyo recently relocated to Ann Arbor, Michigan with his wife, Emilia.

TARING PADI: CREATING CHANGE THROUGH LOCAL ACTION

Translating to mean the “fang of the rice paddy”, Taring Padi is an arts collective located in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Founded in 1998 after the fall of President Soeharto’s regime, Taring Padi artists began creating art collectively based on the need for social and political criticism.

In May, 2006, Taring Padi’s home and surroundings were destroyed in a devastating earthquake that killed over 6,000 people and left more than 1.5 million homeless.

Following the earthquake, Taring Padi bought land and established itself as a permanent community arts center, building a children’s library, gallery and workshop space. While still keeping their social and political criticism, Taring Padi went further to create programs for their community such as reading and English classes, arts workshops and village exhibitions.

Emilia and Sudandyo will discuss their firsthand experience of Taring Padi’s transformation following the earthquake in 2006. They will reflect on how disaster brought a group of artists and activists closer to their community.

JEAN–PAUL JENKINS & AVALON KALIN

Jean–Paul Jenkins is a musician and artist whose work explores community building and listening with multiple attentions. He has created pieces for dance, improvising orchestra, electro–acoustic installation, small groups and choirs. He has also organized and played hundreds of music performances in Portland and elsewhere for the last 15 years. Most often he can be found at his home petting his cat or playing guitar. Feel free to stop by for tea some time.

Interdisciplinary artist Avalon Kalin explores consciousness and relationships through idiosyncratic project work. Most often originating from the particular interests and anecdotes of himself and those around him, Kalin’s work provokes and embodies a spontaneous interest in the experiences that comprise contemporary life. He lives in Portland, Oregon.

PRACTICE SPACE: MAKING THE BAND COULD BE YOUR LIFE

Practice Space invites artists and members of the public to start bands during the Open Engagement conference.

Practice Space creates an instant band experience by facilitating small groups in the creation of one or two songs and a band identity over the course of not more than 2 hours — in one space, or in many smaller workshops in many different spaces; to be announced. Practice Space creates a genuine “being in a band” experience by simplifying the process and creating “practice spaces” where any given group can access both instruments, recording facilities and promotional material as well as preset song structures or pre–recorded tracks (beats etc) if needed. As “producers” and “engineers” the artists—Jenkins and Kalin—will help guide the “talent” toward fulfilling their musical goals. The participants role will include writing lyrics and music, designing band identities, being the band. To participate, RSVP to practicespaces@gmail.com.

HANNAH JICKLING

Hannah Jickling is the founding director of Portland State University’s newest graduate program, MFA in Paper Maché. In addition to her recent work as an administrator, she has developed projects with the Columbia River Orienteering Club and the Pacific Giant Vegetable Growers Association. Flags, vegetation and enormous pumpkins feature prominently in her latest work.

MFA in Paper Maché is pleased to announce it’s second annual symposium with a line–up of internationally renowned makers and thinkers. This year’s theme: MAKING THINGS BETTER WITH PAPER MACHÉ, will reveal the pleasures and treasures generated by making in the context of a socially engaged environment.


During this year’s symposium “Making Things Better with Paper Maché”, look for: interviews, gags, specialty objects, pasty messes and take–home projects as they sneak through the back door of Open Engagement.

CECILIA DE JONG

Born 1979 Helsingor, Denmark. She lives and works in Odense. Graduated in 2008 from The Funen Art Academy, Odense. Her practice is centered around personal relationships and acquaintances made when she works
as a teacher. She investigates how art as a field can give meaning to her own life as well as connect her to her immediate surroundings. She has co–founded “The Berlin Office” which is a research platform situated in Neuköln, Berlin.

Cecilia will host a mini sculpture workshop at the Park by Portland State University. **THE MINI FRUIT–SCULPTURE WORKSHOP** will invite local families and costumers from “Saturday” Farmers Market to produce little sculptures together with artists participating in Open Engagement. This will hopefully initiate a fruitful dialogue about what art can be and how it can give meaning to everyday activities. Cecilia hopes to see you there to a talk about how art and life interact and how we as artists find our place in the community.

We will enjoy a quiet time investigating how fruit and vegetables can turn into beautyfull sculptures, ready to eat and share, right after production is completed! To find the workshop, look out for blackboards announcing the event and a big Picnic blanket.

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**ALULA EDITIONS IN COLLABORATION WITH LEA REDMOND OF LEAFCUTTER DESIGNS**

Alula Editions works in collaboration with artists to create conceptually crafty and aesthetically thoughtful repeat patterns for textiles. Subscribers to our edition service receive four objects a year made from this hand silkscreened fabric. Alula editions is captained by Helena Keeffe and Amber Cady, two Bay Area artists who share an interest in people and how they communicate through making. Lea Redmond crafts objects, ideas and actions. Through Leafcutter Designs, her workshop in Oakland, CA, she offers unexpected objects and participatory projects.

Alula Editions is working in collaboration with Lea Redmond, Lexa Walsh, PSU drawing and printmaking students and the I Heart Art: Portland Etsy Street Team to produce the official tote bag for Open Engagement. Prior to the conference a group of PSU students will set out to draw some of the most beloved food carts in Portland. The drawings will be arranged to create a repeat–pattern that will be silkscreened onto fabric and sewn into bags. The bags serve the dual function of holding all of the important stuff of the conference as well as giving visitors from outside of Portland a guide to cart cuisine.

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**TEMPORARY SERVICES**

Temporary Services is Brett Bloom, Salem Collo–Julin and Marc Fischer. We are based in Illinois and have existed, with several changes in membership and structure, since 1998. We produce exhibitions, events, projects, and publications. In 2008 Temporary Services initiated Half Letter Press, a publishing imprint and an experimental online store.

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**NICK LALLY**

Nick Lally is an artist who creates participatory events and situations which explore the ways informational technologies have affected peoples’ everyday lives. He is a founding member of the Artclash Collective and is currently pursuing an MFA in Digital Arts and New Media from UC Santa Cruz.

The shift to an informational economy has had a profound impact on the cultural and social landscape in which we find ourselves. Key to understanding this shift is understanding how the logic of software has come to underlie and guide this process. This talk will explore the ways in which artists can author software processes which enact and mediate events and situations which are an expression of authorial intent, and which open up new spaces for social participation, dialogue and reflection on complex systems. Participants in such work are then able to see the potential for familiar processes to enact new participatory possibilities in the world, they are able to reflect on how similar software processes affect their everyday lives and they are invited to develop a deeper understanding of the logic of processes through their interaction with software systems.

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**ELYSE MALLOUK**

Elyse Mallouk is an artist and writer based in San Francisco. Her studio work investigates love, and relies on the viewer’s desire to construct narratives out of disparate parts. She holds an MFA in Fine Arts and an MA in Visual and Critical Studies from California College of the Arts.

**THE SOCIAL BIND: RENEGOTIATING THE AESTHETIC IN CONTEMPORARY ART**

In recent years, an upsurge in museum programming that focuses on social exchange and the creation of graduate programs in Social Practice have combined to draw tentative boundaries around socially engaged art. As the field gains institutional clarity, this project considers the promise and problem of defining social practice as a discipline distinct from other ways of artmaking. This involves a look back at Nicolas Bourriaud’s Relational Aesthetics, and a critique of the historical trajectory it reinforces. It also requires a reexamination of the word aesthetic, in order to arrive at an understanding of the ways in which the word has functioned historically, and the role it can continue to play in the discourse surrounding socially engaged art. This presentation contends that the rigidity or openness with which we define the social in art is an aesthetic question, one that deals with the overlap between production and consumption, activity and passivity, making and interpreting.
DINO MANGINI

Dino Mangini is a Northwest native living and working in Portland. He received his BA in Art History from Western Washington University and studied at the Scuola Lorenzo'de Medici in Florence. His philosophical and artistic explorations are absorbed in Lacanian theory. He is a member of the QED collective.

