

Floating Lab Collective

Philosophy

Floating Lab Collective (FLC) is a group of artists based in Northern Virginia working collectively on public art, new media and social research. FLC has worked extensively in Northern Virginia and Washington, DC as well other cities such as Detroit. Medellin, Colombia and Louisville, KY Our goal is to expand public art practices and provoke discourse about the future of society. The collective is a dynamic and flexible group that draws together resources in response to specific communities. Each project experiments with key leverage points within communities that have the capacity to expose, analyze and transform around identity, economics and the environment. The collective's working process is integrative, turning social action into art and creative processes into social change. FLC is known for designing new platforms to provoke participation such as mobile, digital and transportable devices. All FLC projects aim to be acts of service that bring sustainable resources to a community, acts of acknowledgement that educate and promote community members and acts of empowerment for participants.

Background

Floating Lab Collective began in 2007 at the Multimediale Arts Fesitval organized by **Provisions Library**, a research center for arts and social change. Its first public action, Protesting on Demand, deployed teams throughout Washington to mount spontaneous protests, as requested by the public. The project was also performed at Transitio MX **Laboratorio Arte in Alameda**, **Mexico**. FLC formed a partnership with Provisions

Library, serving as its community and public art program. With funding from The Creative Communities Initiative of the Community Foundation of the National Capital Region the Floating Museum was founded using a food delivery truck as a mobile museum and platform for participatory art practices in collaboration with communities in DC, Indianapolis, Kentucky, Detroit and Medellin, Colombia. Floating Lab Collective participated in Provisions' Brushfire Project a public art series that was displayed nationwide during the 2008 elections. Floating Lab exhibited in Close Encounters: Facing the Future at the American University Museum, later shown in New York City at the **Nathan Cummings Foundation** and at Denison University in Ohio. Other exhibitions include, Let's Talk! at The World Bank, Res-Publica: Space as Essay at the Cafritz Foundation Art Center and The Exhibit Theater of Peace at the NGBK in Berlin Germany.

Modus Operandi

Given an invitation to an intervention in an exhibit or museum or the need to address a particular topic, the group will respond to the challenge based on a series of steps: research, context, community engagement, public space, resources available. With that information the collective brings central issues like mobility, accessibility, and participation to design the project. Based on the core ideas of the project, objects, new media apparatuses, or structures are designed and built. In parallel the iconography and the design of the logo are disseminated as a form of visualizing the project and to promote and engage in a dialogue with the communities prior to the execution of the project.

01 Screamer

Scream at the Economy

Video Documentation: in Vimeo / search: screamattheeconomy

June 2009 Washington DC / New York

Is a participatory project which invites people to call a phone number and scream at the economy. We chose the scream as a universal interface, an instinctive survival expression and as a warning of danger. It also brings an art historical context and (such as in Munch's painting) that have become shorthand of modern alienation and despair, icons of anxiety and hopelessness.

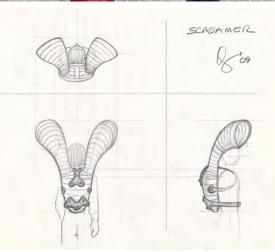
The archived screams are recorded as mp3 files used to commission musical compositions by various international composers.

Finally, the musical compositions are played through the "screamer," a portable speaker system, that performs in public spaces and in front of relevant financial institutions.









02 METModular Enviromental Transporter

Video Documentation: http://vimeo.com/ 31856323

October 2010

The Modular Engagement Transporter (M.E.T.) is modeled on the NASA Modular Equipment Transporter used on the Apollo missions to document the surface of the Moon. The M.E.T., was a cart outfitted with pneumatic tires that carried geological tools, cameras, and sample cases on the lunar surface.

The Floating Lab Collective recreated this device to explore the surfaces of our own planet that have become alien to us; specifically areas such as BP's Oil Spill along the Gulf of Mexico, the Mountain Top Removal sites of Appalachia or even our own communities and neighborhoods, that have lost their sense of public space and solidarity. The Floating Lab Collective's MET is outfitted with digital still, video and pin-hole cameras, projectors, speakers, a backdrop, a pull out table and chairs coated in chalk board paint to facilitate meetings and project planning, as well as storage compartments equipment specific to certain projects. The MET is a aggregation of documentary tools to explore the aesthetics of alienation and to reveal transformative encounters with communities and landscapes.









