



# CALL // CITY AS LIVING LABORATORY

Sustainability Made Tangible Through the Arts

**CALL//WALKS**  
2019 National Walks Report



# CALL/WALKS

## FRAMEWORKS

The path to meaningful action is forged through the long-term process of relationship building.

CALL/WALKS are a step in that direction.

**"CALL/WALKS bring together a diverse constituency, demonstrating our approach to addressing complex environmental concerns. By building a national network of like-minded organizations and supporters we work together to amplify our impact."**

**-MARY MISS  
FOUNDER & ARTISTIC DIRECTOR  
CALL/CITY AS LIVING LABORATORY**

### CREATING A MAP FOR INNOVATIVE AND COLLABORATIVE ARTIST-LED INITIATIVES

CALL // CITY AS LIVING LABORATORY'S mission is to raise environmental awareness and promote the sustainable development of urban communities through the arts. We see artists as innovative coalition-leaders who can chart a course towards greater community understanding and engagement in the journey towards sustainable development.

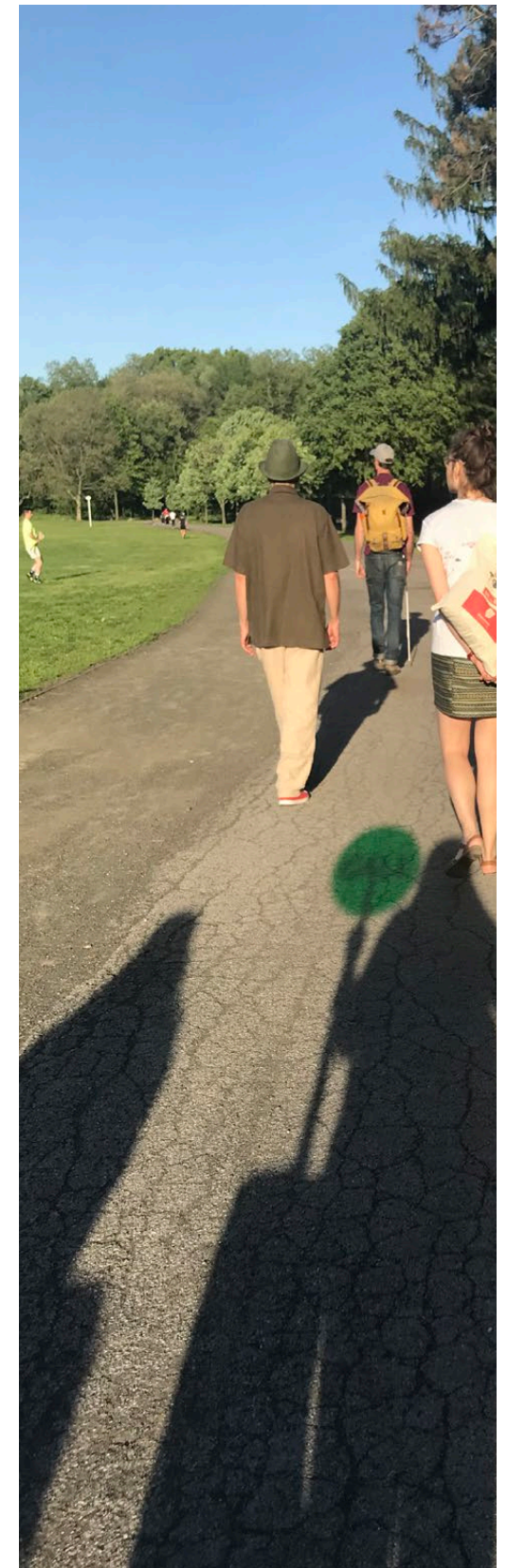
Rooted in place-based experience, CALL's artist-facilitated programs foster a deeper understanding of a location's history, as well as the natural systems, social relations, and infrastructure that sustain life. They connect personal experiences of the local environment to larger issues of sustainability and accelerate action toward concrete solutions. Programs succeed through interdisciplinary collaborations with scientists, urban planning experts, key community actors, and government officials.

Over ten years, CALL has refined a flexible framework for our iterative development process. The walks, workshops, and other exploratory activities integrate informal learning, grass roots activism, artistic vision, and scientific knowledge. This framework provides a deep understanding of complex local structures and continually informs larger initiatives through ongoing research and feedback.

CALL/WALKS are the launchpad for this process, bringing together residents, artists, and scientists for "traveling dialogues" that decode local ecosystems, spark imagination, and seed ideas for creative interventions. CALL/WALKS strengthen communities and demonstrate the power of meaningful collaboration between artists and scientists to provoke fresh thinking about complex issues. Through over 70 walks, we've learned a lot and have developed a toolkit to enable others to join in.

CALL launched the first National CALL/WALKS event in May 2019, in partnership with a network of organizations that applied the toolkit in their local context. On the following pages are a snapshot of what these walks explored and accomplished. The diversity of themes mirrors the diversity of expertise and are inspiring. We are eager to see what is in store for this expanding network and the fruits that will come from these explorations.

No one can deny that the challenges we face are immense, but the CALL/WALKS show us that we can envision solutions, find hope, and walk step by step into tomorrow. We hope you'll be inspired by the pages that follow, check out our CALL/WALKS toolkit, and join us in advancing the sustainable development of our communities.



# CALLAWALKS

## BALTIMORE

**“One of the pleasures of my work is helping people see ecological patterns and processes in everyday life. Wonder and curiosity is key to creativity in science.”**

**- LEA JOHNSON  
ECOLOGIST**

**“Art gives people the opportunity to approach ideas from different perspectives. Artists have been trained to ask diverse questions, using many avenues to gather and impart experience and perception.”**

**-JANN ROSEN-QUERALT  
DIRECTOR, RINEHART SCHOOL OF SCULPTURE  
MARYLAND INSTITUTE COLLEGE OF ART**

### **NEST + FLOW**

*Artist Jann Rosen-Queralt and ecologist Lea Johnson highlight the way species, water and energy move through the landscape, exposing ecological patterns and processes often overlooked or unseen.*