Dino Mangini will be presenting an examination of the changes in attitudes about the role of social art in the Albanian capital city of Tirana—a city currently undergoing a rapid transformation in its pursuit of establishing itself as part of a ‘Westernized’ nation. Using the methodologies developed by Jacques Lacan and Slavoj Zizek, this analysis constructs a bridge from Tirana to Portland in the pursuit to identify where and when ideology enters into social art. Through this alternative route we can identify and implement a system that questions the meaning of itself as a way to define place, a process that returns to its sources as a way of cultivating identity, and a design that synthesizes the universal and particular—a call for Critical Regionalism.

RODRIGO MARTI

An avid cyclist, Rodrigo moves about swiftly. Born in Mexico, bred in Canada and presently based in Los Angeles he has actively focused on the form and politics of cultural production for a long time.

For the Open Engagement Conference Rodrigo is planning to be everywhere all time. He is reminded by Thomas Griffith that, “Journalism is in fact history on the run.”

BARBARA MENELEY

Barbara Meneley is a Canadian prairie–born interdisciplinary artist whose site responsive work engages with relationships to and within physical and cultural landscapes. Barbara’s work takes shape in reference to the social, cultural, historical and economic contexts and questions conceptions and misconceptions about the dimensions of contemporary society and culture.

Barbara Meneley is Artist in Residence for the Isabel Johnson Shelter, a safe house in Regina, Saskatchewan. For Open Engagement she will be sharing and developing her residency work by inviting conference participants to take part in private, 1–2 hour creative workshops in safe and secure circumstances. Barbara will safeguard the confidentiality of all participants and there will be no documentation. Participants are also invited to engage with Barbara in discussing the research questions of her residency:

Can arts and cultural opportunities facilitate a greater connection between participants and the community to instill greater positive supports? Can arts programming strengthen ties between our target population and community supports addressing family violence? Can involvement in artistic and cultural activity assist in reducing violence and abuse in communities?

BRIAN MERKEL

After moving from Portland OR to Detroit, MI in the fall of 2009 Brian Merkel has focused less on art making and more on the craft of charcuterie, but he doesn’t see why the two have be so different from each other.

HAVE A SAUSAGE MADE IN YOUR LIKENESS

Born out of passion for both art and charcuterie, Sausage Portraits offer the opportunity for any meat loving person to express his or her individuality in the form of a sausage. You simply fill out a Sausage Personality Questionnaire that have been placed around town at various art and food establishments. The questions are actually a complex, meaty, algorithm that determine the ingredients for the sausage recipe. Spicy or mild, sweet or savory, made with chicken, beef, or pork, featuring fruits or veggies, there are so many possibilities, but only one sausage that will bare your name.

Once the questionnaires have been gathered and converted to recipes they will be posted on the Sausage Portrait blog. During the Open Engagement conference a well-rounded selection of recipes will be chosen for a sausage making demonstration and tasting party.

ANNE ELIZABETH MOORE

Anne Elizabeth Moore is the author of Unmarketable: Brandalism, Copyfighting, Mocketing, and the Erosion of Integrity (The New Press, 2007), the founding editor of the Best American Comics series, and co–publisher of now–defunct Punk Planet. Moore teaches at SAIC and conducts self–publishing work with young women in Cambodia. www.anneelizabethmoore.com

Anne Elizabeth Moore is a text–based artist and cultural critic that uses self-publishing, media intervention, shop-dropping, direct pedagogical engagement, and traditional publishing venues to explore democracy around the globe. Her work has appeared in front of audiences both mass and tiny to receptions both welcoming and violent. Moore is scheduled to appear on FORMS OF AVAILABILITY: THE ROLE OF TEXT AND PRINTED MATTER IN SOCIAL ART, and she will likely address her work on the 2008 fake New York Times, her multilingual DIY self–publishing project How To Make This Very Zine, and her ongoing media–making collaboration with young Khmer women, including over 65 individually distributed zines and the collaborative book New Girl Law, which investigates the struggle for human rights and gender equality in Cambodia. Also she is super funny, although you wouldn’t think it from this description.
MELANIE NAKAUE

Melanie Nakaue is an interdisciplinary artist living in Los Angeles, CA. She received her MFA from the California Institute of the Arts in 2004. Selected exhibitions of her work include: AM NUDEN DA, London; Monte Vista Projects, Los Angeles, CA; Beloit College, Beloit, WI; Portland eXperimental Film Festival, Portland, OR; Art Center College of Art and Design, Pasadena, CA; Gallery 4F, Los Angeles, CA; and San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco, CA.

The SELF-PORTRAIT PROJECT (TELL ME ABOUT YOURSELF) attempts to engage participants through a shared artistic process of drawing and social interaction. In addition, the “Self–Portrait Project (Tell Me About Yourself)” hopes to foster new relationships and understandings between individuals. Individuals who do not know each other would sit at a table supplied with various drawing supplies and will be asked to do the following:

1. Make a drawing that represents who you are. This can be as literal or as abstract as you like.
2. While drawing your self–portrait, introduce yourself to the person(s) sitting next to you and explain how your drawing represents who you are and tell them about yourself.
3. At the end of the drawing period, (30 minutes) participating individuals have the opportunity to keep their self–portrait drawings or exchange them with other participants.

ASHLEY NEESE

Ashley Neese has executed projects in the Rosenberg Gallery at NYU; San Jose Institute for Contemporary Art; TRUCK Contemporary Art, Calgary; and Koh–i–nor, Copenhagen. In 2009 she participated in artist residencies at ThreeWalls, The Alberta Printmakers Society, and The Berlin Office. This year she will launch Open Heart, a publication about love in contemporary culture and spend six months writing love letters in Berlin, Germany.

BERIT NØERGAARD


WHAT ARE YOU WEARING TODAY?

Did you dress up to show your personality, to keep a decent facade or maybe just to stay warm? No matter your intensions it is partly out of your hands how others will read your appearance. Each reading is a subjective interpretation based on personal experience, knowledge and taste of the person watching. A read scarf for instance could by one be read as a pure fashion item yet another might see it as a political statement. And what shows an all black outfit? Is it a mourning suit, lack of fantasy or smashing stylish? The possible interpretations are endless.

JEFF NYE, ASSISTANT CURATOR, DUNLOP ART GALLERY

Jeff Nye has curated exhibitions with social engagement in mind (Block Party, 2009; Speaking Pictures, 2008; The Garage Show, 2007). Jeff has also published articles about socially engaged art practices (Shifting Borders, 2007; International Journal for the Arts and Society, 2006). He wonders if there is a better way.

REALIZING AN ENGAGED GALLERY...FOR BETTER OR WORSE

As an accessible and civically–funded gallery with two spaces imbedded in the Regina Public Library, the Dunlop Art Gallery is embarking on an investigative approach to social engagement under the thesis that the art gal-
lbery’s roles are changing. In addition to presenting contemporary art, the Gallery is expected to sustain collaborative relationships with audiences, neighbors and other organizations—to become a community builder.

Working in a socially-engaged way, we must to step outside of previously established and expected functions. Recently the Dunlop’s Curators have to adopt several new roles: guitar player, gardener, curriculum designer, food server, moderator, and school teacher.

