

**PROJECT
RESET**

A Guide to Arts and Diversions



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For More Information

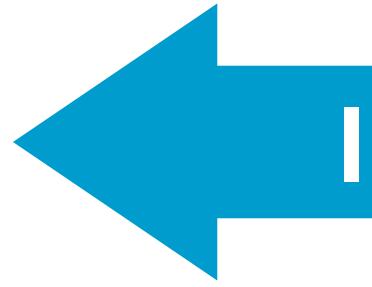
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Introduction



One of the persistent injustices of our criminal justice system is its harsh treatment of people accused of low-level offenses. The collateral consequences of traditional punishment can be great and range from losing employment and housing to changes in immigration status or losing access to educational opportunities. Project Reset offers a new approach, providing a way to resolve a case quickly without going to court or suffering disproportionate consequences.¹ By participating in community-based programming, participants can have their case dismissed while avoiding some of the collateral consequences of the traditional system. Simultaneously, Project Reset can connect participants to community resources that can address their needs and the underlying causes of an arrest.

An alternative to the traditional system, Project Reset has looked to innovate again by partnering with arts institutions to create meaningful arts-based programming. For over two decades, the Center for Court Innovation has been using arts as a tool to promote healing for individuals, strengthen communities, and increase fairness of accountability within the justice system.² Project Reset's partnerships with the New Museum and the Brooklyn Museum are the latest chapter in a longer history of work in the arts.

We hope this document can be a helpful blueprint for other jurisdictions, justice system stakeholders, arts practitioners, institutions, teachers, and social services providers, looking to start or continue the important work of early diversion and the growing desire for leveraging arts-based programming to center participant experience, explore accountability, and transform the criminal justice system.

Why Arts?

The Center is committed to using arts-based programming because it has been shown to be effective at facilitating self-reflection and personal growth.³ There are many different arts-based programs working to change the criminal justice system and the root causes that drive people to become entangled in the system, including Recess Assembly and Young New Yorkers.⁴ In this document we are focusing specifically on how the Center has partnered with two museums—the New Museum and the Brooklyn Museum—to increase accessibility to cultural and community institutions and provide arts-based pre-arrangement diversion programming. The lessons learned and promising practices developed can be applied to a wide range of arts-based diversion programming.

While there is plenty of evidence showing how the arts can play a critical role in social services,⁵ it's worth noting the capacity of the arts to facilitate imagination for change, beyond the seemingly pre-determined, to create "an elastic interpretation of potential," as Derek Fordjour, a teaching artist and Project Reset facilitator, says.⁶ This feature



of the arts is particularly relevant to programming that provides an alternative approach to the conventional justice system. Project Reset, for example, encourages participants to imagine alternatives to the existing systems of justice. In the Brooklyn Museum's intervention, participants are encouraged to "flip the script," imagining how they are perceived externally, and how they might be truly seen in a more just system. The arts offer a way to ask difficult and necessary questions—now especially, as we urgently examine the justice system's perpetuation of racism and inequality. The arts encourage us to ask: Why do arrests happen? Did wrongdoing occur? Whose perspectives of wrongdoing are we relying on when an arrest is made? The Center's collaboration with the New Museum and the Brooklyn Museum represents an attempt to both ask and answer these questions.

Innovation and change require imagining unconventional partnerships between museums and social service providers, re-imagining public spaces and accessibility by making museums more inclusive places, and re-imagining the criminal justice system by diverting cases from it to produce better results. Through the Center for Court Innovation's partnership with museums, we hope to continue working towards a humane and fair justice system, and to challenge ourselves to imagine the possibilities of what a transformed justice system might look like.

Collaboration is vital. The institutions that came together to build this program have different perspectives and priorities. These differences sometimes pose challenges, but they also provide opportunities. We have all learned from each other and arrived at a place we couldn't have reached in isolation, introducing a new vision of justice.

I am proud to partner with the Center for Court Innovation and Brooklyn Museum on Project Reset, an innovative program to reduce incarceration and convictions and make communities safer. We know that over-policing in low-wealth Black and Brown communities puts people of color at greater risk of arrest for crimes of poverty, and even for conduct that would not be criminalized in whiter, wealthier neighborhoods. Instead of compounding the harms caused by racially disparate policing, my office uses Project Reset to turn low-level arrests into positive turning points for the individuals involved. Facilitators harness the transformative power of art to reshape people's thinking about concepts like justice, safety, conflict, and accountability. This process helps participants change harmful behavior without the negative collateral consequences of court appearances, convictions, and jail time.

