

Content created in affiliation with the Institute of Sacred Music at Yale University, 2020-2021

Thinking Outside the Box Office:

Deconstructing the Relationship Between
Music and Space

Maddie Blonquist Shrum | Religion & the Arts, M.A.R. '21
Maura Tuffy | Choral Conducting, M. M. '21

Zine Designed by Mikayla Johnson



Dear Ziner,

If you are a creative who loves collaboration and ethical arts practice but doesn't always know where to start, then consider this booklet especially for you! We are thrilled to offer you this interactive zine as a supplement to our presentation, *Thinking Outside the Box Office: Deconstructing the Relationship Between Music and Space*. In it, you will find a condensed version of our work, facilitator resources, and further reading recommendations. Feel free to explore its pages in the order that you choose, using the Table of Contents as your homebase.

This zine is in no way all-encompassing, but our hope is that these materials will peak your curiosity, offer an entry point into critical society-shaping and community-building ideas, and inspire you to incorporate this type of work into your own medium. We can't wait to see where you take this!

Thanks for reading!

Maddie Blonquist Shrum & Maura Tuffy



Maddie Blonquist Shrum graduated with High Honors from Brigham Young University in 2018 where she studied piano performance, interdisciplinary humanities, and art history. She is currently a second year M.A.R. candidate at Yale Divinity School with a concentration on Religion and the Arts whose mission is to “create experiences that change people.” She is passionate about collaboration, arts accessibility, and museum studies. These interests have led her to pursue a career as an art curator—a role which she has filled in both institutional and independent capacities.

Maura Tuffy is a soprano and conductor whose mission is to catalyze collaboration across all artistic disciplines. She holds degrees in Vocal Arts and Choral Music from the University of Southern California and is currently pursuing a Master of Music degree in Choral Conducting at the Yale School of Music/Institute of Sacred Music. Through her art, Maura aspires to cultivate progressive change in the arts and strengthen the tie of musicians to the communities they serve.



[to Table of Contents](#)

Table of Contents

<u>Introduction</u>	2
<u>Interpretation</u>	4
<u>Accessibility</u>	5
<u>Communal Impact</u>	6
<u>Inspiring Resources</u>	8
<u>Recommended Reading</u>	9

INTERPRETATION

“How does one’s interpretation of art change across spaces?”

When walking into a museum, chapel, or concert hall one is frequently surrounded by velvet seats, “Do Not Touch” signage, and ominous high ceilings. Is art being treated like a prop in these “high-class” spaces? If concert halls and museums were stripped of their ornate decorations, might audiences interpret art differently? Whether we are aware of it or not, the interpretation of art can shift across spaces. Placemaking is a collaborative process that shapes public spaces to maximize shared value; it capitalizes on a local community’s assets in order to promote an individual’s well-being. The study of art’s relationship to place – and its subsequent effect on community – can help define one’s spatial identity. Thus, public spaces become networks for new meaningful artistic experiences.

“City-making is a social process, a relationship between social and physical shaping of cities, between how people use, create, and live in social spaces, and the formal and informal material and embodied production of urban environments.”

-Cara Courage,
Arts in Place, 1



Assistant Professor of Musicology (World Music) at the University of Southern California, Dr. Scott Spencer is currently involved in a project which encourages a shift in the performance venue narrative. In collaboration with UCLA’s Stavros Niarchos Foundation for the Study of Hellenic Culture, he is developing Sound in Sacred Spaces, a working group that “brings together minds from humanities, sciences, performing arts, and religious traditions to discuss acoustemology of sacred spaces.” This interdisciplinary group gathers to provoke questions around the ramifications of space like, “Are genres of music composed for a space, or a product of that space?” and “Does a sacred space imbue something to the music presented there?” The space that he and his colleagues are exploring is one that is both physical and philosophical. By bringing music outside of these deemed “sacred” spaces, Dr. Spencer and his teammates are redefining music’s relationship to space, investigating space in physical and metaphysical forms, and creating room for equitable community to flourish.

[to Table of Contents](#)

ACCESSIBILITY

“How can facilitators make their work more accessible to public audiences?”

