

INVITED

THE ANNIVERSARY LIST CELEBRATION STATION

The *Maryland Institute College of Art's (MICA)* inaugural *Master of Fine Arts in Curatorial Practice* class organized a two-part exhibition inspired by the tenth anniversary of Station North Arts & Entertainment District called *Invited*. The exhibition series featured site-specific artworks in ten area businesses as well as a community inspired and celebratory-themed gallery exhibition in *MICA's* newly renovated *Studio Center Sheila & Richard Riggs and Leidy Galleries*.

Invited: The Anniversary List ran from September 28th, to November 11th, 2012. *Invited: Celebration Station* ran from October 21st, to November 11th, 2012.

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Jeffry Cudlin
Practicum Instructor
Curatorial Studies
Advisor

FOREWORD

The inaugural class of MICA's MFA in Curatorial Practice (CPMFA) has proven to be a gifted bunch of matchmakers. Over the course of their first year, these ten curators have made love connections between departments inside MICA, arts organizations outside of it—and between artists, businesses, and residents living and working within the Station North Arts and Entertainment District.

These students have been playing cupid in order to create *Invited*, a bold, sprawling, multi-valent art experiment commemorating the tenth anniversary of Station North's founding. Station North was the first area in Baltimore City to be officially recognized by the State of Maryland as an arts district. This designation was meant to establish central Baltimore as a magnet for cultural producers and arts-curious audiences, and to spur economic development through creative placemaking.

When they first arrived in 2011, nearly all of our ten Curatorial Practice students were new to Baltimore. As they ventured out from their classroom in MICA's Studio Center on North Avenue, the students met neighbors who held disparate views about the history of the places where they live and work—and about the role the arts might play in shaping their future.

Station North is turning ten, and that's cause for celebration, but there are plenty of other committed survivors here worth cheering, too. Businesses like Nutty Sensations, Caribbean Paradise, and Sun Grocery may not court the theater crowd, or gallery-goers—but they have devoted followers, roots in their community, and great stories to tell. Miss Ceo's appliance shop, Heavenly Blessings, for example, is likely absent from most maps of local cultural attractions. Yet the services the store provides—affordable reconditioned appliances for buyers with iffy credit—have been available to Station North residents for 37 years, long before it even occurred to anyone to create an arts district here.

Wherever they looked within the district, the Curatorial Practice students found anniversaries worth celebrating. So they decided: Why only focus on artists, gallerists, or theater companies? Why not throw a party to which everyone is *Invited*?

Thus, for *Invited*, the students shine spotlights not on arts non-profits, but on neighborhood for-profit businesses whose connections to the arts are tenuous. The class recruited a group of adventurous, nimble contemporary artists and paired them with business owners—many of whom were wary, but willing to take the plunge—in order to create ten temporary site-specific art projects, effectively turning non-arts businesses into cultural attractions.

Ultimately, the goal of these love matches between artists and businesses is to foster an open, inclusive conversation about the role of the arts in the future development of Station North.

Behind this matchmaking endeavor is a large, supportive family. This project would not have happened without the dedication of our twelve Practicum Advisory Committee members—drawn from MICA, the Baltimore arts community, and Station North itself, and including Station North’s Executive Director, Ben Stone. Within MICA, Karen Stults from the office of Community Engagement, Mary Ann Lambros from the Office of Advancement and Anne South from the Office of Events have offered crucial support. And, of course, all of the participating artists and business owners have shown incredible faith, patience, and generosity throughout every phase of *Invited*.

My co-instructor Gerald Ross and I have benefitted from the vision of CPMFA Director and long-time MICA Curator-in-Residence George Ciscle. His track record for audience-focused collaborative exhibition making has served as a model for us and for our Practicum class. I am pleased to say that *Invited* reflects George’s values as much as any guidance Gerald or I offered.

Finally, I’m proud to say that *Invited* shows great drive, ambition, and imagination on the part of these students. This class did not have to create a project on this scale, with so many moving parts to track, or so many relationships to nurture. They chose to challenge themselves and each other. In the process, these ten trail-blazing curators have set a very high bar for every class that follows them to meet.

INTRODUCTION

Gerald Ross
Practicum Instructor
Director of Exhibitions

Take ten fledgling MICA curators with exceptionally different life experiences and from different places throughout the US and abroad. Place them in a developing urban arts district in Baltimore, a neighborhood most of them have never visited. Next, assign a task to collectively curate—from scratch—an art experience that not only reflects the community but also relates a meaningful story about it, and its arts and culture, under the auspices of the program of which they are the initiates. Give them one year to do this.

This is Practicum, a course in MICA's new MFA in Curatorial Practice program. As the director of MICA's Exhibitions department as well as a Baltimore artist and curator, I had the unique opportunity this past year to engage with this group as part of an advisory committee, to teach them directly from my experiences, and to help identify and clarify this vibrant and sometimes misunderstood community's voice. As MICA's gallery and programming director, setting a high standard was a primary focus. As a curator and exhibition facilitator at MICA, presenting an ever-widening picture of a complete exhibitions experience was just as essential as recognizing that this opportunity was a first. After all, this exhibition is not only the first of many created by a unique curatorial practice program in a top-tier art college but it also serves as the inaugural art installation in MICA's new Studio Center. Singularly, the goal of this project is to provide a base for the CP MFA's continued work within Baltimore's Station North Arts and Entertainment District.

One of the many unique qualities of Practicum is that it goes well beyond mere graduate school academic rigor for a course. Along with positive support and guidance, my role was to push the curators to achieve an understanding of Station North in its entirety—warts and all. Along with the work out in the trenches the class also created PR, wrote and rewrote text, sent loan agreements, dealt with safety regulations—all the hard work that remains hidden from the viewer.

Ultimately, working week after week, both in the classroom and in the district, the students hammered out idea after idea, working with neighborhood individuals, businesses, various committees, academic departments and community leaders, shaping countless scenarios into one shared curatorial vision: *Invited*, a two-tiered exhibition that celebrates local businesses, artists and MICA, as well as the tenth anniversary of the Station North.

In *Invited: The Anniversary List*, ten installations peppered throughout the community celebrate the everyday and off-to-the-way-side by calling attention to specifically non-arts businesses in Station North. These are the common shops and stores that folks in the neighborhood visit daily. Here, the curators have highlighted an important role each play in sustaining economic structure—one that exists with or without the art district moniker. By directing collaborations between the business owners and artists the curators have given over ownership and creative freedom to each party, strengthening the voices of each. Accompanying *Invited: The Anniversary List*, ***Celebration Station*** is a separate conversation about commemoration and recognition. Working off the idea that this space must be a hub—a central point to gather, distill information and realize the entirety of the project - the curators invited nine additional contemporary artists to the formal setting of MICA's Richard and Sheila Riggs and Leidy Galleries. This installation consciously addresses the idea of celebrating and playfully riffs on the overarching themes and politics in the business installations. Mapping, site documentation and the ambitious schedule of programming—walking and bike tours, a panel discussion, and a gala red carpet event - gracefully links the two concepts together.

A layered, complex exhibition has been created. Indeed, this two-tiered exhibition firmly establishes MICA's new MFA in Curatorial Practice program and MICA's presence in Station North, appropriately building on an internal academic conversation about curating in a contemporary urban landscape. I am honored to have been part of the process with these curators over the last year. There is much to celebrate.

