



Activities of the Brandeis University CAST Minor and Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts 2015-2016



**Activities of the Brandeis University CAST Minor
and Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts
2015-2016**

This past year has been very productive for both the minor in Creativity, the Arts and Social Transformation and the Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts. On campus, through the CAST class and events, many different perspectives on the arts and social transformation were brought into conversation. Beyond Brandeis, several research projects, publication opportunities and outreach initiatives have raised the profile of the discipline of peacebuilding and the arts and extended the international network of scholars in the field.

The Minor in Creativity, the Arts and Social Transformation

CAST Class

This year, the class **Introduction to Creativity, the Arts and Social Transformation** enrolled 19 students, which included 17 undergraduates and 2 MA students. Supporting the instructor Dr. Cynthia Cohen were CAST/PBA program coordinator David Briand and Jennifer Largaespada '16, the teaching assistant for the course.

Over the course of the spring semester, in addition to weekly reflective writing, the students completed four major assignments:

- An oral history interview with someone different from themselves and a synthesis of the story in a creative form. Some of these creative works were presented in a mini-festival of arts and social transformation as part of the Leonard Bernstein Festival of the Arts
- An inquiry into a Boston-area organization addressing violence through creative approaches, and a synthesis of this learning into an album. A list of the organizations and some sample albums are attached (Attachment #1).
- Participation in a Design Lab focused on one of four issues:
 - Creative approaches to reducing gang violence in East Boston
 - Creative approaches to addressing perceptions of Boston as a racist city, and undesirable as a tourist destination for African Americans
 - Creative options for Boston Children's Chorus, facing a forced move from its administrative and rehearsal spaces due to development/gentrification
 - Creative approaches to developing a festival of cultures with Waltham immigrant and other local communities and Brandeis studentsThe design lab reports for each are attached. (Attachment #2)
- Research or creative/reflective work on topics of students' choosing; a list of topics is attached. (Attachment #3).

The CAST class was also visited by an extraordinary roster of artists and cultural workers who engaged the students in conversation and, in some cases, creative work. They included:



- Germaine Ingram, civil rights attorney and jazz tap dancer based in Philadelphia, who lectured and performed about themes relative to historical memory, especially in relation to the legacy of slavery in the United States. She offered “Freedom Underfoot,” the keynote performance for the ‘Deis Impact festival of social justice and “The Law and the Stage: Platforms for Pursuing Social Justice” as the ‘Deis Impact keynote address. Both can be seen at: <http://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/deisimpact/>.



- Jane Sapp, cultural worker, educator, activist, pianist and songwriter who has worked in communities throughout the country (See <https://brandeis.edu/ethics/peacebuildingarts/jsapp/index.html>.)
- Robbie McCauley, playwright, director, actor and winner of the



1990 OBIE award for her play *Sally's Rape*. She directed CAST students in reading a brief excerpt of *Body and Sold*, a play about youth sex trafficking within the United States, and, with Amy Merrill '69, led a discussion about efforts to raise awareness of sex trafficking through play readings throughout the city.



- Chris Bedford, director of The Rose Art Museum, and Tim Phillips, Co-founder and chairman of the board of *Beyond Conflict*, a Boston-based global conflict transformation organization.



- Pedro Alonzo, Boston-based independent art curator and expert on street art



- Theaster Gates, distinguished social practice installation artist whose work includes sculpture, installation, performance and urban interventions, and director of the Arts and Public Life initiative at the University of Chicago



- Rick Lowe, founder of Project Row Houses in Houston, Texas, and a 2014 MacArthur genius award recipient

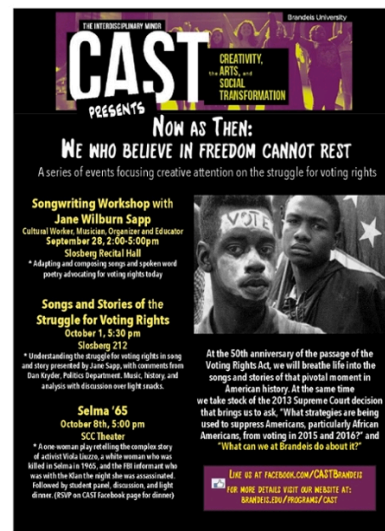
Overall, the students in the CAST class were engaged and committed, producing high-quality work that reflected their learning during the semester. Some credited the class with helping them to imagine a direction for their careers after Brandeis, and many reported that they appreciated the opportunity to get to know Boston and Waltham better through their research into organizations, participation in the design labs, and conversations with guest presenters.

Campus Events

In addition to the class, the CAST minor engaged members of the campus community in thinking about and experiencing the contributions of the arts to social transformation through campus events:

- A September 2015 series of events marking the 50th anniversary of the 1965 Voting Rights Act **called Now as Then: We Who Believe in Freedom Cannot Rest**. This series consisted of:
 - A songwriting workshop led by Jane Sapp, in which students composed the song "Time to Act." A video of the students performing the song with Jane Sapp can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0qXUz6bT7vw>
 - A joint presentation about the history of voting rights since 1965 given by Jane Sapp and Dan Kryder, the chair of the

Politics Department at Brandeis



- A performance of the play *Selma '65*, written and directed by Catherine Filloux and starring Marietta Hedges, followed by a conversation with a diverse group of Brandeis students and community member
- An October 2015 visit from Dr. James Thompson, distinguished scholar/practitioner of applied theater from the UK, who gave a speech to introduce a performance by Syrian musicians in the [Music Unites Us](#) series and a presentation of his work in applied theater in Sri Lanka, and who generously participated in a CAST salon with faculty members and students.
- The February 2016 'DEIS Impact (DI) performance of "Freedom Underfoot" by DI keynote speaker Germaine Ingram, about the final horrific year of the Civil War in Atlanta, consisting of original songs and dances, combined with text from slave narratives, diaries, women's autobiographies, and letters
- The April 2016 Design Labs with Rick Lowe, which brought into conversation not only students from the CAST class and additional students from the Heller School, but also members of Brandeis faculty, staff, and administration, as well as Boston and Waltham-area colleagues including:
 - Dr. S. Atyia Martin, chief resilience officer of the city of Boston
 - Ben Hires, director of programs at Boston Children's Chorus
 - Genoveva Tavera, organizer at the Waltham Alliance to Create Housing
 - Tim Phillips, Beyond Conflict
 - Wen-ti Tsen, Cambridge artist
 - Madhawa Palihapitiya, Associate Director of the Massachusetts Office of Public Collaboration, and contributor to *Acting Together on the World Stage*
 - Mayan, a streetworker from City of Boston Youth Services Unit
- CAST/PBA also co-sponsored the following:
 - A talk by hip hop icon KRS-One for the "Art, Race, Activism" visiting artists series, sponsored by the Department of African and Afro-American Studies
 - A presentation of poetry by poet Miles Hodges, sponsored by the Brandeis Black Student Organization
 - A salon in March 2016 with Deborah Langstaff, Naomi Sinnreich, Elaine Reuben, and Brandeis students, with an exchange of music, dance and poetry.



Faculty Development

In FY '15, the faculty committee of the CAST minor awarded grants of \$2,000 each to four members of the Brandeis faculty for research and creative projects.

- "My American Girls" – Azlin Perdomo (Hispanic Studies, Romance Studies)
- "Choreographing the Disabled Body: Gender, Performance, and Zionism in the work of Tamar Borer" – Prof. Ilana Szobel (Near Eastern and Judaic Studies)
- "The Birdsong Project" – Prof. Judith Eissenberg (Music)
- "Performance and the Rehumanization of the Other" – Prof. Adrienne Krstansky (Theater)

Please see <http://www.brandeis.edu/programs/cast/fac-proposals.html>

In October and November of 2015, the recipients of these awards reported to the Brandeis community on their work.

In FY 16, faculty development continued along a different track. Two members of the CAST faculty committee participated in the Introduction to Creativity, Arts and Social Transformation class: Tom King, Associate Professor of English, and Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies; and Hispanic Studies Instructor Azlin Perdomo attended the class and participated in its design labs.

CAST is supporting the extension of one of the FY '15 grants. Instructor Azlin Perdomo has proposed a new CAST course that would engage Brandeis students with members of Waltham's immigrant communities in documenting, shaping and presenting their stories, culminating in an event at the Rosebud, an arts venue in downtown Waltham, that might connect with the Brandeis Festival of the Arts. As a first step, Azlin will be conducting research within Waltham communities and organizations in the summer of 2016, assisted by a CAST student, to assess interest in and feasibility of such a project, and to identify collaborating partners.

The Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts

Research and Related Publications

This year has been unprecedented in the opportunities for publication and research offered to the Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts at Brandeis. These research and publication initiatives include:

- "Arts and Building Peace: Affirming the Basics and Envisioning the Future," an essay featured in the United States Institute of Peace newsletter *Insights*, Summer 2015. <http://www.usip.org/insights-newsletter/state-of-the-art-arts-and-peacebuilding>
- "Municipalities and the Prevention of Violence: The Contributions of Arts and Culture," co-authored by Cynthia Cohen, Kitche Magak, Nila Premaratna and David Briand. This paper, produced as part of the "Cities Responsibility" project of The Hague Institute for Global Justice, was presented at a conference of the

International Studies Association in Atlanta in March 2016. It is a framing document that offers conceptual frameworks bringing lenses of the arts and culture to the fields of conflict transformation and human rights and examples and case studies illustrating approaches from the fields of development, security, coexistence and reconciliation, human rights and freedom of expression, and trauma healing and resilience. This paper was incorporated into the syllabus of the Intro to CAST class.

http://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/peacebuildingarts/pdfs/library-authors/2016_05_Cohen_municipalities-arts-culture-violence-prev.pdf

- *I Feel Music Everywhere: The Jane Sapp Songbook*, collection of piano music, lyrics, and narratives about seven songs Jane has written with children in communities across the United States. Progress continued on **A Way Out of No Way**, our continued collaboration with Jane Wilburn Sapp, including her two visits to campus—one for the voting rights series, the other a workshop for the CAST class—as well as the production of the preview version of the songbook. A full version of the songbook is expected to be completed in the summer and fall of 2016.

I Feel Music Everywhere:
The Jane Sapp Songbook
Preview



Songs Written With Children in
Communities Across the United States

With notes for music educators
and chorus leaders

- “The Contributions of the Arts and Cultural Work to Reconciliation in the Aftermath of Violent Conflict and in Deeply Divided Societies,” a report for the United Nations is currently being reviewed by special rapporteurs in transitional justice and cultural rights. Portions will likely be disseminated through the UN system in coming months and years. We are awaiting permission to circulate this paper.
- The Theory and Practice of Social Transformation through the Arts is the title of a research project underway with three colleagues with support from the Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Study (STIAS). The project aims to produce, in 2018, a book tentatively entitled *Artful Change: How Creative Communities Transform*. A research grant from Brandeis supported a pilot series of related podcasts called **Arts for Life: African Voices**, which highlights the work of African artists, culture bearers and theorists in social transformation, based on a STIAS colloquium convened in Stellenbosch in December 2015. A pilot of the podcast series can be found here:
<http://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/peacebuildingarts/arts-for-life/index.html#episode1>

Outreach, Convenings, and Advocating for the Field

In addition to the many events at Brandeis that have raised the profile of peacebuilding and the arts on campus, the Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts has been involved in several endeavors during the year designed to strengthen the field and increase its visibility and credibility:

- The ***Peacebuilding and the Arts Now e-newsletter*** with issues in October 2015 and June 2016. Please visit <http://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/peacebuildingarts/news/newsletter.html>.
- The dissemination of **Acting Together** resources in partnership with ReCAST, Inc.
 - The cultivation of a dissemination team comprised of Brandeis undergraduate and graduate students
 - Small grants to educators and trainers leading to a Nepali translation of the film
 - A gathering at Juniata College to take place during the final week of May 2016 with members of the Acting Together project (see more about this below).

A partial list of organizations receiving copies of the Acting Together documentary and toolkit can be found in Attachment 4.

- Participation in daylong convening of lead researchers in **City Responsibility: The Role of Municipalities in Conflict Prevention** at The Hague Institute for Global Justice in the Netherlands. May 2015.
<http://www.thehagueinstituteforglobaljustice.org/projects/city-responsibility-the-role-of-municipalities-in-conflict-prevention-2/>
- Participation in **Art in Conflict Practitioners' Forum**, a conference convened by ArtAsFoundation in Zurich, Switzerland, May 26 – 28, 2015. The conference explored links among arts, culture and economic development initiatives in zones of violent conflict. We led roundtable on “Making results visible: Options for evaluation of arts projects in regions of violent conflict.”
<http://www.artasfoundation.ch/en/project/practitionersforum>
<http://www.artasfoundation.ch/forumartinconflict/programme/>
- Participation at **Artists and Mediators** in Geneva, a one-day gathering hosted by Ambassador Alexandre Fasel (Switzerland’s permanent ambassador to UN and international organizations in Geneva) to explore ways to strengthen role of artists in high-level mediation processes, May 29, 2015.
- **A crucible for our thoughts – social transformation through the arts**, a seminar at the Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Studies for STIAS affiliates, co-led by Michelle Lebaron, Cynthia Cohen and Kim Berman.
<http://stias.ac.za/news/2015/12/a-crucible-for-our-thoughts-social-transformation-through-the-arts/>
- **On Being Human Today: The Theory and Practice of Social Transformation through the Arts**, the STIAS/PWIAS (Peter Wall Institute for Advanced Studies) five-day colloquium in December, 2015 for invited guests from Canada, Israel, South Africa, Rwanda, Ireland, and the U.S. <http://pwias.ubc.ca/programs-awardees/international-partnership/wall-colloquia-abroad/>

- **“What is the role of the arts presenter in a community in crisis?”** The Association of Performing Arts Presenters (APAP) pre-conference in New York City in January 2016, sponsored by Brandeis in collaboration with APAP, the British Council and the National Endowment for the Arts.
<https://sway.com/xTwzrSmPeMPgTpO9>
See Attachment #5 for copy of Cindy Cohen’s opening remarks.
- A meeting in May 2016 in Washington DC with Alexandra Toma, coordinator of the Peace and Security Funders Group, about advocating for peacebuilding and the arts amongst funders. Follow-up underway.
- A gathering of practitioners, scholars, and funders at Juniata College convened at the end of May 2016 to:
 - Reflect on the field since the release of **Acting Together** resources
 - Consider revisions to the toolkit and the different platforms for dissemination of **Acting Together** resources, such as a print toolkit and training protocols on flashdrives
 - Articulate a vision for, and develop a plan for strengthening the infrastructure of, the larger field of arts, culture, and social change.
 Participants included representatives from the United States Institute of Peace, National Endowment for the Arts, the British Council, and the Office of the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights.

Program Development

PBA has made significant progress this year developing the concept for an initiative in music and social transformation. A salon held at Brandeis invited students, staff, and community members to share their work and converse in generative ways about how to enhance their practice. To follow up on the salon, PBA has initiated meetings with the Brandeis Center for European and German Studies and the Boston Goethe Institute, with plans for recordings and events featuring musical renditions by Deborah Langstaff of poetry by the German Jewish poet Hilde Domin. We are also currently generating resources for a Jane Sapp residency at Brandeis in 2016.

Administration

Both CAST and the Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts are administratively housed in the International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life. Financial matters and other administrative responsibilities such as copying and mailing are coordinated by Barbara Strauss, senior department coordinator of the Ethics Center. Communications specialist Lauren Satterlee is responsible for the PBA, CAST and Acting Together websites, and the e-newsletter.

This year, a supplemental gift from the Max and Sunny Howard Foundation allowed for the hiring of David Briand as the CAST/PBA program coordinator. David has provided research, operational and administrative support for events and projects both on and off campus. For example, he has coordinated with visiting scholars and artists as well as Brandeis offices and departments to support presentations and

performances for the CAST class and the Brandeis community. He also played an important role in documenting and recording parts of the STIAS colloquium, and has used that material to produce pilot episodes of the podcast project Arts for Life: African Voices. David assisted in the research and editing of the paper on the prevention of violence in municipalities for The Hague Institute for Global Justice, as well as the paper on the arts and reconciliation for the UN. Finally, David has been working closely with Jane Sapp, arranging the preview version of her songbook and producing a video of "Time to Act," the song written by students in Jane's workshop. David will continue in this role on a part-time basis at least through August 2016.

CAST/PBA was also supported by two student workers, Bront Velez and Jenn Largaespada.

As the Teaching Assistant for CAST class, Jenn managed communications between students and the professor regarding syllabus or assignment changes, administrative announcements, and content revisions. She coordinated with students to ensure that all of their technology needs were met for their individual and group presentations. She videotaped relevant portions of each class session that will be used as resources for future professors of this class.

Jenn also organized and curated the Festival of the Arts/Cast of Colors event showcasing student work inspired by an assignment in the Intro to CAST course. She facilitated discussions between student artists and event organizers about material and technology needs. She acted as a consultant for student artists who wanted to discuss viable and interesting ways of presenting their work. She handled the administrative details of the event such as reserving the space, ordering food, and publicizing the event over social media. The event brought together students and artists from various media--songwriting, poetry, architectural models, dance, photography, and video--as well as educators and other school personnel together to discuss themes related to CAST as well as to strengthen the sense of community amongst people associated with CAST.

