

# LISTEN

A Case Study in  
Socially Engaged Art



Chris Ashwell and Shawn Braley  
of Cincy Stories using the  
listening object that Caroline  
Woolard created.

Photo by Maureen France.

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Installation display of listening  
tools by Caroline Woolard.

Photo by Maureen France.

# ABOUT



Progress photos for listening objects  
created by Caroline Woolard.

Photos by Maureen France.

**CASE STUDY** LISTEN was a year-long socially engaged art project that resulted in three listening objects made by artist Caroline Woolard in dialog with four Cincinnati-based organizations. Each object is a response to an organization's unique way of listening: a storytelling game using small bronze objects for MORTAR and Cincy Stories, sets of ceramic cups for The Welcome Project, and a card game about cooperation for the Cincinnati Union Co-op Initiative.



# PROJECT PARTNERS



**Caroline Woolard**  
Visiting Artist



**Mary Clare Rietz**  
Facilitating Artist



**Cal Cullen**  
Wave Pool



**Steven Matijcio**  
Contemporary Arts Center



**William Thomas II**  
MORTAR



**Allen Woods**  
MORTAR



**Derrick Braziel**  
MORTAR



**Sheryl Rajbhandari**  
Welcome Project  
& Heartfelt Tidbits



**Kristen Barker**  
CUCI



**Maria Dienger**  
CUCI



**Chris Ashwell**  
Cincy Stories



**Shawn Braley**  
Cincy Stories



**Josephine Noel Heilpern**  
Ceramicist



**Jeff Warren**  
Illustrator



**Scottie Bellisemo**  
Woodworker



**Ben Orozco**  
Designer

## VISUAL ARTISTS

Caroline Woolard<sup>1</sup> is a New York-based artist who creates sculptures using online networks, handbuilt objects, and immersive environments. Woolard is the co-founder of cultural equity initiatives OurGoods.org (2008), TradeSchool.coop (2009), BFAMFAPhD.com (2013), and StudyCollaboration.com (2016).

With a background in community organizing, Mary Clare Rietz<sup>2</sup> is a Cincinnati-based artist who sees herself as facilitator. Mary Clare and her community collaborators use visual art to make place-based public works that point to possibilities for empathy, connection, and equity.

## COMMISSIONING ARTS ORGANIZATIONS

LISTEN was commissioned by the Contemporary Arts Center<sup>3</sup> and Wave Pool<sup>4</sup>.



Artists  
Reframing  
Community



## PROJECT SPONSOR

This project was funded by a grant from The Carol Ann and Ralph V. Haile, Jr./U.S. Bank Foundation.

The Carol Ann and  
Ralph V. Haile, Jr.



FOUNDATION

<sup>1</sup>carolinewoolard.com

<sup>2</sup>maryclarerietz.com

<sup>3</sup>contemporaryartscenter.org/exhibitions/2018/03/listen)

<sup>4</sup>wavepoolgallery.org/listen-with-caroline-woolard

## PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS



MORTAR<sup>1</sup> exists to ensure that all entrepreneurs and small businesses, regardless of socioeconomic status, gender, race, or background, have an opportunity to participate in the rejuvenation of our city.



Cincy Stories<sup>2</sup> exists to build community through story. We do this by hosting live storytelling events, creating people based documentaries and working in neighborhoods to engage communities using the tools of story.



Cincinnati Union Co-op Initiative<sup>3</sup> (CUCI) is a non-profit that partners with individuals and organizations to create worker- owned businesses that sustain families and help create an economy that works for all.



The Welcome Project<sup>4</sup> mission is to engage, integrate, and empower marginalized and at risk refugees and immigrants by providing community connections, employment, education and skills training.

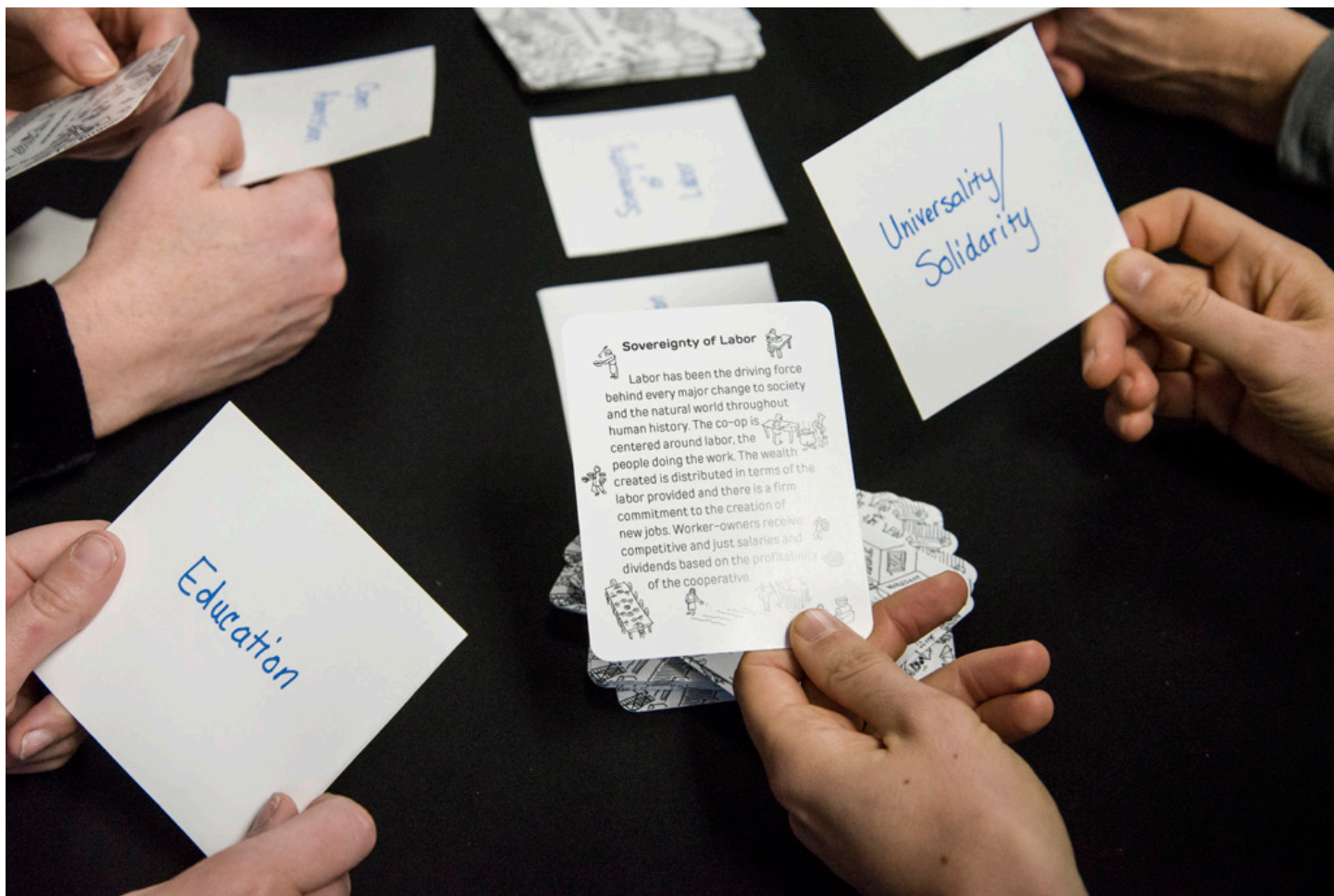
<sup>1</sup>[wearemortar.com](http://wearemortar.com)

<sup>2</sup>[cincystories.org](http://cincystories.org)

<sup>3</sup>[cincinnatiunioncoop.org](http://cincinnatiunioncoop.org)

<sup>4</sup>[welcomecincinnati.org](http://welcomecincinnati.org)





Testing the old and new versions of the Principles of Cooperation Card Game (one of three listening objects from LISTEN by Caroline Woolard) at the Neighborhood Summit in March 2018.

Photo by Maureen France.

## CASE STUDY AUTHORS

This document was initiated and written by visiting artist Caroline Woolard, with feedback and commentary from local facilitating artist Mary Clare Rietz, and commissioning arts partners Steven Matijcio, curator at the Contemporary Arts Center, and Cal Cullen, artist and executive director of Wave Pool. This document compiles a summary of LISTEN's process, a project timeline, notes on the approach, commentary by collaborators, and worksheets developed for LISTEN. We hope that it will serve as a case study to think through the possible forms of engagement when a visiting artist is invited by an arts institution to work in a geographic or professional community that the visiting artist does not regularly interact with.





Neighborhood storytelling  
gathering organized by  
MORTAR / CincyStories and  
Caroline Woolard in August.  
Photos by Mary Clare Rietz.

# PROCESS

## IN JANUARY 2017... Cal Cullen from Wave Pool and Steven Matijcio wrote to Caroline Woolard to invite her to create a work of socially engaged art in Cincinnati.

