Exploring the Implications of Community Mural Arts: 
A Case Analysis of a “Groundswell” Project

Jacquelyn Pontious

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Max Stephenson Jr., Chair
Andrew Morikawa
Ann KilKelly
Robert Leonard

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By Jacquelyn Pontious

Abstract

Groundswell, a New York-based nonprofit community arts organization, creates high quality public art with youth and artists throughout the five boroughs of the City. This study examines how the nonprofit utilizes mural making, a potentially democratic art form, to provide opportunities for individual and collective impact. I undertook key informant interviews and documents analysis to explore the complex model the nonprofit employs to create a collaborative and community-based art process for youth, while also developing a product that can both spark conversation and reflect residents’ experiences. Overall the nonprofit’s mural making process provided its youth participants with opportunities to reflect and develop personally and professionally. They worked collaboratively to accomplish a goal and learned to think critically about the role of gender and media as they considered their mural subjects. To create their art, youths needed to exercise empathetic understanding as well as creativity to craft a positive message and subsequently design a pictorial representation that reflected the experiences, interests and concerns of the community residents with whom they worked. Not only did Groundswell program participants undertake reflexive and developmental experiences, but the community of Coney Island also gained a mural that serves as a positive affirmation, a sounding board and a symbol of the community’s resilience in the wake of Hurricane Sandy.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

While the mural arts in the United States have their origins among the nation’s Native-American inhabitants, community, also referred to as participatory, mural making emerged in this country in the 1960s. From that time to the present day, this art form has continued to evolve, shaped by the country’s changing cultural and political landscape. Scholarly and popular understanding of the benefits of community-rooted mural production has shifted as the practice has developed. This thesis explores the roles of the arts in community through a case analysis of one nonprofit organization’s use of mural making as a strategy to encourage individual and community change.

Because of the complex, localized nature and function of murals in communities, this project was limited to a case study of how one nonprofit organization, Groundswell Community Mural Project, based in New York, utilizes this form of art-making for social activation and change amongst the youth and communities with which it works. I conducted this study to assess empirically a specific use of community mural-making practice, the implications of this work as perceived by its participants and representatives of engaged communities, and to learn more about the methods the arts nonprofit employs to create its murals. This inquiry describes how one civil society organization is conducting this work. In addition, I have sought to chart the implications of Groundswell’s mural-making practice for the sense of agency, personal growth, career development and community engagement experienced by its youth participants and affected community residents. To complete this study, I conducted semi-structured interviews with the organization’s staff members, youth participants and community
partners. I also examined a range of documents, including the organization’s strategic plan, policy and budget documents, media clippings and the Groundswell website.

The literature concerning community and participatory art and mural making suggests that both the process of execution and the resulting product shape project outcomes (Cockcroft, Weber and Cockcroft, 1998, Cooper and Sjostrom, 2005, Krensky and Steffen, 2009 and Valdez, 2011). In consequence, I asked my interviewees to share their experiences as they produced a mural as well as what they perceived to be its outcomes and why. I recorded and transcribed each interview I conducted. Thereafter, I analyzed each, seeking to discern themes that arose concerning both the dynamics of the production process and its implications for participants, staff, community partner and youth perceptions of its results.

This introduction is followed by a literature review in Chapter 2 that surveys current perspectives concerning the roles of the arts in community as well as the strategies arts organizations and institutions have used in the past and are now employing to do such work. Finally, I discuss methods of mural making in community and what functions and purposes these art works serve. Chapter 3 describes the research design and methods I employed to complete this study. Chapter 4 provides a capsule portrait of Groundswell, which brings together artists, youths and members of community organizations to use public art as a tool to encourage agency in youth and advance social change. Chapter 5 examines one recent mural project conducted by the organization, describing its context and outcomes as perceived by the young people and community members involved in creating it. Chapter 6 outlines the study’s findings and conclusions.
and describes how this research contributes empirically to the field of community cultural development.
Chapter 2

Literature Review: Community and Socially Engaged Art-Making

Art and its Purpose

Arlene Goldbard has described several of the defining challenges of our era, including climate change, women’s health issues, immigrant rights, globalization, political polarization, the growing disparity between the wealthy and the poor and racism (Goldbard, 2013). She has argued that “a radically new perspective is needed, one that can bring the full force of human creativity to bear on these challenges” (Goldbard, 2013, p. 212). Beverly Naibus has similarly observed, “knowing that we have a multitude of challenges and a long row to hoe, we need communities that are grounded, imaginative, open-hearted, questioning and well-informed” (Naibus, 2009, p. 4).

Goldbard has stated that, “our capacity to act is conditioned on the story we tell ourselves about our own predicament and capabilities” (2013, p. 182). The narratives we construct are in turn shaped by our culture, which is an evocation of dominant societal conceptions of beauty and meaning. According to Goldbard,

Culture is an elastic idea, accommodating all that we human beings create. […] It is the sum-total of human creativity and invention: language, signs and symbols, systems of belief, customs, clothes, cooking, tools, toys, and adornments, everything we build and everything we use to fill it up including art, the concentrated essence of culture (Goldbard, 2013, p. 11).

Goldbard has likewise contended that culture, “is the crucible in which our individual and collective identities take shape, the container for our civil discourse, the medium in which families, communities and institutions take root” (2013, p. 449).

Meanwhile, James Bau Graves has suggested that we are at a point in history when cultural resources are more necessary than ever before: “Our cultural capital has
become increasingly valuable in a global, knowledge-based economy, and as a key source as people in the United States and around the world seek to preserve their identities and understand others” (Graves, 2005, p. 827). In addition to these functions, Naibus has argued that, “Cultural work can be a significant part of developing fresh approaches to social change” (Naibus, 2009, p.4).

Taken together, these authors argue that one key to addressing the defining challenges of our era lies in examining our nation’s existing cultural infrastructure. They each have suggested in differing ways that by working through the arts citizens and artisans alike can bring about conscious cultural change. As Goldbard has argued, “we have the opportunity to choose cultural evolution, self-selecting our most powerful survival traits: awareness, empathy, creativity, our capacity for beauty and for meaning, for moral grandeur” (Goldbard, 2013, p. 490). Becker has pointed to this potentially transformative power of art, “The image of the liberated human psyche can be communicated by art, not necessarily through a literal representation of the utopian dream, as in socialist realist work, but in the emotions such work is able to elicit” (Becker, 1994, p.117).

Different scholars have variously defined art and its purposes. Herbert Marcuse, for example, has argued that, “art creates the realm in which the subversion of experience proper to art becomes possible: the world formed by art is recognized as a reality which is suppressed and distorted in the given reality” (Marcuse, 1970, p.6). Carol Becker has summarized Marcuse’s perspective this way,

Art is a location—a designated imaginative space where freedom is experienced. At times, it is a physical entity, a site—a painting on the wall, an installation on the floor, an event chiseled in space and/or time, a performance, a dance, a video, a film. But it is also a psychic location—a place in mind where one allows for
recombination of experiences, a suspension of the rules that govern daily life, a
denial of gravity (Becker, 1994, p.117).

For her part, Goldbard has referred to art as “those artifacts and experiences intentionally
created to convey beauty or meaning, giving shape to concepts and feelings” (Goldbard,
2013, p.152). Beth Krensky and Seana Steffen have defined art and its purposes
somewhat differently,

It is the nature of art to create openings where one can envision something outside
the realm of what already exists for oneself, one’s community, and the world—a
realm where anything is possible. Artists and arts practitioners know that it is
within this free space for creative expression that people can explore new
identities and possibilities for themselves and their communities, moving beyond
perceptions of limiting boundaries and circumstances (Krensky and Steffen, 2009,
p. 95).

Both the artist’s intentions for a piece and the source of inspiration for it play a
role in its purpose. To whom and how it is presented and/or performed also affects the
motivations for its creation. Cohen-Cruz and Leonard and Kilkelly have distinguished
community-based art from other art forms, “A community-based production is usually a
response to a collectively significant issue or circumstance. It is a collaboration between
an artist or ensemble and a ‘community’ in that the latter is a primary source of the text,
possibly of performers as well and definitely a good portion of the audience” (Cohen-
Cruz, 2013, p. 2). The artists that do this work “strive for a more egalitarian ideal. They
do not embrace the star system. Everyone has some creative input” (Kilkelly and Leonard,
2006, p. 6).

Analysts have described this form of art-making—art that both derives from, and
affects a community—using a range of terms. Naibus has labeled it ‘socially engaged art’
and contended that it “is created in an expansive place that awakens peoples’ voices,
minds, and spirits in various ways” (Naibus, 2009, p.2). Naibus employed both the terms
activist art and socially engaged art in her discussion, suggesting that a key distinction separates the two concepts (2009, p.4). She argued that socially engaged work can occur in isolation or within community, while activist art must align itself explicitly or implicitly with a social movement of some sort (2009, p.5).

Cohen-Cruz also draws this distinction, but uses the terminology ‘grassroots’ versus ‘community-based’ in specific reference to theater making. She has described the tensions between them as “two senses of radicality, i.e., rooted in community and left-wing” (Kilkelly and Leonard, 2006, pg. 15). Ultimately, however, Cohen-Cruz argues, “they converge in a shared principle: ‘arise from or go to a root or source’ rather than to impose from on high, i.e., facilitate the self-expression of communities that have vested interest in change from the status quo” (Kilkelly and Leonard, 2006, p.15). Cohen-Cruz has also discussed another concept relevant to public art-making, community cultural development, which encompasses a range of initiatives that artists undertake in collaboration with residents, “to express identity, concerns and aspirations through the arts and communication media, while building cultural capacity and contributing to social change” (Kilkelly and Leonard, 2006, p. 16).

Krensky and Steffen have argued that these varied approaches can be captured by the terms and practices associated with public, activist and community art. These are not parsimonious categories. Public art involves, “the display or performance of art in a public setting by a professional artist or artists” (Krensky and Steffen, 2009, p. 137). These authors have said that public art can be transformative for those engaged, which they define as a process that inspires new possibilities for individuals and societies (Krensky and Steffen, 2009, p. 137). However, they argue that this process [of making
public art] is not inherently transformative, and public art may serve a variety of purposes, including providing an aesthetic experience, keeping a record of history or being incorporated as a part of architecture. Meanwhile, they describe activist art as that which occurs in public settings and which professional artists use to display opportunity to address social and political issues. Such artists aim to create the potential for social change by stimulating public interaction, “activist art has three guiding characteristics: it must have political content, be created or displayed in public (not in museums or galleries), and create some interchange or interaction with the public” (Krensky and Steffen, 2009, p.137).

Finally, Krensky and Steffen have defined community art as similar to activist art “by virtue of its experiential and inclusive nature” (2009, p. 137). They distinguish it by its participatory design,

With community art, professional artists work directly with others in grassroots settings to create art in the public interest. […] More expressly, community art is consistent with the beliefs ‘that everyone is an artist…There is no doubt in the minds of community artists that social change takes place—for artists and community members alike…the production of art by people who don’t define themselves as artists is a radical, transformative act’ (Krensky and Steffen, 2009, p.168).

Pablo Helguera has maintained that what differentiates other art forms from socially engaged art (SEA)—his term of choice for community art—is that SEA depends on residents for its existence and is a community-building endeavor, “All art invites social interaction; yet in the case of SEA it is the process itself—the fabrication of the work—that is social. Furthermore SEA is often characterized by the activation of members of the public in roles beyond that of passive receptor” (Helguera, 2011, p.203).

Goldbard has distinguished different forms of art for community-building purposes by the type of artist engaged in them: “By community artists, activist artists,
socially engaged artists, I mean makers of art in collaboration with other community members as a collective expression, often one that calls attention to injustice or celebrates commonality” (Goldbard, 2013, p.152). William Cleveland, terming such work ‘community arts,’ has observed, “While ‘community arts’ may be a modern term, it actually describes an activity that is quite old. It basically involves artists and their fellow citizens coming together to make art (paintings, performances, poetry and the like) that in some way reflects their common concerns” (Cleveland, 2000, p. 1). While the nomenclature may vary, or may be used interchangeably, Naibus has suggested that, “the terms used to describe this practice change, just like fashions change. In the end it is what the work means to the communities in which it is made that is most important” (Naibus, 2009, p. 5).

The aesthetics employed in community-based art-making also vary with the nature of the work undertaken. In community-based theater, “the signature grassroots approach is personal story-based, which offers people a subjective way to respond to social circumstances” (KilKelly and Leonard, 2006, p. 17). Visual artists, The Beehive Design Collective, create graphics that tell stories that might not otherwise be broadly salient in public conversation. Their mural narratives are generated through conversations with the people touched by an issue or concern and thereafter translated by the artists into graphics and widely shared.

Other artists work in the aesthetic of accessibility, including a number of popular theater companies. Pregones Theater Company, for example, based in New York City, began in the 1980s by creating theater for low- to moderate-income Hispanic community residents. The company continues to create works anchored in Latino culture for its target
audience. Tomas Ybarra-Frausto has described another example of this sort of artistic aesthetic, Chicano rasquache (Hispanic Research Center, 2001). Traditionally referring to the idea of a lower class, the Chicano movement has turned the term on its head to represent an entire art movement based in resistance to the demoralization of individuals and to their affirmation, “Chicano art that is rasquache usually expresses an underdog, have-not sensibility that is also resourceful and adaptable and makes use of simple materials including found ones” (Hispanic Research Center, 2001). Cohen-Cruz also discusses the aesthetic of adaptation from tradition or culture. One example is Cornerstone Theater, best known for its versions of classic works to tell the stories of rural and urban communities.

Another aesthetic can be found in the work of artists who “create a close rapport with audiences by breaking the fourth wall, ‘it’s not TV,’ and encouraging participation” (Kilkelly and Leonard, 2006, p.19). Cohen-Cruz has described the theater company Wagon Burner’s practice in these terms. The group’s work aims to employ humor without offending and its productions are intended to educate, entertain and break down stereotypes. One visual artist, Kelly Ramos, directly draws on this aspiration of eclipsing barriers in her work by “calling attention to the fictive nature of art by exposing and narrating the very process of making a painting” (Philippine Star, 2013). She breaks the image down for her audiences into a sequential narrative explaining different processes of producing the painting, from revealing the materials used to documenting the process after completion.

Cohen-Cruz has also outlined an aesthetic of working in place. The example she has cited is Dell’Arte Company in Northern California, where the work is, “created by,
for and about the area in which you live. Artists can earn community support while challenging parochialism, bigotry, insularity, apathy; they balance experimentation with awareness of what the audience wants, likes, hopes for, can tolerate, will be inspired by” (Kilkelly and Leonard, p.7). Many mural artists and organizations employ a place-based aesthetic as well. The community mural organization called Groundswell, located in New York City and discussed in greater detail in this thesis, creates murals with artists and court-involved youths from Brooklyn. These art works depict issues the young people encounter in their communities, including concerns linked to race, sexuality and human liberation. Another example of place-based artistry is The Bogside Artists of Belfast and Londonderry, Northern Ireland, who draw on their experience of living through a period of deep political conflict referred to as ‘The Troubles’ in their province. Through 12 pieces, the artists have re-presented some of the most significant events of the 30-year conflict, “In telling this story they have served a pressing need for their community and Derry’s people in general to acknowledge with dignity, if not pride, the price paid by those who became victims of the struggle for democratic rights” (Bogside Artists, 2009).

