CALL // CITY AS LIVING LABORATORY
Sustainability Made Tangible Through the Arts

CALL // 2016
CALL // MISSION

CALL // CITY AS LIVING LABORATORY combines the skills and perspectives of artists and designers with those of scientists and citizens to create public programs and projects that increase awareness and potential for action around key environmental issues.

Internationally renowned artist Mary Miss founded CALL in 2009, with the goal of harnessing the creative vision of artists to combat the rapid deterioration of our environment. Trained as a sculptor, Miss has focused on creating works that reveal and explore a site’s history, its ecology, and aspects of the environment that have gone unnoticed.

CALL // UPDATE

This has been a momentous year for CALL // City as Living Laboratory. In Indianapolis we have continued programming and assessment of STREAM/LINES—engaging local residents at the installation sites and through performance, readings, tours, and workshops. Work has begun on the second phase of WATERMARKS in Milwaukee and a newly completed installation at Artpark has launched the ARTPARK LABORATORY.

Here in NYC CALL/WALKS have explored new issues and perspectives along Broadway around Columbia University, the Upper West Side, and in Chinatown. Research, planning, and design work on the kiosk in Harlem—now titled EPIK (Emergency Preparedness Information Kiosk) have been underway with a Working Group from WE ACT for Environmental Justice. The four projects in the Bronx hold exciting promise. As these projects advance, CALL is working with Social Ecologist Adrian Cerezo and curator Donald Russell, to document, synthesize, and contextualize CALL’s Framework. We have also begun a conservation assessment of Mary Miss’ works in storage and are developing a strategy to manage and make public her and CALL’s extensive archive. The framework conservation and archive initiative has been made possible by a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

ARTPARK LABORATORY

Completed this July 2016, BOWER (cover) is the first commissioned work facilitated by CALL to establish an experimental program for Artpark and contribute to an effort to revive the mission of Artpark as a leading center for creative experimentation and innovation.

BOWER (a leafy shelter or recess, an arbor, a rustic dwelling), created by artists Ellen Driscoll and Joyce Hwang, is an arrangement of architectural fragments, which host birdhouses, and etched glass windows in a skeletal structure designed to promote awareness of local bird species—including chickadees, wrens, flycatchers, nuthatches, bluebirds, and purple martins—and draw attention to the ever-increasing perils of bird-strike window collisions and deaths.

The outlines of the structures emulate the vernacular architecture of the Lewiston/Artpark area but could be stand-ins for homes almost anywhere in the country. Driscoll and Hwang consulted with University at Buffalo faculty and graduate researcher Katharina Dittmar, Ph.D, Associate Professor of Biological Sciences and Heather Williams, Ph.D Candidate, Department of Biological Sciences along with the Buffalo Audubon Society which offers public programs at the installation site.

CALL’s next venture in realizing the multi-year ARTPARK LABORATORY will be a new work by William Lamson that will investigate Artpark’s geological history and current conditions. His project will provide an opportunity to for students and locals to discover the park’s past revealed in its rock formations that span millennia.

BOWER and Lamson’s projects along with research, mapping, and planning by Mary Miss will serve as a platform to imagine a new vision for Artpark’s future and inform a long-term strategy to conceptualize its cultural programming by focusing on the complex environmental challenges of our time including energy, waste, water, habitat, air quality, and climate change.
HARLEM PROJECT

EPIK, by Elliott Maltby, grew out of a November 2014 CALL/WORKSHOP with community members at SoHarlem. Maltby’s core concept aligned with WE ACT’s Northern Manhattan Climate Plan published in 2015. WE ACT, responding to years of escalating social inequality in the City and the lack of a clear roadmap for addressing the mounting climate crisis, partnered with residents of Northern Manhattan to create their own plan to confront the impacts of climate change by addressing long-standing disparities in political and economic power.

To conceptualize EPIK, Elliott Maltby has been collaborating closely with WE ACT members and local citizens in monthly meetings, field trips, and neighborhood workshops. They have considered a wide range of precedents, inventoried goals, explored the neighborhood’s open space for potential siting and vetted conceptual and physical design ideas. Importantly, they have considered how and by whom the kiosk will be programmed, operated, and maintained over time.

