

# CULTURE AND COMMUNITY DESIGN • 2023 •

Grades 9-12 Survey Questions

NAME: Samuel Jones  
GRADE: 11th  
SCHOOL: Clatsop High School

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE TYPE OF ART? (Drawing, Sculpture, Photography, etc.)  
Photography

WHERE DO YOU EXPERIENCE OR SEE ART? (Public Places, Museums, Galleries, etc.)  
Clatsop Community Center

WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT CLATSOP COUNTY?  
The scenery and the people.

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO CHANGE ABOUT CLATSOP COUNTY?  
The economy and the schools.

WHAT DOES THE AFRICAN DANCE MEAN TO YOU? (If you don't know, write "I don't know.")  
I like it and I love it.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE THING ABOUT YOUR CULTURE?  
The food and the people.

"EVERYWHERE WE GO, THERE WE ARE" | WWW.ADAMATL.ORG

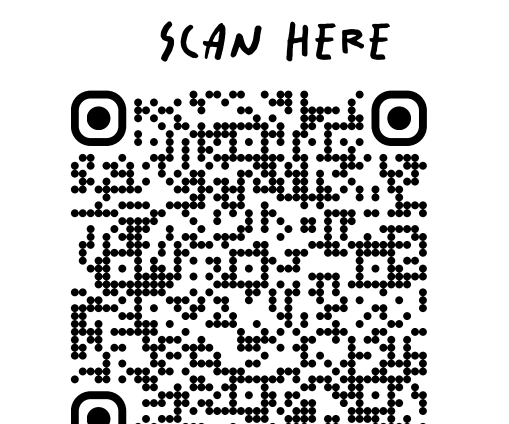
# WELCOME!

ARC's Culture & Community Design program (CCD) is an immersive seven-month program where community organizations serving underrepresented populations collaborate with artists, local officials, and planners to design community engagement projects using arts and culture. The program intentionally includes individuals and organizations representing communities that have been historically marginalized or excluded in local and regional planning processes.

This is the first year that the CCD class took place and we wanted to make a book for you to get a sense of what it's about. This year, we created a space to learn, dream, collaborate, and support two vital community based organizations, the African Diaspora Art Museum of Atlanta (ADAMA) and Full Radius Dance.



2023  
WHO MAKES UP CULTURE AND COMMUNITY DESIGN?





# ARC'S COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CULTURE TEAM

Embedded within the Community Development department, our team leads the integration of culture within planning processes through programs like CCD.

## MISSION

To reimagine community engagement by embedding culture within our programs, practices, policies, and opportunities with Black and Indigenous communities and communities of color that have been historically marginalized and excluded to improve community outcomes and quality of life.

## VISION

Communities in the Atlanta region that have been historically and systemically marginalized and excluded are centered and supported as partners and co-creators in the planning process to express and fulfill their ideas and desires through their own social, artistic, and cultural practices.

## MEET THE TEAM!



### ROSHANI THAKORE

Roshani is a socially-engaged artist, a Georgia native, and thrilled to be working with communities across the metro Region via her role as Head of Community engagement and Culture at ARC. She dreams of owning a wiener dog one day.



### ELEANOR SWENSSON

Eleanor Swensson, MFA, MUPD, AICP-C is a community planner and multi-disciplinary artist. She currently serves as the Senior Community Engagement and Culture Planner for ARC and lives in Athens with her partner, Mick, and two cats, Xena and Lunchbox. She has a deep love for home cooking, poetic performance, and all kinds of dance.

### ANTEMIL JORKEY

Antemil is a Community Engagement and Culture Planner in the Community Development department at ARC and is interested in housing and transportation and the intersections between arts/culture and people-focused planning. She loves cats, live music, a good pun, parks and the sounds of people existing within a city or place.



### GINA CIPRIANO

Gina is the part-time Community Engagement and Culture program assistant and a full-time grilled-cheese enthusiast who loves telling stories through creative design. She lives in Southwest Atlanta with her husband, Cory, and her new baby, Rosalia. For fun she enjoys cooking, hiking, estate sale-ing and petting her dog, Bucky, and cat, Mr. Noodles.

### ISAAC KIRWAN

Aspiring planner and student. Loves everything about how cities live, move, and groove. Currently interning in the Community Development department and soon to be exploring a new life and opportunities in Jersey City with his partner, Mat and two cats, Tilda Swinton and Ethyl.