Concern for reciprocal and sustained engagement and a skeptical view of projects that use communities and participants as props will be put forth. With that in mind, could the Gallery act as an imbedded intermediary between mobilized relational art practices and the rooted community that surrounds and uses the gallery day-to-day? Those who attend will be asked what they might expect from a socially-engaged gallery. What would artists and communities require from such a gallery to create truly successful socially-engaged projects?

VALERIE OTANI, DIANE HESS & ED WASHINGTON

Valerie Otani is an artist who layers history and human stories to create an experience that combines beauty with content.

Diane Hess is the Education Director of the Fair Housing Council of Oregon, a non-profit with the mission of eliminating illegal housing discrimination.

Ed Washington is the Community Liaison for Diversity Initiatives at Portland State University.

TOUR: RACE AND THE HIDDEN HISTORY OF PORTLAND

This light rail tour intertwines Portland’s ethnic history with the artwork inspired by the neighborhoods. The tour reveals lost ethnic communities, the prominence of the KKK, racist laws and the history of housing discrimination. At Vanport station the artwork marks the destruction of Oregon’s second largest city in a flood in 1948. Vanport resident Ed Washington shares a firsthand experience of the flood. The final stop is at the Expo Center, where 3,700 Japanese Americans were imprisoned in 1942, housed in animal barns, before they were expelled from the West Coast. The artwork by Valerie Otani commemorates this history.

The tour adds to our knowledge of Portland, one of the least ethnically diverse cities of its size. It is an opportunity to reflect on the forces that shape the city, and the role of the artist in making those forces visible. Supported by the Fair Housing Council of Oregon, TriMet and Oregon Nikkei Endowment.

OTIS

The MFA program in Public Practice at Otis College of Art and Design offers Opportunities for close study with internationally known artists and theorists, field internships with professional artists, and teaching assistantships in the College’s innovative Integrated Learning curriculum. Led by Suzanne Lacy, the renowned artist, educator, theorist of socially engaged public art, and author of the influential Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art, the program exploits L.A.’s unique position at the center of an emerging, creative and world culture.

Consuelo Velasco has an undergraduate degree in Fine Art from UC Santa Cruz with an emphasis on mixed media, murals and small press publications. She graduated a master’s program in Public Art Studies at the University of Southern California where she studied the history, theory and administration of public art with a particular focus on digital media and art in rural contexts. Velasco was previously employed by the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, Metro Art where she was extensively involved in the public art component of the Expo Light Rail line as a graduate administrative intern.

There is nothing more exciting for Paige Tighe than creating something that looks colorful and vibrant and having it say something uncomfortable. By documenting her own family she explores the dysfunctional dynamics of American culture. Taking fabric or paint, oftentimes bed sheets swiped from family members, she makes portraits. In these pieces, the discomfort is tangible. Yet, this discomfort is woven with an undercurrent of joy. Paige tries to understand American culture as a big messy whole while still searching for answers to her and her family’s place within it.

Andy Manoushagian, hailing from Ft. Worth, Texas, recently completed his Bachelor of Environmental Design in Visual Studies at Texas A&M University. While there, he studied architecture, digital video and photography, and multi-media installation design in addition to music composition and performance through membership in Percussion Studio, a student-led percussion ensemble, and teaching the drumline at Bryan High School (Bryan, TX). Currently, he is working to complete his MFA thesis project entitled “FREeCOLOGY,” a study of human, social, and environmental ecologies. More information can be found at his personal website, andy-manou.com and freecology.com.

PARFYME

Parfyme (pronounced “perfume”) is a four person collective, spread across Copenhagen, Bergen and New York City. Our work manifests as both practical research and immediate actions and ameliorations, realized without too much planning (well, compared to how architects, politicians, and city planners work!).

Parfyme will present their much-loved and last-place-winning experiment in city planning and cultural politics: EVERYONE CAN USE THE
HARBOR.

For six months, “Everyone Can Use The Harbor” opened up the waterways of Copenhagen, excited idealists, aggravated police, confused bureaucrats, and thousands of people got their feet wet. All it took was a deal with the devil, and a bankrupt quadrennial...but is it so simple?

PUBLIC SOCIAL UNIVERSITY

Public Social University curates free/all ages idea and skill-sharing events intended to empower individuals to transform their lives and communities. Activating art galleries as places where personal and social change can occur, amateurs and professionals alike are invited to facilitate, teach, and co-curate the activities that comprise these multidisciplinary events.

The Oral History Space (OHS) was born from public interest in creating a collaborative project following Public Social University’s December ORAL HISTORIES event. A temporary interactive museum, the OHS will provide visitors with a unique, welcoming space in which to explore oral histories from a diverse range of projects, archives, cultures and communities. Oral historians will interview and record oral histories in archival quality by appointment and drop-in. These histories will be shared throughout the remainder of the installation, stored in our temporary archive, and interviewees will be presented with a complimentary copy of their document(s). Following the installation, these oral histories will be housed in reputable public archives. Scheduled events will occur in the public square outside the OHS, including community discussions, oral history workshops, and live presentations of oral histories. More information about the OHS, including a schedule of events, can be found on the internet at http://psuohs.blogspot.com.

LISA RADON

Founding editor of ultra (ultrapdx.com), Lisa Radon also writes the Culturephile blog for Portland Monthly, and has written for Portland Spaces, FLAUNT, and Surface Design. Recent catalog essays include those for The Quadratic Logogram of Almost Everything at Half/Dozen Gallery and The M.O.S.T. Box Set: Remixed at Autzen Gallery.

OPEN is a collaborative, durational, co-writing experiment addressing the concerns, practices, and issues around socially engaged art via a writing out loud. All conference attendees and interested artists, critics, academics, and thinkers are encouraged to contribute statements, questions, essays, interviews, images, resources, project reports, etc. We’ll be writing throughout the conference with an additional day for wrap up. Bring your laptop, we’ll have WiFi plus a few computers available, or contribute from wherever you are at any time of day. The result will be a document of shared authorship that may exist as web page, PDF, and publication. Every participant will be listed as a co-author. Find open here: http://www.booki.cc/open

MATTHEW RANA

Matthew Rana is an artist and writer living in Oakland. His comics, newspapers, performances and videos are part of an investigation into alternative histories and counter-narratives. He holds an MFA in Social Practice and an MA in Visual & Critical Studies from the California College of the Arts.

Matthew’s most recent project, The Autobiography of Ernest Patrick Butler: His Battles with God, Life and Self, (2009) is a comic book co-authored with Rick Butler, a man who sells handmade crocheted hats at the MacArthur BART station in Oakland, CA where he lives with his dog Mama. Over the past two years, Butler and Rana have developed an ongoing collaboration that incorporates comic book production, as well as crochet and video work. They maintain an online comic and blog viewable at www.rickbutlercomic.wordpress.com and are currently working on proposals for an artist in residence program for individuals seeking transitional housing. For their presentation at Open Engagement, Butler and Rana will discuss their work together and their experiences as collaborators.

AFFECTIVE ECONOMIES

A DISCUSSION WITH HELEN REED, HENRY JENKINS (VIA SKYPE) & HARRELL FLETCHER. DIGITAL PARTICIPATION BY DAVID HORVITZ

In his book Convergence Culture, Henry Jenkins coins the term affective economies to describe a new configuration of marketing theory, which seeks to understand the emotional foundation of consumer decision-making. According to the logic of affective economies, consumption is no longer enough, as audiences are invited to participate in brand communities.

There is a parallel surge of interest in participation, direct engagement and collaboration in recent art practices. In this panel we explore the various interests and implications of the participatory impulse, looking at examples from socially engaged art projects (such as Harrell Fletcher & Miranda July’s Learning to Love You More), blogs, fan practices of engagement, web 2.0 initiatives, and social networking sites.