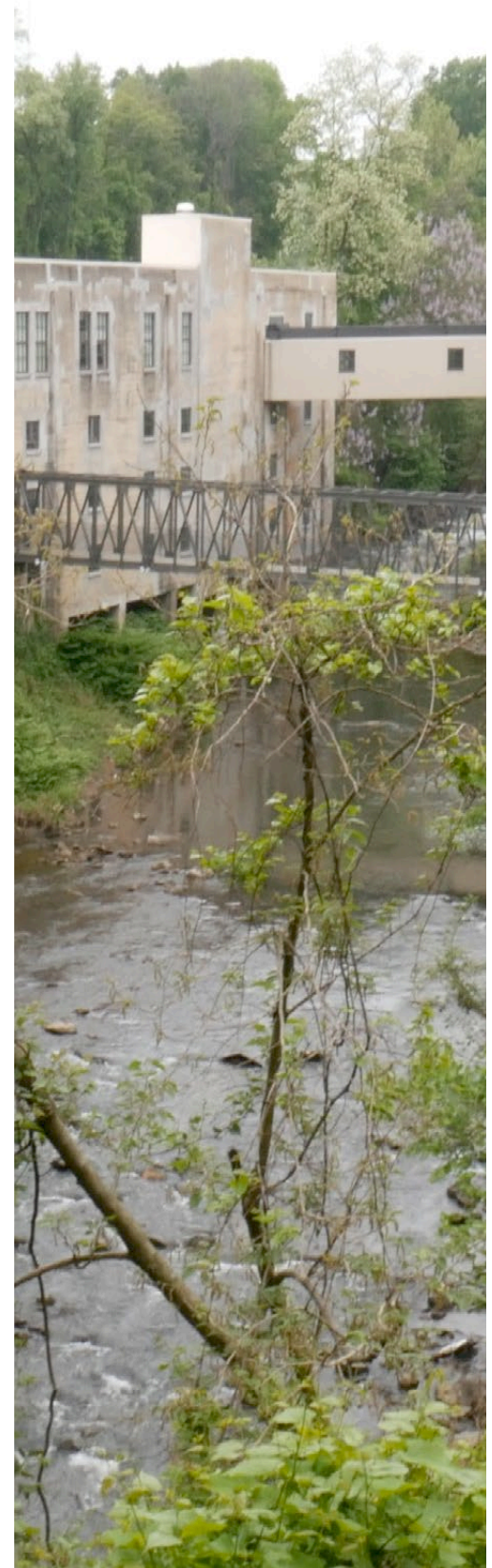
**May 4th, 2019  
Jones Falls**

We met at the Druid Hill Reservoir, which is being completely overhauled in order to comply with the 2006 Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) rules. Before beginning, we presented two questions: Had anyone seen an ecosystem, and if so how was it perceived? Jann suggested that one needed to physically experience it, possess scientific knowledge, and use imagination since all functions cannot be seen at once. Two other threads were introduced, framing and cross-scale interactions (micro-macro-micro). Jann included cut mats that participants could use to “frame” their sights – directing them to zero in on one aspect or many aspects of our surroundings throughout the walk. Lea introduced magnifying glasses, enabling exploration of unseen detail. While observing the reservoir renovation we discussed Baltimore’s watersheds, emphasizing the Jones Falls, water supply (drinking, storm water, and sewage), and framing. As we moved east we looked at interactions between human and natural processes, such as an eroding hillside and desire paths.

As we approached the Jones Falls Expressway our conversation moved to flows and dispersal, while we observed flowing water, traffic, scent, and pollen moving across the landscape. The next highlight was observing nesting Yellow Crowned Night Herons in the Sycamore tree branches spreading across the falls way. Forging on to Keswick Road and the Stone Mill residential community, we used dousing rods to discover hidden flows, urban heterogeneity, sediment transport and deposition, and plant cultivation and escape. The second to last stop took us past Mt. Vernon Mill No. 1, where we considered the different ways people perceive the power of water and looked closely at leaves from the high ground above the river. From there we headed down to Round Falls, where we were surrounded by the sound of water and we asked participants to consider the complexities of harnessing water as a resource while accepting the results of human impact on it. As we walked back up a refurbished path to the park, the last emphasis was urban ecological restoration, and the flows of energy and water through food webs.

Watching people engage with one another, ask questions, examine plant leaves, seeds and flowers with magnifying glasses, listening to the ooh’s and ahh’s upon locating the birds and the nests hidden in the tree canopy, and successfully using the dousing rods made it perfectly clear that the participants were engaged and excited. One walker offered further historical context for Druid Hill Park and its connection to slavery and the production of textiles. Walkers made many connections to their own experiences of flow, water, and species in cities, engaging in lively conversation throughout the walk.

*-Jann Rosen-Queralt & Lea Johnson*



# CALL/WALKS BALTIMORE

**“CALL/WALKS  
have set a  
precedent for  
how to better  
incorporate  
community  
perspectives  
into our  
programming.”**

**“Through the tour, conversations,  
and performance, this work seeks  
to sensitize and visualize the  
ephemeral condition of the earth  
in the face of the threat of water.  
It aims to create awareness about  
biodegradable resources that are  
quickly reintegrated into nature.  
It also aims to blur social borders,  
reintegrating representatives  
of previously displaced and  
excluded communities.”**

**-SHERI PARKS  
VICE PRESIDENT FOR STRATEGIC INITIATIVES  
MARYLAND INSTITUTE COLLEGE OF ART**

**- KAI CROSBY-SINGLETON  
COMMUNITY LIAISON  
STRATEGIC INITIATIVES, MICA**

## LIVING BOUNDARIES

*Led by artist Miguel Braceli and ecologist Steward Pickett, Living Boundaries proposes exploring the scientific, artistic and social principles of absorption.*

**Coming Spring 2020  
Baltimore, Location TBC**

When Miguel Braceli was asked to lead a CALL/WALK in Baltimore, he knew he wanted to focus on the boundaries that exist between the city, its inhabitants, and the environment in this city, where historical red-lining has been a notorious example of exclusionary land use. In partnership with ecologist Steward Pickett, the walk would examine different forms of land use and its consequences, investigating the human relationships to the environment, while addressing sea level rise, flooding, and wastewater management. An experiential performance using food-grade water-soluble paper over the lake would interrogate concepts of absorption and suspension, within the context of racial and social segregation.

Initial plans situated the walk in Roland Park, a place that was literally been built to put a physical boundary between the city and an upscale housing development. The park's construction displaced the Barrs Hill Community, an African American neighborhood that was one of the first Free Black communities in the US, marking the beginning of “red-lining.” The lake at the center of Roland Park, was to be the stage for Braceli's intervention and the focal point of the walk. Soon, the water issues the walk planned to investigate would become a hurdle to overcome; Lake Roland has been so severely degraded by stormwater and sewer overflow that it was not possible for people to enter the water, making the performance impossible. Another site for the walk had to be found.

The next obvious location was one of many sites along the Chesapeake River. This well-connected network of waterways was key to Maryland's success, from its early colonial days onward, as it allowed goods to be easily transported domestically and internationally. From transporting timber, grain, and cotton to trafficking enslaved peoples, its waters fueled the industrial revolution, leading to the enrichment of some and the abuse of others. While this area was always vulnerable to flooding, increased erosion has led to multiple “100 year” floods in the last five years; nearly a dozen small islands have been lost as the region sinks more rapidly than the rest of the eastern United States.

There were many places along the river that would accommodate the scale and scope of this project, but the replica of the ‘swinging bridge’ that once carried enslaved, migratory, and indentured workers from their homes to the grist mills seemed most apt. The performance was re-envisioned to carry the soluble paper across the moving bridge; the struggle to cross the bridge without dropping the paper and its dissolution in the water at the point of contact would reflect the precarity faced by their historical predecessors.