Jenn collaborated on the Jane Sapp songbook in layout input and drafting song descriptions, as well as on the podcast reviewing content and assisting in editing.

Bronte's work was made possible through a gift from Elaine Reuben '63. She took responsibility for managing on-campus outreach for CAST events, including creating flyers and activating listserves, as well as maintaining the PBA database. She also contributed to the copyediting of major reports.

Financial Support

Support for CAST/PBA comes from different sources, including:

- The Max and Sunny Howard Memorial Foundation. In AY '16, we received a gift that was used to support the new minor in Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation, including visitors to the class, on-campus events, faculty development, printing, and student workers. A supplemental gift was used to

support David Briand, a researcher and program coordinator who assisted in all aspects of the CAST minor and the program in Peacebuilding and the Arts.

- The Ethics Center, which supports the communications specialist and PBA Now e-newsletter and websites
- Elaine Reuben '63 for CAST student initiatives and the dissemination of **Acting Together**
- Research grants from Brandeis University for the municipalities project and the podcast series
- Amy Merrill '69 for the municipalities project

A grant submitted to the National Endowment for the Arts by the British Council, in partnership with Brandeis University and the University of Manchester in the UK, was funded at the 50% level. It will support an assembly of four teams of artists from different cities, who will meet to reflect on their work related to the reduction of violence. This assembly will be co-convened by James Thompson of the University of Manchester (UK) and Cynthia Cohen, and will involve Rick Lowe and Germaine Ingram, visitors to Brandeis in AY '15, among other socially engaged artists. We are now working with the Brandeis Development office and the British Council to secure the other 50% of project costs, which would allow a critical second assembly to be held in the following year.

Looking Forward to 2016-2017

In the upcoming academic year, both CAST and Peacebuilding and the Arts will continue to pursue the initiatives begun during our first two years, and hopefully branch out in some new directions as well.

The CAST class will meet again in the fall semester, as we transition from offering the course in the spring to the fall (in order to better meet the needs of students, many of whom are abroad during the spring semester.) As of the end of May, eleven students already have enrolled, and we expect enrollment to increase when first year students sign up for classes and when we reach out to the MA students at the Heller School. We plan to spend some time during the summer analyzing student feedback and their responses to assignments and revise the design labs and community research accordingly.

We will continue to host events on campus, although probably somewhat fewer than the impressive (but also crowded) schedule of last year, when we benefitted from guests sponsored by other university offices, including the Division of Creative Arts, the Gittler Award, and 'Deis Impact. We are looking forward, for instance, to an event featuring the research and on-the-ground work of Kristin Parker, the Acting Director of The Rose Art Museum, who is working on the protection of tangible cultural heritage in contexts of war. In addition, the program in Peacebuilding and the Arts, in collaboration with The Rose, has been invited by CEC ArtsLink to host a

young Turkish arts administrator. She will be invited to present about her work on arts and intergroup relations in the current Turkish context.

CAST faculty development will continue; the precise direction will be decided after CAST faculty committee member Azlin Perdomo reports on her summer research into Waltham organizations that serve immigrant communities and the members of those community themselves.

Professor of English and of Women's, Sexuality and Gender Studies Tom King will co-chair the faculty committee and take over the role of undergraduate advising head in the coming year. I believe that broadening the leadership of the minor to others on the faculty committee is key to its success over time, and we are looking forward to working with Tom to do a review of the electives and explore approaches to making the capstone more rigorous and meaningful. Work will also continue on the podcast series *Arts for Life: African Voices*, primarily while Cindy is in residence in South Africa during the month of January 2017.

Peacebuilding and the Arts has also recently been invited by the Peace and Security Funders Group (a network of foundations and individual donors that fund initiatives in violence prevention, conflict transformation and reconciliation) to collaborate on several initiatives to raise the profile and credibility of arts-based peacebuilding initiatives among over 260 funders. We hope to generate the resources to pursue this unprecedented opportunity to improve the conditions for those who work in the larger peacebuilding and the arts field.

CAST and PBA continue to enjoy support from Brandeis University, International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life, as well as from Elaine Reuben '63 and Amy Merrill '69. We are working with the development office to pursue grants, both from Boston-area foundations interested in the arts, and additional donors and foundations as well.

Attachments

Attachment	1	Organizations researched by teams of CAST students
Attachment 2		Design Lab Reports <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Boston Children’s Chorus• Gang Violence in East Boston• Perceptions of Boston as Undesirable Tourist Destination for Africang Americans• Celebrating Waltham immigrant communities
Attachment 3		CAST Student Final Project Topics
Attachment 4		Individuals and Organizations receiving <i>Acting Together on the World Stage</i> resources in 2015g 2016
Attachment 5		Opening Remarks at the Association of Performing Arts Presenters Preg Conference

Organizations researched by teams of CAST students

826 Boston - a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting students ages 6 to 18 with their creative and expository writing skills, and to helping teachers inspire their students to write.

Artists for Humanity - an organization that aims to bridge economic, racial, and social divisions by providing under-resourced urban youth with the keys to self-sufficiency through paid employment in art and design.

Company One Theatre - a non-profit organization dedicated to changing the face of Boston theatre by uniting the city's diverse communities through innovative, socially provocative performance and developing civically engaged artists.

Design Studio for Social Intervention - an artistic research and development outfit for the improvement of civil society and everyday life, dedicated to changing how social justice is imagined, developed and deployed in the United States.

More Than Words - an empowerment organization in Waltham for youth who are in foster care, court-involved, homeless or out of school to take charge of their lives by taking charge of a business.

Spare Change News - a newspaper written, drawn and photographed by currently or formerly homeless, or otherwise low-income individuals, the proceeds of which benefit these vulnerable communities.

The Network/La Red - a survivor-led, social justice organization that works to end partner abuse in lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, BDSM, polyamorous, and queer communities.

Urbano Project - an art studio that facilitates encounters between artist-mentors, local youth and community partners to learn, and experiment through creative placemaking, supporting a new generation of artists and leaders committed to social change.

Violence Transformed - an annual series of visual and performing arts events that celebrate the power of art, artists and art-making to confront, challenge and mediate violence.

2015-2016

Attachment 2
Design Lab Reports

Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation (CAST) Presents:
Boston Children's Chorus Design Lab

April 19th, 2016
2:00pm - 4:50pm
Brandeis University
Rose Art Museum

Summary Report

Introduction:

A design lab is a process for bringing together various constituencies related to a problem, issue or possibility to think in creative ways and to design structures, processes, or expressions that lead to a more just, peaceful, resilient, and vibrant communities. This design lab was a collaboration between CAST students, faculty, staff and The Boston Children's Chorus (BCC). The BCC mission is to “harness the power and joy of music to unite our city's diverse communities and inspire social change. [Their] singers transcend social barriers in a celebration of shared humanity and love of music.” The chorus aims to break stereotypes and foster meaningful relationships between segregated communities through music training and performance. To date, the chorus has over 450 students from over 100 communities in the Greater Boston area, ranging widely in age. They are organized into thirteen different choirs spanning five locations: the South End, Allston-Brighton, South Boston, Dorchester, and the Lower Roxbury section of the South End.

Due to mounting gentrification pressures, the BCC is facing a relocation challenge. The BCC office building in Downtown Boston was recently sold to a developer and, due to high market property values and specific acoustic requirements, suitable and affordable spaces are increasingly difficult for them to find. Most financially available options are less central than the current downtown Boston location and moving the location out of downtown will impact 45-60% of participating families who drive or take public transportation to the downtown office. This possibility is discouraging many families from continuing their involvement in the program. Despite these challenges, the BCC wishes to use this relocation opportunity as a way to consolidate the now dispersed choirs. It is believed that creating a single common space of practice would significantly increase interactions across different communities and age groups. This design lab was created in order to assist the BCC decide what values should inform their decisions about relocating: should they seek to retain as many of their current participants and bear the higher costs of staying in downtown Boston? Or, should they potentially sacrifice some participants in favor of group consolidation and lower costs? This report summarizes the proceeding of the design lab, participants, key learnings, discoveries, ideas, recommendations, concerns, and questions that arose from the design lab.

Key Questions:

1. How does the BCC balance meeting its organizational goals alongside the economic realities of commercial real estate in Boston, including negotiating the politics of gentrification and equity of resources in the neighborhoods they serve (i.e transportation accessibility)?

2. When considering relocation sites, which principles should guide the decision?
3. What organizational and community needs should be prioritized?
4. Who should play a role in the decision making process?