Harrell Fletcher has worked collaboratively and individually on a variety of socially engaged, interdisciplinary projects for over fifteen years. His work has been shown at SF MoMA, the de Young Museum, The Berkeley Art Museum, and Yerba Buena Center For The Arts in the San Francisco Bay Area, The Drawing Center, Socrates Sculpture Park, The Sculpture Center, The Wrong Gallery, and Smack Mellon in NYC, DiverseWorks and Aurora Picture show in Houston, TX, PICA in Portland, OR, CoCA and The Seattle Art Museum in Seattle, WA, Signal in Malmo, Sweden, Domain de Kerguehennec in France, and The Royal College of Art in London. He was a participant...

Henry Jenkins is the Provost’s Professor of Communication, Journalism, and Cinematic Arts at the University of Southern California. He arrived at USC in Fall 2009 after spending the past decade as the Director of the MIT Comparative Media Studies Program and the Peter de Florez Professor of Humanities. He is the author and/or editor of twelve books on various aspects of media and popular culture, including *Textual Poachers: Television Fans and Participatory Culture*, *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide and Fans, Bloggers and Gamers: Exploring Participatory Culture*.

Helen Reed is an artist based in Portland, Oregon. Over the past 5 years Helen’s art practice has involved working with specific invested communities. During this time she has landed the first senior citizen on the moon, contacted Marshall McLuhan by Ouija Board, and coordinated a lesbian–separatist rave in the farmlands of Ontario. Her most recent project is “Twin Twin Peaks, a 3rd Season of Twin Peaks,” written and acted by the show’s fans. Helen is an MFA candidate in the Art & Social Practice program at Portland State University.

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KERRI–LYNN REEVES

Kerri–Lynn Reeves, an artist based in Winnipeg, Manitoba, explores relationships, interactions, and personal histories and their associated boundaries and desires. The objects and stories associated with these themes act as fodder for her artwork, which is manifested in a variety of mediums, including installation, sculpture, textile and participatory group projects.

Exploring ideas around prized possessions, the value of objects, and the relationships that one can have or associate with an object, *SHOW & TELL* will be a session much like one would have had in third grade but with one twist. Participants are to do “Show & Tell” with an object that they do not actually have at the conference. The presenters are to explain why the chosen object’s existence is important to them and share any information about its history, its physical appearance, and its associations that they deem relevant. The absence of the object will give participants extra incentive to really reflect upon the object and its importance, and the audience an exercise in active listening. “Show & Tell” will provide insight into the presenters’ personalities and lives without focusing on the obvious facts, allowing for deeper insight and connections to be fostered.

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LAUREN ROSENBLUM

Lauren Rosenblum works at Locks Gallery, Philadelphia and is a member of the art historians collective, Art Workers Resource Group. She was previously Curatorial Intern at the Philadelphia Museum of Art and Gallery Guide at the Fabric Workshop & Museum. She received her BA in History of Art from Bryn Mawr College.

She will be exploring the use of documentation in the history of recorded, performative artworks, in both photographic and written analytic forms as well from first–person and outsider positions. Lauren will address how the photograph, critical essay, book, journal and zine have functioned as templates to explore and analyze contemporary art and also explore the evolving roles of the artist and the art historian as moderators of the documentation of socially engaged art.

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MARY ROTHLISBERGER

Mary Rothlisberger is a nomadic thinker situated within North America. She does not believe in bodies, but she does believe in the animal shape of ideas. When she is not building giant birds nests or living on frozen lakes under upside–down rowboats, she is probably walking the traintracks in Palouse, her favorite town in the entire world. She is brutally honest & brutally kind. She loves people who write letters.

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LAUREN MCCLEARY

Lauren is an artist, creator, shadow catcher, writer, researcher, picture taker, time traveling horse rider. Lauren is interested in making, stories, imagining, contemplation, observation, music, wide spaces, nostalgia, navigating mountains, listening to rivers, intersecting paths, Flickers, Nuthatches, hitting the road, crossing the oceans, harboring good thoughts, and gardening.

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NICKOLUS MEISEL

Nickolus Meisel was born into the liminality of Western Kansas and lives in the liminality of Eastern Washington. He loves the romance of the space in–between things especially the space between your lips and particularly if he can get you to involuntarily show your teeth (with an upturn at the corners). He likes addressing the objects that we normally see as passing for temporary function or the space we use to get elsewhere. He likens himself to a buffalo (he’s pretty hairy) and wants to be Santa when he grows up.

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SMALL TOWN SOCIAL PRACTICES (PUBLICATION)

Small Town Social Practices is a zine that addresses topics of contemporary making outside of the metropolitan audience. Social practices as they relate to rural communities. Intervention in your neighborhood. Collaboration with your family. An exploration of space & place as it relates to the outskirts and the hinterland. An exploration of space & place as it relates to our nuclear communities, our neighbors, and ourselves.

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SANDY SAMPSON

Sandy Sampson is a multidisciplinary artist. Identifying and facilitating opportunities for casual pedagogy in public space and between strangers
is a major part of her current practice. Sampson also teaches and works at Project Grow; an art studio and urban farm that celebrates and supports mental diversity.

PROJECT GROW located in North Portland is an art studio and urban farm powered by a mentally diverse group of core members and volunteers. Initiated by artist Natasha Wheat in 2009 Project Grow believes that community integration, meaningful work and connection to our food sources are basic rights.

Volunteer: Micah Wallace (Documentarian)
Volunteer: Adrianna Santiago

SEA CHANGE WITH CULTURE SCULPTURE

SEA Change in an art collective based in Portland. SEA = Social Environmental Art. Culture Sculpture is a Portland-based artful sustainability consulting service.

Get your hands in the dirt—help plant a permaculture garden at the Art Building. The urban garden includes food plants, “art” plants for coloring paints and dying fabrics, and native, drought tolerant plants. 50% of garden’s food production, like persimmons and hardy kiwis, will be donated to the Oregon Food Bank. Permaculture is an approach to designing human settlements and agricultural systems that mimic the relationships found in natural ecologies. Waivers will be available on site to sign before participating.

SERG (SOCIAL EVOLUTION RESEARCH GANG)—LORI GORDON, ROBIN LAMBERT, ASHLEY NEESE

Lori Gordon, Robin Lambert and Ashley Neese are collectively known as The Social Evolution Research Gang (SERG). Individually, each artist maintains a practice exploring numerous social aspects of art and life—conversation, intimacy, mix tapes, napping, lunch, daydreams, love letters and reading—each of which they hold in high regard.

SERG will be creating a short-term, temporary Library that will be accessible in the Open Engagement Reading Room. As opposed to a traditional library in which books are available to be borrowed by the visitors to the library, the books in this library are borrowed from other people. One feature distinguishing our Library from the rest of the Reading Room will be the book covers. Each book will have a SERG Book Cover printed and wrapped around the book. These books covers will be made of simple brown paper. A second feature will be a sticker placed on the inside of the book before the books are returned to their owners. This stick will identify the books as belonging to the SERG Library as well as when it initially appeared in the Library.

SAMUEL C. SHAW, AMELIA WINGER-BEARSKIN

Samuel C. Shaw is a PhD candidate in the sociology department at Vanderbilt University; he studies urban and cultural sociology. Amelia Winger-Bearskin is a performance and video artist, and is assistant professor of studio art at Vanderbilt University.

MAKING PLACE (WWW.MAKINGYOURPLACE.COM) is a photo blog exploring how city, community, and place are made and experienced. The global public is invited to submit three photographs depicting: how you make your city, how the city is made better, and how it is made worse. An exploration of how Portland is ‘made’ will be the subject of this open engagement session, based on participant submissions from Portland.