It is no secret that audiences for classical music and concert attendance are in decline. Funnily, enough, many attribute this to the “prim, formal customs associated with classical music,” rather than the genre itself. In most cases, there is nothing inherently exclusionary about notes on a page. Rather, it is the setting in which they are heard that can imbue the music with discriminative connotations. When addressing accessibility, the stifling conditions under which most people experience classical music and the lack of audience interaction that typically ensues are key concerns.



Adam Karelin, bravely led the Student Symphony Orchestra of USC in a 14-day digital festival of Saint-Saens’ “Carnival of the Animals” over the summer. Each day, the CCO released a curated virtual performance of one movement. However, these were not your typical Zoom box synchronizations. Nearly half of the pieces were accompanied by footage of original dance choreography and for the seventh movement, “Aquarium,” the group incorporated special cinematography of aquatic life in collaboration with the Aquarium of the Pacific.

In terms of accessibility, Adam actually found that there were significant advantages to the virtual format:

- (1) it allowed performers to each send in the best recording of their part
- (2) paved the way for dynamic and engaging visual elements, thus making the music more approachable
- (3) infinitely expanded their capacity for collaboration across disciplines and geographic boundaries
- (4) increased their audience reach exponentially since they were not confined to maximum occupancy of a physical space

“It is the nature of art to create openings where one can envision something outside of the realm of what already exists for oneself, one’s community, and the world—a realm where anything is possible. Artists and art 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 the perceptions of limiting boundaries and circumstances.”

- Beth Krensky,
Engaging Classrooms and Communities Through Art, 5

COMMUNAL IMPACT

“How can one effectively enrich their community through spatially conscious art engagement?”

Community is what fuels the purpose of putting art into the world; it is the conduit by which art is transformed and given purpose. If community is the result of social interaction, space is the ground upon which those conversations grow. What is more, space can influence the types of conversations that arise, and perhaps more importantly, dictate who is a part of those conversations. However, careful consideration of communal needs can bring several benefits:

- 1) effective co-facilitation can dismantle an air of imperial benevolence by valuing others' voices in decision making processes, and knowing what a community wants, instead of what we think they need
- 2) brave spaces allow individuals to feel prepared entering the space; there is an underlying community agreement
- 3) arts spaces that can make audiences feel valued is something that transcends the strength of the physical space and is what we consider intangible

“We change the world one room at a time. This room, today, becomes an example of the future we want to create. There is no need to wait for the future. Creating the experience of belonging in the room we are in at the moment becomes the point, namely that the way we structure the assembly of peers and leaders is as critical as the issue or future we come together to address.”

- Peter Block,

Community: The Structure of Belonging, 160

[to Table of Contents](#)

Located in Los Angeles, California, **Urban Voices Project** was born out of a need to address the social separation of community and art. Arts hubs such as Walt Disney Concert Hall, the Broad Museum, and LA Opera are all located on Bunker Hill — a seven-minute walking distance from Skid Row, one of the largest homeless communities in the US. This separation, according to UVP Artistic Director and Co-Founder Leeav Sofer, was, “built from a culture that is meant to inspire awe and elitism, as a statement and landmark on the map to be the ‘highest form’, and a measure of wealth of a city.”



Founded in 2014 out of the Colburn School and John Wesley Health Centers, UVP brings music, health, and well-being to Skid Row, through singing workshops, music education, and a performing ensemble. Leeav and Kate Richards (Music Wellness Director) emphasize establishing a co-leader/co-facilitator model, which fosters the kinds of relationships that we want to have with other human beings.

UVP's performing ensemble comprises artists and performers from Skid Row. The choir is the platform that uplifts and centers the singers' vulnerable experiences, and forms a “brave space”. These brave spaces allow individuals to feel prepared entering the space. For Leeav and Kate, it is not only about having space, but holding space.

[to Table of Contents](#)

Inspiring Examples and Resources for Arts Leadership and Engagement

- ▶ Scott Spencer, [Sound in Sacred Spaces](#)
- ▶ Beth Krensky
- ▶ Adam Karelin, [Student Symphony Orchestra of USC](#)
- ▶ Urban Voices Project
- ▶ Nasty Women Connecticut
- ▶ Urban Collective
- ▶ Music Haven
- ▶ Community Musicworks
- ▶ Sebastian Ruth, [Music and Social Action \(Coursera\)](#)
- ▶ NXTHVN
- ▶ Vijay Gupta, [Street Symphony](#)
- ▶ The Industry, experimental opera based in Los Angeles

Maddie Blonquist Shrum

maddie.blonquist@yale.edu
<https://maddieblonquist.weebly.com/>

Want to
collaborate?

