Undergraduate Semester in Dialogue
SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Art In Community
CREATING CULTURES OF INGENUITY AND INNOVATION

Undergraduate Semester in Dialogue Students:

Alex Kennedy
Andrea Semenik
Carly Teng
Emily Ross
Hanah Van Borek
Jocelyne Leszyzynski

Kristin Ramsay
Lia Haleem
Megan Branson
Melanie Shim
Pamela Coneybeare
Ramsay Malange

Steffen Quong
Stephanie Ellis
Torey Hampson
Zach Lundrie

December 3, 2009
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Art In Community
Bottom left row (left to right)
Megan Branson, Melanie Shim, Kristin Ramsey, Ramsay Malange, Pamela Coneybeare
Center row (left to right)
Mark Winston, Lia Haleem, Carly Teng, Emily Ross, Torey Hampson, Hanah Van Borek, Judith Marcuse
Back row (left to right)
Zach Lundrie, Andrea Semenik, Stephanie Ellis, Jocelyne Leszcynski, Alex Kennedy, Steffen Quong
Missing
Andrea Rose
“The great dilemma of our time is, having generated such incredible creative potential, we lack the broader social and economic system to fully harness it and put it to use.”

RICHARD FLORIDA, Author of The Rise of the Creative Class

In early September, the fall 2009 “Art in Community” Semester In Dialogue undergraduate students came together from different faculties to sit around a table for the first time. We all shared one idea: that we could make a positive difference in our community through our dialogue coursework. Together we lived, ate and breathed art and community practices intensely for an entire semester, working towards understanding what “Art in Community” is all about.

Looming over our semester was the responsibility to put on a public dialogue in November, with the topic, approach, venue, and facilitation almost entirely in our hands. From that challenge emerged “Thought-Luck”, a public exploration of potential interactions between SFU’s School for Contemporary Arts and the Vancouver community as the university moves into the Woodward’s Development.

Thought-Luck

“Woodward’s will bring inclusivity, body heat, architectural expression and poetry, not to mention little Tokyo to the DTES”

GREGORY HENRIQUEZ, Canadian architect most widely known for his community-based mixed-use institutional and social housing projects in the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver, BC.

“Thought-Luck” was conceived as a gathering of individuals where all perspectives would be welcome in exploring new creative programming ideas that could help to bring SFU and the community together through art. In a “Thought-Luck,” as in a potluck, everyone has something to bring to the table, in this case discussion and sharing ideas and values that contribute to positive outcomes. Our goal was to create a safe and comfortable environment for a community gathering where the university and community could learn together.
On November 24th, 2009 over 100 participants came together at the Japanese Hall, an unusually diverse mix of students from Semester in Dialogue and other university programs, SFU faculty, staff and administrators, representatives of numerous community arts organizations, artists, residents of the Downtown Eastside, community organizers, and others.

What is Dialogue?

"Dialogue is concentrated conversation among equals. It offers helpful ways to work together cooperatively, encourages mutual understanding between diverse perspectives, produces healthy professional and personal relationships, and leads to stable, resilient outcomes."

SFU DIALOGUE WEBSITE
"In true dialogue, both sides are willing to change."

**Anonymous**

Dialogue is a useful tool for revealing the complex issues and challenges involving SFU Woodward’s and the community, by encouraging all involved to have a genuine and respectful conversation about what could be contentious issues. Rather than we students defining, dialogue, however, we asked participants of "Thought-luck" to call out what they felt dialogue was in a word or two, and their answers guided our afternoon:

- Listening
- Respect
- Exchange
- Talking
- Openness
- Difference
- Empathy
- Honesty
- Non-judgmental
- Cultural knowledge exchange
- Give and receive
- Accountability
- Compromise
- Ideas
- Awareness of power differential
- Humour!
- Tolerance
- Goodwill
- Giving voice to the marginalized
- Being critical
- Accountability of power and roles

Becoming familiar
Open minded brainstorming
Vulnerability
Be Green
Creativity
Our Creative Spaces: Group Projects

"Community cultural development is an art, not a science"

ARLENE GOLDBARD, Author of New Creative Community: The Art of Cultural Development

Prior to the dialogue, our class developed a creative space map, as well as a number of projects that explore the nature of cultural space. These projects contributed to the dialogue by helping us imagine community-based programs in and around Woodward’s, and how creative spaces can build inclusive artistic experiences. Brief summaries and links to the full reports are below.

CREATIVE SPACE MAP

As a group we were asked to identify creative and cultural spaces in Vancouver and then present them on a map. We came to a consensus that a creative space is a place where we are inspired to be creative or go to watch creativity unfold. We used Google Maps to create a visual representation of our own individual creative spaces within the Lower Mainland. One student loves to go to Hotel Vancouver to sit and think in the lobby, another uses the Vancouver Public Library as a place for safe inspiration. A few of us think most creatively when moving, whether running on the Stanley Park Seawall or going for a peaceful walk.

To see all of our creative spaces, view the map at: http://maps.google.ca/maps/ms?ie=UTF8&hl=en&msa=0&msid=115854493979075976123.0004762f1db8d978bd00d6z=11
**DANCE SQUARE**

Alex Kennedy, Carly Teng, Megan Branson, Ramsay Malange

**GOAL: TO BRING SENIORS AND YOUTH TOGETHER THROUGH ART**

Imagine seniors and youth doe-si-doeing to bluegrass tunes and learning about past and present social dance trends through storytelling. Square dancing classes and summer workshops would be administered and run by university departments and community organizations. SFU Recreation, SFU Co-op, SFU School for the Contemporary Arts, a senior’s centre, and a youth centre would create a powerful alliance for strengthening community bonds.