# CULTURE AND COMMUNITY DESIGN

## THE WHAT AND THE WHY

CCD came out of the Arts Leaders of Metro Atlanta (ALMA), a leadership program that began a decade ago to make connections between arts leaders and government, planning, and civic leadership. The program has been slowly evolving and now it's through CCD that culture is integral in ARC's community development work, focusing on equitable community engagement.

We know it will continue to evolve as the years go by as we are committed to be responsive to the wants, concerns, and needs of our communities.

### WHY INTEGRATE IT INTO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT?

The Community Development Department believes that culture is essential for building a thriving, inclusive, and healthy region. We want to invest in artists and culture bearers as leaders in their communities to drive more innovative inclusive engagement practices resulting in more diverse voices.

We want to do more than just bring new voices to the table - **we want to create new tables!**





# OBJECTIVES

## THROUGH THIS WORK WE WANTED TO...

- Create an experiential learning space for community members from the metro Atlanta region to collaborate and work with two community based organizations on a public, community engagement event.
- Ensure that two community based organizations are better positioned and equipped to utilize arts and culture, including artists from their own community, to participate in and lead community planning engagement efforts.
- Develop skills for seven artists to learn how to work more effectively with folks from different backgrounds.
- Engage with historically excluded and marginalized communities using arts and culture strategies through an intentional co-designed process with community circumstances, needs, and desires in mind.
- Use a creative practice as a foundation in approaching community engagement and planning work.



## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITY OBJECTIVES

This was the first year the CCD class collaborated with local community-based organizations to create public community engagement events as one of the deliverables. Leaning into experiential learning, the class worked directly with community members in collaboration, creative co-design, and visioning. We wanted the class to...

EFFECTIVELY COLLABORATE  
WITHIN THE GROUP  
ANCHORED BY COMMUNITY  
AGREEMENTS

CREATE A PUBLIC  
EVENT!

INVOLVE COMMUNITY  
MEMBERS IN THE  
CO-CREATION OF THE  
EVENT

USE CREATIVITY IN THE  
DESIGN AND THE EXECUTION  
OF THE EVENT

DEVELOP SUSTAINABLE SYSTEMS  
FOR RELATIONSHIPS AND  
ACCOUNTABILITY



# WE MOVED THROUGH THIS CLASS



# EMBEDDED IN THESE VALUES

## EQUITY AND JUSTICE

Through our community engagement and arts and culture work, we commit to advancing social, cultural, economic, and environmental equity and justice for, by, and with people, especially artists and culture bearers, and organizations from these communities.

## COLLABORATION AND CO-DESIGN

We affirm the knowledge, power, and joy within the communities we serve. We seek specifically to collaborate with communities that planning has historically and systemically excluded and often harmed by practicing the mindsets, methods, and conditions of co-design.

## CURIOSITY AND COURAGE

We commit to taking risks, embracing curiosity and imagination, and acting with courage and resolve to navigate constant complexity and occasional conflict while challenging an inequitable and unsustainable status quo.

## REFLEXIVITY

We acknowledge our positionality, privilege, and power as employees in a regional planning agency tasked with designing and managing programs and policies that influence community decisions and outcomes. We commit to transparency and accountability, questioning our assumptions, and regularly evaluating ourselves and our actions.



# CLASS TiMELiNE

## iNViTATiOn

The Community Engagement and Culture team reached out to metro Atlanta artists, planners, government officials, and community-based organizations to invite them to apply to CCD.



## LEARNiNgS/COLLABORATiONS (SPEAKERs)

We learned from local and national artists, urban designers, and more about creative community engagement and experimented with different collaborations together.



## SiTE ViSiTs

Together we learned more about our community-based organizations and the communities they serve.



## PROCESSiNG/DEBRIEF

We collectively came together and shared our big lessons learned.



START

FINiSH!

## WELCOME

We came together at ARC to learn more about each other and begin our 7-month journey in creativity and collaboration.



## ENGAGEMENT EVENT

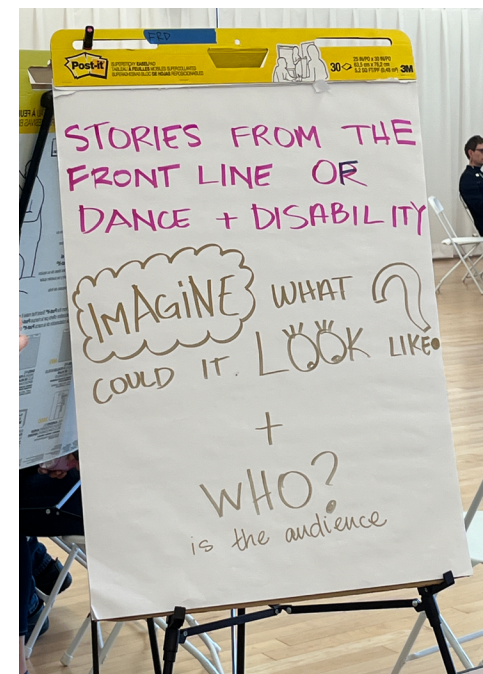
We took what we learned and put it into action!



