

Alex Gilliam

Director, Public Workshop 917-335-5518 alex@publicworkshop.us @publicworkshop

Professional Work

Founder + Director, Public Workshop *2009-Present, Philadelphia, PA*

- A cheerleader of possibility, Public Workshop creates uniquely engaging opportunities for youth and their communities to shape the design of their cities.

Co-Founder, Department of Making + Doing (DMD) *Fall 2012-Present, Philadelphia, PA*

- Working with NextFAB, the Hacktory, and Breadboard to create a making-oriented civic innovation workshop and STE(A)M laboratory in Philadelphia. Funding for DMD has been provided by ArtPlace, Knight Foundation, Barra Foundation, and Cognizant.

Founder, Tiny WPA *June 2012-Present, Philadelphia, Chicago, Flint, New York City, Camden*

- Working with community partners in Philadelphia and other cities to connect young adults with needs where their contribution can have a legitimately transformative impact on the design of their neighborhoods, schools and public spaces.
- Community partners include: Flint Public Art Project, Smith Memorial Playground, Cooper's Ferry Partnership, North 5th Street Revitalization Project, Science Leadership Academy, People's Emergency Center, Van Alen Institute, the Village of Arts and Humanities, Philadelphia Horticultural Society, Albemarle County Public Schools, Cleveland Community Design Collaborative, and the Western School of Science and Technology.

Designer, Build-It! *March 2011-Present, Everywhere*

- Designed and developed a cardboard architectural building toy--Build-It!--that allows people to create fantastic, inhabitable structures on playgrounds, vacant lots, in classrooms and your very own backyard: www.beabuildinghero.com
- Design and facilitate participatory building workshops for youth and communities all over the United States.
- Proceeds support Public Workshop programming.

Community Engagement Consultant, Drexel University *October 2014, Philadelphia, PA*

- Creating a series of 'building' events to put community members at the center of making improvements to and taking ownership of Drexel University's new community outreach center.

Community Engagement Consultant, Philadelphia Water Department *September 2014, Philadelphia, PA*

- Designed a building event and custom Rain Drop Build-It! Disks to engage passersby in exploring the Fairmount Water Works and 'the state of water' in Philadelphia.

Community Engagement Consultant + Skate Park/Playground Builder, Cooper's Ferry Partnership *July 2014 to Present, Camden, NJ*

- Developing a connected series of pop-up play spaces and in-school programs while growing a group of community design leaders that put Camden youth at the forefront of improving vacant lots and building broader communities around public space in the City.

Community Engagement + Maker Space Consultant, Philly CAM *July 2014 to Present, Philadelphia, PA*

- Helping Philly CAM put its stakeholders at the forefront of creating a new media and tech lab in their current facility.

Community Engagement Consultant, Van Alen Institute *May 2014, New York, NY*

- Designed a 'building event' in which participants built a DIY pop-up meeting space for a panel discussion with experts around the nature of DIY public space in New York City.

Community Engagement + Education Consultant, Ewing Cole Architects *April 2014, Philadelphia, PA*

- Redesigned Ewing Cole's process for engaging teachers and students in the design of Department of Defense K-12 schools.

Senior Lecturer, University of the Arts Industrial Design Department *Fall 2011-2013, Philadelphia, PA*

Community Engagement Consultant, Schuylkill River Development Corp + Second Muse *September 2013, Philadelphia, PA*

- Created 'Camp Crescent,' a pop-up maker space to draw people and encourage them to explore a largely unknown park in Philadelphia. Over a weekend, 100+ participants made 400 years of history of the area out of cardboard.

Community Engagement Consultant, Franco Montalto & Drexel University *Winter 2012-2013, Philadelphia, PA*

- Developed a curriculum and supporting tools to launch a National Science Foundation-funded 'Citizen Scientist' program to engage citizens in measuring the impact of green infrastructure projects in Philadelphia and New York City.

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Adventure Playground Builder, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society *Fall 2012, Philadelphia, PA*

- Led hundreds of youth, young designers and families in the designing and building of a pop-up adventure playground and outdoor tinkering space in the very heart of downtown Philadelphia.

Youth Engagement & Program Consultant, Demoiselle 2 Femme *July 2012-July 2013, Chicago, IL*

- Created a design-build community leadership program that put teenage women in the Roseland neighborhood of Chicago at the forefront of stimulating change in their neighborhood.

Youth Engagement + Learning Consultant, Open House New York *August 2011-June 2012, New York, NY*

- Developed a National Endowment for the Arts-funded design leadership program for 7th grade public school students in the Bronx that empowered them to hack their learning experience and redesign their educational spaces.

Community Engagement Consultant, Old Bakery Block Master Plan *September 2011-March 2012, Austin, TX*

- Developed and facilitated a series of participatory place-building events to engage Austin residents in re-imagining the use of a series of under-used lots and buildings on Congress Avenue. The project also included designing its brand and web presence, leading the design-building of temporary structures, and creating a nation-wide design competition around the spaces.