— Brooklyn District Attorney Eric Gonzalez

In my office, we pursue individualized justice while working to reduce systemic racial disparities in the criminal justice system. We know that people of color are overpoliced for low level offenses, and in most misdemeanor cases, incarceration does not advance safety or justice. Project Reset provides a better alternative—transformative arts-based programming that reduces recidivism and incarceration. I'm excited that the Project Reset Toolkit will be shared widely because that means more people will have meaningful opportunities to reflect on their behavior and change for the better instead of suffering the trauma of jail and the collateral consequences of criminal convictions.

— Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg

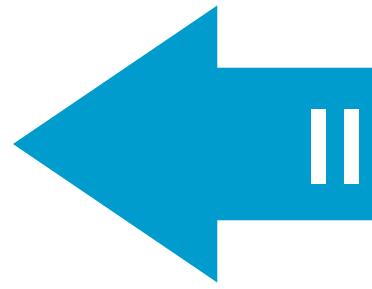
Project Reset is one of the most transformational interventions we have to address low-level offenses while preventing New Yorkers from ever stepping foot in a courtroom. It provides participants with meaningful opportunities for self-reflection and community building, and demonstrates the power of art as a tool to recognize and change behavior—all while helping create a more equitable justice system. Project Reset is a proven and necessary framework for diversion programming, and we're ecstatic that cities across the country will be able to replicate it with the help of this guide.

— Former Manhattan District Attorney Cy Vance, Jr.





What is Project Reset?



Project Reset represents New York City's first systematic attempt to create meaningful diversion opportunities for New Yorkers at the point of arrest, resolving cases before they enter the court system. An early misdemeanor diversion program that receives referrals directly from the prosecutor's office, Project Reset holds participants accountable while reducing the direct and collateral harms of justice-system involvement and lessening the burden of low-level cases on criminal courts and system actors. Project Reset does this by:

- helping participants avoid the punishing collateral consequences of an arrest, such as loss of work or housing, or negative impacts on immigration status;⁷
- improving efficiency of case processing and lessening the burden on overtasked judges, public defenders, and prosecutors;⁸
- furthering procedural justice, treating participants with respect and working to ensure they feel they have been treated fairly;⁹
- helping participants navigate a confusing and opaque justice system with transparency; and
- improving public safety by lessening recidivism, a proven result of justice system involvement.^{10 11}

Project Reset participants who successfully complete the 2-to-4-hour programming do not have to set foot in a courtroom and do not receive a criminal record as a result of their arrest.

How it Works

Project Reset serves adults who are issued desk appearance tickets for eligible non-violent misdemeanors. The desk appearance ticket gives the arrested person a date to return to court for arraignment. Between the arrest date and the scheduled arraignment date, the prosecutor's

office has the opportunity to review the case and charges. The prosecutor's office refers eligible cases to a service provider (in this case, the Center for Court Innovation) that offers people the opportunity to engage in voluntary one-day programming rather than go to court.¹² The District Attorneys' offices determine eligibility, and eligibility varies by office.

Programming can take many forms, including psychoeducational group workshops, arts-based or museum-based programming (which is the subject of this document), restorative justice circles, and individual sessions. In all these settings, participants have a chance to reflect on the underlying issues that led to their arrest and how to avoid future contact with the justice system. Participants are also offered voluntary referrals to community-based social services. Everyone who completes Project Reset never sets foot in a courtroom and the district attorney declines to prosecute their case. There is no penalty for those who do not complete Project Reset, as they simply go to court through the traditional process. Ninety-seven percent of participants complete programming.¹³

The program has been supported by a broad coalition of criminal justice stakeholders for its impact and cost savings.¹⁴ In both boroughs where Project Reset offers arts programming, the district attorneys have been strong advocates. Brooklyn District Attorney Eric Gonzalez called it "an approach that will reduce recidivism and make our justice system more fair." Manhattan District Attorney Cy Vance said, "By committing to divert these misdemeanor cases... we will further eliminate unnecessary incarceration and reduce the risks of deportation, loss of housing, and loss of employment that often accompany a criminal prosecution." These are sentiments about Project Reset that have been echoed by elected officials citywide.¹⁵

Since its launch in 2015, Project Reset has diverted thousands of cases from the justice system, providing programming that allows individuals to avoid court and a criminal record altogether.