Explanation of CAST 150b:

The Introduction to Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation explores how to use art as a means in moving toward social change and reconciliation. The course explores several forms of creativity and expression including oral history, the visual arts, music, dance, theater, and storytelling. In studying these art forms, students learn how to build peace, mitigate conflicts, and establish social justice. The class lays out a framework for the Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation minor, but it is also for students who study politics, peace and conflict studies, international and global studies, and the arts.

Explanation of CAST Minor:

The Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation minor encourages students to study the intersection of the arts and theory and practice of social change and peacebuilding. Students in the CAST minor will learn about how to impact change on society by thinking critically about the arts and developing their own projects that contribute to building peace. The CAST minor will challenge students to consider aesthetics and story when it comes to building peace by encouraging them to engage in written, visual, oral, and performing arts.

Explanation of Assignment/Roles Students Played:

Prior to the design lab, the students in the Spring 2016 CAST 150b course were assigned to research different organizations in Boston that use art and/or cultural expressions to address or facilitate social change. Students were asked to compile information about the organization's mission, practices, challenges, and solutions. This information was consolidated in a session prior to the design lab in an effort to expose students to the similarities and differences between Boston-based organizations doing socially engaged work through art. During the design lab, students were able to draw upon this knowledge and offer relevant examples from these other organizations in order to place the BCC's relocation challenge within a larger context.

Additionally, students were assigned with different roles during the discussion. The notetaker was tasked with keeping detailed notes, and the rapporteurs was tasked to summarize and report the discussion to fellow students and participants, who engaged in different design labs.

Participants:

- David Briand (Brandeis, Oral History Project Manager; Facilitator)
- Ben Hires (BCC, Director of Programs; Presenter)
- Cynthia Cohen (Brandeis, Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts, Director)
- Dan Feldman (Brandeis, Vice President for Planning and Institutional Research)

- Leigh Swigart (Brandeis, Programs in International Justice and Society, Director)
- Kat Page (Brandeis, Fitness Coordinator)
- Julie Maschler (Brandeis, Undergraduate student; Notetaker)
- Eric Lin (Brandeis, Undergraduate student; Rapporteur)
- Isabel Lahn-Schroeder (Brandeis, Undergraduate student)

Key Learnings:

During our analysis of the challenges associated with relocating, we identified the most crucial consideration in decision-making: transportation. Ben Hires was clear in expressing that accessibility for students to attend rehearsals and practices could not be compromised. A location that could not bring participants from diverse communities would greatly undermine the fundamental mission of BCC. With the understanding of this crucial factor in relocating, the group discussed multiple suggestions:

- Relocating to a community interested in strengthening its art programs: Introducing BCC to a neighborhood historically less invested from the arts would open up new opportunities for community engagement, support local efforts in building quality programs, and highlight cultural gems in the neighborhood. However, this approach would raise the issue of serving one or all communities. Once situating itself into a neighborhood, BCC's role and impact would then be closely tied to the neighboring community. On the other hand, being in downtown offers more accessibility in terms of being a focal point for all communities. This suggestion would lead to re-evaluation of BCC's mission and approach.
- Alternative transportation method: The group also came up with ideas of carpooling neighboring participants or purchasing a rental bus for pick up. These alternative methods of transportation could reduce some difficulty in getting to the new location. However, the logistical and financial feasibility raised new concerns.
- Non-physical consolidation: Instead of finding a single location for all participants, the choirs could be in interaction through frequent collective programming, such as events or performances. This suggestion not only could eliminate the need of finding a permanent large space, but also could achieve the goal of consolidation. The logistical challenge of frequently finding a large venue would need to be further addressed.
- Space sharing with other non-profit organizations: Instead of BCC renting a space on itself, it could partner with other organizations and share usage to make the new location affordable. This suggestion has great possibility, since BCC only need the rehearsal space Monday through Thursday in the afternoon and Saturday morning. With scheduling, multiple organizations could potentially utilize the space, and share the rent. This suggestion would require more research on possible organization to collaborate with, to minimize the overlap and conflict of space and time.

- Space sharing with educational institutions: Many universities have wonderful spaces suitable for chorus rehearsals, many of which are not always in use. BCC could partner with educational institutions for scheduled usage. However, these institutions often could not provide the permanent office spaces needed for BCC staffers. Our discussion led to considering the separation of office and rehearsal space.
- Compromise: Looking at the current state, some level of compromise seemed to be inevitable. A 24,000 square-foot sized space, which would be enough for both office and rehearsal spaces, in downtown Boston might not be an available option in the current real estate market. However, the BCC could find a suitable temporary location after the end of its current lease and continue the search for a permanent location in the next 5-year market cycle.

Many of these suggestions were already explored by the BCC with detailed surveys on financial feasibility, economic impact, and community/parental impact. The insights in those surveys raised further logistical, financial, or organizational challenges, some of which are mentioned above. Throughout this discussion, issues of socioeconomic inequality, inadequate distribution of resources, and oppressive systemic structures were continuously referred to and play a large role in shaping the BCC's relocation decision process.

Next Steps:

The conclusions drawn from this design lab have led to further questions identified, such as what the role of the municipality is. Could (and should) cities provide shared spaces which multiple non-profit organizations' could use as communal rehearsal or performance spaces? Other questions that arose were: How can spaces be more effective for multi-functional purposes in order to suit the needs of different performance arts? Could the municipality be the bridge between different institutions and organizations by facilitating collaborations?

Reference:

<http://www.bostonchildrenschorus.org/>

Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation (CAST) Presents:
Responses to Gang Violence in East Boston Design Lab

April 19th, 2016
2:00pm - 4:50pm
Brandeis University
Rose Art Museum

Summary Report

Introduction:

A design lab is a process for bringing together various constituencies related to a problem, issue or possibility to think in creative ways and to design structures, processes, or expressions that lead to a more just, peaceful, resilient, and vibrant communities. This design lab was a collaboration between CAST students, faculty, staff and members of the Greater Boston area whose experiences and careers offered vital perspectives for addressing the complex issue of gang violence in East Boston.

East Boston and the surrounding neighborhoods near the Maverick T station have suffered from a spike of violent crime in recent months. The growing tensions between two Latin American gangs, MS-13 and MS-18, have been linked to a number of homicides of young men in the last six months. These gangs are extensions of highly recognized criminal organizations in El Salvador and Mexico. The M-18 was formed in the 1960s by Mexican immigrants, while MS-13 was created in the 1980s by El Salvadorian immigrants escaping civil war. MS-13 is a designated transnational criminal organization with more than 6,000 members in the U.S., and 30,000 members globally. These gangs target middle and high school students for initiation, especially in Chelsea and East Boston high schools. To achieve membership, or “homeboy status”, members must engage in “significant criminal activity,” which includes the murder of a rival gang member. The September 2015 murder of a 15 year old, Irvin de Paz, led to one such initiation of a MS-13 member. At least three other young men under 20 years of age have been found dead in East Boston as a result of feuds between these two gangs in the last 6 months. The rise in homicides has alarmed the East Boston community who recently had a vigil for the victims and called for the end of violence in their community.

The purpose of this design lab was to consider the unique possibilities that the arts and cultural work can bring to address this problem and to critically assess how such possibilities might be strengthened. Organizations such as Centro Presente, Harbor Arts, Zumix, and Teens Against Gang Violence are incorporating art and cultural elements in their approaches to mitigating gang violence. The main discussion explored what other arts and cultural initiatives could be created and what challenges they could face. Our exploration benefited greatly from a City of Boston employee working in the Youth Services Unit, Mayan, whose perspective as a former gang member helped to ground the discussion.

Key Questions:

1. What is the overall context of gang violence in East Boston? What are the underlying conditions that give rise to gang violence and what are the current manifestations?
2. What contributions are being made by artists, cultural workers, cultural institutions, to the prevention of gang violence in East Boston?

3. What should arts organizations keep in mind as they do their work with youth in East Boston?
4. What can we learn from successful examples of the art's contribution to building trust and ending conflict between two groups?
5. What types of programs or creative spaces are needed to address this issue?
6. How can this issue be reframed in order to account for the sources of resilience found in gangs and within communities and how can arts organizations work to tap into those resources?
7. Very little is known about the inner workings of gangs or criminal groups, what tools can the arts contribute to our understanding of these groups? (Perhaps, different creative forms of expression made by former gang members could be a way for us to learn more about the root causes of gang violence).

Explanation of CAST 150b:

The Introduction to Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation explores how to use art as a means in moving toward social change and reconciliation. The course explores several forms of creativity and expression including oral history, the visual arts, music, dance, theater, and storytelling. In studying these art forms, students learn how to build peace, mitigate conflicts, and establish social justice. The class lays out a framework for the Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation minor, but it is also for students who study politics, peace and conflict studies, international and global studies, and the arts.