**GROWING UP WITH WOODWARD’S**

Andrea Semenik, Lia Haleem, Pamela Coneybeare, Stephanie Ellis

**GOAL: TO CREATE ON-GOING ARTS-BASED CLASSES FOR CHILDREN LIVING IN AND AROUND WOODWARD’S**

Each academic semester, children would sign up for arts-based classes that would be inspired by community-building activities and projects that we have learned about from discussions with community members and organizations. Some of the projects might include mural making, community theatre, quilt making, and drumming. These classes, for children aged five to twelve, could be co-facilitated by professional art facilitators, local artists and SFU students, particularly from Education and Contemporary Arts.

This programming could be delivered in collaboration between Arts Umbrella through their Outreach program, SFU’s Continuing Studies’ Community Education Program and community organizations such as the YWCA.
OUR STORIES CAFÉ

Emily Ross, Steffen Quong, Torey Hampson, Zach Lundrie

GOAL: TO CREATE COMMUNITY BY SHARING STORIES

Considering new spaces in Woodward’s, we identified the need to overcome the anonymity that comes from living in a city. The project proposal is composed of six workshops and an interactive story wall, which we imagined in the W2 Café. The six workshops would explore the themes of past, present and future at Woodward’s and participants would be encouraged to share their stories through written word, drawing and other creative practices. These journals would then be mounted to a freestanding wooden structure that would complete the art installation. At the end of the first year, the entries would be scanned and bound into a book that would be kept as a piece of Woodward’s ongoing history.

ONE PLAY, ONE COMMUNITY

Hanah Van Borek, Jocelyne Leszczynski, Kristin Ramsey, Melanie Shim

GOAL: TO BRING STUDENTS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS TOGETHER THROUGH THEATRE

Inspired by the power of theatre, we imagined a Special Topics class in the School for the Contemporary Arts at SFU that would include eight SFU students and eight community members. The class would collaboratively choose a play (or scenes of several plays) to study, workshop, and perform.

The play chosen would explore a community issue or theme. The class would then research and explore in-depth, drawing on community experts and organizations during the process. At the end of the semester, all 16 students would mount a small scale, low cost production in a black-box theatre.

To view these proposals in full, please visit our projects website at: http://www.sfu.ca/dialog/undergrad/student+projects.html
II. Organization and Consultation

Organizing Process

"Diverse cultures should be treated equally in our multicultural societies"

ARLENE GOLDBARD

"The students made a big effort to be inclusive of the voices at the table."

DIALOGUE PARTICIPANT

One of the biggest challenges we had working as a class of sixteen individuals was deciding how to achieve the difficult goal set before us. The public dialogue on Tuesday, November 24 was carefully planned over the course of two and a half months. The creativity, collaboration, consulting and organizing involved were carried out through processes mutually decided on by the class.

Once all of the necessary tasks for creating the dialogue had been defined, the next step was to designate roles. We divided ourselves into separate committees, each with its own focus and responsibility. Committees worked autonomously as well as in collaboration with other committees.

Marketing was responsible for conceptualizing, designing and printing the logo, tag line, poster, nametags, invitations, bookmarks, and postcards. This team also was responsible for formatting the slide show at the event.

Event Planning did the logistical preparation, including booking the venue, designing the layout of the room, and organizing audio and visual equipment. This committee also prepared the agenda for the event as well as an outline for both the workshops and the plenary.

Finance was responsible for budget, managing and tracking expenditures, and catering. This committee also sought sponsorship as well as a grant from the Simon Fraser Student Society (SFSS).

Consulting constructed the list of guests to invite, sent out invitations, consulted with stakeholders and members of various communities, managed the registration and web survey, responded to inquiries about the event, and put up posters.
Consultations

"The real development consists in involving and drawing upon people's own cultures, not imposing a standardized middle-class culture"

ARLENE GOLDBARD

We consulted widely with stakeholders and other members of the community who might have an interest in the relationship between SFU’s School for Contemporary Arts and the broad community. Consults included representatives from City Council, university faculty, other SFU representatives, W2 and numerous DTES community organizations.

We created a comprehensive list of members and organizations from these three areas of focus. Each student consulted two or three individuals from the list for their insights into SFU's role in the community, and the community’s role within SFU. These conversations guided the organization of the dialogue, and helped us compile a comprehensive and inclusive guest list.

Some common ideas could be threaded from the various consultations, which helped the Dialogue students garner some context into the subject at hand. Many of the thoughts and ideas that were brought up in personal consultations and group dialogue were echoed at the Thought-Luck:

- Fear of gentrification
- History of artists & arts practices in the DTES
- SFU needs to pay attention to the community
- Examples of university collaboration & involvement in the community already exist
- Community arts-practices can change the way people relate to each other
• Dialogue can be successful when representative
• Individuals/residents should be considered, not just organizations
• Humanizing the DTES, homelessness as a state not a person
• Longevity: ability to carry on the conversations and see things through
• Utilizing existing assets
• Fear of students taking housing resources away
• Semantics matter, how one names or chooses words about the community
• Giving voice to the community, programming coming from the community
• "Leadership on the ground, continual dialogue and negotiation"

"Looking around the room and seeing so many participants from the community! Kudos to outreach."