## REPORTiNg/PRESENTATiOn

We told the story of all of our learnings with recommendations for the organizations and ARC to sustain this work!





# WHAT DID THIS CLASS

# FEEL LIKE ?





# OUR COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS

(AKA, WHO WE WORKED WITH)

For authentic community engagement to occur, community assets like community-based organizations that are embedded in marginalized communities need to be involved. Because both ADAMA and Full Radius Dance are local arts organizations that serve residents of metro Atlanta that belong to the African diaspora and the disability communities, the Community Engagement and Culture team selected them to be the two organizations CCD would host for 2023.







African Diaspora Art  
Museum of Atlanta

### **THE AFRICAN DIASPORA ART MUSEUM OF ATLANTA**

is a virtual museum showcasing contemporary art and culture of the African diaspora. The museum's goal is to support a regional sense of belonging, promote economic development, opportunity, and cultural heritage tourism. To do this the museum intends to bring contemporary art and culture to people of the African diaspora where they are with data-driven resources. Core to ADAMA's mission is providing greater accessibility to contemporary art and culture while cultivating belonging and community togetherness. The museum intends to eventually create a permanent physical home in a historically Black Atlanta neighborhood to foster art accessibility for African Descended people.

THE FOLLOWING ARE CORE TO ADAMA'S VISION FOR A  
PHYSICAL CONTEMPORARY ART AND CULTURAL SPACE:

Centers the Black  
Experience

Anchored in a Historically Black  
Neighborhood in Atlanta

Designed in Partnership  
with the Neighborhood

On Three Acres of Land

Street  
Presence

Pedestrian  
Access

Accessible by Car and Public  
Transit



# CLARKSTON

The ADAMA group in the CCD program researched 4 areas in metro Atlanta to make a community engagement art activation. The group chose Clarkston – a culturally diverse neighborhood with 60% Black residents, half of them being foreign-born and the other half American. The group thought this would be the best location to build relationships and develop a community driven art activation learning how ADAMA could translate this work after the class to the other 4 areas.

Through group discussions with Clarkston’s mayor and ADAMA staff, the vision of “One Clarkston” was born to cultivate belonging and togetherness between the two prominent cultural groups in the city. Driven by art and culture, the CCD ADAMA group sought to be the catalyst for the public engagement around “One Clarkston.”

## LOCATIONS: COMMUNITY ASSETS

### CLARKSTON COMMUNITY CENTER (STRATEGIC SITE FOR CODESIGNING)

The CCD ADAMA group decided to work with the youth in Clarkston for their engagement work and identified the local high school and the Clarkston Community Center where youth gathered and regularly socialized. The group reached out to both and found more traction with the community center.

### REFUGE COFFEE (STRATEGIC SITE FOR COMMUNITY EVENT)

As in much of metro Atlanta, Clarkston is spread out and has only the bus system available for public transportation. There is a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly street not too far from the community center with ethnic grocery stores, restaurants and a nonprofit coffee shop, Refuge Coffee, which is dedicated to providing job opportunities for local refugees. The CCD ADAMA group learned about an annual event Refuge Coffee hosted called the 5k Race Around the World. Because of Refuge Coffee’s centralized location within the Clarkston Community, the group leveraged the race to strategically engage with the wider Clarkston Community around the topic “One Clarkston.”

## CO-DESIGN PROCESS:

Before the community event, the CCD ADAMA engagement team collaborated with students in the Clarkston Community Center’s Leaders of Tomorrow program. The leadership program focuses on fostering youth leadership in refugee, immigrant and BIPOC communities. The youth learn to lead through engaging in their community, learning about the voting process, and by advocating for resources their community needs.

The CCD ADAMA group engagement team created a youth visioning session to gather input and ideas and spark discussion in the session about Clarkston’s assets and areas for improvement. The students showed great enthusiasm for the idea of “One Clarkston” and were eager to share.