Explanation of CAST Minor:

The Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation minor encourages students to study the intersection of the arts and theory and practice of social change and peacebuilding. Students in the CAST minor will learn about how to impact change on society by thinking critically about the arts and developing their own projects that contribute to building peace. The CAST minor will challenge students to consider aesthetics and story when it comes to building peace by encouraging them to engage in written, visual, oral, and performing arts.

Explanation of Assignment/Roles Students Played:

Prior to the design lab, the students in the Spring 2016 CAST 150b course were assigned to research different organizations in Boston that use art and/or cultural expressions to address or facilitate social change. Students were asked to compile information about the organization's mission, practices, challenges, and solutions. This information was consolidated in a session prior to the design lab in an effort to expose students to the similarities and differences between Boston-based organizations doing socially engaged work through art. During the design lab, students were able to draw upon this knowledge and offer relevant examples from these other organizations in order to describe how the arts and cultural work more generally could strengthen community efforts to address the rise in youth gang violence in East Boston.

Additionally, students were assigned with different roles during the discussion. The notetaker was tasked with keeping detailed notes, and the rapporteurs was tasked to summarize and report the discussion to fellow students and participants, who engaged in different design labs.

Participants:

- Mads Palihapitiya (UMass Boston, Associate Director of Massachusetts Office of Public Collaboration; Presenter)
- Mayan (City of Boston, Youth Services Unit—South End; Presenter)
- Maria Pachon (Brandeis undergraduate; Presenter)
- Jennifer Largaespada (Brandeis undergraduate; Facilitator)
- Daniel Lagenthal (Brandeis; Experiential Learning and Teaching)
- Thomas King (Brandeis; English, Women and Gender Studies)
- Ali Santana (Brandeis undergraduate; Rapporteur)
- Linda Ferrer (Brandeis undergraduate; Notetaker)
- Angel Ramirez (Brandeis undergraduate)
- Koon How Goh (Brandeis undergraduate)

Key Learnings:

In the 1990s, Boston achieved dramatic success in reducing its level of gang-related gun violence—in particular, youth homicides. That success has brought widespread recognition and attention to what has now become known as The Boston Strategy to Prevent Youth Violence. Other cities have begun to experiment with some of its key programs, in particular Operation Night Light and Operation Cease Fire (more information about those programs can be found at this website: http://www.sasnet.com/bostonstrategy/story/07_boston.html). While these projects were effective, a major criticism has been that they did not include attempts to address long-term structural issues within the community. For instance, the programs did not include the public school system as an active partner despite requiring school police officers to participate in the programs.

Throughout our discussion this failure to include other school personnel in the program kept recurring as a potential way to improve the city's response to the recent rise in gang related violence. It is known that a main reason that young people, especially immigrant youths, find themselves drawn to gangs is that they often have difficulties assimilating to their new surroundings and the gangs provide them with a space to build community and earn social status. To counteract this, school personnel could be provided with resources to provide alternative spaces for community building for young people—especially spaces that encourage artistic and cultural expression as this could be a way to strengthen cultural pride while removing its association with the international gangs. Lack of public funding and teacher's time was cited as a major obstacle to this approach.

The economic opportunities presented by the gangs were also cited as a challenge. Young immigrants, looking for ways to support themselves and their families, are drawn in by the opportunities to make money that the gangs provide. If arts and cultural organizations devoted resources to developing the skills of potential artists (both artistic and managerial) in the area, young people might be persuaded to invest their time and energy in those activities. These opportunities would need to offer concrete entryways into the advanced schooling or career tracks in order for them to be viable alternatives to gang membership. Partnerships with local colleges and universities could

facilitate these types of opportunities.

A final consideration was that restorative justice models for rivaling gangs have precedent in cities such as Chicago. It was noted that in order for such efforts to be effective in Boston, neutral spaces must be made available for such discussions. Arts and cultural institutions, as well as colleges and universities, could serve as these neutral spaces for rivaling gang members to meet to discuss their grievances so long as these institutions were not perceived to favor one group over the other. These efforts would have to be coupled with the efforts of city and social workers on the ground who would be most likely to convince the two groups to come together.

Reference:

<http://www.cpresente.org/what-we-do/youth-program>

<http://www.harborarts.org/>

<http://www.zumix.org>

<http://www.tagv.org>

<http://www.zumix.org>

<https://www.boston.com/news/local-news/2016/01/29/how-violent-street-gang-ms-13-operates-in-massachusetts/>

http://councilcommittee.lacity.org/stellent/groups/boardcommissions/@councilcmte_contributor/documents/contributor_web_content/lacityp_019577.pdf

<http://www.boston.com/news/local-news/2016/01/20/t-shooting-victim-was-a-known-gang-member-police-investigating-possible-feud-between-rival-gangs>

<http://www.boston.com/news/local-news/2016/01/29/feds-dismantle-violent-street-gang-ms-13-in-early-morning-raids-arresting-37>

Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation (CAST) Presents:
Perceptions of Boston as Undesirable Tourist Destination for Racial Minorities

April 19th, 2016
2:00pm - 4:50pm
Brandeis University
Rose Art Museum

Summary Report

Introduction:

A design lab is a process for bringing together various constituencies related to a problem, issue or possibility to think in creative ways and to design structures, processes, or expressions that lead to a more just, peaceful, resilient, and vibrant communities. This design lab was a collaboration between CAST students, faculty, staff and members of the Greater Boston area whose experiences and careers offered vital perspectives for discussing possible solutions to address the perceptions of Boston as an undesirable tourist destination for African-Americans and other minority groups. The purpose of this design lab was to discuss the ways in which arts and cultural work could help to address these negative perceptions of Boston.

Racial discrimination is an ongoing reality in the lives of African Americans and Latinos in Metro Boston. Although the region has experienced significant growth in racial and ethnic diversity over the past several decades, racial minority groups continue to struggle for full acceptance and equal opportunity. African Americans and Latinos report persistent discrimination in the workplace, in seeking housing, and in their day-to-day encounters with other metro area residents. Large shares of African Americans and Latinos say they feel unwelcome in marketplaces and residential communities throughout the region. Substantial shares believe that racial discrimination in Metro Boston is a serious problem. These sentiments arise within a region whose majority population may believe that racial discrimination is no longer a serious issue.

In the mid-1970s, the city of Boston erupted in racial violence over the desegregation of its public schools. Since those turbulent times, thousands of racial and ethnic minorities have settled in the city and region. Growing diversity and the passage of time may have led to a sense among some area residents that the city of Boston's racial divisiveness is a relic of the past, and that the area's wells of racial intolerance have subsided. Although racial strife is nowhere near the levels of the 1970s, racial intolerance and racial inequality have not fully subsided. Instead, they have taken new forms and have moved across the region. As greater numbers of racial minorities have come to reside in the region's central and satellite cities, Whites have continued their decades-long migration to the farthest reaches of the outer suburbs. Metro Boston today is thus a deeply segregated region, and such segregation has had the effect of isolating many racial minorities in neighborhoods of concentrated poverty and severe social and economic distress. Within this context of significant racial inequality, perceptions of racial discrimination among the region's most disadvantaged groups—African Americans and Latinos—remain very high. This finding emerges from a poll of over 400 African American and Latino adults in Metro Boston. These perceptions discourage many potential African-American and Latino tourists from choosing Boston as a suitable travel destination resulting in a loss of real profits for the city's tourism industry.

Key Questions:

1. What is known about the perceptions of African Americans about Boston as a tourist destination?

2. How has this situation emerged? What historical dynamics and contemporary realities have contributed to this situation?
3. What role could arts and cultural work play in increasing opportunities for communities of color and for improving perceptions of Boston as a tourist destination?
4. Who needs to be brought into this conversation? What additional information/perspectives are needed?
5. Can this issue be reframed to generate creative approaches?

Explanation of CAST 150b:

The Introduction to Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation explores how to use art as a means in moving toward social change and reconciliation. The course explores several forms of creativity and expression including oral history, the visual arts, music, dance, theater, and storytelling. In studying these art forms, students learn how to build peace, mitigate conflicts, and establish social justice. The class lays out a framework for the Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation minor, but it is also for students who study politics, peace and conflict studies, international and global studies, and the arts.

Explanation of CAST Minor:

The Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation minor encourages students to study the intersection of the arts and theory and practice of social change and peacebuilding. Students in the CAST minor will learn about how to impact change on society by thinking critically about the arts and developing their own projects that contribute to building peace. The CAST minor will challenge students to consider aesthetics and story when it comes to building peace by encouraging them to engage in written, visual, oral, and performing arts.

