

Innovative Cultural Uses of Urban Space

CONSTRUCTION ZONES AND VACANT LOTS



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a NOCD-NY profile series



look for:

- adaptive reuse
- construction zones and vacant lots
- public outdoor space: temporary and long-term
- publicly owned facilities
- religious spaces
- shared space

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

BETSY IMERSHEIN has more than 30 years of experience engaging communities, small businesses and cultural organizations in economic development, cultural revitalization, and sustainability initiatives. Betsy is Principal and founder of Sustainability Strategies, a company making sustainability achievable for small to mid-size businesses, residential and non-profit organizations. She is Director of SUSTAIN for FABnyc, the leadership organization of the East 4th Street Cultural District on the Lower East Side. This two-year sustainability initiative, funded by a Rockefeller Foundation Cultural Innovation Grant, focuses on the use of the arts as a tool for communication and engagement aimed at behavior change. Betsy is co-founder and former CEO of Croton Energy Group Inc, specializing in clean energy management and sustainability engagement services. She was also advisor and policy analyst for Cooper Union Institute for Sustainable Design and co-founder and lead for an advocacy organization with over 70 shops encouraging New Yorkers to ‘shop local, shop small.’ Betsy launched and directed a new office for 550+ companies in the Maspeth Industrial Business Zone in Queens.

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cover photos, clockwise from upper left: LentSpace in Hudson Square, FABnyc ArtUp on an East 4th Street construction container, New York City Department of Transportation Urban Art by Carla Torres.
credits: Dean Kaufman, Tom Oesau, NYCDOT



INTRODUCTION

“While the blue-chip art world struggles to recover from its art-as-investment bubble, young artists mistrustful of the system have formed groups all over the city with the intent of taking back some of art’s cultural resonance...the idea that you’d come to New York to make it big has given way to the idea that you make art for the sake of itself, not in some competitive way. It’s all about people making art and music and doing gardening in more of a community than you could hope to get in the exclusive gallery scene.”¹

– *Rachel Nelson, cofounder of and participant in the collective Secret Project Robot, Bushwick, Brooklyn*

Artists have always pushed boundaries, searching for new and unusual ways to attract audiences to their work. And the pervasiveness of art adorning construction sites, scaffolding, containers, and vacant lots represents the wholesale creative reuse of the public domain, whether as a temporary display or a permanent fixture.

The ad hoc nature of these projects has been bolstered by changes in the art world, the construction boom and explosion of infrastructure projects, and ironically, the withered economy, which created many of the actual spaces on which to innovate. In September 2011, the Manhattan Borough President’s Office issued a report, *Arrested Development: Breathing New Life into Stalled Construction Sites*.² One of

¹ Brian Chidester, “Rebel Diaz and Secret Project Robot Do Art Their Own Way: May We Shift Your Paradigm?,” Village Voice, August 8, 2012, <http://www.villagevoice.com/2012-08-08/art/rebel-diaz-and-secret-project-robot-do-art-their-own-way/>.
² <http://www.scribd.com/doc/66288564/Arrested-Development-Breathing-New-Life-Into-Stalled-Construction-Sites>.

its recommendations for ameliorating the negative impacts of stalled and active construction zones in neighborhoods throughout New York City was that the city encourage and support construction-fencing beautification strategies.

Of the projects and programs that were researched for this study, most are the inspiration of one person or a small organization, turning something ugly or intrusive into urban art making, using the city itself as a canvas for creativity. Art is popping up spontaneously in neighborhoods throughout the five boroughs, largely under the radar and unregulated by city government.

This spontaneous and rapid expansion of street art is being propelled by informal networks of street artists, actively engaged and communicating among themselves through blogs and their own press outlets, while the mainstream media has little understanding of, or desire to pay attention to, this upsurge in public art. The street artist networks are an effective means for sharing opportunities, mentoring young artists, and allowing artists to invite one another to their sites, creating more attention than “inside” art shows are able to muster.