Youth Engagement Consultant, Holly Shores Master Plan *August 2012, Austin, TX*

- Created and led a chocolate cake community, master planning to engage youth and their families in the creation of the park's master plan by Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates.

Field Fellowship Recipient & Design Consultant, National Building Museum *November 2010-March 2011, Washington, DC*

- Developed a series of design-build workshops for uniquely engaging Museum visitors.

Youth Engagement & Education Consultant, Chicago Architecture Foundation *July 2008-2011, Chicago, IL*

- Created and led innovative community design-leadership programs and events for K-12 students, designers and educators.

Community & Youth Engagement Consultant, Landon Bone Baker Architects *December 2009-March 2011, Chicago, IL*

- Designed and managed an innovative program in which young adults gathered data and stories to help the architecture firm, its community partners, and city leaders make better decisions about how to improve the health, well-being and efficiency of their neighborhoods through design.

Education Consultant + Facilitator, Cooper Hewitt National Design Museum *Spring 2006, New York, NY*

- Co-developed and facilitated a more 'activist' oriented City-Of-Neighborhoods program for high school students with Damon Rich and then led a summer master class for educators from across the United States.

Program Designer + Coordinator, Hester Street Collaborative *June 2005-August 2006, New York, NY*

- Developed and directed the Citizen Designer Internship Program, a unique intergenerational community design-build workshop and think-tank. Responsibilities also included creating and leading a multigenerational design charrette of local experts, community members, teachers and students to create an outdoor classroom at PS 134.

Rural Studio Outreach Fellow *2003-2004, Greensboro, Alabama*

- Created and directed "Sunshine Builds," a program to empower K-12 students through the redesign and rebuilding of their neglected school.

Director of Design, Charter High School For Architecture and Design *August 2000-June 2003, Teacher August 1999-June 2003, Philadelphia, PA*

- Managed the School's department chairmen from all academic programs.
- Wrote, developed and implemented the Design Department curriculum.
- Recruited, interviewed and recommended Design faculty for hiring and shaping the Department into a highly motivated team.
- Created a series of design-centered community-building events, including student-led exhibitions and design field days.

Carpentry, Cabinet and Metal Fabrication Apprenticeship *June 2004-November 2005, New York & Virginia*

- Apprenticed with a variety of skilled tradespeople to learn how to 'build' everything from cabinets to houses to custom doors.

Architecture Program Creator & Studio Instructor, Pennsylvania Governor's School for the Arts, Erie, PA, 2001-2002

- Created and developed the school's first Architecture Program.

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Education

University of Texas, 2006-2009, Master of Architecture
University of Virginia 1995-1997, B.S. Arch, minor in History

Honors

The Ida Newman Magic of Play Award, Smith Memorial Playground *May 2014*
Top 100 Community Designers In The US, Public Interest Design *December 2012*
Placemaking Contest-Grand Prize, Metropolitan Planning Council of Chicago *November 2012*
Brightest Minds In Philadelphia, Philadelphia Magazine *November 2012*
Curriculum Special Recognition, Association of Architectural Organizations *March 2011*
Field Fellowship, National Building Museum *November 2010*
K-12 Design Education Think-Tank Member, National Endowment for The Arts *November 2009*
Graduate Teaching Award, University of Texas *May 2009*
Rural Studio Outreach Fellowship, Auburn University *September 2003*
Bryanston Teaching Fellowship, Dorset, England *September 1997*

Partnership Awards

State Farm YAB Grant with the Science Leadership Academy, State Farm Youth Advisory Board *September 2014*
Surdna Thriving Cultures Grant Winner with People's Emergency Center, Surdna Foundation *April 2014*
New Urban Mechanics Civic Design Challenge Winner (Multiple Awards), Mayor's Office of Philadelphia *September 2013*
Barra Foundation Grantee: Department of Making and Doing, Barra Foundation *June 2013*
ArtPlace America Grantee: Department of Making and Doing, ArtPlace America *May 2013*
Cognizant Making The Future Grant: Department of Making and Doing, Cognizant *May 2013*
Philadelphia Redevelopment Authority Grant, PRA *May 2013*
Greenbuild Legacy Project and Grant with Smith Memorial Playground, USGBC *April 2013*
Knight Arts Challenge Winner: Department of Making and Doing, Knight Arts Challenge *April 2013*
Spruce Foundation Grant with North 5th Street Revitalization Project, Spruce Foundation *March 2013*
Access To Artistic Excellence Grant with Open House New York, National Endowment For The Arts *May 2011*