Cohen-Cruz has described a core aesthetic in community-based art-making, however labeled, as, “a deep belief in the power of art to bring different people together, and the result is that stereotypes are cracked open in the unfolding of art” (Kilkelly and Leonard, 2006, p. 19). Krensky and Steffen have similarly stated, “Given its power, art has been a part of community life as a form of personal and cultural expression since the beginning of recorded history. A survey of the field suggests that three predominant social frameworks for the arts have emerged over time: civilizing, romantic and transformative” (2009, p. 126).
Those who adopt the civilizing view regard art as a means to socialize norms and qualities for human and societal welfare. Meanwhile, adherents of the romantic perspective see art as “the expression of emotion through inspiration that leads to self-discovery and self-definition” (Krensky and Steffen, 2009, p.137). The transformative view of the role of the arts integrates the civilizing and romantic perspectives, but also expands those notions to account for the fact, “that development of the imagination is the impetus for social change. Thus, transformative arts can be used to redefine the self, build community and address civic issues” (Krensky and Steffen, 2009, p.137). Krensky and Steffen have argued that all community based, or socially engaged, art should be categorized within the transformative aesthetic because the art methods that fall under this category, “explore, express, and emote in ways that inspire new possibilities for individuals and societies” (Krensky and Steffen, 2009, p.137).

**Art, Education and Process**

The arts can play important roles in development in children, including motor skills, language development, visual learning, cultural awareness and decision-making. In addition, bringing youngsters together in an art-making process can provide key educational experiences in leadership development, collaboration, cooperation, sharing and community building. The next section provides a number of frameworks outlining how to engage children and youths in collaborative and community-based arts making processes in an educational environment. I found the processes and strategies described in this literature useful in thinking about the different ways organizations can design and employ community arts based practices with older youths and with a broader set of participants. The literature also highlights the varying roles of the artist or organizer in
the process, which I found thought provoking when thinking about how to facilitate community based arts practices.

Mark Cooper and Lisa Sjostrom have argued,

Educators understand the importance of helping every child to have a voice, to feel part of and responsible for community, and to be involved in decisions for the common good. Kids are not only better citizens but also higher-achieving students when they understand and value differences that make up the *pluralibus* while they also experience being part of the *unum*. The challenge is how to create this kind of democratic community with kids. Collaborative art-making is a profound way to do this (Cooper and Sjostrom, 2006, p.4).

Krensky and Steffen have similarly contended that, “In spite of the perceived and proven value of the arts, fewer and fewer Americans are experiencing the transformative power of the arts during their education. Art programs in schools across the United States have been cut as education budgets diminish” (2006, p.105). Carol Korn-Bursztyn has suggested that, “the arts provide a metaphor for the tension between freedom and boundaries in education. The reluctance to dip into the messiness and perceived disorder of the arts is a stand-in for concerns about the optimal balance between freedom and structure, expression and boundaries” (Korn-Bursztyn, 2012, p.11).

Korn-Bursztyn has outlined the specific tensions that result in the classroom concerning different media in art education, “Fewer opportunities are provided to children in early education today to work with materials that appear messy to teachers and child care providers, such as paints and clay” (2012, p.12). She has also examined music in the classroom, “Music in early childhood pedagogy is closely associated with movement, early instrumentation and song. However, in many early childhood classes today, music is presented as background, rather than foreground” (Korn-Bursztyn, p.12). She has also expressed concern that, “Song is applied in the service of classroom management, as in the ‘clean-up song,’ during transitions between activities, or not at all”
Korn-Bursztyn has also noted that few opportunities for dance are typically provided during early childhood education because teachers and caregivers are largely unfamiliar with how to work within the art form and are loathe to risk children moving in unpredictable ways (2012, p.13).

Korn-Bursztyn has advocated a specific form of art education to address these concerns, which she has dubbed ‘aesthetic education.’ “Aesthetic education has offered an alternate approach to the historic emphasis on materials-based practice in early education. In the aesthetic education approach, the focal point of study is the work of art” (2012, p. 13). An aesthetic education approach in the classroom, typically involves partnership with a cultural arts organization, and the in-class presence of a teaching artist. In this approach close study of a museum-quality work of art involves collective looking and talking about what the children observe, and the meanings that they derive from their observations (Korn-Bursztyn, 2012, p.13).

While works of art are the central focus for this pedagogical approach, “experiential learning through materials-based exploration is an important adjunct to close study of works of art. Work with art materials, movement, storytelling, sound and music optimally precede and follow structured group activities” (Korn-Bursztyn, 2012, p.13).

Cooper and Sjostrom have offered a specific framework for bringing children together around collaborative art-making processes, “Collaboration creates educational value all by itself. It requires skills in conversation, negotiation, problem-solving and listening—lessons as essential as math and literacy” (Cooper and Sjostrom, 2006, p. 458).

These authors have emphasized that before one can lead a collaborative art project, the facilitator must first see himself or herself as an artist, a master and in charge of a creative project, “I implore you to let go of the old, very unhelpful idea that only special people make art” (Cooper and Sjostrom, 2006, p. 126). As they have explained, “Master in this
case doesn’t mean you can paint like Da Vinci or sculpt like Brancusi. It does mean that you understand that everyone—you yourself included—is visually literate simply by virtue of being born with two eyes and living in a visually rich culture” (Cooper and Sjostrom, 2006, p. 126). It also means on the most basic level that the facilitator is taking responsibility for leading the project.

The next necessary attitudinal frame for master artists, according to Cooper and Sjostrom, is, “Being a master artist in collaborative art with kids means that you are willing to accept everyone’s artistic contribution without prioritizing or passing judgment” (Cooper and Sjostrom, 2006, p.172). The master artist is responsible for creating a space in which children are comfortable taking risks.

Finally, the master artist must be open to discovery. The goal is for students, to find a new way of seeing and communicating what is often a cliché. The peace sign might become a mask, for instance, while Pokemon might be part of a larger, zanier pattern. Your role is to help students take the image out of the realm of cliché, or Madison Avenue, and bring it into the realm of exploration (Cooper and Sjostrom, 2006, p.195).

The overall aspiration is to think of art projects as investigations linked to student interests and studies.

In addition to providing this guidance for the artist-convener, these authors provide a framework for development of collaborative art-making processes. The master artist must address a series of questions as he or she crafts the opportunity, “Do you choose the topic or do your students do so? Do you decide where the piece of art will be exhibited or do you give students the chance to decide? Any combination of decisions is fine, but it’s up to you, as master artist, to understand who you’re working with and how best to orchestrate success” (Cooper and Sjostrom, 2006, p. 228). These analysts also
explore the question of creating a collaborative working environment in which the space feels exciting for children. This includes having key materials in place, as well as fostering ownership of the space used, “Turn the studio over to them as theirs—to come and go as they please, to keep clean—while you make sure everything functions” (Cooper and Sjostrom, 2006, p. 239).

Cooper and Sjostrom stress that providing structure for the art-making process is essential, “You don’t teach physics (or reading or history) all at once, in random order; you teach specific concepts and skills in a step-by-step deliberate manner utilizing organizing tools such as assignments, deadlines, tests, daily classroom rituals, pedagogical tricks of the trade” (2006, p. 296). They argue the same is true for a collaborative art project. The authors outline two types of organizing frameworks and contend that both are indispensable for success,

One is the attitudinal framework: You set the intention to make a great work of art and believe you’re going to succeed. The second is the physical framework, or form, of the artwork: a mask, mural, dollhouse, puzzle piece, sculpture of a number 5, a snail, or any other conceivable shape that serves as an organizing principle for a project (Cooper and Sjostrom, 2006, p. 296).

Cooper and Sjostrom (2006) advocate reinforcing the interest of children with books, field trips and activities that can contribute to the exploration of creativity in a collaborative work environment. In their view, having fun should be the highest priority when framing ideas for projects (Cooper and Sjostrom, 2006, p. 279). These scholars have emphasized that the art-making process is properly conceived as collaborative throughout and should be one in which participants engage in dialogue and decision-making concerning the artistic framework, form and project theme as well as the “closing ceremony,” at which the completed artwork is displayed or exhibited.
Korn-Bursztyn (2012) and Cooper and Sjostrom (2006) each have developed children’s art education processes that aim to foster democratic aptitudes. Krensky and Steffen (2009) have offered an additional model that creates connections between students and their communities. They argue that while we have seen a decline in arts funding and programming in schools, a striking trend has emerged in recent decades in which advocates have sought to engage the arts to build and promote healthy communities and foster change. As Krensky and Steffen have observed,

Community Based Art Education (CBAE) can be a tool to situate young people as engaged citizens within their communities by employing the arts as both a process to understand social issues in the larger community context and a product that contributes to the public dialogue. Through artistic interaction with their environments, students become the investigators and re-creators of their world, making this type of art education exceptionally well suited to support the development of social responsibility and democratic participation (2009, p. 178).

CBAE can take many forms and can be a part of a school-based program or can exist purely in a community setting, “There are formalized community-art organizations and informal projects in community settings, ongoing school-based programs and one-time workshops and events ” (Krensky and Steffen, 2009, p. 190). One example of creating an arts organization to conduct this work is Tim Rollins + K.O.S. (Kids of Survival). K.O.S. is, “a south Bronx initiated project that uses the arts for both individual transformation and social critique. The group has gained international attention for the content as well as caliber of the work it has created, which can be found in major museums collections worldwide” (Krensky and Steffen, 2009, p. 199). Another example of an art organization utilizing the CBAE model is New Orleans’ Young Aspirations/Young Artists (YA/YA). The organization, “works with young people and uses art to empower artistically talented inner-city youth to become professionally self-sufficient through creative expression” (Krensky and Steffen, 2009, p. 199).
Krensky and Steffen’s CBAE framework is also anchored by the tenet that community art-making is both a product and a three-phase process: Setting the Stage, Building Community and Making Art. Each project is artist led and community centered,

Our research shows that community art must be artist led because, while art has transformative capabilities, it alone is not sufficient to cause transformation among individuals working in a community-based setting as a collective. A professional artist or art educator must provide the expert guidance to facilitate the collective, creative process. In the model we are presenting, community centered means that the artist or art educator facilitates, rather than directs, participants through a process that encourages them to dream and empowers them to create (2009, p. 242).

In Setting the Stage, the authors distinguish between community and school-based settings when designing an art education process. However, even though the venues may be different, the process is the same. The arts practitioner organizes the effort in this phase by identifying the project’s aims, “While the goals of making art and building community are inherent, additional project goals typically reflect community needs, school standards, and donor interests” (Krensky and Steffen, 2009, p. 263). Overall project aspirations might include bringing diverse people together, creating an opportunity for children to play and teaching youth participants social and leadership skills. These aspirations, “serve as a starting point for co-creating additional goals with participants as the foci of the community-art project” (Krensky and Steffen, 2009, p. 263). Included in this initial step is the identification of which community will host and be served by the project as well as a consideration of what space or spaces will be used.

Following the identification of goals and the host entity, the role of the arts practitioner is to inspire gatekeepers and stakeholders, “to trust the community-centered process, convince them to be confident about the outcomes, and involve them at appropriate times for input and approval” (Krensky and Steffen, 2009, p. 283). Support
from key stakeholders must be obtained early in the process and is critical for success. Examples of frequently important project/program partners include principals or teachers in school settings and city government and community leaders when a nonprofit, public or for-profit organization offers space and support.

Once support from stakeholders has been established, “art practitioners have varying levels of responsibility for recruiting participants and sustaining their involvement” (Krensky and Steffen, 2009, p. 283). Effective community-art projects involve a core group of individuals, “including some type of community leadership, that is committed to participating for the project’s duration … recruiting the core group may be as simple as allocating classroom time for the project or be as time intensive as going door to door in a neighborhood and talking with people in their living rooms” (Krensky and Steffen, loc. 283).

Another responsibility that can fall on the artist in this phase is securing funding and legal counsel, such as in cases that might deal with liability and ownership issues of the art produced. Meanwhile, the arts practitioner must also take steps to ensure that the project will be as meaningful as possible for all involved, “If it is to be accepted and respected by the community it must authentically arise from the experiences of the community” (Krensky and Steffen, 2009, p. 294). Ultimately, for the artist, the art-making process demands a dual emphasis on being creative and building relationships.

In the second stage of the CBAE process, Community Building, the artist, “helps participants build awareness about themselves and each other” and typically does so by facilitating various community-building activities and initiatives (Krensky and Steffen, 2009, p. 318). Krensky and Steffen (2009) provide an example of this sort of effort, a
game they use at the beginning of a project during which participants share their names and a quality they bring to the group. The art practitioner must also establish “a clear framework for interaction within which the community-art project operates” (Krensky and Steffen, 2009, p. 326). The artist can facilitate this step by asking those involved to articulate what community means to them and then helping the participants work as a group to develop ground rules for how they will act as a community.

Not only does the artist concern herself or himself with setting the stage for public art projects and facilitating a community building process, he or she also must seek to provide an authentic art-making experience, “that balances skill building and role taking with the process of making professional-quality art” (Krensky and Steffen, 2009, p. 389).

The third, or Making Art phase of the CBAE involves envisioning content and form, determining the audience and conducting research. Once a shared vision of content and form has been constructed, “the art practitioner supports participants in technically and logistically expressing their vision artistically” (Krensky and Steffen, 2009, p. 442). This training can take place in a variety of ways and can include, “interaction with professional artists, use of professional art materials, study of art history relevant to the project, mastery of the artistic medium and critique” (Krensky and Steffen, 2009, p. 442).

The authors also discuss the completion stage of a community arts project, which involves a formal unveiling that results in interaction between viewers and the artwork. Krensky and Steffen have observed that, “a triadic relationship exists between the work of art, the viewer and the creator and that ‘the work of art is complete only as it works in the experience of others rather than the one who created it’” (2009, p. 463). The public ceremony of revealing the artistic effort serves as an affirmation of what participants
have created together and involves the art practitioner, participants, key stakeholders and supporters, community members and relevant public figures,

An unveiling fulfills the transformative power of art by engaging an audience and eliciting their responses in interaction with the art as viewers. While the art-making process helps participants envision themselves as artists by supporting the creation of professional-quality work, the unveiling reinforces those newly formed perceptions by allowing participants to witness others viewing their artwork and them as artists (Krensky and Steffen, 2009, p. 474).

The formal presentation of an art work is typically followed by a celebration, which provides contributors the opportunity to be honored and to appreciate their fellow participants in the process. Finally, reflection and evaluation follow the unveiling and festivities. This step provides a sense of completion for participants as well as a means by which to inform the quality of future endeavors.

The aesthetic education model presented by Korn-Bursztyn, Cooper and Sjoström’s conception of collaborative art-making and Krensky and Steffen’s community-based art education model all emphasize the importance of process and a professional quality product in community-based art-making. The developmental goals sought for participants as well as the outcomes desired from the process distinguish the approaches from each other. The aesthetic education model seeks to engage children in art-making while helping them develop critical thinking, imaginative and reflection skills. The collaborative art-making process assumes the developmental goals provided by the aesthetic education process and works to provide a means for children to develop capacities, self-confidence and aptitudes that can foster democratic values and behaviors. The community-based art education model assumes the capabilities encouraged by the aesthetic education and collaborative education processes. CBAE shares the collaborative art-making frame’s emphasis on participatory decision-making. However, the model
emphasizes the community building aspects of that process. That is, its proponents aim not only to help individuals gain skills and experience, but also to develop a shared sense of community in the process. Finally, supporters of both the aesthetic education and community based art education approaches view the role of the professional artist as critical, whereas adherents of the collaborative model encourage anyone with the right set of attitudinal frames to take on the process of public art-making. These art education and engagement models provide alternate analytical frames through which to examine the work of Groundswell and its process of engaging youth in art and community based educational experiences. Because Groundswell’s chosen medium is public art, specifically murals, the following section offers a brief history of mural making in the United States. Thereafter, I delve more deeply into the community mural art form and outline processes by which they can be created.