Many of the project creators included in this report described their work as the transformation of scaffolding or construction sites into street-side galleries, often through placing murals on sites susceptible to vandalism or neglect. Organizers stated that “after years of tagging and vandalism, the wall murals are helping to rejuvenate the street”³ and that after a container was painted, “the tagging, public urination, garbage and street people disappeared.”⁴

FRAMING

A Focus on New York City Neighborhoods

The broad focus of this profile is the opportunities presented by construction sites, scaffolding bridges, containers, and vacant lots for neighborhood revitalization and beautification through public art and the use that has been made of these sites. Some projects are part of ongoing organizational initiatives, while others have sprung up serendipitously when conditions in a neighborhood presented advantageous circumstances. Projects initiated by New York City government are also discussed.

Although the profiled sites are different in type, their issues and concerns are similar. And organizations have opportunistically expanded their programming to encompass all such sites when they have become available. The projects highlighted in this report have been initiated by the community

and have been making vital cultural, social and economic connections within their neighborhoods.

Existing Site Conditions

Frequently, there is no prior warning to the sudden appearance of construction equipment in a neighborhood, with all variety of its paraphernalia becoming a long-term presence and blight for the community. Such intrusions might include containers, scaffolding bridges, building sites in various stages of construction with fencing and barriers, and short or long-term vacant lots.

These sites have become of increasing interest to designers, artists, and neighborhoods.

Project Impacts

Most public art projects affect neighborhoods

³ Interview with FABnyc executive director Tamara Greenfield, July 30, 2012.

⁴ Interview with street artists Pebbles Russell and Jon Neville, July 11, 2012.

positively, as the area appears more cared for after they are installed. Residents experience a reduction in vandalism and vagrancy and a noticeable decrease in graffiti and garbage. Another result is increased pedestrian traffic as people visit these new art locations, which become a showcase for community and new talent. And probably most significant, there appears to be an increased engagement between neighbors.

FINDINGS

Shared Characteristics

All art projects are different, as is each neighborhood where they are installed, even when projects are initiated by the same organization. This makes it difficult to describe distinct characteristics, though the following tend to be in evidence for all projects and organizations researched:

- *The planning process is frequently short, because of the sudden appearance of the site or the uncertainty of how long it will be available.*
- *Because of the small window for planning, and the current fund-raising environment, it's difficult to raise funds specifically for these projects, especially for community-based organizations.*
- *Most of the organizations sponsoring projects have small budgets, if they have any budgets at all. And if they have budgets, rarely is their money specifically dedicated to these projects.*
- *Time frames for installation and project duration vary, even within each site.*
- *Some locations become ongoing art sites, affording longer preparation and exhibition time.*

- *Artists are frequently asked to donate their time, although their materials are usually paid for.*

Navigating City Agencies

For the kind of projects discussed here, it's unclear what New York City law is and what permits are necessary. This lack of clarity became one of the most frequent complaints reported and was a common source of frustration. Most project organizers have had no official New York City agency contact and have not needed to get permits—though when they have, they have found city agencies difficult to navigate. Where permits have been necessary, sometimes the property owner or contractor has taken on the task of obtaining one; other times this has proved to be a big expense and a barrier to implementation.

Partnerships and Collaborations

Engaging the community creates expanded relationships between and support from residents, small businesses, and civic organizations. Partnerships are vital for several reasons:

- *They're needed to get projects started.*
- *They ease the creation and facilitation of new and ongoing projects.*
- *They develop because of the project and then support them.*
- *It's important to have clarity in all partner roles and for each to stay within its organization's core competencies and strengths.*
- *As sites change or suddenly become available, often new relationships and partnerships are needed, and these take a lot of time to develop.*

Street art projects, with their mix of established and young artists often working on the same project, have created informal support and mentoring.