CURATORIAL STATEMENT

Curatorial Practice
MFA 2013

It was never going to be easy; that was a given. We faced a challenge: identify and connect with the communities of Station North Arts and Entertainment District and create an exhibition about and for those audiences. All but one of our group had only recently moved to Baltimore. We had been here just long enough to know that the area with which we had been assigned to interact had a spotty reputation. Station North, which is celebrating its 10th anniversary as an arts district this year, immediately offered lots of positives, to be sure, but these were shadowed by stories of dangers, past and present, particularly along the main artery of North Avenue. Despite any trepidation we might have had we knew straight away that the first steps would be hitting the pavement, knocking on doors, and getting to know the community—the people who lived, worked, and played in Station North.

We knew that we wanted to develop a platform that communicated an earnest desire for reciprocity between the members of Station North's community and ourselves at MICA. After deciding that this platform could best be created in partnership with non-arts businesses in Station North, we got out on the streets, polling every locally owned business in the district—as well as shaking hands, taking names, and sharing stories. It turned out that much of Station North's reputation as an unsafe place was a fiction: In spite of the areas within the district still in need of tender loving care, it is mainly a vibrant community full of creative, welcoming people ready to take on new challenges. We were so warmed by the personal interactions we had with district residents that it only made sense to do a little something special for these people who had made us feel so invited.

The two-tiered exhibition that resulted—*Invited: The Anniversary List* and *Celebration Station*—serves as a laboratory for exploring the connections that we uncovered, created, or encouraged over the past year. *The Anniversary List* pairs one local business with one artist and one curator in ten different sites throughout the district. Each installation is based on the material associated with each selected business's anniversary year according to The Traditional List, an index of customary gifts originating in 1937. Artists and business owners were encouraged to dialogue about how to create an interpretation of their material and how best to integrate the resulting work into the business's space and working rhythms.

Celebration Station, which will be the first exhibition in the gallery spaces of MICA's newly renovated Studio Center on North Avenue, is our way of reversing the exchange, inviting the community into our own working space. Nine artists have been invited to create works that address themes of celebration--of an arts district, of good neighbors, and of locally owned businesses that stay and thrive--and investigate the character of this unique community. It is a humble gift for the communities of Station North and MICA. An invitation, if you will, for the first anniversary of this program and its involvement with Station North is celebrated with paper. We hope that you take this invitation to heart and join in celebrating the budding of this new relationship.



THE ANNIVERS



HARVEY KALIN
1014 N. CHARLES STREET
HOURS OF OPERATION
MONDAY-THURSDAY
5PM-12AM
FRIDAY-SATURDAY
ALL DAY
SUNDAY
CLOSE AT 12 MIDNIGHT
RATES
Club Late - \$10.00
OVERNIGHT - \$20.00
MONTHLY RATES
RESERVED - \$150.00
UNRESERVED - \$120.00

**PREMISES
PATROLLED
BY OFF-DUTY
BALTIMORE
CITY POLICE**

LIMITED

ARY LIST

THE ANNIVERSARY LIST

For Invited: The Anniversary List, ten artists have come together to partner with ten Station North business owners to celebrate the anniversary of each selected business. *Invited: The Anniversary List* is inspired by the materials collected in the traditional wedding anniversary gift list, each of which symbolizes the length of time shared in a relationship. Each participating artist interpreted the material associated with the number of years their partnering business has been open. The resulting installations- many of which were new commissions—showed art audiences, patrons, and residents the positive effects the arts can have on the community.

Nak Won with **Carolina Mayorga**, (*Washington, D.C.*)
curated by **Gabrielle Buzgo**

C & N #1 Deli-Grocery with **Jaime Bennati '08 '11**, (*Westerville, Ohio*)
curated by **Matthew Spalding**

Pearson's Florist with **Amy Boone-McCreesh**, (*Baltimore, Maryland*)
curated by **Chloe Gallagher**

Caribbean Paradise with **Nancy O'D. Wilson '81**, (*Baltimore, Maryland*)
curated by **Allison Gulick**

Chaudron Glass with **Nick Clulow '01**, (*Baltimore, Maryland*)
curated by **Tasnim Abdullah**

Nutty Sensations with **Emily C-D '05**, (*Baltimore, Maryland*)
curated by **Catherine Akins**

Soul II Soul 2 Barber with **Cathleen Sachse '12**, (*Baltimore, Maryland*)
curated by **Emily Clemens**

Heavenly Blessings with **Lauren Boilini '08**, (*Baltimore, Maryland*)
curated by **Deana Haggag**

Sun Grocery with **Amanda Moyer**, (*Detroit, Michigan*)
curated by **Jaimianne Amicucci**

Honey Carry-out with **Shana Goetsch '12**, (*Baltimore, Maryland*)
curated by **Hyejung Jang**



01

NAK WON

LOCATION

12 W 20th St
410.244.5501

YEARS IN BUSINESS

4

MATERIAL

Silk

CURATOR

Gabrielle Buzgo

Business Owner: *Kiwon Shin*

What was your experience with contemporary art before the Invited project?

I really don't know about contemporary art, and I don't have any experience before.

What role do you see art playing in your community?

I think this community is a bit shady, so through the art playing, this community could be more brighter.

Do you feel different about MICA's presence in the Station North Arts and Entertainment District?

I would say, yes. This area looks getting better because of MICA's effort.

Would you participate in another collaborative art project in the future? Why or why not?—

I'd say, yes. I like something new to my business.

Artist: *Carolina Mayorga*
(Washington, D.C.)

I had no experience with Station North Arts and Entertainment District so I began the project by visiting and documenting the site and its surroundings in order to conceive the site-specific project.

It is very interesting to work with non-arts related businesses. It brings different challenges as far as the concept, the audience, site conditions etc. Art spaces can be limiting at times, as they might want artists to play by certain rules or push specific agendas.

Art should definitely play a more active role in the community, it is important to continue projects that bring the art outside of the traditional art context and promote community participation.



02

C&N #1 DELI-GROCERY

LOCATION

1918 N Charles St
410.224.6005

Business Owner: **Julio Diaz**

What role do you see art playing in community building?

YEARS IN BUSINESS

1

Art is something you have to understand. I believe art brings the community positive things. You look at art and you start to see the details, and it makes you see things. Art makes you think.

MATERIAL

Paper

Do you feel differently about MICA's presence in the Station North Arts and Entertainment District?

CURATOR

Matthew Spalding

That's a hard question because I don't know very much about MICA. I had heard there was an art school and that it was good, but I learned that it was right in my back yard. I know this neighborhood has been changing a lot- and fast- and I know that art is part of that.

Artist: **Jaime Bennati '08 '11**

(Westerville, Ohio)

I think hearing about this project and being asked to get involved I was eager to get to know some of the community in new settings outside of the MICA bubble and arts community. It was an opportunity to learn about Julio's business and witness the relationships he has with his customers, something that I found valuable. It felt comfortable there and I found myself wanting to hang out and talk some more with him and people coming in. If I had more time, I would've liked to work with him for a day from start to close.