Explanation of Assignment/Roles Students Played:

Prior to the design lab, the students in the Spring 2016 CAST 150b course were assigned to research different organizations in Boston that use art and/or cultural expressions to address or facilitate social change. Students were asked to compile information about the organization's mission, practices, challenges, and solutions. This information was consolidated in a session prior to the design lab in an effort to expose students to the similarities and differences between Boston-based organizations doing socially engaged work through art. During the design lab, students were able to draw upon this knowledge and offer relevant examples from these other organizations in order to describe how the arts and cultural work more generally could work to change the perceptions of Boston as an undesirable tourist destination.

Additionally, students were assigned with different roles during the discussion. The notetaker was tasked with keeping detailed notes, and the rapporteurs was tasked to summarize and report the discussion to fellow students and participants, who engaged in different design labs.

Participants:

- Dan Terris (Director, International Center for Ethics, Justice, and Public Life, Brandeis)

- Tim Phillips (Director, Beyond Conflict)
- Dr. Atyia Martin (Chief Resilience Officer, City of Boston)
- Rick Lowe (Artist/Community Organizer, Project Row Houses, Houston)
- Brandon Leahy (Undergraduate student, Brandeis)
- Tyfanny English (Undergraduate student, Brandeis)
- Alona Weimer (Undergraduate student, Brandeis)
- Queen White (Undergraduate student, Brandeis)
- Brandon Leahy (Undergraduate student, Brandeis)
- Subhasinee Sapkota (Undergraduate student, Brandeis)

Key Learnings:

Our discussion generated many useful insights for beginning to address this challenging problem. Due to the all-encompassing nature of the problem, we agreed that the City of Boston should make concentrated efforts at engaging large cultural institutions in processes of self-reflection in order to address racial issues and incorporate minority communities in those processes. While art has the potential to generate new narratives for individuals and communities, it is clear that many of Boston's cultural institutions are woefully inaccessible to large swaths of the community it purports to serve. Since the perceptions of Boston as a racist city are linked to its history and most of the region's tourism is related to its history, the City of Boston should invest in institutions that devote themselves to the preservation and pursuit of African-American and Latino history. This would serve to dispel the belief that Boston is not interested in its minority communities and could be an opportunity for the City of Boston to recognize its own role in racial and economic injustices in the region while leading the way in correcting some of those injustices. However, the City of Boston should be wary of cultural institutions that promote their minority art and history collections in order to generate publicity but who do not ensure that their space is inviting and accessible to those minority communities. One way to circumvent this issue is by encouraging cultural institutions to create partnerships with local churches and/or community organizations that serve the African-American and Latino communities. While it would take time to build a reasonable level of trust between these institutions and the community because of the legacy of the region's racism, the investment in these partnerships would be a sign of commitment to the African-American and Latino communities in Boston that would be reflected onto potential tourists. It could also serve as a model for other cities who seek to make efforts at reconciliation with their own minority populations.

Alongside this, it was noted that the City of Boston could focus on ensuring that the curriculum for public schools at all levels include some analysis of the history of racial inequality in the U.S broadly and in the region specifically. This education should include the positive legacies that African-Americans have contributed to the region—for instance, both Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X spent considerable amounts of time in the city and it was in a Massachusetts prison that the latter underwent his spiritual and political maturation—as well as the contributions that Latinos have made in

the region. Through the incorporation of this education in the public school system, fruitful and generating conversations about race could be pursued. This could lead to a sense of inclusion amongst African-American and Latino communities because they would see the contributions of their community members honored. By increasing the sense of inclusion and dignity of the city's African-American and Latino communities, the perceptions of Boston as a racist city would likely decrease leading to a rise in interest from minority tourists.

References:

<http://www.civilrightsproject.harvard.edu/metroboston/synopsis.php>

<https://civilrightsproject.ucla.edu/research/metro-and-regional-inequalities/metro-boston-equity-initiative-1/we-don2019t-feel-welcome-here-african-americans-and-hispanics-in-metro-boston>

<https://www.bostonglobe.com/opinion/2015/08/08/did-busing-slow-boston-desegregation/5HXQbNFyuvD0SV4UdhNgAL/story.html>

<http://www.bostonfed.org/commdev/color-of-wealth/>

Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation (CAST) Presents:

“Becoming Neighbors”: Celebrating Waltham’s immigrant and local cultures and strengthening Waltham/Brandeis ties through new course and related festival at the Rosebud

April 19, 2016

2 - 5 p.m.

Brandeis University

Rose Art Museum

Introduction:

A design lab is a process for bringing together various constituencies related to a problem, issue, or possibility to think in creative ways and to design structures, processes, or expressions that lead to more just, peaceful, resilient, and vibrant communities. In the spring of 2016, the minor in CAST supported four design labs, one of which discussed how to strengthen the university's ties to the various immigrant communities in Waltham.

The Rosebud is a satellite gallery of the Rose Art Museum located in downtown Waltham that was created in an effort to make the museum's collection more accessible to the community. *Becoming Neighbors* is a project proposed by Professor Azlin Perdomo which seeks to gather stories of Waltham residents, particularly those from immigrant communities, about their daily lives. This collection of stories would be presented alongside Brandeis student stories during an exhibition and festival of inspired creative works at the Rosebud. The goal of this festival would be to make Brandeis students and members of the Waltham community aware of the potential of the museum as a space for transformation. By lifting up students’ stories and the stories of both immigrant and other members of the Waltham community, the journeys, struggles, and humanity of all participants will become more visible.

The design lab was an opportunity for Professor Perdomo to receive input from various constituencies from the Waltham and Brandeis communities about how best to approach this project. In addition to students from the CAST introductory course, the discussion included Brandeis faculty and representatives from The Rose Art Museum and a local non-profit organization called WATCH (Waltham Alliance To Create Housing). With these diverse experts, we were able to shed light on the particular needs and viewpoints of Waltham community.

In a larger context, *Becoming Neighbors* will address the “invisibility” of immigrants in the U.S.; public debates over immigration policy; and challenges immigrants (including undocumented immigrants) face. CAST students were able to bring their semester’s studies, while Rose Art representative Kristin Parker brought her understanding of how museums can create space for voices or people underrepresented in traditional, homogenous environments. Additionally, Genevieve Tavera from WATCH provided valuable insight into the day-to-day, pervasive struggles of the Waltham community. This report summarizes the proceedings of the day, participants, key learnings, discoveries, ideas, recommendations, concerns, and questions that arose from the design lab.

Key Questions:

1. What kinds of real and virtual platforms can be crafted to create a community where students, immigrants, and members of other Waltham communities share experiences and present their stories through artistic forms and processes?
2. Should the project focus on only one community, such as immigrants from Latin America, or should it include various immigrant communities?
3. How can we evaluate the potential benefits and drawbacks of this experience?
4. What are the possibilities inherent in making the festival planning and production process a university course?
5. What are the possibilities and constraints of the Rosebud space?

Explanation of CAST 150b:

The Introduction to Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation explores how to use art as a means in moving toward social change and reconciliation. The course explores several forms of creativity and expression including oral history, the visual arts, music, dance, theater, and storytelling. In studying these art forms, students learn how to build peace, mitigate conflicts, and establish social justice. In the class, students study works by authors ranging from Mary Marshall Clark, John Paul Lederach, Cynthia Cohen, James Baldwin, and Toni Morrison. The class lays out a framework for the Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation minor, but it is also for students who study politics, peace and conflict studies, international and global studies, and the arts.

Explanation of CAST Minor:

The Creativity, the Arts, and Social Transformation minor encourages students to study the intersection of the arts and theory and practice of social change and peacebuilding. Students in the CAST minor will learn about how to impact change on society by thinking critically about the arts and developing their own projects that contribute to building peace. The CAST minor will challenge students to consider aesthetics and story when it comes to building peace by encouraging them to engage in written, visual, oral, and performing arts.

Explanation of Assignments/Roles Students Played:

Prior to the design lab, the students in the Spring 2016 CAST 150b course were assigned to research different organizations in Boston that use art and/or cultural expressions to address or facilitate social change. Students were asked to compile information about the organization's mission, practices, challenges, and solutions. This information was consolidated in a session prior to the design lab in an effort to expose students to the similarities and differences between Boston-based organizations doing socially engaged work through the arts. During the design lab, students were able to draw upon this knowledge and offer relevant examples from these other organizations in order to inform the development of this project.

Four students were chosen to assist in this design lab. Two students, Sarah Terrazano and Chila Haber, were chosen to take on the roles of notetaker and rapporteur. The notetaker carefully transcribed and contributed to the discussion, while the rapporteur prepared her summary of the findings for the rest of the group. We had the privilege of utilizing knowledge from an MA student in Conflict Resolution, Shadi Sheikh Saraf, whose area of expertise is with refugee communities. Her experience as an immigrant coupled with her specialization in conflict resolution provided a useful perspective to the discussion. Furthermore, three of the CAST students were able to bring unique and substantial perspectives because either they or their parents immigrated to the US.

