A Museum in Context:

Understanding the Practices of Independent Pop-Up Museums

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Abstract

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Various institutions in the museum field have embraced the concept of "pop-up museum" as a way to reach new audiences and to experiment with new ideas for their institution. There are, at the same time, other pop-up museums emerging both independently and out of grassroots efforts not associated with established museums. It is suggested that pop-up museums have potential to push the museum field towards innovation (Giordano 2013). This descriptive study examined the practices of independent pop-up museums. Data was collected using site observation and interviews with the organizers of four pop-up or mobile-style museums across the Unites States. The findings suggest that these pop-up museums represent an emerging form of museum making, one that is grounded in representing and connecting with underrepresented or underserved communities. Moreover, the practices of pop-up museums advance unique visions of what a museum can be and do for communities and society as a whole. The study also calls for a platform in which these organizers and their museums are included in the conversations with museum professionals as equal colleagues.

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Chapter One: Introduction

The term "pop-up," when coupled with a word that describes a space refers to a structure that appears unexpectedly and exists for a short period of time. Adopted in retail industry for marketing purposes, "pop-up" has become a popular concept for brands and products looking to build public interest (Burgess 2012). Pop-up experiences, such as pop-up restaurants and fashion brand stores, are now part of the intricate web of today's urban environment (Genzinger 2011).

In the recent years, the museum field has also utilized the concept in various forms of "pop-up museums." The key attributes of pop-ups (temporary, flexible, relatively low-cost) make them an ideal platform for museums to think and act beyond their museum walls, as it is apparent in the creative ways museum professionals use the pop-up concept in engaging with various communities and reaching new audiences (American Alliance of Museum 2012; Bizzarri 2014; DelCarlo 2012; Lord et al 2015; Ross 2013). Examples of pop-up museums that are organized by existing museums range from a one-day satellite museum to a temporary exhibit-type event installed in an vacant or public space. For example, in 2014, various museums in Chicago each hosted a pop-up exhibit or an activity in the lobby of Hotel Allegro in downtown Chicago (Bizzarri 2014). Michelle DelCarlo's model of "Pop Up Museum," a temporary exhibit to which community members bring their own objects and anecdotes to share, is replicated by various museums across the country (Popupmuseum.org, n.d.). The Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History regularly host Pop-Up Museums as part of their public engagement programs (MAH 2016).

While there are many pop-up museums that are organized and installed by existing museums, individuals and community groups who are not directly affiliated with existing museums also organize their versions of pop-up museums throughout the country. Such

grassroots pop-up museums vary in size, format, and types of objects on display (or not on display). For example, the Pop-Up Museum of Queer History in New York City turns empty storefronts into temporary exhibits dedicated to untold stories of LGBTQ community. Pop-Up Science in Seattle, Washington, is a pop-up science museum that offers workshops, lectures, and hands-on activities. The Mobile Museum of American Artifacts collects and displays objects gathered from people of a town that it travels to. These pop-ups often do not have a permanent physical location or a permanent collection. They exist as an idea until they are materialized through objects and a space. With the absence of a permanent location or institutional backing from existing museums, these grassroots pop-up museums are "rootless" and different from the pop-ups that are organized and hosted by existing museums.

The emergence of pop-up museums outside of the traditional museum field provides the field with an opportunity to rethink their practices and learn from fresh perspectives. While the museums in the field have an established network to share experiences or best practices of hosting a pop-up museum, the field rarely pays the same level of close attention to the pop-up museums that emerge outside of the traditional museum field. It may be helpful to uncover their missions, values, purposes, "collections," organization of the exhibits, and target audience. This study attempts to bridge the gap between the museum field and those "rootless" pop-up museums by describing the origins, structures, and practices of independent pop-up museums..

In summary, the purpose of this study is to describe the phenomenon of pop-up museums by organizers from outside the traditional museum field. The following research questions inform this study.

1. How do the pop-up museum organizers conceptualize their museums?

2. How are these pop-up museums organized (funding, exhibit space, exhibit content, target audience)?
3. How do pop-up museum organizers build relationships with local communities?
4. What are concerns or challenges that the pop-up museum organizers face?

Chapter Two: Literature Review

The goal of this study is to describe the phenomenon of independent pop-up museums that are organized by individuals and groups that are not affiliated with existing institutions. This chapter reviews literature related to the concept of "pop-up" experiences, participatory urban placemaking, and larger social and cultural trend in the society and the museum field.

The Concept of "Pop-Up" Experiences

This section pulls from literature related to the origin and development of the concept of "pop-up" experiences in the society. The section also reviews how the concept is adapted in various industries for advancing the need of the industry. Moreover, this section considers how the pop-up concept is manifested in various forms of "pop-up" museums.

What is a "Pop-Up"?

A "pop-up" cultural experience refers to a form of cultural engagement that is characterized by the temporality or unexpectedness of the experience (American Alliance of Museums 2012; Giordano 2013; Van Schaik 2015; Davis et al 2015). Silvia Giordano and Asha Davis also highlight how pop-ups activate or revitalize a space (Giordano 2013; Davis et al 2015). For example, according to Davis, a pop-up is "established" when an organizer "temporarily activate[s] places and spaces for promotion, trials or the sharing of resources" (Davis et al 2015, p. 94). The concept started in the commercial field, especially in retail sector, in early 2000's and has expanded to many other cultural experiences in recent years, such as dining, theaters, gardens, and libraries (American Alliance of Museums 2012; Giordano 2013;

Davis et al 2015). For consumers, pop-up experiences offer an exclusive, “do not miss phenomena” as it only exists for a short period of time; an encounter to something in an unexpected place; or a discovery of new products or brands (Hollwich 2015; Giordano 2013, p. 461).

The characteristics of pop-up experiences, including temporality, mobility, cost effectiveness and unexpectedness, make them an ideal platform to experiment with new ideas, different set of rules, unusual materials, and so on **(**American Alliance of Museums 2012, p. 12**;** Hollwich 2015, p. 126**).** Organizing pop-up experiences can promote change in the communities that they are established in or that they work with. Giordano argues that pop-up experiences, with the sense of urgency and exclusivity, have “power to revitalize less vivid neighborhood and attract a much wider audience” (2013, p. 461). Van Schaik, recognizing the original intentions of pop-up structures and experiences, sees that pop-ups can be used as “platforms of change,” “engines of social purpose” and “as facilitators of the inherent knowledge of people” (2015, p. 11).

The pop-up concept owes its popularity to several different economic and social trends, most notably globalism, economic recession, and shifts in cultural authority. For one, the weakened economy since the great recession in 2008 makes it difficult for businesses to not only attract new paying customers but also to invest in permanent structures or locations that may or may not pay off in the end (American Alliance of Museums 2012, p. 12). The low-cost nature of pop-ups is also appealing to grassroots organizations or start-ups (Ryan 2012, p. 81; Quartier 2015, p. 44).

Another factor is “loosening of cultural authority” in society (Giordano 2013, p. 461; American Alliance of Museums 2012). With their informal structure and location, pop-ups can

break down imposing or authoritative cultural experiences to accessible and relatable experiences, such as gourmet dining turning into food trucks that serve gourmet food (American Alliance of Museums 2012). Cultural institutions, particularly, face the need to provide more inclusive, participatory experiences, as the public becomes more interested in being a participator rather than a mere patron (Simon 2010).

A third factor has to do with the nomadic and global lifestyle that society has come to accept (Quartier 2015, p. 47; American Alliance of Museums 2012, p. 12; Giordano 2013, p. 461-2). Quartier argues that the ubiquity of pop-up experiences arises from the tendency of the society to be "less place-attached" and to tolerate frequent changes (2015, p. 47). On the other hand, Giordano attributes the popularity of pop-ups to a "revival of localism," in which consumers prefer to have face-to-face experiences in their neighborhoods (2013, p. 461). In this sense, pop-ups can be considered as "[a] reaction against a world becoming too global and too plugged-in" (American Alliance of Museums 2012, p. 12). As pop-ups become more accepted and utilized, the literature suggests that pop-ups demonstrate the potential to move beyond a trend and turning into a new "typology" that exists as its own genre (Quartier 2015**;** Hollwich 2015).

Pop-Up [Fill in the Blank]: Uses of the pop-up concept

Organizers of pop-up experiences use the concept for a variety of reasons; to reach their patrons, to raise awareness for their services, brands and products, to experiment with new ideas, to reach new audiences, to develop and strengthen partnerships, and so on (Davis et al 2015; Hollwich 2015; Quartier 2015; Van Schaik 2015). For example, in Australia, several public libraries have organized different versions of "pop-up libraries" (Davis et al 2015). As Davis and

others observe, such pop-up libraries, defined as “a collection of resources taken outside the physical library space to the public,” range from a bookcase taken to unexpected spaces to a re-creation of a complete library experience at a nerd/geek expo (2015, p. 97).

With the flexibility and low-cost of pop-ups, educators can incorporate the process of planning and implementation of pop-ups in their curriculums as part of “experiential learning;” for example, students can organize a pop-up retail store in a retail promotion course (Burgess 2012, p. 284-5). In some cases, the use of the concept is subtle and nuanced. For example, Quartier observes a brand retail store taking the informality and spontaneity of pop-ups and using them as “a motif” for their new store (2015, p. 43).

While pop-ups fulfill short-term goals, such as generating sales and increasing library membership, pop-ups are also a tool to advance long-term goals of the organizers. For example, the focus of pop-up libraries is “literary-based engagement with the general public” in a less formal setting, as “an extension of the library brand” to promote literacy and reading (Davis et al 2015, p. 97). For architects, pop-ups present an opportunity to experiment, “that in turn can enable the profession to grow through inventive approaches, concepts and use of materiality” (Hollwich 2015, p. 125).

To plan a successful pop-up, one cannot overlook the importance of “the concept, the location, and creating a memorable experience” (Davis et al 2015, p. 94). However spontaneous or unexpected pop-up experiences may seem to consumers, detailed planning of a pop-up is essential and the organizers need to “work to keep these audiences engaged after the initial introduction” (American Alliance of Museums 2012, p. 12; Davis et al 2015, p. 95).

Pop-Up Museums

How does the pop-up concept manifest itself in the museum field? The pop-up concept seems to be at odds with the expectations for museums to be permanent and stable institution. The literature does not suggest that existing museums turn into pop-up institutions; rather, the idea of a "pop-up museum" is suggested in a context of experiments, in which a museum can test a theory and learn from the results. The temporary, flexible, low-cost nature of pop-ups presents "opportunities for innovation and experimentation" for the museum field **(**American Alliance of Museums 2012, p. 12**).** For example, Denver Community Museum (DCM) was created as "a temporary pop-up museum that [relied completely] on community submissions for its exhibitions" (Kopke 2011, p. 399). The forming of DCM was an experiment of "giving control to the participants" and "providing a community space where citizens can share their objects and their stories" (Kopke 2011, p. 399). Reflecting on the year of DCM, Kopke suggests that museums could "switch [...] to also being context providers - by linking their collections to the outside world and offering ideas on how this knowledge is relevant and can be applied to various lives" (2011, p. 402).

The perimeter of what constitutes a pop-up museum is undefined, as demonstrated by the lack of a professional network like American Alliance of Museums (AAM) or the International Council of Museums (ICOM). While acknowledging the variances, Giordano offers the following definition to a pop-up museum**:**

> The pop-up museum could be considered as a short-term institution, mobile museum or outdoor exhibit, created outside the confines of its traditional location, in existing temporary and unexpected places, with strong community anchors and the aim of enhancing civic engagement (Giordano 2013, p. 462).

Giordano argues that pop-up museums are "a reaction to a static museum concept" (Giordano 2013, p. 463). "A stale museum" maintains the distance between the objects and visitors, and the falling number of repeated visitors is an ongoing issue **(**Giordano, 2013, p. 463**).** With the mobility of pop-up museums, organizers can bring the museum experience beyond the walls of a museum and to the audience, rather than waiting for their arrival **(**American Alliance of Museums 2012, p. 12**;** Giordano 2013, p. 463**).** Organizers of pop-up museums also experiment with more interactive exhibits, such as making visitor participation and contribution the center of the museum experience **(**Kopke 2011**;** DelCarlo 2012**)**. With their innovative ways of tapping into resources and engaging the audience, Giordano argues that "pop-ups question the stale idea of culture toward renewal" **(**Giordano 2013, p. 463**).**

Examples of a "pop-up museum" in the field vary widely, from a satellite museum to a one-day exhibit event in an empty storefront (American Alliance of Museums 2012, p. 12; DelCarlo 2012; Giordano 2015; Kopke 2011; Ryan 2012)**.** Giordano classifies types of pop-up museums in the field as: "institution-based" with focus on community, "institution-based brand events by moving institutions," art-focused "show-it-yourself expositions" and conversation-focused "show-it-yourself exposition" (Giordano 2013, p. 464)**.**

In Giordano's classification, community-focused institution-based pop-ups are interested in "the effect of such cultural events upon the citizens and neighborhood" **(**Giordano 2013, p. 464**).** An example of such a pop-up museum is the Denver Community Museum, where focus was on creating a space for the community.

Other examples of institution-based pop-up museums are those that are conceived as part of marketing strategy for brands and museums (Giordano 2013, p. 464). For example, an article on ChooseChicago.com in 2014 featured a pop-up exhibit series at Hotel Allegro Chicago, in

which several museums in Chicago participated (Bizzarri 2014). The participating museums rotated the pop-up site to raise awareness of their institution, offering various activities for local and tourist families (Bizzarri 2014).

Art-focused "Show-it-yourself" pop-ups are activated when individual artists or a group of them finds a space to showcase their works (Giordano 2013, p. 465). The Pop-Up Museum of Queer History can be considered an example of art-focused show-it-yourself expositions. The pop-up was organized out of a need for "a space where queer people can learn queer history as told by other queer folks" (Ryan 2012, p. 80). The pop-up, realized in empty storefronts, showcased artworks submitted from community artists (Ryan 2012, p. 81).

Giordano lists Michele DelCarlo's Pop-Up Museum concept as the example of conversation-based exposition (Giordano 2013, p. 465). In this concept, participants bring in objects of their choice and talk about them for a few hours (DelCarlo 2012, p. 5).

The emergence and popularity of the pop-up concept should be considered as a product of the economic, social, and cultural environment in this particular time. As some scholars argue, the concept has been established as its own genre, rather than a mere trend. The basic characteristics of the concept are versatile, hence various industries, including the museum field, have utilized and adapted for their own purposes.

Participatory Urban Placemaking

The following section reviews the participatory movement in urban placemaking, referred to as "tactical urbanism" (Lydon et al 2015) or "Do-It-Yourself (DIY) urbanism" (Finn 2014; Deslandes 2013; Heim Lafrombois 2015). While such models of participatory placemaking are celebrated for their efficiency and potential to initiate change, scholars warn

against overlooking the values and biases that are present in DIY movement. Scholars also suggest possible implications of the amateur, informal, marginal placemaking practices for the professionals and policymakers.

