

Bulletin Board

The Bulletin Board Cafe at Institute 193 was intended to address the need for immediately-local visual exchange. For years, the city of Lexington hosted kiosks that were open and free for various groups and individuals to post announcements for concerts, art-openings, events, personal ads and fliers for services. Those kiosks, for unexplained reasons, have been permanently dismantled and the exchange of information has been forced into out-of-the-way locations - typically next to bathrooms in various restaurants and bars littered around town. The result is an incoherent local dialogue and the relegation of "posting" to facebook, twitter and other online entities that, by design, encompass much larger communities. The centralized "bulletin boards" have disappeared, leaving behind large swaths of the community that do not use digital social media.

The Bulletin Board Cafe's installation at Institute 193 was deliberately open to the entire community and was designed to create and encourage dialogue about any event, activity, interest, project, business, etc. It was not intended to serve any particular group but its incarnation as a temporary installation within the confines of a contemporary arts space created a perhaps inevitable dynamic. The board primarily served as a physical space for visual artists to come and post things they are working on and to receive feedback (critique and praise) about their most recent efforts. It demonstrates a need for physical exhibition space in the Downtown Lexington area – and perhaps more significantly – a need for critical dialogue amongst local working artists. There is a tremendous need for critical debate, writing and scholarship and this temporary public space visually attests to that need. The other unintended consequence was a flowering of creative energy from some "unusual suspects." Lawyers, doctors and restaurant owners contributed poems, journal entries, sketches and other creative products in addition to the standard fare of business cards, flyers and menus. This book is a snapshot of materials left at the bulletin board during its 6-week run at the Institute. At the end of the exhibition, items were removed and scanned in no particular order and are printed here.

The Bulletin Board Cafe installation and this resulting publication constitute a working proposal to the City of Lexington. Perhaps the city could create and facilitate the operation of a business that is at once a space for community exchange and a self-sustaining cafe? The requirements are simple. Bulletin board, tables, chairs. The cafe would ideally be centrally located and accessible to the greatest number of people, both in location and price. Coffee, tea and soda. Or the city could bring back the kiosks. Or both?

The Bulletin Board Café is an installation and social tool that encourages dialogue amongst individuals, local art communities and other groups with diverging interests. It is foremost, a place to exchange information locally. Bulletin boards are constantly being relocated to dedicated URLs, which propose an international public. In order to determine where technology might be best deployed is to address local needs, we must find situations where individual members of local communities are actively trying to find, connect, and share information with one another.

I propose the Bulletin Board Café as a sociological tool that supports proximal information to encourage useful sharing amongst the local art communities and general public. The exchange of information supports the individual's interests within a community and can possibly initiate broader social, cultural and economic dialog and actions. Bulletin Board Café is a tool for participation and community voice. I will invite the public to share responsibly any information this public includes minors. Bulletin Board Café will have a sign-up sheet to schedule free use of the Bulletin BoardCafe to host PUBLIC round tables, free courses, and negotiations.

All ephemera, objects and information are to be included in the installation of Bulletin Board Cafe and all actions can be documented for publication.

Philosophy

It is human nature to communicate; the first societies were built on exchange thriving on the local resources. A healthy community will mirror in the individual's rights, freedom of expression, arts, politics, economy. As a community we can actively participate in a global society.

Health is cognitive to expression and aligns with prosperity, tolerance, and change.

Commodity

Beverages, and publications both for free and purchase, any organization that signs up for using the space must be free, if any money is made a percentage will be put in a fund to fund future educational and or events at bulletin board cafe.

Design

Property should be a small room with storefront window, to create intimate environment with a fish bowl visibility.

Bulletin Board Café/ installation

Bulletin board

Long picnic table

One chalk board for impromptu strategizing