

The
Laundromat
Project

**COMMUNITY AND
NEIGHBORHOOD
MAPPING**

**A Participatory Process
for Generating
Interactive Arts Experiences**

COMMUNITY MAPPING

is a participatory action research method used to leverage the collective brilliance of

**NEIGHBORS,
ARTISTS, and
CULTURAL WORKERS.**

The process, rooted in **DEEP LISTENING** and **ASSET-BASED DESIGN**, results in community-responsive, creative tools, strategies, workshops, and interventions that support progressive change in neighborhoods.

THE LAUNDROMAT PROJECT asks its artists to use this approach when entering any neighborhood or community where they might work. Please consider this exercise just one strategy that you might use as you begin your work.

**By the end of this process, we hope
you will be able to:**

- 1. Activate a mapping process in a community or neighborhood in which you plan to work.**



- 2. Use these mapping techniques to build community and neighborhood specific arts experiences.**



- 3. Generate a performative and/or visual representation that illustrates your findings.**

Take a moment to respond to the prompt below. Feel free to grab an extra sheet of paper. There's so much to write!

To work in this community or neighborhood, I need to know....

Write as much as you can. The writing can be creative, a list, a narrative, a poem, and/or graphic notation.

GENERATE four questions or prompts based on your free write that you will use when mapping this community or neighborhood. These prompts can be related to what might be most pressing for the group of people with whom you might work, a goal or aspiration, or an important event or cultural practice. As you generate your list, be sure to include details about a community or neighborhood's resources, needs, institutions, and quality of life concerns.

1.

2.

3.

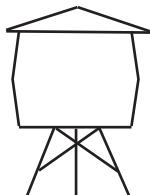
4.

Based on your free write and your prompts, decide which organizations, neighbors, schools, cultural hubs, spiritual centers, or artistic venues might be able to provide answers to your questions.

1.

2.

3.



4.

5.

6.

ATTEND 2-3 neighborhood events you think might provide answers to your questions. Events could include: a community board meeting, arts event, festival, family event, cultural event, religious service, neighborhood association meeting, sporting event, or neighborhood potluck.

Event name	Date	Location

While there, listen and look for responses to your questions. Some of the answers may be verbal responses, some may be visual.

GATHER the information while there. Here are some ways to do this:

- Record an interview (with permission)
- Take pictures (with permission)
- Keep a list of concepts and ideas
- Collect a series of quick sketches
- Write responses to your questions

Remember to attend these events as an active listener and learner. Consider your relationship to the community or neighborhood, especially if it is not your own.

ORGANIZE your information after the event. Then write a one-page narrative that explains what you learned and a potential plan for an art workshop or activity informed by or based on that information.

Now, plan a way to creatively show and tell the findings of your mapping process with your collaborators.

Possible creative report-back activities might include:

- Create a series of graphic notation(s)**
- Draw and label a community or neighborhood map**
- Devise an improv performance**
- Draw a comic strip**
- Write a series of short-form poems**
- Write a list poem that responds to the prompt “My Community/Neighborhood Is...”**
- Transform an interview into a monologue**

**Share your creative report-backs on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter by including these hashtags with your post:
#creativecommunitymapping #thelaundromatproject**

If you plan programming in this community or neighborhood, make sure it is relevant to the members or residents.

OUR TEAM

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On behalf of The Laundromat Project, this exercise was created by Ebony Noelle Golden, our Cultural Organizing Consultant. Golden is also the founder of Betty's Daughter Arts Collaborative.



SUPPORT

Invest in our work to weave art into everyday spaces and lives.



PARTICIPATE

Attend a workshop or volunteer with our artists and staff.



APPLY

Become a fellow, resident, or teaching artist.

CURRENT SUPPORTERS

The Laundromat Project has been made possible through the generosity of Agnes Gund, The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, David Rockefeller Fund, Dedalus Foundation, EILEEN FISHER, Foundation of Contemporary Arts, Joan Mitchell Foundation, Lambent Foundation, Lily Auchincloss Foundation, Mary Duke Biddle Foundation, Materials for the Arts, Muriel Pollia Foundation, Nathan Cummings Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, The New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, The New York State Council on the Arts, Robert Rauschenberg Foundation, The Theo Westenberger Estate, and The Union Square Art Awards.



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WHO WE ARE

Incorporated in 2005, The Laundromat Project brings art, artists, and arts programming into laundromats and other everyday spaces, thus amplifying the creativity that already exists within communities to build community networks, solve problems, and enhance our sense of ownership in the places where we live, work, and grow.

WHAT WE SEE

The Laundromat Project envisions a world in which artists are understood as valuable assets in every community and everyday people know the power of their own creative capacity to transform their lives, their relationships, and their surroundings.

WHAT WE DO

We bring socially relevant and socially engaged arts programming to laundromats and other everyday community spaces in order to reach as many of our neighbors as possible. We are particularly committed to long-term and sustained investment in communities of color as well as those living on modest incomes.