*Dear Caroline Woolard,*

*The Contemporary Arts Center and Wave Pool Arts Center are working in partnership to pilot a new Socially Engaged Arts program this year for and with the city of Cincinnati, Ohio entitled 'Shouting Distance.' This program will bring a prominent artist to Cincinnati to respond to community needs, facilitated in deep partnership with an organization and a specific neighborhood or community.*

*We're very interested in your work and were wondering if this might be of interest to you?*

*A few guidelines to note:*

- This project can begin at anytime but must be completed by November 1st, 2017.*
- Depending on your proposed project, we will work with you to find a compatible community partner and assist in building this connection.*
- The final project must have a strong visual presence*
- We have accommodations at Wave Pool for you (or can set up alternative housing if that location doesn't make sense), but are willing to work with you to figure out how much time you would actually be in Cincinnati for this project.*
- At least one artist talk or public performance would be expected.*
- We have an honorarium to offer the pilot 'Shouting Distance' artist as well as funds for supplies, travel and hospitality, and production/facilitation assistance.*

*If you are still reading this and are interested, we'd love to invite you to send us any thoughts or ideas you have. We'd be interested in hearing what concepts you're looking to expand on or if you have something that you'd love to try for which this might be a good fit. By understanding a little bit about the direction you're interested in heading with your work, we'll be able to think more deeply about opportunities, histories, and groups here that might be relevant and worth exploring. We're hoping that we can make this project as constructive and productive for you as it will be for us and the city of Cincinnati.*

*Thank you so much and we look forward to your reply,*

**Cal Cullen**

*Executive Director*

*Wave Pool: A Contemporary Art Fulfillment Center*

*513.600.6117*

*[www.wavepoolgallery.org](http://www.wavepoolgallery.org)*



## IN MARCH 2017...

After three or four phone calls between invited artist Caroline Woolard, Steven Matijcio from the CAC, and Cal Cullen from Wave Pool, invited artist Caroline Woolard proposed that the group adapt the Center for Urban Pedagogy's approach to bringing graphic designers and organizations together to support the organization's graphic design needs. Adapting this approach to socially engaged art means asking local organizations what they want, rather than assuming they want to implement a visiting artist's ideas. It took Caroline, Cal, and Steven a few months to come to consensus on this approach, and to shift the budget to match it.



Kristen Barker and Caroline Woolard.

Photo by Maureen France.

**IN MAY 2017...** Caroline proposed four ideas to local groups aligned with her efforts around economic justice. Caroline spoke with each group on the phone, first introducing herself and discussing possibilities and requirements for the project, which was commissioned by arts organizations who needed to demonstrate the project's impact to funders through an arts-based framework. A commissioning organization may support an invisible or less visible process, but always needs a public event, and often physical objects, to photograph and document that the funds were well spent. This project would have to fulfill the requirement for a "strong visual presence," even though the medium of social engagement is often about building relationships, a process that is not in itself visually compelling.

Caroline then gave the groups a series of options to choose from, including a set of tools for listening, a peer learning space, a sculptural installation based on conceptions of time, and a wild card idea that would be developed together, from scratch, and made sure each group knew that they would be paid for their time. The groups then had time to determine which projects, if any, were of interest to them.<sup>1</sup>



# PROCESS

Dear Sheryl, Mary Clare, Derrick, Bonnie,  
Mary, Katy, Lela, and Kristen,

I am so grateful for your time and support in speaking to me over the past few weeks. As you know, I am trying to do something that moves between art and social change in Cincinnati, and I would love to hear your feelings about my ideas in progress, if you have time. If you're too busy, that's ok!

I am very sensitive to the fact that many of you are overworked and under-resourced in a time of urgent social emergency, so I am offering 3 PROPOSALS for you each to weigh in on, over the next month, from now until June 1.

Please let me know what you think by June 1st, so I can begin to incorporate your feedback to make one project that most people here feel is relevant.

I appreciate any and all feedback by email: [carolinewoolard@gmail.com](mailto:carolinewoolard@gmail.com) or phone 929-522-9064 by June 1. Before I share 3 proposals with you, I want to reiterate the Background, my Skills, the Schedule, and the Budget, below.

If you don't have time, that is totally fine too. I want to hear from you if you have a strong feeling that one of these ideas is best.

Thanks so much!

Caroline

PS: I've pasted the proposals below and also attached this writing as a PDF, for easy printing.

## BACKGROUND

As you know from our conversations, I have been invited by Wave Pool and the Contemporary Arts Center to do a "socially engaged" art project in Cincinnati. The project should relate to the social issues facing residents today and must have a visual arts component. After I hear from you, I use your feedback to determine which project I feel will be of mutual growth for residents of the area, for each of you, and for the arts organizations. I will try to combine the feedback into one project. That project must be approved by Wave Pool and CAC. The project must also be documented for the funders of this project.

## MY SKILLS

I am a facilitator, educator, visual artist, graphic designer, and producer of large-scale, public, participatory art events. As an educator, I've been teaching undergraduate and graduate sculpture and design classes at the School of Visual Arts and the New School in New York City since 2010. As a visual artist, my projects range from a cafe performance space run at MoMA in New York City (<http://carolinewoolard.com/project/exchange-cafe/>) to coins I created to circulate as an alternative currency (<http://carolinewoolard.com/project/believing-stars/>).

In my work as a convener and creative director of solidarity economy and cooperative groups, I have helped to gather groups together and media projects like <http://SolidarityNYC.org>, <http://nycreic.com>, <http://tradeschool.coop>, and <http://landscapesofprofit.com>. I also make sculptures like tables for gathering (<http://carolinewoolard.com/project/capitoline-wolves/>) and card games for thinking about the commons (<http://bfamfaphd.com/cards>).

## SCHEDULE

I will visit for a week between August 13–21st, to begin work on a project with some of you, based on the proposal I determine is best from your feedback. I will then return for a few days in the fall (anytime Sept 3–Dec 3) to present the project with a public event. The date of my return will ideally be tied to an existing event you are already organizing, or an event that you want to attention drawn to.

## BUDGET

I have \$2000 to pay partner organizations, and imagine that I could pay each group \$500–800 (depending on the number of groups involved), or I could pay one group \$2000.

## PROPOSAL 1

Barter-based learning Space

## PROPOSAL 2

Object for Communication/Listening/Group Work

## PROPOSAL 3

Installation for Reflection

## PROPOSAL 4

You Decide!

# PROPOSAL 1 Barter-Based Learning Space

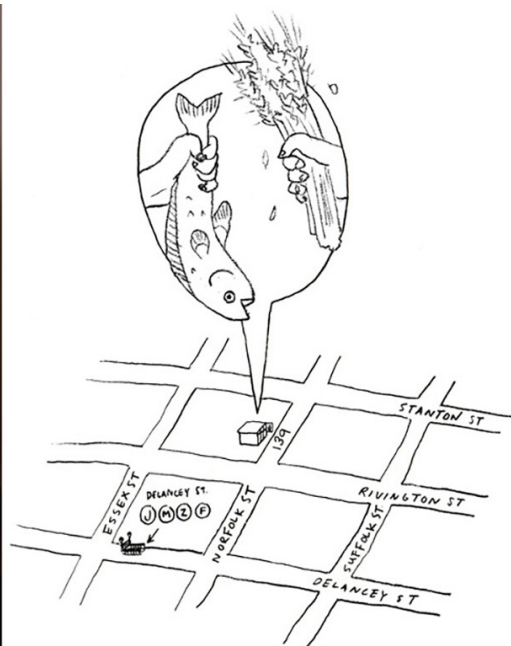
I facilitate the opening of a learning space that runs on barter, training the trainers to run the school using open source software and community organizing skills.

Trade School is a non-traditional learning community that runs on barter. We celebrate local wisdom, mutual respect, and the social nature of exchange. It works like this:

1. People offer to teach a class about something they know.
2. They decide on a list of barter items they're interested in receiving. Barter items can be in the form of goods or services, both tangible and intangible. For example: jars, music tips, clothes, vegetables, or help with something like finding an apartment.
3. Students sign up for their class by agreeing to bring something from their list.

You can see the online platform I developed with collaborators Or Zubalsky, Louise Ma, Rich Watts, and more at work here<sup>1</sup>, and the sign up system (we also have a robust back-end system where teachers propose classes and organizers approve them, as well as an email system to remind students).

You can watch a video about it here<sup>2</sup>.