EPIK will be a replicable hub to build awareness and skills to expand emergency preparedness and climate resiliency. It will function as a place for exchange, education, and creativity between emergencies and operate as a focal destination in the event of an emergency. Through the possible incorporation of elements like solar energy, a vegetable garden, bioswales or a raingarden, composting, and environmental data collection such as temperature and air quality, it will model sustainable development practices. EPIK is conceived as a model that can be replicated and linked to multiple hubs in Northern Manhattan and potentially across the city.

WATERMARKS: AN ATLAS OF WATER

Following the successful concept development for WATERMARKS, Marquette University has committed major funding and collaborative support, from the Museum and engineering departments and by providing space in the Global Water Center. This partnership is helping CALL move forward with design, testing, and implementation plans.

WATERMARKS will demarcate point by point mapping of water topics in Milwaukee on the scale of the city. Specific locations throughout the downtown will be identified by a series of vertical markers.

An iconic centerpiece of these interventions will be the lighting of the the 350’ high stack on the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewer District (MMSD) treatment plant. From the MMSD stack other specifically designed markers will radiate out from the downtown Harbor District. Each of these markers will act like oversize ‘map pins’ and indicate a piece of the water story particular to the site. Adjacent ‘ripple marks’ will note audio dial-up information where the viewer/listener will be made aware of other parts of the city’s complex water story.

Originating at the Inner Harbor, this constellation of markers will extend out through surrounding neighborhoods creating visual and programmatic linkages across boundaries of geographic and social divides – making a ripple effect increasingly tangible. Each WATERMARKS site will be a hub for activation by other artists, scientists, experts, and local communities to continue the process of building awareness and engagement around water conservation and broader environmental protection.
CALL/WALKS - CHINATOWN

This fall CALL/WALKS, covered diverse perspectives and issues. With the Chinatown Art Brigade (Tomie Arai, ManSee Kong, and Betty Yu) and Samuel Stein we learned much about struggles, successes, and shifting terrain of existential challenges that Chinatown has faced in the past and those it faces in the immediate and long-term future. They helped us understand that to envision a livable Chinatown for those who have made it their home for many generations, environmental measures must be matched with zoning and legislation that will protect residences, jobs, and small business.

Jean Shin and Robin Nagle offered a tour of Chinatown through the lens of “canners” who hunt the streets of NYC for discarded bottles and cans. The “invisible” canners provide a tangible service to our entire community through redemption that returns these wasted castoffs to distributors. They also revealed the magnitude of the waste generated by business, industrial, and construction sources, which far exceed household refuse.

Ellen Driscoll, Joyce Hwang, and Mackenzie Younger started with a reflection on the history of Collect Pond, its eventual decline, and the role that the pond originally played in sustaining the Lenape and colonial settlers. Grossly polluted by the early settlers, the pond was eventually drained, paved over, and built upon. After recounting the Pond’s demise, Driscoll, Hwang, and Younger focused on the interplay between animal and human habitat as we walked from Collect Pond Park to Kennedy Park where participants were asked to draw a rat’s life.

Mary Ting, Paul Bartlett, and Sophie Plitt focused on the toxic health hazards from air pollution in Chinatown that were significantly exacerbated by post-9/11 dust fallout. We started at Canal and Broadway and wound our way south and east through the neighborhood where our attention was turned toward the opportunities and impediments to improve the surrounding hardscapes by planting trees and creating more green space.
BRONX PROJECTS

Following artist/scientist led walks and workshop in 2015, four teams are developing concepts focused on local community priorities: daylighting Tibbett’s Brook and expanding the scope and participation in community gardens. The four teams are led by SLO Architecture, Bob Braine, Mary Mattingly and Juanli Carrion. CALL has received two seed grants from the New York State Arts Council and the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs to move these projects closer to completion and activation.

Finding Tibbetts Brook: Amanda Schachter and Alexander Levi of SLO Architecture, in cooperation with Theo Barbagianis, of eDesign Dynamics, will create a micro wetlands on three truck beds to be sited on the Target parking lot at 225th Street and Broadway, with active support from the Bronx Council for Environmental Quality, the Friends of Van Cortlandt Park, and from other collaborating artists. The micro-wetland will function not only as a social space, but as a small-scale means to contain run-off from the parking lot and reintroduce native species back into the neighborhood.