A History of Arts Collaborations and Project Reset

The Center for Court Innovation began Project Reset arts programming as a series of small pilots, first partnering with local organizations such as Recess, the Sugar Hill Museum, and Gavin Brown's Enterprise. The Center later transitioned into a pioneering partnership with the New Museum, offering in-museum programming for 18- to 24-year-olds that seamlessly integrated exhibitions into discussions of arrest experience, accountability, and identity. Following the success of this partnership, the Center and the Brooklyn Museum launched the first-ever pre-arrangement arts diversion program that served adults of all ages. With the support of the District Attorneys' offices in both boroughs, the Center now offers arts programming for adults of all ages in both Brooklyn and Manhattan. This expanded eligibility demonstrates the benefits of collaborating closely with institutions from each sector—service provider, justice system, and arts—to develop a program that takes advantage of each stakeholder's expertise and facilitates buy-in from each partner. Prioritizing stakeholder engagement sets the program up for long term success and growth, and, as with the expanded age eligibility for arts programming, can shift perspectives and policies.

Elements of Successful Arts and Diversion Programs

The process of developing, launching, and sustaining Project Reset arts programming generated lessons, among them:

Collaboration

The Center's arts and pre-arrangement diversion programs in Manhattan and Brooklyn have all involved the collaboration of three groups.

1. Criminal Justice System Stakeholders

This includes the district attorneys' offices, which

make referrals and decline to prosecute participants' cases when they complete programming; defense agencies, which advise participants on their legal options, answer legal questions, and provide insight into collateral consequences stemming from the arrest; and court actors with whom Project Reset coordinates to ensure that participants who have completed the program are not scheduled for a court appearance they no longer have to attend.

2. Social Service or Program Providers

In this case, the Center for Court Innovation provides the central role of case management for each participant, including initial outreach, explaining the program to participants, and doing intake. The Center's clinicians provide individual counseling to identify clinical needs, respond to crisis situations, and provide resource referrals. The Center also refers participants to legal defense agencies for free assistance with inquiries.

3. Arts Institutions

Museum educators and teaching artists bridge the gap between arts institutions and program providers with their expertise in facilitating arts-based discussions and art-making experiences. It takes a specific skill set to engage people in arts-based exercises and to help them feel comfortable creating and reflecting on art. During planning for Project Reset, a concern was that adults would not be comfortable engaging in art-making or arts-based discussion. With that in mind, the educators and teaching artists on the Reset team created experiences appropriate for and effective at engaging adult participants. One way the museums achieved this was by looking to work with credible messengers—teaching artists who can speak with authority on the justice system, issues of social justice, and how art can connect to these areas. This allows teachers to connect with participants and increases participants' comfort in processing challenging or traumatizing justice-related experiences in a group setting. Partnering with arts institutions opens the door to the possibilities of interacting with the artwork within their walls, rendering

what can be an intimidating space more familiar and accessible. The hope is that participants not only have an engaging and meaningful experience during the Project Reset session, but also return to use the museum as a visitor, trusting their perspectives are valued.

Procedural Justice

Procedural justice is about being treated with fairness and respect in justice systems. Research studies have boiled procedural justice down to a handful of key elements:

1. Respect for people and their rights
2. Voice (or an opportunity to tell their side of the story)
3. Neutrality of decision-making, and
4. Promotion of understanding of the process.¹⁶

Though this sounds simple, it is demonstrative of the difference it can make when someone can avoid court all together. Defendants may encounter difficult interactions with court officers, may feel silenced in the courtroom, and the court proceedings can be inaccessible for non-attorneys. For example, in a court setting, defendants may find it difficult or intimidating to speak or ask questions.