Participants:

Marci McPhee (International Center for Ethics, Justice, and Public Life, Brandeis)

Azlin Perdomo (Romance Studies, Brandeis)

Kristin Parker (Deputy Director, The Rose Art Museum)

Alyssa Canelli (Experiential Learning and Teaching, Brandeis)

Shadi Sheikh Saraf (MA student in Conflict Resolution, focusing on refugees)

Genevieve Tavera (community organizer, WATCH)

Sarah Terrazano (undergraduate student)

Chila Haber (undergraduate student)

Rafael Rodriguez (undergraduate student)

Shadi Sheikh Saraf (undergraduate student)

Key Learnings:

At the end of the design lab we noticed a few ideas that were repeated throughout the day and that were acknowledged as important tensions for the Rosebud festival to consider going forward.

The opening topic of discussion was the idea of immigrant “invisibility” and marginalized voices. Immigrants are often invisible in terms of under-representation: they lack power in politics and are vulnerable to exploitation from employers and other members of their new society. Despite their structural invisibility, it was pointed out many immigrants do not feel invisible. On the contrary, they can feel as though they stand out and that they carry the label of “other” visibly. This constant division and discordance can cause immigrants to feel helpless and powerless, pressuring them to succumb to assimilation. Our discussion considered how to address this tendency to assimilate with the recognition of the Rosebud as a potential place for cultural celebration and preservation. The Rosebud festival would affirm to the Waltham immigrant community that their experiences are worth exhibiting in an art gallery—a space that is historically associated with the elite classes of a society. This would, it is hoped, restore some agency and power back into these marginalized community members.

In order to effectively implement the project, communication is crucial. The design lab discussed the many challenges of establishing dialogue between Brandeis students, city planners, and the Waltham immigrant community. Genevieve Tavera, the WATCH representative, particularly criticized the lack of communication between city planners and Waltham community members. The unwillingness of city planners to consider the community’s needs manifests itself into social inequalities such as a lack of adequate housing for many low-income and immigrant community members. Accordingly, how can we remedy this lack of communication? The Rosebud festival could be used as an opportunity to facilitate a dialogue between these seemingly disparate stakeholders within the Waltham community.

In contemplating how to make the Rosebud an accepting and inclusive environment to the greater Waltham community, we discussed the drawbacks of other arts institutions for comparison. One

major concern was the exclusivity of traditional, well-funded establishments like the Museum of Fine Arts (MFA). The MFA is a cold environment, showcasing what the mainstream art world has deemed important and worthy of high investment. This makes such institutions neither welcoming nor accessible to minority groups who are not represented in canonical art. For instance, European art spans multiple sections of the museum; whereas, pre-columbian art is cornered in a smaller gallery. Furthermore, the perception that is necessary to have background knowledge and a particular etiquette in order to enter institutions like the MFA also poses a significant barrier for a variety of community members. In order for the project to be successful the Rosebud would have to actively realize its potential to relieve some of these assumptions and become an inviting space for as many community members as possible.

A final consideration is that *Becoming Neighbors* should have a lasting effect beyond a simple one-time festival. Suggestions included seasonal projects and an annual street festival inspired by artist and social engaged practitioner Rick Lowe. In order to have a continuing impact on the community, the Rosebud festival must go beyond conventional methods for social change. The interdependence and resilience of the Waltham community will best be helped by the combined efforts of Brandeis students, city planners, and non-profit organizations, empowering often silenced Waltham community members.

CAST Student Final Projects

Mikah Atkind - **Analyzing the Impact of Two Israeli-Palestinian Youth Art Organizations**, Heartbeat and Creativity for Peace.

Tyffany English - **Define Fashion. Don't Let It Define You.**, an exploration of how fashion can define an individual, and how it can be used to project one's truest self and be an inspiration to others in being themselves.

Linda Ferrer - **Restorative Justice for Pagans**, experiential learning through conversations with individuals in Salem, Massachusetts and others who have made extraordinary achievements towards equality and social justice for the Pagan community.

Koon How Goh - **14 Stiletto**, about discrimination against transgender people in the U.S. and around the world.

Chila Haber - **The Influences of Improvisation**, a comparison of improvisation to other more restrictive art forms, exhibiting the unique capacities of improvisation to heal, give voice to the oppressed, incite problem solving, and access the unconscious.

Isabel Lahn-Schroeder - an examination of the **Jewish Film Institute**, previously known as the San Francisco Jewish Film Festival (SFJFF), which is dedicated to conveying freedom of expression, social justice, and social transformation through open dialogue and outstanding works of art.

Brandon Leahy - **Post September 11th Humor: Reconciliation in the Aftermath of Extreme Violence**

Eric Lin - **Community Engagement through Social Media Headquarters**, an inquiry into the lower and middle class living areas in Silicon Valley or around San Francisco that are being bought by start-ups or dominating technology companies for developing headquarters.

Julie Maschler - **Listening to Make a Difference**, which asks, How can the deaf community enjoy a musical, when at its core a musical evokes one's sense of hearing? Is it possible for deaf actors to participate in a musical, when they cannot hear the music that is key to the performance?

Maria Pachon - **The Artist Approach to Gang Violence**, examining arts-based interventions to gang violence in East Boston.

Katherine Page - a reflection on **storytelling and its roll in reconciliation**

Angel Ramirez - **The Importance of Documenting the Lives and Success of People of Color in White Institutions**

Rafael Rodriguez - **“Inaction” (‘For What It’s Worth’ Remix)**, a song written to capture the despondent and disenfranchised tone of the current political climate in the U.S.

Ali Santana - **Wall**, a story inspired by the work of the Erick Jean Center for the Arts in Dorchester, MA combined with the lessons of the CAST introduction course. Wall is a narrative of the moral imagination at play in a community, which is a key component to the success of the Erick Jean Center.

Subhasinee Sapkota - **A Diversity of Tactics**, which examines the phenomenon of diversity in the work place, focusing on the lack of women of color in the pro-choice movement, looking at NARAL Massachusetts and SisterSong.

Shadi Sheikhsaraf - **Art as a Tool for Reconciliation and Coexistence**, an inquiry into an artistic intervention in Iran (paint and graffiti) that resulted in community mobilization and social engagement between Afghan refugees and Iranian communities.

Sarah Terrazano - **Poetry’s Potential for Reconciliation: An Exploration of Casagrande’s Bombing of Poems**

Alona Weimer - **Museums and Social Transformation: A Research and Commentary With Focus on the Boston Area African American Community**, about the role of museums in encouraging the possibility for social uplift and transformation, looking deeply at African American museums and institutions around Boston.

Queen White - a portfolio of extensive research on **the movement of Black bodies and its relationship to Black identity and strides for freedom.**

Individuals and Organizations receiving *Acting Together on the World Stage* resources in 2015-2016 – partial list

Participants in STIAS colloquium

Patty Abozaglo	Ireland and Peru
Gcina Mhlophe	South Africa
Kim Berman	South Africa
Théogène (Totto) Niwenshuti	Rwanda and South Africa
Ariella Friedman	Israel
Mark Solms	South Africa
Kitche Magak	Kenya
Frank Meintjies	South Africa
Carrie MacLeod	Canada
Peter Reiner	Canada
Janis Sarra	Canada
Rena Sharon	Canada
Michelle LeBaron	Canada
Ashli Akins	Canada

ENACT Fellows - ENACT (Educational Network for Active Civic Transformation) is a new national program to engage young people in state-level legislative change. Students enrolled in courses taught by ENACT faculty fellows at colleges and universities in or near state capitals will learn how to work with advocacy organizations, legislators and legislative staff members to advance policy.