## SOME IDEAS:

MUSICAL CHAIRS

TRIVIA GAMES

RAFFLE PRIZES

CULTURAL BOARD  
GAMES

FOOD

CULTURALLY SPECIFIC  
MUSIC

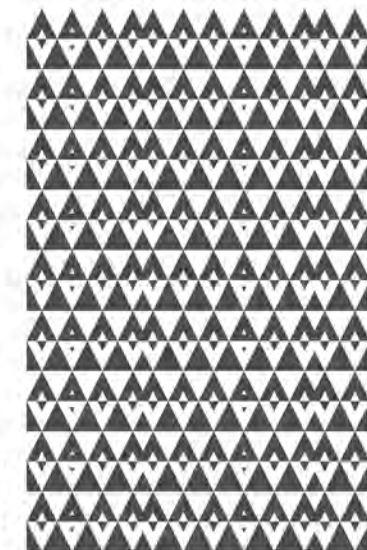






OUR MOTTO IS:

EVERY  
WHERE  
WE GO,  
THERE  
WE ARE



AFRICAN DIASPORA ART MUSEUM OF ATLANTA | [WWW.ADAMATL.ORG](http://WWW.ADAMATL.ORG)



# THOUGHTS ON CULTURE, "ONE CLARKSTON" AND MORE

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT ART?

It can express feelings  
and ~~and~~ it can tell people about your culture through it.

{ WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE THING ABOUT YOUR CULTURE? }

"The food, people, culture, diversity."

"The shared experiences. I can connect with people from across the Black diaspora and we can connect on upbringing and values"

"The communal aspect. We don't do anything without thinking about someone else"

WHAT DOES THE AFRICAN DIASPORA  
MEAN TO YOU?

Beauty of  
Black ppl  
everywhere

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE THING ABOUT  
YOUR CULTURE?

-The clothes -The dance -The people  
-The music -The Parties  
-The food -The weddings -The boys

{ WHAT DOES THE AFRICAN DIASPORA MEAN TO YOU? }

"For me it's exciting and resilient"

"It means the anyone with African roots that can be anywhere around the world"

"It means our African community finally coming together to create a better community"

"Rich, deep culture being grown in new soil"

"Sharing a culture with people who look like you but are from different places"

WHAT DO YOU LOVE ABOUT CLARKSTON?

I love that there a lot of  
different nationality/races people in  
here. I also love cuz I get to  
try different food and get to see  
different ppl culture.

{ WHAT DOES "ONE CLARKSTON" MEAN TO YOU? }

"I think if all different communities get together, celebrate together. Getting to know each other and build a "One Clarkston"

"One Clarkston" means designing a community for all instead of one. Uniting all cultures and their needs for a better future for their kids"

"One Clarkston" means we are all together even though we are different"



# WHAT DID WE LEARN?

## 3 KEY LEARNINGS FROM THE PROCESS

- AGENCY AND COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP
- ACCESSIBILITY
- ACCOUNTABILITY

### AGENCY AND COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP!

Centering transparency in decision making is vital for cultivating spaces where there is clear community agency and ownership.

Leveraging existing assets within the community cultivates a sense of ownership within a community.

### ACCESSIBILITY!

Creating multiple entry points for community members to engage and shape the process is key.

Identifying and utilizing strategic locations in a community increases opportunity for collaboration with community members.

### ACCOUNTABILITY!

Clear communication to community members can improve participation and ownership.

Disparities in established community institutional resources can run the risk of placing greater emphasis on particular voices over others.





# SUMMARY OF KEY LEARNINGS

The CCD ADAMA group centered transparency in decision making by creating spaces where ownership is clearly with the community itself and helped to foster a sense of ownership for the students in the process. This was done by tapping into existing assets, the Clarkston youth program and the centrally located Clarkston Hub. Meeting the community where they naturally congregate allowed for the community to inform and shape the process. The engagement process overall and engagement booth the day of the event provided multiple entry points for community engagement.

Helped to foster a sense of ownership for the students

Clear communication to community members

When doing this work clear communication to community members is also important for community enthusiasm and engagement in the process. The voice of the native Black population was not captured as extensively as the foreign Black population because of the existence of greater institutional resources for the foreign population. In engaging with communities, it is important to recognize when more established institutions for one portion of the target population may be overshadowing another portion.

The inequitable resources for the Black population in Clarkston have made it challenging for community ownership within the city. In a smaller scale, because the CCD ADAMA group centered the community and culture that already existed in their engagement work, there is a clearer path to develop more trust and community ownership with the entire Black population, and ultimately cultivate a robust and multidimensional “One Clarkston.”