Participatory/ Tactical/ DIY Urbanism: Overview

The shared characteristics of participatory urbanism, which include tactical or DIY urbanism, are responsiveness to local issues and immediacy of the project (Finn 2014; Deslandes 2013; Heim LaFrombois 2015; Lydon et al 2015; Wortham-Galvin 2013). Tactics in participatory urbanism are conceived as a response to problems that are specific to a local community or a neighborhood. Brooke D. Wortham-Galvin writes that "participatory urbanism" refers to urban placemaking in which "ordinary people" are engaged, that is often "small and or incremental," and it "responds to immediate needs that engage discourses of publicness" (2013, p.34). Mike Lydon and Anthony Garcia writes that tactical urbanism is "a method for transforming what allows emergent networks of people and their ideas to develop quality of life improvements at neighborhood scale" (2015, p.20). Projects in tactical urbanism are a response to a place-specific problem at a neighborhood level, thus it is not meant for conceiving a "one-size-fit-all" solution (Lydon et al 2015, p.3). DIY urbanism responds to how certain urban buildings and areas are underutilized and often undesired. Ann Deslandes writes that DIY urbanism is "locally driven renovation, revamping and revivification" of unutilized urban areas by "non-professional urban actors" (2013, p.217). Emphasis on locality is one of main characteristics of these urban planning concepts.

Projects in participatory, tactical, or DIY urbanism are often small-scale and low-cost, hence making them feasible to implement without committing a lot of resources (Finn, 2014;

Heim LaFrombois, 2015; Lydon et al, 2015; Wortham-Galvin, 2013). Megan Heim LaFrombois uses the definition of DIY urbanism as "unsanctioned grassroots and citizen-led urban planning interventions that are small scale, functional, temporary, creative and place specific" (Heim LaFrombois 2015, p.1).

DIY urban projects are temporary and "not usually intended to instigate long-term change" such as revising policies or infrastructure (Lydon et al 2015, p.8). Rather, such DIY urban projects are a brief intervention that stimulates urban landscape by enacting individual creativity. As Deslandes puts it, DIY urbanism enables "meanwhile use" of empty city buildings for the purpose of housing creative, cultural, and community projects (2013, p.217)**.**

In urbanism literature, these concepts are differentiated by potential actors involved, and this difference highlights their attitude towards the official planning structures and policies. The methods in participatory urbanism and tactical urbanism can be adapted and implemented at individuals or government level (Lydon et al 2015; Wortham-Galvin 2013). "Participatory," in this sense, means inclusion of various interests in an effort to improve the neighborhood, which can include local residents as well as government officials. On the other hand, DIY urbanism emphasizes the actions done by individual amateurs or non-professional actors outside of formal urban planning structure (Delandes 2013; Finn 2014; Heim LaFrombois 2015)**.** As Donovan Finn writes, in DIY-movement, "urban residents take it upon themselves to do what cities will not or cannot to address urban issues using micro spatial urban practices" (2014, p.381). DIY urbanism functions as "a retort to the domination of elite and large-scale forms of resourcing" and "an anti-professional approach to urbanism in general" (Deslandes 2013, p.220).

While discussions on DIY urbanism tend to focus on its positive aspects, it is important to reflect on questions raised about the practice. Some argue that "the link between spatial justice

and DIY urbanism" is an incomplete claim "both in terms of being piecemeal, and in being bound up with particular interests and privileges," thus it can reinforce the very bias that creates injustice (Deslandes 2013, p.223; Heim LaFrombois 2015). Deslandes argues that, while DIY urbanists often experience financial poverty, they secure their claim to spatial justice "through the use of cultural capital," which is "expressed in high levels of visual and textual literacy and often informed by a liberal arts education" (2013; p.222-3). It runs a risk of further marginalizing or excluding "abjected aspects of urban marginality" such as squatting or graffiti (Deslandes 2012, p.224). Similarly, Heim LaFrombois argues that the dominant conceptualizations of DIY urbanism "reflect and reinforce the masculinist privileging of public urban spaces, physical and economic infrastructures, and the public activities [...] in these spaces" while overlooking the practices of other and less privileged individuals or groups (2014, p.8).

DIY Museums: DIY movement in cultural institutions

Literature on DIY movement in cultural institutions highlight less the aspect of activism and social justice and focus more on the aspect of "taking the matter to yourself": this is not to say that DIY cultural institutions do not incite similar narratives of giving space to subjects less represented in formal institutions. Scholars who study DIY institutions, namely Sara Baker and Alison Huber and Liisi Taimre, argue that formation and maintenance of grassroots and independent cultural institutions are culmination of personal interests in the subject or theme, social benefits, and a sense of mission or duty as bearers of culture or a piece of history **(**Baker et al 2014; Taimre 2015).

According to Baker and Huber who study DIY institutions in the context of popular music heritage, DIY institutions provide three main functions: for one, as "cultural institution"

that archives a “complete sense” of how popular music was lived and experienced, and provide public access to the collection; as “social institution” in which a community forms “around the collective learning and enactment of tasks” of preservation; and as “affective institution” in which “affect” for popular music is produced and reinforced through “community and the process of remembering and again through encounters with objects” (Baker et al 2014, p. 518-20, p. 525).

Similarly, Taimre studies DIY museums in Estonia, which are small, independent museums run by amateurs, as they represent “alternative ways of museum-making” in response to the changing museum field (Taimre 2015, p. 26). Taimre finds that the founders of such small museums cite “self-realization” as one of motivational factors, including personal interest in Estonian history, the wish to contribute to local community, pride, and a sense of mission or duty for the theme of the museum (Taimre 2015, p. 28-30). The owners of these small museums value having or making personal connections with the theme of the museum, museum visitors, and the local community (Taimre 2015, p. 30-32). Personal connections affect the ways the owner views the world, the ways in which visitors are encouraged to interpret rather than being given absolute truth, and how the owners use the museum to strengthen ties with the local community (Taimre 2015, p. 32).

There are also limitations to DIY institutions. Baker and Huber, citing Ashley’s work (2012), are aware of the importance of avoiding idealizing the community forming around the DIY institution (2015 p. 520). Taimre identifies that sustainability of the institution is a question raised by the museum field and a concern for practitioners. Not only is funding a constant concern, but also there is usually only one person (the founder) caring the museum and holding the knowledge (Taimre 2015, p. 33).

Implications for the Professionals/Policymakers

What does the rise and popularity of the tactical or DIY movement mean for professionals or policymakers in the field? For one, scholars suggest that DIY movement serves as an agent that informs professionals of the needs in communities and gaps between professionals and DIY urbanists (Finn 2015; Baker et al 2015; Lydon et al 2015). Tactical and DIY urbanists work outside of the formal structure of urban planning to bring change to local needs. Hence, Wortham-Galvin writes that participatory urbanism "highlights the disparity between professionalized discussions of place and those that derive from the inhabitants" (2013, p. 34)**.** Similarly, the DIY institution of heritage preservation highlights for policymakers "the growing need to prioritize popular music heritage" especially the first generation of the audience of popular music ages and as volume of popular music material increases (Baker et al 2015, p. 526-7). The small-scale, low-cost, and place-specific method makes tactical urbanism ideal for demonstrating the need for change, implementing a prototype as an experiment of "proofs of concept," and bringing immediate benefits as a placeholder project of a long-term transformation (Finn 2014, p. 393; Lydon et al 2015, p. 12-20).

The rise of the DIY movement also suggest that professionals and policymakers recognize non-professional actors as equal partners with expertise in their own right**,** and that professionals need to find a way to balance and harness the bottom-up enthusiasm (Baker et al 2015; Finn 2014; Taimre 2015; Wortham-Galvin 2013)**.** Non-professionals, such as residents of a neighborhood or popular music listeners, are not only the beneficiary of improvements brought by DIY projects, but also they are experts with lived experiences of the issue or the subject (Wortham-Galvin 2013, p. 35; Baker et al 2015, p. 517). It is also important to understand that multiple actors and interests are involved in placemaking. Wortham-Galvin argues that

understanding participatory urbanism as "anthropology of urbanism," which examines "how people enact places to reveal the politics of context," potentially enables "a plurality of people to become equal partners with form and space in the making of place" (Wortham-Galvin 2013, p.35). In order to engage non-professional actors and harness their enthusiasm, Finn suggests "[creating] programs that empower citizens to become involved in local space design and management" (Finn 2014, p.393). Taimre specifically points out that the museum field should regard and accept small DIY museums as "equal colleagues" of museum practice, especially given that the field is becoming more welcoming of audience participation (Taimre 2015, p.34).

Social and Cultural Trends

This section reviews the literature on social and cultural trends in the society, and how such trends impact the ways the public relates to the concept of space and implicates for the museum field.

Globalization and Information Revolution

To make sense of today's cultural environment, it is helpful to discuss two major trends in recent human history; globalization and "Information Revolution" (Harvey 1989; Kratz et al 2006; Lord et al 2015). Globalization can refer to transnational movements of people, products, information, and ideas. This refers to physical movements as well as movements via digital technologies such as television and the internet. Lord uses the term "Information Revolution" to refer to the rapid growth in information technology, such as computers and smartphones, that allowed more people to access and exchange information (2015, p. 9). This also allowed people

to participate in “international conversations that were once the exclusive domain of states and corporations” (Lord et al 2015, p. 9).

Globalization and information revolution have changed the way people relate to places and spaces, as well as how we organize them. First, globalized economy and the advance of information technology have created a condition that David Harvey calls the “time-space compression” (1989, p. 241). Harvey uses this term to signify “processes that so revolutionize the objective qualities of space and time that we are forced to alter [...] how we represent the world to ourselves (Harvey 1989, p. 241). Harvey argues that “the history of capitalism” can be characterized by “speed-up in the pace of life, while so overcoming spatial barriers that the world sometimes seems to collapse inwards upon us” (1989, p. 241). Moreover, today’s cultural landscape is full of juxtaposed images, such as local and global, old and new, present and past. Such economic and cultural landscapes result in the sense as if time has collapsed and the world has become smaller. With constant changes and juxtapositions of seemingly unrelated fragments, today’s society can be “disorienting and disruptive” (Harvey 1989. p. 284). This concept of fragmentation also applies to physical landscape. Postmodernists consider that a space does not need to be arranged according to overarching objectives (Harvey 1989). Along with this concept, postmodernists “cultivate [...] a conception of the urban fabric as necessarily fragmented,” in which many uses of such fragments are ephemeral (Harvey 1989, p. 66).

Implications for Museums

There are two implications for the role and value of museums in today’s society. First, Harvey and Lord describe the potential role of museums as a place that people can turn to in order to make sense of the fragmented world, and to develop skills that are necessary to adapt to

changes in the society (Harvey 1989; Lord et al 2015). As Harvey explains, museum culture of "local history, of local production, of how things once upon a time were made, sold, consumed" can foster a sense of local identity, or at least something that signifies it (1989, p. 303). Moreover, museums show processes of changes and adaptation over time, whether it be local history, art, or science (Lord et al 2015, p. 25). Learning about transitions through time helps people to develop "contextual intelligence and cross-cultural skills," both of which are necessary to recognize a change and to seek ways to adapt to them (Lord et al 2015, p. 25). In a fragmented and chaotic society, museums provide a meaningful order to collections of images and objects.

Another implication is that museums, as institutions, are as dynamic and flexible as the society itself, contrary to the popular notion of museums being static and unwilling to change. Kratz uses the concept of museums as "a varied and often changing set of practices, processes, and interactions," rather than a fixed structure (Kratz et al 2006, p. 2). As means of travel and communications evolve, there are more possibilities of new interactions between individuals and groups. Kratz notes that the "[p]resent global moment," requires museums to reflect on "the changing nature of social relations and communication" (Kratz et al 2006, p. 4). Bautista argues that "[today's] infrastructure of education" is "rather a distributed, mixed-mode learning environment" (Bautista et al 2011, para.6). What Bautista refers to as "Distributed Museum" is "a postmodern formation" in which museums adapt "its traditional functions and spaces to the new cultural environment of the digital age" (Bautista et al 2011, para.4). While museums have occupied the informal spaces for learning, contemporary museums are as flexible as the learning environment itself (Bautista et al, 2011, para.7). Contemporary, "distributed" museums offer learning experiences that are spread across material and digital locations, fixed and mobile experiences, and pre-scripted to flexible activities (Bautista et al 2011, para.7).

Globalization and the advancement of digital technology have changed the way people relate to a place, to one another, and to culture. In today's changing cultural environment, the role of museums is two-fold; one side is more or less predicated on the promise of museums being stable, and orderly against the current of fragmentation, the other is a kind of social practice that are flexible and, in Bautista's term, "distributed" calls for widening what a museum might look like and where it can be (2011, para.4).

Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed the ways in which the scholars and practitioners discuss the definition, use, and benefits of "pop-up" concept, the concept of tactical and DIY urban placemaking, and the implications of globalization and Information Revolution. These bodies of literature also illustrate how these concepts affect or get incorporated into practices in the museum field. Although not explicitly, each body of literature points to the potentiality of independent pop-ups or mobile museums, that can exist to offer the museum field with some insights to the needs of a community (as in the case of DIY museums), or leading examples of new museum-making. Yet, discussions about pop-up museums in the field focus on their benefits as a form of experiment in audience participation or outreach, and they hardly touch on the actual practices and structures of pop-up or mobile museums that operate as a stand-alone institution.

This research study is an attempt to fill that gap by describing the origins, structures, and practices of independent pop-up museums. The following chapters describe the methodology and findings of this research study.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Research Goals and Questions

The purpose of this study is to describe the phenomenon of independent pop-up museums that are created and operated by individuals or groups who are unaffiliated with existing institutions. The following research questions inform this study.

1. How do the pop-up museum organizers conceptualize their museums?
2. How are these pop-ups organized (funding, exhibit spaces, exhibit contents, target audience)?
3. How do the pop-up museum organizers build relationships with local communities?
4. What are concerns or challenges that the pop-up organizers have?

The study was designed as a qualitative descriptive study. The following chapter describes the study's methodology, including sampling, data collection, data analysis, and limitations.

Sampling

For the purpose of this study, I borrow the definition of "pop-up museum" that Silvia Giordano articulates in her essay, in which a pop-up museum is defined as "a short-term institution, mobile museum or outdoor exhibit, created outside of the confines of its traditional location, in existing temporarily and unexpected places, with strong community anchors and the aim of enhancing civic engagement" (2013, p. 462). For the purpose of this research, I created a

list of additional criteria for case study sites. I identified potential case study sites by purposeful sampling based on the following criteria:

(1) The pop-up identifies as a museum.

(2) The museum is not funded or supported by other existing museums.

(3) The museum is organized by individuals or groups unaffiliated with other existing museums.

(4) The museum appeared at least once between January, 2015 and November, 2016.

(5) The museum has appeared at least twice since its beginning.

(6) The museum is open to the public.