Additional learnings of importance were shared:

- *A really tall ladder is helpful.*
- *Outdoor sites create challenges for hosting art openings. It's hard to make an opening work in the street, especially on a week-night or during inclement weather.*

RECOMMENDATIONS

Some project organizers want clear guidelines from New York City; others want to continue operating under the radar. This lack of unanimity reflects the varied experiences of creating street art. That being said, there is

relative agreement on several ways to support street art and its organizers:

- *Create guidelines and best practices to help individuals and organizations wanting to do similar projects.*
- *When permitting is required, streamline both the paperwork and number of applications necessary for street art projects by creating a universal New York City agency application.*
- *Have New York City agencies publicize what construction sites are available for public art intervention.*
- *Continue and expand support for New York City Department of Transportation's Urban Art program and the joint New York City Department of Buildings and Department of Cultural Affairs' Urban Canvas program.*

STREET ART EXAMPLES

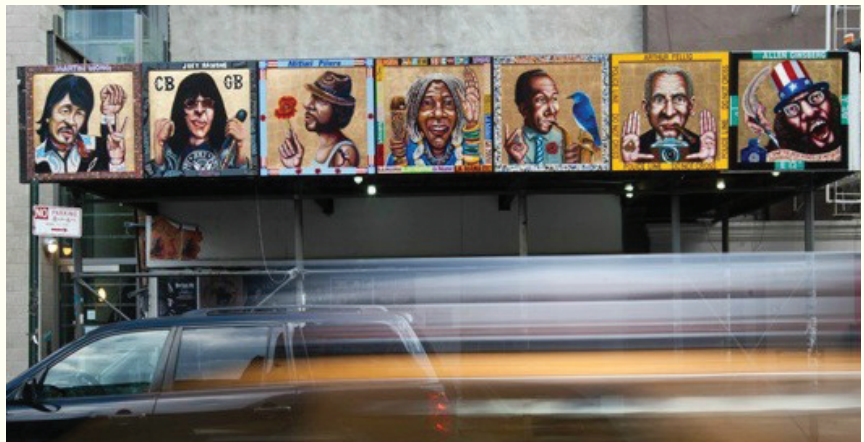
Creating Public Art on Scaffolding and Throughout the Neighborhood

East 4th Street and Fourth Arts Block (FABnyc)

Lower East Side, Manhattan

Fourth Arts Block, better known as FABnyc, is the leadership organization for the East Fourth Street Cultural District, a mixed-use Lower East Side block of fourteen performing and visual arts organizations, civic groups, and residential buildings with first-floor mom-and-pop stores. Two motivating factors precipitated the commencement of its public art programming of under-used construction sites in September 2008: first, FABnyc completed a streetscape design process in which the community encouraged implementation of public art projects and, second, capital construction projects began on the block, with very unpopular scaffolding bridges suddenly appearing on several of the arts buildings. What started with one bridge in 2008 has expanded into ArtUp, its public art program, with a part-time director overseeing the curating and installation of projects in five locations: scaffolding bridges, construction containers, an interior street, and vacant walls both on the block and throughout the Lower East Side.

According to the executive director of FABnyc, “When we started the project, we really had no idea what we were doing. Fortunately, with all the construction on the block, we already had a relationship with the New York City Department of Design and Construction, who connected us to the scaffolding company. The company was fairly neutral about the idea for the



FABnyc’s ArtUp program exhibits on East 4th Street scaffolding bridge
Photo: Udom Surangsophon

project. All they asked was for us to complete a liability waiver, return the scaffolding bridge to its original condition, and they’ve pretty much left us alone. We’ve programmed a new show every three to four months since . . . and that was four years ago!”

FABnyc’s first scaffolding bridge exhibition was funded through an already existing streetscape grant. A Kickstarter campaign in 2011 brought some earmarked funding to ArtUp, though as its public art program has grown, FABnyc has not been able to secure ongoing, dedicated financial support for this programming.

During its four-year span of visual arts programming, ArtUp has exhibited work by photographers, street artists, sculptors, and muralists, as well as children’s projects. Each exhibit has provided an opportunity to experiment with medium, subject, and interaction and reaction from the community. Through trial and error FABnyc has learned that bold graphics and colors are most noticeable and receive the greatest response, while vinyls and photographs are not as well received. Its most recent show, delving into the diverse cultural history of the neighborhood, was the most popular. Future planning will focus on creating more projects that effectively explore and express the community’s history and diversity.