# OVERALL INTERNAL ARC LEARNINGS



There is power in lived experience

As shapers of the built environment, planners have the power to facilitate the realization of community agency, ownership and power. Simultaneously planners must also maintain a level of humility and recognition of their positionality to foster the accountability necessary to maintain long-term relationships necessary to maintain this facilitation.

Planners have the power to facilitate the realization of community agency, ownership and power

Planners must also maintain a level of humility

There is power in lived experience and there is power in connection. The ADAMA engagement work highlighted these key learnings and fostered the space for youth to voice their points of view and wield their decision-making power in the process.





## FULL RADIUS DANCE

Full Radius Dance is a physically integrated, Atlanta area dance company dedicated to increasing accessibility and elevating creative experiences for dancers and dance enthusiasts with disabilities. They provide a wide range of virtual and in-person programs including professional performances, education, and community outreach.



Full Radius Dance joined CCD to “increase accessibility of its virtual and in-person programming by understanding and addressing the needs and realities of the disability community.” Centering the needs of the disability community will further the company’s desire to:

- Broaden society’s understanding/image of what a dancer looks like to include people of all bodies, abilities, or disabilities;
- Be a go-to resource for physically integrated dance technique across the globe;
- Consistently innovate, improve, and push boundaries on artistic expression; and
- Offer audience members and dancers a transcendent, emotional experience through their performances.

After learning about more about Full Radius Dance’s goals, the CCD Full Radius Dance group wanted to use the class to:

- Authentically engage with the dance and disabled arts community;
- Explore new engagement methods with the Full Radius Dance community beyond performance events; and
- Gather best practices for equitable accessibility in performance venues beyond the basic requirements in the American with Disabilities Act.



# LEARNING ABOUT THE COMMUNITY

The CCD Full Radius Dance group acknowledged their need to be in relationship with folks who identify as having a disability because everyone in their group identified as able-bodied. They engaged with Full Radius Dance's community and audience as a starting point to understand the needs of the disability community through field research and an online survey distributed at one of the Company's in-person performances. They encountered more able-bodied community members overall primarily because most performance arts spaces within the metro Atlanta region are highly inaccessible. Because the Company had board members and community members who identified as having disabilities, the group interviewed disabled dancers and dance supporters to talk about their thoughts and experiences moving through an able-bodied world. The interviews were done one-on-one either online or over the phone.

These conversations gave space for the group to hear suggestions, experiences, needs, and curiosities directly from community members and gave a clearer picture about the advocacy work that needs to be done around accessibility and the arts in metro Atlanta.





# INTERVIEW TAKEAWAYS

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HAVE FLEXIBLE SEATING IN THEATERS, SO THAT WHEELCHAIR-BOUND INDIVIDUALS DON'T ALWAYS HAVE TO SIT IN THE SAME PLACE (THE FRONT OR MIDDLE) AND THEY CAN SIT WITH THEIR FRIENDS.

ATLANTA'S URBAN SPRAWL AND TRAFFIC, MAKES THE CITY DIFFICULT TO NAVIGATE, AS IT IS TIME CONSUMING TO GET TO VENUES

FULL RADIUS DANCE HAS A GREAT MODEL - THEY CONSISTENTLY HAVE PROGRAMMING, REHEARSALS, AND THEY PAY WELL

NOT ABLE TO ASCERTAIN SCOPE OF ACCESSIBILITY FOR VENUES FROM THEIR WEBSITE (THEY MAY HAVE A RAMP AND ACCESSIBLE SEATING, BUT BATHROOMS MAY NOT BE PROPERLY ACCESSIBLE).

FULL RADIUS DANCE HAD A BIG IMPACT ON SEVERAL INDIVIDUALS AND EXPANDED THEIR IDEA OF WHAT THEY COULD DO IN THE ART WORLD

AUDIO DESCRIPTIONS AND CAPTIONING SHOULD BE STANDARD, BUT ARE COST PROHIBITIVE FOR MOST VENUES. THERE SHOULD BE FUNDING SOURCE THAT COVERS THESE COSTS FOR ART VENUES.