Mural Arts, A History

Murals constitute a distinct public art form that provides opportunities for unique experiences for participants and the communities in which they are undertaken. According to Lucy Lippard, “No activist art has had more community support and long-term social impact than murals, a uniquely democratic public art form, highly visible and collaboratively executed. The process itself is as empowering as the product” (Cockcroft, Weber and Cockcroft, 1998, p. xi).

Francis O’Connor has argued that the word ‘mural’ evolved from an adjective to a noun in 1850, as in mural versus mural painting. O’Connor has specifically defined murals as,
… any pictorial or abstract composition, usually, but not necessarily large in scale and intended to be permanent, which has been executed on or for a specific interior or exterior wall, or situated on a ceiling or in a natural context, which defines, in visual terms, the purpose of its environment. Put in other words: Murals are images on walls, which portray with deliberate intent what goes on within or before those walls (O’Connor, 2010, Chapter 1, Subhead B, n. pag.).

O’Connor begins his discussion of a history of murals in America by analyzing Native-American forms from prehistory to the end of the 19th century to contend that Native Americans used murals, “to define their conception of themselves in space and time,” (O’Connor, 2010, Chapter 4, Subhead A, n. pag.). Native Americans created their works on the outer walls of housing structures,

The prehistoric tribes left images on exterior walls, just as the Community Mural Movement does in our own day. The Pueblo cultures of the Southwest painted murals on the adobe walls of their kivas and multi-storied houses, and created interior wall shrines comparable to our murals in churches or courthouses, and what we call "installations." The Plains tribes painted heraldic "murals in the round" on the exteriors of their portable tipis, just as we paint logos on airplanes, trucks and vans. And the Northwest Coast cultures, influenced by Oceanic art, created environments imaged with their totemic myths as settings for potlatches worthy of the opulence of our “gilded age” (O’Connor, 2010, Chapter 4, Subhead A, n. pag.).

O’Connor has suggested that being aware of the earliest manifestations of mural arts is not to suggest their direct causal influence on today’s efforts, but instead to illustrate the instinctual connection of this aesthetic practice to human behavior, “these similarities prove that the very impulse to image environments is a primordial instinct, shared by humans back to the beginnings of communal experience” (Chapter 4, Subhead A, n. pag.). He has identified four general areas in which the tribal and European functions of mural arts coincide:

• The art may make ceremonial environments sacred
• The orientation of such environments to the compass points
• The utilization of both interior and exterior walls
• The heraldic use of mural imagery to define community status (O’Connor, 2010, Chapter 4, Subhead C, n. pag.).

According to O’Connor, American Indians created image environments because, “[they] felt themselves to be at one with nature—which was their ceremonial environment. For these peoples, the seasons and heavenly bodies, their cycles and locations, regularities and anomalies, all took on symbolic or mythic meanings—which came to be the essence of their aesthetics” (O’Connor, 2010, Chapter 4, Subhead C, n. pag.).

The independent art historian has described late Colonial era murals, that is, those created from 1750 to the American Revolution, and grouped them into three types. The first sort, (pictorial) paintings were, “integrated into the architectural structures of a room. Panels arranged in groups on walls and doors fall into this category, along with overmantels and fire screens—and their scale [was] pictorial” (O’Connor, 2010, Chapter 8, Subhead A, n. pag.). O’Connor’s second classification was landscaped or storied environments, “painted across the full expanse of plaster walls, and creating stylized interior views of the external world. Here the scale was almost always transactional and derives from imported, hand-painted pictorial wallpapers, and indirectly from the popular panoramas of the era” (O’Connor, 2010, Chapter 8, Subhead A, n. pag.). The third form of Colonial murals were overall decorative designs that, “derive[d] from patterned wallpapers and [could], in curious ways, occasionally take on an architectural scale” (O’Connor, 2010, Chapter 8, Subhead A, n. pag.). Anonymous and unschooled artists typically created U.S. Colonial-era murals. Their driving aesthetic varied based on region. For example, in the Southwest states, Spanish mission murals with Christian imagery dominated. On the East Coast, mural works depicted both landscapes and religious figures.
During the Revolution and post-revolution time periods, O’Connor has contended “domestic pictorial environments” were most common (Chapter 10, Subhead A, n. pag.). The first examples of public murals appeared during this time. These included panoramas and frescoes painted for churches or commercial buildings. O’Connor has reported that this era also produced the first trained American-born muralist, Rufus Porter. Known for his landscapes, “He (Porter) had an instinctive sense of the wall as wall—not as just a larger window onto an external scene—and little interest in copying nature when it could be improved upon so fancifully by an independent-minded artist with a parlor's environment to picture” (O’Connor, 2010, Chapter 10, Subhead G, n. pag.). In keeping with this inclination, it is not surprising that Porter created a number of murals for public inns during his career. Jean Lipman, another art historian who has studied America’s colonial period, has suggested that Porter created a number of murals for public buildings such as the “fine landscape scene” in the Philadelphia Museum (O’Connor, 2010, Chapter 10, Subhead K, n. pag.). By the 1830s, “Porter and his band of limner muralists were flourishing, painting residential murals along the east coast” (O’Connor, 2010, Chapter 10, Subhead K, n. pag.).

The century and a half, beginning in 1817 and concluding some time after 1950, proved a historically significant time period for murals in the United States. The United States government commissioned one especially noteworthy mural (in four phases) during this time; the original rotunda of the Capitol. The first stage of art making at the Capitol, from 1817-1855, when eight works were installed, “constituted the first public, monumental pictorial environment in the country” (O’Connor, 2010, Chapter 11, Subhead A, n. pag.). Interestingly, while these pieces are today considered historical
murals, “it is plain that no one at the time of their conception thought of them as such”

(O’Connor, 2010, Chapter 11, Subhead A, n. pag.). O’Connor has argued that,

The net effect was to integrate the huge canvases with the curved wall. As such we can, with some justice (if not contemporary precedent) call them murals today. Also, aside from their architectural context, these eight paintings define as well as embellish the very center of our polity for their times. These images encapsulate their era's ideals concerning the finding and settlement of the continent and the events, which permitted a free society to flourish upon it (O’Connor, 2010, Chapter 11, Subhead D, n. pag.).

Near the end of the 19th century the Academic Mural Movement emerged in the United States. Until this period, distinguished muralists working in America, such as Trumbull, Cornè, Porter and Brumidi, were largely unrecognized, “The publication of Pauline King’s American Mural Painting: A Study of the Important Decorations by Distinguished Artists in the United States, had established the priority of the Academic painters” (O’Connor, 2010, Chapter 15, Subhead A, n. pag.). Art historians do not agree concerning whether this group of painters was responsible for the start of the mural arts in America or whether, as noted, the movement actually began earlier (O’Connor, 2010, Chapter 15, Subhead A, n. pag.).

In any case this movement spanned the years from 1870-1920 and, “academic murals were understood by the muralists who created them as part of a larger public agenda of national beautification and education” (O’Connor, 2010, Chapter 15, Subhead A, n. pag.). Demand also grew during this period for academic muralists to create works for private institutions and residences. The primary aesthetic of these efforts was “decoration,” understood as,

the art of embellishing the background of life. It is the art of making necessary things beautiful. … More strictly defined, a decorative treatment is one that is essentially fitted to its purpose, to its locality … and to its environment. […]
Decorative Art is at once an embellisher, a celebrant and a recorder. It records the happenings of the state, it lends significance to the walls, it celebrates actions and immortalizes the features of worthy citizens. … In sum, mural painting is an integral and essential part of that public and municipal art which is a public and municipal educator (O’Connor, 2010, Chapter 23, Subhead L, n. pag.).

While academic muralists during the first decades of the 20th century worked “at many a Court House and State Capitol, and in the private residences and clubs of the social and industrial establishment” (O’Connor, 2010, Chapter 24, Subhead B, n. pag.) younger muralists, both trained and not, “managed to secure a wall, and what they had to say over the next thirty years in defining their spaces was certainly more in keeping with their radically changing social and artistic times” (O’Connor, 2010, Chapter 24, Subhead B, n. pag.). The Progressive and Labor movements influenced this new generation of artists. As a result, “a small number of artists, influenced by European Art Nouveau and the arts and crafts movements, began to explore ‘decorations’ that went beyond the traditionalism of the Academic muralists” (O’Connor, 2010, Chapter 24, Subhead A, n. pag.).

Out of this period arose a new sense of realism in mural art, “born of a greater emphasis on ordinary people and places, and of European styles such as Impressionism, that permitted art to emulate the visual phenomena of nature with greater seeming exactitude” (O’Connor, 2010. Chapter 27, Subhead A, n. pag.). Overall, the first decades of the 20th century marked a great transition in the purposes and aesthetic of murals. Many young U.S. muralists looked to the leadership and example of several Mexican artists, including Diego Rivera, Jose Orozco and David Siquieros, active in a mural movement that arose following that nation’s revolution in 1910. Mexican muralists were eventually pushed out of their own country as a result of a changing political climate and
were subsequently invited to create murals in the United States. Their work ultimately “had a lasting impact on the history of its [United States] mural art” (O’Connor, 2010, Chapter 27, Subhead A, n. pag.).

A fresh murals movement in the 1930s was shaped by the influence of the post-revolution Mexican muralists who, “brought to the United States a sense of the mural’s capacity for expressing social concern, a fascination with the country’s rampant technology, and a revival of the fresco technique” (O’Connor, 2010, Chapter 28, Subhead A, n. pag.). O’Connor has noted that “their influence [the new muralists] lay in reinvigorating the mural as an art form capable of addressing public issues at a time American artists needed such means and permissions” (O’Connor, 2010, Chapter 28, Subhead A, n. pag.). From 1930-1933 mural foci evolved in the U.S. to serve as a democratic art form emphasizing the “American Scene,” whether urban or rural. From 1933-43, the New Deal encouraged and funded programs that placed much emphasis on mural arts. According to O’Connor, “Of all the cultural institutions of the 1930s, none caused more murals to be painted than the innovative government programs set up between 1933 and 1935 by the New Deal administration to help artists survive the Depression” (O’Connor, 2010, Chapter 28, Subhead C, n. pag.).

In the four decades after World War II, the abstract art movement aggravated an already growing tension between easel and mural art, “By the time the New Deal projects were being terminated in the early 1940s due to the onset of World War II, abstraction in art had become the goal of most of the younger artists, and the goal of social relevance had been replaced by that of personal expression” (O’Connor, 2010, Chapter 35, Subhead C, n. pag.). Abstract Expressionists such as Jackson Pollock and Mark Rothko helped,
“to expand the scope of mural painting in one sense: Their use of transactional scale” (O’Connor, 2010, Chapter 35, Subhead C, n. pag.). Ultimately, this period challenged society’s definition and understanding of what constituted a mural, “The purpose of any mural is to define the purpose or function of a space. Non-representational, or abstract, murals are indigenous to our century and relatively rare—especially in the medium of mosaic—and define a space decoratively rather than iconically” (O’Connor 2010, Chapter 35, Subhead C, n. pag.).

In the mid-1960s, the United States government emerged once more as an arts patron, as it implemented programs through the General Service Administration’s Art in Architecture program and the National Endowment for the Arts. The murals commissioned by these programs were placed in federal buildings and public places. Overall, this patronage supported murals as public art.

The Community Mural Movement began, with idealistic goals and pragmatic methods, according to O’Connor, around 1965. He described this trend as, “inspired by the example of the Mexican and New Deal muralists and the old but still effective idea of ‘art as a weapon’ in the battle for social justice” (2010, Chapter 37, Subhead A, n.pag.). A number of local organizations made up the movement whose most significant aspect was its emphasis on the ‘artist organizer’ assembling a ‘neighborhood team’ led by an individual experienced in wall painting. O’Connor has emphasized that, “Unlike the practice of the past, the Community Mural Movement was unique in its outreach to the young of a particular neighborhood and in providing them opportunities to develop as socialized individuals through the medium of art” (2010, Chapter 37, Subhead A, n.pag.).
Janet Braun-Reinitz and Jane Weissman have described the community mural arts movement as developing in four phases. The first stage extended from the late 1960s through the early 1970s, “which saw the end of the Vietnam War and an important economic recession” (Braun-Reinitz and Weissman, 2009, pg. xiv). The murals of the period drew, “… from the protest narratives of earlier Mexican muralism, the history of Depression-era work relief programs, and 1960s activism, these murals were decidedly anti-elitist” (Knight, 2008, p. 2170). Because of that fact, they were “often overlooked or dismissed by critics, with their inconsistent styles and blatant socio-political agendas constituting ‘a challenge to establishment ideas on what [was] admissible as art’” (Knight, 2008, p. 2170). Two mural styles emerged during this early phase, “one was nonnarrative and included the large abstracts and geometrics sponsored by City Walls and painted by professional sign painters, the works of the earliest Harlem muralists, and some of the artists in Los Angeles, Boston and elsewhere” (Braun-Reinitz and Weissman, 2009, p xv). The second and more dominant style consisted of “politically charged narratives” (Braun-Reinitz and Weissman, 2009, p. xv). These murals, “were not about revolution, but their subjects—racism, opposition to the social status quo, feminism—were so politically charged and their visual presence so impressive that they were called ‘revolutionary’” (Braun-Reinitz and Weissman, 2009, p. xv).

To consolidate a number of federal job training programs that existed to help un- and underemployed workers, the federal government passed the Comprehensive Employment Training Act in 1973 (CETA), which framed what Braun-Reinitz and Weissman have called the second phase of the Post-War mural arts movement, occurring roughly from the mid-1970s to the early 1980s. According to Braun-Reinitz and
Weissman, “CETA provided support for muralists and enabled them to extend the political strain of murals through the end of the 1970s” (2009, p. xiv). Knight has argued that muralism flourished on the west coast during this time, “especially among racial and ethnic communities that had been largely excluded from the art world” (Knight, 2008, p. 2170). Knight has particularly highlighted the work of Judith Baca during this period,

Artist Judith Baca directed the efforts of 30 professional artists, and as many as 450 teen workers (some recruited through the juvenile justice system). Together they produced a 13-foot-high, 2,435-foot-long mural spanning the Tujunga Wash flood control channel in the San Fernando Valley. The work depicts the history of California, from dinosaurs to the 1984 Olympics, ‘from the viewpoint of those usually written out of the histories’ (2008, p. 2170).

During this period, too, New York artists hosted the 1st National Murals Conference in 1976, attended by muralists from major cities across the United States. Interested artists organized the 2nd National Mural Conference in Chicago in 1978. Braun-Reinitz and Weissman have suggested that, “because of the conferences and because of increased communication among muralists, mural artists were no longer isolated. They felt part of a larger community” (2009, pg. xvi). By the end of this phase, due to shifting artistic and political ground, “political engagement was out, affirmation was in. Murals against racism became murals celebrating race” (Braun-Reinitz and Weissman, 2009, p. xvi).

With increased attention to murals and communication among artists, funding sources and processes changed, shaping the third phase of Post-War community mural development in the U.S., “In the 1980s, funders’ desire to avoid conflict or criticism in murals and conflict because of them began to dominate the mural-creating process” (Braun-Reinitz and Weissman, 2009, p. xvi). In consequence, mural production declined nationally during this period.
Phase 4 of the Community Mural Movement, or roughly the last 15 years of the 20th century, saw a surge in private and public funding for murals as well as in support for K-12 school programs employing the art form, “These efforts all had strings attached that said in effect, ‘Nothing about violence, nothing critical, nothing politically left’” (Braun-Reinitz and Weissman, 2009, p. xvii). Murals became almost completely institutionalized during these years, “that is, organizations, not artists, controlled imagery, and critical politics was shunned in favor of affirmation (of hope, community, race, gender, mysticism, and religion)” (Braun-Reinitz and Weissman, 2009, p. xvii). As a result of this support, mural arts organizations, such as the Philadelphia Mural Arts Program, Groundswell Community Mural Project and Los Muralistas, experienced growth and expansion (Braun-Reinitz and Weissman, 2009).