As final preparations were being made, this too would become impassible; the state would not allow any form of art to take place in the park. The process and pathway to thoughtful disruption are sometimes re-routed by bureaucracy. So, Living Boundaries presses on, in search of a site for a 2020 CALL/WALK. In its final site, the same process will follow: we will investigate what properties the water absorbs from the natural environment, where the human interventions are, and the values assigned to the landscape. How have the boundaries shifted?

*-Kai Crosby-Singleton & Liza Cucco*



# CALL TO ACTION MILWAUKEE

**“Seeing a part of the heart of this city in this way was transformative ...the true meaning of the adage “boots on the ground” was activated in each of us.”**

**- PORTIA COBB  
ARTIST**

**“Compared to a traditional public meeting that asks residents to provide feedback in a very one-dimensional way, this was a more hands-on way to get people physically into a space and experience it at a human scale.”**

**-SARAH BREGANT  
LOCAL ORGANIZER**

**NORTHWEST SIDE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

## **RECLAMATION & RESTORATION in the 30th Street Corridor**

*Artist Portia Cobb & environmental engineer Tory Kress led a walk engaging the public in envisioning the future of Milwaukee’s 30th Street Corridor. Formerly the industrial powerhouse of the City, many of the manufacturing jobs have since left, leaving economic hardship and vacant land in this area.*

**May 4th, 2019  
Green Tech Station**

Our walk covered an area that most participants had never been to before, except for possibly passing by quickly on Capitol Drive. The beautiful weather helped to highlight that the area we were covering was full of interesting, picturesque, invigorating, and inspiring places with enormous potential. Bringing a large group through the redevelopment sites of Green Tech Station, Century City, and Melvina Park and experiencing their reactions, questions, and ideas was a reminder of the importance of telling the story of these places and working to engage with the community both near and far from these sites in order to ensure that the redevelopments are successful from the community’s point of view.

One of the questions posed was about how urban areas can compete with suburban greenfields to attract economic development opportunities. My answer related to all the things that we are doing at our urban sites to make them appeal to developers who would provide good jobs for residents. But as we discussed a bit further, we all engaged in a bit of brainstorming about how creative events (like this walk) and creative uses for vacant land (like green infrastructure and various forms of art) can be a differentiator in terms of making urban spaces stand out.

One woman asked about a business that used to be in the area. I hadn’t heard of it and began talking about other former businesses that used to anchor the industrial corridor. But this woman was specifically interested in this particular company because it was her father’s former workplace, and I was at a loss to answer her question. I am so grateful to Portia for jumping in at that moment to point out that stories like this woman’s direct connection to this place are so important and how could we find a way to commemorate these stories and the places that hold meaning for everyone with a relationship to this area. In the past, we’ve discussed a museum highlighting the history of the Corridor or hosting a StoryCorps session – maybe it’s time to revisit this idea...

In Melvina Park, our group was fortunate to meet Yvonne McCaskill, the resident leader of the Century City Tri-Angle Neighborhood Association. Yvonne shared with our group about her community, their activities and events, and their vision for the future. She was an inspiration for our walk attendees and again for me as she always is, but in a new way to see her tell the story to a new audience.

In summary, Saturday’s walk was a reminder that communities, their histories, their experiences, and their visions should be fundamental to the work that I do addressing blighted and vacant land. Also, that art inspires and connects people and opens up new ideas and possibilities for solving problems.

*-Tory Kress*



# CALL WALKS MILWAUKEE

**“Everything I learned was new! I loved the connection between water works, art, and the neighborhood story!”**

**-WALK PARTICIPANT**

**“Artists and engineers see things differently and have different technical expertise to share, and both are important, so reaching a balance of how to fit things together cohesively is paramount in design.”**

**-SARAH BREGANT  
LOCAL ORGANIZER  
NORTHWEST SIDE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

## **CONNECTING WATER & ART in the Garden Homes Neighborhood**

*Artist and designer Fatima Laster & engineer Jerome Flogel, lead a walk exploring the historic Garden Homes Neighborhood and the green infrastructure/water features that surround it.*

**May 4th, 2019**

**Garden Homes Neighborhood Park**

Jerome and Fatima provided an exceptional balance to the technicality of stormwater management/green infrastructure and public art. One of the stormwater basins we visited actually already has a series of murals and small sculpture gardens that some participants weren't previously aware of. Having those at the basin where the primary purpose is to reduce flood risk in the neighborhood speaks to how art can complement science and add value to a space for neighbors to enjoy. Further, the themes of the murals at the basin are peace, pride, and unity, each of which was decided via direct engagement with residents nearby. By conducting surveys and having conversations with neighbors before creating the murals, we ensured that the art installations were meaningful to people in the neighborhood and could further illustrate connections between Garden Homes and the new stormwater basins as a way to tie everything together. Overall, the walk helped explore these connections in a way that created a lasting impact on participants and hopefully changes the way people think about how art and water can help tell a story and generate a sense of neighborhood pride and belonging.

*- Sarah Bregant*

The walk in the Historic Garden Homes neighborhood occurred on a perfectly warm and relaxed day that permeated through the leaders and audience. There was a well mixed group of participants, including local residents, people that had never been to the Garden Homes neighborhood, and people that grew up there and/or still have family in the neighborhood. The walk was very organic, engaging, congenial, interactive, and comfortable, which made for an impactful learning experience. The participants received a balanced story of how collaboration between public works and art work can be a symbiotic relationship that enhances the experiences of neighborhoods and communities. The group learned how the water that falls around them through precipitation is greatly impacted by the changes we make, big and small, to the surface of the earth. Highlighted was how art can make water and infrastructure that we take for granted tangible. Art's capacity to create a pathway for communication and to instill pride and ownership in improvements made to the neighborhood was also discussed. The participants seemed very thankful for the walk and the information obtained from it.

*-Jerome Flogel & Fatima Laster*



# CALL NEW YORK CITY

**“Can ‘humans’ engage in a relationship with nature that enters into a co-regulating exchange promoting, connection, health, and healing for both parties? Can this type of interaction stimulate an egalitarian re-weaving of the fabric of life?”**

**-NICOLÁS DUMIT ESTÉVEZ  
PERFORMANCE ARTIST**

**“Nicolás and I were able to build off one another in a dynamic way. Our minds drift into different directions- his towards a thoughtful connectedness to experience and mine towards the scientific and factual. We were able to mold a walk where our different experience of the same place melded cohesively.”**

**-JOHN BUTLER  
ECOLOGICAL PROJECT MANAGER  
VAN CORTLANDT PARK ALLIANCE**

## The Tree & I

*Artist Nicolás Dumit Estévez and Ecological Project Manager John Butler lead a contemplative walk through Van Cortlandt Park exploring the deep connection between people and nature.*

**May 21st, 2019  
Van Cortlandt Park**

The sound of car horns and the rumble of 1 train on the elevated platform above began our walk on May 21st, as we departed the 242nd street subway station towards Van Cortlandt Park. We walked north, then into the park to the southern end of the parade ground, the largest field in New York City, and paused. Nicolás instructed us to silence our phones and be present in the moment, leading us in a breathing exercise. We looked out over the parade ground to find our place with nature at that moment, focusing our eyes in silence on the different shades and textures of green that made up the grasses, plants and trees around us. After a period of silence, John told us a bit about the types of trees surrounding us in the park. We continued our journey across the fields, following Nicolás' instruction to walk purposefully and gently, as if our feet were kissing the ground.