We suggest that cities are greater than the amalgamation of individuals within them; individuals make the city, casting their legacy in the built environment, in their patterns of daily life, in representations, and in the relationships they make. “Making Place” provides a venue for participants to tell stories through photographs about how places are made where their lives unfold. Potentially, “Making Place” ties participants to their cities, connects them to others in their cities, and to others in other cities around the world.

SIGNAL FIRE

Signal Fire facilitates wilderness experiences for artists and writers. Signal Fire hosts group retreats and remote residencies, utilizing Oregon’s public lands to bring city-bound artists out to wild places at low or no cost. Signal Fire was founded in 2008 by activist Amy Harwood and artist Ryan Pierce. www.signalfirearts.org

THE MILD KINGDOM: WHY WILD CITIES ARE HEALTHY CITIES, AND HOW ARTISTS CAN HELP.

Join Signal Fire and friends for a walking workshop examining the possibilities of rewilding public space.

Rewilding describes the recovery of native plants, animals and other natural systems. This workshop makes the case for the considering human communities as natural systems as well, and for rewilding cities to benefit all inhabitants. The format will be an easy walk, led by several different guides. As we go, the guides will interpret the urban landscape through the lens of their own expertise—earn to identify medicinal plants, turn parking lots to community gardens, forage for pigeon eggs, and much more.

Meet underneath the west end of the Hawthorne Bridge, on the Westbank Esplanade along the Willamette River. Wear comfortable walking shoes and layered clothing. For a list of guides and updates see www.signalfirearts.org.
MARK R. SMITH

Participating artist teachers Mark R. Smith, Susan Harlan, Marie Sivak, Michelle Ross, Jacqueline Ehlis, Vicki Lynn Wilson, John Larsen and student painters from Portland Community College, Portland State University and Oregon College of Art and Craft all share foundations painting in common, as their original point of entry into visual art practice.

PLEIN AIR SMACKDOWN

This plein air painting contest will assume the ritual and urgency of a championship high school football game. Collaborative teams of top painters from Portland area art programs have been recruited to compete with one another for bragging rights and an ultimate prize. Facing off against a multi–tiered still life, four squads will render at their easels in earnest through four quarters of intense observational process including layout, roughing in, materialization and refinement stages. Generally regarded as a meditative and stationary pursuit, the still life discipline will be thrust into the action–based and extroverted context of a major sporting event. Under those circumstances, standard notions of time duration and public entertainment will be aggressively challenged. Pep bands, mascots and rally squads will also be on hand. Half–time activities will include an anything goes parade.

THE SPROCKETTES

The Sprockettes are an all female mini–bike dance team from Portland, Oregon. Since 2004, the collective of women have used dance to: advocate bicycling, support community, inspire others to live up to their potential and promote positive self–image. The Sprockettes are a DIY dance team.

The Sprockettes will start things off with a special Open Engagement performance! The DIY and in–the–street style of bike dance that The Sprockettes employ truly embodies the intersection of art & advocacy. It is a perfect introduction to the collective of ladies that will be your hostesses for the workshop. Workshop attendees can expect to learn all about The Sprockettes story & the greater Bicycle Dance Revolution. The workshop will explore topics of “The Fun Movement” and fun’s potential to create paradigm shift. The Sprockettes hope to learn from the community as well, and an open discussion will expound on topics brought up in the workshop. Finally, folks will play Memory Dance Chain & get a chance to move their oh–so–sexy bodies! Participants will experience “bringing the fun” first hand. The Sprockettes hope that everyone will leave with something new to fuel their art and their revolution. www.sprockettes.org

ERIC STEEN

Eric Steen creates beer as an excuse to explore and celebrate place, history, politics, and people. Eric writes for beerandscifi.com and has exhibited at ApeXart, the Portland Art Museum, the Kondike Institute of Arts and Culture, and the Glasgow International Festival of Visual Art.

Eric operates a small homebrewery called Slow Beers. He believes that beer reminds us to slow down and enjoy the smaller things in life. For Open Engagement, Eric created a traditional Scottish ale for Beer for Local Foods Dinner. The beer, to be served with dinner, uses four organic malts, heather, bog myrtle, and US Goldings hops to create a light and sweet flavor with a floral nose. Eric also made beer that will be available at the InCUBATE Trivia Night.

CURATING WITH ABANDON

JUDITH LEEMAN

Judith Leemann is an artist, educator, and writer living in Boston. She teaches at the Massachusetts College of Art and Design and serves as artist in residence at the Design Studio for Social Intervention. www.judithleemann.com

SHANNON STRATTON

Shannon Stratton is co–founder and current Director and Chief Curator at ThreeWalls Chicago, a not–for–profit residency and exhibition space. She teaches in the Art History and Arts Administration departments at The School of the Art Institute Chicago. www.three–walls.org

NAMITA GUPTA WIGGERS

Namita Gupta Wiggers leads the curatorial, education and collection programs at Museum of Contemporary Craft in partnership with Pacific Northwest College of Art. She is committed to a program that investigates the cultural dimensions of craft and design.

The exhibition GESTURES OF RESISTANCE, at Portland’s Museum of Contemporary Craft, focuses on contemporary craft actions: work that deploys craft to agitate for change through direct political statements, public interventions, or dialogical, community–specific projects. The exhibition was developed by Judith Leemann and Shannon Stratton and brought to Portland at the invitation of MoCC curator Namita Wiggers.

We will use the exhibition to host a potentially self–contradicting conversation about curatorial abandon and not-abandoning curation. Turning a lens on ourselves, we will diagram the curatorial relations within this particular exhibition. We will engage the space between craft and the social. How do we distinguish between social practices that use the social as their medium and performative craft that uses traditional craft as its medium but understands that making as absolutely situated in the social and capable of introducing new configurations in the social?
SARA THACHER

Sara Thacher makes work dealing with exchange and how these interactions shape our use and understanding of the grey areas between public and private space. Sara holds a MFA in Social Practice from CCA. Most recently she collaborated on The Jejune Institute, a two year long project combining narrative and urban exploration. Sara has received commissions and grants from various institutions including: the San Jose Institute of Contemporary Art, Southern Exposure, the San Francisco Foundation, the Center for Art and Public Life, and the Rhode Island Foundation.

HOW TO MAKE A WAY TO KEEP MAKING:
A WORKSHOP ON METHODS FOR BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE PRACTICE

Choreographers sell tickets to their dance, painters sell paintings, architects receive commissions, and many of those same artists support their work through a combination of grants and day jobs. How do ‘Social Practitioners’ continue to make things, especially when what they make doesn’t precisely follow any of the above structures? Together in this workshop we will sort through models, look at case studies, and assemble strategies for a long-term, sustainable practice.

This workshop will begin by looking at some case studies of creative workers (in the very broadest definition) who have developed innovative ways to support their continued work not only economically, but also physically and socially. Examples from other disciplines will also be addressed, and we will explore ways, if any, that these can be applied to our own individual practice. As a group, we will take advantage of our assembled knowledge to expand upon these initial examples and lay out a spectrum of strategies through which our practices can become self-sustaining.

MAIKO TANAKA & CHRIS LEE

Chris Lee (Amsterdam) and Maiko Tanaka (Toronto) are interested in investigating the spaces between art, design, activism, and pedagogy. Chris is currently pursuing his graphic design masters at the Sandberg Institute in The Netherlands and Maiko is working as the Curator-in-Residence at the Justina M. Barnicke Gallery at the University of Toronto.