For me, art has the ability to evoke conversation amongst people which form relationships, understanding, it can bring joy and pride to communities, spark interest that may have not existed prior, it can educate, inform individuals within or outsiders to a community. In my opinion these are the most rewarding outcomes.

I felt that in the end, the process was successful. I was happy with how the piece turned out and was even more excited when people from the community were in the space engaging in conversation about the materials and even commenting on pieces they recognized. They were interested in knowing more.



PEARSON'S FLORIST

LOCATION

1 E North Ave
410.752.6818

YEARS IN BUSINESS

30

MATERIAL

Diamonds and Pearls

CURATOR

Chloe Gallagher

Business Owner: *Vander Pearson*

How did your relationship with contemporary art change after your involvement in Invited?

After experiencing it I found a newfound love for contemporary art, and what it has done for the neighborhood. I could do this every year if the students asked me.

Do you feel differently about MICA's presence in the Station North Arts & Entertainment District after being involved in the project?

Yes, I feel differently about it because MICA's presence in the neighborhood has been a positive and important one. I thought it was very brave of the students.

Artist: *Amy Boone-McCreesh*
(Baltimore, Maryland)

I was lucky enough to have been paired with a business that was very open and accepting of my ideas, which made for a very pleasant working experience. There were things that had to be considered that would not usually come up in the fine art context of exhibiting. Creating something that would not interfere with the business's everyday workflow, unconventional hanging methods for the work, window size, etc. all had to be addressed.

I think that anyone working in the community is focused on the business at hand and may not have the resources or need for something like art. In this context I see this as an opportunity to create a small space that can become a visual respite from the daily grind in the city, as well as a way of drawing positive attention to businesses that have been in Station North long before it became what it is today.

It was exciting to see the finished work on site but because the windows of the business are so small, as an artist typically working in a white walls gallery space, I was left wishing the idea was expanded into a larger space. Despite this, I would not have done anything differently because I think the emphasis should remain on the businesses and celebrating their position in the community.



04

CARIBBEAN PARADISE

LOCATION

1818 N Charles St
410.332.8422

YEARS IN BUSINESS

13

MATERIAL

Lace

CURATOR

Allison Gulick

Business Owners: *Barbara and Brian Vassell*

What was your experience with contemporary art before beginning the Invited project?

I love contemporary art. I visit museums frequently.

How did your relationship to contemporary art change after?

It had a great impact on me. It has inspired me to do more artwork myself.

What role do you see art playing in your community?

I see art in this community being frequently inspired by the members of this community.

Would you participate in another collaborative art project in the future? Why or why not?

Yes, if Allison helps out again. She picked out a great artist to represent our style. We are forever grateful.

Artist: *Nancy O'D Wilson*'81

(Baltimore, Maryland)

The owners were excited to have something unusual in their space and to be included in the project helped to make them feel special. I enjoyed working with Caribbean Paradise and it alerted me to some great places in Station North that I had passed but never visited.

Art makes ordinary people feel that they are part of something special within the community. I was really apprehensive about exhibiting in the space. To compensate for this anxiety I incorporated extra framing as protection for my work.



05

CHAUDRON GLASS

LOCATION

1801 Lovegrove St
410.685.1568

YEARS IN BUSINESS

112

MATERIAL

Oak

CURATOR

Tasnim Abdullah

Business Co-Owner: *Hank Chaudron*

How did your relationship with contemporary art change after being involved in Invited?

Our artist really connected with our business. His use of materials, while contemporary, had a traditional flare. It made me look at contemporary art in a new light.

What role do you see art playing in your community?

Thirty years ago, our area had traditional craftsmen and artists. It's been sad to see them struggle and eventually leave or go out of business. Now it's great to see the resurgence in the area.

Artist: *Nick Clulow '01*

(Baltimore, Maryland)

Chaudron Glass is much more than a business, it's a living history composed of many layers that continue to form over time. Those layers are bonded by one family's commitment to the art and craft of glass-work. At this single workspace one is able to experience the evolution of a hundred years of practice. It's inspiring to witness the maintenance of this hand-craft tradition working so naturally alongside an efficient commercial operation. Baltimore is blessed to house a business of such integrity and tradition.

Hanging art in unlikely places presents the possibility of unexpected outcomes. It must be considered that art can have a profound impact on individuals that aren't intentionally searching it out. When art is relegated to its traditional, stark, spaces, its ability to surprise and delight is sometimes muffled by a lack of context. When artwork is discovered in living or working space, an unavoidable relationship develops between that space and the artwork. If a place emits a strong personality, the artist must deal with that energy in some way—they must either aim to integrate their artwork smoothly into that environment, or mischievously attempt to redefine that environment using their artwork as the tool. This process introduces an exciting new dynamic between place, artist, and audience, and I feel that this is the gift offered by Invited.



06

NUTTY SENSATIONS

LOCATION

34 E Lanvale St
410.908.6500

YEARS IN BUSINESS

1

MATERIAL

Paper

CURATOR

Catherine Akins

Business Co-Owner: *John Phillips*

How did your relationship to contemporary art change after participating in Invited?

I am humbled by all the wonderful and giving people I have met.

What role do you see art playing in your community?

Without art, something is missing. Art is many different things to many different people but something to everyone.

Would you participate in another collaborative art project in the future? Why or why not?

Yes, I loved all the great people and good energy.

Artist: *Emily C-D '05*
(Baltimore, Maryland)

I often work with 'non-artists' probably because I like their lack of pretention & enthusiasm for creativity in new and unexpected contexts. Art is integral for community building because it encourages people to think creatively and find exciting new solutions to social and environmental situations.

This project fit right into my mode of working in collaboration with various people within a social/public context. That's why the opportunity excited me. Also I liked the opportunity to work with paper and the fact that Nutty [Sensations] had such cool paper cones to give me for my installation. I love working with the materials that materialize based on the situation!



07

SOUL II SOUL 2 BARBER

LOCATION

403 E North Ave
410.805.5043

Business Owner: *Frankie Jones*

What role do you see art playing in your community?

YEARS IN BUSINESS

7

Art is playing a bigger role than ever before because there were not as many artists in the community as there are now. Different forms of art that engage the community have come from that.

MATERIAL

Wool/Copper

Do you feel differently about MICA's presence in Station North Arts and Entertainment District?

CURATOR

Emily Clemens

Prior to the project I did not know much about MICA. Now I am learning even more by serving on the Practicum Advisory Committee for next year's class.

Artist: *Cathleen Sachse'12*

(Baltimore, Maryland)

It's wonderful to actually be able to make an interactive piece of artwork in my own neighborhood. Station North is a community filled with both young and old, art makers, creative types, and with honest, hardworking individuals. I wanted to make a piece that everyone could take a creative role in, whether they are artists or not. I wanted my piece to be able to change, to reflect the individuals in this diverse community.

As an artist you need to always be aware that you are in fact working in a place of business, and that you need to take into consideration things like workable space, the feelings of the people who work in the business, and the fact that people will likely be in an environment where they are used to being able to touch things, and to move them around a bit. A business is a more unpredictable environment for an artwork to reside than a gallery.