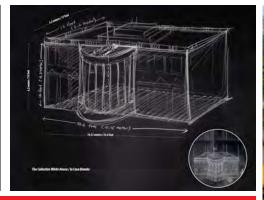


03 Collective White House

La Casa Blanda

Video Documentation: http://vimeo.com/29628086

August 2011 Medellin - Colombia



Throughout the world, the White House is an icon of United States power and the aspirations of human progress. It is a primary media image symbolizing decisions made in Washington that have a profound impact on people all over the planet but who play little or no role in the decision-making process. The Collective White House is a public art project through which people can re-imagine their relationship to the power represented by the White House. By turning an historic symbol of institutional authority into a collective social space the project encourages cultural and political dialogue, participation, empowerment and reciprocity: a peoples' embassy.

Construction: The Collective White House n°1 is constructed from the reused, donated bedsheets. The bedsheets are a metaphor for the transient condition of individuals, addressing issues of identity and immigration in the context of an economic system of exchange and labor. The project calls on the participation of the local populace and craft-makers, so the whole community reflects on the construction process and ultimately the final meaning of the project.







04 Agenciesof discriminatory language

Video Documentation: http://vimeo.com/29356282 http://vimeo.com/29356195

September 2011 Museo de Antioquia / Medellin-Colombia

The Afro-Colombian Experience explores the experience of discriminatory language which affects the Afro-Colombian community. It identifies new creative expressions that restore and elevate affective and identity-based language through the music of resistance and mourning. (2 videos were created with the Afro-Colombian community).







05 Mobile Studio

Video Documentation: http://vimeo.com/29390990

August 2011 Medellin - Colombia



During the past three years six Hip-Hop artists, Colacho, Medina, Chelo, Gordo, Yheil and Rasta, have been murdered in Comuna 13, a neighborhood of Medellin, Colombia. This tragic series of events was compounded when the murdered were branded as criminals by the media. However, these events have galvanized a new city-wide movement to build and educate more peaceful communities.

The project created a self-sufficient, mobile sound studio to produced and-distribute the sounds and lyrics of the urban younth in the Comunas around Medellin. The Mobile studio provides empowerment and orientation, inserting the mobile studio into the network of Hip-Hoppers, providing concrete forms for their production. Further, it would link similar groups in the city as well as could serve to connect the experience of Medellin with other international audiences.







O6 Agencies of the Casa Blanda www.collectivewhitehouse.org Video Documentation: http://vimeo.com/ 29403936

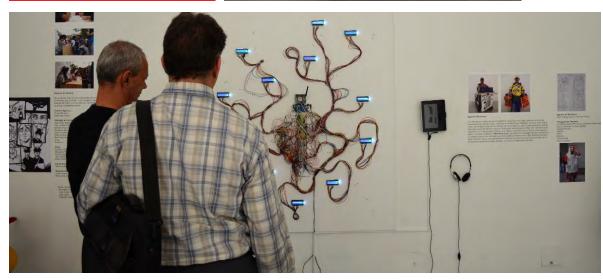
September 2011 Museo de Antioquia / Medellin-Colombia

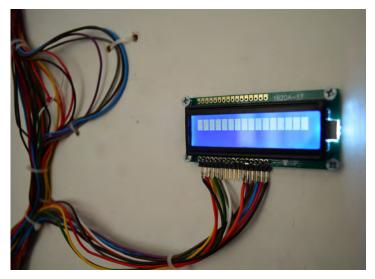
Minuteros: Minuteros are a class of street worker who sell the use of a cell phone. The experience of the Minuteros in the streets of Medellin provides contextual insight into a sub-culture of the city as well as an opportunity to intervene in daily life at the intersection of technology, employment, commerce and human interaction.











07 Agenciesof the Casa Blanda www.collectivewhitehouse.org

September 2011 Museo de Antioquia / Medellin-Colombia

Utilizing the nomenclature of the institutional process, a series of departments or agencies are housed inside the Collective White House (Casa Blanda). These departments invent new opportunities for dialogue between the people and the institution, such as:

H/agency of Complaints, Dreams and Fears H/agency of Re-Mapping H/agency Discriminatory Language















08 Floating Museum

On going since 2009 North Virginia / Washington DC



The Floating Museum is a response to urban mobility and the concept of the "commuter," specific to the metropolitan area of Washington DC. The Floating Museum symbolically transforms a truck, normally used for selling tacos, into a moving museum. It functions under the premise of accessibility, participation, pertinence, roaming, and integration of displaced communities. The Floating Museum gathers and disperses ideas, constantly adapting itself to new urban environments. It moves concepts from abstraction into tangible form, becoming a platform for the interchange of experiences.

