Sustainability of Community Arts:

A Case Study of Locust Street Art in Buffalo, NY

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Locust Street Art (formerly MollyOlga)
Buffalo, NY

Founded in 1959
The Study

Problem Statement: There are a limited number of community arts organizations implementing intergenerational art education programs and effectively sustaining their practice over a minimum period of ten years. A study of practices that promote sustainability will promote longevity of arts programs in community oriented contexts.

Main Question: How does a community arts organization sustain itself over time?

Study Design: A qualitative case study of Locust Street Art; data collection methods included video-recorded observations and interviews, and document analysis.
What is Community Arts?

- exists outside of the traditional public education setting
- serves the community in which the programs are located
- implemented by artists and teaching artists
- art production is connected to the community
Findings of the Study

- pedagogy that honors individual autonomy
- site’s designation as “A Safe Space”
- a sense of ownership by community
- adaptation to community transition and economic changes
Pedagogy that honors individual autonomy:
Emphasis placed on students’ vision.
A safe space:
Consistency, stability, accessibility
A sense of ownership by the community:
Decision making by community members
Adaptation to community transitions and economic changes: Creativity in fundraising, partnerships, and outreach
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Presentation will be online at
http://dgtworkshop.weebly.com