For our next stop, we came to a large ash tree that sits on the edge of the parade ground. Here the group was guided to interact with the tree and feel its presence, asking a silent question to the tree and caressing the bark. This tree is one of the noted “Great Trees” of New York City, hundreds of years old, and is considered a wolf tree. This means that the tree grew in an open environment and its branches spread outward. Group participants asked about Emerald Ash Borer, which seems to be destined to doom the ash trees of New York. The loss of the ash trees could have a significant impact on the ecology of New York; they play an important role in water cycling and decomposition in the forest.

The group followed a path down to the wet meadow, in what was once a formal garden. Participants were instructed to pick one tree each, present that tree with a conundrum from their lives, and ask the tree for its wisdom. Journals were supplied to aid in the process of silent reflection.

We ended our walk at Tibbetts Brook, where much of John's work in the park is focused. John shared the vision for daylighting the brook, the major green infrastructure project that CALL is advocating for through our work in the Bronx. Nicolás reflected on the intersection of art, nature, healing, and the importance of water to all things that live.

Can humans engage in a relationship with nature that enters into a co-regulating exchange promoting, connection, health, and healing for both parties? Can this type of interaction stimulate an egalitarian re-weaving of the fabric of life? Towards the end of the walk, as John reflected on Tibbetts Brook, he spoke movingly of the brook as living being he interacts with on a daily basis, who knows his secrets, and whose secrets he knows. John directly correlated this understanding to be an outgrowth of the walking the park with Nicolás, and seeing the familiar landscape through his lens. John is not alone; the Tree & I left leaders and participants alike with a connection to the natural world that will have a lasting impact. .

*-John Butler, Liza Cucco, & Nicolás Dumit Estévez*



# CALLAWALKS NEW YORK CITY

**“Working with Stephen made me understand the iterative process of learning new concepts and designing visions is quite different than mine, which follows a scientific mode of observation and analysis.”**

**-VALERIE IMBRUCE  
ECONOMIC BOTANIST  
BINGHAMTON UNIVERSITY**

**“I’d never walked through this neighborhood before with the vendors in mind. This walk has made me see them in a more meaningful way.”**

**-WALK PARTICIPANT**

## **MAPPING CHINATOWN’S FOOD SYSTEM**

*Led by urbanist Stephen Fan & economic botanist Valerie Imbruce, Mapping Food Systems will take participants on a walk through Chinatown’s unique and robust food system, in which farms growing specialty fruits and vegetables are integrated with street level sidewalk vendors and shops by wholesale brokers*

**May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019  
Grand Street Subway Station**

Beginning across from the Grand Street subway station, one of the major neighborhood entries for food shoppers from across the city, we traced the main commercial thoroughfares of the historic Cantonese section of Chinatown westward along Grand St, southward along Mott, and ended at the Canal Street triangle. These blocks have some of the highest concentrations of food stores, food street vendors, and food stoop-side stands. The walk focused on two aspects of interrogating the equitable and sustainable use of space, exploring the distribution networks and farms that supply Chinatown and the impacts on the urban realm. The walk was designed to paint a picture of a “food system” from production, to distribution and consumption, to show that Chinatown is not an isolated ethnic enclave, but is embedded in other geographies and subject to a myriad of social, economic and political processes.

Along the way, we stopped at key sites, including the location of the former Dragon Gate night market, a street corner where urban foragers sell their harvest, and the Canal Street triangle where produce vendors were removed and replaced by a tourist kiosk. Not only did we map the historic and current uses of urban space in relation to the food system, but we also used mapping as a projective act: by providing three design visions that imagined solutions to some of the infrastructure challenges of the area while retaining market space.

In addition to responding to issues raised at a CALL-organized community workshop, the walk furthered our interest in the potentials and limits of community-engaged design processes. It was our hope this walk would reach an audience that was interested in life in Chinatown from a personal standpoint, because they live and shop there, or advocate for the community. With a remarkable turnout of nearly 100 participants at two back-to-back walks, it did. We heard from participants about the variety of reasons why they care about Chinatown: as a teaching resource, as a cultural mecca for second+ generation Chinese, as a gateway for new immigrants, as a place to buy unique ingredients, as a place to be a cultural tourist, as a political site to advance Asian-American representation city wide, as an economic site of small, independent businesses, as part of their identity and personal family history as Chinese-American.

Mapping Food Systems was an inspirational kick-off to our upcoming research and project development in Chinatown, the partnerships that will develop, and we look forward to where it will take us and the shared vision that will grow from it.

*-Stephen Fan & Valerie Imbruce*





# CALLAMARKS PITTSBURGH

**“In Hays Wood, we come face-to-face with evidence of the despoiled history of human uses, some of which nature is working to amend.”**

**-CHARLES BEIR  
BIOLOGIST  
WESTERN PA CONSERVANCY**

**“Charles grounded us and helped us to learn specifically about what we were seeing, while Natalie opened us up to a more exploratory and philosophical dialogue. By combining both viewpoints, we were able to have richer conversation and a better understanding of the site.”**

**-KARA SMITH  
PRINCIPAL ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNER  
CITY OF PITTSBURGH**

## WALKING THE URBAN WILDERNESS

*Artist Natalie Settles, Biologist Charles Beir, and Landscape Architect Kara Smith explore Hays Wood, a former industrial mining site which has returned to the wild and is soon to become a city park.*

**May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019  
Hays Woods**

In the studio, my best work frequently arises from honest questions to which I do not know the answers. Hays Woods embodies an unanswered question – how are we to understand our industrial past and natural history and live out the answer to that question in the future? It is a question that we ignore to our peril in our distracted consumer culture. However, if we answer it well through conservation, remediation, and changes to our own lives, places like Hays Woods can embody an answer to the questions posed by the ravaged landscapes surrounding us.

It was a muddy day in Hays Woods, when we began our walk pondering these questions. From youngest to oldest, we gamely slid through the mud and scrambled through the brush to discover puddles full of tadpoles, mine seepage, a swathe of Fire Pink wild flowers, tangles of invasive knot weed, cascades of native may apples, the blight of excavation scars, and amazing urban wilderness vistas.