In contrast, Project Reset encourages question asking and builds into the curriculum an overview of the justice system, explaining why participants are here, what their outcome will be, and how Project Reset differs from the traditional system. Another example is the Project Reset space, which is made as welcoming as possible—additional contrast to the conventional system. Though procedural justice is limited in its scope and impact—addressing perceptions as opposed to tackling deep-rooted issues with the criminal justice system—research indicates it can play a role in broader solutions that seek to address deeper problems.¹⁷

Evaluation and Research Component

In order to assess a program's impact, it is critical to have a robust evaluation component—an oppor-



tunity to gather feedback from participants and consider what the program is doing well and what needs improvement.

Data tracking is just as critical. When coordinating a program with so many different partners, it's vital to have a case-tracking system that helps staff strategize their outreach and troubleshoot problems. Project Reset uses Salesforce, a tracker that streamlines case referrals and compliance reporting and generates simple reports to analyze case flow. Access to this data also informs troubleshooting between stakeholders like Project Reset and the D.A.s' offices. For example, through Salesforce, the case tracking system, Project Reset analyzed the outreach and contact rate, which showed that Project Reset is having trouble reaching eligible people due to lack of reliable contact information. Project Reset brought this issue to the district attorneys' attention and worked to diversify contact methods by providing police precincts with palm cards to give out upon arrest, and by developing a Project Reset website. This increased our accessibility to potential participants and created pathways for them to get in contact with Project Reset, if they did not have or did not feel comfortable providing contact information at the point of arrest.

Another reason this evaluation component is so critical is because the blending of arts and diversion programming is a new practice. Vital to the integrity of any program is regularly assessing it and determining whether it is operating as planned and what changes should be made.



Partnership between the New Museum and Center for Court Innovation

III

BY EMILY MELLO, SENIOR ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, NEW MUSEUM WITH CHERRYE DAVIS, TEACHING ARTIST

History and Context: Choosing to Engage in this Work and Partnership

The New Museum was established in 1977 as the first museum dedicated to contemporary art in New York City. As a non-collecting institution, the program aimed to be responsive and supportive of living artists who had not received critical acceptance and recognition through exhibitions, documentation, programs, and publications. The Museum connected a broader public to those artists' expressions of contemporary social issues and experiences of identity that were underrepresented in older museums which have collections at their core. Embedded in much of this work was a critique of social and economic structures founded on inequities, including how they manifest in art institutions.

The Department of Education and Public Engagement aligns the New Museum's mission of "New Art, New Ideas," with core values of growth through critical engagement, collaboration, innovation, and belonging. The department co-creates new and responsive models for the engagement of youth and adults by partnering with public school teachers, professors, staff of non-profit community centers, grassroots activists, and artists. Recent artist residencies, teacher professional development, public programs, youth programs and part-

nerships have cultivated anti-racism and healing justice-in-arts teaching and learning; building queer and trans youth community space through art; artmaking and conversational gallery programs with organizations such as Fortune Society, and critical public engagement in imagining a just world without prisons. These programs vision a practice of generative community relationships in museums through convening with our differences, online or onsite, to take up institutional spaces often imbued with an atmosphere of hierarchical control and seeking to transform them with collective creativity and care. The relevance of "New Art, New Ideas" relies on sustained mutual growth, desire, inclusiveness, and belonging shared amongst diverse stakeholders. Partnering with Project Reset, the department expands and further deepens this work by newly imagining and practicing a method of justice that counters conventional court systems and changes the role and possibilities of meaningful community engagement in art museums.

Planning Process

In 2018, the New Museum's Department of Education and Public Engagement sought to grow upon the successes of intimate community partnerships by furthering the New Museum's relationships with those directly affected by the justice system and at the same time amplifying critical discussions of artists, activists, and reformers regarding the carceral

Project Reset allowed us to review art in different ways, as well as use the art to describe situations.

— New Museum participant

system on larger, visible, public platforms. We began planning the exhibition and artist residency, *Mirror/Echo/Tilt* for the summer of 2019. The collaborative project of artists Melanie Crean, Shaun Leonardo, and Sable Elyse Smith is a video, performance, and a living curriculum practiced with court-involved youth, formerly incarcerated adults, and individuals otherwise vulnerable to the justice system. The residency included a summer fellowship for participants in the Recess Assembly diversion program, a workshop series with staff and community partners, and a Convening for Contemporary Art, Education, and Social Justice. While planning these programs, Associate Director of Education Emily Mello had many conversations with artist and colleague Shaun Leonardo, a former manager of education programs at the Museum.