Partnerships and community relationships have been the linchpin of FABnyc’s continued street art successes and growth. Although each project has its unique partners, underpinning all has been the relationship that FABnyc has with the stakeholders on the block, the artist community, and the local community board. Matching the right kind of project to each site, context, or owner continues to be a challenge. Yet there is no shortage of artists interested in each new project, as artists seem to love the opportunity to exhibit at this scale and at such highly visible locations. Further, two visual art partners, ArtForward and MaNY Project, which are not physically located in the East Fourth Street Cultural District, have curated projects, coordinated with artists, managed installations, and helped promote FABnyc’s shows.

Equally critical has been FABnyc’s ongoing, good relationship with the New York City Department of Design and Construction, which initially forged connections with the first scaffolding

company and continues to facilitate connections, with the encouragement of other contractors to partner with FABnyc. And once the local precinct of the New York Police Department understood the container-painting projects and received the necessary documentation, it became a good partner, too.

Although spreading its wings beyond the East Fourth Street Cultural District, FABnyc's street art programming remains within the larger neighborhood of the Lower East Side. The strength of the group's community relationships and credibility has underpinned its ability to navigate problems, get introductions, and encourage owners they hadn't worked with before to take a chance on a new project.

Creative Use of Construction Fencing to Bring a Community Together

No Longer Empty (NLE)

New York City

No Longer Empty (NLE), which was formed in 2009, creates site-specific contemporary public art throughout the boroughs of New York City. In its reinhabiting unused spaces, its intention is that art pay homage to the historical value of sites in the context of their neighborhoods, creating an interaction between content, space, and the site itself. Although the primary focus of NLE's work is empty storefronts and buildings, the group has created six murals for construction sites and scaffolding in several communities around New York City.

In all its work, local partnerships and community engagement are crucial, and NLE prefers to collaborate with partners who also have a stake in each project. Through a personal connection at the New York City Economic Development Corporation, NLE was introduced to the Coney Island Development Corporation (CIDC). NLE was invited to create a large-scale mural on blue construction fencing that surrounded an enormous development site next to a subway station and Nathan's restaurant—an important landmark in Coney Island. The fencing would remain for approximately six months, until construction began. This site was in the middle of a neighborhood worn down by protracted fighting over changes, losses, and new development surrounding the beloved Coney Island amusement park.

In selecting artists to design and paint the mural, NLE's curator chose individuals who knew and loved Coney Island. CIDC



Veng and OverUnder's mural coordinated by NLE for for Coney Island Development Corporation Photo: Luna Park

took care of all the permitting and provided a small fee and materials for the artists. As soon as they arrived with their paint and supplies, NLE encountered tremendous anger from a community wanting to know why “they” could paint the mural while residents and community artists could not do equivalent painting at other sites. For the protection of both the artists and the mural, CIDC engaged a full-time police patrol.

During the process of painting this large-scale mural that celebrated the neighborhood and its history, the artists and NLE engaged with the community, and the anger and resentment slowly dissipated, replaced by appreciation for what was being created. This shift was noticeable to the curator, who continually returned to the site all winter long to observe how differently the public space was being perceived and treated. The mural helped to create an environment in which people lingered even during the winter months. And then a funny thing happened: when construction began in the spring, the blue panels that the mural had been painted on were taken down and reused, not as a mural but just as construction pieces. Seen at other construction sites in the neighborhood, the panels became a Rubik’s Cube, installed without regard for the art content but beautiful to look at nonetheless.