THOUGHT-LUCK DIALOGUE PARTICIPANT
"Art is like beginning a sentence before you know its ending. The risks are obvious: you may never get to the end of the sentence at all – or having gotten there, you may not have said anything. This is probably not a good idea in public speaking, but it’s an excellent idea in making art”

DAVID BAYLES & TED ORLAND, Authors of Art and Fear

Outcomes

(*The ideas in this section were drawn from notes taken during the dialogue by students. They are not direct quotes but rather a synthesis of prominent ideas and themes voiced by participants.)

Our main objective was to generate tangible ideas through which the university and community could interact, using art as a bridging vehicle. We worked to establish an open and respectful atmosphere for participants to voice their ideas in. This dialogue model allowed participants to take control of their own experience and, at times, guide the discussion away from the event’s focus on art and community and into broader concerns about the university-community relationship.

Most breakout groups envisioned ways that the university could participate in community capacity-building. Many participants imagined a university that brings their students into the world
neighbourhood. Others expressed their belief that the university has an important role in building “a sane, sustainable, and strong community into the future” (dialogue participant). Adopting alternative, grassroots models for education and research, and teaching students about the socio-political history of the DTES were some of the tangible ideas for helping dissolve the negative perception of the university in the community.

Many participants expressed a desire for the university to participate in outreach and inreach. The former would use the talent and infrastructure intrinsic to the university to enliven the public sphere around Woodward’s. The latter would invite local artists into the university setting to share their art practices and professional experiences.

There was a deep interest amongst participants in having the university come into partnership with the community in ways that respect the diversity and depth of arts-based practices that already exist in the community. A core idea was for the university to start collaborating with local cultural workers in ways that keep continuity and sustainability in mind. Participants highlighted many ways for interest groups, including the university, to share talent, infrastructure, and other resources that could enhance and expand the arts community. Though new collaborations may be risky in an area with such complicated social issues, they believe the university shouldn’t be dissuaded from trying new community-based initiatives.

"Wonderfully diplomatic. Made me feel that what I had to say was important and valued."

THOUGHT-LUCK DIALOGUE PARTICIPANT

We used postcards as a tool to explore arts-based program ideas in the breakout groups, which were addressed to the director of the School for the Contemporary Arts and the Director for Community Engagement. In some groups the postcard concept was replaced by more organic conversation. Each small group dialogue had its own inner dynamic and trajectory, requiring the facilitator to improvise the timing and, in some instances, the content of the activities. Many participants felt that the small group discussions were too short and that it was difficult to fully develop the group’s concrete ideas for cultural community development initiatives. A collection of the postcard responses can be found on page 23.
After the small group discussions, we reviewed notes on each groups’ discussion and consolidated a list of themes and ideas. The major concepts emerging from the breakout groups included:

**Themes**
- “Of the community not in the community.” Inclusivity of all community members
- Outreach & Inreach: inviting residents into university & allowing students to practice art outside the classroom
- Sharing Space/Place making
- University facilitation
- Activism
- Hiring locally
- Support and preserve existing arts communities
- Resource Pooling & Collaboration: “not reinventing the wheel”
- Art in Public Spaces: “Put the art where the people are”
- Mentorship
- Starting small with continuity in mind
- Appropriate social representation
- “Speaking the Language” Academia & community

**Ideas**
- Weekly accessible open-mic at Woodward’s
- Developing accessible educational initiatives, credit or non-credit, which set students to engage in arts practice with existing organizations in the DTES
- Find ways to connect different existing organizations or groups within SFU, such as Simon Fraser Public Interest Research Group (SFPIRG) & International Centre for Art for Social Change (ICASC) with students to create courses and projects
- Back-to-school Mural project: local artist
- Fine Arts 101 program – example, like Humanities 101
- curiosiTEAS: local residents story-telling
- Artist-in-Residence from the community at SFU
- Weekly community TV show using the W2 media hub
- Parade
- Low-income residents at the centre
- University open spaces for local artists to use for free, employ/mentor community members
- Look at all existing Community Agreements (e.g. SFU, CCAP) and create an umbrella charter of Community Responsibility for SFU
- A large-scale, temporary public art project with students in collaboration with local artists.
- An aboriginal community education centre that is open to the public for anyone to learn about their culture and histories.
Participants found the small group discussions lively, and were stimulated from the conversation they had had in their groups to engage eagerly over the break. Participants from SFU mentioned that they are looking forward to exploring some of the art-based programming that was suggested, and to working with a team to create and implement programs. We are hopeful that the energy and highly positive responses to the ideas generated at our dialogue will grow into real programming.

**Reflections**

A few community members voiced concerns about Simon Fraser University as a colonial force and ivory tower. It was also noted by some DTES residents and cultural workers that many universities (not explicitly SFU) use problematic research methodologies in studying DTES populations—approaches perceived as not being participatory, so that data rarely return to the studied population in a form that is useful or easily comprehensible.

Inclusivity was a prevalent desire for many of the participants at our dialogue. Similar to how our class set up the event—where all voices were of equal value—participants hoped that programs would not simply be in the community but be of the community. Those who would benefit from projects and programs must be consulted and have control in all processes. Representatives of The DTES spoke of the imbalance of power in the decision-making process for their community. Accompanying these comments and feelings was a belief that the marginalized need to be heard and not dismissed.

