

Public Dialogue

Creative Strategies
for Redevelopment:
Artists as Catalysts
for Neighborhood
Regeneration



Curator Bios

Dara M. Epison is the Manager of Cultural and Community Engagement in the Office of Civic Engagement at the University of Chicago.

Epison led the renovation effort and developed the program for the Arts Incubator in Washington Park, a project of Arts + Public Life. She previously served as the Program Coordinator for University and Community Arts Collaborations in the Office of the Provost at UChicago. Epison worked to shape the community engagement strategy for the Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts and the platform for the Arts + Public Life initiative. Prior to joining UChicago, Dara was a project manager for Theaster Gates' studio. Epison played an integral part in planning Gates' 2010 exhibitions at the Milwaukee Art Museum and the Whitney Museum of American Art, and his residency with the Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts. Epison received her Bachelor of Arts in Art History with a co-major in Caribbean Studies from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

Allison M. Glenn is the Arts + Public Life Program Manager and Exhibitions Curator at the Arts Incubator in Washington Park.

Glenn has contributed to various publications, including the Studio Museum in Harlem's *Fore* exhibition catalog and Art21.org. Exhibition experience includes, *Now Dig This! Art and Black Los Angeles 1960-1980*, an exhibition at the Hammer Museum that was part of the Pacific Standard Time initiative of the Getty Research Institute; a 2010 Exhibitions Fellowship at Hyde Park Art Center, the School of the Art Institute of Chicago's 2012 MFA Exhibition Curatorial Fellowship, and many independent exhibitions. She recently completed a Research Fellowship with Dorchester Projects. Glenn received a dual Master's Degree in Modern Art History, Theory and Criticism & Arts Administration and Policy from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and a Bachelor of Fine Art Photography with a Co-Major in Urban Studies from Wayne State University.

Public Reading Room

July 12 — August 12

Hours: Mondays 12–6 pm
Wednesdays 12–3 pm
Fridays 12–3 pm

Location: Arts Incubator,
First Floor Gallery

Type: Drop-in public library

Cost: Free

The public reading room is a combination of texts and information on the redevelopment of urban environments through the arts and design. The materials featured are on loan from *Spontaneous Interventions: Design Actions for the Common Good*, an exhibition on view at the Chicago Cultural Center and the University of Chicago libraries through September 1, 2013.

Public Dialogue Resource Station

July 12 — August 12

Hours: Mondays 12–6 pm
Wednesdays 12–3 pm
Fridays 12–3 pm

Location: Arts Incubator,
First Floor Gallery

Type: Resource Station

Cost: Free

Browse through the information kiosk to discover events taking place around Chicago that are related to the ongoing dialogue focused on the intersection of art, design, and community development.

Calendar

Washington Park Archival Project

July 15 — August 9

Hours: **Mondays 12–6 pm
Wednesdays 12–3 pm
Fridays 12–3 pm**

Location: **Arts Incubator,
First Floor Gallery**

Type: **Archival project**

Participants: **Current and former
Washington Park
residents**

Cost: **Free**

The Washington Park Archival Project aims to document the deep cultural history of the Washington Park neighborhood. Bring objects, images, and other ephemera to be scanned, digitized and placed into the community archive.

Public Dialogue #2 Artists and Communities: The Gentrification Debate

Friday, July 19

Hours: **6:30–8:30 pm**

Location: **Arts Incubator,
Second Floor Flex Space**

Type: **Public conversation**

Participants: **Steve Cancian,** Los Angeles-based landscape designer and creator of **Sidewalk Living Rooms Los Angeles;** **Cauleen Smith,** filmmaker and 2012/13 Arts + Public Life/Center for the Study of Race, Politics and Culture **Artist-in-Residence;** and others

Cost: **Free**

Do artists, designers, and their work contribute to gentrification? Join us for a public Oxford-style debate, focused on the perceived connection between the influx of artists to an established community and the displacement of its residents.

Portraits with the Public

Portraits:
July 25–28, 10am–5pm

Exhibition: **August 5 — 12**

Reception: **Monday, August 12,
6–8 pm**

Location: **Arts Incubator,
First Floor Gallery**

Type: **Portrait studio
and Exhibition**

Participants: **Washington Park
community members**

Cost: **Free**

Portraits with the Public is a pop-up photography studio created by Chicago-based photographer LaMont Hamilton. The project aims to capture photographic portraits of the people who make up the Washington Park neighborhood. Drop in to observe or participate in the photo shoot and return in August to visit the resulting exhibition on view.

Artist Bio:
LaMont Hamilton is a portrait photographer based in Chicago. Born 1982 in Kansas, Hamilton idolized Gordon Parks after discovering his images at an early age. It was this kinship with the fellow Kansan Parks that eventually led Hamilton to photography.