The Museum partners with grassroots community organizations, in harmony with existing programs and projects. Community generated needs and assets are addressed collaboratively with comminuty members who join the collective. Projects always incorporate training in such areas as video production, digital arrts, photography, etc.





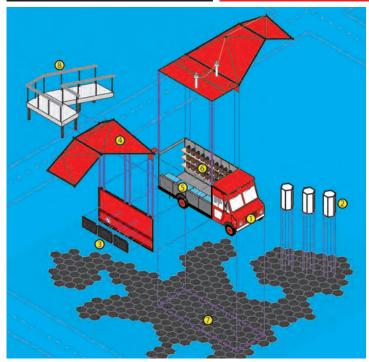




09 Remuseum

March - April 2012

Is an ongoing research project that questions the notion of the cultural institution presented as museum, as a definitive space consecrated to house cultural exchange. The notion of [Re] proposes a dynamic for the constant revision of the museum within the language that cultural and art institutions have produced and sustain. [Re] attempts to question and produce an open dialogue with the material, the structure and context proposed by the museum as institution and mechanism of deliverance. [Re] as prefix proposes conversion and transformation; re-assign, re-balance, re-direct, re-cycle, re-purpose, re-contextualize the cultural institution. Just as the museum reifies objects by subjecting them to historical interpretation, Re/Museum reifies the museum as an object seeking to discover future interpretations and cultural platforms.

















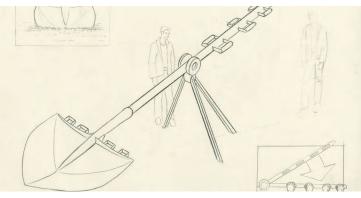
10 Collective **Objects**

Ongoing

sume.

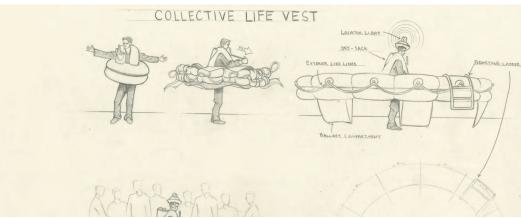
Collective Objects are a series of diagrams exploring the possibilities of collectivism in the act of consumption of objects that are already in existence in our material landscape. The sketches are meant to be sent to the respective companies, where FLC hopes to enter into a dialogue with the fabricators to expand the notion of how and what we con-













Sonya Soutus

Senior Vice President, Public Affairs and Communications Coca-Cola North America

Dear Ms. Soutus.

The Floating Lab Collective is an art and design collective focused on social improvement and based in Greater Washington, DC. We are writing out of a genuine concern for your consumers and would like to propose a collaboration with your company to offer an alternative mode for dispensing your product, one that promote values of community and collectivity.

As it stands today, the design of the Coke bottle is near perfect in its sleek, recognizable utility. But in today's changing society, one is too often forced to compete with others to obtain quality goods such as Coca-Cola. Inevitably, there are those who simply cannot afford Coca-Cola and those who must forgo all other human relationships in order to obtain it.

Thus we propose a simple solution to resolve the conflict: multiple bottlenecks.

Now, not only will your consumers be able to enjoy the blessing that is Coke-- but they will also be able to share it with those around them. Rather than reinforcing the alienation of modern society, Coke will offer a brief reprieve by creating intimate micro-communities around an incredibly satisfying beverage.

We have enclosed schematics for the collective Coke bottle within. Obviously moving forward we will need to work out the practical details of the design (number of necks, neck length, thickness and type of plastic) through a series of targeted focus groups. There will no doubt be a number of obstacles to overcome before we can make the collective Coke bottle a reality. But we here at the Floating Lab Collective have absolute faith in your abilities to provide tangible solutions for your customers. Needless to say, we in turn are prepared to dedicate all of our resources to such a worthy endeavor. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Floating Lab Collective Art and Design Building Room 2050 4400 University Drive MSN 1C3 Fairfax, VA 22030 USA