Criteria (2) and (3) are important in order to distinguish the case study sites from the ones that are organized by a traditional museum, which are not the focus of this study. Since this study is focused on active and recurring pop-up museums, criteria (4) and (5) were necessary to exclude pop-up museums that are organized as one-off event.

I searched on the internet for websites or news articles about potential case study sites using keywords such as “pop-up museum” and “mobile museum.” As a result, I identified fourteen pop-up or mobile museums that meet the criteria. Four sites were available to schedule time for interviews and site observation. The sites that were included in this study were: Black Cube (Denver, CO), Colored Girls Museum (Philadelphia, PA), Foster Youth Museum (Oakland, CA), and the SoHo Memory Project (New York, NY).

Black Cube (Denver, CO)

Black Cube identifies as “a nonprofit, experimental art museum that operates nomadically” (Black Cube, n.d., “About Us”). The museum was founded by an artist and

philanthropist Laura Merage in 2015 with the mission to "[nurture] the self-sufficiency of artists and inspire people to discover and appreciate contemporary art beyond traditional white museum and gallery walls" (Black Cube, n.d., "About Us"). The museum does not have a physical presence; it materializes only in a form of pop-up exhibitions created by the museum's Artist Fellows. The museum headquarter is located in Denver, CO, but the pop-up locations range from metropolitan Denver area to international locations, depending on the project. At the time of this study, two pop-up exhibitions in Denver were available for observation. "The Sometimes Pop-Up Kiosk" is "part shop, part ceramic installation" by an artist Stephanie Kantor (Black Cube, n.d., "The Sometimes Pop-Up Kiosk"). The installation is located in a kiosk on 16th Street Mall in downtown Denver. This project furthers the artist's interest in tourist destinations "by exploring the gift shop, a common aspect of how we experience museums, cultural landmarks, and tourist destinations" (Black Cube, n.d., "The Sometimes Pop-Up Kiosk"). "Unclassified Site Museum" is an installation by an artist duo SANGREE, located on a vacant lot that used to be a public transportation terminal in Denver. The installation is imagined to be a subterranean archaeological excavation site, part of which can be seen through a glass window on the ground. Through the window, one can observe "an architectural remnants of a multi-family residential compound" (Black Cube, n.d., "Unclassified Site Museum").

The Colored Girls Museum (Philadelphia, PA)

The Colored Girls Museum calls itself "a memoir museum, which honors the stories, experiences, and history of Colored Girls" (The Colored Girls Museum, n.d., "About Us"). The museum dedicates itself to collecting objects that are "submitted by the colored girl herself, as representative of an aspect of her story and history [...] her object embodies her experience and

expression of being a Colored Girl" (The Colored Girls Museum, n.d., "About Us") The museum, founded in 2015, is housed in a residential home located in Germantown, in Philadelphia, PA. The neighborhood is "renowned for its compliment of historic buildings and homes" (The Colored Girls Museum, n.d., "About Us"). At the time of this study, the museum reopened for the second phase of its current series, "A Good Night's Sleep." Each room in the house, except for a few rooms, is converted into an exhibit space, which various local artists curate and organize according to the theme of the exhibition. .

Foster Youth Museum (Oakland, CA)

Foster Youth Museum is "the largest collection of art, artifacts, and video portraits about youth experiences in Foster care" (Foster Youth Museum, n.d., "About"). The project started in 2005 as part of a training curriculum to better understand "foster youth perspectives and how youth can heal and grow with supportive relationships, collaborative decision- making, positive encounters, and respect" (Foster Youth Museum, n.d., "About"). The museum is operated in collaboration with California Youth Connection, whose mission is to "[develop] leaders who empower each other and their communities to transform the foster care system through legislative, policy, and practice change" (California Youth Connection, n.d., "Mission"). Foster Youth Museum rents out its exhibition "Lost Childhoods" to partner locations. The exhibition "tells the story of loss and powerlessness in the foster care system – and the human capacity for resilience and connection" through art, artifacts, and video portraits submitted by current and former foster youth (Foster Youth Museum, n.d., "Exhibit Rentals"). The exhibition is organized differently based on the location, but as a whole it runs about 100 square feet.

The SoHo Memory Project (New York, NY)

The SoHo Memory Project identifies itself as "a mobile museum, archive, and blog celebrating and preserving the history of SoHo as a New York City neighborhood" (The SoHo Memory Project, n.d., "About"). The project first started as an archival blog, then began touring the neighborhood with its "Portable Historical Society" in 2016. The mobile exhibition is transported around in a portable cart, which unfolds into a bookshelf that display objects for the exhibition. The exhibition, "SoHo 1960-80," follows the transformation of SoHo "from a manufacturing district to a vibrant artist community" (The SoHo Memory Project, n.d., "Mobile Exhibitions"). The exhibition is organized in the themes of Live, Work, Play, and Eat (The SoHo Memory Project, n.d., "Mobile Exhibit"). The SoHo Memory Project tours around the neighborhood of SoHo and other neighborhoods in New York; the pop-up locations so far include gallery entrances, parks, and private events.

Data Collection

The study used mixed methods of structured observation and semi-structured interviews with museum personnel. This approach allowed for holistic and in-depth investigation of the pop-up museums to understand how each museum was conceptualized, implemented, and maintained.

Site Observation

I conducted structured observation of the participating sites either (1) by visiting the sites during their appearance, or (2) by analyzing photographs and videos obtained from the pop-up organizers. Black Cube and The Colored Girls Museum were scheduled to open during the

period of February to March, 2017. I visited the two pop-ups on February 27, 2017 and March 12, 2017 to collect observational data in person. Since Foster Youth Museum and SoHo Memory Project did not have a plan to open in public during the data collection period, I asked the founders for visual documentations, such as photographs or videos, of the most recent pop-up. During the visit, or while observing the photographs, I took notes using the observation protocol (Appendix.2). I developed the protocol according to the research questions. The protocol is comprised of three parts, (1) Physical Structure, (2) Atmosphere/Environment, and (3) Interaction and Engagement. Each part contains detailed questions about the museums.

Semi-structured interviews

I conducted semi-structured interviews with the individuals who identify themselves as the leading organizer of the museum. The interviews were used to draw "qualitative, descriptive, in-depth data that is specific to the individuals" (Pickard 2013, p. 196). In the interviews, I asked them about their own ideas and experiences with their pop-up museums, as well as concerns or challenges that their museums faced. The questions were drafted according to the research questions.

The majority of these museums are grassroots organization, which meant that there were often only a few who were dedicated staff of the institution. I conducted the interviews in-person for Black Cube and the Colored Girls Museum, on the phone with Foster Youth Museum, and on video conference system with the SoHo Memory Project. When it was necessary, I asked follow-up questions over e-mail.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using emergent coding from interview transcripts and observation notes. The data were processed through NVivo research software for coding and analysis purposes. To analyze the interviews and observation data, I developed a coding rubric by at first organizing the data into overarching emergent themes (Purpose, Logistics, Pop-up exhibition, Audience engagement, Community relationships, Future), then breaking the themes to sets of sub-themes. The complete coding rubric and the examples used in the study are included in Appendix C.

Limitations of Study

First, the small sample size of the study limits generalizability of the study. Moreover, because the primary method of finding the sites was limited to internet search, the study excludes other instances of grassroots pop-up museums that do not have a web presence. Second, while the interviewees were asked to describe their relationships to external communities, the study does not address the perspectives of community members. The study is primarily interested in how the pop-up museum organizers articulate their visions of community engagement, rather than whether or not their goals are actually met. Effectiveness of pop-up museums is an area of a potential research study, but it exceeds the scope of this particular study.

Chapter Four: Findings and Discussion

The goal of this study was to describe the phenomenon of independent pop-up museums, which are pop-up or mobile style museums that are operated by individuals or groups not affiliated with established institutions. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, I conducted semi-structured interviews with four organizers, who identified as the founder or director of the participating museums across the United States. Site observations of the participating pop-up museums were conducted either in person (Black Cube, the Colored Girls Museum) or by photographs obtained from the interviewee (Foster Youth Museum, the SoHo Memory Project). Data were analyzed according to emergent themes. This chapter summarizes the findings of the research, organized by the themes explored in the research questions.

Definition of Terms

In this section, the interviewees are referred by their position titles, such as "the executive director of *X*," however all of them were involved in founding of their respective museums. In addition, I draw the literature in order to define the distinction between "exhibit" and "exhibition." "Exhibit" refers to "the localized grouping of objects and interpretive materials that form a cohesive unit within a gallery," while "exhibition" is "a comprehensive grouping of all elements [...] that form a complete public presentation of collections and information for the public use" (Dean, 2002, p. 3).

Findings

1. Origin, Purpose, and Role of Pop-Up Museums

It's a placeholder, for the stories of a group of citizens who are often overlooked, marginalized, whose

services and stories are often marginalized by others, whose contributions are often overlooked and undermined. We are evidence; our role is to be evidence, to be historic record. - Executive director, The Colored Girls Museum, interview

The purposes of independent pop-up museums can vary widely. The organizers articulated their purposes in four themes: Representation, Accessibility, Providing a space for a community, and Alternative museum-making.

Representation

The participating museums started in reaction to the lack of representation of a certain community or part of history in mainstream museum field and society in general. For example, the SoHo Memory Project highlights the history of SoHo as a neighborhood, other than the lives of artists that have come out of the neighborhood who are well studied and discussed elsewhere. The founder described, "[p]eople have this romanticized image of SoHo, of the artists' lives, but they don't know the nitty gritty of the living in SoHo [...] We have a lot of lessons to teach for those who don't know the way the neighborhood developed to what it is today." Thus, the focus of the organization is "everything but the arts in SoHo" and the mobile exhibition is organized around the theme of transformation of SoHo from a manufacturing district to a thriving artist colony, and what has made the transformation possible. "Without knowing that," the founder, who was born and raised in SoHo, explained, "you cannot fully inhabit the neighborhood or really respect it." Similarly, the Colored Girls Museum celebrates the lives, accomplishments, and contributions of "ordinary extraordinary colored girls." The museum is a manifestation of the executive director's interest in ordinary black women, as well as her response to the invisibility of ordinary black women and their contributions to the world. "People like Beyonce or Michelle Obama would have museums and they deserve one, but people who make the world go around are ordinary people who get up in the morning and just do every day." The executive

director described in the interview, “I wanted to create a space of honor and celebration of, [with] focus and attention to really begin the process of gathering and sharing, ordinary accomplishments of colored girls.”

The purpose of representation is also manifested in how the museums provide the community with opportunities to take back their stories that have been appropriated or depersonalized. The Colored Girls Museum responds to the ways in which stories of people of color, especially of the working class, are presented in mainstream platforms, as the executive director described, “[to be entertained, people of color] have to do it on someone else’s term [...] we often have to engage with our stories in spaces which, even if they are not intentionally hostile to us, they are holding parts of our stories and not a welcoming space.” The executive director considered museums in general as “cultural symbolic altar [that determines] what has value and what doesn’t by its absence.” The executive director described that creating the very platform and the act of “[assigning] a value and [driving] the narrative ourselves has been really liberating and powerful for [them] and people who come [to the museum].”

Similarly, Foster Youth Museum collects personal artifacts from current and former foster youth and tells stories of their experiences in the foster care system. The co-director explained that she had the idea for collecting the artifacts when she was developing a training curriculum for children’s affairs professionals. In the process, she noticed that her co-developers would bring personal artifacts to make a point about their experiences in the foster care system. Over the years of working with youth in the foster care system, the co-director had noticed how personal stories are often buried or depersonalized in the foster care system. In response, Foster Youth Museum personalizes the foster youth experience by the use of personal artifacts and stories. The museum aims to “[uncover] the truths that people aren’t aware of, and build

compassion and interest in foster youth's lives." The co-director also felt that the museum allowed for telling the stories of foster youth in a dignified, respectful, and honorable way:

> Most rewarding experience has been seeing the lives foster youth come in technicolor, seeing really hard stories being told with tremendous amount of care and allowing for compassion, knowing that the young people's stories are being told with dignity and honor.

Space for the community

The museums also provide a space for the communities they serve, putting the interests and well-being of the communities at the forefront of the museum. One of Black Cube's goals is to be "artist-first" institution, which includes advancing the career of the artists the museum works with and ethically paying for their labor in exhibition production. Having worked as a museum curator for years, the executive director noticed how the museums in the field would put on exhibitions without paying much attention to artist's' career development or sustainability. Partly in response to that, the executive director approaches the task of curation in the original sense of the term, "to take care of," which she explained during the interview:

> 'Curate" is to take care of, they are custodians of collection, but I am interested in what that means in a [non-collecting] museum. [...] We try to think about artists holistically and procure [site-relational] projects that would really make a difference in their career and also for them to think about their career largely and [their] goals and ambitions they might have. [...] We start from the artists and everything moves around them.

In addition, the co-director of Foster Youth Museum referred to the museum as "vessel of healing for foster youth," which provides foster youth, former and current, with opportunities to

"take things that represent traumatization of some times and pass the stories on and let go of it." The co-director described that the stories told to the museum are ones that "have been shameful or really sad in the person's life that are really painful and they had to go through it alone." By telling the stories with the museum, "[foster youth] are lessening their isolationism and they are disempowering the abusive people who never expected to have the general public to know the harm they caused to these young people." The museum provides a meaningful platform for storytelling and it is trusted with the artifacts and stories because "[the foster youth] know the museum do our best to tell their stories with dignity." Similarly, the Colored Girls Museum aims to create a space that is embedded in and advances the needs of the community. As the executive director articulated, besides the strong intention to be evidence, the role of the museum is "to be the urgent care that we need, to provide first-aid to the colored girl."

Accessibility

The theme of "accessibility" often came up as one of reasons why these organizations adapted the pop-up or mobile method for their museums. The organizers discussed the importance of reaching the audience and presenting the subject in accessible, relatable mediums. The multiplicity of the term 'accessibility" is essential to understand the varied ways the organizers articulate their intention of creating an "accessible" institution.

First, pop-up and mobile style allows the museum to actively reach out to an audience that does not necessarily go to a museum or seek related cultural experiences, as well as to reach those who might be interested in the subject. For example, Foster Youth Museum has traveled to a brewery, a cathedral, to Arkansas, to name a few examples. The co-director of Foster Youth Museum explained that the advantage of pop-up/mobile style is;

> that [the museum] can reach people across all over the world, and bring our messages to different locations where they don't have to come to us. [...] We definitely know that a mobile museum allows us to reach more communities that wouldn't normally go to a static art museum.

Moreover, the organizers explained their interests in creating a platform that delivers relatable experiences for people with all levels of knowledge and interest in the theme of the museums, hence their pop-up museums serve as an entry point. For example, Black Cube was created with the intention of "[increasing] access to the arts," in a way that supports the arts but simultaneously "[takes] off from this pedestal, something out of touch, you cannot reach and inaccessible." The nomadic nature of the museum comes from their interest to reach people in places that are not traditionally reserved for art experiences, such as the middle of a busy street, and the exhibitions present an opportunity to engage with art in a relatable format, such as posing to be informational kiosk for tourists. Similarly, the founder of the SoHo Memory Project intended to reach the audiences with varied levels of knowledge about SoHo.