TRADE, LEARN, WORK IN NEW YORK CITY.  
139 NORFOLK ST. JAN 25 - MAR | 2010

OPENING PARTY : SUNDAY JAN 24 6 PM

Trade School Coop flag and invitation featured on Caroline's website<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>tradeschool.coop/

<sup>2</sup>kickstarter.com/projects/OurGoods/trade-school-learning-spaces-that-run-on-barter

<sup>3</sup>carolinewoolard.com/system/tradeschoolcoop/

## PROPOSAL 2 *Object for Communication/Listening/Group Work*

*Through a series of workshops with members, I create a functional and beautiful set of objects that reflect a listening/collaboration process. Maybe it is a kind of rug, a talking stick, a bowl, or another object that members of a group use to set the space for a contemplative practice or a kind of dialog or group work.*

*People could learn the skills of listening, attention, and collaboration that are essential to any family, business, school, or team. Whether patrons are working on a new project, an entrepreneurial endeavor, or a community-based initiative, patrons will benefit from practice spaces for approaches to collaboration. Who can build something that they have not yet*

*imagined, drawn, debated, revised, and yet still desired? To communicate dreams—to create discursive spaces for imagination—the arts are essential. Great facilitation tools allow people to communicate across differences of opinion, experience, and expertise.*

*More information about the Center I have created in New York about this kind of group work<sup>1</sup>.*

Study Center<sup>2</sup>



## PROPOSAL 3 *Listening Sculpture*

*I create a space for reflection and dialog about hope for the future of Cincinnati, working with members and local residents to create a large-scale conversation about a shared topic of interest and an installation of kinetic/moving objects with water in a field.*

*It might feel like this:*

*On a Saturday afternoon, I found myself gathering with a large group of Cincinnati residents in a park (exact location TBD). Upon entering the park, I was given a small bowl with a tiny hole in the bottom. I walked over to the area where everyone was standing. I saw that they were gathered around an installation of many many oval-shaped objects on the ground.*

*Resting in the grass everyone was holding their bowl while looking at one hundred larger bowls, oval-shaped, like two hands cupped together, holding water. The stillness of the water in the bowls reflected the clouds in the sky overhead. After a moment of silence, we were asked to take the small bowls we were holding, sit for a moment with them, and make a wish for the future of our country. When we were done with our wish, we were instructed us to walk into the grass of the installation and to place our small bowl in one of the oval shaped larger bowls that made up the installation in the grass.*



Caroline Woolard, *Eye Amulet*, porcelain and water, 8" x 2" x 2", 2017.

Photo by Levi Mandel.

## PROPOSAL 4 *You Decide!*



## PROCESS

The groups were all most interested in the proposal about communication and listening (in their membership, in their organizations, and between members, organizations, and the public).

Caroline, Cal, and Steven hired Mary Clare Reitz, a local artist who was excited to facilitate daily engagement with the groups throughout the process, as Caroline is based in New York City. Mary Clare started by conducting in-person interviews using questions about listening practices that Caroline and Mary Clare designed together. Mary Clare wrote up key anecdotes from the interviews and shared them with Caroline and Cal from Wave Pool, to assist Caroline when she visited for the first time, in-person, in August. After a week-long visit in August, where the groups brainstormed with Caroline and then confirmed what ideas for tools for listening were most interesting to them, Caroline began to prototype sculptural tools, and to refine these objects in dialog with the partner organizations in the fall and winter.

# PROPOSAL

Derrick,

Great to talk yesterday! Here is what resonated with me from our conversation, typed up now as a proposal.

Caroline Woolard serves as an arts/service design consultant to MORTAR and the story-telling organization (Name?) with the intention of creating a framework for the two organizations to work together and for the public to understand their partnership more easily. Possible deliverables include ideas for marketing the partnership, a service design map, and a sculptural object to be used for listening.

## **SCHEDULE**

I will visit for a week between August 13–21st, to begin work on a project with some of you, based on the proposal I determine is best from your feedback. I will then return for a few days in the fall (anytime Sept 3 – Dec 3) to present the project with a public event. The date of my return will ideally be tied to an existing event you are already organizing, or an event that you want to attention drawn to.

## **BUDGET**

I am coming to Ohio with a grant from Wave Pool and will have my labor covered by them. I have up to \$2000 to pay partner organizations, and imagine that I could pay each group \$500–800 (depending on the number of groups involved), or I could pay one group \$2000. They will also make a video about our work together, and write about our work for purposes of their grant.

## **ADDITIONAL IDEAS TO TALK ABOUT**

Through a series of workshops with members, I could create a functional and beautiful set of objects that reflect a listening / collaboration process. Maybe it is a kind of rug, a talking stick, a bowl, or another object that visitors to the space could use while telling stories about the neighborhood and local businesses.

More information about the Center I have created in New York about this kind of approach to making objects for group work is here: <https://vimeo.com/198242353/34f85d904a>

Let me know what you'd like me to edit/alter before you send it on.

Thanks again,

Caroline

William Thomas II of MORTAR  
and Shawn Braley of Cincy  
Stories presenting their project  
with Caroline Woolard.

Photo by Maureen France.



## TIMELINE

- January – May** **Designing the Process of Working Together**
- Conversations with all partners and proposal creation.
  - 5 hours of Mary Clare’s work / 20 hours of Caroline’s work
- May – June** **Design Questions**
- “Do you want an artist to create an object for listening / contemplation in your organization?” See the questionnaire at the end of this document.
  - To work with: Heartfelt Tidbits (Sheryl) , (Kristen) CUCI, Mortar (Derrick) 5 hours of Mary Clare’s work / 5 hours of Caroline’s work
- June – July** **Interviews – specific questions**
- When you hit obstacles, what is missing in communication? What would the desire be? See the *Interviews for Community-Engaged Design of Objects for Listening* questionnaire at the end of this section.
  - To work with: Heartfelt Tidbits (Sheryl) , (Kristen) CUCI, Mortar (Derrick).
  - Mary Clare emphasizes in-person Aug 13–20 meetings and confirms their availability then \$100 per group x 3 groups = \$300 / 5 hours of Mary Clare’s work
- July – August** **Synthesis of Interviews**
- “What is wanted?” Resonant anecdote / quotation.
  - 5 hours of Mary Clare’s work
  - 3 hours of Caroline’s work

# TIMELINE

## **August Week-long Visit**

- “Would this object speak to your desire / obstacle in communication?”
- Prototyping / dialog all week in gatherings with partners
- \$100 per group x 3 groups = \$300
- 5 hours of Mary Clare’s work / 40 hours of Caroline’s work

## **September – November First Round of Designs from Caroline**

- 80 hours of Caroline’s work

## **November – December First round of Feedback from partners**

- \$100 per group x 3 groups = \$300
- 5 hours of Mary Clare’s work / 5 hours of Caroline’s work

## **December – March Production of final objects**

- 5 hours of Mary Clare’s work / 80 hours of Caroline’s work
- \$100 per group x 3 groups = \$300

## **March Final Presentation / Celebration (in person with Caroline)**

- 40 hours of Caroline’s work / 10 hours of Mary Clare’s work
- \$100 per group x 3 groups = \$300

## **April Reflection Document**

- 20 hours of Caroline’s work
- 10 hours of Cal, Steven, and Mary Clare’s work

Each object is a response to an organization’s unique way of listening: a storytelling game using small bronze objects for MORTAR and Cincy Stories, sets of ceramic cups for Welcome Editions, and a card game about cooperation for the Cincinnati Union Co-op Initiative.

The final objects were presented first at the CAC, at a private, intimate event with the participating organizations and people who teach, fund, or participate in socially engaged art in Cincinnati, and again at the Cincinnati Neighborhood Summit, an annual civic engagement event with 400+ attendees.