I felt really good once the piece was installed. My piece however is interactive, so I won't really be able to relax until the show is over. This piece is only my second interactive piece presented in a non-gallery setting, so it's still a learning process. I'm sure as the public interacts with the piece more I will realize some things I can improve. That's the really great part of an interactive piece of artwork though- it can evolve over the run of the show.



08

HEAVENLY BLESSINGS APPLIANCES

LOCATION

1608 Greenmount Ave
410.659.7274

YEARS IN BUSINESS

37

MATERIAL

Mixed Gems

CURATOR

Deana Haggag

Business Co-Owner: *Ms. Ceo*

Do you feel differently about MICA's presence in the Station North Arts & Entertainment District?

Without question. It was a blessing that exceeded my expectations.

Would you participate in another collaborative art project in the future? Why or why not?

Absolutely, the project has been an experience of learning and building relationships of diversity. The project has given me a reference point. As a landmark I am able to use my own building as a description or point of reference to instruct potential customers as to how to locate us.

Artist: *Lauren Boilini '08*

(Baltimore, Maryland)

Working with Heavenly Blessings was a very interesting experience. Miss Ceo is an amazing and unique individual and she made the experience, all on her own. She allowed me more freedom than other commissions I have done. I was very sensitive to the fact that this was her business, but she was always supportive.

I am a size queen. I love to work LARGE. So, it was mostly my ego that said yes to this project. I wanted to cover a building with my painting. The process was very different though. At first, the business did not know me, what I did, or where I was coming from. There was a lot of freedom in that, but also a lot of anxiety on my part.

I think art can have a positive role in community building, but I have mixed feelings about it. Sometimes I feel like it is a band-aid on a bullet wound. I'm glad that my business was so open-minded, so we had a great dialogue, which made me more comfortable with the process, because otherwise I would have felt like a guerrilla artist coming in and taking over something that doesn't belong to me.

I felt good and strange when the process was over. Ultimately, I am glad that I did it and I formed some good relationships. I definitely learned a lot, a lot about Baltimore especially, and I surprised myself. I satisfied some of my curiosities about community art.



SUN GROCERY

LOCATION

400 Pitman Pl
410.539.2973

YEARS IN BUSINESS

12

MATERIAL

Silk

CURATOR

Jaimianne Amicucci

Business Owners: *Mr. and Mrs. Kim*

What was your experience with contemporary art before beginning the Invited project?

We don't know. We have heard there are artists in this kind of area or district so we thought that meant they put up some paintings on walls and buildings.

How did your relationship to contemporary art change after?

The art creates a different atmosphere in the store, more like a home. We were surprised by the artwork, we didn't think of this but we are very happy.

What role do you see art playing in your community?

To "pop" the community- give the feeling of upcoming things. The art means that something is going on.

Artist: **Amanda Moyer**
(Detroit, Michigan)

Coming from the Metro Detroit region of Michigan, having never set foot in Station North, I relied heavily on asking the curator questions about the community and Sun Grocery to inform my work. The more I learned about Station North, the more similarities I saw with this district and areas of Detroit. When creating the installation for Sun Grocery I imagined the perspective of Detroit residents and city dwellers. Considering their perspective made me realize that the artwork must first and foremost be visually dynamic so that customers of the grocery store are inspired to take time to experience the installation.

The challenge becomes how to create a piece of art that is able to attract the viewer's eye amidst all the visual distractions. In regards to working with a business owner, the most important component is that the art does not impede the function of their business.

Public artwork can be instrumental in fostering local pride and building an identity for the community. Without art a community lacks heart and character.



HONEY CARRY-OUT

LOCATION

400 E Federal St
410.539.5347

YEARS IN BUSINESS

6

MATERIAL

Iron

CURATOR

Hyejung Jang

Business Owner: *Kwang-Jin Park*

What was your experience with contemporary art before beginning the Invited project?

I had been a fan of art but never had experience with any participatory or socially engaged art before.

How did your relationship to contemporary art change after?

After I experienced the Invited project and Shana's work, I came to understand contemporary art's role beyond the beauty and to be willing to commit to MICA's projects.

Do you feel differently about MICA's presence in Station North Arts and Entertainment District?

To see the commitment of Shana's process and work, I feel better about MICA's role in the community.

Artist: *Shana Goetsch '12*

(Baltimore, Maryland)

I am very familiar with some parts of Station North, and less knowledgeable about others. However, the most important experience for me to have was in getting to know my site and the owner. I knew I would have to find a good balance between everyone's wants and needs and my own concept and aesthetic. I think it actually helped me to have fewer preconceived notions because I was able to ask more questions.

As a community artist, it's not my first time working with non-artists or businesses, but I always do feel it's refreshing...always unexpected, liberating and truly honest.

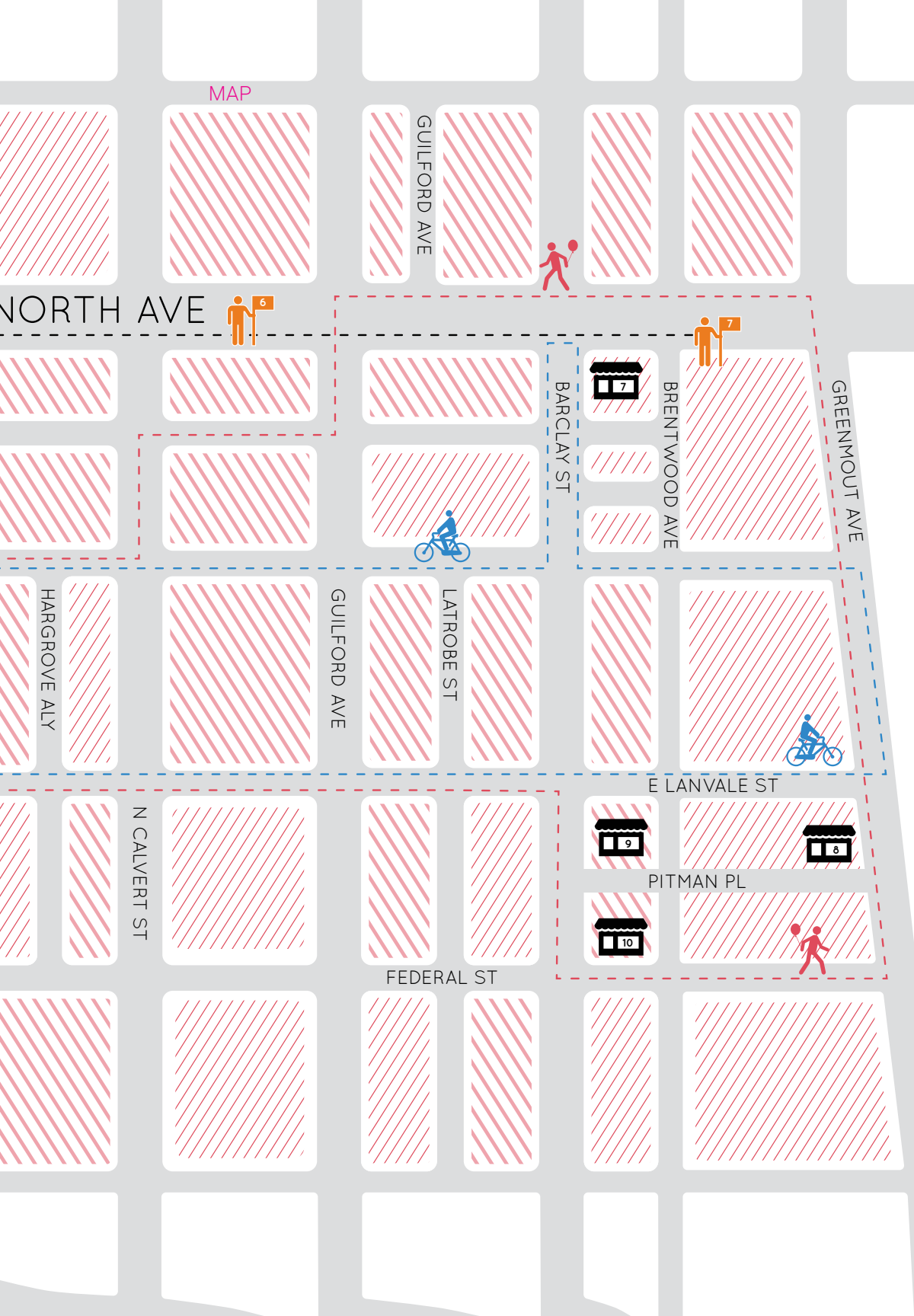
By its nature, I see art as being very "call and response"; it's filled with action. It creates an automatic opening for communication and engagement just by existing.