Braun-Reinitz and Weissman conclude by characterizing the most recent era as Post-September 11, defining a time period in which patriotism and calls for unity dominated mural rhetoric, particularly in New York, as a result of the terrorist attacks against that city in 2001. More recently, the dominating themes of the Community Mural Movement have been social justice and urban renewal. In addition, the traditional function of murals, i.e., decoration, still plays a key role in the art form in the United States. As Ronald Fleming has argued,

Today, muralism has emerged in America in two realms: social protest in the cities and civic boosterism in the towns and smaller cities. Murals within the urban environment often draw from the progressive politics that the Mexican muralists advocated, using art as a vehicle for social programs and community empowerment, while employing the visual impact as a grassroots attempt to reclaim their blighted landscape. Outside the big city, mural programs have emerged nationwide in small communities, from villages to minor cities. The impetus for these murals often lies in a desire to bolster a sagging postindustrial economy with tourism dollars, while renewing a sense of civic pride among residents (2007, p. 97).
A key question that attends mural making today is what role technology should and will play in the art form’s continuing evolution. O’Connor concluded his recent work by arguing, “This is a new epoch, and the future of the mural as an art form is in the ability of muralists to find a new ideological reason to define the space around them, and to understand and pursue technology’s reach and the possibilities it has to offer everyone” (2010, Chapter 38, Subhead D, n. pag.).

As mural artistry in the United States faces growing concerns and questions about its form and aesthetics, community mural making is nonetheless thriving. The next section examines more deeply the social functions of such efforts and the various processes of production that artists and communities have employed in creating them.

**Community Mural Making – Function and Process**

Cockcroft, Weber and Cockcroft have sought to understand what ‘community’ means in community mural making,

If we are to give community a functional meaning, it must be a group of people who share a sense of community—who share common interests, common values, and a sense of solidarity or trust based on these. […] Community cannot be outlined on a map; rather, it is built, and it can be dispersed again. Community is a process of people coming together around common problems, discovering their common values and developing their sense of solidarity (1998, p.72).

Cockcroft, Weber and Cockcroft have also observed that, “murals do not magically start the community process and, in fact, cannot become part of that process until it has already begun” (1998, p. 72). They have argued that murals can make communities stronger and can serve as a vehicle for those participating in their development and rendering to engage in redefinition or reformulation of common values. These authors also have contended, “Inevitably, community murals are controversial, for in a world of
injustice, exploitation, war and alienation, a formulation of values implies a criticism of that world and the projection of a possible alternative world” (Cockcroft, Weber and Cockcroft, 1998, p. 73).

David Conrad has described the community mural as a democratic art form. He has stated that community murals and the artists who create them, “exemplify respect for people, respect for themselves and respect for art in their murals. They make skillful use of architectural environments to transform walls into beautiful creations. They involve others in the art process and strive for unity and cohesion in visual expression” (1995, p. 102). Conrad has also argued that community murals serve as a means to provide a democratic education for their artists, those who participate in their creation as well as for those viewing them (1995, p. 102). Similarly, the Institute for Democratic Education in America (IDEA) argues that a democratic learning environment is one that supports, “the individual development of each young person within a caring community. Democratic education helps young people learn about themselves, engage with the world around them, and become positive and contributing members of society” (http://democraticeducation.org/index.php/features/what-is-democratic-education/, n.d.).

Cockcroft, Weber and Cockcroft have suggested that murals can serve as a vehicle for community identification, “people identify with the murals because murals tell the story of the people themselves. They see their lives reflected in the murals on a heroic scale” (Cockcroft, Weber and Cockcroft, 1998, p.83). For these analysts murals become a symbol of place that defines the character of a neighborhood or area for both residents and outsiders. They become landmarks and part of the geography of a region.
Murals can also demystify art, “As people observe the day-to-day process of painting they are surprised at the many changes that occur. Those who have watched three or four projects are educated to murals; the inner connections of composition are revealed. This strange thing ‘art’ becomes not only accessible, but a necessary, desirable thing” (Cockcroft, Weber and Cockcroft, 1998, p. 88). One universal signal of successful mural projects is that the public is left wishing to participate in the production of another one.

Cockcroft, Weber and Cockcroft organized their understanding of the range of methods to create community murals, “in terms of those who paint” (1998, p. 108). They outlined three categories distinguished by who creates the art and how: directed team murals, collective youth murals and children’s murals. These categories are by no means mutually exclusive and “The common denominator is collective execution led by a director or artist-organizer-in-charge” (Cockcroft, Weber and Cockcroft, 1998, p. 108).

Directed team murals are those fabricated by a group, “but in which the design itself bears the stamp of one or two artists in charge of the project” (Cockcroft, Weber and Cockcroft, 1998, p. 108). Collective youth murals describe a situation in which teenagers are typically participants and the murals projects are, not only created, but also conceived and designed by those engaged. The artist’s role in the production is that of facilitator and their skills and expertise “enable the group to carry out their own ideas” (Cockcroft, Weber and Cockcroft, 1998, p. 115). The authors also discuss the importance of the public nature of the project when working with youth groups in this method. As they have observed,

Often the youths involved already abandoned the classroom to make the streets their stage, although their self-dramatization may be antisocial. A mural project, in offering them an infinitely more effective platform, also places them in a role of responsibility
to the community, a role daily reinforced by public reaction to their work (1998, x p. 117).

According to Cockcroft, Weber and Cockcroft, what distinguishes children’s murals is that they are “permanent murals in which a group of children collectively master a theme and a wall, creating a single more or less unified composition” (1998, p. 136). They contend that the core differences between children’s and adult’s murals is the themes they express as well as their “mode of representation” (1998, p. 137). What they mean is that for children, murals reflect their stage of growth as developing persons, whereas adult murals more directly reflect cultural and social concerns.

Along with the methods discussed previously regarding collaborative and community-based art-making, Sergio Valdez has offered a specific argument for how murals can be created in community. Using the term participatory mural making, he has observed that the production process “may adopt one of three approaches,

1) For the community—either the amateur or professional artist conceives of and produces a painting for the community

2) With the community—the painter conceives of and then organizes the production process with community members acting as assistants;

3) From the community—the artist/facilitator promotes the creation of a mural based on residents’ own themes, images and participation in the design and painting process (Valdez, 2011, p. 111).

Conclusion

This review of the relevant literature concerning the historical evolution of the forms of murals and the social purposes they have played as well as how they have reflected
and involved individuals in their development suggests that artists desirous of engaging communities must pay close attention not only to what they will produce, but also how they will do so. Mural making can provide an opportunity to equip participants and inexperienced artists with new skills as well as with opportunities to develop important democratic capacities. Murals appear well situated to stimulate democratic possibilities, as their creation very often requires collaborative involvement due to size and scale. Moreover, these works of art are typically created by and for communities and in their physicality often re-present stories important to residents residing near their location. While murals surely can be used as “cosmetic Band-aids to cheer up neglected neighborhoods” (Cockcroft, Weber and Cockcroft, 1998, p. xiv) they can also serve as a tool for community healing and change. The following analysis will describe how one nonprofit utilized a mural project to provide skills development and democratic opportunities for youth artists as well as to encourage residents of a storm-affected community to gather and collectively discern ways to transcend the difficulties that had befallen them.
Chapter 3

Research Design and Methodology

To assess the capacity of mural making to foster agency in youth and catalyze space and opportunities for broader community and social change, I examined a community-based art-making organization, Groundswell, based in Brooklyn, New York. The nonprofit utilizes mural production as a means of providing interested youths a sustained opportunity to engage in community and to develop professional and democratic capacities in doing so. Groundswell also views its mural production efforts as a means to catalyze local residents’ interest and conversation on the questions and concerns their art evidences. I selected this organization because I would like to develop my career as a community-based muralist and was interested in why one organization would choose to work exclusively with youth (outside of program staff, artists and partners). As a visual artist I also am particularly intrigued by murals specifically, the organization’s public art medium of choice. Finally, the academic literature concerning murals often suggests that their production can elicit significant intellectual and emotional changes in those participating in creating them, while also opening up opportunities for community change. I was therefore intrigued to learn more about how the principals in one well-known mural arts organization viewed these concerns and whether and how they designed their production processes to address them.

I evaluated one mural project in depth via an analytical case study so as to be able to gain a full picture of the context and targeted community as well as to research the process the nonprofit employed to produce its work. Yin has offered a relevant rationale
for use of case analysis, “The more that your questions seek to explain some present circumstance (e.g., “how” or “why” some social phenomenon works), the more that case study research will be relevant” (Yin, 2014, p. 4). In evaluating Groundswell’s work, I recognized that each mural created is unique in the issues it addresses, the participants and partners involved, and the community within which it is located. I also suspected these factors would influence the overall process Groundswell employs when creating murals. As Yin has observed,

> A case study allows investigators to focus on a “case” and retain a holistic and real-world perspective—such as in studying individual life cycles, small group behavior, organizational and managerial processes, neighborhood change, school performance, international relations, and the maturation of industries (Yin, 2014, p. 4).

In short, I chose the case study method to understand the organization’s mural process holistically and to assess the roles of the youth and stakeholders involved in its fabrication. Finally I recognize that my discoveries from this case study may not be extended to all participants, staff and partners who work with, or for, Groundswell or in community mural making more generally. However this study method allows for a systematic comparison of empirical descriptions and practices to existing theory. In short, while not statistically generalizable, my findings are analytically generalizable and therefore may prove useful to future researchers.

I collected and analyzed three types of data: organizational documents, individual key informant interviews and secondary sources that studied the character, social functions and aesthetics of murals and mural making processes. More specifically, I obtained/evaluated the following paper and web resources for my analysis of Groundswell:

- Groundswell Strategic Plan FY 2014-2017
Together, these sources outlined the overarching mission, values, vision and goals of the nonprofit. They also are an entree into how the organization conducts its work while offering a window into Groundswell’s staff’s beliefs and culture.

In addition to reviewing and analyzing organization documents, I conducted interviews with two staff members, one project artist, three participants in the Coney Island Rising Up project and two employees of the partner organizations involved with that specific mural’s production. I contacted all potential interviewees by email first and followed up, if necessary, by phone. In total I reached out to 11 youth participants, 4 staff members and 2 partner organization representatives.

I traveled to the organization’s office in Brooklyn, NY and met personally with the nonprofit’s staff members, project participants and partners. I recorded all of the interviews I undertook. In addition, I conducted one interview via Skype and one by telephone. I recorded each of these conversations, too. I provided a consent form to each study participant for consideration and signature before conducting the interview and I explained that I would strive to keep their identities confidential as stated in the approved IRB protocol for this effort. I had previously shared the consent form with each interviewee when first scheduling their interviews. The following table outlines the interviewees by pseudonym and organization and/or project role.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Organization/Project role</th>
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The questions I had prepared, organized by interviewee category, appear in Appendix A. I hoped to learn from all of my respondents in their interviews their perceptions of their experiences working for, or with, Groundswell during the creation of a mural project. Based on the literature, I hoped to identify the model or models they employed to conduct this work as well as how they engaged youth and community members throughout the process. I created questions for administrative staff with these concerns in mind. Creating community-based public art requires capturing narrative and story, so I hoped to hear and collect stories from youth respondents concerning why they came to work with Groundswell, what they experienced while engaged in a community creating a mural as well as what they learned and heard from residents about the impacts of Hurricane Sandy, whose devastation had occasioned their particular artistic effort. I was also interested in whether and how learning about those experiences may have shaped or influenced them.

In addition to interviews, I also scanned newspaper clippings concerning Groundswell to develop a better understanding of the art-making nonprofit’s history, preferred production process and perceived project success. These materials appear in the
references. I gathered and compiled the documents while I was in the field. I took field notes during interviews and while visiting the mural site. During the interviews, I took note of the physical environment as well as the gender, race and age of the respondents so as to consider these factors as I pondered our interactions. I also recorded reflections concerning how their responses made me feel as well as what I perceived as their emotional responses to sharing their stories related to the mural project. This helped me to assess more effectively the relative impact their experiences had on them. When visiting the mural, I developed notes about its surrounding physical environment, its location on the wall space it occupies and how the art made me feel when viewing it. I also recorded reactions from passersby.

After collecting data and documents from the field, I transcribed the interviews. Based on the administrative responses and information I obtained from staff and documents, and responses from participating youths, I coded the interview responses into two broad categories. Happily, these coincided with the literature’s discussion of process and product for participating individuals, the collective and the community. I further subdivided responses based on the character of interviewee comments. Below is my coding structure and the chapters in which I discuss relevant analyses.

- Organizational structure and methodology (Chapter 4)
  - History
  - Mission
  - Organization Values
  - Intended Impacts and Outcomes
  - Administrative Structure
  - Programs
  - Capacity Building
  - Broader mural process

- Coney Island Rising Up Project (Chapter 5)
  - Process
    - Impacts on Youth
      - Personal
• Professional
• Democratic
  o Connection with community

• Product
  o Message/purpose
  o Location/physical space

By organizing the information on the basis of the categories and themes I identified, I could more effectively determine the sources of the impacts and outcomes I saw arising in the mural project I studied. I also used these themes as a frame through which to consider the thinking of Groundswell’s leaders about participant agency and community change, in conjunction with what I had already gleaned from the literature concerning these matters and the mural production process.
Chapter 4

A Capsule Portrait of Groundswell

Overview

Groundswell, a nonprofit community arts organization based in New York, creates public art with youths and artists throughout the five boroughs of the City. Since its founding in 1996, the organization has created nearly 500 murals, partnering with more than 300 organizations and groups to create public art that “delights, inspires and invigorates thousands of New Yorkers everyday” (Groundswell, 2012, n. pag.). As the organization’s strategic plan has stated, “In partnership with community organizations, neighborhood groups, and public agencies, we bring collective voice to such issues as social justice, women’s leadership, male identity, labor history, and gun violence, among others” (Groundswell Strategic Plan, 2013, p. 3).

The story of Groundswell began with a single project led by founding Executive Director, Amy Sananman. Before establishing Groundswell, Sananman, obtained her graduate degree in public policy, and worked as a tenant organizer at the Urban Homesteading Assistance Board in New York City. She “primarily worked evenings and weekends helping renters turn their city-owned buildings into tenant owned co-ops” (Braun-Reinitz and Weissman, 2009, p.152). In 1995, she reached out to Joe Matunis, lead artist of Los Muralistas de El Puente (The Muralists of the Bridge, in Brooklyn), an inter-generational artist collective within El Puente Academy, “a community human rights institution that promotes leadership for peace and justice through the engagement of members (youth and adult) in the arts, scientific research and environmental action” (El Puente Leaders for Peace and Justice, n.d.). Sanaman and Matunis worked to create a
mural with teenagers that depicted their struggles as Mexican immigrants in the United States, “Months of meetings between Sananman, Matunis and kids from the Richardson Street building eventually led to planning for, and the creation of, a mural called ‘The Golden Birdcage’ on a wall at the Shufra Chocolate Factory” (Bader, 2012, n. pag.). The final mural addressed “the complex sacrifices made by immigrant parents leaving their homeland to improve life for their children” (Groundswell, 2012, n. pag.).