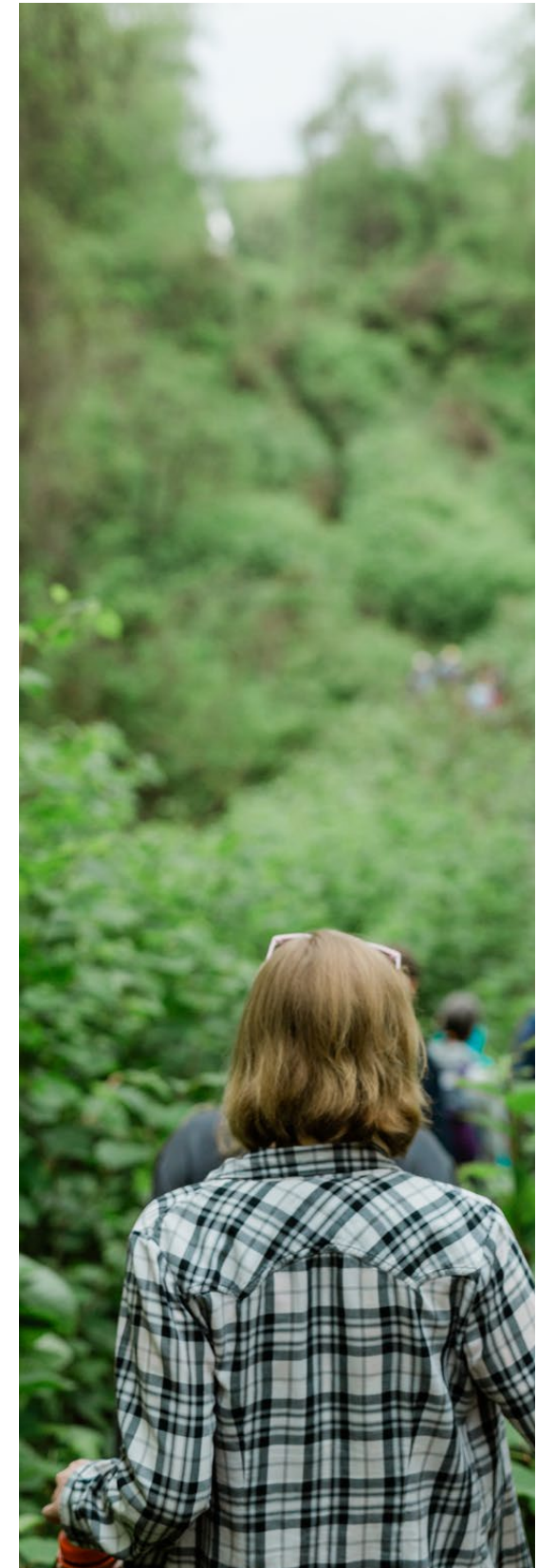
The materials that graveled the path were dirt and rock and plant matter, but there was also brick, ceramic, coal, and a more recent addition – plastics. As an artist, materials in a work are never arbitrary; they are things I engage thoughtfully. In a place like Hays Woods, the leavings beneath our feet are a patina of this site’s past. While the human detritus of brick, ceramic, and coal are still fairly natural and inert, the plastics of modern society seem out of step with the pace of our world. They are often single use and yet last for millennia. A place like Hays woods is a historical archive and a living question about how we will answer to the materials of our lives.

The best work I make frequently arises from limits – either from necessity or choice. Hays Woods is a place that teaches us about the need for limits on our individual, commercial, and civic lives. Without limits we will continue to surround ourselves with blighted landscapes. Hays Woods shows us the outcome of excesses and asks us how we will choose our limits more wisely.

As we departed from the woods, a woman who had spent many years walking the terrain and advocating for its conservation came up to me. She said, “I have been on many nature walks, but I have never heard or thought about the things you were saying.”

Later, a young artist wrote to say she was earning her degree in art, and this walk had inspired a vision for her future as an artist interested in ecology. Plans for the trails that will wander through Hays Woods when it becomes an accessible public space are just beginning, and it seems her trail is just beginning too.

*-Natalie Settles*



# CALL WALKS SANTA FE

**“The nuclear age began in New Mexico and we can never allow people to forget what it has meant to our state. We continue to suffer the consequences.”**

**-TINA CORDOVA  
ACTIVIST,  
DOWNWINDERS OF NEW MEXICO**

**“This topic is really emotional but the walk format allowed for calm, productive exchanges. I learned a lot.”**

**-WALK PARTICIPANT**

## **ATOMIC STORIES: Media and the Nuclear History of New Mexico**

*Artist Andrea Polli organizes a walk with nuclear Historian Luis Campos and Activist Tina Cordova on the impact of the atomic bomb on the landscape and people of New Mexico.*

**May 4th, 2019  
Santa Fe Art Institute**

Our Atomic Stories walk met on the grounds of the Santa Fe Art Institute, which is situated at a former military barracks turned film set. We began inside with a brief overview of atomic history leading up to the Manhattan Project, then headed outside to tour the site. Near abandoned structures from the set for Manhattan, I introduced the scale, scope, and speed of the development of the Manhattan Project. We paid particular attention to the lived realities of those who participated in this effort—their youthfulness, their commitment to secrecy but also their small acts of resistance against the militarization of daily life. We reflected on the collaboration of Americans and European scientists, the scientific brainpower assembled at Los Alamos, and the industrial scale of the project.

Our next stop focused on the first atomic test at Trinity, exploring its aims and reasoning, various shocking eyewitness accounts, and the tragic stories of the downwinders, (families who lived near the original test site). The claustrophobic sense from the overhanging building then enabled us to transition seamlessly to a story of Cold War civil defense. We walked over to a nearby well, which evoked atom-inflected stories of agriculture and subsistence near Trinity, and the effects of environmental contamination from uranium mining in western New Mexico, including the massive Church Rock spill of 1979. We proceeded to a sculptural installation, where we talked about the ongoing health effects for downwinder populations. An old cottage nearby evoked the exclusion zone around Chernobyl, raising questions of how to be at home when one can no longer be at home.

Our journey brought us back indoors to a theater to watch a video exploring the atomic bomb by my co-leader Andrea Polli. Our final discussion point centered on the rise of the antinuclear movement, and the ways in which art and culture have played central roles in atomic diplomacy and nuclear disarmament. As a historian of science and an instructor of a course on “Atomic America,” it was a privilege to be able to share the rich and complex histories and legacies of our nuclear world with members of the community. It was a unique opportunity to do so in the form of a walking tour, where particular sites could evoke a kind of “double-vision”—seeing both the architecture, space, or environment before you, but also seeing it through a second set of eyes, opening up an otherwise largely inaccessible history. The pairing of a historical overview with the work of a local activist advocating for the recognition and compensation of atomic downwinders made for a particularly poignant and powerful form of interaction, and Tina and I worked off of each other’s comments in productive fashion.

The inclusion of a final meal at the end of the event, with thematically relevant dishes—chocolate cake from a recipe that had been served to laboratory scientists at Los Alamos, mushroom caps evoking the mushroom cloud, a strawberry tart referencing the story of an elderly babushka in the Chernobyl exclusion zone offering strawberries from her garden—was the perfect capstone to a three-hour tour that was over before we even realized it. But there will doubtless be a long half-life to the stories, conversations, and connections that we made on this WALK.

