

Goodmeet @ SALT was as a daylong, participant-driven event for people and organizations that provide sanctuary.

Non-profit & for-profit executives, managers, educators, artists, church administrators, and students joined together as a common resource to reexamine the experience of finding and providing sanctuary in NYC.

These are the reports posted the www.Goodmeet.org website within 48hrs of Goodmeet @ SALT. Any corrections, alternative reports, and additional reports can be uploaded to www.Goodmeet.org/Report.html for inclusion until 6/24/09.

Attendees

Leann Boyd

Michele Brody, Artist (<http://www.michelebrody.com>)

Erik Fabian, Principal, Double Happiness (<http://www.DoubleHappinessNYC.com>)

Christina Joy Ferwerda, Interpretive Specialist, Lee H. Skolnick Architecture (<http://www.skolnick.com>)

Alison Fleminger, Art Program Curator, University Settlement (<http://www.univeristysettlement.org>)

David Friedlander, President, Sustainable Events (<http://www.sustainableevents.net>)

Michaela Holden, Student / Event Producer / Artist, NYU Wagner

Claude Hubbard, Property Manager

Grace Hwang, Director, SALT artspace (www.saltartspace.org;
<http://saltartspace.wordpress.com>)

Karen Kang (<http://www.karenkang.com>)

Unitey Kull, Managing Director, Manhattan New Music Project (<http://www.mnmp.org>)

Lily M

Devin Martin, Health Counselor, Integrate Nutrition (<http://www.integratenutrition.com>;
<http://devinmartin.blogspot.com>)

Kristen Nash

Stephanie Nikolopoulos

Stephanie Pereira, Education Coordinator, Eyebeam Atelier (<http://www.eyebeam.org>;
http://make_it_happen.posterous.com)

Paul Ramey, Gallery Church

Glenda Reed, Artist / Operations Manager, Center for Architecture Foundation

Freddy Wyatt, Gallery Church

Goodmeet @ SALT was co-hosted by Double Happiness LLC & SALT artspace on 6/13/09.

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Session Reports

Title: Session Planning Session
Time: 11:30 - 11:35am
Location: Circle
Reporter: Stephanie
Convener: Stephanie (me)
Attendees: Everybody.

Notes:

Best format for organizing sessions, in terms of:

- What you want to take away
- What you want your participants to take away
- How you are going to maximize the orientation of people in the space to achieve your goals
- How you are going to measure success, change, or outcomes - What does it look like? What strategies will you use?

Title: What is sanctuary and why do we seek it?
Time: AM
Location: by the mirror
Reporter: Grace Hwang
Convener: Claude Hubbard
Attendees: Claude Hubbard, Grace Hwang, Devin Martin, Kiersten Nash, Christina Joy Ferwerda, Alison Fleminger

Notes:

The words that described sanctuary were categorized by three descriptors: physical - it has distance and boundaries; social - the rules of sanctuary are followed by those who participate and these rules must be respected by those who don't participate; spiritual - we need it for meditation, centeredness, healing.

Devin provided philosophical categories that paralleled these: I (spiritual), WE (social), IT (physical).

Definition: Sanctuary is a place where we can just BE.

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We talked about longing for sanctuary, losing it, trying to recreate it... constantly screwing up and needing to return to it... and one comment that really struck me was, "the best teacher is the most earnest seeker" or, "the one who will lead you back to sanctuary is the one who yearns for it the most".

Alison remarked with exasperation that throughout time we keep impeding on others' sanctuary - whether they are religious crusades or that loud person on the subway.

We also talked about how modern sanctuary must be mobile; yet temporary. For followers of Islam, it is physically a 2x4' mat; socially an act that followers partake in 5 times a day; and spiritually an act of prayer.

Claude's conclusion that the reason we seek sanctuary is because we are built for it.

I was pretty fascinated by thinking about how the search for sanctuary has multiple dualities: It is personal yet communal, self-centered yet others-centered, just as relevant now as it was at the beginning of time.

My search and longing surpass boundaries of creed, tribe, history, generations, especially when it is compared to Israel's cultural/political search for "home"; or when it is compared to the story of humanity falling from Eden and longing to return to it.

I'm still thinking about these things are the more I meditate on them, the more I feel closer to them! If you seek, you will find!

Title: Sanctuary/ Community
Time: afternoon
Location: 1158
Reporter: Grace Hwang
Convener: Karen Kang
Attendees: Karen Kang, Grace Hwang, David Friedlander, Glenda Reed, Devin Martin, Kiersten Nash, Michaela Holden, Claude Hubbard, Paul Ramey

Notes:

I just loved being able to create a space with fabric and chairs with others. When thinking about sanctuary, I just wanted to be inside something, and now as I reflect on the experience, I wanted a place that was cocoon-like - where I felt snug and tucked in, covered, safe - but not fully dark and opaque - the element of light and transparency was just as important.

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I found it interesting to think about the negative and positive elements of sanctuary.

I liked the act/ritual of taking off our shoes to signify we were entering sanctuary.

And I also found it interesting that those of us that participated in the covered sanctuary soon felt freedom to break rules of personal space that the people engaged in conversation outside of this space did not. We drew on each other, leaned on each other, traced each other - it was very intimate. I don't think I would have come to this conclusion if I hadn't participated in making and experiencing a communal sanctuary.

Title: The Language of Repose
Time: afternoon
Location: 1158 tables
Reporter: Grace Hwang
Convener: David Friedlander
Attendees: David Friedlander, Grace Hwang, Christina Joy Ferwerda, Devin Martin, Michaela Holden, Karen Kang

Notes:

David asked us to express the language of repose.

I felt led to express in body language - and the word repose made me want to curl up in the fetal position. After improvising some movement, I wrote about my experience and these are the words that came to mind:

slow
sustained
alleluiaah
still
small
Ssshhhh

I really enjoyed hearing and seeing others' languages.

Devin told me about an artist Dylan Newcomb who pairs letters and sounds with body movements. pretty crazy stuff:

http://www.dylannewcomb.com/Dylan_Newcomb/The_16_Ways_Introfilm.html

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Title: How Can "Happenings" (Events, Performance, Ceremonies, etc) Provide Sanctuary?
Time: 4:30-5:30pm
Location: Gallery Church Sanctuary at SALT Art Space
Reporter: Michaella Holden
Convener: Michaella Holden
Attendees: Grace Hwang, Alison Fleminger, Karen Kang, Stephanie Pereira, Michaella Holden, Devin Martin, Unitey Kull, David Friedlander, Stephanie Nikolopoulos

Notes:

The session was organized as follows:

BRAINSTORM I - when have we experienced finding sanctuary at an event or performance in the past? What were the conditions of what was happening that compelled this experience?

BRAINSTORM II - *How* can what happens provide sanctuary? *What* does it provide?

FOCUSED DISCUSSION - We each described the event(s)/performance(s)/experiences we had in mind and then tried to pinpoint the common themes amongst our experiences.

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS - We came up with a list of a few essential things an experience has when it provides sanctuary:

- Element of connecting individuals to something (or some group) larger than themselves
 - Music or some other element(s) pertaining to the senses that creates a specific atmosphere
 - Some form of structure (either physical or something less tangible, such as a time structure - that keeps the experience cohesive)
 - A safe environment and a flexible (and sometimes fluid) nature to the experience
 - A feeling of transcendence that is experienced (either consciously or not) by the participants.
- All are deeply engaged in some way.

ACTION ITEMS FOR OURSELVES - We each put some individual thinking into next steps we could each take for upcoming projects we have and then after sharing them with the group, other group members commented or made additional suggestions.