Emphasis on being of and not just in the community reflects pressure from the community to hire locally, and provide employment and funding to community individuals and organizations. This theme was not explored deeply by the group, but is obviously an issue that needs more clarity from both the university and those promoting community participation. Awareness and integration of pre-existing groups and communities were urged by several participants. This was just one of many insights that were voiced in the conversation that the dialogue stimulated.
IV. Challenges and Successes

Our class had two main objectives for this event. First, we wanted to get individuals who do not usually talk with one another to sit down together at the same table and share their thoughts. Second, we wanted the discussions to have outcomes. We accomplished both of these goals, but also encountered challenges from which we learned a tremendous amount. This section outlines the areas in which we can improve, and also where we thought we were effective.

Challenges

One of the biggest challenges was communicating to the guests our intentions and the event’s purpose. This was especially difficult given the history between Downtown Eastside residents and organizers with outside organizations, including SFU but also municipal, provincial and federal governments, corporate groups, and business associations. Tough issues existed before we organized the dialogue, and some participants found it difficult to move beyond those and participate openly in this Thought-Luck. This underlying tension made some guests skeptical and defensive when we attempted to explain why we students were hosting this dialogue.

We found it challenging to not present ourselves as the University giving advice or trying to change the already existing community. Our event was geared towards simply providing a place to have a discussion and a space for collaboration between diverse individuals and groups. The notion of "us" versus "them" stood in the way at times. In hindsight, we perhaps were not clear and concise enough about our purpose and role.

Another concern expressed by a few participants was that they felt the room lacked diversity—either we had too few residents from the Downtown Eastside, too few representatives from SFU, or too few people who are in positions of power to make the ideas we generated into a reality. Perhaps we could have alleviated some of this concern by being more intentional with the "mapping the room" exercise, to make it more obvious how many diverse groups were represented, but the list of participants appended certainly indicates a healthy and unusually diverse attendance.

We learned how challenging it can be to create an environment where a diverse range of voices feels welcome and safe to speak about their experiences and perspectives. This was an issue in some of the small group discussions and particularly in the larger group plenary session. A few, although fortunately not most, participants were intimidated to speak up due to certain voices using inappropriate language and behaviour in contrast to the group’s collective description of “what dialogue means.”
"Lots of food for thought."

**THOUGHT-LUCK DIALOGUE PARTICIPANT**

**Successes**

Attendees were diverse and represented many different groups. We had representatives from SFU, UBC, residents in the DTES community, the city of Vancouver, arts organizations, and First Nations, to name a few. One target group missing from our event was residents of the Woodward’s building itself. Overall we are pleased that so many participants came to the table.

Another accomplishment was that we created an environment of respect. During the introduction, we established a dialogue model that attendees created and, for the most part, followed. Our dialogue did not turn into a debate; at the very least, participants let others finish speaking, and actively listened to other attendees. Feedback forms suggest that most participants felt that they all had an equal opportunity to speak.

The most fundamental goal of the dialogue was to inspire ideas generated by stakeholders through which SFU’s School of Contemporary Arts and its new community could interact through art. In the small break-out groups, each participant was encouraged to imagine what these creative projects might look like, and were given postcards to record their ideas, that have been passed on to the Director of the School for the Contemporary Arts and the Director for Community Engagement. These ideas are listed in Appendix at the end of this document, and represent the major outcome from the afternoon.

As can happen in a dialogue, any of the ideas discussed were more like themes that should be taken into account when implementing these programs. Therefore, we also have included a list of these themes in the “Outcomes” section).

The dialogue resulted in a plethora of tangible, achievable ideas that have real potential to be implemented. Our hope is that through these ideas the university and community will succeed in using the power of art to develop the collaborative understandings and strong working relationships through which good neighbours enjoy and benefit from each other.
V. How Dialogue Changed Us

"People who take part in cultural activities are more involved with the life that goes on around them"

MAX WYMAN, Author of Defiant Imagination

This event, and three months of practicing the art of dialogue, have changed us as participants in the world.

We have come to a fuller understanding and appreciation of inclusivity and creative collaboration. We have stretched personal limits in our attempts to be present, focused and listen first. We are more comfortable with silence, simplicity and brevity, as they make space for greater vulnerability and deeper meaning. We have the courage now to engage with policy-makers, executive directors and fellow student alike. We have begun to see the world through other people’s lenses, allowing us to re-evaluate and expand our worldviews. Dialogue has taught us not only to not take things personally but also to listen attentively and show respect, especially when disagreeing. We are more adept at communicating in a way that is collaborative, meaningful, and efficient.

What follows are a few personal reflections from Semester in Dialogue students:

“By striving to engage in continuous dialogue, we have come to a fuller understanding and appreciation of inclusivity and creative collaboration. We have stretched our personal limits in our attempts to always be present and focused. We have learned that true, deep listening takes skill, but more importantly it takes energy and certain vulnerability, an opening of the self to receive without necessarily needing to fully understand or accept. We have a new appreciation for silence, simplicity and brevity, as well as ambiguity. We are all experts of our own experience. We are all gifted storytellers with important stories to share. And we are all more aware of ourselves in the world, and of how our actions can and will shape it.”

Stephanie Ellis

“We have the courage now to engage with policy-makers, executive directors and fellow student alike. We challenge ourselves to draw out the stories within everyone that we meet by telling our own personal narratives.”