The success of the process used to create The Golden Birdcage encouraged Sananman to bring together a group of artists, educators and activists that shared a belief that “collaborative art-making combines the sanctity of personal expression with the strength of community activism” (Groundswell, 2012, n. pag.). As Braun-Reinitz and Weissman have noted, “Sensing that a new organization could make valuable
contributions to the city’s mural tradition while meeting specific civic and economic goals, she [Sananman] founded Groundswell” (Braun-Reinitz and Weissman, 2009, p. 153). Incorporating in 1998, Groundswell worked primarily project-to-project until the organization was able to hire staff and acquire office space in 2003.

The current mission of the nonprofit is “to bring together youth, artists and community partners to make public art that advances social change, for a more just and equitable world” (Groundswell Strategic Plan, 2013, p. 3). Groundswell derives its understanding of a more “just and equitable world from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, “which recognizes the dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family as the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world” (Groundswell Strategic Plan, 2013, p. 20).

Groundswell’s fundamental values include encouraging creativity, critical thinking, collaboration and compassion. The Partnership for 21st Century Skills, a public-private partnership organization founded in 2002 that builds collaborative partnerships, “to position 21st century readiness at the center of U.S. K-12 education, (p.21.org, n.d.), published a report in 2006 on the findings of a survey of leaders of Fortune 500 Companies concerning the behaviors and skills that are necessary for this century’s workforce. Groundswell has drawn on this group’s effort in its own strategic plan, “To equip our youth for leadership we have pulled four of these skills – and codified them as The 4Cs;

**Creativity as a Tool:** We believe in the right to fulfill our human potential. Each of us is entitled to the right to develop our creativity, artistic skills, and intellect. At Groundswell, we ask participants to offer creative solutions and to compromise in resolving differences of opinion. We invite participants to remain open to the unexpected possibilities of collaborative art, keeping in mind that what we leave behind inspires others through its beauty and its message.
Collaboration: A sense of community is inherent in Groundswell’s mission, energizing our work and raising our humanity. We ask our participants to encourage the group’s sense of community by contributing ideas and working together to accomplish a common goal. Each participant has a right to express his or her ideas and feelings and is expected to show respect in how they criticize or disagree. Participants also show respect by paying attention, asking questions, arriving on time and honoring people’s painting space.

Critical Thinking: The Groundswell process encourages youth to make informed decisions and develop solutions through research, analysis and discussion. We ask participants to express their unique perspectives and to raise questions through artwork, writing and voice.

Compassion: We believe that people flourish in a spiritually and physically safe and compassionate space. We believe that we learn best through teaching and encouragement, not through intimidation. We expect participants to practice empathy for the feelings and situations of others. This empathy includes the connection between self and community, resulting in the desire to act (Groundswell Strategic Plan, 2013, p. 20).

Staff member A informed me in an interview that Groundswell works to achieve both individual and collective impact. As the organization’s current strategic plan, for fiscal years 2014-2017, has outlined, “Our aspiration at Groundswell is to offer inspiration, tools and agency to participants, partners and passersby” (Groundswell Strategic Plan, 2013, p. 9). The strategic plan articulates Groundswell’s understanding of these terms,

We think of inspiration as that spark, or aha! moment when an artist, youth, community partner or neighborhood resident feels a new connection, sees new potential, looks at a problem in a new way or decides to get involved. We think of tools as skills acquired through Groundswell programs and projects. We define agency as the ability to make change toward personal or collective goals. This belief—I can make it happen—results from the inspiration and tools acquired through our programs (Groundswell Strategic Plan, 2013, p. 9).

The organization’s members collectively believe that “art creates community and community creates change,” which informs their understanding of their work’s broader impacts. To achieve collective influence Groundswell breaks this aphorism down, as a
practical matter, into three targeted areas, youth development, community-building and public art (Groundswell Strategic Plan, 2013, p. 6). To secure youth development,

Groundswell targets New York City youth ages 14-18 who are underserved (by cultural and youth development programs), marginalized (due to their current or prior court-involvement, educational, foster care or other status), and/or economically disadvantaged. We target youth from the communities where we develop our projects (Groundswell Strategic Plan, 2013, p. 9-10).

Groundswell’s public documents emphasize that while the nonprofit provides opportunities for all students regardless of artistic ability or background, their programs offer additional opportunities for youths to pursue artistic practice specifically.

To create outcomes at the community level, “Groundswell engages partners that can leverage our art-making process and that share our vision of a more just, equitable world. We work with nonprofits, schools and government agencies that serve underserved, marginalized, and/or economically disadvantaged communities” (Groundswell Strategic Plan, 2013, p. 10). Staff member A described the reason why partners work with Groundswell, “It might be to beautify a space, it might be to build a constituent base, it might be to raise awareness about something, it might be to change how people feel about their neighborhood or affirm how they feel about their neighborhood, it might be to build capacity within their organization” (Personal interview, 2/5/2014).

Groundswell maintains that public art enhances neighborhoods and is an essential part of community building. The organization targets locations in the City where little or no investment in public art has occurred. The organization’s murals,

Highlight social justice issues, increase community awareness, promote civic engagement, and facilitate social justice. The visual landscapes generated by Groundswell youth and artists reflect our core values and the concerns of our
community partners. The result is collaborative, relevant, aesthetically
distinguished works of public art (Groundswell Strategic Plan, 2013, p. 10).

The nonprofit has distinct vision statements for each of its three targeted
dimensions of work. Groundswell’s vision of youth development “is to engage
underserved, marginalized and economically disadvantaged youth in public art-making to
gain the inspiration, tools and agency to take ownership of their futures” (Groundswell
Strategic Plan, 2013, p. 6). The staff’s vision of community change is “to encourage
dialogue and activism, in partnership with organizations that share their values and
aspirations” (Groundswell Strategic Plan, 2013, p. 3). Finally, the institution’s vision for
public art is, “to link personal expression to community activism, resulting in high quality
work that conveys compelling messages about the concerns of our participants and
partners” (Groundswell Strategic Plan, 2013, p. 6).

Groundswell currently employs seven full-time staff members and 22 artists. The
board of directors is comprised of 12 members with the expertise and backgrounds
outlined below. The organization’s staff positions and their roles and responsibilities
include:

• **Executive Director**: Overall responsibility for all Groundswell programs and
  employees, budget, insurance, funders and publicity.

• **Program Director**: Supervises artists and project progress at all job sites.
  Responsible for communicating and negotiating with all Community Partners.
  Directs and supervises the Program Associate and Assistants. Organizes Artistic
  Advisory Committee, dedications and scaffolding. Manages project budgets.
  Responsible for dealing with level three disciplinary issues.

• **Project Manager**: Responsible for coordinating the ordering and delivering of all
  supplies to job sites, coordinating volunteers, manages level two disciplinary
  issues, youth timesheets, and pre and post evaluations

• **Youth Advocate**: Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) Liaison.
  Responsible for checking in with youth to provide socio-emotional, educational,
  and career development support offering social service referrals and resources.

• **Director of Development & Communications**: Responsible for coordinating
  press releases, and media interests and funder site visits. Documentation of
project activities with support from Development & Communications Associate and Interns.

- **Development & Communications Associate**: Assist Director of Development & Communications
- **Office Manager**: Responsible for administrative and operations support.
- **Program Interns**: Assist Program Director and Manager
- **Lead Artist**: Responsible for preparing the Work Plan and executing the plan for engaging Youth Workers in researching and learning about the theme and community partner. Plans visual literacy exercises to come up with ideas and concepts for murals as well as provides training for Youth Workers in the skills required to execute the project design. Also responsible for creating a cohesive design based on collaborative research and brainstorming.
- **Assistant Artist**: Works closely with the Lead Artist in implementing the Work Plan, planning the logistics and the day-to-day activities of projects, and is responsible for keeping youth on assigned tasks, and making sure that the youth timesheets are correctly filled out and turned in on time and keeping the work site organized and safe.
- **Experienced Youth Workers**: Experienced Youth Workers should be assigned tasks that will build on their skills and knowledge of working on a mural project and given the responsibility of assisting New Workers in acquiring skills and knowledge of Groundswell mural making.
- **New Youth Workers**: New Workers will be trained in the basics of Groundswell mural making (Groundswell Roles and Responsibilities, 2013, n. pag.).

Collectively, the members of Groundswell’s board of directors represent the following areas of expertise:

- Finance
- Media production and distribution
- Past participation in Groundswell programs
- Artistry
- Writing and publishing
- Nonprofit law and litigation
- Leadership
- Gender equity and social justice
- Arts development
- Marketing
- Business administration
- Real estate development
- Environmental education and art
- Music, television and new media litigation (Groundswell, 2012, n.pag.)

To be hired as a Groundswell artist, applicants must possess a minimum of a Bachelor’s degree in Fine Arts. Staff member A described the criteria Groundswell staff seek in prospects as follows,
We only take 5-10 new artists a year. All the artists have to start as assistants. We have a pretty rigorous application and interview process. And once we've selected artists, then they have to go through a one-day training with us and they have to work as an assistant until we feel they are ready to lead a project. All our projects have an assistant and a lead artist. Even if it's a very experienced artist, if they haven’t worked here before then they have to start as an assistant and then maybe after one project they'll be ready to lead. Then there are other folks that are earlier in their practice and so they are assistants for years. They have to have their own studio practice and really have a point of view with their own body of work, we don't teach that. Obviously they have to have a strong interest and skill in working with young people (Personal interview, 2/5/2014).

As outlined above, the literature offers a range of models or ways in which artists may facilitate participatory mural projects. Groundswell’s approach accords with Krensky and Steffen’s (2009) methodology, in which a professional artist provides expert guidance to a collaborative process. As staff member C, a lead artist, observed, “I try to stay away from their creative process, and my role in the end as the artist is to take the ideas that clearly they felt are really important and have to be represented, and place them in a very cohesive design” (Personal interview, 2/2/2014).

**Organization Programs**

Groundswell operates a number of programs for youths, primarily aged 14-21 that involve public art projects. The organization’s flagship is the Summer Leadership Institute (SLI), a summer job-training program for up to 100 participants. SLI is a Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) offered by the New York City Department of Youth and Community Development. The City’s goal for SYEP is, “to provide New York City youths ages 14-24 with paid summer employment for up to six weeks in July and August” (http://www.nyc.gov/html/dyed/html/jobs/syep.shtml). Teams of young people spend seven weeks working with professional artists and community-based
organizations during SLI, learning job skills and creating public art for neighborhoods (Groundswell, 2012, n. pag.).

Groundswell offers Voices Her’d as a young women’s leadership development afterschool program in the spring that culminates with an SLI program experience during the summer. Participants examine issues that women and girls face and subsequently choose a topic pertaining to those concerns, for a mural project.

Groundswell’s leadership development program for young men is called Making His’tory. The program, targeted to individuals who have been involved with the juvenile justice system, begins in the spring as an afterschool program and continues as an SLI experience in the summer.

The nonprofit’s Teen Empowerment Mural Apprenticeship (TEMA) involves two teams of teen artists in an afterschool program that meets weekly throughout the school year to create art for community-based organizations.

Turnstyle is an alternative detention program for youths with minor offenses, such as vandalism, fare evasion and truancy that is focused on accountability and skill building. The New York City Department of Probation, the New York State Office of Children and Family Services and the Center for Court Innovation assign young people to this Groundswell program. Turnstyle graduates may go on to Segue, which provides an opportunity for youths to develop the art skills needed to participate in Groundswell’s afterschool and summer programs.

The nonprofit also provides a pre-professional training opportunity called Portfolio Development (PD), a capstone for the organization’s other youth programs.
Students participating in PD work with professional artists to develop a representative sample of their work for college fine arts degree program applications and scholarships.

Groundswell also partners with K-12 schools throughout New York City to “integrate the visual arts into the academic curriculum. Each school partnership culminates in a public art project that reflects the school’s mission and furthers its educational objectives” (Groundswell, 2012, n. pag.). These ventures can be integrated into the school day or may take place after school.

Finally, the nonprofit conducts a number of special initiatives. One of these is a mural residency for incarcerated youth. In this program, Groundswell artists work onsite in juvenile detention facilities. Additionally, the arts organization works with the NYC Department of Transportation and its Office of Education and Outreach to create original traffic safety signs, “These young people explore traffic conditions on streets adjacent to their school and then create a personalized safety message for pedestrians and motorists. A selection of signs designed collaboratively by the students are fabricated by the DOT sign shop and temporarily installed in local locations identified by the students” (Groundswell, 2012, n. pag.).

Distinctively, all Groundswell programs offer participating youths stipends and/or employment wages depending on the initiative in which they are engaged. As Staff member A observed in our interview,

For our summer program, kids need summer jobs so it’s a summer jobs program. But they’re not paid to do a program, they’re paid because we are being commissioned to do a piece of work. […] That payment is important, one-because that is the framework of what they’re doing, and two- it’s to value the work, and three- the kids that we work with need to get paid in the summer (Personal interview, 2/5/2014).
Staff member B also underscored this point, “It’s reinforcing the fact that artists should get paid. It’s a legitimate job” (Personal interview, 2/6/2014).

Participating youths receive stipends for the afterschool apprenticeship programs in which they engage. As Staff member A described the efforts, “Our afterschool programs generate public art, also kids get stipends, because we were commissioned by someone to do a mural and we are recognizing the work that they are doing to generate that project. It’s an apprenticeship” (Personal interview, 2/5/2014). Staff member A also suggested that the portfolio development program provides a stipend for art supplies. The court mandated or detention-based and school-based programs do not, however, offer compensation or stipends. After successfully satisfying the requirements of these training opportunities, individuals may apply to participate in a core program that offers compensation.

Youth development, especially in leadership and art mastery, is a common aim across all of Groundswell’s programs. Participants declare a mastery area and undertake capacity building exercises that award them with “pins,” similar to the structure of Girl or Boy Scout badges. Pins symbolically represent youths’ command of specific capacities, which the organization refers to as “tools.” The 4C’s, Groundswell’s core values, thread across all of these individual capabilities or capacities. The organization provides a matrix depicting the relationship of each guiding core value to each individual exercise and pin. The pins that youths may pursue in the Leadership Mastery area are included in Figure 1.
The art mastery area is a specialized track for young people who intend to develop capacities in art. The Portfolio mastery program is for individuals who wish to pursue a Bachelor’s of Fine Art degree. According to Staff member B, this capacity building program is, “like an extension of art mastery, we have a portfolio class that’s year round, and those are for youth who want to go to art school. So in taking portfolio they’re doing the same pins, but it’s a little more rigorous and a lot more focused on helping them get
their portfolio together” (Personal interview, 2/6/2014). The pins for both the art and portfolio mastery programs are included in Figure 2.

### Figure 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pin</th>
<th>Core Value Addressed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>History of public art in the United States</td>
<td>Creativity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication skills</td>
<td>Collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual Literacy</td>
<td>Critical Thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountability</td>
<td>Compassion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Studio Foundation</td>
<td>Collaboration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Drawing</td>
<td>Critical Thinking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Painting</td>
<td>Creativity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision</td>
<td>Compassion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research</td>
<td>Critical Thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept</td>
<td>Creativity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persuasion</td>
<td>Not Specified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media Literacy</td>
<td>Not specified</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Staff member B, obtaining the first four pins or tools, which span all mastery areas, is mandatory for all of those participating, “That’s visual literacy, history of public art, accountability, and communication. Everyone has to do those, and then you can decide to continue on […] and you would either do the leadership [area] or the art mastery [area]” (Personal interview, 2/6/2014). Staff member B noted, too, that, “all the pins related to that [mastery area] are really focused on activating and cultivating
whatever that big picture skill is. So the leadership pin culminates with an internship in
our office or with the art mastery it’s to be an apprentice on one of our mural projects”
(Personal interview, 2/6/2014).