SITE MAP



INVITED BUSINESSES

- 1 Nak Won
- 2 C & N #1 Deli-Grocery
- 3 Pearson's Florist
- 4 Caribbean Paradise
- 5 Chaudron Glass
- 6 Nutty Sensations
- 7 Soul II Soul 2 Barbershop
- 8 Heavenly Blessings
- 9 Sun Grocery
- 10 Honey Carry-out



MAP

GUILFORD AVE

NORTH AVE



BARCLAY ST



BRENTWOOD AVE

GREENMOUT AVE



LATROBE ST

GUILFORD AVE

HARGROVE ALY



E LANVALE ST

N CALVERT ST



PITMAN PL



FEDERAL ST





Nobutaka Aozaki (New York, New York)

Pippin Barr (Copenhagen, Denmark)

Graham Coreil-Allen '10 (Baltimore, Maryland)

Deuxo '11 (Baltimore, Maryland)

Paul Gagner (New York, New York)

Skye Gilkerson (New York, New York)

Adehla Lee (New York, New York)

Chris Manzione '10 (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)

Kwanteack Park (New York, New York)

CELEBRATION STATION

Invited: Celebration Station, the culmination of the two-part exhibition, opened MICA's newly renovated Studio Center. The exhibition filled two gallery floors with celebratory-themed artworks- many commissioned for the exhibition-as well as documentation of the ten *Anniversary List* Station North business installations. Nine local and international artists took part in the first-ever exhibition in MICA's Sheila and Richard Riggs and Leidy galleries, featuring icons of parties, such as mylar balloons and interactive games, to celebrate both the ten selected sites and the Station North community at large.

NOBUTAKA AOZAKI

(New York, New York)

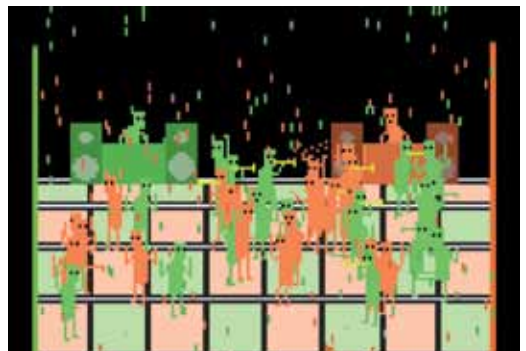
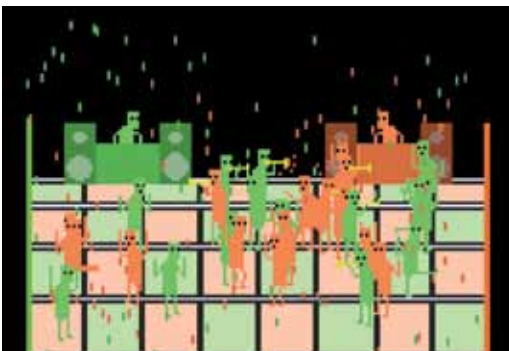
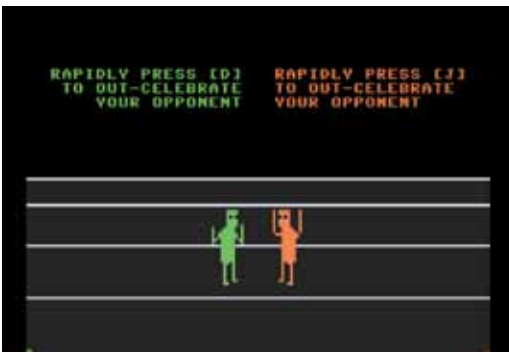
Smiley Bag Portrait is a participatory art project where the artist invites pedestrians to sit and model as he draws their portraits with Sharpie marker on the smiley faces of the ubiquitous plastic take-out bags. This project is inspired by sidewalk portrait artists in tourist places like Times Square in New York City. The artist performs with the small mobile structure on which he displays samples of portrait bags. Participants can get their portraits for free.

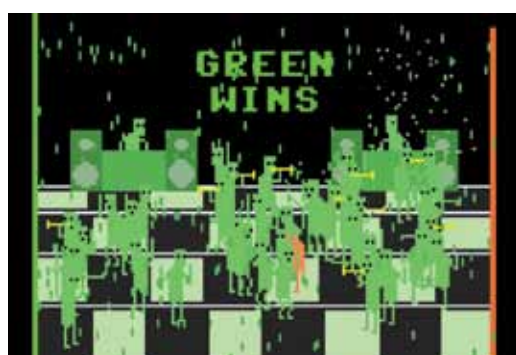
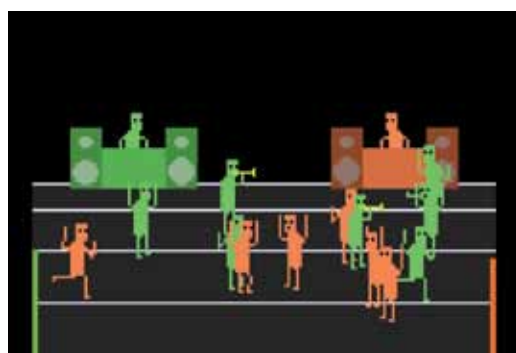


PIPPIN BARR

(Copenhagen, Denmark)

Celebrate FTW! is a game of competitive celebration. Players vie to see who can express the highest partying spirit by rapidly pressing a single button to spur on virtual carousers. As players increase their celebration meters, the on-screen party becomes more and more extreme, featuring DJs, confetti, and even vuvuzelas.





GRAHAM COREIL-ALLEN

(Baltimore, Maryland)

New Public Sites - Station North Avenue (NPS-SNA) is a playful and poetic walking tour through seven collections of invisible sites and overlooked architectural and psychic features along North Avenue between Greenmount and Howard Streets. The *NPS-SNA* project invites a practice of “radical pedestrianism” that pushes urbanite agency, interprets the overlooked and banal and investigates the negotiable nature of the built environment. If a pedestrian is simply a person traveling by foot, a radical pedestrian is one who travels by foot through infinite sites of freedom while testing the limits of and redefining public space.