Jocelyne Leszczynski
“Dialogue acts as a tool for introspection. Throughout the past semester, we have all learned to look inside ourselves to find our own stories, ideas, and passions. These stories are then a tool to seek out the same things within others.”

Emily Ross

“Dialogue is used with difficulty because as it’s a tool it’s also an attitude. If you have the intention to learn, to be respectful, and to keep an open mind, you’re dialoguing. If you can be in that place and stay there then it becomes a muscle you learn to stretch and the world opens up around you.”

Steffen Quong

“Dialogue is a different style of communication that is unlike any other I have come across. It has enabled me to have more presence without needing to uphold a rigid point-of-view. Listening first before judgement has helped me to better fully consider ideas and to forward the conversation in a meaningful direction. Dialogue offers a way of conversation that is not adversarial but respectful and meaningful synthesis.”

Lia Haleem

“Dialogue is a process of self-confrontation and growth. As we begin to see the world through other people’s lenses, our own beliefs and values are inevitably called into question. If we remain true to dialogue principles of openness, empathy, and respect, we cannot help but reconsider our own interpretations of things. This can be scary, and it can lead to the unearthing of difficult issues of all kinds. But if it is done respectfully, everyone participating has a great opportunity to benefit. Dialogue has given us safe and effective techniques for re-evaluating and expanding our worldviews. Dialogue has taught us to not take things personally. We have realized that listening attentively and showing respect, especially when disagreeing, is the most pleasant, meaningful, and efficient way to get to the heart of things. When everyone behaves like this much good is possible. When some people don’t, it’s not your fault.”

Alex Kennedy
Participant List and Affiliation

"Culture, though it can be dangerously divisive, is the essence of the evolving civilization that we make together"

MAX WYMAN

Thought-Luck Participants
Tuesday, November 22, 2009
Japanese Hall, 487 Alexander Street, Vancouver

CCAP = Carnegie Community Action Project
DTES = Downtown Eastside
SFSS = Simon Fraser Student Society

Alana
Alex Kennedy
Am Johal
Andrea Reimer
Andrea Rose
Andrea Semenik
Andrew Owen
Blake Turner
Bryan Gallagher
Candice Roberts
Carly Teng
Cathy Leszczynski
Cheryl Geisler
Chloe Ellis
Christina Panis
Dalannah Gail Bowen
Dani Fecko
Dave
Diana
Diane Kadota

Student
Semester-in-Dialogue Student
Office of Jenny Kwan
City of Vancouver
SFU Centre for Dialogue
Student
Creative Producer
Electric Company Theatre
Former Semester in Dialogue student
Vancouver Coastal Health: Community Artreach Team
Semester-in-Dialogue Student
Family member of dialogue student
SFU Faculty of Art, Communication and Technology
Family member of dialogue student
Centre A
DTES Centre for the Arts
The PuSh International Performing Arts Festival
CCAP (Carnegie Community Action Project)
Roundhouse Community Arts and Recreation Centre
Hard Rubber New Music Society, Vancouver Chinese Instrumental Music
Melanie Shim  Semester-in-Dialogue Student
Meriko Kubota  Vancouver Foundation
Michael Kozlowski  Guest of Ross Merriam
Michaelin McDermott  Doc-BC
Moshe Mastai  Building owner on West Hastings
Noah Gotfrit  Student
Owen Underhill  SFU Faculty of Art, Communication and Technology
Pamela Coneybeare  Semester-in-Dialogue Student
Patricia Gruben  SFU Contemporary Arts, Praxis Centre for Screenwriters
Peter  Fearless City
Quin Martis  
Ramsay Malange  Semester-in-Dialogue Student
Rob Turner  Friend of dialogue student, Burnaby School District
Robin Ramsey  SFU/Family member of dialogue student
Rose  CCAP
Ross Merriam  Geist Magazine
Sandra Botnen  Link Dance Arts, Inner Ring Circus Arts
Sara Kendall  L.O.V.E. (Leave Out Violence)
Sarah Van Borek  Family member of dialogue student
Scott Sawka  Friend of dialogue student
Shannon  Roundhouse Community Arts and Recreation Centre
Sid Tan  W2 Community Media Arts Society
Steffen Quong  Semester-in-Dialogue Student
Stephanie Ellis  Semester-in-Dialogue Student
Stephanie Greaves  SFU Faculty of Art, Communication and Technology
Susanna Uchatius  Theatre Terrific Society
Vicktor Jean  Guest of Tom Quirk
Wayne  CCAP
William Radford  SFU International
Vanessa Richards  SFU Community Engagement through the Arts
Veronica Dahl  Family member of dialogue student
Vicktor Jean  Guest of Tom Quirk
Wayne  CCAP
William Radford  SFU International
Vanessa Richards  SFU Community Engagement through the Arts
Veronica Dahl  Family member of dialogue student
Vicktor Jean  Guest of Tom Quirk
Wayne  CCAP
William Radford  SFU International
Vanessa Richards  SFU Community Engagement through the Arts
Veronica Dahl  Family member of dialogue student

* We apologize if we have missed anyone on the day of the registration due to the high volume, and thank you for your participation.
**Postcards**

"Arts...give us a sense of shared interest and direction"

MAX WYMAN

The following are unedited quotes are from participants at the Thought-Luck dialogue. Each was asked to put ideas on a postcard to be sent to the Director for the School of the Contemporary Arts and/or Director for Community Engagement.

The question asked was, "In reflecting on the role of SFU Woodward’s in the community, what tangible, creative initiative(s) do you envision?"