Groundswell conducts pre-and post-program evaluations of its participants using
a survey questionnaire at the beginning and end of every program. According to staff
member B, “it’s just a matter of gauging where they started and where they end up. So
it’s another way of gauging like, ‘so I learned, you know, when I came here I wasn't that
comfortable working with other teams and by the end of the project, I was comfortable’”
(Personal interview, 2/6/2014). The pre-program evaluation asks participants to rate on a
perceptual thermometer scale of 1 to 4—1 being not comfortable and 4 being very
comfortable—how they feel about creative brainstorming activities, communication,
working with other creative individuals and communities, their preparation for school and
work and if they have worked with Groundswell before.

Youths completing the post-program evaluation survey address similar questions,
but that form also specifically offers space for participants to record their experiences
creating a mural, their perceptions of how it will help the local community and their
views about whether and how involvement with the project has furthered their personal
development and if they have any ideas to improve the learning/mentoring process for the
organization.

The Mural Making Process

While the impetus for bringing artists, teens, community organizations and
funders together varies, the steps in the collaborative mural-making process are the same
across all Groundswell projects. The nonprofit’s overall approach aligns with the
collective youth mural model outlined by Cockcroft, Weber and Cockcroft, “A collective youth mural is not only executed, but also conceived and designed by a group of nonprofessional young people. The role of the artist in charge is that of facilitator, whose skills and knowledge enable the group to carry out their own ideas” (1998, p. 115).

Before the mural making process can begin, the art nonprofit’s staff work to secure funding and to identify a community partner(s) and wall space. To begin the process of creating the mural, the participating group must identify its theme and goals clearly. According to Staff member A, the community partner will have a goal(s) for the project, “So they're going to have the education goal or a raise awareness goal, or a beautification goal, and then they’re going to generally set the theme” (Personal interview, 2/6/14). In addition, the Groundswell program staff members undertaking the work will have objectives. For example, the Voices Her’d program leaders encourage exploration of issues from women’s perspectives, or as Staff member C observed, “normally we deal with issues that are pertaining only to women, and particularly teenage girls” (Personal interview, 2/2/2014). Ultimately, as Staff member A noted in an interview with me, “so the goals of the mural project are really developed by us in partnership with the community partner” (Personal interview, 2/5/2014).

The youths also undergo basic theoretical art training,

I always show them a very detailed power point on what mural making is and what murals are in general and that includes a very thorough art historical lecture. Afterwards we talk about different types of techniques and how psychology of color or just the color might affect someone’s mindset or thinking or perception of the space. We talk a lot about architecture; we talk about urbanism in the early phases of a project especially (Personal interview, Staff member C, 2/2/2014).

Following this step, participating youth artists undertake intensive research, guided by goals established jointly with the community partner. Staff member A stated in
an interview for this study, “So if they [the community partner] are saying this should be around climate change, then we are like, ‘Alright, well who should the kids be meeting with to learn about climate change?’” (Personal Interview, 2/5/2014). During the research phase, the project team interviews community residents and issue experts. Staff member C described the process,

The community partner comes to Groundswell or we go and visit them and they speak to us about how they feel and why they’ve chosen us to do this project with them. So it gives the students a chance to meet the person and that’s the moment they realize, ‘Okay, this is a job, I’m getting paid, so its really serious, and I’m going to do something amazing. This is a big, big deal’ (Personal interview, 2/2/2014).

After meeting with the community partner, the youths go to the place where the mural will be installed. Staff member C described this step this way, “Once that (partner visit) is done and we have an idea in mind we go out in to the community and ask the people at least 5-10 questions that can help us guide our project” (Personal interview, Staff member C, 2/2/2014).

Following the research stage, artists and participants together begin the conceptual and design stage of creating the mural. Staff member C described this period saying,

Once we have all of their interviews, we actually will take that to our Groundswell studio and we just talk about different ideas and we start creating charts and we draw on the walls and we make huge collages, we cut magazines and we paste them together we put things that shouldn’t belong together … all types of brainstorming ideas … (Personal interview, 2/2/2014).

Artists and youths work together to create a shared vision for the mural. Staff member C commented on this phase of the process, “at that point there is a lot of collaborative effort, students start working first on small, individual sketches, then they make paintings and then they play with different materials, like collage” (Personal
Following this initial skill development and brainstorming stage of the design period, the youth artists develop multiple concepts of possible murals to present to their community partners. Staff member C described this phase this way, “We ask them, ‘Do you think the direction we are going in fits your concept?’ and then depending on what they choose, then we take that and we continue working on the details” (Personal interview, 2/2/2014).

The lead and assistant artists seek throughout the project planning process to ensure the final mural has artistic integrity while preserving the contributions of individual team members (Groundswell, 2012, n. pag.). Once the design has been developed, participating teens share their work with community members and other key stakeholders for feedback. Following this public input, the group revises its design to reflect those comments. The final stage of mural making includes fabrication, during which the young people involved gain additional experience and develop more insights into the art-making process. The organization creates murals by directly painting on walls or on parachute cloth. Parachute cloth allows teams to create an entire mural at the Groundswell studio and subsequently install the piece on its designated site. According to Staffer B, using this media provides the team with more security against weather conditions. Finally, all of Groundswell’s mural creation efforts conclude with a celebratory public dedication of each completed piece. That gathering always includes staff members, youth, community partners and directly affected residents.
Chapter 5

The Coney Island Rising Up Mural Project and Findings

Hurricane Sandy

On October 29, 2012, Category 2 Hurricane Sandy hit New York City directly flooding and destroying streets, businesses and homes,

Its cyclone winds extended 175 miles from the storm’s eye, and ripple effects from a post-tropical nor’easter were felt across the entirety of New York, all the way to the Great Lakes. Swooping and lunging into New York harbor with a peak wave of 32.5 feet, the storm crashed over the protective seawall at Battery Park City (Otis, 2013, n. pag.).

The peak wave sent surges 14 feet high directly into the city’s subway system, filling the Hugh Cary Tunnel to Brooklyn.

Overall, the devastating conditions extended across Staten Island, Coney Island, the Rockaways and Long Island, “Spouting floodwaters turned iconic boardwalks into matchsticks, upended historic amusement park rides and trapped thousands in attics, on roofs or on upper floors — particularly the elderly and those living in projects” (Otis, 2013, n. pag.). By sunrise on October 30, 50 million people from Haiti to Rhode Island were without power as a direct result of Sandy’s high winds and drenching rain (Otis, 2013, n. pag.). Many deaths resulted from drowning and electrocution. Sandy left as many as 3,000 New Yorkers with homes too damaged to allow them to return and therefore in need of emergency shelter and, “some 80,000 tenants in New York City Housing Authority projects in Lower Manhattan, Coney Island and Far Rockaway without basic services” (Otis, 2013, n. pag.). Authorities estimated the cost of recovery from the storm would total $65 billion, affecting about 60 million people across all states in its path, “New York City, like storm-ravaged communities up and down the coast,
limped its way back to a semblance of its former self in the weeks and months that followed Sandy, although for many families and neighborhoods, life was forever altered” (Otis, 2013, n. pag.).

**Recovery Diaspora**

Groundswell staff and artists involved with the Summer Leadership Institute program in 2013 decided to address Hurricane Sandy as their theme. More than 100 youths involved in the program created a total of five murals in the communities of Coney Island, Red Hook, Staten Island and the Rockaways. As a group, Groundswell titled the works, Recovery Diaspora. The nonprofit described its effort this way, “As a response to the devastation caused by Hurricane Sandy, teen artists drew from stories of healing and recovery to create a visual narrative that captures the concerns, hopes, and overall spirit of these communities” (Groundswell, 2012, n. pag.). The murals and their respective community locations are listed below, followed by photographs of the murals.

- You Can Take Our Homes But You Can’t Take Our Hearts
- Rebound and Rebuild
- We Rose Above the Challenge
- Coney Island Rising Up
- Recovery Diaspora
You Can Take Our Homes But You Can’t Take Our Hearts
12 x 17 ft, Acrylic on Parachute Cloth - Staten Island, NY, 2013

Rebound and Rebuild
8 x 8 ft, Acrylic on Canvas - Red Hook, NY, 2013
We Rose Above the Challenge
35 x 5 ft, Acrylic on Parachute Cloth – Far Rockaway, NY, 2013

Coney Island Rising Up
7 x 20 ft, Acrylic on Parachute Cloth – Coney Island, NY, 2013
Coney Island Rising Up

Coney Island Rising Up was one of two murals created by the Voices Her’d program during the 2013 Summer Leadership Institute (SLI). According to Staff member C, the Voices Her’d program in particular operated differently than it had in the past in developing its mural concerning Hurricane Sandy,

Normally we work with a really prominent and important topic that is pertaining to female students or girls but this time we felt that this was just such a huge problem in New York. Everyone was really devastated and we had a lot of students affected, so we thought that it might just really be the right topic. [...] We also looked at the way women would be affected (Personal interview, 2/2/2014).

The following sections apply the themes identified in my coding of the interviews I transcribed to illuminate and investigate those aspects of the process and product that
appeared to foster agency in the youths who participated in crafting Coney Island Rising Up, while also producing social impacts.

The youth artists reported three sorts of impacts as arising from their involvement in the Coney Island mural project, which I characterize as personal, professional and democratic. I organize the findings from the interviews based on these categories in the following sections, however some responses could be included in more than one.

**Personal Abilities**

The youths I interviewed had different motivations for becoming involved with Groundswell in the summer of 2013. While Youth C had experience working with the nonprofit on other projects, Youths A and B were new to the organization. All three of the young people were motivated, in part, by the employment opportunity Groundswell
offered as a function of SLI as well as by the organization’s mission to create art for social change. As Youth B indicated, “I was looking for a summer job and my pastor suggested a program called Groundswell. [...] From what I heard about the previous projects they always come together to make art pieces that make statements” (Personal interview, 2/7/2014). Youth A shared the following story with me in an interview, “I found out about Groundswell through one of my aunts. Basically she was like, ‘There’s this program that you get to paint murals, and they pay you and it has to do with social justice,’ and I was like, ‘Sign me up!’” (Personal interview, 2/9/2014) Youth C had worked for Groundswell previously and, believing wholeheartedly in its mission, had sought out the opportunity to work for the arts nonprofit again in the 2013 SLI session.

Creating a mural about Hurricane Sandy had unique individual as well as collective personal impacts on the youth I interviewed. Youth B in particular came from a community that had been hard hit by the storm. Youths A and C did not have first-hand physical experiences with the storm’s devastation, but nonetheless had been personally touched by Sandy through their relationships with others, “I was affected through other people. To see their struggling and what they had to go through” (Personal interview, Youth C, 2/13/2014). The youth conducted interviews with community members while engaged in research to produce the mural and Groundswell staff tasked them with collecting stories and information about the impact of Sandy on Coney Island’s residents. Youth B recollected,

So the mural was for Sandy victims and I was a Sandy victim. [...] I live exactly by the water; the bay is my back yard. My family decided not to evacuate, and it was just really scary being in the house and you didn't know what would happen and the lights were off. And so when we went to Coney Island, I could relate to the stories that were happening, like when you see your neighborhood in just utter destruction, it’s a sadness that comes over you (Personal interview, 2/7/2014).
The Coney Island mural served an educational purpose for participating youths regarding the storm’s impacts. This finding echoes David Conrad’s contention, “Murals also educate those who view and participate in them” (1995, p.100). Collectively, the youths heard the residents of Coney Island describe the destructive impact of Hurricane Sandy on their community as well as argue that they had not received sufficient public support. Youth C reflected “I wasn't aware how bad the Sandy storm was until I started actually working on it and talking to the community members and going out there seeing things myself” (Personal interview, 2/13/2014). She further reflected,

I think the greatest part was actually visiting Coney Island and being on that boardwalk and seeing what was destroyed, actually being there and just to imagine and visualize how it was when the storm hit, because Coney Island does hold a lot of history, its been there for a century, like 100 years, and just to see it all swept away or some parts of the boardwalk not restored…really hit us (Personal interview, 2/13/2014).

Professional Capabilities and Awareness

Working with Groundswell provided opportunities for participants to develop their artistic capabilities. Young people involved in every Groundswell project are taught a set of basic art skills in order to conceptualize and fabricate a mural successfully. Depending on their existing level of art experience the youth with whom I spoke felt their skills had advanced in different areas. Youth B did not have prior art experience before working with Groundswell and recalled, “just incorporating words with pictures, it helped me with that; just basic drawing skills actually” (Personal interview, 2/7/2014). Youth A had taken painting classes and considered herself an artist. She suggested to me that working on the mural represented an opportunity to practice and obtain feedback (Personal interview, 2/9/2014). Youth C had previously worked with Groundswell and
also considered herself an artist. She discussed her appreciation for the amount of time and energy artists put into their work. She was grateful for having worked with Groundswell to complete a number of projects and thereby getting a chance to learn the basics of art (Personal interview, 2/13/2014).

The mural-making experience influenced participating youths’ academic and career goals differently. Their views appear to have been shaped by their personal goals before working with the nonprofit, their existing interest in art and the skills they developed and the community experiences to which they were exposed while a part of Voices Her’d. Youth C, currently pursuing higher education, is working to integrate art and design into her studies. In her interview with me she attributed this interest directly to working with Groundswell (Personal interview, 2/13/2014). Groundswell was Youth B’s first job. She described her experience as helping her develop a measure of professionalism, “I don't really call myself an artist. But I think working here, since it was like my first real job, it taught me the basics that you need for working and […] also how to be professional, like I learned that at home, but when I came here I had to put it into action” (Personal interview, 2/7/2014). While she has multiple career goals, Youth A noted that her experience with Groundswell had shaped her ideas about pursuing art,

I definitely want to pursue art, like actually when I grow up I want to be a teaching artist. […] The teaching artist was definitely influenced by them [Groundswell] because that is what she [the artist on the project] does, she is a teaching artist, and I was like, ‘That's what I want to do,’ because I was like, ‘I want to teach, but I also want to practice art’ (Personal interview, 2/9/2014).

On top of the art skills acquired, Youths A and B also suggested they had more confidence in their public speaking skills as a result of working in Voices Her’d (Personal interviews, 2/7/2014 and 2/9/2014).
Democratic Capacities

As mentioned above in the literature review, David Conrad has captured well the democratic nature of a community mural making process by stating that the artists and their mural product, “exemplify respect for people, respect for themselves and respect for art in their murals. [...] They involve others in the art process and strive for unity and cohesion in visual expression” (1995, p. 102). Youth reactions and responses to a collaborative working environment varied across the interviewees. Youth B observed, for example, “You had to learn early on that just because you don't like someone doesn't mean you can't work with them, and just because you don't like someone doesn't mean that their ideas aren’t valid” (Personal interview, 2/7/2014). Youth C discussed how she felt she learned the value of teamwork as a result of participating in the project (Personal Interview, 2/13/2014). Youth A in particular recalled an exercise led by Groundswell staff in which participants were asked to share something that upset them, which facilitated the feeling of having a safe space to share emotions and talk while recounting differing experiences and articulating disparate views. In reflecting on this encounter, Youth A observed, “I find it easier to talk to people that have a different point of view [...] after having conversations with people that do not agree with me or have different life experiences, it’s just easier, like connecting with people. I feel like I grew in that way” (Personal interview, 2/9/2014). Michael Mosher has described this result as a democratic outcome of community making,

These artists draw inspired solutions out of their own expertise, the team processes they developed, and the cultural flowering of many peoples. The collective accomplishment feels good, but most importantly, it nurtures
community as it creates awareness that by working together a significant project can be accomplished (2004, p. 536).