Through this relationship, the department was introduced to Aaron Charlop-Powers, then deputy director of early diversion and strategic projects at the Center for Court Innovation, and Midtown Community Court staff including key personnel Chris Heinrich, manager of diversion programs, and Harriet Holder, a senior program associate of diversions programs, to identify aligned aims, values, and approaches and each organization's unique considerations and resources for the program. In October, we began a search for a teaching artist by reaching out to the museum-based arts educators and teaching artists for whom social justice had been core to their practice.

Following interviews with both New Museum educators and Project Reset staff and reviewing sample lesson plans, the New Museum hired Cherrye Davis. Cherrye was selected for her excellent facilitation skills, demonstrated and sustained experience with teaching through art and cultural objects in museums, as well as in public school settings with young people in communities that are vulnerable to the direct effects of the current justice system. Additionally, she brought the

strengths of her artistic practice in spoken word, theater/film, and poetry to engaging facilitation. In addition to observing a Project Reset session at the Midtown Community Court with New Museum education staff, Cherrye began familiarizing herself with the New Museum's approach to gallery-based programs and lesson plans. She attended trainings on the upcoming exhibitions and discussed art selection, timing and logistics, and entry points to discussion in planning meetings with Museum education staff.

Working with Project Reset staff and the New Museum, Cherrye drafted and revised a plan for 17- to 25-year-olds that included co-facilitation with Kristina Singleton, coordinator of diversion and transformative initiatives at the Midtown Court. We piloted the program in January 2019 and increased to twice monthly sessions in the fall of 2019. In addition to the importance of curriculum and teaching approaches, Project Reset and New Museum staff were mindful during planning of how someone's experience with the museum begins on their travel to it and the moment they are welcomed through the museum's doors.

Best Practices for Facilitation

1. Select accessible works of art that generate relevant conversation

Art offers ample opportunities to think about how personal points of views and experiences are shaped by history and the social realities of present-day contexts. A skilled facilitator can engage a group with almost any work of art, inviting close inquiry that generates a curiosity about artists' perspectives, and, as importantly, participants' desire to tease out and reflect upon their own points of view and listen to each other's. However, art that would seem to require relay-ing a lot of outside information from a narrow historical or institutional knowledge-base often limits discussion. That is why we find works of art that contain a wealth of visual, and sometimes sonic, information that welcome viewers to intuit and infer meaning from their own collective and direct responses, knowledge, and experiences. We avoid overly determining where the conversa-tion will go, however works that visibly speak to

relationships and tensions between individuals and systems offer links that bridge the discussion of art to one of transformative models of justice. If we are together imagining and practicing justice that acknowledges the structural impacts on individuals and seeks ways to resist and not replicate them in addressing challenges, conflict, and harm, then art that counters or illuminates the personal and social contours of racialized, classed, and gendered systems opens the door for these for connections.

There are an abundance of artists and artworks, whether or not directly addressing experiences with law enforcement, that express lived and observed racialized, gendered, and economic oppressions and resistance. This work imagines and prompts alternative desires and possibilities for what a world with safety, care, and freedom would require. For many who come through Project Reset, the insights of these works are not foreign to them, but a pathway to center the joys, challenges, loves, power, beauty, resistance, pain, and truths of worldviews within institutions that have long overshadowed them.

Artists' acknowledgement through creative expression of social ills, historic legacies, and their human impacts and responses, are part of the larger truth-telling that is necessary for transformative justice. Likewise, facilitators' active listening, repeating back, asking questions, and responding to the group's observations, creates an environment that contrasts with a traditional courtroom, of "judge and judged," cultivating a safer space for collective participation in identifying, visioning, and affirming needs, desires, and futures beyond arrest experiences. Participants are interpreters, thinkers, and creators in this collective practice.

2. Create a holistic experience that supports joy, beauty, the senses, and well-being

"How did they do that?...Did they have help or do it by themselves?...What is that made of? My grandmother sews...I love using black and white photography, it feels more dramatic." We often begin with the questions, "What do you see?" when viewing works of art accompanied by the reassurance that there are no right or

wrong answers—if you see it, it's what you see, from our own point of view. How can we build meaning together from sharing what we see? We are not reading a tract or a position paper to get to a point, but rather to create a constellation of ideas, memories, associations, observations, and connections.