Washington Park Arts Archive Project: Featuring Sixty Inches from Center

Saturday, August 3

Hours: **12–4 pm**

Location: **Arts Incubator,
First Floor Gallery**

Type: **Archival project**

Participants: **Chicago-based artists**

Cost: **Free**

Pull out the old shoeboxes, look into the cracks of books, sketchbooks and notepads, and gather them all together. Join us to build up the Washington Park archives with Chicago's art-makers and supporters. As part of Sixty Inches From Center's partnership with the Chicago Artists Archive at Harold Washington Library, artists from across the city are invited to bring their exhibition postcards, catalogs, artist statements, CV's, images, and all other tokens from their careers to the Incubator.

The inspiration for the Public Dialogue program is the Arts Incubator in Washington Park. The Arts Incubator, an initiative of Arts + Public Life at the University of Chicago, opened its doors a mere six months ago. As Arts + Public Life expands its programmatic ambition and grapples with the role that this space can play within the existing fabric of the Washington Park neighborhood, Public Dialogue will leverage conversations with peers in the field that operate at the intersection of academia, culture, community, and space activation.

Public Dialogue is designed as a response to decades of community planning in Washington Park, driven by expressly local desires to enact change or a broader set of circumstances and priorities that only tangentially touch the neighborhood. The disparity between the aforementioned approaches inevitably leads to a disparity in the way that a community is engaged. How can a bridge between the two strategies be constructed? Where do the models for this new form of engagement currently exist? What role can cultural producers, artists, arts organizations, designers, and architects play in the planning and shaping of communities?

The name Public Dialogue derives from the ambition to design an environment that literally and metaphorically allows for an exchange of ideas, knowledge, and creativity. Through a few key gestures—designing a resource station for convening and sharing; moving the administrative spaces of the facility from the upper level into the visible ground floor space; and dedicating a space for the consumption of knowledge that is often limited to the confines of the UChicago campus proper—the Arts Incubator’s first floor project space will be transformed into a dialogic space.

We hope you’ll join us in the dialogue.



Partners

As part of the Public Dialogue program, we have partnered with local organizations and programs that will add to and expand upon the conversation:

Sixty Inches From Center is a non-profit organization that documents and engages the visual arts in Chicago. SIFC uses video, audio, photography, editorial essays, and interviews to document artists and arts events that exist outside of the city’s mainstream cultural institutions. By doing so, SIFC is able to capture the innovative work of artists and communities that might otherwise be missed by traditional art historical narratives.

This documentary material is then featured on SIFC’s Chicago Arts Archive project website, ensuring that it is available both as an educational resource and as a platform to support the work of local artists. Through a partnership with the Harold Washington Library’s Chicago Artists Archive, the content collected by SIFC is included in the Archive’s extensive physical catalog of artists files to further the connection with and documentation of 21st century artists.

Through the Collective Project, SIFC seeks to establish programming and partnerships that allow them to use resource sharing as a way to increase access to and engagement with the arts in Chicago.

SIFC joins Public Dialogue to offer Washington Park neighbors the opportunity to share their stories on Saturday, August 3, through the Sixty Inches from Center Archives Washington Park program. More information available in the program description.

Spontaneous Interventions: Design Actions for the Common Good, an exhibition at the Chicago Cultural Center, May 24–September 1, 2013, features 84 urban interventions initiated by architects, designers, planners, artists, and everyday citizens that bring positive change to neighborhoods and cities in addition to a pop-up installation in Millennium Park.

Chicago is the first destination of *Spontaneous Interventions*, which served as the U.S. presentation at the 13th International Architecture Exhibition at the Venice Biennale (2012). The contents of the exhibition have been updated to include more recent and more local projects. Among the 84 projects that are presented, more than a dozen are from Chicago, including several that also appeared in Venice.

Spontaneous Interventions, organized by Cathy Lang Ho on behalf of the Institute for Urban Design, is devoted to the growing movement of architects, designers, artists, and everyday citizens acting on their own initiative to bring improvements to the urban realm, creating new opportunities and amenities for the public. The exhibition received over 178,000 visitors in Venice, and earned a Special Mention from the Golden Lion jury, the first time the United States has been honored in the history of the Venice Architecture Biennale.

Spontaneous Interventions has loaned over 70 original texts from its collection to the Public Dialogue Reading Room. In turn, Public Dialogue will host exhibition public programming at the Arts Incubator designed to engage audiences in a cross-city exchange of thoughts and ideas related to the creative investigation and interpretation of the urban landscape.