The youths also demonstrated their ability to think critically about the impacts of Hurricane Sandy on the Coney Island community. Youth A described her experiences of grappling with the gendered impacts of the storm, “[We looked at] the stuff that specifically affected women—there was a lot of sexual assault in the buildings” (Personal interview, 2/9/2014). Youth C also shared insights concerning media coverage of the storm,

Just a lot of things were going on in Coney Island that the media didn't really bring to light because I guess it wasn't ... Coney Island is kind of a predominantly, I don't want to say poor area, but it's not as rich as New Jersey, so they didn’t get as much help as they should have and that was really important to paint about them and give them a voice and let them be noticed (Personal interview, 2/13/2014).

Overall, the organization encouraged agency in youth by providing opportunities and skills training for personal and professional reflection and growth as well as democratic engagement. The participating young people with whom I spoke were all motivated by the employment opportunity Groundswell offered as well as by their interest in working with an organization that seeks to create art to foster social change. Involvement with Groundswell in and of itself provided a means for the program participants to gain experience in being held to professional standards and accountable for both their workplace behaviors and their outcomes. They gained art skills and experience in working in a collaborative environment with each other and with project partners and community members. In conjunction with work-related expectations and capacities, they all obtained a basic set of art skills as well as additional opportunities to explore critical and creative thinking, empathy, acceptance and open-mindedness.
Connect with Community

The Coney Island mural project had two community partners. Partner 1 was a representative of a nonprofit organization that works to help low-income New York City neighborhoods become healthy communities of choice by providing technical and financial assistance. The other collaborator, Partner 2, works for a nonprofit community development corporation dedicated to providing affordable housing, commercial revitalization and improving the quality of life in the Coney Island community. Partner 1’s role in the mural project was to contribute direct financial support for the Coney Island Rising Up development process. According to Partner 1, “we provided grant support, to allow Groundswell to do their work and do their summer program” (Personal interview, 2/10/2014).

Partner 1 saw the project as increasing awareness of the work of the local community development organization, in this case, the efforts of Partner 2, in the Coney Island area. Partner 1 reported that her organization leaders also anticipated stimulating a modicum of hope in the community while also, as a practical matter, locating a space that could use “some lifting up in itself to provide visuals and art in the neighborhood” (Personal interview, 2/10/2014). Finally, Partner 1 indicated part of her community organization’s mission is developing at-risk youth, so supporting Groundswell’s process allowed it to further its own goals.

Partner 2, who worked with community members during the recovery period, described Hurricane Sandy’s impacts, observing,

Every single store on Mermaid Avenue was totally blown away. I mean our office was a total mess. We had to work out of a trailer for months. Sandy brought together people even more than ever and it was neighbor helping neighbor. Because, people, like old people and handicapped people were stranded up in the
apartments, and nothing was running, so they couldn’t go down the steps. And neighbors would go and visit them, and some needed medication, luckily the pharmacy was open but nothing was there on Mermaid Avenue. Except for the bodegas, which opened like the next day because they didn’t tear their walls down and clean out the mold. There was one story about a woman who went out to buy eggs after Sandy, and the watermarks were still on the eggs. But, otherwise, everything was shut down for months, until everything was ripped down, the mold was scraped off and everything re-built (Personal interview, 2/5/2014).

After being engaged by Groundswell to work on the project, Partner 2’s immediate role was to contribute on-the-ground community resource development, such as securing wall space for the mural. Partner 2 also contributed to crafting the mural’s message. In describing this phase of the process, the liaison stated,

So we were kicking around ideas. And at first they were thinking more of the amusement area, because tourists will come to the amusement park, and the boardwalk, and the beach. [...] So, when I started talking to the people at Groundswell I said no, we don’t want to, it’s enough about the amusement park, we should have a mural about the people, and the residents of Coney Island, in a positive light. And, then it evolved more into, you know after Sandy hit how everybody came together- the positive side of the residents here, that isn’t publicized. It’s a very tight knit community (Personal interview, 2/5/2014).

Partner 2 also recalled that many of the murals found across Coney Island are a reaction to the deaths of young people by gun and gang violence. As he elaborated, “so the way the mural evolved was showing the togetherness of people” (Personal interview, 2/5/2014).

According to Groundswell staff I interviewed, the project and youth artists engaged the broader Coney Island community at multiple points in the mural production process. During the research phase, young people visited local businesses along Mermaid Avenue. As staff member C described it, “There was a pharmacy, there was a bakery, and they walked in and the lady started crying, but basically local businesses seemed like a good way to start, because they are there quite permanently and…generally had people walking by” (Personal interview, 2/2/2014).
Youth A also shared a story in an interview with me reflecting on her engagement with community members,

We went to this meat market, I'm a vegan, but I wanted to hear the woman's story, and so we went inside and asked her all the questions and she was tearing up—she was a first time business owner. She invested her whole life savings in to this business, it was so fancy, she showed us pictures and then she literally finished it the day before Hurricane Sandy, and she was on Coney Island so it just destroyed her whole shop. The basement was flooded; there were sharks in her basement. It was so upsetting. She was like, ‘This is my life; this is what I've been working up to and all of a sudden it’s over.’ And basically, whoever, it was some kind of government program that gave her a loan, but then it’s so much money that she has to pay back, and she said with her salary there is no way that she would be able to pay it all in one time, so it’s probably going to take her like 15 years and then it’s with interest, so now because of Hurricane Sandy she has to pay more (Personal interview, 2/9/2014).

Another issue that arose out of the interviews the youths conducted concerning the impacts of the storm, as noted above, was increased awareness of sexual assault that had occurred during the storm. According to Youth A, “There was a lot of sexual assault in the buildings. Because people would be going to, like, get help and nobody was outside, we heard four stories of that” (Personal interview, 2/9/2014). Youth B reflected on other issues that arose in the interviews, “we also talked to the gardeners in the area, how they had to replant things and the garden is a community garden so it benefits everybody, so its destruction affected a lot of people in the neighborhood” (Personal interview, 2/13/2014). Youth A observed that many community members were eager to share their stories and experiences arising from the storm, “a lot of people were like, ‘our stories are not being heard, nobody is asking us,’ and they were so thirsty to tell us, everything about their experiences because nobody was asking them” (Personal interview, 2/9/2014).
During the fabrication phase of producing the mural, youths also reached out to community residents in the streets. Young artists stood along the thoroughfares with an image of the mural concept, seeking input from individuals as they passed. Youth A recalled, “We just stood there and were like, ‘We're going to put this up here!’ We had to talk to a lot of strangers on the street and ask them their personal stories about how Hurricane Sandy affected them and the response that we got back was really nice” (Personal interview, 2/9/2014). Youth C also stated, “We were stopping the people and telling them, ‘We’re having a mural coming soon,’ and it was just cool to see how the community members reacted, like ‘Wow, these people actually do care, we are getting noticed, we are getting recognized’” (Personal interview, 2/13/2014).

While community members and the project partner from Coney Island received opportunities for input during the research phase, resident feedback and reactions were also offered during the installation and ceremony phases of the mural making process. Staff member C described her reflections and experiences this way,

I think one of the main things was that people felt like somebody noticed that they really have been struggling in that area, and that their struggle and sort of like the problems that they came out of and all of the difficulties that they had with the storm really started coming to light so that people could understand, ‘Listen we altogether have been struggling and it’s time to rise up.’ I think that was kind of like the main outcome. I think it’s been really, really incredible, I mean I get emails, I see different blogs in which it’s posted, and I think it’s really, really fantastic, I unfortunately don't live very close to it, but it’s really great and even the day we were installing the mural. I mean there were constantly people talking to us and clapping and being so happy bringing us water and thanking us for the days we were there (Personal interview, 2/2/2014).

Product

Message/purpose
After meeting with community members and partners, the message of the mural, became that of coming together and “rising up.” According to Youth A, “It [Sandy] was a lot of destruction and then it made everybody strong in a way, which I really feel like the mural tried to depict that” (Personal interview, 2/9/2014). The mural indeed included a number of images of people helping people. The mermaid holds all of the graphics together, as a metaphor for Mermaid Avenue, which serves as a central location for Coney Island residents, and a hard hit area from Sandy. The background imagery depicts an amusement park element so as not to leave out completely a culturally significant aspect of the area. As mentioned previously, area residents and youth artists wanted to be sure the overall message was focused on recovery and rebuilding and therefore included images of replanting a community garden and the residents helping each other and standing united. Small buildings in the foreground depict the homes and ‘mom and pop’ stores of Coney Island, with towering affordable housing units in the background, another culturally significant image of the area. Youth A reflected on what was learned from the residents about the impact of the Storm in saying, “Hurricane Sandy kind of made everybody realize how much they needed each other” (Personal interview, 2/9/2014).
In reaction to the entire Recovery Diaspora murals series, Partner A reflected,

I was amazed at how, dynamic and different each mural was out of the four and really saw that it was a reflection of, because part of their process was the youth went and talked to folks in the neighborhood so it’s very localized, but then also you know it’s a group of youth who get together and they have different ideas, and then it also ties in to what Coney Island represents to people, which is very different than Far Rockaway, and they have different history and paths (Personal Interview, 2/5/2014).

**Location/Physical Space**

The Groundswell team installed the Coney Island Rising Up mural in a location that commemorated the message it was communicating. Partner 2 described the Santos White Community Garden, in which the mural was located as, “A wonderful little place. Santos is also a musician. He has a Hispanic band, and he has concerts in there and you’ll see a big plastic cow and chickens, and you know, so it’s this little nice little mini farm in the middle of Coney Island” (Personal interview, 2/5/2014).
The community garden was also nearly destroyed in Sandy’s wake, “As soon as Sandy hit everything was totally washed out, he had chickens—I mean it’s like a full farm in the middle of Brooklyn in between the huge blocks of apartments. It was really amazing because he was actually able to rebuild the entire garden with the help of all the community members and he gives away the vegetables to the people,” recalled Staff member C (2/2/2014). As Cockcroft, Weber and Cockcroft have suggested, “A mural becomes a symbol of a neighborhood, defining its character in the eyes of both its residents and outsiders” (1998, p. 86). Installing the mural in the community garden underscored the community’s broader effort to rebuild together as well as to serve as a positive affirmation, symbolizing the area’s resilience in the aftermath of Sandy, “After a summer of hard work, the new mural—and restored garden—served as a reminder of the neighborhood’s tenacity and resilience” (Bredderman, 2013).
Santos White Community Garden, photo by Deborah Matlack, [http://www.matlackphotography.com/](http://www.matlackphotography.com/)
Chapter 6

Conclusions

These findings have implications for the field of community cultural development. Not only does the work of this nonprofit confirm many of the theoretical claims in the literature regarding the methods and benefits of community based art-making, Groundswell has implemented a number of unique strategies that contribute to thinking about how to employ programs that provide educational value in arts and leadership while also encouraging agency in young people.

As noted in the literature review, existing scholarship has outlined three main approaches to community based mural production (Valdez, 2011). Groundswell works principally within the third framework, a participatory art-making process in which the artist facilitates a production process with community members from conception to implementation. The Brooklyn nonprofit engages youths as its participants, a model described by Cockcroft, Weber and Crockcroft (1998), as the Collective Youth Mural, but also extends participation to the larger community through the youths. In addition, Groundswell employs aspects of the aesthetic education, CBAE and collaborative education models when providing youths with basic art education that bridges community based practice.

The organization offers an aesthetics-based art education, in teaching participating youths art skills as an auxiliary function to the accomplishment of its main goal, which is the development of a mural for a targeted community. Not only this, their basic art training across all programs and their specialized portfolio development program expand
art access for youth in the New York City area. By providing compensation for youths to create public art, Groundswell not only creates spaces to encourage young people to develop themselves professionally, but also to increase their access to art and engagement skills and experiences. Finally, the nonprofit’s mural making efforts demonstrate that creating art, and being an artist, is a valuable and worthwhile career option.

Groundswell has embraced the idea that a professional artist is critical to the mural process to ensure aesthetic quality and for the product to be able to achieve maximum impact, an idea also embraced by the aesthetic education and CBAE models. The CBAE model also argues that community is created as a result of the process, an outcome reported to me by the youth artists in the Coney Island Rising Up project as well as by representatives of the organization, its partners and the residents involved in the mural’s creation. While the case of the Recovery Diaspora series was an exception, Groundswell typically employs a collaborative approach by having young artists choose a topic for a mural working with a community partner. They also create the art together as a team with local residents’ input, illustrating not only the method and goals of the collaborative model, but also connecting this method to the CBAE approach. In addition, Groundswell’s strategy provides a significant contribution to the field of community cultural development by paying youth artists to conduct work in community.

With regard to encouraging agency as a result specifically of working on the Coney Island Rising Up Project, it is clear that participating youths were affected personally and professionally while they also were offered opportunities to develop collective conscious awareness through a democratic education process. As they learned of the experiences and heard the stories of suffering directly from area residents,
participants empathized with them while also thinking critically about the role of gender and public input in storm response. In addition, working on the mural exposed them to research tools, such as interviewing and information gathering and provided experiences in collaborating that positively shaped their views about working with others. The interviewees all expressed interest in furthering art, as a major or minor aspiration in their careers, as a direct result of working with Groundswell. Finally, the youths I interviewed all suggested they had a new appreciation for working with others in a team setting to reach a shared goal in which not everyone necessarily agrees.

This Groundswell mural project also provided a sounding board for community residents who might not otherwise have been heard. The Coney Island Rising Up piece became a positive affirmation of the community’s resourcefulness and resilience in recovering from the devastation of Hurricane Sandy. Residents of Coney Island were invited to participate at multiple stages of the mural’s development, to contribute to its message and to ensure that the imagery and metaphors chosen to represent their stories resonated with them. Commemorating the area’s ability to rebuild while affirming a transcendent hopefulness about the future, the mural was installed in a community garden, which many individuals from the area collectively helped to replant. That communal gathering spot and garden is located near the mid-point along Mermaid Avenue, and now hosts the mural, serving as a literal and physical metaphor for the strengths of the collective as they look to the future on Coney Island.

Ultimately, Groundswell draws from all of the development models discussed in the literature to shape its art production process. Through their mural projects, they provide democratic education opportunities for youths to develop a sense of personal
efficacy as well as specific capacities that will serve not only to advance their art interests, but also allow each to play proactive roles for positive social change. The nonprofit also provides communities with public art that reflects and conveys their stories, struggles and successes.
Appendix A

Interview Questions

For Organization Staff
- How does public art, in your view, bring about social change and personal transformation? Do you have personal experience you are willing to share?
- How and why did you get involved with Groundswell?
- How do you understand transformation in youth?
- What strategies are employed in, or as a result of, the process to engage youth in this transformation?
- How do you choose an area and/or partner for a mural project?
- How are participating artists and youth groups selected/engaged to create a mural?
- How are funds raised for the project?
- What are the goals of each mural project? Do they vary based on the specific location?
- What art skills do you aim to teach during the process? Do they vary based on project?
- What happens with participants after the project is completed? What involvement, if any, does Groundswell continue to have with youth following mural completion?
- How, if at all, does your organization measure personal transformation?