DEUXO

(Baltimore, Maryland)

In Ten Years... is an animated map of the participating businesses in *Invited: The Anniversary List*. Using graphic icons and bold colors, the map illustrates Station North with whimsical simplicity in a way it's never been seen before. Both pragmatic and fun, the map invites the community to tour the ten sites and create adventures of their own.

The second component of the installation allows audience members to reflect on memories, hopes and wishes for Station North. Using the call and response model, the prompt "In Ten Years" invites the community to write impressions and ideas relating to the past or future. However one decides to interpret the prompt, stories can be shared in a communal space that unites the gallery setting with the community it's in.



PAUL GAGNER

(New York, New York)

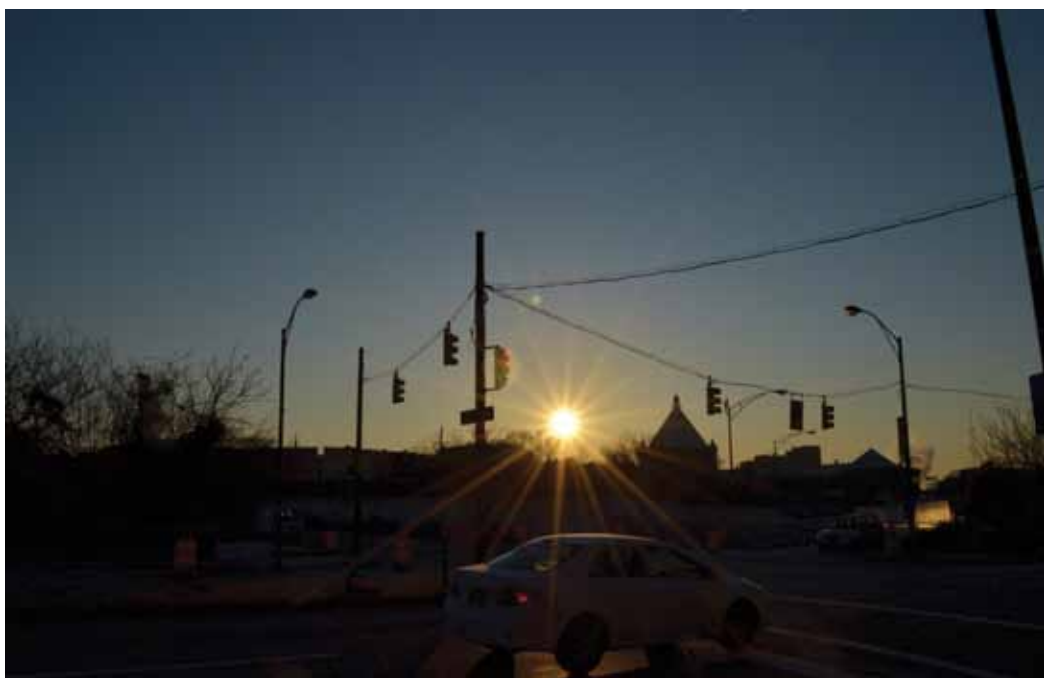
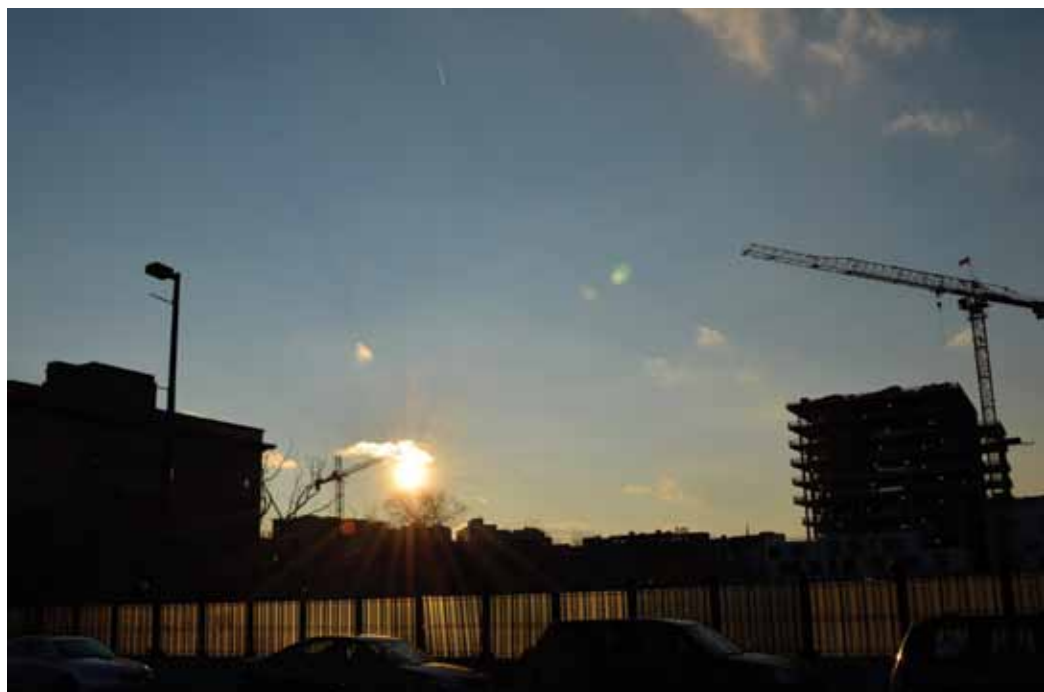
Clearing the Air is a series of four stark white sculptures depicting ordinary urban street objects such as a fire hydrant and a parking meter. Tethered to each of these four sculptures is a group of a dozen or more helium-filled mylar balloons. The balloons carry messages that are insincere apologies with a humorous effect. These messages play with the graphics and content of typical balloons which serve as gestures of congratulations. This gesture is a rich opportunity to create a funny situation that is meant to be selfless, but comes across as inappropriate and awkward.



SKYE GILKERSON

(New York, New York)

The Sunrise Watches the Sunset, which was done in collaboration with Australian filmmaker Josh Hopkins, consists of two videos playing across from each other. Each video was recorded at approximately the same time on opposite sides of the earth: one in Baltimore's Station North, and one in its nearest inhabited diametric opposite, Perth, Australia. The videos face each other as if created for their own observation. As the sun disappears into the landscape of one video, it rises off the screen of the next. The piece addresses cycles, vantage point and perspective; the same moment is both an end and a beginning.



ADEHLA LEE

(New York, New York)

Happy Monster is a large-scale wall sculpture that incorporates festive themes and visuals. Pompoms and plastic eggs are usually the artist's main materials, but for *Invited: Celebration Station*, Lee incorporated ingredients from the *Anniversary List* sites such as fake flowers from *Pearson's Florist* and business cards and flyers from *Soul II Soul 2 Barber* and *Heavenly Blessings*. The mix of these various materials creates an interesting integrated surface that is composed of thousands of different colors and textures. Juxtaposed against this is a participatory piece, *Uncomfortable Couch*, which allows audiences to participate without just standing there.