Transforming an Ugly Construction Container into an Ongoing Public Art Centerpiece

Centre-fuge

Lower East Side, Manhattan

Centre-fuge was created in the winter of 2011–12 by two residents of East First Street in Manhattan, who one day looked out their window and saw a construction container across the street—blocking their view of a park and a children’s playground. It was dirty and ugly and a blight on the block. The idea of transforming this eyesore into something beautiful that would both engage their community and provide opportunities for street artists, emerging and experienced, is the backbone of this project.

The organizers reached out to their block association, which connected them to the local community board, which, through New York City Department of Transportation and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, connected them to the user of the construction container, a contractor that was employing it as an office. The contractor consented to its office being painted, and an agreement was reached. The initial contract period arranged between Centre-fuge and the contractor was for one year, with exhibits



Artists finish work on the Cycle 6 mural on an East 1st Street office container.
Photo: Centre-fuge

changing every two months. The container is projected to be on the block at this location for five years.

From idea to first mural installation happened quickly—just several months. In its initial outreach and five-page proposal, Centre-fuge laid out its artist guidelines and first two cycles of design for the container, which cemented transparency and trust with the community—and the project's success. Immediately, the area around the container had less garbage, had a reduction in public urination, and had fewer homeless people hanging around. The container project has brightened the area, helped create happy neighbors, and become a destination for people to visit and photograph.

Local businesses have donated materials and space for a fund-raiser. Enough money was raised to pay for some of the supplies, though the artists do not receive any remuneration, nor do the project's organizers. But the project continues to grow with each two-month cycle. More artists learn about Centre-fuge and apply to be a part of it. Seven artists are selected for each cycle, with well-known and new street artists often being combined.

Buoyed by its successes, Centre-fuge has applied for nonprofit 501(c)(3) status and plans to expand to more locations with nontraditional street art possibilities. For this organization it's about life on and of the street that's reflective of a specific neighborhood, and appreciating its ability to take an eyesore and make it beautiful.

Collaboration and Support Between a Small Business and a Community Art-Making Organization

Groundswell

Brooklyn

Unlike the typical scenario in which organizations or activists respond to a neglected or unexpected site, Groundswell was contacted in spring 2007 by a local dumpster-carting business that was interested in exploring the possibility of murals being painted on its dumpsters.

Groundswell, a Brooklyn-based organization, is dedicated to public, collaborative community art making and using art to advance social change. It has been creating murals on walls in underserved neighborhoods in New York City for sixteen years, in partnership with civic and educational institutions, city agencies and occasionally working with a private business or property owner.

Mo's Carting, the company that reached out to Groundswell, places dumpster containers around New York City at construction and demolition sites and in store parking lots, collecting and recycling building materials. For its project, teens were enlisted to create and paint murals on several dumpsters; the project doubled as an opportunity for the teens to learn about recycling and how garbage is handled and disposed of in New York City.

Mo's owner said that she had been following news stories about street art projects and that she wanted to help kids do something positive, instead of getting into trouble for graffiti painting. After seeing an article about Groundswell in the *New York Daily News* she reached out to explore the possibility of a collaboration. Several dumpster murals later, she is pleased to have engaged in the project and is disappointed that it didn't become a bigger program—but there were obstacles. Of greatest negative impact was the collapse of the economy, meaning there was less business linked to construction and fewer resources to financially support the project. She also encountered some negative reactions from clients regarding the murals on her dumpsters. And because New York City tightly regulates what can be placed on waste dumpsters, using them for art making is limited and potentially problematic for the twelve city agencies that regulate her industry.



Dumpster painted by Groundswell's Teen Empowerment Mural Apprenticeship program participants Photo: Groundswell

A Successful Partnership Activates an Empty Lot

LentSpace

Lower Manhattan

Vacant lots pose a different type of challenge and often create an enormous blight in a community. Rarely are there resources available to program and use the lot, and often community activists have difficulty finding an owner or responsible person to discuss even temporary usage. The vacant lot at Sixth Avenue and Canal Street, in Lower Manhattan, owned by Trinity Wall Street (TWS), is not such a case. Although it is empty and waiting for a development that keeps being pushed off, its owner was eager to constructively and temporarily repurpose the site until construction begins. The executive directors of TWS and the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council (LMCC), having a long history of partnering on Wall Street area projects, came together and created LentSpace—conceived as a summer site for community and artistic activity. During the first two years, starting in 2008, the site was open five days a



LentSpace “in the meantime” activity in Hudson Square. Photo: Dean Kaufman

week, offering specific sculpture projects, community programming, and extensive, temporary landscaping.