> I was trying to appeal to all audience, in a sense that people who are just visiting SoHo, people who have lived in SoHo for decades, people who knows a lot about the history of the neighborhood and those who don't, people who have heard of SoHo but don't really know much about the neighborhood history.

Alternative Museum-Making

Here, I borrow the term "alternative museum-making" from an essay by Liisi Taimre, who studied small independent museums in Estonia as "alternative ways of museum-making" (2015, p. 26). Taimre wrote that such museums represent new ideas and practices that emerge

under the concept of "New Museology" (2015, p. 26). Similarly, the independent pop-up museums in this study represent the intent to reimagine what a museum is and can be. For example, the name of "Black Cube" is in direct response to a traditional exhibition space in a common contemporary art museum, "white cube." While a white cube is meant to be "a purified, psychological space" that is centered around objects and devoid of the sense of site or location, Black Cube procures projects that are in relation to the sites and the audience there. The executive director articulated that the museum is "a different way to think about what a museum could be," with different ways of engaging with the communities around the museum and its audience, as well as going back to the roots of putting artists forward. The museum is certified by W.A.G.E (Working Artists for Greater Economy), an activist organization in New York working for regulating the payment of artist fees. "That is the biggest splash I hope to make as a museum," the executive director said during the interview, "we really ethically think about the artists and our relationship to them."

The executive director of the Colored Girls Museum explained that the conception of the museum came as an attempt to interrogate the idea of museums as a space and what the space can do for the community. This idea leads back to the concept of representation, accessibility, and needs of the community. After explaining her professional path as an artist and a non-profit executive, the executive director explained the conception of the idea for the Colored Girls Museum:

> It has always been the theme of space, also as it relates to women of color, the temporariness of being able to claim home space, the ways that we were moved around, or have to move, so something about the power of [...] taking over the idea of a museum and interrogating it for our own lives, [asking] what a museum can do for us?

This train of thought leads to thinking of museums as an animated entity, such as a person. The executive director imagined the Colored Girls Museum as "a colored girl who is working on behalf of her people, as an entity that 'performs'." Hence, the museum was never meant to be static, instead "it was always going to be dynamic and in conversation with its community, and lifting up the things that are concern to us. [...] We could not have been able to anticipate how it was going to go. And we still don't know what she does or she wants to do. We serve her."

The other part is rethinking what the very term of "museum" means for the society today. As the founder of the SoHo Memory Project articulated, "[p]eople assume that you can't touch anything in the museum, so it is interesting how our language hasn't caught up to the idea that there are more ways to being a museum."

In sum, the origins, purposes, and roles of these pop-up museums can be understood as follows:

- The pop-up museums are a response to the lack of representation of a certain community or an opportunity to include their own stories.
- The pop-up museums aim to create a space for the community to heal, nurture, and advance their needs for the wellbeing of the community.
- "Accessibility" in the pop-up museums can mean reaching out to the audience by appearing where people are, and providing relatable cultural experiences.
- The pop-up museums try to re-imagine and redefine the existence of museums in the society.

2. Logistics of Pop-Up Museums

It is a very lean organization. It also allows to be nimble, dynamic, and flexible, and artist and community-focused. - Executive Director, Black Cube, interview

The concept of alternative museum-making influences the ways in which the pop-up museums are funded, selecting the locations they appear, and the types of museum personnel. This section discusses the administrative logistics of the participating museums.

Funding Structure

The sources of funding for initiating and operating these pop-up museums vary and change often, depending on partnerships and the projects. The sources include contributions from private foundations and project partners, public and private grants, and crowdfunding using social media. For example, Black Cube is incubated by an independent foundation and receives most of its operating budget from the foundation. For each project, Black Cube amplifies the budget through building partnerships, which also vary project to project. In one project with the Mexican artist duo, a partner company donated some of the cost of fabrication, and the Mexican Consulate helped to pay for the flight fares from Mexico City to Denver for the artists. To a certain extent, membership drives (Black Cube, the Colored Girls Museum), admission fees (the Colored Girls Museum) and service fees for consulting, talks and speeches done in the name of the organization (the SoHo Memory Project) also supplement the operational budget of the museum. The executive director of the Colored Girls Museum explained that they are also willing to subsidize the rest of museum budget by paying out of pocket because of passion for their work: “The rest of it, we subsidize ourselves because we want to do it.”

These independent pop-up museums are able to meet their needs with fewer funding

sources than a typical museum, but it should be noted that securing sufficient and stable funding nonetheless poses a difficult challenge for the museums. For example, the co-director of Foster Youth Museum described that the museum is chronically underfunded because the museum is not the main mission of the agency it currently operates under. Being under-resourced and the high cost of transporting the exhibition limited their decisions about where the museum could go or who they can partner with. As the co-director describes:

> The biggest challenge has been funding. Mounting a museum show is more expensive than most places can afford. A lot of places want to put the museum up, [and] if we had nice juicy grants to go to ten different locations in the state or to big events, we would do that. But at this point we have to go with who has funding.

On the other hand, some organizers valued that their funding structures allowed for the flexibility in their museum practice and helped them to focus on what the museum set out to do. When asked about advantages of the museum structure, the executive director of Black Cube answered; "[...] the advantages are funding, mostly. It all goes to the projects. It is a very lean organization. It also allows to be nimble, dynamic, and flexible, and artist and community-focused." Similarly, the executive director of the Colored Girls Museum valued sustainability of the museum without relying on high-level donations or government funding, as she explained:

> We [the museum] can exist because we can fly in at a very low level, keep our costs pretty low, and we can shape-shift as necessary in order to survive. [...] We have the luxury, not that we have any money, of determining our course, of allowing it even evolve as it's evolving, because we are not under pressure to do what anybody in particular wants to do it.

Pop-Up Location

Mobility is one of key features of these pop-up museums, which represents their interest

in actively reaching out to the audience. The organizers discussed their processes of deciding on the locations and the sites where they bring their museums. The process of pop-up site selection can be situated somewhere on the spectrum, in which there is "utilizing available spaces" on one end, and the project feasibility and partnerships on the other (Figure 1). There is also an aspect of building the organization's narrative, especially for younger pop-up museums

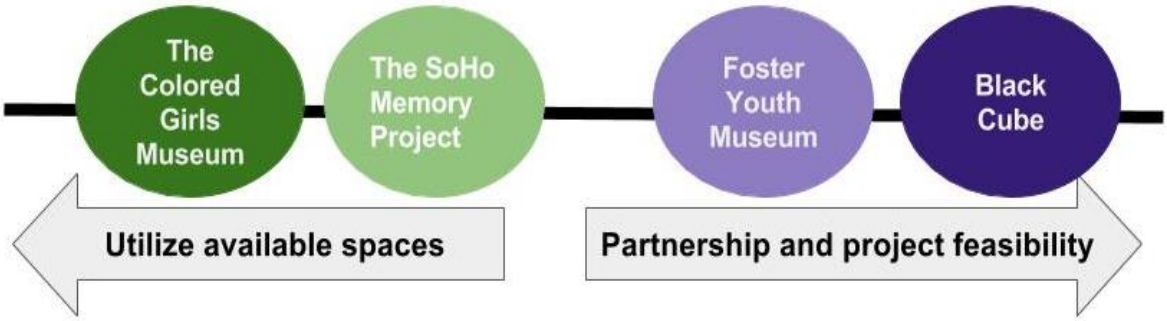

Figure 1: The range of site selection process.

The pop-up museums that fall closer to "utilizing available spaces" decide on their location based on evaluating the spaces that are available to use without investing in real estate. The founder of the SoHo Memory Project was aware that the chances of having a permanent space for the museum were low, due to high cost of real estate in New York City, especially in the SoHo neighborhood. The founder said that she got the concept of a mobile exhibition from a friend, who had started a nonprofit organization that brings portable cultural experiences in public spaces, such as a portable reading room. This concept enabled the founder to access public spaces in SoHo, and to set up the museum where she could reach the target audience. The executive director of the Colored Girls Museum explained that a tragedy in her family and realization that "if [she] was waiting for the right space, right time, right money, [the museum] is never going to happen" led to her decision to convert her own residential home into a museum:

> One of the things that was stopping me from manifesting the museum was that I don't have a space like [other museums]. This began, sort of 'if I was waiting for the right space, right time, right money, it is never going to happen. So I guess I should just see what's going to happen.' I have a space, what is going to look like in this space? Then I remembered, the history of museums was at homes.

On the other end of the spectrum is selecting the locations based on project feasibility and partnerships. Black Cube especially follows this pattern. Because the museum puts artists' interests first, the site selection is based on the project proposals that Artist Fellows come up with. Starting from a project proposal, the executive director goes out to look for a location that most makes sense for the project concept, as well as whether or not the project is feasible to fabricate in certain sites. This selection process involves a great deal of negotiations with external parties, including the owners of sites, municipal governments, and other groups.

The co-director of Foster Youth Museum explained that, at the beginning, the museum was intended to accompany the trainings for children's affairs professionals, hence the locations depended on where the trainings were happening. The museum is currently more interested in reaching the general public. Due to the financial restrictions, their site selection process depends not only the venue itself but also whether the sponsoring organizations can cover the cost of transportation and putting up the exhibition. The co-director explained:

> We choose our venues based on, will this be a good venue to get the message out, and do they have funding or resources to bring us. It is very expensive to bring the museum somewhere. It is less about venues and more about sponsoring organization.

Especially for younger organizations, building the organizational narrative is also a key influencer on the site selection. Such museums use the site selection as a way to understand how

the museum would behave in different situations. As the founder of Black Cube noted:

> Because the organization is young, we are building a narrative of what we can be in the sites we engage. So last year it was really important for us that we go outside of Colorado. I had some ethical questions about what it meant to be part of a community that I wasn't familiar with and didn't have established audience with.

Museum Leadership and Staff

The participating sites were operated by a small number of dedicated personnel. As for leadership, some of the participating sites incorporate a collective leadership style, which allows the museums to operate smoothly and to represent the community more holistically. For example, Foster Youth Museum is run with co-directors, and the different management style of the two directors keep the museum running successfully: "I am more of a big picture and my co-director is like a logistical genius. So we really need both factors in order to succeed as a museum." The Colored Girls Museum also takes a collective leadership style, in which there are the executive director, the curator and the associate director who are both practicing artists and identify as male. Regarding the gender of the leadership team, the founder noted that it adds depth to the representation of black women and that the message of the museum.

> Originally, it was going to be all-female leadership, but the two women I was working with couldn't do it. To my surprise, [Curator] said yes. [...] It definitely raises a question and people have asked me, what is a colored boy working at the Colored Girls Museum? The short answer is that you can't have a colored girl without a colored boy. Part of what we are talking about is the importance of looking at the world through someone else's lenses other than of your own, what becomes available for you to see.

The leaders of these pop-up museums are responsible for day-to-day operation of the museum, as well as setting the course and narrative of the organization. Without established staff team, some of the organizers noted that it is challenging to balance time and workload. The executive director of Black Cube mentioned; “What else has been challenging, I think, the bandwidth of my workload. Of course it is something I am very passionate about, but it takes every waking moment in my life.”

These pop-up museums receive help from their volunteer bases, although the extent and formality of it varies. In this section, I specifically discuss the use of volunteers and “staff” members of the pop-up museums, those who are involved in maintenance and operation of the museums, rather than contributing to the pop-up exhibitions. This section excludes the project partners, such as Artist Fellows (Black Cube) and art and artifact contributors (the Colored Girls Museum, the SoHo Memory Project, Foster Youth Museum), whom I discuss in a later section of this chapter.

Staff, or mostly volunteers, of the participating sites take on various roles within the museums. While volunteers take on administrative tasks in some cases, most of the volunteers at these museums facilitate and enhance the audience’s museum experience by being a docent for when the exhibit opens. The volunteers can speak about the exhibit and they often relate to the museums at a personal level because they have lived experiences with the themes of the museums. For example, Foster Youth Museum has docent volunteers who are themselves current and former foster youth. For the SoHo Memory Project, a friend of the founder, who also grew up in the neighborhood, staffed the exhibition and answered questions from the visitors. The founder explained that having two people with lived experiences in SoHo added a personal touch to the exhibition:

> I told [the friend] about the exhibit so she can answer questions, but also she can bring her own experience to it, since she has a long history with SoHo, as do I. The questions that people ask are always answered by technical questions, and memories of like, how these things pertain to our lives. So it made it sort of more personal.

When it comes to the logistics of the independent pop-up museums, there is no one model or process that these museums follow. The key findings about their logistics can be summarized as follows:

- The funding sources are varied and often changing.
- Securing sufficient funds poses a challenge, but some pop-up museums embrace the flexibility and its ability to focus on their main goals.
- Selection of pop-up locations depend on what spaces are available (or can be made available), and on feasibility and partners of the projects.
- Museum leadership sometimes takes collective leadership style to holistically represent the community and to ensure success of the museum.
- Volunteers help facilitate the museum experience by being a docent or a tour guide. They often have personal experiences with the theme of the museum.

3. Inside the Museum: Exhibitions and Audience Engagement

We hope that people would see our exhibition and take some kind of action. We try to provide opportunities for the levels of that action might be. Every exhibition we try to think of our audiences, and what they might be ready for action, so we change up. - Co-Director, Foster Youth Museum, interview

This section focuses on what goes on inside a pop-up museum, once the idea for the museum is born and the stage for an exhibition is established. How does a pop-up museum

curate and install its exhibition? How does a pop-up museum engage with its audience beyond the exhibition?

Curation Process

The curation process of the participating sites includes collecting objects and deciding what goes into the exhibition. In some cases, particularly Back Cube, it is a process of inviting artists to procure an exhibition project.

The organizers generally start with collecting artifacts, testimonials, or information about artists, to start the process of materializing the museum. The organizers described that they started by reaching out to their personal contacts, such as co-workers, friends, and neighbors, who they knew had first-hand experiences with the themes of their museums. From there, the organizers develop a bigger pool of contributors of artifacts, art, and testimonials, either by word-of-mouth invitations and targeted open calls. For example, the founder of the SoHo Memory Project "sent out email to people who lived in SoHo, and asked them what their favorite childhood memory was." The co-director of Foster Youth Museum explained that the process started with the curriculum developers who she had been working with: "[...] there was a group of about 6, and made themselves donate the things as part of [curriculum development] process. And then we put out calls on personal level, either word of mouth, text message, and [social media]." The Colored Girls Museum first invited artists that the leadership team personally knew to be "inaugural artists" of the museum:

> Part of the assignment was that, 'you come, but you invite 2-5 ordinary extraordinary colored girls to submit objects and artifacts that you, as the curator of the space in this

> museum, would curate. [...] some of those people who were invited by those artists have then become curators of those spaces, and they invited other artists.