IN PERSON EVENTS ARE PREFERABLE BECAUSE OF THE COMMUNITY CONNECTION. VIRTUAL EVENTS ARE CONVENIENT, BUT WOULD BE NICE TO INTEGRATE COMMUNITY INTERACTION WITH THE EXPERIENCE





## COMMUNITY CO-DESIGN JAM

With these learnings, the CCD Full Radius Dance group continued working with the Company directly to develop an engagement activity that centered folks with disabilities. Accessibility was extremely important for this Community Co-Design Jam so they decided to create a hybrid event for people to join virtually and for people to join in person at Moving in the Spirit, a creative youth development dance program with a physical space that prioritized accessibility in its design.

The Community Co-Design Jam followed a charette\* format to foster generative dialogue to collect, celebrate, and integrate stories from the front lines of dance and disability.

The Co-Design Jam opened by inviting participants to establish co-design commitments everyone agreed to honor throughout the collaborative work.

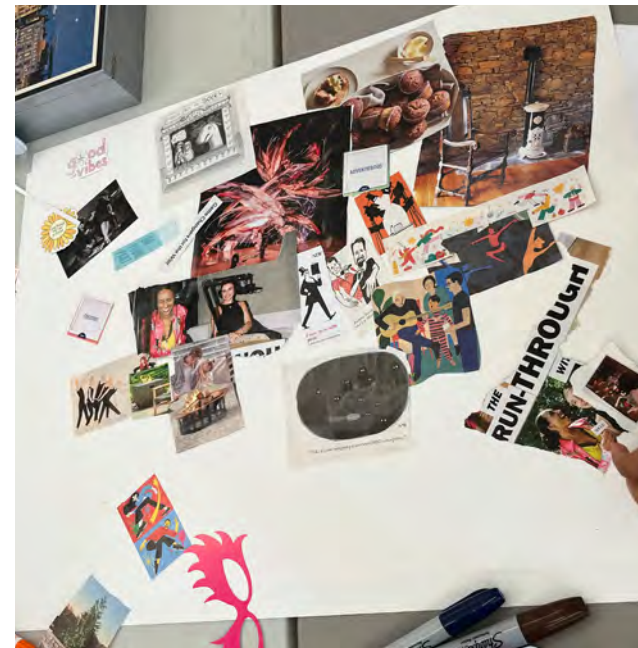
### THE 7 COMMITMENTS FOR THE SPACE:

- |                                              |                                   |
|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1) BE RESPECTFUL                             | 4) ASSUME GOOD INTENT             |
| 2) EVERYONE HAS PERMISSION TO SPEAK IN DRAFT | 5) PLEASE TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF   |
| 3) PEACE, LOVE, HAPPINESS                    | 6) GROW TOGETHER                  |
|                                              | 7) WELCOMING CLARIFYING QUESTIONS |

The Full Radius Dance group created a space to learn how to integrate stories from the front lines of dance and disability through conversations and collages. Some of the ideas they heard from the group to creatively honor those stories and increase accessibility to Full Radius Dance's work included:

- |                                   |               |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| VIDEO BLOGS                       | REALITY SHOW  |
| PHYSICALLY INTEGRATED DANCE PARTY | COMEDY SHOW   |
| CAMPFIRE STORIES                  | COLORING BOOK |

\*CHARETTE – "A MEETING IN WHICH ALL STAKEHOLDERS IN A PROJECT ATTEMPT TO RESOLVE CONFLICTS AND MAP SOLUTIONS"





# WHAT DID WE LEARN?

## KEY LEARNINGS FROM THE PROCESS

- ACCESSIBILITY
- COLLABORATION

### ACCESSIBILITY!

That accessibility is the entire journey, not just the destination

Our society has a long way to go for things to be truly accessible

Our institutions have failed us in terms of accessibility

Meaningful virtual participation is possible and is ready to be built

### COLLABORATION!

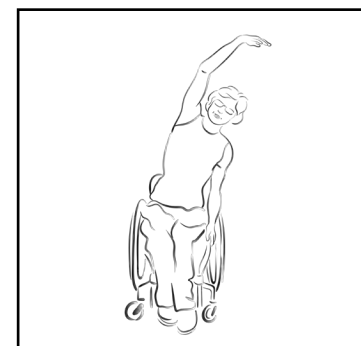
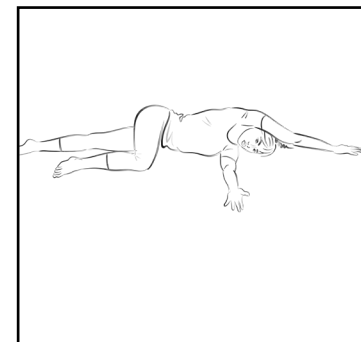
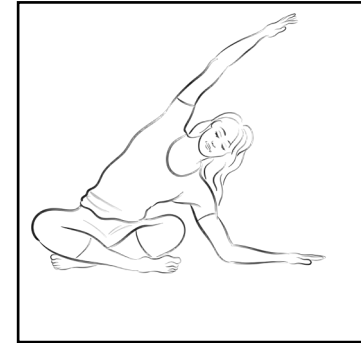
Workshop and get to know the organization