With changes in circumstance and leadership at both LMCC and TWS, and with the creation of the Hudson Square Business Improvement District (BID), LentSpace was reconceived, but it was not available for programming during the summer of 2011. Winter of 2012 saw additional challenges and pressures, forcing the site's programming to be reduced during summer 2012 to Tuesday through Thursday from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. With the expansion in partnership organizations, LMCC continues to be contracted by TWS to program the space for temporary art installations and musical programming on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The BID has taken over all garbage collection and maintenance of the site and programming for Wednesdays, creating appealing community programming and attracting an array of food trucks to enliven the area during lunch hours.

Despite challenges, this site has continued to be activated for temporary community enjoyment and art making during the summer months. The idea was hatched by two organizations—a testament to the value of partnerships and their power to create, implement, and sustain new projects—with a third partner brought in as the opportunity arose. TWS and LMCC have been partners on numerous projects over the years and have persevered in making LentSpace an asset for the Lower Manhattan community.

City Agencies Creating Opportunities for Public Art and Community Engagement

Urban Art and Urban Canvas

New York City

Several New York City agencies have created programming aimed at activating and beautifying construction sites and their surroundings. The New York City Department of Transportation (DOT), with funding from the city's PlaNYC, launched Urban Art in October 2008. Developed as a community-based collaborative program focusing on beautifying public property and construction sites, Urban Art requires that each project have a partner to help fund, curate, produce, and install the art, with DOT providing up to five thousand dollars for each project. One of Urban Art's original programs targeted construction fencing and barriers.



Urban Art project on Flushing Ave, Brooklyn
Photo: Eugenie Tung, NYCDOT

Several construction site projects were installed with a variety of local partners and BIDs. But ultimately the difficulty of working with private property owners was too great an obstacle, so the focus of the program was changed to one of creating murals on street barriers that delineate bicycle paths around the city, which are on city property.

Another New York City program giving artists and designers the opportunity to create artwork for temporary structures at construction sites was launched in June 2010. This program, called Urban Canvas, is a collaboration between the New York City Department of Buildings and Department of Cultural Affairs that aims to beautify and promote maintenance of New York City's streetscape around construction sites.

The program created a competition that selected four designs for printed artwork on different types of temporary protective structures: construction fences, sidewalk sheds, supported scaffolds, and cocoon systems. The designs were initially selected by jury, followed by an online public vote, with final approvals given by the New York City Public Design Commission. The four winning designs have been available through the Urban Canvas Pilot Program for property owners and developers to install. So far only a few sites have chosen to participate.

CONCLUSION

On the local, neighborhood, and city agency levels, artists and activists are turning obstacles and blight into community assets through art making and proclaiming that place matters—both the space itself and the people who live and work there. The interventions highlighted in this report speak to the opportunities that exist to make real change with ingenuity, fortitude, and a little bit of luck.

Having a very tall ladder was offered as one unexpected suggestion. Another was emphasizing that making connections constitutes an important skill.

New York City neighborhoods are amenable and welcoming to street art projects, especially those adorning construction sites, scaffolding, containers, and vacant lots. And it appears that property owners and contractors who were individually contacted are open to the right project and possibility of collaboration. Do most property owners and scaffolding companies even know about the opportunities to create art during construction? The benefits of art making to communities are clear. Maybe the New York City Department of Buildings and Department of Cultural Affairs could refocus their collaborative program to identify and connect artists and arts organizations interested in beautifying and revitalizing neighborhoods with owners, contractors, and scaffolding companies.