\Black Cube, as "Khunstall-style (non-collecting)" museum, curates artists rather than objects. The museum's curation process involves intense researching for emerging artists, for example, by participating in contemporary art discourse, going to art fairs, reading publications, following art institutions, and listening to recommendations from artists that she has worked with. The curation also reflects the process of establishing the organizational narrative:

> We try to build a conversation of local artists and national/international artists, so we start from that mix. I know we are looking for artists that we can impact their career, [...] to move the needle of their career. I'm also [...] trying to build the diversity of projects that we do, [as] building a narrative for the organization. [...] We are an experimental organization, so we try to procure projects that are on the edge of contemporary art, like experiences that people might question as art experiences.[...] It is not just traditional sort of paintings, not that we won't do paintings, but they would be done in an experimental way.

Installation Process

Installation of the exhibition actually turns the idea of the museum into a tangible form, claiming physical presence in the selected locations. The process of installing the exhibition depends on the type of exhibition they are putting up (Table.1).

Exhibition Type	Installation Process	Characteristics	Examples
Mobile-style	Transporting (packing and unpacking). Setup at the location.	Can be efficient. Physically demanding. Impact on equipment.	The SoHo Memory Project. Foster Youth Museum.
Site-Relational	Develop exhibition in relation to the site. Fabrication on the site.	Depends on the project. A lot of negotiations. Hard to build efficiency.	Black Cube. The Colored Girls Museum.

Table.1 Patterns of Installation Process

For mobile-style exhibitions, in which the contents stay more or less the same, the installation process mainly refers to transportation from its storage location and setting it up the exhibition at the destination. The SoHo Memory Project and Foster Youth Museum follow this pattern. While this pattern allows for making the installation process as efficient as possible, the installers must consider the logistics of carrying the exhibition into the site, especially so if the destination is inside a building. Moreover, the constant movement is physically demanding for the installer and for the equipment. The SoHo Memory Project's exhibition is a mobile cart which contains all the artifacts and other contents for the museum. The cart is usually stored at the basement storage space in the founder's apartment building. To open the museum, the founder explained that she generally pushes the cart herself to the location through the streets in New York, which are usually busy and full of obstacles:

> We push the carts through streets to the destination, so it is logistically and physically challenging. [...] You have to think about, would it fit the elevator of the building, or things like that. [...] Blocks in New York are smaller than other cities, there are 20 blocks in 1 mile, but the thing is, it is not a flat surface. There is always construction everywhere. Some roads are cobblestones, so there are a lot of obstacles. And in the daytime there are so many people.

Similarly, the co-director of Foster Youth Museum reported the museum equipment is often damaged during the transportation, and that it is resource and labor-intensive to move the exhibition from one place to another:

> We repair and replace picture frames and [other equipment] frequently. [...] We get volunteers, but they are usually not super skilled with management, so our properties, not our artifacts but the artifact holders, get damaged. It is also very expensive to travel. [...] Now we travel in a giant U-Haul truck, it's one-day packing and one-day unpacking. It takes a lot to put a museum up, so it is very cost-expensive and labor-intensive.

To some extent, as the founder of the SoHo Memory Project described, "the transportation itself becomes a show." As the founder moves the cart through the streets, she notices that passersby are curious to see what is going on. "People always ask me what is in the cart."

On the other hand, "site-relational" exhibitions do not follow one process: rather, each project is developed, fabricated, and installed differently. Thus, this pattern can be characterized by the extent and degree of negotiations with the exhibition concept, the artists, various parties involved in the project, and restrictions of the pop-up sites. Black Cube and The Colored Girls Museum follow this pattern.

The executive director of Black Cube explained that because every site-relational project is different in every aspect (artist who is making the exhibition, materials, location, groups related to the site), it is difficult to establish a pattern that she could replicate in other projects. For example, the executive director pointed out:

> Working with city and governments has been challenging, just because of the amount of approvals, each city is different in terms of committee approvals for different things. Sometimes it takes surprising how much time and energy it takes to work with a city.

Moreover, the executive director described that various restrictions of the sites require negotiations with the artists and their ideas. After describing the installation process of a past project, in which the artists had to deal with the restrictions placed by the site owner, the executive director noted:

> [Initially] I thought it was just purely [that] we would make the artist's idea but actually, because we are in everyday space, there is a lot of negotiations that has to happen with artists.[...] That is the difference between when you are conceiving an organization and actual reality of the organization; fire code, ADA, public right of way...

At The Colored Girls Museum, the installation process varies depending on the artist curators who bring in the objects to the museum. The museum lets the artists to dictate the load-in and arrangements of objects in the first part of the show, from September to November. When necessary, the head curator of the Colored Girls Museum steps in to fill in the gap between exhibit spaces and hold the story of the exhibition together. In the preparation for the second part, the museum uses the "hibernation period" of November to March to "notice how the works are behaving in the space, then work more closely with the artists to really focus the exhibition." This process allows the museum and the artists to reexamine "whether or not it is actually working in the way they wanted it to be working." Moreover, because the museum invites various artists for one exhibition, the Colored Girls Museum works with different work-styles during the installation process. While the installation process seems chaotic to some, the executive director noted that she enjoys the haul-in period. The executive director described that having the objects and stories at her home is like "hosting guests in a bed and breakfast," and that the installation period feels like that as well.

Exhibition contents

The exhibition contents carry the museum's messages in various ways, manifesting the museum's purposes and roles for their audience.

In manifesting the purpose of "representation" of a certain community or history, the pop-up museums rely on contributions from the respective communities for the majority of the exhibition content. The exhibition contents, such as the artifacts, stories, and artworks, share the first-hand experiences. Not only such testimonials are told in the way they want, or in some cases their own words, but also the contributors are able to assign value and significance to the objects. For example, Foster Youth Museum displays personal artifacts and portraits, along with the personal stories and testimonials of their experiences in the foster care system (Figure. 2). The exhibition pictured here is called "Lost Childhoods," which, according to the co-director, "tells a story of foster youth from the perspectives of foster youth."

Figure 2. The Exhibition of Foster Youth Museum. Photo: Ray Bussolari.

In some cases, the effort to represent the community or stories comprehensively reaches beyond the visual aspect of the exhibition. Some of the exhibitions were multisensory, incorporating scents and music to the experience and thereby creating an immersive environment. The founder of the SoHo Memory Project described that the exhibition is meant to

be interactive in order to understand the exhibition (Figure. 3). “One has to touch, feel, smell, listen, and do all these things. If you just stand and look at it, it wouldn’t make sense.” For example, in the exhibition there are “smell jars,” each jar containing different scents that one would encounter in SoHo, such as smell of leather manufacturing.

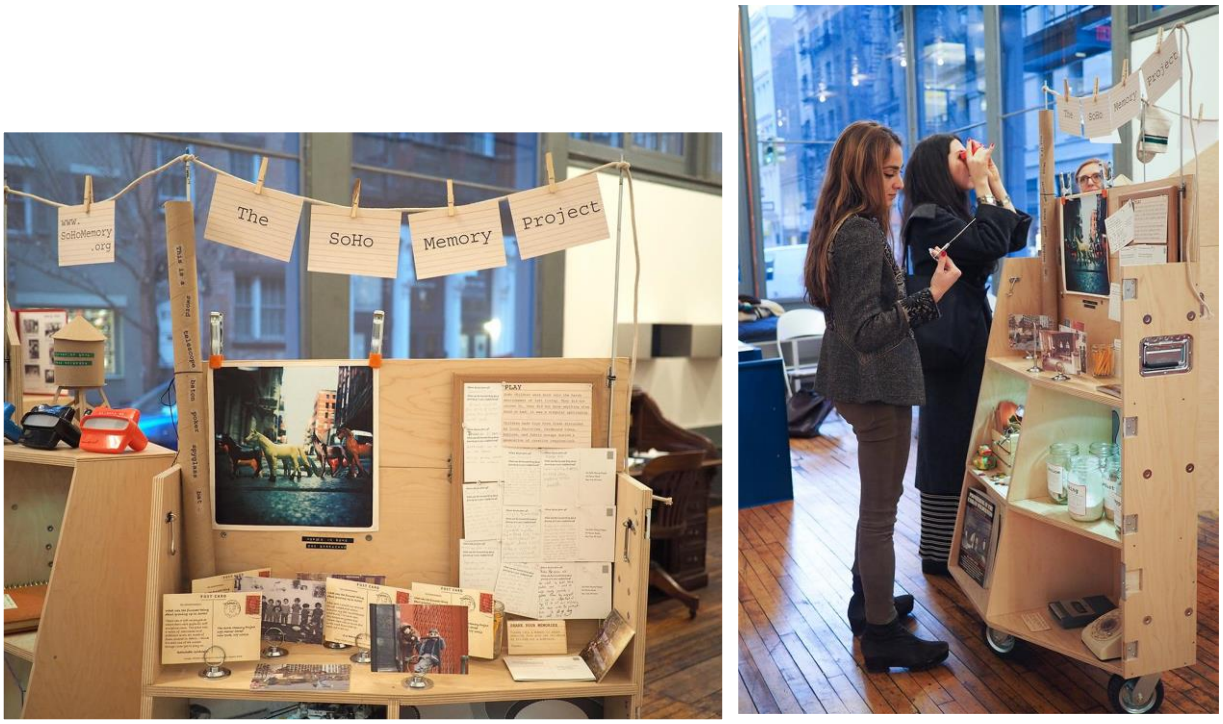

Figure 3. The mobile exhibition of the SoHo Memory Project (left). Visitors interacting with the exhibition (right). Photo: The SoHo Memory Project.

In creating an “accessible” exhibition, the organizers arrange the exhibition contents to appeal different types of audience and to encourage them to directly interact with the objects. For example, the SoHo Memory Project places something in every shelving unit of the mobile cart; some are floor level where children can easily reach and interact with the objects. As the founder described, “The exhibit is broken down into cubes, so that way, people can look at whatever that interests them, and move on diagonally, horizontally, or vertically. So from [every angle] you are always looking at something.”

In addition, these exhibitions appear in everyday spaces, turning the sites into relatable cultural experiences. At the time of my visit, Black Cube's latest exhibition, "The Sometimes Pop-Up Kiosk," was located in the middle of 16th Street Mall in Denver, CO (Figure. 4). 16th Street Mall is a busy street in downtown Denver, and it is known as a tourist destination that has many stores and restaurants. Besides the businesses on two sides of the street, pedestrian "islands" run through the Mall, on which many small food kiosks are located. The exhibition was guised as a tourist information kiosk, which looked exactly like other food kiosks.

Figure 4. Black Cube, *The Sometimes Pop-Up Kiosk* by Stephanie Kantor. Photo: Megumi Nagata 2017.

The purpose of being a space for the community is manifested in the act of collecting artifacts and nurturing the artists. In addition to that, the theme of healing and care also come up in the exhibition themes. For example, the Colored Girls Museum's exhibition at the time of this study was arranged and imagined as "an urgent care facility for the colored girls," which was part two of the year-long exhibition (Figure. 5), "A Goodnight Sleep." Displayed in the

exhibition are objects and artworks that represent the necessary things to have a good night of sleep, which range from a topsy-turvy doll, woven baskets, paintings, quilts, and so on. The museum tour follows the storyline by going through the exhibit spaces as one would go through an urgent care facility, starting from Reception, Triage, Examination Room, Healing Suite, Washroom, and to Apothecary.

Figure 5. The Colored Girls Museum, “Reception” (left) and “Healing Suite” (right). Photo: Megumi Nagata 2017.

Lastly, as for “alternative museum-making,” what differs from many museum exhibits is the use of labels. For example, the SoHo Memory Project intentionally omitted labels from the exhibit. The museum invites visitors to make sense of the exhibition and the contents through their own experiences. The founder of the SoHo Memory Project explained, “I don’t really have any descriptions. I am not saying what you are supposed to, or what connections you are supposed to make.”

Audience Engagement

Beyond the exhibitions, these pop-up museums engage with the audience through structured programs and by simply inviting them in a conversation.

Structured programs include artist lectures, guided museum tours, and workshops. For example, Black Cube offers artist lectures that go along with the exhibitions, which are intended to provide the audience with opportunities to gain deeper understanding of the exhibitions and the larger context of contemporary art field (Black Cube, n.d., "Programs"). The Colored Girls Museum offers a guided museum tour to every visitor coming through the museum. The tour is led by the museum leaders and supported by the artist curators when necessary. The tour provides visitors with information about the artists and artifacts, as well as gain deeper understanding about the contexts of the exhibition. Because there is no label or descriptions that accompany the artworks, visitors are encouraged to ask questions and engage in conversations with the tour guides. Another example of structured programs, Foster Youth Museum provides local community to contribute to the museum collection. The museum hosted a pop-up workshop with local youth to accompany the show in Arkansas. In the workshop, they were asked to bring artifacts that represented their experiences in the foster care system. The result of a workshop was a section in the exhibition dedicated for foster youth in Arkansas. It allowed the audience, particularly local foster youth, to draw connections between the exhibition and their own experiences.

Another way of engaging with the audience is, quite simply, having personal conversations with visitors. Although such interactions are less structured, the museums make as much effort as possible to deepen the museum experience, and they value the interactions that come out of it. The museums would have someone on site, such as the director, volunteers and

docents, to interact with visitors. Furthermore, in hopes of leading visitors to take action after seeing the exhibition, Foster Youth Museum offer information on various ways to further engage with the subject. As the co-director described;

> We hope that people would see our exhibition and take some kind of action. [...] We have a flyer that we hand out in the exhibition, if people are willing to take it. It is actually a postcard; it's a challenge for a next step, [such as making donations, being a mentor for foster youth]. Every exhibition we try to think of our audiences, and what they might be ready for action, so we change up.

The organizers also remarked that they value any level of personal interactions with visitors or seeing them being engaged with the exhibition and making connection to their lives. When asked about what has been rewarding about the museum, the executive director of Black Cube answered: "I think it is just having conversations, having art conversations with people that aren't approaching art as art. Just having conversations about the experience, I think it is really refreshing." The executive director of the Colored Girls Museum also noted that what had been rewarding about the museum was "[knowing] that people can come here on Sunday, it could be two people or it could be two hundred that they leave here with something that they didn't know that they even needed."

For independent pop-up museums, an exhibition may be the may be the main method of communication with the audience, but they also put effort in interacting with visitors through various programs and simple conversations.

- The pop-up museums curate their objects, and sometimes artists, by reaching out to the respective communities.

- The process of installing a pop-up varies by the type of exhibitions, mobile-style or site-relational.
- Exhibition contents, as well as how they are arranged, represent the museum's goals.
- The pop-up museums provide various structured programs, and they value interactions with visitors.

4. Communities and Pop-Up Museums

It's important to find partner organization if we are going outside of Colorado, to be able to tap into who the community is and what the important issues are, how to engage the audience. [...] It is really difficult to prop yourself in a community, and exhibition, and expect it to resonate with the audience. - Executive Director, Black Cube, interview.