For Project Artist
- How does art, in your opinion, bring about social change and personal transformation? Do you have personal experience(s) with art playing such a role that you are willing to share?
- Groundswell suggests it seeks to transform the youth engaged in its mural projects. How do you understand transformation in youth?
- How and why did you get involved with Groundswell?
- What strategies are employed in, or as a result of, the process to engage youth in this transformation?
- Who comprised your participants and how were they chosen?
- How did you facilitate the group’s effort (with which you worked) to choose a topic/issue?
- Can you describe the major steps in the mural making process?
- What is your role at various stages of the process? Does it change as a project progresses/If so, how?
- What core skills do you aim to teach youth during the mural making process?
- What skills were necessary for participants that were specific to the project?
- In your view, what were the outcomes of the project?
- What costs were incurred? What were the benefits?
- What was your reaction to the final product, aesthetically, and based on your personal experience?

For Project Partners
- How and why did you partner with Groundswell on this project?
- What interested you about creating a mural with Groundswell?
- Please describe your role in the project?
- What was/were your contributions to the project as you saw them?
- What outcomes did you foresee from the project? What were the perceived benefits for you and/or your organization or firm?
- Did the project fulfill its outcomes and benefits, in your view?
- What costs did your organization incur as a result of participating on this project?
- What was your reaction to the final product?
o In your view, can art bring about personal transformation and social change? Do you have personal experience(s) you are willing to share in which it has resulted in either? (In this or any other arts project with which you have been engaged).

o How do you understand transformation in youth?

For Project Participants
o How and why did you get involved with Groundswell? In which program did you participate?

o What did you learn about the topic/issue from creating the mural?

o What skills did you gain during the process?

o What aspects of the process stood out for you?

o What did you expect to learn from the project?

o Did the project fulfill your expectations? If so, how? If not, why not?

o Did anything surprise you during your work on the project?

o What was your reaction to the final product?

o Did the project create any lasting impacts for you? If so, can you describe those for me?

o What were your career goals before the project?

o What are your career goals now after the project?

o What did you think about yourself and your community before the project?

o What did you think about yourself and your community after the project?
Appendix B

Informed Consent for Participants in Research Projects Involving Human Subjects

Title of Project: Exploring mural making as tool to engage youth in personal transformation

Principal Investigator: Dr. Max Stephenson, Co-Investigator: Jackie Pontious

Purpose of this Interview

We ask you to participate in an interview to gain insight into the process of utilizing mural making as a tool to engage youth in personal transformation. We hope to learn about how Groundswell understands personal transformation as well as how that organization employs public art making as a tool to engage youth in this process. We plan to interview organization staff members, the project artist, partners and participants involved in the development of one mural in the last calendar year. Your interview will last about 60 minutes.

Procedures

We ask you to participate in an individual interview conducted in person by Jackie Pontious. Ms. Pontious is undertaking this research as a thesis in partial fulfillment of her degree requirements for the Master of Urban and Regional Planning degree at Virginia Tech. Assuming you agree to a recorded interview, Ms. Pontious will produce a transcript of the audio recording of your interview following its completion. That transcription will be emailed to you to provide you an opportunity to check and comment on its factual accuracy, as you might wish. Interview transcripts will be used only for fact checking and for analysis and quotations for Jackie Pontious’ thesis. Interview files and transcriptions, as well as all interviewee (your) identifying information will be electronically stored in separate files on the co-investigators’ password-protected computer and backed up on an external data storage device (flash-drive) which also will be password protected. The external data storage device will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in the main office of the Institute for Policy and Governance at Virginia Tech. The file containing participant identifying information, such as your name and contact information, will be stored separately from interview transcripts. We consider your identifying information to be valuable background in helping us understand the ideas and concepts you articulate in your interview, but Ms. Pontious will not identify you individually in the thesis document. Every effort will be made to keep your identity confidential and if your insights are shared in the analysis offered in the final thesis, they will appear under a pseudonym.

Your participation in this research is voluntary and will involve only a single interview. If you have any questions about this inquiry, please feel free to contact either Jackie Pontious or Professor Max Stephenson (Ms. Pontious’ academic advisor) or the Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board at the email addresses or telephone numbers listed below.

Risks

We believe the risk of harm to you from your participation in this study is very low. In any case, risks from this study are no greater than those you might face in your daily life.

Benefits

We cannot guarantee a personal benefit to you from your participation, although we are grateful for your consideration and assistance. We also hope that this may be a good opportunity for you to reflect on your experiences and help us better understand the fundaments of your work. If you are interested in the results of this research, please let Ms. Pontious know and she will be pleased to share the final version of this effort with you, as you might wish.

Please check:
YES, I would like to receive a final copy of the thesis Ms. Pontious develops from this research. You may send her final approved version of that document to me at the following email or street address:

_______________________________________

OR

_______________________________________

NO, I would not like to receive a copy of Ms. Pontious’ completed effort.

Confidentiality and Anonymity

We ask your written consent to allow us to use your remarks in your interview in producing a Master’s degree thesis and possible research articles/book chapters from this research. You may choose to speak “on the record” or “off the record” throughout our conversation. If you choose to speak off the record for all or a portion of your conversation with Ms. Pontious your request will be honored and the audio recorder switched off. Your responses “off the record” will not be attributed to you, even with a pseudonym, but the sense of any comments you offer may inform the study’s findings and be reported without identifying attribution. Your name will be kept confidential and will not be shared in any publications, even that which is considered “on the record”.

The Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board (IRB) may see this study’s data. This would occur for auditing purposes only. The IRB is responsible for ensuring that any human subjects involved in research are protected. The Board’s contact information appears below.

Compensation

We are unable to provide payment for you to participate.

Freedom to Withdraw

You are free to withdraw from this research at any time. You are also free NOT to answer questions, as you may elect.

Your Responsibilities and Permission

I, ______________________________, agree to participate in this research. I understand it will focus on my knowledge and experiences working for, or with, Groundswell. I am 18-years-old or older.

I have read and understand this document. I understand the purposes of this research. By signing below, I give my voluntary consent to participate and acknowledge receipt of a copy of this Informed Consent form:

_________________________  ______________________
Signature                      Date
Should I have any questions about this research or its conduct, or questions about my rights, I may contact:

**Principal Investigator:**
Dr. Max Stephenson  
Professor and Director,  
Virginia Tech  
Institute for Policy & Governance  
540-231-7340  
mstephen@vt.edu

**Co-Investigator:**
Jacquelyn Pontious  
Master’s Student in Urban and Regional Planning  
Virginia Tech  
571-217-0249  
jrpont@vt.edu

**IMPORTANT:**

If I should have any questions about the protection of human research participants regarding this study, you may contact Dr. David Moore, Chair Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects, telephone: (540) 231-4991; email: moored@vt.edu; address: Research Compliance Office, North End Center, Suite 4120, Virginia Tech, 300 Turner Street NW, Blacksburg, VA 24061.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND PARTICIPATION**
Assent Form for Participants Under the Age of 18 in Research Projects Involving Human Subjects

Title of Project: Exploring mural making as tool to engage youth in personal transformation

Principal Investigator: Dr. Max Stephenson
Co-Principal Investigator: Jackie Pontious

Purpose of this Interview
We ask your participation in an interview to gain insight into your experience while participating in a mural project with the New York-based nonprofit arts organization, Groundswell. We hope to learn about how you contributed to the project, what you learned from your involvement and how the project might have affected your views about yourself and your community. Your interview will last about 60 minutes.

Procedures
We ask you to participate in an individual interview conducted in person by Jackie Pontious. Ms. Pontious is undertaking this research as a thesis in partial fulfillment of her degree requirements for the Master of Urban and Regional Planning at Virginia Tech. Assuming you agree to a recorded interview, Ms. Pontious will produce a transcript of the audio recording of your interview following its completion. That transcription will be emailed to you to provide you an opportunity to comment on its factual accuracy, as you might wish. Interview transcripts will be used only for fact checking and for quotations in Jackie Pontious’ thesis. Interview files and transcriptions, as well as all interviewee (your) identifying information will be electronically stored in separate files on the co-investigators’ password-protected computer and backed up on an external data storage device (flash-drive) which also will be password protected. The external data storage device will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in the main office of the Institute for Policy and Governance at Virginia Tech. The file containing study participant identifying information, such as your name and contact information, will be stored separately from interview transcripts. We consider your identifying information to be valuable background in helping us understand the ideas and concepts you will articulate in your interview, but we will not identify you in the thesis document. Every effort will be made to keep your identity confidential and if your insights are shared in the final thesis, they will appear under a pseudonym.

Your participation is voluntary and will involve only a single interview. If you have any questions about this research, please feel free to contact either Jackie Pontious or Professor Max Stephenson (Ms. Pontious’ academic advisor) or the Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board at the email addresses or telephone numbers listed below.

Risks
We believe the risk of harm to you from your participation in this study is very low. In any case, risks from this study are no greater than those you might face in your daily life.

Benefits
We cannot guarantee a personal benefit to you from your participation, although we are grateful for your consideration. We also hope that this may be a good opportunity for you to reflect on your experiences and help us better understand the fundamentals of your work. If you are interested in the results of this research, please let Ms. Pontious know and we will be pleased to share the final version of the thesis with you.
Please check:

__________ YES, I would like to receive a final copy of the thesis Ms. Pontious develop from this research. You may send her final approved version of that document to me at the following email or street address:


_______________________________________


OR


_______________________________________


__________ NO, I would not like to receive a final copy of the thesis Ms. Pontious will develop from this research.

Confidentiality and Anonymity

We ask your written consent to allow us to use your remarks in your interview in a Master’s degree thesis and possible research articles/book chapters from this research. You may choose to speak “on the record” or “off the record” throughout your conversation. If you choose to speak off the record for all or a portion of your conversation with Ms. Pontious your request will be honored and the audio recorder switched off. Your responses “off the record” will not be attributed to you, even with a pseudonym, but the sense of any comments you offer may inform the study’s findings and be reported without identifying attribution. Your name will be kept confidential and will not be shared in any publications, even that which is considered "on the record".

The Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board (IRB) may see this study’s data. This would occur for auditing purposes only. The IRB is responsible for ensuring that any human subjects involved in research are protected. The Board’s contact information appears below.

Compensation

We are unable to provide payment for you to participate.

Freedom to Withdraw

You are free to withdraw from this research at any time. You are also free NOT to answer questions, as you may elect.

Your Responsibilities and Permission

I, ____________________________, agree to participate in this research. I understand it will focus on my knowledge and experiences working on a Groundswell mural project.

I have read and understand this document. I understand the purposes of this research. By signing below, I give my voluntary consent to participate and acknowledge receipt of a copy of this Assent form:

_______________________________________
Signature

__________
Date
Should I have any questions about this research or its conduct, or questions about my rights, I may contact:

**Principal Investigator:**
Dr. Max Stephenson  
Professor and Director  
Virginia Tech  
Institute for Policy & Governance  
540-231-7340  
mstephen@vt.edu

**Co-Investigator**
Jacquelyn Pontious  
Master's Student in Urban and Regional Planning  
Virginia Tech  
571-217-0249  
jrpont@vt.edu

**IMPORTANT:**
If I should have any questions about the protection of human research participants regarding this study, you may contact Dr. David Moore, Chair Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects, telephone: (540) 231-4991; email: moored@vt.edu; address: Research Compliance Office, North End Center, Suite 4120, Virginia Tech, 300 Turner Street NW, Blacksburg, VA 24061.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND PARTICIPATION
Informed Parental Consent for Participants in Research Projects Involving Human Subjects

Title of Project: Exploring mural making as tool to engage youth in personal transformation

Principal Investigator: Dr. Max Stephenson, Co-Investigator: Jackie Pontious

Purpose of this Interview

We ask your consent for participation of your child and/or ward in an interview to gain insight into their experience participating in a mural project with Groundswell. We hope to learn about how they contributed to the project, what they learned from it and how the project might have shaped their views of themselves and their community. The interview will last about 60 minutes.

Procedures

We ask your consent for your child to participate in an individual interview conducted in person by Jackie Pontious. Ms. Pontious is undertaking this research as a thesis in partial fulfillment of her degree requirements for the Master of Urban and Regional Planning at Virginia Tech. Assuming you agree to a recorded interview with your child, Ms. Pontious will produce a transcript of the audio recording of your interview following its completion. That transcription will be emailed to you to provide you an opportunity to check and comment on its factual accuracy, as you might wish. Interview transcripts will be used only for fact checking and for quotations in Jackie Pontious’ thesis. Interview files and transcriptions, as well as all interviewee identifying information will be electronically stored in separate files on the co-investigators’ password-protected computer and backed up on an external data storage device (flash-drive) which also will be password protected. The external data storage device will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in the main office of the Institute for Policy and Governance at Virginia Tech. The file containing participant identifying information, such as your son or daughter’s name and contact information, will be stored separately from interview transcripts. We consider their identifying information to be valuable background in helping us understand the ideas and concepts they will articulate in the interview, but we will not identify your child in the thesis document. Every effort will be made to keep their identity confidential and if their insights are shared in the final thesis, they will appear under a pseudonym.

Your child’s participation is voluntary and will involve only a single interview. If you have any questions about this research, please feel free to contact either Jackie Pontious or Professor Max Stephenson or the Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board (Ms. Pontious’ academic advisor) at the email addresses or telephone numbers listed below.

Risks

We believe the risk of harm to your child from your participation in this study is very low. In any case, risks from this study are no greater than those they might face in daily life.

Benefits

We cannot guarantee a personal benefit to your child/ward from their participation, although we are grateful for your consideration. We also hope that this may be a good opportunity for you and your child/ward to reflect on their experiences and help us better understand the fundamentals of the work of Groundswell. If you are interested in the results of this research, please let us know and we will be pleased to share the final version of Ms. Pontious’ thesis with you.
Please check:

__________ YES, I would like to receive a final copy of the thesis Ms. Pontious develops from this research. You may send her final approved version of that document to me at the following email or street address:

_______________________________________

OR

_______________________________________

__________ NO, I would not like to receive a copy of Ms. Pontious’ thesis.

Confidentiality and Anonymity

We ask your written consent to allow us to use the remarks of your child/ward in producing a Master’s degree thesis and possible research articles/book chapters from this research. They may choose to speak “on the record” or “off the record” throughout our conversation. If they choose to speak off the record for all or a portion of their conversation with Ms. Pontious, the request will be honored and the audio recorder switched off. Their responses “off the record” will not be attributed to them, even with a pseudonym, but the sense of any comments they offer may inform the study’s findings and be reported without identifying attribution. Your child’s/ward’s name will be kept confidential and will not be shared in any publications, even that which is considered "on the record".

The Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board (IRB) may see this study’s data. This would occur for auditing purposes only. The IRB is responsible for ensuring that any human subjects involved in research are protected. The Board’s contact information appears below.

Compensation

We are unable to provide payment for your child to participate.

Freedom to Withdraw

You are free to withdraw your child/ward from this research at any time. Your child/ward is also free NOT to answer questions, as they may elect.

Your Responsibilities and Permission

I, ____________________________, agree to allow my child/ward to participate in this research. I understand it will focus on their knowledge and experiences working on a Groundswell mural project. I am 18-years-old or older.

I have read and understand this document. I understand the purposes of this research. By signing below, I give my voluntary consent for my child or ward to participate and I acknowledge receipt of a copy of this Informed Consent form:

_______________________________________

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Should I have any questions about this research or its conduct, or questions about my rights, I may contact:

**Principal Investigator:**  
Dr. Max Stephenson  
Professor and Director,  
Virginia Tech  
Institute for Policy & Governance  
540-231-7340  
mstephen@vt.edu

**Co-Investigator:**  
Jacquelyn Pontious  
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Virginia Tech  
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THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND PARTICIPATION
References