Habitat Fountains (working title): Bob Braine will lead this effort to create two small water habitats in the guise of fountains, one in a publicly accessible, paved-over open space near Van Cortlandt Park and the other situated further south (downstream) closer to the Harlem River. These installations will focus attention and imagination on possibilities associated with the daylighting of Tibbetts Brook. Braine will be aided by George Jackman, a CUNY professor of fisheries biology, and by Rebecca Swadek, a botanist with the New York City Parks Department, to develop the project to by recreating elements of the lost riparian landscape, buried springs, and the brook itself.

Outer Seed Shadow Marble Hill (OSS#MH): Following successes in creating dialogues around social and environmental justice through art, gardening, and education in Manhattan and Brooklyn, Jaunli Carrión is bringing Outer Seed Shadow to the Bronx in the spring of 2017. This unique community garden project will be derived from extensive video interviews with local residents who live in and around the Marble Hill Houses—a public housing project at 225th Street and Broadway. Carrión will capture stories about the lives and cultural backgrounds of local residents in order to create a garden for and by the community. Each interviewee will be asked to select an edible vegetable or flower to be planted in one of 11 garden beds—one for each of the Marble Hill apartment buildings. Events, such as performances, pot-lucks, composting, cooking and other workshops will be scheduled to expand awareness and participation in the garden to encourage the community to sustain the garden in the years to come, and serve as a replicable model for other public housing projects.

DeWitt Clinton Food Forest: The Food Forest will be an edible forest on public land on the campus of DeWitt Clinton High School in the Bronx, where community gardening and sustainability are well established practices. It will be built through the efforts of a diverse group of talents, among them: Mary Mattingly, an artist who has focused on environmental themes; Ursula Chanse, director of Bronx Green-Up and Community Horticulture at the New York Botanical Garden, and Raymond Pultinas, a teacher of English and school gardener at DeWitt Clinton, as well as author of the Witt Seminar on Sustainability in Schools. With the support of the high school administration, the team will utilize four areas on the high school grounds pre-approved for public gardens—approximately 1/4 acre in total.
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ARTISTS & DESIGNERS

Spring 2013
Jackie Brookner
Marco Antonio Castro Cosio
Kristin Jones
Andrew Ginzel
Eliot Maltby
E.J. McAdams
Eve Mosher
Jan Mun
Jody Pinto
John Tauranac

Fall 2013
David Brooks
Ellen Driscoll
Kristin Jones
Nina Lauren Bassuk
Jan Mun
Matthew Jensen

Spring 2014
Josh DeBonis
Bob Hansman
Tyler Meyr
Axi Ome
MK Stallings

Fall 2014
Torkwase Dyson
Iain Kerr
Petia Morozov
Victoria Marshall
Tattfoo Tan
Eliot Maltby

Spring 2015
Juanli Carrion
Heather Hart
Joyce Hwang
William Lamson
Marshall Reese
Amanda Schachter
Alexander Levi

Fall 2015
Robert Braine
Mary Mattingly
Garnette Cadogan
Howard Chambers

Spring 2016
Garnette Cadogan
Howard Chambers
Marshall Reese

Fall 2016
Jean Shin
Chinatown
Art Brigade
Ellen Driscoll
Joyce Hwang
Mary Ting

SCIENTISTS & EXPERTS

Spring 2013
Annaline Dinkelman
Emily Drury
Bob Fanuzzi
Michael Levine
Anthony Lilore
Ro Sheffe
Gabriel Willow

Fall 2013
Patrick Kinney
Sabine Marx
Benjamin Miller
Franco Montalto
Juliette Spertus
John Waldman

Spring 2014
Miriam Berman
Dan Chitwood
Lorin Crandall
Scott Lamkin
George Yatskievych

Fall 2014
Theo Barbagianis
Adeola Enigbokan
Cindi Katz
Timon McPhearson

Spring 2015
Theo Barbagianis
Dalton Conley
Chris Mason
Mike Feller
Gianpaolo Baciocchi

Fall 2015
Jonathan Tarleton
Arline Bronzaft
Sabine Marx
Rebecca Swadek

Spring 2016
Michael Feller
Benjamin Orlove
Jonathan Tarleton

Fall 2016
Paul Barlett
Sophie Plitt
Samuel Stein
Robin Nagle
Mackenzie Younger

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