CHRIS MANZIONE

(Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)

The Virtual Public Art Project (VPAP) is an Augmented Reality (AR) platform for the public display of digital works of art. Augmented reality is a view of the physical real-world environment merged with virtual computer-generated imagery in real-time. ***Invited: Celebration Station*** image recognition technology will trigger an AR gift from the ***Invited*** logo. VPAP is the first mobile AR outdoor art experience ever, and maximizes public reception of AR art through compatibility with smart phones!



KWANTEACK PARK

(New York, New York)

I want to talk TO YOU is an imaginary hotline using a “paper cup phone” with which viewers can speak and listen to one another. The thread of the “paper cup phone” goes through photos of U.S government buildings that are arranged in a hierarchical order based on U.S presidential line of succession (including Baltimore City Hall and Maryland State House.) This is inspired by the fact that in the United States, a democratic country, it’s virtually impossible to speak directly with, or meet, politicians and high-ranking government officials.



CURATORIAL ROUND TABLE

The ten Invited curators, sat down to discuss their motivations, process, and discoveries.

Matthew Spalding: This entire project was about connecting different audiences and building relationships that would hopefully sustain themselves well after the project was over. So, I want to ask, do you think we succeeded in accomplishing those goals?

Hyejung Jang: Hmm. I think that's a bit tricky to tell because I really wanted that relationship to be created through this project, which is why I wanted to work with Shana Goetsch. Shana identifies as a community artist and I trusted her to treat this delicately. The only problem I came across was realizing that my business owner [Kwang-Jin Park at Honey Carry-out] wanted to say yes to anything Shana proposed. They just said 'yes' and to do whatever we wanted.

Chloe Gallagher: Meaning, you had hoped that the business owner would have vocalized more of an opinion, or say something...

HJ: Yes. About art, or their need, but they just said '...You're the artist, you can do whatever you want. You can use my inside space, my outside space, wherever.'

Deana Haggag: Well, isn't that great though? That openness to art...

Emily Clemens: I think in general, Baltimore's a really liberal city. I had a similar kind of experience with my business owner, Frankie Jones at Soul II Soul 2 Barber. He was also very open. Often times he would say, "You know I trust your judgment, you're the artist, whatever, just use your creativity freely." And I think Baltimore is a really open city, so that willingness to participate or to have the artist create whatever they want is directly related to that side of Baltimore's character.

Gabrielle Buzgo: Well, I think it's really interesting that both you and Hyejung had this really positive experience of a business owner being really open and receptive to art because one of our concerns, or one of our theories as a group, was that there were so many people in Station North that weren't related to the arts, or weren't interested in the arts, but having that openness denotes, to me, some sort of interest, or willingness to be a part of the art community.

Jaimianne Amicucci: When I first went to Sun Grocery, and I talked to Mr. and Mrs. Kim they were like, “Oh, we’d like our sign redone. Oh we would like this.” They had specific demands. But then the more I went to visit them, the more that relationship developed and that’s when they trusted me and said, “You know, I think you know best, the artist knows best.”

Tasnim Abdullah: Chaudron was the same. They really loved this project and were so open to anything Nick [Clulow] wanted to do. It was awesome because they are tucked away in this small alley off of Lafayette Street and are one of the oldest operating businesses in Station North. Passed down through five generations of the Chaudron family since 1900! I mean to see them get excited about this project felt great, and to know that they were so open and trusting of us felt really nice.

GB: From the very beginning, Kiwon Shin, the owner of Nak Won, was very helpful, but he was very concerned with how much space this might take up if there was some sort of installation on the inside. Also, while he was really receptive to the idea of this project bringing in new people, he was concerned with people coming in only to look at the artwork and kind of disrupt his business during very busy hours, which is a totally understandable concern in a restaurant. These concerns were great because once they were vocalized to Carolina and myself, we ended up doing something outside, so you can come look at the work at any point, no matter if it’s rush hour lunch, or if Nak Won is even closed, which is very rare, so it worked out. It wasn’t exactly open and free in the sense of “Do whatever you want!” but it was still open and receptive.

CG: Does everybody feel like they effectively communicated to the business owners that we wanted this to be a sort of collaborative process? When I first met Vander Pearson, who’s the owner of Pearson’s Florist, I remember trying to communicate that, but as things went on between myself and Vander and Amy [Boone-McCreesh], Vander sort of defaulted to this acceptance to whatever we wanted to do. And while that was a positive experience for Amy and myself because it was relaxing to know somebody trusted our judgment, it didn’t necessarily reflect all of the goals that we had initially put forth for the project. Vander did give Amy some material, which was really great. He was definitely physically there for us, as far as giving us materials and helping out on installation day, but I’m concerned about my effectiveness relaying that message of collaboration.

Catherine Akins: I had a similar experience. I was working with John and Dave from Nutty Sensations and artist Emily C-D. Nutty Sensations has only been open a year so they are very open to new ideas especially when it gets customers in the door. So, they saw this as an opportunity from the get-go when we passed those initial surveys around and asked what they wanted art to do for their business. They answered that they wanted more people in the doors. So, when I talked to Emily about coming into this project, I knew she was a community artist and would be sensitive to their needs. One thing that was interesting was because Emily was so in tune with the nature of the project and John and Dave were so open, there was this immediate question of my role as a curator. My role was odd. It was like I got them together and then just had to fade away while they built this relationship and rhythm.

GB: You see, I thought that kind of dynamic was perfect for our 'matchmaking' approach or philosophy. I mean we were the matchmakers and when you do that you don't continue to go on dates with the couple because it would be awkward. They develop the relationship on their own. (laughs)

CA: All of a sudden the thing you started evolves into its own thing.

GB: Yeah, like five years later you get a wedding announcement!

JA: I think that what we've all learned is that it's the responsibility of the curator, the responsibility of the artist, and the responsibility of the business owner. I think that's really important. We were working on a massive community arts project with several community artists, but we were not the artists, so how does that work? How do we do that as curators? And I think that's what we were really exploring.

DH: It's interesting that you say that because I think it also challenged a lot of our artists, too. Community arts, or socially-engaged, or what have you, was relatively new to me but was something I had been exploring in practice for a little bit. However for Lauren Boilini, the artist I worked with, it was totally new. She is a painter, a great painter who worked in her studio. Her practice is very insular and painting this humongous mural on Heavenly Blessings was a really different animal. She had people come up to her constantly curious about what she was doing and I remember at one point her reflecting that that was the most interesting part of participating on this project.

Allison Gulick: Yeah. I can totally understand that. The most interesting part for me was working with Nancy [O'D. Wilson], who has been in Baltimore for a really long time, and watching her react to how much this area has changed over the last 10 years. I think in that way, we're starting to see the effects of the district and how an area that was considered not safe, maybe 5 years ago, is becoming revitalized and presenting opportunities for community intermingling that maybe weren't there before. I think that that's probably one of the most rewarding and productive parts of my interaction with this project. As for the relationships, both Brian and Barbara [from Caribbean Paradise] were very receptive to me coming in and to Nancy but I am hesitant to say that it was collaboration. I think it was a collaboration in that they allowed us to use the space, but the relationship that I ideally saw forming in my head... I don't think has ever come into fruition, and I think a lot of that has to do with timing. I mean, we didn't have a year to have meetings with these three groups of people and really get them to understand one another. However, with that being said, Nancy predominately works with lace so I think it's going to bring in a different audience and maybe will boost patronage to Caribbean Paradise and will hopefully get Brian and Barbara to participate in some other things that Station North is doing.