Selected Presentations

Engage Conference, '**Start With Building**' *November 2014, New Orleans, LA*
National Organization of Minority Architects Conference, '**Move Design + Learning To The Sidewalk**' *October 2014, Philadelphia, PA*
Keynote, Fuel Vancouver Conference, '**Great Lessons For Inspiring Civic Innovation**' *May 2014, Vancouver, CA*
Van Alen Institute '**Emerging Public Spaces**' *May 2014, New York, NY*
Keynote, Ed Spaces Conference, '**Empowering Youth To Improve Their Learning Through Design**' *December 2013, San Antonio, TX*
Grantmakers in The Arts, '**TinyWPA**' *October 2013, Philadelphia, PA*
Is School Enough? Presented by the Pearson Foundation, '**TinyWPA**' *August 2013, Boston, MA*
CompostModern, '**Prototyping The Behaviors That Adults Have Forgotten**' *March 2013, San Francisco, CA*
Ignite Philadelphia, '**TinyWPA**' *September 2012, Philadelphia, PA*
Temporary Urbanism Salon, '**How Do You Sustain Innovation?**' *April 2012, Philadelphia, PA*
Congress For Urban Transformation, '**Tiny WPA**' *October 2012, Philadelphia, PA*
RISD, '**Public Workshop**' *April 2012, Philadelphia, PA*
EduCon 2.4, '**How Do You Sustain Innovation?**' *January 2012, Philadelphia, PA*
McGill University, '**Build-It! And Other Tools For Rethinking Design And Learning**' *November 2011, Montreal, Canada*
BMW Guggenheim Lab, '**#teendesignheroes And 'Doing' As Disruptive Civic Technologies**' *October 2011, New York, NY*
Association of Architectural Organizations Conference, '**Build-It!**' *October 2011, Philadelphia, PA*
AIPP Symposium on Sustainability & Placemaking, '**Making As A Tool For Innovation And Collaboration**' *October 2011, Austin, TX*
Social Capital Markets Conference, '**Prototyping Behaviors For Social Innovation**' *September 2011, San Francisco, CA*
Urban Design Week, '**Chocolate Cake As A Tool For Better Engaging Community In Master Planning**' *September 2011, New York, NY*
EDRA 42 Conference, '**Architectural Freeze Tag And Adventures In Intuitive Building**' *May 2011, Chicago, IL*
UCDavis' Rob Thayer Lecture, '**Chocolate Cake And Other Tools For People Changing Cities**' *April 2011, Davis, CA*
Transcultural Cities Symposium, '**Youth Generated Tools For Community Design Engagement**' *February 2011, Seattle, WA*
Echoing Green Social Entrepreneurship Conf., '**Making And Doing As Tools For Innovation And Dialogue**' *January 2011, Austin, TX*
IDEA Series, '**Nine Ways You Can Better Engage Youth And Communities In Design**' *September 2010, Chicago, IL*
Association For Community Design Conference, '**Children Changing Cities**' *June 2010, Berkeley, CA*

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Ripple Conference On Urban Education, '**Children Should Be The Architects Of Our Cities**' March 2010, Chicago, IL
Building A Healthier Austin Symposium, '**Creating A Landscape Of Continuous Play & Exercise**' October 2009, Austin, TX
Great Public Spaces Summit, '**You Can Change Your City: Make Austin Weirder**' June 2009, Austin, TX
Drexel University, '**Five Tactics For Changing Your City**', June 2009, Philadelphia, PA

Selected Press
Q & A With Alex Gilliam Of Public Workshop. **Metropolis Magazine**, October 2014
Tactical Doing: Public Workshop. **Public Journal**, October 2014
How Tiny WPA Is Transforming Neighborhoods With Help From Teenage Girls. **Fast Company**, January 2014
Is School Enough? Tiny WPA **PBS**, November 2013
How Girls With Power Tools Transformed Their Neighborhood, **GOOD Magazine**, August 2013
Embedded Practices, **Architect Magazine**, August 2013
Taking Design Out Of The Studio And Onto The Streets, **Flying Kite**, March 2013
Tear Down The Swingsets, Here's How To Put Play Back In Playgrounds, **Slate Magazine**, January 2013
The Smartest People In Philadelphia, **Philadelphia Magazine**, November 2012
Temporary Playground To Turn Kids Into Planners, **Next American City**, October 2012
Recasting Teachers And Students As Designers, **Mind Shift**, October 2012
What A Bunch Of Legos Can Teach Us About Civic Participation , **BMW Guggenheim Lab/Log**, February 2012
Four Lessons The Classroom Can Learn From The Design Studio, **Fast Company**, December 2011
Cooper-Hewitt Program feature, **Metropolismag.com**, September 2006
Hester Street Collaborative feature, **The Architect's Newspaper**, November 2005
CHAD Design Department feature, **Studio 360**, June 23, 2001, (<http://www.studio360.org/yore/show061601.html>)
CHAD Design Department feature, **Metropolis**, September 2002

As Founder and Director, Alex regularly writes on the Public Workshop website (www.publicworkshop.us) about such things as design education, social entrepreneurship, playgrounds and rethinking how we engage people in making the places we live, work, learn, and play.

His work regularly appears on a number of mainstream websites such as **Yahoo**, **Inhabitat**, **Kaboom!** and **Core 77** but is amazed when it's referenced in 'places' as far flung as www.swissarmywife.com and www.urbanpreschool.com.