Shouting Distance Budget	To Whom	Actuals	
<b>INCOME</b>			
The Carol Ann and Ralph V. Haile, Jr./U.S. Bank Foundation		20000	
The Welcome Project Editions		4000	
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>24000</b>	
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Welcome Editions Cups and Boxes Fabrication	Scott Bellissimo flat fee	-4000	
Brochure Design and Editing	Anna Maffey	-600	
<i>Artist Honorarium*</i>	<i>see below</i>	<i>-8000</i>	
Artist Travel	Caroline Woolard	-604.27	
Artist Per Diem/Housing	Caroline Woolard	-600	
Artist Housing	Hotel 21C	-375	
Partners	MORTAR / Cincy Stories, CUCI, Welcome F	-1500	
<i>Materials / Contractors*</i>	<i>see below</i>	<i>-4500</i>	
Marketing	postcards, dinner at Littlefield	-400	
Photography	Maureen France	-500	
Hospitality	Catering at the CAC	-850	
Local Facilitating Artist	Mary Clare Rietz	-1000	
<b>Total Expense</b>		<b>-22929.27</b>	
Income		24000	
<b>NET</b>		<b>1070.73</b>	
<i>*see below:</i>			
<b>Artists Honorarium</b>			
Artist Fee for proposals / research / emails / calls	Caroline Woolard 90 hours at \$25/hr	-2250	
Artist Fee for week-long site visit	Caroline Woolard flat fee	-750	
Artist Fee for sketches / prototypes / iterations	Caroline Woolard 140 hours at \$25/hr	-3500	
Artist Fee for writing / reflection	Caroline Woolard flat fee	-500	
Artist Fee for final public events	Caroline Woolard flat fee	-1000	
		<b>-8000</b>	
<b>Materials / Contractors</b>			
Copyeditor for Case Study	Helen Hofling	-300	
General Admin Project Management Assistance in NYC	Eli Hill 20 hours at \$15/hr	-300	
Postcards and CUCI test cards	Seemless printing flat fee	-60	
Fabrication Casting round A for Mortar / CincyStories	Shapeways flat fee	-149	
Fabrication Casting round B for Mortar / CincyStories	Shapeways flat fee	-189	
Fabrication Casting round C for Mortar / CincyStories	Shapeways flat fee	-547	
Fabrication Casting round D for Mortar / CincyStories	Shapeways flat fee	-120	
Project Rendering Assistance	Eugene Chang 30 hours at \$20/hr	-600	
Mortar / CincyStories Rendering Assistance	Tianyang Xie 20 hours at \$20/hr	-400	
CUCI illustration collaboration	Jeff Warren flat fee	-250	
CUCI design assistance	Ben Orozco 10 hours at \$20/hr	-\$200	
Mortar / CincyStories boxes	Scott Bellissimo flat fee	-300	
Fabrication of Welcome Project boxes (paid directly by Wave)	Scott Bellissimo flat fee	\$0	
Welcome Project (paid directly by Wave Pool)	Josey Heilpern - ceramics	\$0	
Welcome Project Advertisement	Listing Project / Stephanie Diamond (\$7000)	\$0	
Photography	Levi Mandel	-300	
Printing Postcards for CUCI	Union Printer TBA	-285	
		<b>-\$4,000</b>	
<p>Budget Notes:</p> <p>"Cal and Steven agreed to adjust the initial budget to pay the partner organizations, but I think partner organizations should be paid more, particularly for being present at public events and for taking time to reflect upon the project. I also worked far more hours than I was paid for. The local facilitating artist, in this case, Mary Clare Rietz, needs to be paid far more, as she put in at least 90 hours, if not more."</p> <p>- Caroline Woolard</p> <p>"No administration costs were accounted for with this project. This might normally be covered under overhead/staff costs of an organization, but for Wave Pool - we were completely volunteer-run until April 2017, and even now need to budget for admin/overhead with every grant in order to make sure our staff has a paycheck. I've learned from this that with every budget we need to account for our own staff in order to sustain ourselves." - Cal Cullen</p>			

# INTERVIEWS FOR COMMUNITY-ENGAGED DESIGN OF OBJECTS FOR LISTENING

*Your group's experience with listening*

*Was there a moment when people in your group were able to listen to one another deeply enough to change their mind?*

*If so, what allowed that to happen? Did it have anything to do with a process or a facilitator?*

*Was there a moment when your group was listened to (by the board/outside group / important figure) deeply enough to change their mind? How did this happen?*

*If so, what allowed it to happen? Did it have anything to do with a process or a facilitator?*

*Inquiry re: objects as tools for listening/communication*

*Artist Caroline Woolard wants to create, in dialog with each of you, objects that facilitate listening.*

*The object is not going to do more than the people can. These objects exist to celebrate and build on the successes groups and individuals have had with communication and listening, moments when your mind was changed AND moments when you changed the mind of other people. Think of it as a "trophy" to listening that you actually use, a tool imbued with power of what has worked in the past. A few tools will be made, and all of them will stay in the area.*

*What is an object for listening? An object for listening could be an object that reminds people how much they are speaking, it could be a timekeeping device, it could be an object for meditation or moments of silence, or it could be a rug that encourages people to step on the area that they are speaking from (a yellow area if they are proposing a new idea, a red area if they are responding to an idea, or a blue area if they are mediating between a new idea and a response). It could be a way to make a collective wish together.*

# INTERVIEWS FOR COMMUNITY-ENGAGED DESIGN OF OBJECTS FOR LISTENING

*Have you ever used a talking piece or talking stick in your org? If so, how did it feel?*

*Have you ever taken moment of silence in your group/organization, or started a meeting or event with a centering practice or other practice of being present in your body and mind?*

*Are there spiritual/religious/listening/facilitation practices that you bring into your group/organization?*

*Do you know of any spiritual/religious/contemplative/facilitation practices that members practice at home and might be interested in bringing into the organization?*

*Do any of your existing practices around a moment of silence or spirit/religion in your group/organization include objects? If so, what are they?*

*Have you ever had an experience in which an object or ritual supported or improved communication? If so, was it effective? How did it work?*

*What do you think about the idea of an object as a tool that celebrates and builds on prior success in communication?*

*What possibilities do you see?*

*What skepticism do you feel?*

*Do you want Caroline Woolard to work with you to create an object for listening or communication in your group/organization?*

*Is there someone in your community that Caroline Woolard could work with (and be paid) to create an object together for your group or organization, so that the object better reflects local skills and wisdom?*

*Last thoughts?*

## Logistics

*Are you available to meet with Caroline between Aug 14–18? This is the only time she can be here in person between now and the final presentation, so she really hopes you can meet!*

*What days/times might be good?*

*Do any of your members/staff create objects/crafts/art? If so, what skills do they have and what kinds of objects do they create? Do you think they'd want to work with Caroline to create an object?*

*Do you think any of your members/staff would be interested in making objects for listening? Possibilities:*

*Workshops: making things with Caroline from Aug 14–18!*

*Paid contract work: Caroline working with members/staff to make things from December–February.*

*Thank you!*



Untitled  
Photo by Maureen France.

APPROACH



## APPROACH

When starting a socially engaged art project, it is helpful to have conversations about the range of approaches and impacts that the commissioning art organizations, the commissioned artist(s) and the non-arts organization(s) value<sup>1</sup>.

Caroline Woolard speaking to socially engaged artists Amanda Curreri and Anissa Lewis.

Photo by Maureen France.



# APPROACH TO SOCIALLY ENGAGED ART

01 / 04

Using the sliders below, mark off the area of the slider that matters most to you at this time.

When starting a socially engaged art, it is helpful to have conversations about the range of approaches and impacts the people involved value, and why.<sup>1</sup>

## Discussion / Writing Prompt

Take time to journal, and then talk about, the tensions or contradictions that you notice, when navigating the sliders as you work with an artist, an arts organization, or an organizational partner.

## AESTHETICS

Social • • • • • Fine Art

## ROLE OF THE ARTIST

Facilitator • • • • • Creative Agent

## ORIGIN OF THE ARTIST

Rooted In • • • • • From Outside

# APPROACH TO SOCIALLY ENGAGED ART

02 / 04

Using the sliders below, mark off the area of the slider that matters most to you at this time.

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## THE WORK

Process • • • • • Product

## IMPACT

Inward • • • • • Outward  
(Serving a Community) (Reaching Others)

## ORIGIN OF THE WORK

Community-Generated • • • • • Generated Outside

# APPROACH TO SOCIALLY ENGAGED ART

03 / 04

Using the sliders below, mark off the area of the slider that matters most to you at this time.

When starting a socially engaged art, it is helpful to have conversations about the range of approaches and impacts the people involved value, and why.<sup>1</sup>

## Discussion / Writing Prompt

Take time to journal, and then talk about, the tensions or contradictions that you notice, when navigating the sliders as you work with an artist, an arts organization, or an organizational partner.

## PLACE

Place Specific • • • • • Not Place Specific

## ISSUE

Single Issue • • • • • Multi-Issue

## DURATION

Short Term • • • • • Long Term



# APPROACH TO SOCIALLY ENGAGED ART

04 / 04

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## Discussion / Writing Prompt

Take time to journal, and then talk about, the tensions or contradictions that you notice, when navigating the sliders as you work with an artist, an arts organization, or an organizational partner.

When starting a socially engaged art, it is helpful to have conversations about the range of approaches and impacts the people involved value, and why.<sup>1</sup>

Notes for Discussion:

# APPROACH CONCLUSIONS

For example, LISTEN was more about social engagement than about producing fine art objects, more about Caroline as a creative agent than about Caroline as a facilitator, and definitely more about Caroline engaging from the outside than about an artist rooted in community.

The groups disagreed about whether this initiative was more about product more than process and whether it was about inward impact more than outward impact. They agreed that the ideas were generated outside, were not community-generated, and that the project was a multi-issue work that was short term, not long term.

## AESTHETICS



“More towards social due to the conversations, interaction, feedback and involvement with the Heartfelt Tidbits participants.”

Sheryl Rajbhandari, Welcome Project

“While this process certainly could have gone in the other direction, I appreciated the ability to bring the art down to a human level for every day folks to have an opportunity to engage with it.”

Shawn Braley, Cincy Stories

## ROLE OF THE ARTIST



“Definatly creative agent. Caroline did an amazing job of getting this group of women who struggle to find their voice, feel comfortable enough to share their thoughts and ideas. What was interesting was the bond that they felt with her in that they were willing to share very honest opinions of prototypes and drawings that she shared.”

Sheryl Rajbhandari, Welcome Project

“Caroline and Mary Clare had many creative ideas and brought the collective ideas the group had to life, but it was done in a way that felt very honoring to the ideas presented by both us and MORTAR.”