[to Table of Contents](#)

Maura Tuffy

maura.tuffy@yale.edu
<https://mauratuffyartist.com>

RECOMMENDED READING:

- ▶ Blezzard, Judith. "Performance and Study--New Venues, New Opportunities." *Current Musicology* no. 58 (1995): 112-116,131. <https://search.proquest.com/docview/89063623?accountid=15172>.
- ▶ Block, Peter. *Community: The Structure of Belonging*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2008.
- ▶ Cameron, Julia. *The Artist's Way: A Spiritual Path to Higher Creativity*. New York: J.P. Tarcher/Putnam, 2002.
- ▶ Courage, Cara. *Arts in Place: The Arts, the Urban and Social Practice*. New York: Routledge, 2017.
- ▶ Denison, Charles. *The Artist's Way of Preaching*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006.
- ▶ Dewhurst, Marit. *Social Justice Art: A Framework for Activist Art Pedagogy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press, 2014.
- ▶ Dobson, Melissa C. "New Audiences for Classical Music: The Experiences of Non-attenders at Live Orchestral Concerts." *Journal of New Music Research* 39, no. 2 (2010): 111-124. Accessed September 12, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09298215.2010.489643>.
- ▶ Drummond, Tim. "Singing over the Wall: Legal and Ethical Considerations for Sacred Music in the Public Schools." *Music Educators Journal* 101, no. 2 (2014): 27-31. Accessed April 10, 2020. www.jstor.org/stable/43288918.
- ▶ Helguera, Pablo. *Education for Socially Engaged Art: A Materials and Techniques Handbook*. Jorge Pinto Books, 2011.
- ▶ James, David E. "L.A.'s Hipster Cinema." *Film Quarterly* 63, no. 1 (Fall, 2009): 56-67. <https://search.proquest.com/docview/1710371?accountid=15172>.
- ▶ Krensky, Beth, and Seana Lowe Steffen. *Engaging Classrooms and Communities through Art: The Guide to Designing and Implementing Community-Based Art Education*. Lanham: Altamira Press, 2009.
- ▶ Kronenburg, Robert. "Introduction: Popular Music, Architecture and the Home." In *This Must Be The Place: An Architectural History of Popular Music Performance Venues*, 1-12. New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019. Accessed September 2, 2020. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5040/9781501319310.ch-001>.
- ▶ Lewis, George. *A Power Stronger Than Itself: The A.A.C.M. and American Experimental Music*. University of Chicago Press, 2008.
- ▶ Luke, Timothy W. *Museum Politics : Power Plays at the Exhibition*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002. Accessed September 12, 2020. ProQuest Ebook Central.
- ▶ Nicholls, Claire D., Clare Hall, Rachel Forgasz. "Charting the Past to Understand the Cultural Inheritance of Concert Hall Listening and Audience Development Practices." *Paedagogica Historica* 54, no. 4 (2018): 502-516. Accessed September 12, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.1018/oo309230.2017.1397718>.
- ▶ Reckwitz, Andreas. "Affective spaces: a praxeological outlook," *Rethinking History* 16, no. 2 (2012), 241-258.
- ▶ *Social Practice Art in Turbulent Times: The Revolution Will Be Live*. Edited by Kristina Olson and Erec J. Schruers. New York: Routledge, 2020.
- ▶ *The Everyday Practice of Public Art: Art, Space, and Social Inclusion*. Edited by Cameron Cartier and Martin Zebracki. London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2016.
- ▶ *The Oxford Handbook of Social Justice in Music Education*. Edited by Cathy Benedict, Patrick Schmidt, Gary Spruce, and Paul Woodford. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016.
- ▶ Wolterstorff, Nicholas. *Art Rethought: The Social Practices of Art*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015. <https://www3.nd.edu/~jsherry/pdf/2010/Street%20Art.pdf>

Contact the designer at

 emik.niche