*- Luis Campos*



# CALLAWALKS

## WASHINGTON DC

**“The Anacostia was once a mile wide at this location, with no islands in its midst. Now, with sea level rise, the river is taking the area back.”**

**-KATIE KEHOE  
ARTIST**

**“Experimenting with new ways to move art into everyday life is a core principle of Provisions Library. This program helped reach out to new potential collaborators in the science community.”**

**DON RUSSELL  
DIRECTOR, PROVISIONS LIBRARY  
GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY**

### **BREACHING WATERWAYS: ALONG THE ANACOSTA RIVER**

*Artist Katie Kehoe organizes a walk with climatologist Jagadish Shukla and performance artist Heloisa Escuerdo exploring the impact of climate change and sea level rise in the lowlands of the United States' capitol city. This walk was hosted by George Mason University Provisions Library.*

**Sunday May 5th, 2019  
Kingman and Heritage Island Park**

The night before our walk, flash flood warnings were in effect for the DC area; significant given we were assembling to reflect on flooding and sea level rise. I arrive early to walk the path and check for flooding, pulling logs and boards over muddy sections to make them more passable. It was cool and raining as scientists, artists, academics, students, activists, and community members gathered.

Wearing a wet suit and carrying a body board I'd made out of salvaged materials, I invite participants to walk in pairs, taking turns to talk from personal experience on the subject of flooding.

As we cross a bridge leading to Heritage Island, I announce that should sea levels rise by 6 feet, the island would be entirely flooded. Life jackets spanned both sides of the bridge. I demonstrate their use and hand them out for participants to wear.

We step onto the island, following a rough narrow path and soon happen upon performance artist, Heloisa Escudero, who is stationed on the southern tip of the island. Assembling under a tent, Heloisa invites us to state our anxieties related to sea level rise and perform a walking ritual to symbolically block them.

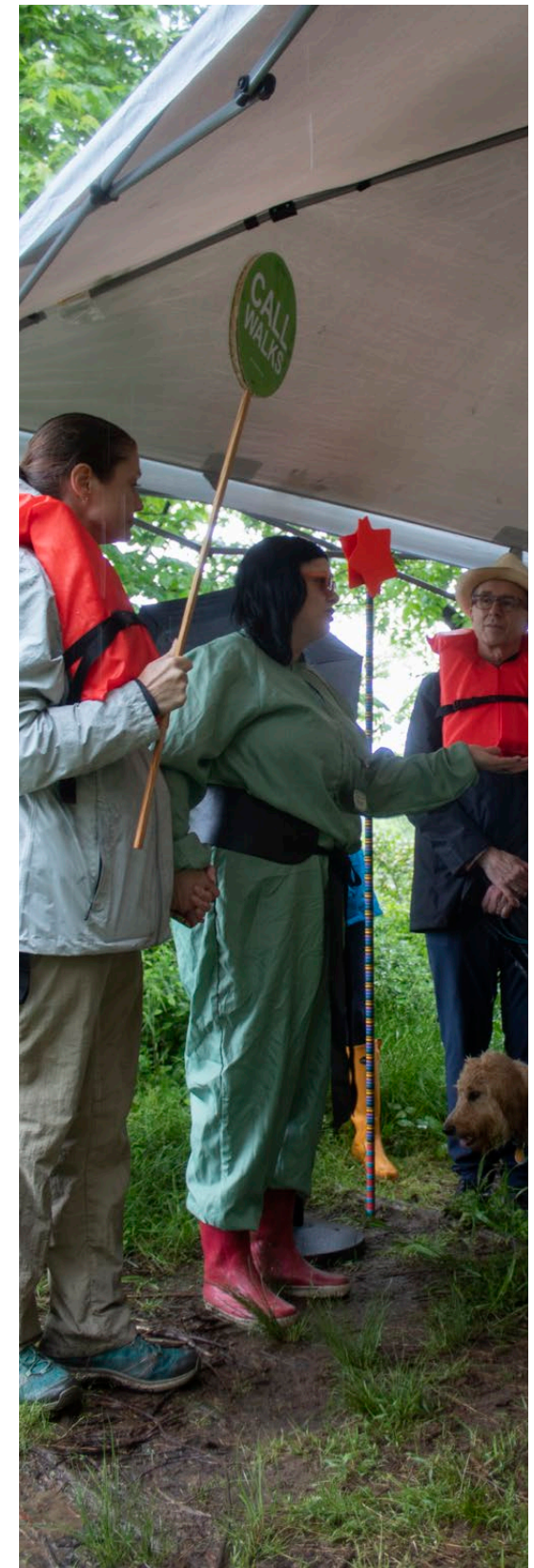
When we move on, I invite participants to reflect on what keeps them afloat – in their life, in their work or literally, on the water. The path is muddier and people offer hands, helping each other to cross rough patches.

We come to a wooden platform, there's a life ring positioned on it and ties for mooring a boat fastened to its perimeter – it's a raft on land. We step onto it and I invite people to share what keeps them afloat; their responses: family, hope, research, community.

We continue, walking to a look-out point at a second bridge and then return to the “raft” seeking shelter from the rain. Don Russell, Director of Provisions Research Center for Arts and Social Change, speaks to us about the history of the Islands and Dr. Jagadish Shukla, George Mason University's (GMU) most senior climate scientist, adds context to our experience by discussing the science behind sea level rise; his colleague, Dr. Barry Klinger, another esteemed climate expert at GMU, adds insights from his research on climate science. A casual conversation evolves, with participants freely asking questions to Shukla and Klinger over cupcakes and sparking water.

The rain quiets as we walk back to where we started.

*- Katie Kehoe*





# CALL WALKS

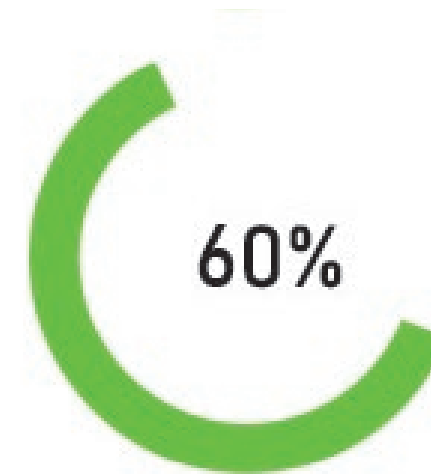
## THE DATA SPEAKS

### WALK PARTICIPANTS RESPOND:

“My passion for this topic was re-ignited.”

“As a younger person, it was interesting to learn about the history of what came before me.”

“I saw parts of my neighborhood that I’d never seen before.”



of participants had never before attended an event that brought art and science together in this way

### 2018-2019 CALL WALKS PARTICIPANTS BY LOCATION



Of partner organizations felt well-supported by CALL, and valued participating in the network.