Materials, sonic and visual textures and tones, color, volume, shape, placement or composition, pattern, details that might seem small to one person, yet looming to another, are not adjunct to conceptual or social narrative and symbolic content. These aspects that engage our senses are intertwined and core to encounters with art. Space and time for attention to these observed qualities supports people sharing how art already shows up in their lives. They might identify themselves as artists or might become inclined to seek out more access to art experiences.

Likewise, a holistic approach imagines the many possibilities for what someone's day might have been like before arrival. Refreshments, short breaks, inviting a periodic deep breath together, stretching, or other somatic exercises, supports being fully present and comfortable in a new space. We employ these approaches (many basic hospitalities not often provided in institutional spaces) for many of our workshops and programs to support facilitators, administrators, educators, youth, and other adult community participants alike, in knowing that



while we have goals that should be clear, we are not merely outcomes, or data points, or people to get through a challenging program in this space together.

We hope that regardless of the circumstances that brought people to Project Reset and the New Museum, people will actually find some relief, well-being, if not joy, in the session rather than just survive it. Partnering with well-equipped and skilled social workers with the same sense of clarity and goals with holistic care is a fundamental strength and necessity of the program.

3. Provide art-making that offers multiple means of self-expression

Discussing art in exhibitions at the beginning of the session offers a shared focus on something outside of ourselves through which connections are made that range from personal to more distanced responses, reflection, and meaning-making. Art-making invites participants to reflect and express their feelings and ideas, particularly if they have been struggling with them alone internally. Again, the art-making portion of the program should not be overly determined, but contain prompts that open infinite possibilities for creative response.

We have found that offering multiple mediums as ways to respond allows participants to experiment and find a means of expression that they find works best for them –drawing, photography, song, movement, or poetry. The intimate group size affords the facilitator the ability to encourage individuals to find and try art making they are comfortable with and desire doing or build upon ways art already shows up in their life elsewhere. This does not produce a cohesive body of work commissioned for a gallery exhibition. Rather, we find exceptional variety and uniqueness in how people wish to express themselves that remains an unfixed process, rather than a product or evidence. There is potentially something that could be very meaningful to some participants working on art to be shown and communicate to a larger audience if they so desire, but this would need to be a different program with time and resources

and intentions supporting this outcome. In the two-hour session for Project Reset, artmaking is rather for an intimate process of reflection and communication that supports feelings, ideas, and creative experiments that can be further explored outside of the Museum’s walls.

Reflection

From January 2019 to March 2020, 132 participants completed arts-based programming at the New Museum and filled out surveys afterward to share feedback. The word cloud below is a visualization of participants’ perspectives on their experience. Participants were asked to use one word to describe their Project Reset experience at the New Museum. The words appearing larger in size represent the most used words.

These words—relieving, welcoming, fun, inspiring, comfortable—are strikingly different from how one might describe the conventional court process. They also reflect the New Museum’s goals that Project Reset participants feel socially, emotionally, intellectually and creatively engaged and welcomed as a community member.

By actively participating in interpreting and creating art , community members transform museums from sites of passive consumption of single, fixed, institutional narratives to places that spark dialogue, change, and growth. Project Reset participants contextualize the art within their own experiences and create personal meanings. We hope they will find this a comfortable and enjoyable process they can build from in future visits to the New Museum or other organizations with friends and family, or on their own in dialogue with art they encounter.

Participants’, teaching artists’, and museum staff’s “collective creativity and care” renders the museum comfortable and familiar instead of constrained and cold. It transforms the museum into a truly community institution, created through the community’s interpretation of the works it houses. Even the guidelines the community creates for how we should treat each other in the space to grow, share, and learn—an activity participants complete at the beginning of each session—depart from institutional gallery policies which typically address restrictions for the safety of valued objects,

Words used by New Museum Project Reset participants to describe their experience in a survey conducted by Project Reset staff.