Shawn Braley, Cincy Stories

“Caroline was wonderful at taking out ideas and making sense of them. It was neat to see how she was able create based off our discussions.”

William Thomas II, MORTAR

# APPROACH CONCLUSIONS

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## ORIGIN OF THE ARTIST



“I think it would’ve been nice to have Caroline on site while she was building some of the prototypes or in person for the discussions because they were so rich. I’ve given multiple examples above related to what worked the best and that was the empowerment it gave to the women who participated. It would’ve been great to have a bit more time on the end so that Caroline could have shown the women her final product herself.”

Sheryl Rajbhandari, Welcome Project

“While Caroline is truly talented and genuine, the nature of being from another city and having rare opportunities for face time with her made this feel more like it was from the outside than rooted in.”

Shawn Braley, Cincy Stories

“Caroline was very collaborative. I felt her connection was rooted from the outside, but that also helped to bring a different perspective to it.”

William Thomas II, MORTAR



Concept rendering by Caroline Woolard with assistance from Eugene Chang.

# APPROACH CONCLUSIONS

For example, LISTEN was more about social engagement than about producing fine art objects, more about Caroline as a creative agent than about Caroline as a facilitator, and definitely more about Caroline engaging from the outside than about an artist rooted in community.

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## THE WORK



“Overall it was a fantastic experience and I know the women really enjoyed their time with her and felt that she respected them and truly wanted and valued their viewpoints. This hasn’t been the case with all of the artists they have worked with so I feel it’s a very sincere comment from them. Thanks for this and making our world a brighter place through the sharing of your gifts and talents!”

Sheryl Rajbhandari, Welcome Project

“I’d say it’s a little of both on this one. We were brought in, by MORTAR, to be a part of this. But ultimately, I think it would have been better for us to have been separate. A big reason being us no longer sharing a space – which we didn’t expect to happen when we started this project, but also because our organizations likely had different needs for this and the compromises we needed to make to fit both of our needs made the outcome less useful than it could have been with two distinctly separate ideas. This isn’t to say that Caroline didn’t do a wonderful job of synthesizing the collaborative ideas we had, it is just to say that we could have been free to think directly of the work we do (same for MORTAR) and build from there.”

Shawn Braley, Cincy Stories



Concept rendering by Caroline Woolard with assistance from Eugene Chang.

“Agreed.”

William Thomas II, MORTAR



# APPROACH CONCLUSIONS

For example, LISTEN was more about social engagement than about producing fine art objects, more about Caroline as a creative agent than about Caroline as a facilitator, and definitely more about Caroline engaging from the outside than about an artist rooted in community.

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## IMPACT



“From the dreaming stages, this is totally a work of community origin. Obviously, it was crafted by Caroline and another artist (whose name escapes me) but this didn’t feel like it was a total outside origination, even if the artist was outside of the community”

Shawn Braley, Cincy Stories

“Agreed.”

William Thomas II, MORTAR



Concept rendering by Caroline Woolard with assistance from Eugene Chang.

# APPROACH CONCLUSIONS

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## ORIGIN OF THE WORK

Community-generated

• • • • •

Generated Outside

“Sometimes an outsider is exactly what’s called for. Caroline Woolard has deep, on-the-ground, hands-on experience with community and artistic engagement in her own home city of New York and beyond, around issues from equitable development, to barter economies, to shared spaces and objects for learning, presence, and listening. Cincinnati has a few active social practice artists, but for most Cincinnatians the idea of “social practice art” is likely to elicit puzzled looks. Most haven’t heard of it, don’t know what it is. It helps to have a known and respected institution (the Contemporary Arts Center), and a known and respected community-based arts center (Wave Pool) say to Cincinnati, in essence, “Social Practice Art is a vibrant and valuable genre within fine art. Here’s an example of an artist and project in that field being done right here. We think this is important, and could offer something good to our city.” It helps to have someone who is cultivating significant experience and mastery in the field to come and show us how it can be done.

Of course, because social practice art is, well, social, Caroline didn’t just come into town and make art on her own. She partnered with four community groups. The challenges brought by the fact that she doesn’t live here were mitigated by having me serve as bridge between her and

the groups. My deep roots here helped ground Caroline’s work. That was key. It didn’t have to be me, but it did need to be someone, and hats off to the CAC, Wave Pool, and Caroline for seeing the value in that and putting resources to it.

This project brought social practice art to Cincinnati in a bigger more visible way than it has existed to date. So our city benefited, but I gained something important too. I had a lot of quality time with Caroline. Because of who she is and how she works – down to earth, generous, open and transparent, a teacher by nature – I had access to how she was thinking about the project, and at points got to think and talk through how to solve problems with her. And now I have a relationship with her. This brings value not only to me as a social practice artist, but to Cincinnati; now our city has in me an active social practice artist with a relationship to a leader in our field. All of us who worked with Caroline on Listen have this. We have what we learned, we have more connected relationships with each other, and we have our friendship with Caroline.”

Mary Clare Rietz, Facilitating Artist

# APPROACH CONCLUSIONS

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## PLACE



“In the middle. The teacups were very much created from the ideas that the women provided yet they could be utilized in any setting or situation to prompt conversation and listening.”

Sheryl Rajbhandari, Welcome Project

## THE WORK



“When the project began the intent was to focus on a single issue, listening. I believe that the process we went through addressed multiple issues, such as not only listening but empowering people to feel comfortable enough to express themselves. I would move the bar a bit towards multi-issue because the end product, the teacups lend themselves towards conversations that are multifaceted and may involve solving or discussing multiple issues.”

Sheryl Rajbhandari, Welcome Project



Concept rendering by Caroline Woolard with assistance from Eugene Chang.



Concept rendering by Caroline Woolard with assistance from Eugene Chang.

# APPROACH CONCLUSIONS

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## PLACE

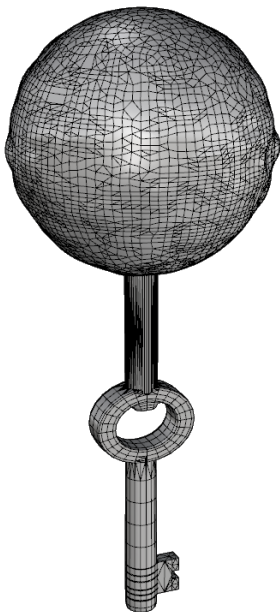


“I’m not quite sure because I don’t have a lot of experience related to what this type of project would generally take. The ladies say our time with Caroline was way too short.”

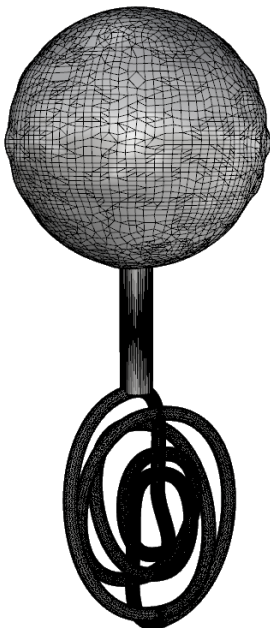
“Agreed.”

William Thomas II, MORTAR

Sheryl Rajbhandari, Welcome Project



Concept rendering by Caroline Woolard with assistance from Tianyang Xie.







Untitled for MORTAR and Cincy  
Stories.

Photo by Maureen France.

# COMMENTARY

## COMMENTARY

1. Engagement
2. Art
3. Time/Scale/Money

Caroline Woolard saw at least three major areas of danger for socially engaged projects made by visiting artists like Caroline, who are invited by arts institutions to work in a neighborhood or professional community other than those that the artist is regularly in contact with, and which the arts institutions do not have regular contact with.



Photo by Maureen France.

## ENGAGEMENT Danger that the visiting artist will cause harm.

“When anyone claims to “do good” and begins to work with a group or in neighborhood that they do not intend to return to, it is far more likely that the group or neighborhood is helping that person than the other way around (the visitor helping). I know that the person who spends the most time on the project will be transformed, and that person is likely me.

I asked myself, “How long will I really be involved in this area? Would I be involved if I were not invited to go there? If not, is there a way that I can connect an issue that I am working on locally to a group in the visiting location?”

In this project, I tried to be upfront about the limits of my engagement with partner organizations, to pay them for their time, and to make sure I met their goals for the project as well as my own goals, and the art institutions’ goals. For example, with CUCI, I decided to act as a graphic designer of sorts, making an illustration/design project with cards, as that was most appealing to them, and I know we can use it in the coop movement in NYC.”

Caroline Woolard, Visiting Artist

## ENGAGEMENT Danger that the visiting artist will cause harm.

“As someone often attempting to bring artists into communities for positive social change, I often find myself having to navigate the territory of engaging visiting artists with communities that are not their own. I really appreciated Caroline being upfront about her schedule as well as her knowledge and background that would all play a role in how she could best connect with and understand certain communities within our city as a visiting artist.”