Having the right people around the table is important

Align objective to community target

Learned a lot directly from our peers

A 15-person group project is not impossible







## SUMMARY OF KEY LEARNINGS

The CCD Full Radius Dance group successfully created a process and a community engagement event centering the needs of the disability community. This was done by constant actions, reflections, and adjustments and because of the group's incredible adaptability. They were able to tap into existing assets with Full Radius Dance and creatively offered a number of ideas, experiences, and opportunities to reimagine performing arts experiences through the eyes of the disability community.



# SPEAKERS

We were fortunate enough to be able to have a number of speakers from the arts, planning and urban design fields come speak to the class.

## TOPICS INCLUDED:

THE ROLE AND OPPORTUNITY OF ARTS AND CULTURE IN PLANNING

PRIORITIZING CREATIVE INVOLVEMENT

LEARNING FROM OTHER ARTS, CULTURE, AND COMMUNITY-CENTERED PROJECTS

HERE IS WHO JOINED US, ALONG  
WITH SOME KEY TAKEAWAYS

## AYSHA PENNERMAN

### ESTABLISHING THE “WHY”

Aysha Pennerman, a creative who’s been on a mission to use her talents for good. With the heart to love and empower others, she has combined the skills she gained over the years as a graphic designer and painter to make an impact. She now paints murals that spark conversations, educate, and empower people in communities.



## GEORGE F. BAKER III

George F. Baker III, also known as GFB3, is a Nebraska-born, Detroit Grown, and Atlanta-Raised Creator. Using his instruments of design, illustration, and production, he employs a playful childlike spirit to engage the inner-child we all have. Currently, he is the Creative Director of Foster, a studio-collective striving to make people unafraid to play.

“WE’RE ALL LOOKING FOR CONCRETE ANSWERS, BUT  
REMEMBER...EVEN CONCRETE IS FLUID.”



MALLORY NEZAM

“ARTISTS NEED TO BE AT THE CENTER OF DECISION MAKING FOR PUBLIC SPACE.”

Mallory Rukhsana Nezam is a creative city consultant who loves cities and believes that we have the tools to make them more equitable and joyful. She specializes in creative placemaking/keeping/knowing, cultural equity, and equitable community development. Her cross-sector practice engages government, artists, advocacy groups, elected officials, community members and urban planners to de-silo the way we run cities. As a St. Louis, MO native, she is the founder of STL Improv Anywhere, and co founder of #ChalkedUnarmed and the St. Louis Artivists. Through her art practice she disarms and disrupts public space norms using play and participatory performance, and is 1/3 of the art collective MADAD (De Nichols & Damon Davis).



NATALIA GARZÓN

“IMAGINE BIG”



Natalia is a storyteller, strategist, communicator, and artist who has experience working in the arts & culture nonprofit sector in Atlanta. Born in Bogotá, Colombia and raised in Costa Rica, Ecuador, and Panama, Natalia brings a multilingual and multicultural perspective to the work she engages with. She is invested in creative placemaking, community engagement, ethical development, and innovative storytelling.



MIKE ALEXANDER

THE IMPORTANCE OF ARTS AND CULTURE  
DRIVING EQUITABLE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Mike Alexander is the Chief Operating Officer of the Atlanta Regional Commission and has over 20 years of public policy experience focused on regional and local community planning. As the COO, he leads this multidisciplinary, professional staff in the fields of transportation planning, environmental planning, community and workforce development, economics, aging services, and demographic forecasting.

PAOLA AGUIRRE SERRANO

CENTERING LIVED EXPERIENCES

Paola Aguirre Serrano is a native from the Mexico-U.S. region, urban designer and partner at BORDERLESS since 2016. Paola has been trained as an architect and urban designer, and her professional experience includes working with government, universities and architecture/urban design offices both in Mexico and the United States.