In the interviews, the pop-up museum organizers described the ways in which their museums develop relationships with diverse communities. The organizers develop and use their relationships with external communities at various stages, from initial conception of the museum to advertising the exhibitions. Moreover, the process of museum-making fosters a community between the organizers and the individuals engaged in the museum such as volunteers.

Relationships with External Communities

The organizers recognize the importance of building relationships with external communities, which include a community that the museum aims to represent, project partners, and local residents near the pop-up locations. These communities play a crucial role in developing the pop-up exhibitions by contributing their artifacts and stories for the museum, as in the cases of the SoHo Memory Project, Foster Youth Museum, and the Colored Girls Museum. The organizers described that they also sought knowledge and input from the external

communities as experts in the area. For example, while developing ideas for an organization to support sustainability of artists, which later became Black Cube, the executive director turned to various groups in the arts community for advice and input:

> I worked with [the founder of Black Cube] to look at arts and culture climate, to identify what sort of needs community identified. We held focus groups, we talked to some artists to get more information, and worked and got advice from a number of foundation directors [...] I also met with some leaders that worked with some organizations [...] that had a artist-supportive angle but organizations that didn't have its building. So that is how [Black Cube] came to be.

The organizers also value the relationships with partners and local communities near the pop-up locations as a resource for outreach and engagement with wider audience. The co-director of Foster Youth Museum described that, along with the marketing plan that the museum creates for a show, the museum "usually work[s] with [a] sponsoring organization and or the venue to utilize their contacts" to send press releases and social media campaigns. The Colored Girls Museum align their exhibition opening for the year with local arts festival "to reach an audience that [the museum] might not typically be talking to," and "to use their publicity machine to reach those audiences and to generate different kinds of conversations."

Developing relationships with locals is particularly important when the museum is branching out to locations or communities that the museum or the practitioner is unfamiliar with. Not only for the purpose of marketing, but it is also important for understanding the context of the communities that the museum is trying to engage with. For example, when Black Cube was installing a project at a closed station, the executive director noticed that there were multiple layers of community that gathered at the site, from office workers taking their dogs out to local

skateboarders. This prompted the executive director to talk directly with the local communities about the exhibition. The executive director noted, “I wanted them to respect and understand the installation and share with larger community when other kids are skating.[...] I would tell them what the project was so they would get excited about it.” Regarding the importance of community relationships, the executive director of Black Cube remarked:

> It’s important to find partner organization if we are going outside of Colorado, to be able to tap into who the community is and what the important issues are, how to engage the audience. [...] It is really difficult to prop yourself in a community and exhibition, and expect it to resonate with the audience.

The pop-up museums and various community groups sometimes reach out to each other for collaborative projects that would further their organizational message. For example, the Colored Girls Museum collaborated with local playwright festival in a creative research project, called “Performing Identities.” The project engages young women to use research techniques “to find out what is the history of indigenous colored girl in Germantown, what has she done here, who is she, where does she live, where are her people, where is she now.” The executive director described that the museum and the festival reached out to each other, and that this collaboration manifests her idea that “it is really important that this museum work with young folks, and that young folks also understand the power and importance of objects and artifacts in their lives, because so often we don’t think about it until much after.”

Community Within

In addition to the relationships between the museum and surrounding communities, the organizers also remarked on a sense of community forming inside the museum. Through process

of museum-making and through art and act of storytelling, the organizers foster relationships with the individuals such as artifact contributors, artist curators, and volunteers. For example, Foster Youth Museum makes a community among the museum staff and the youth by hiring some of those who donate artifacts as docents of the museum. At the Colored Girls Museum, the executive director explained that an important aspect of the museum is "to connect artists to one another and to [...] build community among artists and ordinary colored girls, [...] with an eye towards economic development, community development, really using the power of being artists and connect people and resources." The executive director of Black Cube also described a kind of caring relationship that she feels with the artists she had worked with. When asked about rewarding aspects of the museum, she answered that it is "being able to give [...] artists that haven't produced a project to this scale, the ability to do that, it's an amazing gift that I feel honored to be able to do." This supportive and caring aspect of community relationship is in alignment with the purpose of providing a space for the community, as explored in the previous section.

The participating sites value their relationships with the external communities as a way to develop and enrich the museum experience, as well as a resource for doing outreach for the exhibitions and the museum itself. Additionally, the organizers aim to develop a sense of community among the individuals who are involved in the museum, including the organizers themselves. The key findings are as follows:

- The relationships with external communities manifest in initial stages of developing the museum, in collecting artifacts, in doing outreach for the exhibitions.

- It is important to seek partnerships when having a show at a new location, not just for the marketing sake but also to understand the audience.
- The pop-up museums also aim to foster a sense of caring and supportive community among those involved in the process.

5. Visions for the Future

Now I am thinking maybe I don't need a permanent place. I like the mobility of the exhibit. Flexibility of changing the exhibits. I am thinking of ways to make the mobile exhibition more flexible, and not static. - Founder, the SoHo Memory Project, interview

The organizers shared their visions for the future of their museums, particularly in the areas of museum structure and partnerships. In addition, the organizers were interested in sharing the concept of the pop-up museum with other individuals or community groups so that the concept can be replicated in a different context.

Museum Structure

The organizers explained that they are still in the process of establishing and stabilizing the museum structure, such as funding streams, leadership and staff, and other logistics. Funding seems to be the main concern in terms of whether there is a future for the museum. For example, the co-director of Foster Youth Museum was concerned with securing sufficient resources as the museum grows. The co-director noted, "the issue is whether or not having the resources that [they] can bring [the museum] into the next level."

The comments about the future suggested the organizers' interest in growing the organization; however, the organizers wanted to do so in a way that would preserve the uniqueness and advantages of the current structure. For example, the executive director of Black

Cube described her visions for the future mostly in terms of organizational growth, but not too much that would hinder their responsiveness:

> Hopefully, [becoming] public nonprofit in the future, have a more established form of board and established funding streams. Also hopefully we'll be able to grow staff, to have project managers and administrative staff, but it doesn't need to be huge, because we do a pretty nimble work.

In regards to future funding, the executive director of the Colored Girls Museum described various ways that she was considering to advance the message of the museum and also to supplement the museum funding. One idea was to have each exhibit space in the museum "[be] sponsored by different organizations that [the museum] have connections with or connections with the ideas or the artists," since each exhibit space deals with different stories and artifacts. In an effort to benefit the artists and to promote healing power of art, the museum was planning to host workshops led by the artists the museum has worked with. The fees from the programs would be used to advance the museum's work.

While some aspired to have a permanent location, they also valued the mobility and accessibility of the current structure. Although the founder of the SoHo Memory Project started the project with an intention to have a permanent location, the idea for a permanent location changed over time: "Now I am thinking maybe I don't need a permanent place. I like the mobility of the exhibit. Flexibility of changing the exhibits. I am thinking of ways to make mobile exhibition more flexible, and not static." Similarly, the co-director of Foster Youth Museum described that having a permanent location does not quite align with the current focus of the museum: "Having a permanent location would be very symbolic for foster youth, to have

their own home, but at this point we are interested in seeing the state, the country, and the world with the museum, and having the world see it."

Future Partnerships

The organizers also identified partnerships as one of the areas of growth. On one hand, the organizers were interested in repeating pop-up locations and deepening the relationship with local communities there. For example, the executive director of Black Cube noted that she was interested in maintaining community relationships by revisiting and repeating the locations. "As of now, we haven't revisited the sites for the second time. So it's more like something that comes and stimulates the site and leaves. It's not like traditional museum that are deeply embedded in the community, that's the area for Black Cube as we grow."

The organizers were also interested in expanding the range of partnerships. The founder of the SoHo Memory Project discussed her idea of having the exhibition inside a museum with a relevant theme, thereby building a partnership with other museums and being part of a larger narrative. "[I am thinking] to bring the mobile museum to exhibitions that match the theme, so that way it has a permanent presence, or at least while the exhibit is running. So my mobile exhibit's a story within a larger story." Similarly, the executive director of Black Cube said that she was interested in procuring projects that can easily be identified as cultural exchange. In order to do that, the museum was interested in partnering with organizations outside of Colorado, national and international, so that hopefully the concept of cultural exchange is more clearly communicated to the audience.

> I would like to build projects so they are more of exchange, Colorado artists going outside, bring outsiders in [...] I think right now it is not quite clear why we do a project

> elsewhere and here, other than resources and building a narrative of the organization. I would like the audience to look and understand why here why there.

The executive director explained that the museum was planning a collaborative project with a Czech museum in the near future, in which she would bring a Denver artist to Prague for an exhibition and residency, in exchange bringing the executive director of the Czech museum and Czech artists to Denver.

Replicating the Concept

Some organizers specifically mentioned that they were interested in sharing the concept with other individuals and groups in the future. By sharing the concept, they hoped to create a network of museums working towards a similar, if not the same, purpose of representation and a space for the community. For example, the SoHo Memory Project considered that its concept and the exhibition format as templates that individuals or groups could use to tell stories of their neighborhoods.

> If other neighborhoods want to make the cart, they can take my idea and build their own cart and fill it with objects from their neighborhoods. I think it will be interesting to have carts of different neighborhoods together. [...] I want it to be a template or useful format for other museum or projects to show their own neighborhood history.

The executive director of the Colored Girls Museum was interested in turning the museum into a hub for many colored girls museums outside Philadelphia. She recognized that the stories and experiences of colored girls are different in other regions, thus there would be a need for region-specific colored girls museums. She imagined the museum as "21st Century Underground Railroad," by which she meant a network of outposts across the country where one can seek

information and support. This vision is related back to the museum's purpose of creating a caring space for the community.

> I have a vision of outposts for colored girls everywhere, that really functions like 21st Century Underground Railroad, that as you travel from one place to another you know you can find safety in Colored Girls regional outposts. [...] to create these networks of support. And there will always be a place to gather. I think that is really important [...] that we are able to export that knowledge into the community in meaningful ways.

The organizers envisioned the future in terms of growing and maintenance of museum structure and partnerships with external communities. Moreover, they were interested in replicating the concept in different contexts, in hopes of allowing different communities to represent for themselves and to create a network of organizations working towards a similar purpose.

- The organizers envision organizational growth in a way that they can retain what they like about pop-up structure, such as mobility and flexibility.
- The organizers are interested in deepening relationships with various sites and communities.
- The organizers hope to replicate the concept in different contexts, so others can present their own stories and to create a network of care and support.

DISCUSSION

1. Experimenting with pop-up

As the literature suggested, pop-ups can be a platform to experiment with new ideas (AAM 2012; Hollwich 2015). With the absence of a "white cube" gallery space, a pop-up exhibition might be seen as merely a public art installation, and not a museum. Pop-up museums blur the line between what is considered a museum and what is not. In other words, the pop-up museums are experimenting with the very idea of museums. The definition of the term "museum" varies in the field, but here I employ Eugene Dillenburg's definition, because it encompasses museums that do not have a permanent structure or collection. In his essay, he writes, "a more robust definition of a museum might be: an institution whose core function includes the presentation of public exhibits for the public good" (2011, p. 11). Thus, if the institution uses exhibits as a main method of communication, that is a museum. The pop-up museums in this study materialize through exhibitions and communicate their philosophy to the audience through the objects and narratives.

In the interviews, the pop-up museum organizers remarked that their museums could be at the forefront of re-imagining what a museum can be and do. The practices of the pop-up museums represent "alternative ways of museum-making" (Taimre, 2015, p. 26). The organizers of the participating museums held particular ideas about museums and deliberately chose the format of a museum to serve the needs of the community. Their ideas about museums were apparent in the ways they described the role and strength of museums. For example, the executive director of the Colored Girls Museum considered museums as a "cultural symbols alter' that defines what has value and what does not. The co-director of Foster youth Museum remarked that museums are trusted with the stories because they can tell stories with dignity and honor. The organizers were conscious that they had a responsibility to represent the communities ethically and holistically, because the communities trusted the museums with their artifacts and

stories. Their practices and decisions about the museum revolved around that. The findings suggest that, to the pop-up museum organizers, museums are a set of practices, which includes sharing the voices of communities that have been underrepresented and, at times, caring for their wellbeing.

Experimenting with a pop-up style museum requires coordination of various elements. While a pop-up museum may look spontaneous to the eyes of visitors, organization and installation involve extensive negotiations and building partnerships with various stakeholders. The pop-up museums seem to “pop-up” in unexpected places, where visitors do not necessary think to find a museum experience, but the selection of pop-up locations is also part of the extensive planning. From museum logistics to exhibition contents, the practice of the participating pop-up museums hinged on the extent of the relationships to the communities, which includes the population they aim to serve, project partners, and the audience. These relationships that pop-up museums develop are also part of the experimentation. In other words, the pop-up museums are experimenting with the possibility of a thriving museum in which every part is in context of these relationships.

2.Classification of pop-up museums

In order to describe the phenomenon of independent pop-up museums, it might be helpful to put the participating sites in context of the literature by using the classification developed by Giordano. In her classification method, Giordano categorizes pop-up museums into institution-based community-focused, institution-based marketing strategy, show-it-yourself art exposition, and conversation-focused exposition (2013, p. 464) Although this way of classification suggests that pop-up museums serve only one purpose, the results of this study suggests a step further.

The practices of the participating museums had multiple purposes. Thus, Giordano's classification does not neatly apply to the participating sites. I suggest considering the participating museums in terms of combinations of the different types (Figure. 6). For example, although Foster Youth Museum serves as a repository of artifacts that are significant to the experiences of foster youth, the purpose of collecting these objects is to heal the foster youth community and to inspire visitors to take action for the foster care system. The museum not only possesses the quality of a conversation-base show-it-yourself exposition and community-focused institution. Similarly, Black Cube aims to elevate the artists they work with through procurement of exhibitions, which is art-community focused and a sort of marketing strategy. The museum also tries to stimulate local community by bringing contemporary art. The two purposes of the museum place them among "art-focused show-it-yourself," "marketing strategy" and "community-focused" quadrants.

The findings align with the discussion in the literature, that museums are a set of practices: understanding these museums requires investigating their practices, which are grounded in community relationships, and beyond their physical structure. The classification of pop-up museums needs to reflect the multiple layers of communities that are vital to their practices.