Jay Barth	Hendrix College
Richard Meagher	Randolph-Macon College
Mark E. Button	University of Utah
Adam Myers	Providence College
Kathleen Cole	Metropolitan State University
Katharine Owens	University of Hartford
Victor Eno	Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University
Stephen Pimpare	University of New Hampshire
Robert Glover	University of Maine
Eileen Scully	Bennington College
Sheila Suess Kennedy	Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis
James D. Slack	Jackson State University
Jaelyn Kettler	Boise State University
Darcie Vandegrift	Drake University
Daniel C. Lewis	Siena College

APAP Participants

Kibibi Ajanku	Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance
Lara Allee	National Endowment for the Arts
Liz Alsina	The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
Alberta Arthurs	Consultant

Daniel Banks	Theatre Without Borders
Roberto Bedoya	Tucson Pima Arts Council
Amy Bliss	Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs/ U.S. Dept of State
Kim Campbell	American Circus Educators
Kim Chan	PEN American Center
Ananya Chatterjea	Ananya Dance Theatre
Paul Coffey	School of the Art Institute of Chicago
Cristine Davis	Performing Arts Alliance
Carolelinda Dickey	American Dance Abroad
Cathy Edwards	New England Foundation for the Arts
JJ El-Far	British Council, USA
Susan Feder	The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation
Catherine Filloux	Playwright
Paul Flores	PLACAS
Alison Friedman	Ping Pong Productions
Olga Garay-English	OMGArtsplus
Josephine Garibaldi	Florida State University
Jess Garz	Thriving Cultures
Fatu Gayflor	Liberian Women's Chorus for Change
Gina Gibney	Gina Gibney Dance, Inc.
Eboney Golden	Betty's Daughter Arts Collaborative, LLC
Derek Goldman	Laboratory for Global Performance and Politics, Georgetown U.
Salette Gressett	British Council, USA
Benjamin Herson	Nomadic Wax
Chad Herzog	International Festival of Arts & Ideas
Jane Hirshberg	The Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center
Ulrika Holmgaard	Svensk Scenkonst
Jeanne Howe	Greater Baltimore Cultural Alliance
Abid Hussain	Arts Council England
Cheryl Ikemiya	Doris Duke Charitable Foundation
Andrew Ingall	Pandamonium Productions
Germaine Ingram	Education Consultant
Nike Jonah	Connecting Dots (UK)
Jonathan Katz	Consultant
Brad Learmonth	Consultant
Roberta Levitow	Theatre Without Borders
Amanda McCormick	Trudel McPherson
Jonathan McCrory	National Black Theatre
Paloma McGrego	Angela's Pulse
Anisa Mehdi	Whetstone Productions
Amy Miller	Gibney Dance
Selina Morales	Philadelphia Folklore Project
Heather Noonan	League of American Orchestras
Elin Norquist	Swedish Arts Council
Pennie Ojeda	Consultant
Prentice Onayemi	ArtsPlace

Mike Orlove	National Endowment for the Arts
Walt Pourier	STRONGHOLD SOCIETY / Nakota Designs
Mollie Quinlan-Hayes	South Arts/ArtsReady
Zeyba Rahman	Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art
Michael Rhoad	Center for Performance and Civic Practice
Ruben Rodriguez	Yale
Danielle Rohar	Association of Performing Arts Presenters
Jesse Rosen	League of American Orchestras
Garth Ross	John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts
Jojo Ruf	Laboratory for Global Performance and Politics, Georgetown U.
Dr. Ahmad Sarmast	Afghanistan National Institute of Music
Cynthia Schneider	Georgetown University
Toni Shapiro-Phim, Ph.D.	Philadelphia Folklore Project
Molly Silberberg	BAM
Nick Slie	Mondo Bizarro
Sidney Pepper Smith	National Endowment for the Arts
Paul Smith	British Council, USA
Kevin Spencer	Hocus Focus/Spencer Productions
Scott Stoner	Association of Performing Arts Presenters
Caitlin Strokosch	Alliance of Artists Communities
Sara Terry	The Aftermath Project
Mary Trudel	Trudel McPherson
Carlton Turner	Alternate ROOTS
Polly Walker	Baker Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies
Bethany Wall	Brooklyn Arts Council
Sara Zatz	Ping Chong + Company

Various

Laura Miller (Rockefeller Archive Center)
 Alexandra Toma (Peace and Security Funders Group)
 Maud Fargetton
 Rick Lowe (Project Row Houses, Texas)
 Annie Paulson
 Fran Tarr
 Elaine Reuben
 Polly Walker
 Jane Goodman
 Jessica Charest
 Erika Fell
 Adam Horowitz (US Department of Arts and Culture)
 Azlin Perdomo
 Dakota Butterfield
 Roberta Levitow

**Attachment 5: Opening remarks at the
Association of Performing Arts Presenters Pre-conference**

Thanks to Paul [Smith, of the British Council] for his generous introduction.

I am honored to have been asked to set the stage for today's conversation.

I'm going to start with a story. Recently was in South Africa for 5 weeks, and in that time I talked with dozens of people over dozens of hours. One image from one story stands out in my mind. Mark Solms, a white neuropsychologist who had left SA during apartheid to avoid serving in the army, told about how he was called back to South Africa to inherit and take over his family's wine farm.

Only when he arrived there did he realize that along with the abundant land, he inherited seven families of indentured servants, impoverished people who lived and worked on the land and had no where else to go. His early attempts to negotiate a fairer arrangement with the laborers failed miserably; they were unwilling or unable to enter into dialogue.

Mark decided to try to understand the history that had given rise to these tense relationships and undertook an archaeological dig and an oral history project. The archaeological dig confirmed that the land had indeed been appropriated from the indigenous population, most of whom were killed or fled; and that the farm had been built by slaves. People's stories revealed that poverty made the lives of the descendants of the slaves little better than slavery itself, and that a major milestone in the lives of the workers was when, at age 10 or 14, they received their first pair of shoes.

And it was here that Mark shared the image that transformed his consciousness: adults reported that, as children, they would search for cow patties to stand in, so they could warm their feet. When their feet were cold, they would search for cow shit to warm themselves. The unearthing of this history led to changes on the farm.

The workers, their stories told and heard, became proud of the resilience of their ancestors and their own contributions. Mark felt a sense of shame, but even with all of this knowledge, he was not willing to give up his land, or even share it. But he did put it up as collateral to buy an adjacent farm, which is now jointly owned by the families of the workers, and with them created a consortium of their farms.

It's not a paradise, inequities still abound, many troubling dimensions of the current relationship, but lives and relationships have improved by a huge measure.

The turning point in this drama was the sharing of the stories, the attention paid to the suffering of the shoeless children. It is thru confronting painful history and ongoing dynamics of oppression that we invite transformations in consciousness, in relationships, and sometimes in the lived circumstances of peoples' lives.

As we look at our own communities, although there are many sources of resilience -- much beauty to appreciate, much generosity to celebrate, much wisdom to respect -- inspired by this story we might start by acknowledging difficult realities. To mention just a few, knowing that conversations today will add more—

- * Violence against black and brown bodies, women, young lgbt people in epidemic proportions;
- A generation of soldiers returning from violent wars suffering the wounds of war and the wounds of having injured others
- Communities of young people turning to drugs – dangerous, and dirty drugs – in unprecedented numbers
- People feeling so alienated from institutions that they become vulnerable to extremist propaganda

These manifestations of violence arise from a set of underlying causes that must also be acknowledged. Just briefly:

- Unprecedented levels of inequality
- Unprecedented patterns of displacement and migration forced by violence, poverty, and, increasingly, due to the ravages of climate change
- Unaddressed legacies of past violence
- And, to complete this depiction of a perfect storm, broken and dysfunctional institutions: intergovernmental, governmental, financial, educational that should be helping us address these threats.

I'm sorry to start the day with such a bleak picture, but like the suffering of the South African children, we might as well face it, acknowledge our complicities and then get on with offering what we are able to offer.

As creative people, we have the resources to nourish in ourselves and in our communities the capacities required to imagine and work toward a different world, a place where listening and acknowledging lead to the possibility of the trust we need to work together for a more just, less violent, more vibrant future. We can strengthen agency and amplify the sources of resilience that already exist. As citizens responsible for the greatest military power in the history of the world, perhaps we can create irresistible invitations to our society to shift its priorities, redirect resources from an obsession with destruction to a fascination with creativity.

In unprecedented numbers, policy-makers in fields such as international development, human rights, urban planning, conflict transformation, are realizing that rational discourse and institutional reforms are insufficient to the challenges

we are facing. They are turning to artists and cultural workers – for our imagination, creativity and our capacities to listen, and embrace paradox and build relationships.

Conversations like the ones we are having today have been happening all over the world. I've brought from Brandeis a few practical resources if you'd like to connect up with these. Please help yourself to a packet; it includes the film Acting Together on the World Stage made with colleagues from Theatre Without Borders, many of whom are here today – Roberta, Daniel, Polly, Catherine, JJ.

I believe that Performing Arts Presenters are well positioned, because you are rooted in particular institutions and more importantly, in particular communities. You stick around, get to know people, their problems and resources, obstacles and possibilities – and you can find the cultural resources that might match up. You can help ensure that months after the performances are over, issues continue to receive attention, initiatives are sustained, and relationships are nourished; the reverberations of cultural productions receive the attention needed to minimize the risks of harm and maximize emerging possibilities.

Today, we will

- reflect on the crises that affect our communities
- reflect on examples of arts presenters and partners that demonstrate the potential of this work
- recommend strategies for advancing further dialogue **and for acquiring the support necessary to create the transformations our spirits, our communities and our world are calling for.**

There are many nuances and challenges, much left unsaid here. But thanks to the hard work of the conveners, we have each other for inspiration and nearly a whole day to imagine together. I am so looking forward to seeing what emerges from this unprecedented and important gathering.