## ROSTEN WOO

### MAKING IT HAPPEN!+LONG-TERM COMMITMENTS

Rosten Woo is a designer, writer, and educator living in Los Angeles. He produces civic-scale artworks and works as a collaborator and consultant to a variety of grassroots and non-profit organizations, including the Advancement Project, the American Human Development Project, the Black Workers Center, Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy, and Esperanza Community Housing Corporation, as well as the city of Los Angeles and Los Angeles County. He is co-founder and former executive director of the Center for Urban Pedagogy (CUP), a New York Based non-profit organization dedicated to using art and design to foster civic participation, winner of the 2016 National Design Award for institutional achievement.



## SONIA ROMERO

Sonia Romero is an artist based in Los Angeles known for her paper-cut and printmaking aesthetics, which she incorporates into both her fine art and public art commissions. Romero's paintings, prints and sculptures can be found in many prestigious collections, including the Smithsonian Museum of American Art, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and the Cheech Marin Museum of Art and Culture. Her aesthetic

influences encompass Chicano art, vintage graphics, Los Angeles culture, and the natural world. Growing up in an artistic household in Echo Park, Romero pursued formal education at the Los Angeles County High School for the Arts and the Rhode Island School of Design. Her aesthetic influences encompass Chicano art, vintage graphics, Los Angeles culture, and the natural world.

## YING KONG 邝海音

### SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE



Yin Kong 邝海音 is a community-based designer and curator living and working in Manhattan's Chinatown. Think!Chinatown is the culmination of her work in urban design, museum, culinary & cultural instruction, and community engagement. Previously an Urban Curator of the Dashilar Project, she consulted a municipal agency of Beijing on urban revitalization strategies in the city's historic hutong core. She also spent time teaching at the Black Sesame Kitchen in Beijing and onboard Semester at Sea. She loves sharing Thomas Jefferson facts which she picked up at her time working at Monticello. Yin holds a Masters of Architecture, Urban Design from the Bartlett School of Architecture, University College London and a Bachelors of Arts, Urban Studies from Columbia University.



## OVERALL LEARNINGS

- Marginalized communities have lacked proper resources, infrastructure, and support for generations. More time and resources to build community leaders and collaborate with communities are needed to continue this work.
- There is a lot to unlearn, and that unlearning will take time.
- Coalition building between marginalized communities is an opportunity for ARC to support
- Collaboration and executing a public event is challenging but not impossible!
- Experiential education is an effective way for community members to learn how to do this work.
- Organizing tactics can easily be integrated into this work for community building
- Approaching this work through a creative lens is key!



## WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

This first iteration of CCD highlighted opportunities for ARC to continue supporting marginalized communities through additional programming. ARC will continue to support more coalition building and platforms for BIPOC artists, planners, and culture bearers through Cultural Forums and the continuation of CCD. The classroom was filled with a terrific set of diverse voices but we need to make the program even more accessible to more working BIPOC artists, parents, and folks who live further out in the region.



WE HOPE THAT YOU JOIN US IN THIS WORK  
AS WE CONTINUE TO EVOLVE TO BETTER  
SERVE THE MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES IN  
THE METRO ATLANTA REGION.





THANK YOU

|                            |                 |                       |
|----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Aishah Hyman               | Jennie Lobato   | Marian Lou            |
| Alanna Fairburn            | Joel Silverman  | Martina Lindo         |
| Alif Institute             | Jose Awo        | Matt Smith            |
| Alta Schwartz              | Josh Phillipson | Michael Ewing         |
| Antemil Jorkey             | Julia Kim       | Mike Alexander        |
| Ashlee Jo Ramsey           | Julie Ferracota | Mouna Abdelhamid      |
| Aurora Theater             | Katie Perumbeti | Moving in the Spirit  |
| Aysha Pennerman            |                 | Naomi Siodmok         |
| Beckie Hawkins             |                 | Natalia Garzon        |
| Caitlin King               |                 | Page Burch            |
| Clarkston Community Center |                 | Paige Mitchell        |
| Courteny McClendon         |                 | Paola Aguirre Serrano |
| Crystal Faison-Mitchell    |                 | Peter Trojic          |
| Darwin Brown               |                 | Refuge Coffee         |
| Dorian McDuffie            |                 | Roshani Thakore       |
| Douglas Scott              |                 | Rosten Woo            |
| Eleanor Swensson           |                 | Samyukth Shenbaga     |
| Emmanuelle Chammah         |                 | Shalondra Henry       |
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| Ginia Taylor               |                 | Ty Kelty              |
| Heather Infantry           |                 | Valerie Boucher       |
| Holly Vine                 |                 | Vanessa Lira          |
| Isaac Kirwan               |                 | William Smith         |
| Jaehn Clare                |                 | Yin Kong              |