# CALL/WALKS

## WHY ARTISTS?

**“Through this experience, I gained insight about expanding my art practice by imagining innovative partnerships which will benefit and expand my own narratives and those of art students I teach.”**

**- PORTIA COBB  
ARTIST**

### THE ARTS AND NEW WAYS OF SEEING

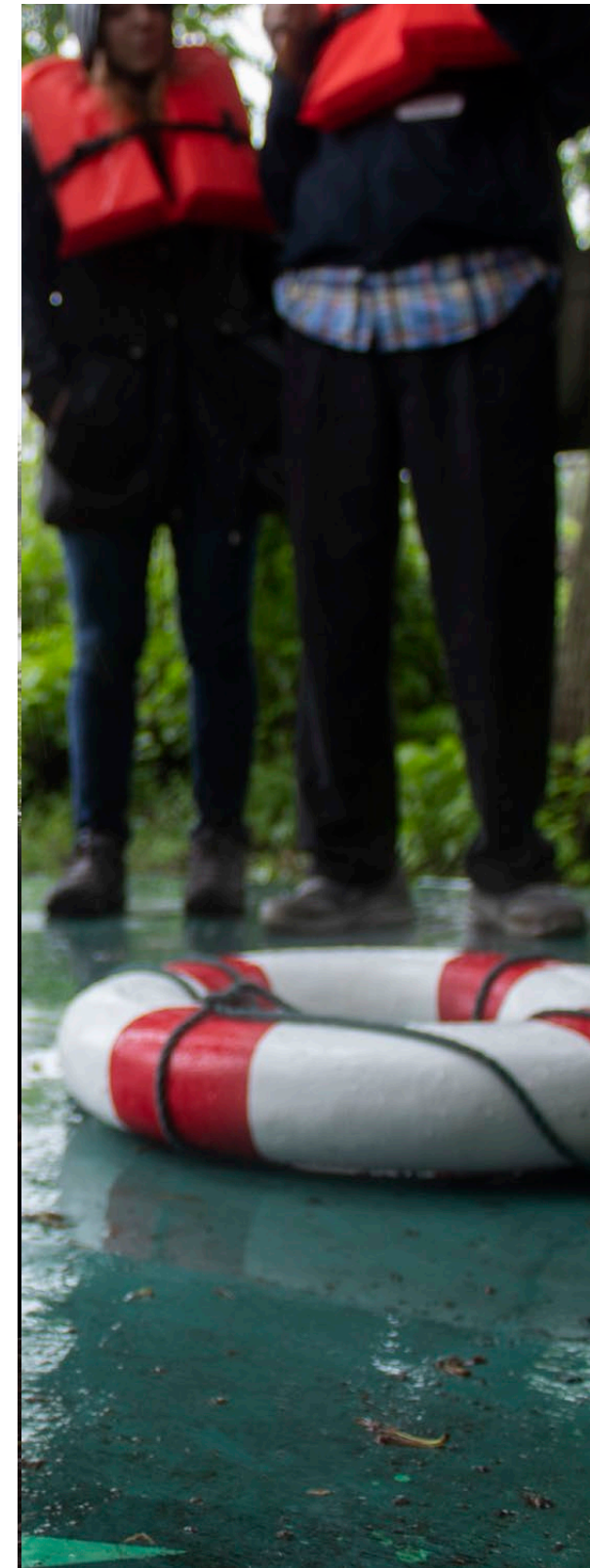
Artists leading CALL/WALKS come from a range of disciplines, and the way each artist engages with the process varies. Physical artworks might enhance connections made on the walk, such as the atomic bomb installation to the left, exhibited at the Atomic Stories CALL/WALK. The walk itself can be part of a performance; in Breaching Waterways, participants engaged with hand-crafted ‘flotation aids’ made from reclaimed materials by walk leader Katie Kehoe. Even when a walk is not explicitly related to their artwork, artists serve the important role of guiding participants in new ways of seeing.

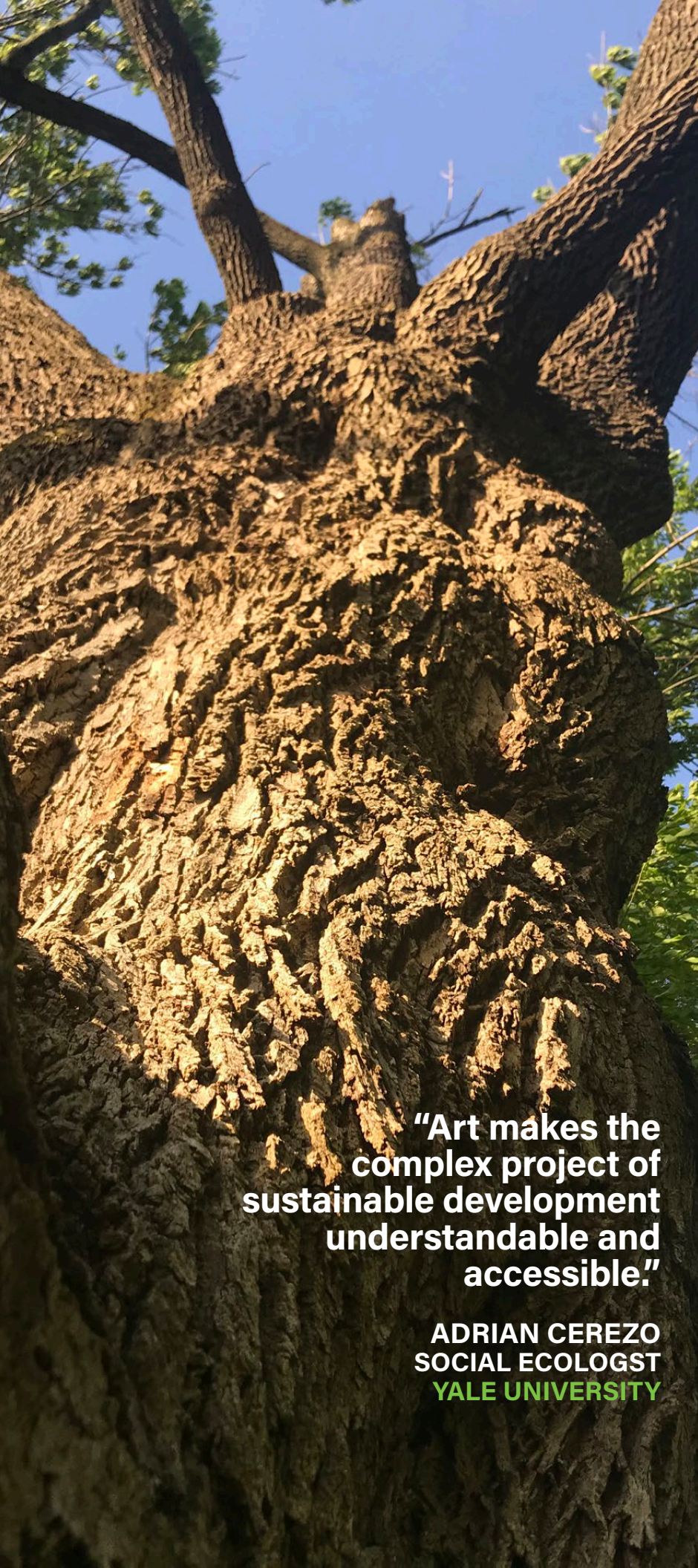
The human brain naturally half-sees the world, filling in the gaps between what it immediately perceives with what it expects to see. Artists are trained to resist this temptation. They develop the capacity to look at the world around them in infinite detail, even peering through the surface to uncover things that are not readily visible. Artists understand that in order to communicate about the world, they must engage all their senses and employ an expansive set of references to interpret what they see.