DH: It's really important that you say that. We consistently brought up the issue of sustainability over the past year and defined it in many different ways. Yes, some of us will continue to keep in contact with our business owner but some of us won't. It is not yet clear whether the artists and owners will continue to be chummy and at this point it's out of our hands. However, I think the most realistic and important sustainability aspect to the project was introducing all of these different people to Station North and to MICA. To a certain degree, many of the people we worked with on this project knew about MICA but not really anything that it did or how it functioned. I mean, the odds of our business owners and their friends and family coming to a MICA opening has grown exponentially.

HJ: I think it's incredible that Celebration Station is the first exhibition in the new Studio Center and we have the opportunity to invite all these people in who wouldn't normally come to a MICA opening.

CG: Yeah. Celebration Station was our chance to reverse the exchange and invite the community that had been so gracious and generous with their time and space into MICA's new building. We made the decision early on to bring in nine additional outside artists to make the work for Celebration Station, nine more voices in the project, and specifically voices that had an outsider point of view. The show sort of acted as another platform to explore themes of celebration, and also another chance to create situations where the relationships that we were trying to foster could grow through experiencing and participating with art.

MS: Oh yeah! Absolutely. So, I didn't really have the opportunity to forge a relationship between my business owner and my artist because shortly after Jaime and Julio met, Jaime moved from Baltimore to Ohio and Julio is so busy. He works seven days a week. Julio brought up receipts within Jaime [Bennati's] work to reflect the material paper in her installation. He first recommended using used receipts. That didn't end up happening but it did end up inspiring Jaime to use rolls of receipt paper she found in a warehouse. Julio also donated packaging material that I would ship to Jaime in Ohio to use in her work. As far as the idea of gifting goes it's interesting because my experience with those two people was that there was minimal contact at first but then heavy contact toward the end. Every time there would be a lull and I would want to reengage I would give them a gift to reconnect in a more targeted, physical, direct way.

GB: I think it's interesting that you're talking about giving gifts yourself, but your business and artist were literally sending gift packages to one another throughout this whole process.

CA: Yeah. And to go off of that, I want to highlight something that was really incredible. The amount of work the business owners were willing to do was unbelievable. They gave a lot. They donated so much of themselves and their product. It really was an exchange and not just the artist giving to the business.

JA: We have been having trouble wrapping our heads around collaboration and whether or not our project was a successful collaboration and I wonder if this exchange of gifts is the way that this project has been successful. We all had these similar experiences of exchange.

TA: As soon as we were finished at Chaudron, Nick said that this process introduced an exciting new dynamic between place, artist, and audience, and that he felt that this was the gift offered by Invited.

EC: That is really great. I mean I can definitely feel the effects of the exchanges. Frankie is now on the new Practicum Advisory Committee for next year's class. It's so rewarding to see the individuals we worked with continue on with the relationships they developed while we were working on this project with them.

DH: Absolutely. I still can't believe we were an inaugural class, opening an exhibition in a new building during Station North's tenth anniversary.

MS: Well, we realized really early on that that was too good to pass up. We were asked to specifically address the audiences of this place that was about to celebrate ten years of existence. How do you not include that?

AG: I think it was amazing that we found the traditional list!

GB: That was a hilarious day and probably the most vivid memory I have of Practicum. I remember it was a very long, long day and we were coming up with absolutely nothing. We couldn't stop thinking about Station North's anniversary and the idea of anniversaries generally. I remember going up to the board and forcing us to write things down. The traditional list came up and suddenly everyone got really excited. We saw this connection between anniversaries and materiality and it was just the perfect kick-off point.

HJ: Yeah. We were struggling to find a way to communicate equally to our business and our artist and the traditional list really was the perfect thing.

JA: It was interesting because we came to this idea of materiality and it established itself as a uniform branding that all of us agreed really worked. I think that it's not the core principle of our exhibition; I think that connecting community is, but it's something that allowed us to creatively play with an idea and to communicate to many different audiences.

CG: I think the reason it really worked is because of the variety of those materials. It was a great paradigm in which ten curatorial voices could find autonomy, which was something we were really struggling with. Also, it was conceptually exciting. It was amazing when we pulled up the list and realized what the materials were- the diversity of them and how much fun it would be to play with those things. We obviously knew those materials couldn't all be real- I couldn't really get Pearson's diamonds and pearls... (laughing)

CA: Didn't somebody cry?

TA: (laughs) Jaimi cried. (all laugh)

JA: It was just so nice to finally be on the same page and be excited about it!

AFTERWORD

Ben Stone
*Executive Director
 Station North Arts
 & Entertainment, Inc.*

The Station North Arts & Entertainment District, the host site for *Invited: The Anniversary List*, sits in the geographic center of Baltimore City. Designated by the state of Maryland in 2002, Station North is among the first state-designated arts districts in the United States, and serves as a model for cultural development and creative placemaking projects across the country. The state designation provides three types of tax incentives, including a waiver from the admission and amusement tax for theaters, an income tax subtraction modification for qualifying artists, and a property tax incentive for buildings rehabbed for artistic uses. While these incentives were designed to attract new residents and businesses to the district, Station North was designated largely to recognize the artists and venues already present in the district. But, while Station North's Arts & Entertainment District designation celebrates the artists, arts venues, and artistic programs that form an important part of the district's identity, it is equally impacted by a number of other factors. Station North's proximity to transportation to Washington, DC and affordable housing stock have attracted DC commuters, who have rehabbed rowhouses and rented apartments in Station North. The district's dense collection of social service providers in the commercial section of Station North attracts a large population of service seekers from across the region during the day. The University of Baltimore, Maryland Institute College of Art, and Johns Hopkins University's adjacency to Station North has brought students, faculty and staff to Station North's houses, businesses, and entertainment venues, and legacy residents, largely African American and older than the populations previously discussed, have created strong social networks within Station North's three neighborhoods.

Over the past decade, new businesses have opened, new residents have moved into the district, and relationships have developed between Station North's artist and non-artist residents. Just as the healthiest forests include a variety of tree species that provide a safeguard against disease, the healthiest arts districts are ecosystems comprised of a variety of activities, entities and personalities that not always arts-centered.

Station North is full of artists and arts venues, but it's also full of non-artist residents and non-arts businesses, many of which existed prior to the district's designation. Invited appropriately draws attention to these non-arts businesses, which collectively contribute to the district's diversity and health.

As in many of Baltimore's neighborhoods, the various populations of Station North do not frequently overlap. By converting corner stores and other businesses into arts spaces, Invited's artists and curators have inspired rare interactions between those seeking art and those seeking groceries. While these groups frequently pass each other on Station North's streets, *Invited* has provided spaces for them to occupy simultaneously- certainly the first step towards expanded dialogue and understanding. Time will tell as to whether or not *Invited* creates an economic boost for businesses involved in the project, but at the very least it has caused some of Station North's parallel layers to begin to intersect.

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which were donated directly by the artists.*

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