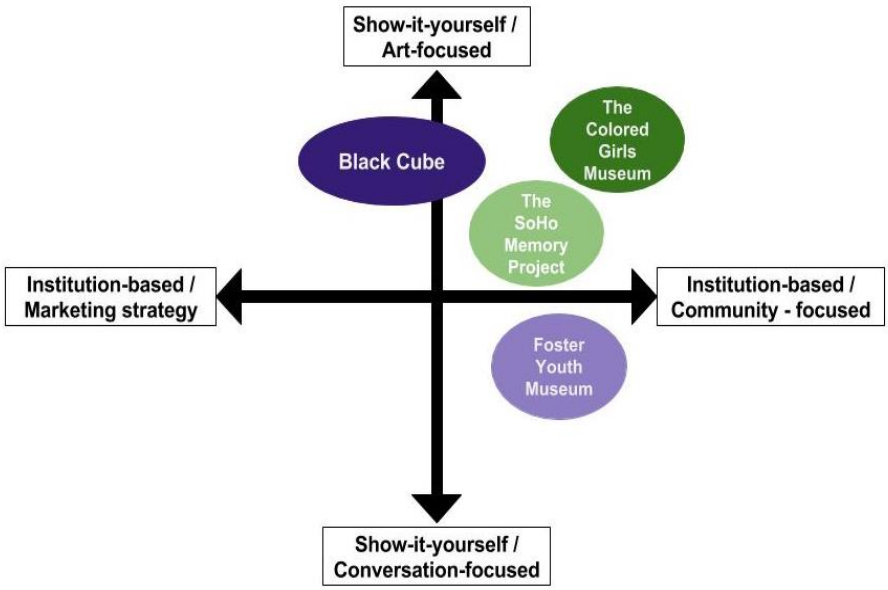

Figure 6. Categorization of the participating pop-up museums using Giordano's classification (Giordano 2013, p. 464)

3. Next phase of the pop-up museums

The literature suggested that pop-ups demonstrate the potential to move beyond a trend and turning into a new "typology" that exists as its own genre (Quartier 2015, p. 47**;** Hollwich 2015).

The visions of the future shared in this research seem to support the speculation, or at least the organizers are interested in the possibility. When the organizers discussed the future of their museums, they articulated visions of growth and sustainability that would not lose the uniqueness and advantages of the pop-up style. The organizers may have initially employed the pop-up style for convenience and to experiment with their ideas, but they have come to recognize what the pop-up style allows them to implement projects or to reach the audience in ways that they would not be able to do with a static structure. Moreover, while their independent status can cause financial and logistical difficulties, it also allows for adapting to changes and responsive to community needs.

What makes the independent pop-up museums unique is that the museum is always in flux, such as partners, locations, and exhibitions. It is exciting because it is unusual, and it is unusual because it recreates itself every time they come into existence. The question is how to sustain this uniqueness of a pop-up museum as they become more institutionalized or revisit locations or relationships. Perhaps, it is essential that the pop-up museums incorporate some kind of audience participation or ways to refresh the exhibition at every pop-up, to offer something new and keep the audience engaged.

4. Implications for the museum field

The examination of these pop-up museums and their practices suggests that the museum field would benefit from treating them as equal colleagues and including them in conversations about moving the museum field forward, for example, by inviting the organizers to industry conferences or partnering with them to address issues in the field or in society. The independent pop-up museums highlight the gap in the museum field as perceived by the communities outside of the professional museum field. Such gap can be narratives of a marginalized group, an underrepresented neighborhood history, or ethical relationships with working artists. The conception of the participating museums was partly a response to what the organizers identified as insufficient or ineffective about the museum field and society as a whole. This concept of the pop-up museums as a response aligns with how the literature characterizes tactical urban placemaking and Do-It-Yourself institutions (Baker et al 2014; Taimre 2015; Lydon et al 2015; Wortham-Galvin 2013). The organizers recognized the gap in the museum field because they were themselves part of the community or have worked very closely with it.

The pop-up museums may be “rootless” in terms of their organizational and physical structure, but their practices are rooted in the relationships with various communities that surround the museum. The museum field could look to the practices of these pop-up museums for developing relationships and placing the museum in context of various communities. For instance, a museum interested in starting a community curated exhibition might consider reaching out to various groups in the community, thus involving multiple layers of the community in the project.

Lastly, the results of this study suggest museum professionals to reflect on the role of museums in society and implications of their work. The pop-up museum organizers used the term “museum” because they were conscious of the role of museums. As the executive director of the Colored Girls Museum expressed in the interview, museums are “cultural symbolic altar,” which plays a role of determining value and significance of objects and stories. The findings suggest that pop-up museums lead the field by example in including the underrepresented groups in the museum narrative, in forging relationships with them, and in grounding the museum practices in the communities. The results of this study implicate that museum professionals need to be conscious of their role of assigning value to objects and stories. Moreover, museum professionals need to be constantly critical of what narratives, communities, experiences, and relationships are represented in the museum.

Chapter Five: Conclusion and Recommendation

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to describe the phenomenon of independent pop-up museums. Using semi-structured interviews with the organizers and site observations, this study explored the practices of the four pop-up museums across the United States, as well as their visions for the future. The research showed that the pop-up museums are best understood as a set of practices, highlighted the relationships between the pop-up museums and the various communities that surround the museum. The findings showed that the pop-up museums emerge, operate, and grow in the context of the communities. In other words, the pop-up museums are museums in context. In response to the gap that the organizers saw in the museum field and the society as a whole, the organizers created their museums to represent a certain community, which they are part of to a certain extent, and to provide a space to heal and nurture. The organizers are able to maintain their pop-up museums by supplementing resources through partnerships and tangible and intangible support from the communities they represent. Their exhibitions materialize the concept of the museums, thus the purposes of the museums are manifested in every stage of creating the exhibitions. The organizers also value facilitating the audience experience to make connections with the museum and the subject community. The organizers envision the future of museums in terms of stabilizing the museum structure, expanding partnerships, and sharing the concept so that the museum can be replicated in a different context.

The findings in this study suggest that the pop-up museums are experimenting with the very idea of a museum. Moreover, the community-ground practices of the pop-up museums implicate the museum field to be reflective of the role of museums in society.

Recommendation

The organizers clearly valued their relationships with the communities that surround the museum. However, the scope of this particular study only focuses on the perspectives of the individuals and groups who organize a pop-up museum. This study suggests that a future study on social and cultural impact of pop-up museums on the communities would further the understanding of this emerging type of museums. A future study could also examine the alignment and gap between perceived and actual impact of pop-up museums. Since the pop-up museums sometimes play a role of advocating for underrepresented groups, a future study could also examine the possibility of pop-up museums as a form of civic and political action.

The conversations with the participants also suggested that organizers of independent pop-up museums might benefit from forming a network that connects pop-up museums across the country, or the world for that matter, to each other. While Michelle DelCarlo's concept of Pop-Up Museum is shared across the field as a standard format of audience participation, that is one of many types and formats of pop-up museums. The absence of a standard practice allows for creativity and flexibility; however, a network of independent pop-up museums would allow organizers to share their practices and ideas for managing challenges that are specific to pop-up museums.

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Appendix A: Data Collection Protocol - Observation

Date:_____ Time:_____ Site Name: _____

A	**Physical Structure**	
A-1	SQFT of the pop-up	
A-2	Where is it located?(Is it an open space? Storefront? Park?)	
A-3	How is the space defined? (ex. Truck, tent)	
A-4	Exhibit theme/subject (What is it? Is it apparent to a visitor?)	
A-5	What is displayed at the location?	
A-6	How are objects displayed or organized? (Random, systematic, curatorial intention)	
A-7	Is there specific direction or flow?	
A-8	Any interactive component? If yes, describe.	Yes No
B	**Atmosphere/Environment**	
B-1	Any sign directing to the pop-up? If so, what and where is it?	Yes No
B-2	What welcomes visitors?	

B-3	How are visitors oriented in the space?	
C	**Interaction and Engagement**	
C-1	Is the organizer present at the pop-up? If so, where is she/he?	Yes No
C-2	Any staff or volunteer on site? If so, where?	Yes No
C-3	If any, how does the organizer interact or engage with:	
	-Visitors	
	-Collaborators (if any are present)	
C-4	Is there anything else (besides in the exhibit) that engages visitors? (ex.donation box, comment cards, etc)	
D	Additional notes	

Appendix B: Data Collection Protocol - Interview

I am asking you to participate in an interview as part of my thesis research, which explores independent pop-up or mobile museums that are organized by individuals who are not affiliated with existing museums. This interview will be used in my thesis research and paper. The interview will take about 45 minutes. I will be recording the audio of this interview for my research purposes. I may pull quotes from this interview and if so I may (or I will not) include your name, position and name of your organization. You may refuse to participate or to answer any question at any time without any penalty. Do you have any questions? Do you agree to participate in this interview? Thank you. Let's begin.

The first set of questions will ask you about the beginning and organization of your museum.

1.How did you/ the founder get an idea or think of the concept for the museum? (Probe: why did you decide to do pop-up/mobile style rather than a fixed location?)

2.What was the intention with creating your museum?

3. Could you describe the process of planning a pop-up exhibit? (Probe: is there a format that you follow?)

4. In the planning process, how do/did you pick the location(s) to open your museum? How do you market or advertise the opening?

5. What happens to the [art/objects] that are displayed at each pop-up?

6. How is the museum funded? (probe: grants, individual donations, admissions, membership?)

The second set of questions will ask you about your museum's relationship to communities around your museum.

7. If at all, how do you keep track of attendance?

8. What type of audience did you have in mind for your museum at the beginning? What type of audience do you actually get?

9.When planning a pop-up exhibit, do you collaborate with 1) local residents, 2) local artists, 3) other community groups? If so, what is the extent of the collaboration?

10. How do you maintain the relationship with the communities around your museum? (Probe: the local residents or businesses, local artists, other community groups)

11.What do you think is a role that your museum plays in the community you are in? In society?

Lastly, in this set of questions, I will be asking about your past experiences and your thoughts for the future of your museum.

12. What are advantages and disadvantages of having a museum in this particular style?

13. If any, what has been the most challenging experience with your museum? Most rewarding experience?

14. How do you envision the future of your museum? Do you have any concerns for the future of your museum?

Anything else you would like to add or clarify?

Thank you for your time and participation!

Appendix C: Coding Chart

CODE	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLES
1. Purpose	Respondent describes the conception of the museum.	
- Representation	The museum is a reaction to lack of representation in the field/ society.	"I think one of the messages of the museum is one way that foster youth overcome isolation and sorrow through relationships, either intimate, chosen family, professional and academic and so forth." "We hope that we uncover truths that people aren't aware of, and build compassion and interest in foster youth's lives." (FYM) "I felt like I wanted to create a space of honor and celebration of, also has its focus and attention to really begin the process of gathering and sharing ordinary accomplishments of colored girls." As I said, museums are cultural symbolic altar, they tell us what has value and what doesn't by its absence. So being able to assign a value and drive the narrative ourselves has been really liberating and powerful for us and people who come here." It's a place holder, for the stories of a group of people who are often overlooked, marginalized, whose services and stories are often appropriated by others, whose contributions are often overlooked and undermined." (TCGM) "People have this romanticized image of SoHo, of the artists lives, but they don't know the nitty gritty of the living in the SoHo. [...] I think we have a lot of lessons to teach for those who don't know, and the way the neighborhood developed to what it is today." "Right now, SoHo is a high-end shopping area and a lot of people live in bunch of expensive lofts and a lot of people moving into the neighborhood, even the last 10 years, are unaware of how SoHo became SoHo of today. I feel like without knowing that, you can't fully inhabit the neighborhood or really respect it." "If anything, I focus everything but art in SoHo, not that it isn't important, but there is a lack of attention to what makes the place possible to have that." (SoHoMP)
- Accessibility	The museum is to provide access to art/stories/history.	"The advantages are that we can reach people across all over the world, and bring our messages to different places where they don't have to come to us." (FYM) "We have two main goals, accessibility and supporting artists." "To see art supported, but simultaneously taken off from this pedestal, something out of touch, you can't reach and inaccessible." (Black Cube)

		"I really wanted it to be in places and all situations, that didn't stick to on format, with the cost being the cart itself." "When I started, I was trying to reach all audience, in a sense that people who are just visiting SoHo, people who have lived in SoHo for decades, people who knows a lot about the history of the neighborhood and those who don't, people who have heard of SoHo but don't really know much about the neighborhood history." (SoHoMP)
- Space for a community Healing Responding to the need	The museum is to provide a space for the community.they serve for.	"We call the museum vessel of healing for foster youth, it's an opportunity for young people to take [...] things that [represent] traumatization of some times and pass the stories on and let go of it. And they know the museum do our best to tell their stories with dignity." (FYM) "That is part of procuring these site-specific projects; they are unique opportunities that are also substantial projects for their portfolio, that move the needle on their career in some way [...] We try to think about artists holistically and procure projects that would really make a difference in their career and also for them to think about their career largely and what sort of goals or ambitions they might have. [...] That is beautiful about Black Cube. We start from the artists and everything moves around them." (Black Cube) "And then you start thinking, why don't museums actually embed themselves in places where they would be beyond commerce and central to visitors coming into to town? What if museums saw us as part of function, really advancing a need that is presented by a community? How could museums think about themselves that way?" "We are evidence, our role is to be evidence, to be historic record, to be the urgent care that we need, to provide first-aid to the colored girl." (TCGM)
- "Alternative museum making" Museum in context "Artist-first"	The museum attempts to redefine or reimagine what a museum.can be.	"As far as art museum goes, we're a different way to think about what a museum could be. We have a different ways to engage with our communities and audience. Also, we are an organization that is on the forefront of ethically paying artists. Working with artists, and putting them first. [...] that's the biggest splash I hope to make as a museum, we really ethically think about the artists and our relationships to them." (Black Cube) "It has always been the theme of space [...] so something about the power of putting, one, sort of taking over the idea of a museum and interrogating it for our own lives, "what can a museum do for us?" "When I imagined what the Colored Girls Museum would be, I thought of it as campus because I didn't think of it as a museum in a

		way that are typically meant by museums. I thought of it as a colored girl who is working on behalf of her people, as an entity that "performs." It was never going to be static, it was always going to be dynamic and in conversation with its community, and lifting up the things that are concern to us. [...] We serve her." (TCGM) "Even the term museum, I wonder about continuing to define the exhibit as it is. People assume that you can't touch anything in the museum, so it is interesting how our language hasn't caught up to the idea that there are more ways to being a museum." (SoHoMP)