Cal Cullen, Wave Pool

“The CAC formed a Community Engagement Council in the Spring of 2017 to help establish a dialogical model when working with various communities on art-inspired projects. Rather than “impose” an artist and/or project upon a community, we aimed to listen to community wants and needs; determine which of those an arts organization could realistically address; and connect these aims with an artist/s who could engage them through the lens of art. Caroline was sensitive to these circumstances and thoughtful about how best to organize a project that would not be weighed down with politics before it began in full.”

Steven Matijcio, Contemporary Arts Center



Concept rendering by Caroline Woolard with assistance from Eugene Chang.



# ENGAGEMENT Worksheet

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01 / 02

For the Visiting Artist

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What is your relationship to this place, and to the people you are working with?  
How does this impact the project?

To whom are you accountable?  
How do you know?

How will you address and use your positional power in this project, as someone who has been invited with resources into an area that may be under-resourced?  
Will you address it directly, with the groups you work with? If so, how?

Consider taking this survey:  
Find Your Powerprint<sup>1</sup>

To whom are the partner organizations accountable? How do you know?

# ENGAGEMENT Worksheet

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02 / 02

For the Partner Organizations

---

Do you currently prioritize experiences of nuance, reflection, or beauty in your organization? If so, describe the last one that was significant.

If so, what resources do you give toward these experiences, compared to resources for fundraising, graphic design, and staff who do not exclusively work on these experiences?

If not, how much time do you imagine you would be able to give to working on/prioritizing an experience like this?

## ART Danger that the objects made will be “ugly.”

“It is very difficult for a visiting artist to make an object with non-artists that both the visiting artist and the non-artists believe is “art” because most people do not receive advanced art education in public high schools, and therefore have different ideas about beauty and references than the visiting artist. In the best cases, if funding and time allow, the non-artists and the artists can train one another in the references and techniques that matter to them. For example, the mural arts organization Groundswell does this, taking paid summer students to art museums while training them in art techniques and having debates about the figures represented in murals for a year before they design and create a mural with a visiting artist.

Welcome Project/Heartfelt Tidbits, I had the most difficulty, because I knew that the women responded best to images I showed them of pattern and color, whereas I am drawn to form and white or solid colors. I decided to try to strike a balance between a form I am interested in, and a glaze/color scheme/pattern they were interested in, with a lotus flower on the bottom. With Cincy Stories and MORTAR, I allowed myself to lead the creation of the objects, as they seemed the most open to nuance and the quirkiness of stories allowed the objects to feel the most like “contemporary art” to me.”

Caroline Woolard, Visiting Artist

I ask myself, “How much will the objects and experiences I make matter to the partner organizations, in comparison to how much they matter to me? When should I ask for their participation in decision-making, and when should I move forward, making decisions that aim to balance their needs while acknowledging that they may have less concern for the “art” than I do?

In this project, with CUCL, I decided to act as a graphic designer of sorts, making an illustration/design project with cards, as that was most appealing to them, and I know we can use it in the coop movement in NYC. With the

Concept rendering by Caroline Woolard with assistance from Eugene Chang.



# ART Danger that the objects made will be “ugly.”

“I have begun to question the importance of making sure that objects created are viewed as art by non-artists. It seems more important, especially in the context of social practice, that objects/installations/experiences created are utilized and loved by the communities they are meant to collaborate with. The point of most social practice works is not that of arts education but of some other social cause and therefore any realizations of an expanded view of what art is or what it can be by a non-arts public is an addendum to the original mission of the work. It is very important however, that these objects be seen as art by the arts community, for the sake of the artist and the organizations and funders backing them. Seeing these objects and interactions as art is imperative for the promotion and identity of the artist creating the work, further educational opportunities on social practice and community engagement through art, and the overall advancement of contemporary art in this direction.”

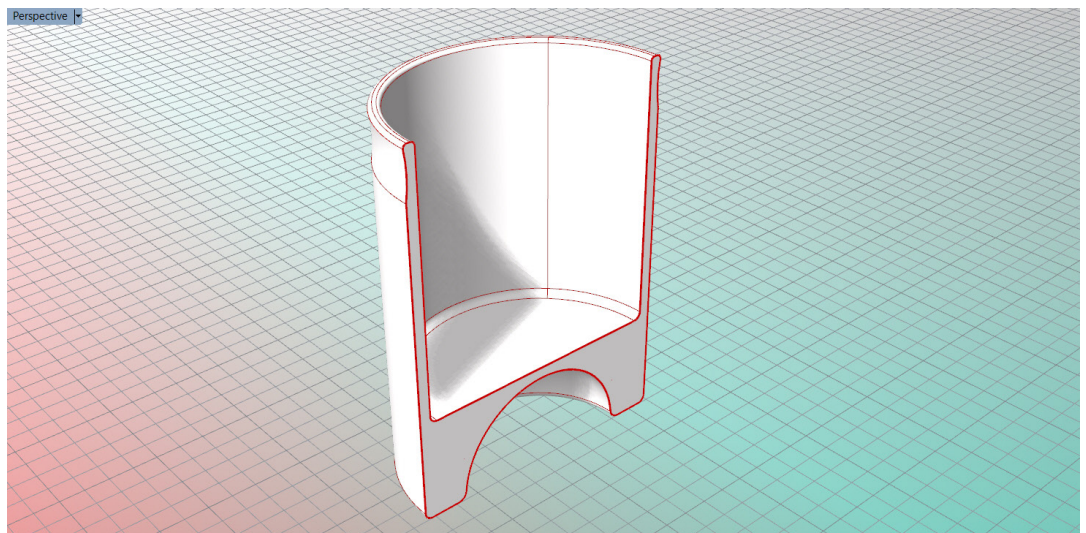
Cal Cullen, Wave Pool

“Hear Hear!!”

Mary Clare, Facilitating Artist

“As much as I want to believe that we are past the dominion of the object in the world of art, the question of some form of tangible product remains relevant when working with communities and funders. We know that process can have fundamental value, but it is more challenging to communicate that notion with those that do not work in the discourse of contemporary art on a regular basis. The CAC and Wave Pool felt some level of need and responsibility to launch the “Shouting Distance” series of community engaged projects with results that could be appreciated by a variety of constituencies. Caroline was sensitive to these conditions and navigated desires from multiple parties with grace and understanding.”

Steven Matijcio, Contemporary Arts Center



Concept rendering by Caroline Woolard with assistance from Eugene Chang.



# ART Worksheet

01 / 01

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For Visiting Artist, Local Artist, Inviting Arts  
Organizations, and Partner Organizations

---

When someone says “art,” what comes to mind?  
Write any words, names, or places down..

Who in your organization is an artist, trained  
formally or informally, or as a hobby? What do  
they make?

What are your references for “great” works of  
socially engaged or community arts, if any, and  
why are they important works of art?

How did you learn about these works of socially  
engaged art, if at all?

Do you have very discrete needs for designed  
and printed materials to share what you do?  
Please note that it is NOT likely that the visiting  
artist and the art institutions will be able to  
support this work.

# TIME/SCALE/MONEY AGREEMENTS

Suzanne Lacy, socially engaged artist and educator, explains that artists need to speak to arts organizations about how to balance time, scale, and money in order to create a project that meets their expectations and does not exploit the artist or the partner organizations involved.

## Agreements:

“I began by explaining that I needed to balance time, money, and scale in order to do a project that would benefit all of the parties involved. I pushed back on the initial request that was presented to me, and the arts institutions agreed to work with me.

For example, at first, Wave Pool and the Contemporary Art Center wanted me to speak on the phone for an unlimited number of hours, to work with three to four organizations, visit the site multiple times, and finish the project within ten months of the signed agreement, for a budget of \$20,000 that included all flights,

hotel stays, printing, hospitality, and artists’ fees. Also, while I wanted the objects to be produced in the spring and presented in the late spring or summer, at an event from May–August 2018, Wave Pool and the CAC needed the event to occur earlier, in March, at the latest.

After talking and going through the budget, I agreed to work with three to four organizations, but only if Wave Pool and the Contemporary Art Center understood that the scale would have to change, as the time and the money were not changing. They understood that the partner organizations would have limited contact with me and limited rounds to review the ideas.”

Caroline Woolard, Visiting Artist



Concept rendering by Caroline Woolard with assistance from Eugene Chang.