Fantastic Grateful Growth Humbling Helpful
Comfortable Calming Artistic Appreciative Cool Different Enlightening
Dope Amazing Engaging Change Awarding Blessed Relaxing Refreshing
Learning Lesson Excellent Needed Artistic Open Useful Memorable Education
Eventful Meaningful Successful Experience Eye-opening Nourishing
Inspiring Reset Caring Invaluable Interesting Knowledge Understanding
Content Uplifting Supportive Fun Opportunity Welcoming

but not how we hold safer and braver space and time for each other. One participant shared their experience with mural making inspired by artist Nari Ward's installation, We the People (2011): "I enjoyed the group activity of filling out what we want in the constitution. It helped build a sense of community with the group". Not only do participants engage in creative work and interpretation, but they collectively reimagine the museum space and the criminal justice system. Another participant noted, "I enjoyed finding shared experiences with others and meeting everyone. It was comforting to speak to people who were open and available."

Museums have incredible potential to be reclaimed as sites for practicing the world we want to live in within and beyond them with our collective differences and commonalities. For these programs to be most successful, sustainable, and deeply transformative, it's essential that mission, values, and leadership support staff in this work as central rather than adjunct. Opening arts institutions to partnerships like Project Reset and increasing the availability and accessibility of Museums to communities historically underrepresented in these spaces is a critical step.

Thank you for making this free and accessible, for putting all of us in a space to share our experiences. This project is very valuable; thank you for giving your time and energy to help us. I hope the system can change across the country through programs like these.

– New Museum participant

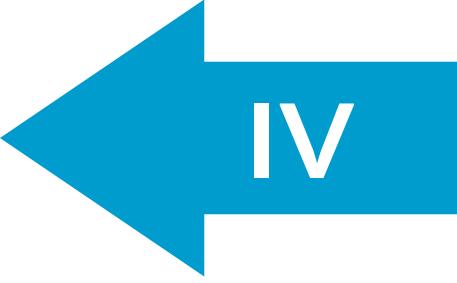


B.B. Thompson (1920-2010)
The Judgment (c. 1960)
Oil on canvas
Collection of the artist

In the early 1960s B.B. Thompson, a self-taught artist from New Jersey, moved to New York City where he studied at the Art Students League. There he met other artists who were part of the Black Arts Movement, including Romare Bearden, Jacob Lawrence, and Elton John. He was inspired by their work and began to paint his own scenes of African American life. This painting depicts a group of people gathered around a tree, possibly a judgment scene or a community meeting. The colors are bright and expressive, reflecting Thompson's passion for his subjects.



Partnership between the Brooklyn Museum and Center for Court Innovation

IV

BY ADJOA JONES DE ALMEIDA, DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR LEARNING AND SOCIAL IMPACT; BROOKLYN MUSEUM

History and Context: Choosing to Engage in this Work and Partnership

Museums are living in a time of deep self-reckoning that has opened up conversations and possibilities not seriously considered up to this point. At the Brooklyn Museum we have been grappling with how to move beyond our long-standing commitment to art that inspires social consciousness towards art that inspires social action. The first step has been to engage in a museum-wide conversation around how power functions in our society; the interplay across four interrelated levels: systemic (i.e., health care, criminal justice system, housing), institutional (i.e., within BkM as a museum), interpersonal (between people), and internalized (i.e., the cop in our heads).

Our partnership with Project Reset has allowed us to activate change across multiple of these levels by seeking out collaborators and stakeholders—from the Brooklyn D.A.’s office, to artists, board members, prosecutors, to the participants themselves—who are together able to activate change across multiple dimensions. We are especially grateful for the ways in which this collaboration has allowed us to continue to transform museum spaces, while also disrupting the traditional pipelines into the criminal justice system.

Planning Process

Planning for the partnership between the Brooklyn Museum and the Center for Court Innovation began when museum staff toured the Center’s court-based project sites in Brooklyn to gain more understanding of the criminal justice context. This prompted questions like: how is the public forced to navigate these court spaces and what do you observe about body language, etc.? How can we disrupt this at the museum?

Brooklyn Museum education staff began the critical process of hiring teaching artists to help create curricula for the program. Kraig Blue and Sophia Dawson were selected based on their teaching experience, personal art practice, and previous involvement in criminal justice reform programs. They both attended classes held by Shaun Leonardo and Derek Fourdjour, teaching artists who assisted in developing the original Project Reset arts curriculum. They also attended teaching demonstrations by museum educators to introduce them to the museum’s pedagogical approach, demonstrate best practices for working with different age groups, and show how to incorporate touch objects, close looking, and storytelling into gallery teaching.