"Students required to get last credit by performing community outreach. SFU/Woodward’s provide space on weekend/evening for arts production and sale. Local artists commissioned to design doors in Residential Towers for purchase by owner and expression of individuality"

"It is exciting that SFU will be coming to Woodward’s! Expectations may be really but, but so too are the possibilities for engaging, in a mutually satisfying way with the neighbourhood [sic] - the people and organizations. First step perhaps, is a thoughtful and well designed process that would help SFU develop collaboratively its vision, principles for being a good neighbour [sic]. I would be glad to help with the process design. Ps. How about SCA designing a core course in art and community engagement open to credit and non-credit students?"

"Art is a powerful political tool to fight gentrification in the downtown eastside (DTES). Please use art and culture to promote the building of more social housing in the DTES. Use art as a political message to tell municipal, provincial, and federal governments to raise incomes in the DTES. Initiate co-operative artist shops, galleries, and include DTES residents and build their capacity to be the artists, do it with them not for them. The opinions/voices of DTES residents are most important, not your own.

SFU is welcome in the DTES as long as your respect the 70% of low-income residents. An art project addressing the fact that the Carnegie Cafeteria if for low-income DTES residents and not for SFU students who can afford tuition and market rental apartments. SFU Students, use your political voice. Remember that 70% of DTES residents are low income, they form the majority. Keep condos and
Yaletown out. We need 6000 social housing units.

"I would like to see SFU arts consider circus arts a program to add its spectrum of artistic practices. Circus helps to cut through language and cultural barriers. It invites people to return to the physically for expression and exploration, creative, artistic and self defining."

"The power of self esteem and self development through performance arts has made a serious impact on our community. We represent the Vancouver Circus School and teach recreational circus programs ages 3-72. Through this and an outreach program, we have been able to facilitate a positive learning environment and help with the self esteem and community development of low income, students, adults, and senior citizens."

"Based on the "Downtown Eastside Community Values", I think Woodward’s should invite local Aboriginal artists to teach (or team-teach/be guest artists) SFU Contemporary Arts Students. These artists could share the studio spaces with students and collaborate on projects. The co-created and independent project could be celebrated in Woodward’s art gallery and other public spaces. It would be good to share resources with these artists and allow their voices to be heard and respected."

"The performative event involving 5 inclusive diverse communities to collaborate on a common universal theme to be performed as a one day theatre event. Ex. Theatre Terrifics' "Bread Project" seeks to bring together 5 communities that would never have the opportunity to create together - developmentally challenged, mental health, queer, immigrant, brain damaged. They will collaborate to create a performative (puppet, music, dance) on the theme of the universal nutritive stories of bread."

"Circle of Trust at Woodward’s: Tell all in the circle of trust. This community group will bridge the gap between youth and residents of the DTES through communication. Together, in a safe and trusting group, individuals will share the personal experiences and stories of their life. This sharing of stories and exchange of knowledge will help both youth and DTES residents overcome adversity and fear from external challenges: their environment. 'Circle of Trust' will foster open communication and learning of different sections of the larger community of Vancouver Residents."

"Open the space, equipment to community groups. Partner with community arts groups for class projects so that there is interaction at the personal level and not just the institutional level."

"A weekly, open accessible Open Mic at the new Woodward’s stressing diversity. New ideas, variety of representation, all cultures, respect all Socio-Economic levels."
“Shared arts projects. Educational non-credit arts based programming (collaborate with existing organizations in Downtown Eastside). Cultural program at SFU Woodward’s interacts with the local arts groups jointly. Develop (negotiate) set of principles for University/community interaction. Find ways to support existing community, especially in relation to arts and cultural activities. Try pilot projects, evaluate with the community.”

“The faculty of FPA could explore a partnership with the Action Research Exchange (ARX) out of the Simon Fraser Public Interest Research Group (SFPIRG). The centre for sustainable community development does this, as do several professors in the faculty of Women’s Studies. If FPA courses were to partner, through ART, with local non-profits, there is huge opportunity for visibility. Students could be required to partner with organizations from term to term.”

“Find ways of increasing the incomes of local people who live on very low incomes. Support efforts to increase Welfare rates, such as Carnegie Action Project’s ‘Raise the Rates’ campaign which are self-determining.”

“I’d like to see this space used to convene different communities ex. DTES artist community with Emily Carr Institute with SFU Contemporary Arts and arts faculties at UBC. Some project/program could be to celebrate and showcase each communities works of art (all mediums included). Use neighborhood small grant projects as examples.”

“Community in theatre. Groups through the community with different backgrounds.”

“Arts, anything that promotes. Recreation for non-competitive exercise. Basis for participation in other areas of family and school.”

“A formal education on the DTES community before the students move into Woodward’s.”

“Free standing wall in lobby that gets re-set every 2 weeks. Anyone can put up anything. Eastside community members would be encouraged to put up anything that they want.”

“No initiatives SVP. Get involved with and support what is already going on in the DTES. Educate yourselves about the cause of the problems down here and the nature of these problems.”

“Create an agreement with W2 to advance community partnerships and assist W2 to be a sustained Woodward’s community amenity.”

“(Represented through a diagram) Process: DTES (stories and friendship, SFU (mediums). Can cross over to create collaboration and mentorship.”
"A working relationship with artists. This one on one mentoring program provides youth an opportunity to gain access to professional art practices. This program run by the Contemporary Art Gallery and Watari is in constant need of a sustainable studio."

