

DIALOGUE BY DESIGN: EXPERIMENTAL PLATFORMS FOR INTIMATE CONVERSATIONS



May Tveit, PRODUCT PLACEMENT *belonging*, 2010.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NOVEMBER 10, 2010

HOW HAS A CONVERSATION CHANGED YOU?

HOW DO YOU KNOW WHEN YOU'RE SPEAKING FOR YOURSELF?

WHY ARE YOU QUICK TO DISAGREE?

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO TALK ABOUT RIGHT NOW?

WHAT MAKES YOU LISTEN?

“Conversation Matter: An Open Forum” at Grand Arts on Saturday, Nov. 20 at 2pm invites Kansas City to share in small group conversations that will explore essential questions about public and private dialogue at a time when public infatuation with electronic media is at its height. The free and open event will be the first in a series of artistic and cultural exchanges over the next several months in the new series, “Dialogue by Design: Experimental Platforms for Intimate Conversations.”

The format of “Conversation Matter” is designed by poet Lori Brack (Maryville, MO), whose goals are to create an artistically enriched, stimulating and safe environment to listen to and share ideas, opinions, and experiences without resorting to old models of debate, speech-making, or persuasion.

“Those who attend will be co-creating an experimental design for conversation that honors questioning, turn taking and listening,” Brack said. “Each conversation will be guided by provocative questions as we create a comfortable space together for people from all walks of life to speak in a way that honors understandings more than solutions or actions, though we are open to considering what these conversations make possible in the future.”

Kansas City artist **May Tveit** will respond to the conversation with an installation that is playfully cumulative and experiential. “The word matter in “Conversation Matter” refers to materials. I’m asking myself what materials conceptually and poetically represent the weight and weightlessness of thought; the back and forth of dialogue; and the continuous flow of ideas and human exchange? How will the residue of the conversation occupy the space during and after it has occurred?” Tveit said.

“Conversation Matter” is the first event in a series exploring intimate conversations in our everyday lives, organized by Grand Arts artistic director Stacy Switzer. “The ‘Dialogue by Design’ series is an opportunity to take a closer look at how we are (and aren’t) talking to each other today,” says Switzer. “How and when do we carve time and space for meaningful conversations in our daily lives? What strategies and formats for this already exist, and what new perspectives are artists bringing to the discussion about how we talk? In an era of digital seamlessness and Facebook pages that won’t die, have the notions of public and private, personal and political become quaint relics from a recent past? Is it revolutionary to talk face to face?”

Upcoming events in the “Dialogue by Design” series include an “An Evening of Warming” on December 11th, including bathtub tarot readings, music, film and performance programmed by Grand Arts assistant director Lacey Wozny, and an evening with *The New York Times Magazine* “Consumed” columnist Rob Walker on December 15th. The series continues January – March 2011, with “The Imaginative Reinvention of Education,” a symposium organized by artist and educator Julia Cole on February 25-26, and a lecture and art criticism workshop with Sylvie Fortin, *Art Papers* magazine Editor-in-Chief in March. Additional events are TBA.

“Dialogue by Design” will unfold in a dynamic gallery environment designed to encourage spontaneous exchange. The installation will include original furniture designs by Grand Arts project managers/fabricators EJ Holland and April Pugh.

“Conversation Matter” with Lori Brack is free and open to all, however reservations are recommended due to limited seating. To reserve a spot, please contact Tasha Karsk, Gallery Assistant at gallery@grandarts.com or call the gallery 816.421.6887.

For an updated schedule of **Dialogue by Design** events and gallery hours please visit us online at grandarts.com or visit us on Facebook.

Lori Brack is a writer and teacher of writing and literature. Her work revolves around systems of collaboration and material manifestations of ephemeral experiences such as reading and conversation. She is the creator of literary installations and curator of a series of community conversations at the Salina Art Center 2002-2004 that explored dialogue and public participation. Her chapbook, *A Fine Place to See the Sky*, was published this fall by The Field School, New York. It originated as a poetic script commissioned for Ernesto Pujol’s collaborative performance piece *Farmers Dream*. Brack teaches at Northwest Missouri State University. Her poems have appeared in the *Packingtown Review*, *North American Review*, and *Rosebud*, among others.

May Tveit is an artist whose site-specific art & public art has received national critical reviews in *Art in America*, *Art Papers*, *National Public Radio*, *The Kansas City Star*, and *Review Magazine*. She

has received numerous honors and awards including a Charlotte Street Foundation Fellowship, American Institute of Architects Allied Arts & Craftsmanship Award, ArtsKC Inspiration Grant, University of Kansas Research Grants, Hall Center for the Humanities Creative Work Fellowship. Most recently she was awarded a 2010 Andy Warhol Foundation/Charlotte Street Foundation Rocket Grant and was selected to participate in the 2010 Art OMI International Artist Residency. Her work is represented in numerous corporate & private collections. She holds a BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design, studied in Rome with the RISD European Honors Program, and received her Masters Degree from the Domus Academy in Milan, Italy. She has taught at the Rhode Island School of Design, Kansas City Art Institute and currently teaches at the University of Kansas and lives and works in Kansas City, Missouri.

The facilitators for this event:

Paula Fried is a psychologist in private practice in Salina, KS. She is also involved in a number of community endeavors, including the Salina Art Center and a community tutoring program at a local high school.

Katie Boody is a native of Kansas City. She holds a BA in English and Dance from Western Washington University and is currently finishing a M.Ed. at Rockhurst University. After teaching middle school in the Kansas City Missouri School District for two years with Teach for America, she now teaches 6th and 7th grade math at Alta Vista Charter Middle School.

Jose Faus is a Kansas City artist and writer. A native of Bogota, Colombia, he maintains a studio in downtown Kansas City, KS in the Kansan Pressroom studios building. He is a founding member of the Latino Writers Collective. He received degrees in Studio Art and Creative Writing from the University of Missouri Kansas City.

Jeremy McConnell is the Director of the Hip Hop Academy a KCMO based Artist Collective that teaches Youth through the Five Elements of True Hip Hop Culture. The Five Elements are DJ'ing, MC'ing, Hip Hop Dance, Graffiti Art & Culture. McConnell is a graduate of KCAI with a BFA in Printmaking. He is a Creative Artist, Community Activist, Music & Culture Lover, Father and Husband.

Suzanne Hogan graduated from the College of Santa Fe in New Mexico, with a degree in both Political Science and Documentary Studies. Suzanne works as an announcer and producer for KCUR 89.3 FM, Kansas City's NPR affiliate station. She also works as a Migrant Advocate for the Migrant Farmworkers Project, and serves as a founding member of the 816 Bicycle Collective.

Frank Shaw's youth was spent in an old house; none of the doors were square. A large dictionary sat open at small desk near the dining room table. Words were important in that household, but there was much that wasn't said.