



*Connecting the Arts with the Community*

**Community Conversation about PUBLIC ART  
Monday, September 8<sup>th</sup> @ 22 Haviland St. Gallery**

**Who was there?**

Joe Fucigna, NCC; Artists: Khalaf Jerry, Irvin Carr, Tony Velez, Edhu Nascimento & Cris Xavier; Susan Gilgore, Lockwood Mathews Mansion; Bill Collins, SONO Task Force; Nancy Woodward, Firing Circuits artist; Lori Glavin, Wilson Ave. Loft Artists (WALA) artist; Lynn Massey & Susan Wallerstein, Arts Commission; Jahmane, Traffic Graphic artist & curator; Tava, dancer; Laura Einstein & Renee Santhouse, Center for Contemporary Printmaking; Diane Jellerette, Norwalk Historical Society; Sherelle Harris, South Norwalk Library; Julyen Norman, Public art inventory consultant; Jennifer Bangster, Cultural Alliance; Aisha, Michael Clocks & Lizzy Rockwell Traffic Graphic artists; Marie, and our wonderful host, Dennis Bradbury, Arts Commission member.

**What did we talk about?**

- **Mayor's Gallery** celebrating and showcasing local artists, studios, and arts-related businesses
  - October – December, 2014: Housing Authority student exhibit
  - January – March 2015: Maybe Wilson Ave. Loft Artists (WALA)
  - April – June 2016: Available
- **In the works**
  - SoNo Public Art Walking Tours – Housing Authority 20 West Art Program Students
  - Public art inventory
  - Holiday wrappers/rappers
  - Student internships
  - Invitation from Sue Brown Gordon for local artists/performers to participate in **Norwalk Arts Festival** next June
- **Traffic Graphic Program** reflections – Jahmane, Lizzy, Michael, Aisha
  - Artists described the ways the community ---commuters, bus drivers, parents--- interacted with them and their art as they worked on their boxes: "It should have been about the world cup!" one person told Lizzy Rockwell.
  - Parents talked about their kids and the importance of art.
  - The artists began to view their work as a performance...
  - There are 36 more boxes!!
  - Ideas about capturing, validating/valuing the engagement part of this project:
    - Read-aloud while artists are working on a box inspired by (children's) literature.
    - Create digital/virtual tours

- Formalize opportunities for community members to speak with the artists while they work and capture the conversations...NPR “Story Corps” idea
- Ask DPW to show/explain what’s inside the boxes; have one box show on the outside what’s on the inside.
- Extend Traffic Graphic idea to the (ugly) black poles and arms carrying traffic signals - -- wrap, paint, bring color and design (suggestion from Bill Collins, SoNo Task Force Chair).
- **SONO Task Force update** - Bill Collins
  - Looking at opportunities for additional murals on private buildings and North Water St. RR Bridge. Maritime Aquarium taking the lead to improve identity branding.
  - Shared details about possible aesthetic improvements and creative installations at 50 Washington St. including light projection/installation on façade.
  - Exploring stenciling on sidewalks for key paths to improve way finding around SoNo
- **Creative Brainstorming** about how to move public art beyond just visual arts and more
  - Dance-a-thon in Ryan Park or other public venue
  - Buskers (street artists/performers) locations around the City
  - Singing/dancing flash mob in Bridgeport
  - Pop up song, dance, poetry, music in outdoor spaces that lend themselves to performance
  - Creative landscaping
  - Listening booths (Julyen suggestion from Philadelphia)
  - “Significant Objects” <http://significantobjects.com/>
  - Wrappers & Rappers (Housing Authority student art program)
  - Spoken word – writers, poets, etc.
  - Visual and spoken ways to showcase 50-100 languages spoken by Norwalkers
  - Aurasma <http://www.aurasma.com/#/whats-your-aura>
  - Public art must be designed and developed by and for the people who live in our neighborhoods (public art policy that outlines requirements for involving stakeholders)
  - Revolving art at SoNo Library
- **Who wants to help?**
  - Arts Commission Member – Laura, Tava, Jahmane, Michael, Khalaf
  - Public art project curator – Jahmane, Aisha, Khalaf
  - Public art project artist – Edhu, Cris, Jahmane, Aisha, Michael, Khalaf
  - Developing new opportunities beyond visual arts – Tava, Sherelle, Jahmane, Aisha, Khalaf
  - Wrappers/Rappers – Jahmane, Aisha
  - Public art tours – Jahmane, Khalaf
  - Student internships – Jahmane, Nancy
  - Other – Tony
  - Host Arts Commission conversation – Joe (NCC)