"Use DTES creative space and community centres for students art and theatre projects. Service-learning with DTES agencies. Sponsorship of DTES artists - 'Artist in Residence' like program. 'Need to be of the community not just in the community.'"

"Access DTES individuals as liaisons for the groups. Don’t just add what is though to be needed, act on existing groups and organizations and help make them as fruitful as possible. Hire Dave Murphy as a community liaison. Define differences between DTES and the aboriginal groups. No DTES photo journals, not as pity cases, as individuals. All students must read 'A Thousand Dreams'.'"

"There is a program I worked with in Edmonton through a theatre festival (Next Fest) where a play written by a high-school student was directed by a professional. The entire cast was made-up of high-school students. This created an atmosphere where two communities were able to work together toward a common goal. I learned so much from the students and they from me. It was thoroughly refreshing. Could such a program be set up to bring art students and DTES citizens together? The importance is a common goal. In that situation, your differences and point of view and life experience become assets instead of barriers. Friendships are made, and experiences are shared."

"Partnerships between SFU Department courses, staff with DTES involved and engaged arts and non-arts organizations to profile the issues/needs/concerns of the DTES community. Examples: theatre class engages with Carnegie Community Action Project to co-write a one act play on homelessness. Writing class works with PACE (organization for street involved prostitutes) to co-create oral histories (a project similar to one Pivot Legal Aid Society has done). Centre for Dialogue puts together a forum on housing needs in the DTES bringing together key players from a cross section of the housing community. Develop a non-credit arts program for DTES involved residents accommodating the same successful model of UBC Humanities 101 and Science 101. These projects need to be doable and build for success. Pilot Projects would build relationships and contribute to larger projects. Develop with the community a statement of shared values and principles under which SFU and the DTES community would engage."

"Specific initiatives will emerge over time. What is critical is to put a process and protocol in place so that expectations can be put in a framework for both SFU and the Community so they know how to work together, what each brings and what timetables are required.
and what resources each provides. If these are accepted and in place, anything is possible."

"A project illustrating the relationship of minority cultures. Ex. Chinese, Japanese... with Woodward’s in its heyday."

"To have affordable meals available somewhere on the university. University students eat at the Carnegie Centre because it is healthy food and it is affordable."

"A 'Out of the Rain' type program (Gallery Gachet) providing a creative space (and materials?) for street artists, homeless artists, destitute artists. Ex. Covered areas (Pigeon Park). Workspace, Organized shows, materials support. Shopping cars and dogs allowed."

"SFU buying local goods and services. SFU hiring local people. The community welcoming SFU into the community. Teach people to read. Community art projects."

"To develop a large scale public art project with students."

"Sell my books in the SFU Book Store. www.libraryeditions.com"

"Collaborative art-making projects in all areas (film, theatre, music etc.) Street music making by students. Street dance making by students. Street theatre making by students. Visible visual arts projects. Local artists presenting to classes."

"Kokoro Dance and the Vancouver International Dance Festival welcomes the opportunity to dynamically engage with the SFU Centre for the Contemporary Arts in animating the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver with live performance both inside the SFU facility and outside in the D.E.S. community. -Kokoro Dance would be happy to offer internships to SFU students to offer professional dance experience -The VIDF would be happy to co-present local, national and international dance artists at SFU and in the D.E.S. community. It is important that these performances be accessible to D.E.S. residents -The VIDF offers free performances -Kokoro Dance has a 23 year history of performances in site-specific (free) spaces. We can help to engage SFU students in these kinds of performances as well as in more formal venues."

"Woodward’s 'Windows' w/ large screens displaying community generated still and moving images, poetry, text, animation, etc. Material gathered from a 'speakers corner' in the atrium or a website curated by a committee of residents."
“Seek to work with the community to insure the maintenance of adequate housing options for current residents. Provide the means and the tools for members of the community to engage in creative self exploration. Create mechanisms and space through which the artistic community can engage with the wider community. Create broadened standards for peer review of art.”

“Sharing resources- ie: art supplies, video equipment. Organize ‘fundraisers’ for DTES non profit Arts organizations. Facilitate an event for all of the front lines Art Facilitators and organizers to meet, connect, and share resources! Open art classes for the DTES community.”

“Space, time, resources for music/other art workshops and community based ensembles- diverse, inclusive- jazz, vocal, percussion (taiko, gamelan, marimba) that enables learning, creativity, improvisation and participation of both student and resident populations. Use of local artists in presentation of workshops, outreach.”

“A place that is open and inviting. Not limiting- use ART as a starting point for dialogue. Inclusive and does not seem ‘out of reach’ for community members and residents of Vancouver. Supportive and positive. A place that builds on existing strengths of the community and works to overcome challenges. Open to all regardless of race, class, gender, citizenship or status. Forward-looking with the idea of collectivity.”

“Share resources (computers, space, etc.). Be a good neighbour and research and respect existing programs and comm. groups. Develop a literature periodical that showcases established writers as well as emerging DTES writers.”

“Respect, research and participate in existing creative projects of DTES rather than imposing ‘academic’ programs onto a community that needs continuity. Challenge teaching methods and involve ‘teachers of experience’ (anecdotal experts).”

“Explore and develop opportunities with immediate neighbours such as W2 and other successful RFP groups. Make it a point to enable the existing groups. A community television program in association with W2. Would also work out multi platform delivery. SFU used to have a regularly produced and scheduled program years ago.”