MAKIN’ UP MONEY

This workshop will explore the economic/political phenomenon of alternative currencies as a form of creative social practice. It will take an experimental dialogical framework, starting with a conversation between artists and local Portland–based currency makers (such as Portland Cascadia Hour Exchange) and work towards the production of proposals and speculative models of new currency initiatives. The aim is to develop knowledge together to explore the uncertain border between artistic social practice and political self-organization in order to consider a new critical field of inquiry and practice between the two.

CHEN TAMIR

Chen Tamir is a freelance curator and writer and also the director of Flux Factory. She holds an M.A. in Curatorial Studies from Bard College. Her recent exhibitions have been held at Art in General, National Gallery of Saskatchewan, University of Toronto, Israeli Center for Digital Art, and Gallery TPW. www.chentamir.com

Chen will give a short introduction to Social Practice and its difference from Relational Aesthetics. She will highlight the talk with specific examples including projects by Flux Factory. Flux Factory is an artists collective and non-profit arts center that commissions collaborative experimental new work. The goal of the Flux art collective is to create a forum where Flux artists can collaborate with each other as well as others in an experimental lab that produces new works. These new works force participants to work with people they’ve never worked with before, or with unfamiliar media, or formal constraints. Some of our more noteworthy recent projects include commissioning artists to take people on mystery bus tours of adventure, making work in people’s living rooms, doing an all edible art shows, turning our gallery into a giant music box, creating an exquisite corpse at an abandoned building, and others.

THE THINK TANK THAT HAS YET TO BE NAMED

Project directors are: “The Director for the Department of the Investigation of Cross-Pollination” and “The Director for the Department of the Investigation of Tactical Education” (respectively Katie Hargrave and Heath Schultz).

The Think Tank that has yet to be named initiates conversations, research, and educational projects that interrogate contemporary issues in the places where we encounter them. As a critical praxis, the Think Tank was formed by several individuals who saw themselves and their creative practices being implicated by neo-liberal systems and ideologies.

The Think Tank that has yet to be named has compiled critical texts on a range of subject matter of interest to us in attempts to answer pressing questions we face as humans. These texts are organized into readers (print and digital) that are available for free distribution. At Open Engagement, the Think Tank presents a library of readers to date covering various topics: Art, Activism and Participation; Artists and Gentrification; Art, Activism and Education; Community; Art and Neutrality; and a new reader in The New Researcher. What does it means to research and how does one implement one’s finding in a socio-political context? How does one breach the barriers that render theoretical inquiry and expression useless? Are researchers and academics charged with research for research sake or should they use their specific knowledge out in the world?
Production, published by Autonomedia, is slated for release this summer. She is currently working with Bin Labs, a collaborative Portland artists group that created a series of pieces in 2008 and 2009 that explored a specific place, the Goodwill Bins, to examine the communities that coalesce around it. The place represents an overwhelming cornucopia of used consumer goods (80,000 lbs flow through this space a day, 7 x a week). These goods and this place creates unusual economies and social networks, often mirroring the processes of biosystems. Our documentary study of the Bins and the resulting installations explores how sorting these leftovers and bits and pieces of culture are metaphorical for how knowledge is produced and how identities are formed. The presentation will touch on issues of waste, sorting, communal work, alternate models of living and how we create systems of value.

NATO THOMPSON

Nato Thompson is chief curator at Creative Time, as well as a writer and activist. Amongst his projects for Creative Time are “The Creative Time Summit: Revolutions in Public Practice,” “Democracy in America: The National Campaign,” “Waiting for Godot in New Orleans,” a project by Paul Chan in collaboration with The Classical Theatre of Harlem, and “Mike Nelson: A Psychic Vacuum.” Thompson was formerly a curator at MASS MoCA, where his exhibitions included “The Interventionists: Art in the Social Sphere” and “Ahistoric Occasion: Artists Making History.” His newest publication, Seeing Power: Art and Activism in the Age of Cultural Production, published by Autonomedia, is slated for release this summer.

PETER HAAKON THOMPSON

Peter Haakon Thompson is an artist based in Minneapolis, Minnesota whose primary mediums are participation and interaction with sincerity. These days he is into learning Somali, playing table tennis and sewing canvas tents.

Peter Haakon Thompson will be presenting two projects at Open Engagement. He will be bringing two EXPEDITIONARY CONVERSATION TENTS, to serve as pavilions for the other Minneapolitans in attendance to share what is happening in Minnesota. They will also be made available to other participants as places to hold gatherings, talks, presentations, etc.

The second project is an exploration of TABLE TENNIS IN PORTLAND. The impetus for this is the presence of Paddle Palace, one of the largest retailers of table tennis supplies in the United States. Judy Hoarfrost, a co-owner of Paddle Palace, was part of the “Ping Pong Diplomacy” trip to China in 1971, often credited with the start of thawing relations between the US and China. Ms. Hoarfrost will give an informal talk about her experience with a chance for table tennis play afterwards.

CARA TOMLINSON

Cara Tomlinson is an artist currently living and teaching in Portland. She works in painting, drawing, installation, video and photography. Her work has been shown nationally in solo and group shows, including: the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts, the Everson Museum in Syracuse, NY; Davenport Museum of Art and Des Moines Art Center, in Iowa; and the Charles Allis Art Museum in Milwaukee, WI. She received her BA degree from Bennington College and her MFA from the University of Oregon. She is currently working with Bin Labs, a collaborative artist group exploring ways that communities coalesce around the resources of waste and excess.

Tomlinson will present the video and installation work of Bins lab, a collaborative Portland artists group that created a series of pieces in 2008 and 2009 that explored a specific place, the Goodwill Bins, to examine the communities that coalesce around it. The place represents an overwhelming cornucopia of used consumer goods (80,000 lbs flow through this space a day, 7 x a week). These goods and this place creates unusual economies and social networks, often mirroring the processes of biosystems. Our documentary study of the Bins and the resulting installations explores how sorting these leftovers and bits and pieces of culture are metaphorical for how knowledge is produced and how identities are formed. The presentation will touch on issues of waste, sorting, communal work, alternate models of living and how we create systems of value.

SERGIO JULIO TORRES

Sergio: a self identified Oaxacan Muxa, has always questioned her heritage, the west, and “good taste”. The feeling of isolation has inspired/forced her to create a paradigm guided by the absurdity, mysticism and the majesty of her past to connect with her people, ancestors and gods.

TABLE TENNIS IN PORTLAND

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The night aims to unite the isolated migrant queers in the name of celebration.

JOEN P. VEDEL

Joen P. Vedel was born in 1983, he is studying, working and living in Copenhagen, Denmark. His artistic practice is ranging from individual exhibitions and projects to work in several collectives, such as YNKB, A.W., and Openhagen.net, as well as with several friends and encounters on his way.

UTOPIAS OF CALM FELICITY, DISORDER POCKETS AND APPLIED UTOPICS. A WORKSHOP TO NOWHERE. Led by Nils Norman and Joen P Vedel. As department leader at the School of Walls and Space at the Royal Danish Academy of the Arts, Denmark, Nils Norman has spent the past year presenting his research into the history, context and politics of Utopia. Its ideal commonwealths, perfect societies, speculative myths, critical methods and real-life experiments.
Joen P Vedel is an artist working on a variety of experiments in occupation, non-plan self-build and anti-gentrification strategies.

Together they will lead an informal discussion based workshop focusing on their research and experiences related to the topic of Utopia. The workshop will begin with a brief outline of the history and political contexts of Utopia as a literary form, critical tool and a call to action. It will move towards a discussion of experimental moments, communitarian and shared struggles and the possibility of possibilities.

The workshop will be an open discussion, designed and structured to encourage all participants to speak and contribute in their own way on the potentialities of collective action.