APPENDIX

Methodology

Every example used in this report (except that pertaining to Urban Canvas) was researched through in-person or phone interviews. Most of the images included have been provided by the organization being discussed or taken from its website.

Interview Roster

- **ArtBridge.** Phone interview with Devin Mathis, director of operations, July 20, 2012
- **Centre-fuge.** In-person interview with Pebbles Russell and Jon Neville, cofounders and directors, July 11, 2012
- **City Soft Walks.** In-person interview with Bland Hoke, cofounder, July 10, 2012
- **Staten Island Arts.** Phone interview with Monica Valenzuela, director of development and community programming, July 17, 2012, and with Dan Adams, architect for Atlantic Salt, July 26, 2012
- **Eastern Minerals** in Chelsea, Massachusetts, Rock Chapel Marine and PORT. Phone interview with Dan Adams, principal of Landing Studio, July 26, 2012
- **Fourth Arts Block (FABnyc).** In-person interview with Tamara Greenfield, executive director, July 30, 2012
- **Groundswell.** Phone interview with Amy Sananman, executive director, July 23, 2012
- **Individual artist.** Phone interview, August 1, 2012
- **Lower Manhattan Cultural Council.** In-person interview with Melissa Levin, director of artist residencies, and Andrew Horwitz, director of public programming, July 18, 2012
- **Mo's Carting.** Phone interview with Maureen Tarulli, owner, August 1, 2012
- **No Longer Empty.** In-person interview with Naomi Herson-Ringskog, executive director, July 18, 2012, and with Keith Schweitzer, curator, July 24, 2012
- **New York City Department of Transportation.** Phone interview with Emily Colasacco, manager, Urban Art Program, July 17, 2012

Interviewed Individuals and Organizations

ArtBridge. This group transforms construction scaffolding into large-scale art galleries, with site-specific exhibits and community engagement by local emerging artists.

www.art-bridge.org
<http://art-bridge.org/installations/installations/past-projects/artbridge-first-exposure-2009/>
<http://art-bridge.org/chromatweet>

Centre-fuge. Centre-fuge transformed an office container into a place of public art on the Lower East Side, at East First Street just west of First Avenue. This rotating outdoor

gallery rebeautifies the block while encouraging the community to express itself in this public forum.

<http://centre-fuge.tumblr.com/>
<http://evgrieve.com/2012/03/centre-fuge-public-art-project-debuts.html>

City Soft Walks. This organization has created a kit of parts for activation of sidewalk sheds to create more functional and engaging public spaces.

<http://www.citysoftwalks.com/>
<http://www.planetizen.com/node/58195>
<http://www.fastcodesign.com/1670533/softwalks-transforms-streetside-scaffolding-into-urban-parklets#1>

Staten Island Arts (formerly Council on the Arts and Humanities for Staten Island). Staten Island Arts organizes and presents LUMEN, an annual waterfront video and performance art festival, which moves between different sites, including an industrial site of salt mountains and vacant buildings and containers along New Brighton's Kill van Kull waterfront.

www.statenislandarts.org
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/roccocell/7432076054/in/gallery-45691715@N00-72157630270148266/>
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/dezaster/7457939590/in/gallery-45691715@N00-72157630270381312/>
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/dezaster/7457942184/in/gallery-45691715@N00-72157630270381312/>

Eastern Minerals, Chelsea, Massachusetts. Rock Chapel Marine and PORT (publicly organized recreation territory) will become an innovative park alongside a working industrial port, incorporating vestiges of the old in the public access portion of the property. They partnered with Staten Island Arts in creating and presenting LUMEN 2012 at an industrial site near the Staten Island Ferry that most people never get to see.