This gives artists a unique ability to take on complex issues. Through their work, they can increase awareness and action around environmental challenges by creating personal experiences for the public. Artists can draw focus on the unseen, under-recognized, or threatened. In making the hidden or abstract more accessible, real, and tangible, their projects can call on community members to help imagine their own futures of sustenance. They can promote community action around specific issues, leading to policy change, and convey the message that nature is everywhere, and in action at all times. Artists can help re-envision the public realm and create a new narrative that gives everyone a role to play in imagining a viable future.

Leading CALL/WALKS extends artists ongoing practices, regardless of the discipline they work within, and engages them in the process of becoming change agents. The deep collaborations they develop with their scientist, engineer or expert partners add to their knowledge-base, and the relationships they build with community members embed them more deeply in the civic structure of their city. Most of our creative leaders find leading a WALK seeds new ideas for their own practice, setting the stage for proposals and innovative projects

Artists also influence the scientists they work with. Partnering as an equal with an artist on these projects opens up new ideas about community engagement and participatory research, while challenging the conventions of art as a merely illustrative tool. Scientists CALL works with report back to us that the experience collaborating with an artist invigorated their work and triggered new approaches.





# CALL/WALKS

## NEXT STEPS

**“Both the deep ecology and the artistic grace of our urban areas are often unseen or under appreciated. CALL/WALKS overcome these deficiencies and immerse us in appreciating and improving our urban environments.”**

**-STEWART PICKETT**  
URBAN ECOLOGIST  
CARY INSTITUTE

**“Art makes the complex project of sustainable development understandable and accessible.”**

**ADRIAN CEREZO**  
SOCIAL ECOLOGIST  
YALE UNIVERSITY

### WALKING TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: CALL/WALKS and the SDGs

A survey conducted in 2017 by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development indicated that approximately 70% of Americans had never heard of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We need to push for significant progress on making our cities more sustainable and that takes both individual and collective action. It's difficult to rally support for achieving goals people don't understand, and CALL seeks to help address this.

CALL is committed to making the complex comprehensible and the abstract tangible. That's why we are choosing to focus our initiatives on projects that are designed to both accelerate our cities efforts towards meeting key targets set by the SDGs and help the public understand what they're all about.

CALL/WALKS can help to decode complexities through immediate personal experiences, providing groundwork to motivate people towards action. Being a part of the CALL network provides a methodology, but also the flexibility to tackle the issues that impact specific, local communities the most.

We're continuing to expand our network and hope you will join us. Together we can move the needle a little bit further and help build a hopeful vision for a future of sustenance for all.

Research and dissemination of the CALL/FRAMEWORK has been made possible through generous support from the Andrew Mellon Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts. Through this support, CALL has begun to build a network of like-minded organizations that want to be a part of imagining creative solutions to complex problems, involving ordinary people in the great project of meeting the UN's Sustainable Development Goals

Since CALL incorporated in 2010, we have led over 70 walks and worked with over 100 artists, scientists, and organizations in New York City and beyond. We have completed an urban-scale project in Indianapolis and are currently developing multi-year initiatives to advance water stewardship and sustainable development in Milwaukee and in the Bronx. CALL launched a pilot 'laboratory' program Lewiston, NY in 2016, and is continuing to work on the development of that project.

CALL's major initiatives are continuously informed by the CALL/WALKS, where neighborhoods, parks, and city streets are traversed time and time again to collect more information, engage more people, and generate more ideas.





# // CITY AS LIVING LABORATORY

Sustainability Made Tangible Through the Arts

## The 2019 CALL/WALK Organizers & Walk Leaders:

### PITTSBURGH

Dr. Charles Beir, Senior Director, Conservation Science, Western Pennsylvania Conservancy  
Ray Gastil, Director at Remaking Cities Institute, Carnegie Mellon University  
Kara Smith, Principal Environmental Planner, Pittsburgh City Planning  
Natalie Settles, Interdisciplinary Artist

### BALTIMORE

Dr. Sheri Parks, Vice President of Strategic Initiatives, MICA  
Kai Crosby-Singleton, Community Liaison, Strategic Initiatives, MICA  
Dr. Jann Rosen-Queralt, Director, Rinehold School of Sculpture, MICA  
Dr. Lea Johnson, Associate Director, Land Stewardship and Ecology, Longwood Gardens  
Dr. Steward Pickett, Urban Ecologist, Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies  
Miguel Braceli, Artist

### MILWAUKEE

Aaron Asis, Senior Designer & Project Manager, CALL  
Sarah Bregant, Community Development Specialist, NWSDCD  
Portia Cobb, Artist, Director, Community Media Project, Peck School of the Arts, University of Wisconsin Milwaukee  
Jerome Fogel, Senior Project Manager, Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District Mary Miss, Founder & Artistic Director, CALL  
Anrew Haug, Development, NWSDCD  
Tory Kress, Senior Environmental Project Engineer, Redevelopment Authority, City of Milwaukee  
Fatima Laster, Visual Artist & Designer, FKL Designs  
Mary Miss, Founder & Artistic Director, CALL

### NEW YORK CITY

John Butler, Ecological Project Manager, Van Cortlandt Park Alliance  
Liza Cucco, Program Manager, CALL  
Nicolás Dumit Estévez, Artist  
Stephen Fan, Architect, Urbanist & Designer  
Olivia Georgia, Executive Director, CALL  
Dr. Valerie Imbruce, Economic Botanist, Binghamton University

### SANTA FE

Jamie Blosser, Executive Director, Santa Fe Art Institute  
Dr. Luis Campos, Nuclear Historian, University of New Mexico  
Tina Cordova, Activist & Co-Founder, Tularosa Basin Downwinders Consortium  
Renee Innis, Design & Communications Manager at Santa Fe Art Institute  
Andrea Polli, Environmental Artist, Chair of Digital Media, College of Fine Arts, University of New Mexico

### WASHINGTON DC

Heloisa Escuerdo, Performance Artist  
Katie Kehoe, Interdisciplinary Artist  
Dr. Barry Klinger, Associate Professor, Department of Atmospheric, Oceanic, and Earth Sciences, George Mason University  
Donald Russell, University Curator, Director, Provisions Research Center for Arts and Social Change, George Mason University  
Dr. Jagadish Shukla, Professor, Climate Dynamics, George Mason University

## The 2019 CALL/WALKS were made possible with the support and collaboration of:



## Keep up with CALL/WALKS



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#CALLwalks

[www.callwalks.org/walkwithus](http://www.callwalks.org/walkwithus)

## CALL // City as Living Laboratory

349 Greenwich Street #5  
New York, NY 10013

p: 212.966.4287

e: [info@cityaslivinglab.org](mailto:info@cityaslivinglab.org)

w: [www.cityaslivinglab.org](http://www.cityaslivinglab.org)