PASPORT

This participatory Library & Resource Center is aimed at both the Portland State MFA students and the general public, with special focus on Open Engagement. The library will host numerous publications and ephemera from Open Engagement participants, reflecting their work and interests. It is a space to gather and disseminate information. There will be additional OE projects presented in the space. Free tea for simultaneous relaxation and stimulation will be served. Guests are encouraged to add notes and keywords to files, and to add information about themselves.

It also includes: Resource Bulletin Board with international artist opportunities Personal files for PSU students and artists with work samples, CVs, ephemera and printed matter from their practice. Books, articles and show cards reflecting contemporary art issues and practice, particularly relating to Art & Social Practice International gallery/art space files. Consultations for writing project proposals and budgets.

Lexa Walsh was born near Philadelphia as the youngest of 15 children. She has lived, worked, exhibited and toured in the SF Bay Area, Europe, and Asia. Walsh was a recipient of the CEC Artslink Award and the Gunk Grant, and has done several international artist residencies and projects. Her work addresses access to and exchange of knowledge & resources, community building, identity, place & history. The work is supplemented and informed by her travels, community work and experimental music projects. She was an independent cultural worker in the Bay Area and worked for many years as a curator and arts administrator at CESTA, an international art center in Czech republic, whose mission is to foster cross-cultural tolerance and understanding through the arts. She co-founded and conceived of the all women, all toy instrument ensemble Toychestra and is a member of the Czech–American a cappella group Kackala. She is currently an MFA candidate in Portland State’s Art and Social Practice program.

WEALTH UNDERGROUND FARM

Wealth Underground Farm is an acre of hand–cultivated vegetables, fruits, herbs, and flowers located 10 miles north of downtown Portland. The farmers are committed to organic and sustainable practices as well as helping to strengthen the local food system in their bioregion, the north Tualatin Mountains and the city of Portland.

Nolan Calisch, one of the farmers and founders of Wealth Underground Farm, will lead a tour of the farm and a participatory project highlighting the effects of sound on plant physiology in his greenhouse. Calisch is interested in what ways artfulness can be present in agriculture. Following the farm tour he will lead a discussion on the re–imagination of our current food systems. What stands in the way of a more sustainable and small-scale approach to nourishment? What kind of innovative support webs and communication could be established between grower and eater? Is there still room for craftsmanship and creativity in farming?

LINDA WEINTRAUB


TERRY O’DAY

Terry teaches in the Art and Environmental Studies departments at Pacific University. Her current work seeks to create conditions that promote a shift in perception regarding the human relationship to environment through interventions in the education system. Projects include a permaculture demonstration site, a sustainability–themed K–12 charter school, and bringing education for sustainability to her university.

HEADLINES: ARTISTS INSPIRED BY ENVIRO NEWS

Four artists conceptualize an art project inspired by a headline from the past month. This headline is attached to a news story about the environment. They will present research, plans, drawings, outreach strategies, and other components of a work–in–process. Featuring a current, headline–grabbing environmental issue guarantees their thematic explorations will be timely. Furthermore, this session’s approach invites panelists to share the inspirational and conceptual components of their creative processes. But the panel is also designed to manifest the audience’s imagination in the service of environmental reform. Audience members will be invited to provide feedback to each presenter. Artists participating in this interactive dialogue are Jennifer Delos Reyes, Harrell Fletcher, Bruce Conkile, and Brian Collier.

PARTICIPATORY SCHEDULE–BINDING WORKSHOP

This workshop, launching the Open Engagement conference, is designed to activate the spirit and theme announced by the conference title. It is
Dawn Weleski activates and broadcasts the stories of individuals and groups in experimental public performances, where conversation is her process and people her medium. She re-purposes found systems as transformative social stages where play can thrive and new culture can emerge. Her work has been featured nationally by The New York Times and NPR.

Now in its third iteration, BUS STOP OPERA comes to Portland to perform along TriMet transit routes. The libretto is composed of conversations collected on public transit between Portland area riders and the artist, musically scored, and performed at transit stops. All cast, musical ensemble, and crew, who themselves are Portland residents, will utilize public transit to travel from one stop to the next at the completion of each operetta.

BUS STOP OPERA: PORTLAND will accumulate mementos of the lives of Portland area residents who utilize public transportation. Most significantly, public and art audiences alike will be introduced to the notion that viewers of a performance or art work may be implicated as collaborators in an attempt to create a valid illustration of reality.

Since 2008, over one thousand conversations have been collected and performed in different cities, including Pittsburgh and New York City. The project has been featured in The New York Times and on NPR’s Weekend Edition. Please visit http://www.busstopopera.com for Portland performance routes, dates, and times.

Me, Her, & Us

Roxy Farhat was born in Tehran, Iran, in 1984. Currently based in Stockholm, she is in her final BFA semester at Konstfack University of Arts, Crafts and Design. Working mostly with video, she uses humor and a pop cultural language to address complex matters such as identity, multiculturalism and gender.

Allison Wiese is an interdisciplinary artist who makes sculptures, installations and architectural interventions. Her work has been exhibited at venues like Machine Project, MCA San Diego and Socrates Sculpture Park. Wiese learned to walk and talk in Brooklyn, Drive in Southern California and everything else important in Texas.

Allison Wiese’s ongoing project STILL NO. 2 (WEST COAST UNIT) is a celebration of consumer bricolage and improvisational authority. It’s made with household plumbing supplies and the inherited expertise of generations of distillers, both amateurs and (sometimes illicit) professionals. Wiese’s recent work finds its vocabulary within a certain vein of populist Americana. It attempts (with a perverse sense of both hopelessness and optimism) to re-plumb the social and political landscape of the near past, questioning the lingering presence of American myths and pointing to truths about the present. Can art intoxicate its audience? Teach people to make the things they need? Teach them to learn what they need to know in order to make what they need? Does it taste good? How powerful is
it? Where can I get some? The entire undertaking is about doing it, not necessarily right, but despite.

CHLOÉ WOMACK

Chloé Womack is a native Portlander and a sophomore Art Practices student at Portland State University. Chloé is an expert on getting free food, and loves talking to anyone. Her interests are vast and include: dance, veganism, public transportation, walking, cooking, reading, food carts, sculpture, laundry, and driving stick.

Dancing is a fun way to exercise, loosen up, and become energized. LET’S DANCE offers conference attendees the opportunity to get their groove on during the afternoon coffee break. Are you ready to learn Portland’s favorite steps? Meet Chloé in the park blocks between Shattuck and Neuberger Hall. No prior training necessary. Comfortable clothing recommended. Positive attitudes are a must.

LINDA WYSONG

Linda Wysong is an across-disciplinary artist who examines urban systems and the connections between the natural and built environments. A Portland resident, Wysong’s work has been shown both nationally and internationally, in New York, San Francisco, Washington DC, and throughout the Pacific Northwest. A previous performance tour— “Backyard Conversations” was included in the PICA TBA:08 Festival.

CONVERSATIONS ON CLAY STREET

Conversations on Clay Street is a performance tour that highlights a street located across the Willamette River in Portland’s Eastside Industrial District. Participants will stop to meet the neighbors, learn about local businesses, and see the initial stages of the new Green Street Plan, as they move through space, time and history. At the turn of the century the area was largely industrial with a lumber mill, a bio-fuel power plant, railroad yards and working docks. Now it is a diverse district with a dynamic balance between community, commerce and green innovation. Walk 12 blocks and explore the area’s amazing energy history and ponder Portland’s constantly evolving relationship with the Willamette River.