# TIME/SCALE/MONEY AGREEMENTS

Wave Pool and the Contemporary Art Center also agreed to:

## TIME

I would only be able to accept limited rounds of feedback from partner organizations

## SCALE

I would be able to make small objects for each organization, not a big event, so Wave Pool and the CAC would find local, previously scheduled events that already gathered a broad public (this became the Neighborhood Summit)

## MONEY

The CAC/Wave Pool would open up additional funds for the objects, if possible (\$4,000 more in the end, from Wave Pool through Welcome Editions)

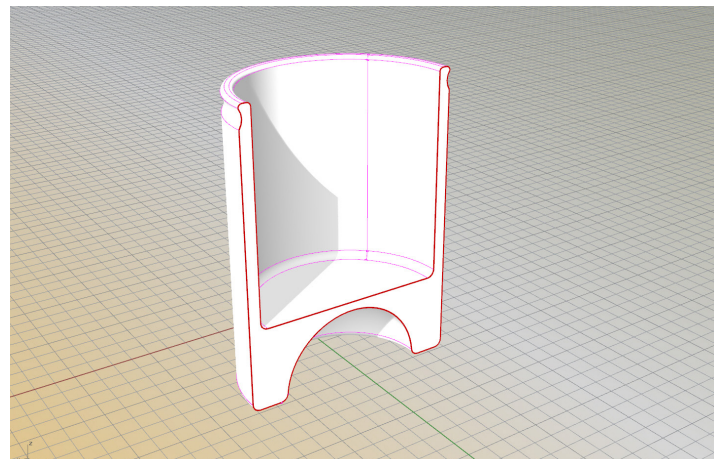
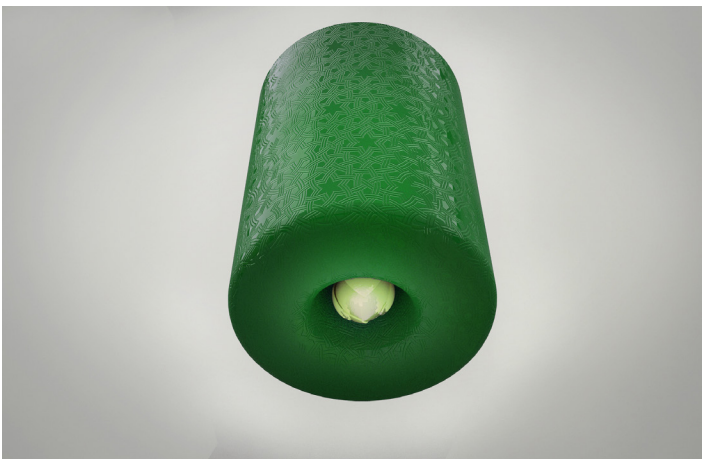
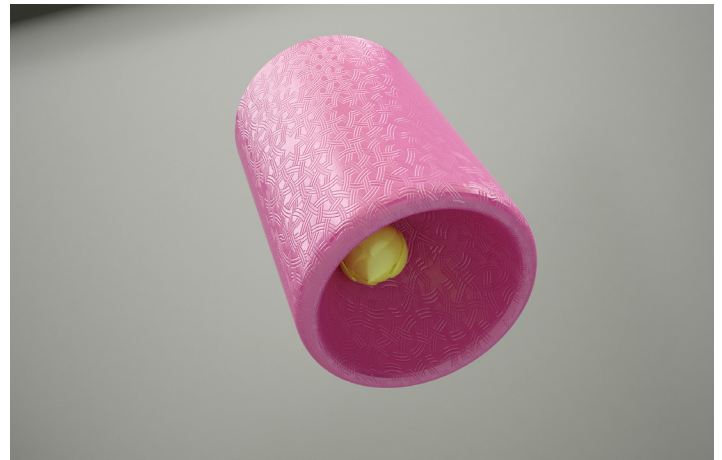
## MONEY/TIME

Emails and phone calls were included in the hourly rate for the project

An artist with deep roots in the area was hired to facilitate the project on the ground

The partner organizations had to be paid for their time in the project

Concept rendering by Caroline Woolard with assistance from Eugene Chang.



# TIME/SCALE/MONEY REALITIES OF GOALS AGREEMENTS

The Carol Ann and Ralph V. Haile,  
Jr./U.S. Bank Foundation

## **Funder/Philanthropists' Primary Goals:**

To provide a charitable service/to get a tax write-off. Funders need documentation of the ways their money has been spent, for the IRS, as any non-profit must demonstrate that it operates in a charitable way as provides a service that would otherwise be provided by the state.

Wave Pool  
Contemporary Arts Center

## **Inviting Art Institution's Primary Goals:**

To share a meaningful art experience with a broad public, to get more funding in the future for projects from funders, to raise visibility for socially engaged art in the area, and to deepen connections with participating organizations. To do this, the institution may support an invisible or less visible process, but always needs a public event, and often objects, to photograph and document that the funds were well spent.



Concept rendering by Caroline Woolard with assistance from Eugene Chang.



# TIME/SCALE/MONEY REALITIES OF GOALS AGREEMENTS

Caroline Woolard

## Visiting Artist's Primary Goals:

To create a project that will be meaningful for the artist, the partner organization, and the wider public, and to get more support in the future. To do this, the artist is balancing the partner organization's needs with their own needs.

Mary Clare Rietz

## Local Facilitating Artists' Goals:

To learn from the visiting artist, to raise visibility for socially engaged art in the area, and to deepen connections with participating organizations.

MORTAR  
Cincy Stories  
CUCI

Welcome Project

## Partner Organization's Goals:

To raise visibility about their work; to add beauty, reflection, and nuance to their work.



Photo by Maureen France.

# TIME/SCALE/MONEY REALITIES OF GOALS AGREEMENTS

“Though conversations about money are often difficult, I appreciated Caroline’s openness and honesty when it came to the reality of her time and worth. Where in most professions preliminary planning conversations are not billable, this perhaps is different in the case of social practice where planning can be the majority of the scope of work.”

Cal Cullen, Wave Pool

“The relationship between time, money, and value is certainly more present and heightened in the world of socially engaged art. As much as institutions feel confident and/or curious to work in this field, it demands a recalibration of conventional procedures and expectations to be successful. Missteps in this arena can engender damaging backlash and resentment at multiple stages along the way. This field has more risk attached to it than almost any other in the visual and performing arts, which makes it captivating, necessary, and sensitive. I know that Cal and I learned a great deal working with Caroline through the process, and despite moments when getting on the same page was a challenge, we appreciated her frankness and patience immensely. The ability to have difficult conversations towards a worthy end goal is crucial in educating all parties involved, including the organizers.”

Steven Matijcio, Contemporary Arts Center



Photo by Maureen France.

# TIME/SCALE/MONEY AGREEMENTS

## Worksheet 1

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01 / 02

For Visiting Artist, Local Artist, Inviting Arts  
Organizations, and Partner Organizations

---

What do you hope to accomplish with this  
project?

What do you need from the other parties in  
order to accomplish this goal?

How will you balance time, scale, and money in  
order to do accomplish this goal?

# TIME/SCALE/MONEY AGREEMENTS

## Worksheet 2

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02 / 02

For Visiting Artist, Local Artist, Inviting Arts Organizations, and Partner Organizations

---

Looking at Worksheet 1 from the Institution and the Partner Organizations, what overlapping hopes do you see? What potential conflicts do you see?

How might you alter your goal for this project, in order to navigate these overlapping hopes and conflicts?





Local facilitating artist  
Mary Clare Rietz.

Photo by Maureen France.

# FACILITATOR GUIDES

# PRINCIPLES OF COOPERATION CARD GAME

01 / 02

- Purpose:** This teaching tool helps people learn about the ten principles of cooperation.
- Timing:** 30+ minutes, depending on the group
- Participants:** 2+
- Listening tool:** cards

## How it works:

1. The facilitator gathers people and places all ten cards on the table, showing the ten principles of cooperation. Each card has one principle of cooperation on the back of the card, and the definition of that principle on the other side.
2. The facilitator asks a participant to mix up the cards and pick one.
3. The participant will read the card they have picked aloud to the group, and talk about what that principle means to them.
4. The group can talk about how they sense or don't sense that principle of cooperation in their group, and how they might emphasize that principle in their group, even more.
5. Another participant picks a card, reads it aloud, and talks about what it means to them.
6. Repeat.



Principles of Cooperation  
Card Game

Photo by Maureen France.



# PRINCIPLES OF COOPERATION CARD GAME

02 / 02

- Purpose:** This teaching tool helps people learn about the ten principles of cooperation.
- Timing:** 30+ minutes, depending on the group
- Participants:** 2+
- Listening tool:** cards

## Organization

Cincinnati Union Co-op Initiative (CUCI) is a non-profit that partners with individuals and organizations to create worker-owned businesses that sustain families and help create an economy that works for all. [Cincinnatiunioncoop.org](http://Cincinnatiunioncoop.org)

## Process

LISTEN<sup>1</sup> was a year-long socially engaged art project that resulted in three listening objects made by artist Caroline Woolard in dialog with four Cincinnati-based organizations. Each object is a response to an organization's unique way of listening: a storytelling game using small bronze objects for MORTAR and Cincy Stories, sets of ceramic cups for The Welcome Project, and a card game about cooperation for the Cincinnati Union Co-op Initiative.

Caroline Woolard worked with Kristen Barker, Olivia Nava Meinerding, and Maria Dienger to add illustrations and design to improve CUCI's existing game.