"Heart of the City Festival- history, dance, film, theatre, storytelling, writing, fine arts- internships. As much off-site opportunities as on-site sessions for both students and general community members- how does the university meet its budget if these programs are free of charge? Partnerships with community organizations. Students out in community with teachers from the street. Intense community orientation led by CCAP."

"I think 'arts as activism' / community arts is a perspective you need to take in order to honour the community already in place. Awareness of gentrification in the area and that SFU will be a catalyst for that process. You need to figure out how you can soften 'the blow of gentrification' to the area and current residents being pushed out.

i.e. you should share 'your space' with artists and residents being pushed out or at risk of being pushed out
cconnect with the social justice, arts and other movements which already exist in the area and support their struggle
document the struggle... etc.
scholarships for low-income residents
Txs for listening."

"Building bridges between SFU and DTES youth, specifically First Nation youth. I would like to see creative projects developed that speak to this group’s marginalized place. Projects that empower and give voice to their concerns and creativity. I would like to see them have access to SFU’s facilities at W. not only to create work but as a path to them seeing higher education as something that is possible for them. Inclusivity is, to me, a key part of SFU’s role in the community of W."

"Outreach community involvement provide educational collaborative involvement. Providing space and time for collaborative projects, innovations. Work w/ existing organizations- SFU as a facilitator. Establish educ. opportunities for residents- low income."

"Create a low-income resident friendly process (providing food, childcare, and welcoming space, or go to where the people are and ask them there) where low income residents decide what the tangible, creative initiatives are; reach out especially to low income Aboriginal residents and artists- do what these people suggest."

"Create an art program led by celebrities for the community. Or roof top festival. Drum orchestra."
"Providing power of learning and literary. Providing access to tools/technology to have impact on economic/quality of life. Blend the best of University + best of community for generation of empowered community to give artistic voice to community. Humanities 101. Libraries as connections to arts institutions and community."

"The possibilities for the community to participate in learning processes and cultural engagement opportunities that are provided/offered by SFU...in an affordable way. Eg// 1) Lifeline [lifelong?] learning that is free and not age restricted. 2) Reduced (and free) admission to cultural events."

"In the spirit of what I feel is most successful at The Banff Centre-where SFU Woodward’s offers a limited number of 'creative residencies' for members of the community to develop an idea without necessity of successful performance in a safe/clean environment- and opportunities of similar 'creative residencies' for members of a non-Vancouver/BC/international community to develop an idea/art/etc. with food/shelter covered."

"What's in it for the university? Work w/ artists and cultural programmers and residents who live and work in the downtown eastside to create projects that listen to and respond to the articulated needs and interests of community members. Foster ways to encounter and live w/ difference that are safe and mutually respectful. Respect difference in innovative ways."

"Dialogue with existing community about how to involve them. Offer space for community and artists so that they interact and cross paths. Create outdoor events accessible to all. Be respectful of what has come before. Do 1 or 2 things really well and then expand."

"Outdoor, free, summer festival of performing Arts targeting local audience base. Open classes for all ages and interests, free."

"Feast house/arbor."

"Take what is happening already in the neighborhood and work together to enhance and build on it. Some programs need to join forces and collaborate. Take the experience the artists who live in the [DTES] have and engage them in programs."

"I envision a 'main lobby' mural encompassing the individualities and diversities of a new community creating a new family within a city with celebratory recognition- for discussion and meditation, inspiration, building. Enhancing experience and engagement. God gave us 2 hands- one to give and one to receive."
"Anything that involves community choirs, creative protest, noisemaking, puppetry, that enhances the protest culture of the neighborhood."

"Processions, parades through the DTES to overcome fear and ignorance. Temporary public art. Participatory public art. A DTES culture crawl. A Christo covering of the DTES. An art show [of] DTES residents @ SFU."

"Collaboration @ and support for the Pantages Theatre Project, the new Carnegie Opera, learning/teaching @ Oppenheimer Park Centre, and engagement @ educational programmes already underway @ the larger housing structures. Taking student art in all its forms to the streets, year round."

"A class by SFU students to teach people who can’t afford universities the things they are learning creative writing, technology, etc.). Maybe an ‘Art Wall’ where anyone can come and make art. Perhaps in collaboration with the above idea (art classes) community art wall. Starting ongoing [committee] made up of people in the DTES as well as students who come up with initiatives that can include all people in the area."


"Social communication, advertising, multi-media to amplify community concerns/issues to a broader public- a collaboration between students and community organizations- a social propaganda [making] machine."

"I envision a quality of change for real outreach to the D.E. community- a neighborhood of people who are made to feel unwelcome and unrelated to the ‘cement edifice’ that SFU Downtown [Harbour Centre] has become over time, and the W site will ultimately become. Sidewalk art for children in the community."

"Annual mural created by students and local community artists. Graffiti jam. Ideal space by The Cambie. An annual graffiti jam on wall space provided by SFU. This would create a way to reach out to local artists who must do [their] work legally to give them legal wall space."

"A mural event, or ongoing process involving community artists and SFU students on a large wall space off one of the alleys adjoining Woodward’s. The cooperation and involvement of SFU and approval by building owners (consent) to use backs of buildings, or space adjoining parking lots. Local artists could benefit from material donation, cooperation with and recognition by students. Event and process could be documented, publicized and celebrated."