YOU ARE MY FRIEND
(JENN NIELSEN, SARAH SANDMAN, JEFF HNILICKA)

You Are My Friend is a collaborative based in Brooklyn. They combine histories of activism, design, filmmaking, and event planning to create awesomeness through immediacy. They frame their explorations of people, space, and time as aesthetic gestures, often occurring on the dinner table, the road trip, or the dance floor.

“WE ARE NOT CHOREOGRAPHERS. YOU ARE NOT DANCERS. YET.” Cultural value of a city comes not only from physical structures but the architecture of the city’s organisms. Through site-less tourism YOU ARE MY FRIEND will gather the collective gestures and movements of Portlanders. Hoping to explore an alternative topography of Portland, they survey the city through its head nods, hip swivels, and toe wiggles.

Upon arrival in Portland, YAMF will loiter in public spaces. Through secret observation, direct inquiry, and collaborative play, the inhabitants of the city will teach them 100 Dance Moves.

Please join YAMF at the closing party to see a presentation on their findings. And to dance your ass off.
FRIDAY

OPEN: A COLLABORATIVE, PERFORMATIVE, PAPER-IN-PROGRESS
Lisa Radon
PICA's Resource Room
224 NW 13th Ave, Suite 305
10AM–2PM

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION TABLE/INFO POINT
Art Building Lobby/SP Library, 2000 SW 5th Ave
4PM–6PM

SPEED IDEATING
Ariane Jacob
Art Building 320, 2000 SW 5th Ave
5PM–7PM

BUS STOP OPERA
Dawn Weleski
Various Locations, Hollywood TC (1410 NE 42nd Ave)
7PM
SW Jefferson & 10th #3049
8PM

MUSEUM MUSEUM OPENING
1101 SW Jefferson Street
7PM–8PM

MIDNIGHT MOVIE: STORIES!!!
510 SW Hall Street
10PM–12AM

SUNDAY

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION TABLE/INFO POINT
Art Building Lobby/SP Library, 2000 SW 5th Ave
9AM–6PM

BREAKFAST AT VOODOO DOUGHNUTS
Laurel Kurtz
22 SW 3rd Ave
9:30AM–10:30AM

BUS STOP OPERA
Dawn Weleski
Various Locations, 6th & Pine (near Voodoo Donuts)
9:30AM
Lloyd Center (13th & Holiday)
10:30AM
Clackamas Town Center TC
11:30PM

NILS NORMAN AND JOEN VEDEL UTOPIAS WORKSHOP
Shattuck Annex Hall, 1914 SW Park Ave
10:30AM–12PM

LUNCH
12PM–12:30PM

AMY FRANCESCHINI TALK
Shattuck Annex Hall, 1914 SW Park Ave
12:30PM–2PM

BREAK + DANCE LESSON
Chloe Womack
Shattuck Annex Hall, 1914 SW Park Ave
4:30PM–5PM

TWIN TWIN OPENING
Twin Twin Peaks, Car Hole Gallery
114 SE 12th Ave
8PM–10PM

INeCUBATE TRIVIA NIGHT
Autzen Gallery, Neuberger Hall, 724 SW Harrison
9PM–12AM

THE LONG RIDE HOME
Laurel Kurtz and Amy Steel
Autzen Gallery, Neuberger Hall, 724 SW Harrison
12AM
MONDAY

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION
TABLE/INFO POINT
Art Building Lobby/SP Library,
2000 SW 5th Ave
9AM–6PM

PROJECT GROW
SEA Change Gallery,
625 NW Everett Street Gallery #110
9AM–5PM

IF IT AIN’T BROKE
Sara Black and John Preus
Igloo Gallery, 625 NW Everett #102
(Space open to the public)
10AM–6PM

OPEN: A COLLABORATIVE, PERFORMATIVE,
PAPER-IN-PROGRESS
Lisa Radon
PICA’s Resource Room
224 NW 13th Avenue, Suite 305
10AM–2PM

SIGNAL FIRE WALKING WORKSHOP
Meeting place TBD
10:30AM–12PM

LUNCH
12PM–12:30PM

NILS NORMAN TALK
Gerding Theater at the Armory,
128 NW 11th Ave
12:30PM–2PM

BUS STOP OPERA
Dawn Weleski
Various Locations,
Beaverton TC (4050 SW Lombard)
4PM
Sunset TC (SW Barnes Rd. at Hwy 217)
5PM
6th & Montgomery (near Annex)
6PM

SOUP AND COMEDY DINNER
6:15PM

PANEL WITH NILS NORMAN, AMY
FRANCECHESINI, MARK DION
Moderated by Nato Thompson
Shattuck Annex Hall, 1914 SW Park Ave
7:30PM–9PM

DANCE PARTY!!!
The Red Cap, 1035 SW Stark Street
100 DANCE MOVES
You Are My Friend
SAUSAGE PARTY
Brian Merkel
9:30PM

SATURDAY
2:30PM–4:30PM
1. Affective Economies — Helen Reed (Moderator), Henry Jenkins, Harrell Fletcher, David Horvitz (5th Avenue Cinema)
2. History and Critique of SP — Jen Delos Reyes, Sean Carney, Michael Reinsch, Chen Tamir, Elyse Mallouk (AB 200)
3. Me, Her and Us — Anna Martine Whitehead, Roxy Farhat, Wafa Yasin, Cecilio Cooper (AB 260)
5. The Ethical Implications of Social Art — Constance Hockaday (Moderator), Ted Purves, Rachel Hardesty, Matthew Rana, Sarah Biscarra, Jackie Davis, Jo Nelson, Anna Lise Jensen (SAH)
7. Social Spaces and Collaboration — Jill Baker, Cara Tomlinson, Sammy Shaw, Amelia Wingert-Bearskin (AB 240)
8. Brian Collier (AB 135)

SPECIAL PROJECTS:
Human Taxidermy — Robin Corbo (NH)
Fruit Sculpture — Cecilia de Jong (Park Blocks)

SUNDAY
2:30PM–4:30PM
1. Group Work: The Collective Impetus — Katy Asher (Moderator), National Bitter Melon Council, Broken City Lab, INCUBATE, Otsu (Autenz Gallery)
2. The Unexamined Process — Doug Blandy (Moderator), Frances Bronet, John Fenn, Lori Hager (AB 240)
3. Global Perspectives on Art and Social Practice — Dino Mangini, Emilia Javanica, Sudandyo Aprilianto, IRUS (SAH)
4. Building a Sustainable Practice: Workshop — Sara Thacher (AB 320)
5. Parfyme: Everyone Can Use the Harbor — Douglas Paulson (AB 200)
6. The Role of the Art Institution in Community Engagement — Nato Thompson (Moderator), Jeff Nye, Tina Olsen, Stephanie Parish, Danielle Abravinas, Elizabeth Cline (Portland Art Museum, Mark Building)
7. Social Spaces and Collaboration — Kerri–Lynn Reeves, Matthew Rana, Nick Lally (AB 260)
8. Sprockettes Work Shop (TBD)

MONDAY
2:30PM–4:30PM
1. Some Forms of Availability — Ashley Neese (Moderator), Think Tank, Lauren Rosenblum, Matthew Stadler, Anne E. Moore (TBD)
2. Wealth Under Ground Farms Tour — Nolan Cainsh (TBD)
3. Max Tour: Race and the Hidden History of Portland- Valerie Otani (TBD)
4. Tour of SE Clay — Linda Wysong (TBD)
5. A Plein Air Action — Mark Smith, Susan Harlan, students from PCC and PSU (TBD)
6. Floating Forest — Bruce Conkie (TBD)

SPECIAL PROJECTS:
The Miracle/Bookmobile (Roving)
Tiny Offerings — Brenda Huchinson (Sea Change Gallery, 625 NW Everett Street Gallery #110)