## Materials

Each card measures 3.5" x 4.5" and the test cards were printed by Micah Hornung. Future iterations of these cards will be available online as freely downloadable PDFs and for purchase through CUCI and Wave Pool.



Illustration by Jeff Warren and  
Caroline Woolard, 2017.

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**Purpose:** This is a game that helps participants get to know one another.

**Timing:** 30+ minutes

**Participants:** 2+

---

**How it works:**

1. The facilitator asks the participants to close their eyes as the facilitator buries the objects in the box so that only the spheres are showing.
2. One participant selects an object and picks it up.
3. The participant tells a story based on the object they are holding.
4. Another participant selects an object and tells a story based on that object.
5. Repeat.

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**Purpose:** This is a game that helps participants get to know one another.

**Timing:** 30+ minutes

**Participants:** 2+

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**Organizations:**

MORTAR exists to ensure that all entrepreneurs and small businesses, regardless of socioeconomic status, gender, race, or background, have an opportunity to participate in the rejuvenation of our city. [wearemortar.com](http://wearemortar.com) Cincy Stories exists to build community through story. We do this by hosting live storytelling events, creating people based documentaries, and working in neighborhoods to engage communities using the tools of story. [CincyStories.org](http://CincyStories.org)

**Process:**

LISTEN<sup>1</sup> was a year-long socially engaged art project that resulted in three listening objects made by artist Caroline Woolard in dialog with four Cincinnati-based organizations. Each object is a response to an organization's unique way of listening: a storytelling game using small bronze objects for MORTAR and Cincy Stories, sets of ceramic cups for The Welcome Project, and a card game about cooperation for the Cincinnati Union Co-op Initiative.

Caroline Woolard worked with Allen Woods, Derrick Braziel, Chris Ashwell, William Thomas, Shawn Braley and Chris Ashwell to imagine and implement this game, which is loosely based upon an event that they held together, where friends and neighbors brought in objects that were significant to them. The bronze objects were designed by Caroline Woolard and sit in poplar boxes handmade by Scott Bellissemio.

**Materials:**

Each object is roughly 1" x 2" x 1" and is cast in stainless steel infused with bronze, with a final composition of approximately 60% steel and 40% bronze. The objects went through an electroplating process that deposits a 0.1 micron layer of gold on the outside of the objects. Due to the electroplating process, the gold may wear off with friction, over time.



Untitled

Photo by Maureen France.



# WELCOME PROJECT CUPS

01 / 01

**Purpose:** To drink tea with one another.

**Timing:** As long as you like.

**Participants:** 2+

**Listening Tool:** Ceramic cups, water, tea or coffee, and flowers or lotus blossoms, if possible.

## How it works:

Drink tea with an open heart. Notice that the cups have two sides. When turned over, the underside of the cup becomes a vessel for a flower, a candle, or a water-clock.

Organization: The Welcome Project's mission is to engage, integrate, and empower marginalized and at-risk refugees and immigrants by providing community connections, employment, education, and skills training.



Welcome Project Cups  
Photo by Levi Mandel.

# WELCOME PROJECT CUPS

01 / 01

- Purpose:** To drink tea with one another.
- Timing:** As long as you like.
- Participants:** 2+
- Listening Tool:** Ceramic cups, water, tea or coffee, and flowers or lotus blossoms, if possible.

## Materials:

Each vessel is a wheel thrown cup in speckled clay. The interior and exterior is glazed in high-gloss green with black speckles. The bottom is a high-gloss black with a blue lotus flower. The exterior is decorated with bright blue and green shapes. The size is approximately 4.25" tall with a 3.25" diameter. Each item is handmade and has slight variations in size, finish, and color. They are food safe and made for everyday use. Hand washing is recommended. Sold in a set of four in a handmade poplar box.

## Process:

LISTEN<sup>1</sup> was a year-long socially engaged art project that resulted in three listening objects made by artist Caroline Woolard in dialog with four Cincinnati-based organizations. Each object is a response to an organization's unique way of listening: a storytelling game using small bronze objects for MORTAR and Cincy Stories, sets of ceramic cups for The Welcome Project, and a card game about cooperation for the Cincinnati Union Co-op Initiative.

This limited edition of ceramic vessels was designed by Caroline Woolard over the course of a year in dialog with Welcome Project members Zoila Martinez, Lourdes Martinez, NarMaya Rai, Bibi Rai, Binta Rai, Sarmila Rai, Purni Rai, Mariam Al-Zoubi, Fabiola Rodriguez,

Krishna Ghimire, and Angele Mputu. These ceramics continue Caroline Woolard's study of functional objects for contemplation and collaboration. The cups were wheel thrown by ceramicist Josephine Heilpern and are sold in sets of four in poplar boxes handmade by Scott Bellissemo. The dividers in the boxes were made by members of the Welcome Project. This is a limited edition of thirty boxes, with four cups per box, for sale at Wave Pool. All profits go to Welcome Editions and feed back into the growth of the Welcome Project, a collaboration between the non-profit organizations Wave Pool and Heartfelt Tidbits.



Welcome Project Cups  
Photo by Levi Mandel.

# REFERENCES + LINKS

## ABOUT

### PAGE 06

<sup>1</sup>[carolinewoolard.com](http://carolinewoolard.com)

<sup>2</sup>[maryclarerietz.com](http://maryclarerietz.com)

<sup>3</sup>[contemporaryartscenter.org/](http://contemporaryartscenter.org/)

<sup>4</sup>[exhibitions/2018/03/listen\) wavepoolgallery.org/  
listen-with-caroline-woolard](http://exhibitions/2018/03/listen%20wavepoolgallery.org/listen-with-caroline-woolard)

### PAGE 07

<sup>1</sup>[wearemortar.com](http://wearemortar.com)

<sup>2</sup>[cincystories.org](http://cincystories.org)

<sup>3</sup>[cincinnatiunioncoop.org](http://cincinnatiunioncoop.org)

<sup>4</sup>[welcomecincinnati.org](http://welcomecincinnati.org)

## PROCESS

### PAGE 12

<sup>1</sup>The Minute Hand of Social Engagement  
[artmakingchange.org/voices/the-minute-hand-  
of-social-engagement/](http://artmakingchange.org/voices/the-minute-hand-of-social-engagement/)

### PAGE 14

<sup>1</sup>[tradeschool.coop/](http://tradeschool.coop/)

<sup>2</sup>[kickstarter.com/projects/OurGoods/trade-  
school-learning-spaces-that-run-on-barter](http://kickstarter.com/projects/OurGoods/trade-school-learning-spaces-that-run-on-barter)

<sup>3</sup>[carolinewoolard.com/system/tradeschoolcoop/](http://carolinewoolard.com/system/tradeschoolcoop/)

### PAGE 15

<sup>1</sup>[vimeo.com/198242353/34f85d904a](http://vimeo.com/198242353/34f85d904a)

<sup>2</sup>[carolinewoolard.com/system/study-center/](http://carolinewoolard.com/system/study-center/)

## APPROACH

### PAGES 25–29

<sup>1</sup>Mapping the Landscape of Socially Engaged  
Artistic Practice Alexis Frasz & Holly Sidford  
Helicon Collaborative 2017  
[artmakingchange.org/wp-content/  
uploads/2017/09/Mapping\\_the\\_Landscape\\_of\\_  
Socially\\_Engaged\\_Artistic\\_Practice\\_Sept2017.pdf](http://artmakingchange.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Mapping_the_Landscape_of_Socially_Engaged_Artistic_Practice_Sept2017.pdf)

## COMMENTARY

### PAGE 41

<sup>1</sup>Find Your Powerprint  
[juliediamond.net/powerprint/](http://juliediamond.net/powerprint/)

## FACILITATOR GUIDES

### PAGE 55, 57, 59

<sup>1</sup>[wavepoolgallery.org/listen-with-caroline-  
woolard](http://wavepoolgallery.org/listen-with-caroline-woolard)

# LISTEN

A Case Study in  
Socially Engaged Art

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## COMMISSIONING ARTS ORGANIZATIONS

LISTEN was commissioned by the Contemporary Arts Center and Wave Pool.

## PROJECT SPONSOR

This project was funded by a grant from The Carol Ann and Ralph V. Haile, Jr./U.S. Bank Foundation.

## VISITING ARTIST

Caroline Woolard is a New York-based artist who creates sculptures using online networks, handbuilt objects, and immersive environments. Woolard is the co-founder of cultural equity initiatives OurGoods.org (2008), TradeSchool.coop (2009), BFAMFAPhD.com (2013), and StudyCollaboration.com (2016).

## FACILITATING ARTIST

With a background in community organizing, Mary Clare Rietz is a Cincinnati-based artist who sees herself as facilitator. Mary Clare and her community collaborators use visual art to make place-based public works that point to possibilities for empathy, connection, and equity.



Artists  
Reframing  
Community



The Carol Ann and  
Ralph V. Haile, Jr.



FOUNDATION