<http://www.architecture.neu.edu/news/partnering-industry-recreation-waterfront-development>
<http://www.chelsearecord.com/2012/02/16/innovative-park-new-salt-pile-to-work-together-on-waterfront/>

Fourth Arts Block (FABnyc). FABnyc's ArtUp program reinigorates spaces through public art and community partnerships, transforming construction sites, scaffolding, and other underused space in the Lower East Side into street-side galleries.

www.fabnyc.org
<http://eastvillagevisitorcenter.com/news/241-artup-featured-on-wabc-tv>
<http://www.metropolisny.com/articles/frank-fortino-supports-the-arts-in-nyc-in-a-unique-way/>

Groundswell. This group produces projects and murals throughout New York City, participating in collaborative site-specific and community-specific art making that honors and engages the individual, group, and community during the production of a mural or other artwork. Examples include its collaboration with community groups to activate vacant lots with murals, until construction was completed, and its project Don't Trash NYC, designed

with Mo's Carting, a dumpster company, to engage teens in learning about garbage and recycling while creating art projects to enliven and beautify the dumpsters.

www.groundswellmural.org

Don't Trash NYC

<http://www.groundswellmural.org/project/don%E2%80%99t-trash-nyc-container-project>

Water Is the Life of NYC

<http://www.groundswellmural.org/project/water-life-nyc>

Press

<http://cityroom.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/08/30/painted-on-the-walls-the-stories-of-new-york-communities/#more-431506>

Individual artist at Grand Street in Lower Manhattan.

This artist is interested in using the construction fencing outside her front door for art making and community engagement.

Lower Manhattan Cultural Council (LMCC). LentSpace, at the intersection of Canal Street and Sixth Avenue in Lower Manhattan, is a project created and programmed by LMCC in partnership with Trinity Wall Street and the Hudson Square BID. LMCC is licensed to create and present artistic activities for the vacant lot at specific times during the summer months.

http://www.lmcc.net/cultural_programs/lentspace

Mo's Carting. This small dumpster-carting business in Brooklyn worked with Groundswell on the project Don't Trash New York.

New York City Department of Transportation. The department's Urban Art program supports site-responsive art created in collaboration with community-based organizations.

http://www.nyc.gov/html/dot/html/sidewalks/urbanart_prgm.shtml

Thirty-First Street barrier art, first and second iterations

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/nycstreets/sets/7215762872225693/>

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/nycstreets/sets/72157629321359957/>

Hudson River Park Trust barrier beautification

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/nycstreets/sets/72157629255045636/>

No Longer Empty (NLE). While engaging communities, NLE brings art to communities, here with a scaffolding and construction site project in Coney Island, Brooklyn.

www.nolongerempty.org

Videos

Phase one of Coney Island: <https://vimeo.com/23049330>

Chris Stain / DUMBO: <https://vimeo.com/15965173>

Robyn Hasty / DUMBO: <https://vimeo.com/15642723>

Helen Dennis / DUMBO: <https://vimeo.com/16368342>

Phase two of Coney Island: <https://vimeo.com/30753014>

Organizations With Similar Programming

Additional information was gathered from the following organizations, although they were not interviewed.

Alliance for Downtown New York: Re:Construction, begun in 2007 with approximately twenty projects completed, is winding down because of the loss of funds from the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation. It is a public art program using construction sites, scaffolding bridges, and concrete barriers and thus "channels the energy of Lower Manhattan's rebuilding process by recasting construction sites as canvases for innovative public art and architecture."

<http://www.downtownny.com/programs/reconstruction>

596 Acres. This organization helps individuals and communities find, map, and activate public vacant lots in their neighborhoods. According to its website, as of September 2, 2012, there were 1,218 public vacant sites on 1,275 lots. The group offers a potentially interesting calibration tool for tracking vacant construction sites, scaffolding, and containers that are potentially available for street art projects.

<http://www.596acres.org>

New York City Department of Buildings and New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. These departments launched Urban Canvas in June 2010 as an opportunity for artists and designers to create printed artwork for temporary structures at construction sites to beautify New York City's streetscape and promote maintenance of these structures.

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/urbancanvas/html/home/home.shtml>

a NOCD-NY profile series



look for:

- adaptive reuse
- construction zones and vacant lots
- public outdoor space: temporary and long-term
- publicly owned facilities
- religious spaces
- shared space