2. Logistics	Respondent describes the logistics of running the museum.	
- Funding	How the museum is funded	"We are primarily a grant-driven and contract-driven, so we do more or less programming depending on the funding that we are currently getting." "The biggest challenge has been funding. [...] Mounting an exhibit is more expensive than what most places can afford. [...] At this point we have to go with who has funding," (FYM) "Most of the funding to the museum comes from [the private foundation] but for each project we've been able to amplify it." "I think that the advantages are funding. It all goes to the projects. It is a very lean organization. It also allows to be nimble, dynamic, and flexible, and artist and community-focused." (Black Cube) "We can exist because we can fly in very low level, keep our costs pretty low, and we can shape-shift as necessary in order to survive. [...] We have the luxury, not that we have any money, of determining our course, of allowing it even evolve as it's evolving, because we are not under pressure to do what anybody in particular wants us to do." "The rest of it, we subsidize ourselves because we want to do it." "Because the idea is that she should be sustainable, she should not be dependent, she should be free to take care of herself." (TCGM)
- Pop-up location Utilizing resources Project/Partner-	Respondent describes how pop-up locations are selected	"But my friend who started a nonprofit[...] and what she's done is, she sort of taken care of that issue by making portable experiences that she can take through the city streets into public places [...] And I think she may have suggested it as [possibility of having an exhibit that rolls around, and so I started thinking about that. And I thought, well, what a great way to go to your audience instead of having them come to you." (SHMP)

based Building organization narrative		"One of the things that was stopping me from manifesting the museum was that i don't have a space like, you know, it needs to look like those other [museums] not exactly but [...] This began, sort of "you know, if I was waiting for the right space, right time, right money, it is never going to happen, so I guess I should just see what's going to happen. I have a space, what is it going to look like in this space?" (TCGM) "We get requests frequently for the museum. [...] at this point we are primarily interested in reaching the general public, we are less focused on children's affair professionals. We choose our venues based on, will this be a good venue to get the message out, and do they have funding or resources to bring us. It is very very expensive to bring the museum somewhere. It's less about venues and more about sponsoring organization." (FYM) "because the organization is young, we are building a narrative of what we can be in the sites we engage. So last year it was really important for us that we go outside of Colorado. I had some ethical questions about what it meant to be part of a community that i wasn't familiar with and didn't have established audience with. And the other things that we tested last year was like a pilgrimage location within Colorado to see if we had enough of following in urban spaces to build off the locations audience but also bringing in local artists" (Black Cube)
- Museum personnels Leadership Staff/Volunteers	Respondent describes the makeup and the roles of museum "staff".	"I am more of a big picture and my co-director is like a logistical genius. So we really need both factors in order to succeed as a museum" (FYM) "Originally it was going to be an all-female leadership, but the two women I was working with couldn't do it. To my great surprise, Michael said yes. So then I began asking, who else might be interested in the story about a colored girl. [...] But it definitely raises a question and people have asked me, what is a colored boy working at The Colored Girls Museum, and the short answer is that you can't have a colored girl without a colored boy. Part of what we are talking about is the importance of looking at the world through someone else's lense other than of your own, what becomes available for you to see." (TCGM) "What else has been challenging... I think, the bandwidth of my work load. Of course it is something i am very passionate about, but it takes every waking moment in my life." (Black Cube) "[The foundation] has a larger infrastructure for incubating non-profits. So graciously, with their support,

		we have legal support, marketing support accounting support and grant writing support. We usually have two interns on board, and for openings and exhibitions volunteers as needed. There is also [staff], who is our volunteering strategic artist development volunteer, and she works with artists on their professional goals." (Black Cube) "when I was taking it around, I had someone [...] who also grew up in SoHo, like I did. I told her about the exhibit so she can answer questions about what these objects are, but also she can bring her own experience to it, since she has a long history with SoHo, as do I. And so the questions that people ask are always answered by, you know, technical questions, and memories of like, how these things pertain to our lives. So it made it sort of more personal" (SoHoMP)

3. Exhibition	Respondent explains the details of museum exhibits.	
- Curation process		"It first started with the curriculum developers, so there was a group of about 6, and made themselves donate the things as part of process. And then we put out calls on personal level, either word of mouth, text message, Facebook." (FYM) "So we bring on a bunch of artists a year, this year it's five, and they are artist fellows, and we work with them to conceive a site-specific or site-relational project [...] and we also try to think of artists more holistically." (Black Cube) "Curatorial. What do I mean about that? it's a lot of research. Like most contemporary art curators, you know, they like to [...] research and find next artists. We try to build a conversation of local artists and national/international artists, so we'll start from that mix. I know we are looking for artists that we can impact their career, like I said earlier, to move the needle of their career. I'm also [...] trying to build the diversify of projects that we do, [as] building a narrative for the organization[….]Other kind of things that we like to do is, so we are an experimental organization, so we try to procure projects that are on the edge of contemporary art, like experiences that people might question as art experiences. Like the Kiosk shop (current exhibit) is just a tourist shop, or not. So it engages the community in that way, it is not just traditional sort of paintings, not that we won't do paintings but they would be done in an experimental way." " (Black Cube)

		"There are a million different ways that I get artists' info. I participate in contemporary art discourse, I go to art fairs, I go to big buyer in arts, so I am aware what is going on in the field. I listen to recommendations from the artists, art publications and news. I look at younger artists coming out of school. There are [sic] handful of institutions that I follow. And my favorite way is to listen to recommendations from the artists I have worked with." (Black Cube) "But what really does happen is that the first of the artists, who we call inaugural artists of The Colored Girls Museum, people that we [have invited or knew] to get the ball rolling, and they said yes. They brought with them, part of the assignment is that, "you come, but you invite 2-5 ordinary extraordinary colored girls to submit objects and artifacts that you, as the curator of the space in this museum, would curate. Some of what has happened was, some of those people who were invited by those artists have then become curators of those spaces, and they invited other artists." {TCGM) "I sent out emails to people who lived in SoHo, and asked them what was their favorite childhood memory. And I actually printed their responses and put it on a menu stand beside photos, not their photos, but of children playing in the SoHo. " (SoHoMP)
- Installation process Mobile-style Site-relational		"Mobile museum means there is impact on your equipment. We repair and replace picture frames and glass [and other equipment] frequently. [...] so our properties, not our artifacts but the artifact holders, get damaged. It is also very expensive to travel, so when we first started the museum [...] it was much easier to take the museum to places. Now we travel in a giant U-Haul truck, it's one-day packing and one day unpacking [...] it takes a lot to put a museum up, so it is very cost-expensive and labor-intensive. (FYM) "It takes a lot of physical strength. We push the carts through streets to the destination. So it is logistically and physically challenging. It's a mobile museum, and unlike museums that have a permanent home and have people come to you, we have to bring it to the people. You have to think about, would it fit the elevator of the building, or things like that. When it has to go to a different neighborhood, then it has to go on the back of a truck."(SoHo MP) "The furthest I had to go was 6 blocks. Blocks in NY are smaller than other cities, there are 20 blocks in 1 mile. But the thing is, it is not a flat surface. There is always construction everywhere. Some roads are cobblestones, so there are lot of obstacles. And in the daytime there are so many people. But this whole pushing the cart around,

		that itself sort of becomes a show. People always ask me what's in the cart." (SoHo MP) There is not a process, each project is different. (Black Cube) "So the artists had to deal with some of these restrictions to the site.]When I was first thinking of Black Cube, I thought it was just purely we would make the artist's' idea, but actually, because we are in everyday space, there is a lot of negotiations that has to happen with artists. (Black Cube) "That is the difference between when you are conceiving an organization and actual reality of the organization. Fire code, ADA, public right of way... budgets are always restriction." (Black Cube) "Working with city and governments has been challenging sometimes, just because of the amount of approvals. Each city is different in terms of committee approvals for different things, so sometimes it is surprising how much time and energy it takes to work with a city. " (Black Cube) "When we come back, one of the ways we use the hibernation period is to notice how the works are behaving in the space, then work more closely with the artists to really focus the exhibition. So when the artist's load in [for the part one], we pretty much let them do it the way they want it. But once we sat with the work and look at the work, then we will give feedback as to whether or not it is actually working in the way they wanted it to be working. " (TCGM) "Hosting these objects and stories is like hosting guests in a bed and breakfast, so the load-in very much feels like that " (TCGM)
- Content		""Lost Childhoods" tells a story of foster youth from the perspectives of foster youth." (FYM) "So everything in the exhibit is interactive in order to sort of participate in the exhibit, one has to touch, feel, smell, listen, and do all these things. If you just stand and look at it, it won't really make sense. So people can, you know, the objects, some examples of the objects are jars of old smells of SoHo. There is also a video you can watch and art piece that you can look at of comic books of art piece. I have menus from restaurants. And so, these are all entry points of where people can pick something up and, you know, maybe make their own story. I don't really have any.. . descriptions. I am not saying what you are supposed to, or what connections you are supposed to make." (SoHo MP)

		"The exhibit is floor level, so kids to can interact with the objects on display, I show them the toys and smell jars and they pay with them." (SoHo MP)

4. Audience engagement	Respondent describes how the museum engages with the visitors to the museum.	"When we were in Arkansas, when we go to some place new, we [frequently] try to open up opportunity for locals, especially foster youths, to add to the collection. So we host a pop-up museum style workshop alongside the exhibition show. [...] we had a pop-up workshop, and what came out of that pop-up experience was an entire wing about Arkansas youth in the museum. " (FYM) "And installation, and public opening, and we had artist lecture on site." (Black Cube) "We hope that we uncover truths that people aren't aware of, and build compassion and interest in foster youth's lives. We hope that people would see our exhibition and take some kind of action. We try to provide opportunities for the levels of that action might be. We have a flyer that we hand out in the exhibition, if people are willing to take it, it is actually a postcard, it's a challenge for a next step, [ie, donation, mentorship, etc]. Every exhibition we try to think of our audiences, and what they might be ready for action, so we change up." (FYM) "I think it is just having conversations, having art conversations with people that aren't approaching art as art. Just having conversations about the experience, I think it is really refreshing." (Black Cube) "Knowing that people can come here on Sunday, it could be two people or it could be two hundred, that they leave here with something that they didn't know that they even needed. That's been honestly rewarding." (TCGM)

5. Community relationship	Respondent describes the nature of relationships to external communities and relationships forming within the museum.	
- External community Content	Respondent describes how the museum develop or use relationship with external communities.	"Generally we create a marketing plan for shows, especially for big shows, which includes press releases, social media, documentation, and we usually work with sponsoring organization and or the venue to utilize their contacts and send out to their people. So we have our own community of people who follow FYM and foster

providers Experts Project partners		youth issues, and who are interested in art, but we would never go to a gallery or a nonprofit organization...we benefit from their mailing list too." (FYM) "I worked with Laura to look at local arts and culture climate, to identify what sort of needs community identified. We held focus groups, we talked to some artists to get more information, and [..] worked and got advice from a number of foundation directors, including like Bumpee Foundation. I also met with some leaders that worked with some organizations like Creative Capital in New York, organizations that had a artist-supportive angle but organizations that didn't have its building. So that is how it came to be." (Black Cube) "When I went to San Antonio, it's important to find partner organizations if we are going outside of Colorado, to be able to tap into who the community is and what the important players are, how to engage the audience. Mostly that is our public facing side. It is really difficult to prop yourself in a community and exhibition, and expect it to resonate with the audience." (Black Cube) "Also we found that it was a local skate spot, so the kids were skating there all the time. And we also found that there is a homeless or not quite homeless folks that were out there a lot who would feed pigeons. So it made sense there to talk to the skaters who were skating there, so I felt like, I wanted them to respect and understand the installation and share with larger community when other kids are skating. So when I saw them, I wouldn't scold them for skating near the artwork, or tell them that it was a private site. I would tell them what the project was so they would get excited about it. So it was really important to understand those different layers of communities that exist there." (Black Cube) "What typically happens is that, the last two years, we would open the show as part of [local arts festival]. And the reason that we would do that is that it allows us to reach an audience that we might not typically be talking to, also to use their publicity machine to reach those audiences and to generate different kinds of conversations." (TCGM) "We are collaborating right now with [local playwrights festival] on a project called "Performing identities," it's a 12-week immersive, "where is the colored girl" kind of like Where is Waldo sort of project, where we have young woman using research techniques to begin to dig into Germantown, to find out what is the history of indigenous colored girl in Germantown, what has she done here, who is she, where does she live, where are her people, where is she now." (TCGM)

- Community within	Regards to the relationships/community/ networks forming within the museum.	"Also being able to give younger artists, they are not always younger, artists that haven't produced a project to this scale, the ability to do that, it's an amazing gift that I feel honored to be able to do." (Black Cube) "The other part of this work is to connect artists to one another and to really build community among artists and ordinary colored girl, that's with an eye towards economic development, community development, realy using the power of being artists and connect people and resources." (TCGM) "Sure, some of the young people that donate artifacts also we hire them to be docents for the museum. So we make community with our staff and to each other, based on the experience of giving tours in the museum and answering questions. And also they have been friends before, often it's word of mouth (that expands the circle of artifact contributors), so sometimes they were already pre-connected." (FYM)

6. Future, Growth and Sustainability	Respondent describes the vision of future, growth, sustainability of the museum.	
- Museum structure	Regards to the organization and structure of the museum, such as funding, resources, leadership and staff, and organizational narrative.	"(the future of the museum) We are struggling with figuring out how to resource it. The museum has passed its infancy stage, we think of it more as a toddler with legs who is ready to run, but the issue is whether or not having the resources that we can bring them to the next level. Having a permanent location would be very symbolic to foster youth, to have their own home, but at this point we are interested in seeing the state, the country and the world with the museum, and having the world see it." (FYM) "Hopefully, public nonprofit in the future. have a more established form of board and established funding streams. Also hopefully we'll be able to grow staff, to have project managers and admin staff, but it doesn't need to be huge, because we do a pretty nimble work." (Black Cube) "And that we build leadership, and are able to try to turn it over to younger generation of many women to steward it, to know it to grow it into beyond what we can imagine." (TCGM) "But now I am thinking maybe I don't need a permanent place/ I like the mobility of the exhibit. Flexibility of changing the exhibits. I am thinking of ways to make mobile museum more flexible, and not static." (SoHo

		MP)
- Partnership	Regards to building and strengthening partnerships.	But as of now, we haven't revisited the sites for the second time. So it's more like something that comes and stimulates the site and leaves. It's not like traditional museums that are deeply embedded in the community, that's an area for Black Cube as we grow. (Black Cube) I would like to build projects so they are more of exchange, Colorado artists going outside, bring outsiders in, So just kind of enhance and develop more projects, more of clear exchange, I think right now it is not quite clear why we do a project elsewhere and here, other than resources and building a narrative of the org. I would like the audience to look and understand why here why there. [...] in 2018, we are going to do an exchange with a museum in Prague, so I am going to bring a Denver artist to Prague for exhibition and residency. And then I am going to bring the executive director and curator of the museum with the Czech artists to here ad do a project here. (Black Cube) Another thing I am thinking, is to bring the mobile museum to exhibitions that match the theme, so that way it has a permanent presence, or at least while the exhibit is running. So my mobile exhibit is a story within a larger story. (SoHoMP)
- "Replication"	Regards to the interest in replicating the concept of the museum elsewhere.	I envision us being in city spaces and countries, I have a vision of outposts for colored girls everywhere, that really functions like 21st century underground railroad, that as you travel from one place to another, you know you can find safety in Colored Girls regional outposts. There would be somebody who give information about what is going on with colored girls in that space, maybe give you a bed if you need one, to create these networks of support. And that there will always be a place to gather, I think that is really important, that as we learn more about what is transformational and important about this work, that we are able to export that knowledge into the community in meaningful ways. (TCGM) If other neighborhoods want to make the cart, they can take my idea and build their own cart and fill it with objects from their neighborhoods. I think it will be interesting to have carts of different neighborhoods together. And same for the digital archive, I want it to be a template or useful format for other museums or projects to show their own neighborhood history. (SoHoMP)