Brooklyn Museum partnered a museum educator from our staff with each teaching artist to help de-



velop lesson plans and support session facilitation. While the museum hosts two different groups, one for participants ages 26+ and one for participants ages 17-25, there are minimal differences in the written curriculum. Rather, the material differences come in the ease with which people of similar ages are able to relate to each other and open up in a group setting. Another material difference comes in facilitation style during the sessions. It was important for each teaching artist to have experience with the age group they were working with. The facilitation style for the youth group was more open, encouraging participants to play their music as they created their art for the program. The older session was more structured, as participants relied on the structure to facilitate opening up and being comfortable sharing with one another.

Best Practices for Facilitation

1. Let the space develop organically

It's important for facilitators to let go of expectations of what connections participants should make or what conclusions they should draw from the experience. In this way, we encourage complex, diverse, and more genuine reactions. The session should allow time for participants to engage in a purely artistic experience. At the same time, while it should be treated with sensitivity, the subject of the arrest should not be actively avoided—the teaching artist or facilitator should gauge whether participants feel comfortable exploring these

topics. Not naming the fact of the arrest can sometimes contribute to feelings of shame and embarrassment that Project Reset hopes to help participants overcome. The bottom line is that participants come to Project Reset with a variety of experiences and perspectives. Some have had traumatic experiences with police and need to express their justifiable anger. Some want to take accountability in a safe space. It is the teaching artist or facilitator's task to create a space for these different perspectives using art as a conduit. Simultaneously, the goal is to celebrate or introduce the joy and expressive potential of art for art's sake. It is a balance, creating a conversational culture that is supportive, generous, and provides an opportunity for participants to reflect on how their museum experience might connect to what has brought them there.

2. Have staff from social services or program providers on hand

Participants should never feel confused or unclear about how their time at the museum fits into their case outcome. Part of Project Reset's goal is to illuminate an opaque system. Staff from Project Reset, the Center for Court Innovation or an equivalent social service provider staff should always be on hand to support teaching staff as well as answer system questions and give an overview of the case process, and provide other social service referrals that Museum and teaching staff are not able to offer. Program provider staff should be on hand also to address unexpected clinical needs as they come up. Though participants are screened

It was fair because instead of going back and forth to court to get sentenced to a program just like this, I got the chance to do everything in one shot without stepping in the courthouse.

— Brooklyn Museum participant

for these needs and their appropriateness for a group setting beforehand, the social service provider and museum should be prepared and appropriately staffed for this eventuality.

3. Provide take-home elements and facilitating continued engagement with the museum

Because sessions are only two hours long, it's important to provide participants with something tangible to take home with them which can help extend the experience. As part of our sessions, all participants are given art journals to take home, and the option to take their artwork with them, unless they would like them to be featured in a future exhibition. Providing family passes and materials to upcoming events and programs has also been critical and some participants have returned for other museum programs.

Reflection

Collaboration both internal and external is fundamental to this kind of program. It's important, for example, to build in time for planning and building shared goals with stakeholders. It's also important for museum staff to understand the roles of all criminal justice stakeholders in the case process. Additionally, when it comes to internal collaboration, it is critical to ensure the teaching artist feels welcomed into the Education Division and Brooklyn Museum community, or equivalent communities in other jurisdictions. There is also an element of

Everyone deserves a second chance when they make a mistake. Court made me feel so sick. I couldn't sleep or eat the days leading up to my court date. So much anxiety. It felt like the end of the world.

– Brooklyn Museum participant

collaboration with participants in creating an open and generative space. This begins with developing a welcoming and safe environment for participants to connect and build relationships. Something as simple as having breakfast items and snacks for participants to partake in can go a long way in facilitating participants' buy-in to the program. As a matter of internal collaboration, front-of-house staff and security staff should be folded into the planning and training process to ensure complete institutional buy-in to the goals of the program and to ensure creation of a welcoming space.

The experience of coming into a museum can be an unwelcoming one- an experience of silent or passive observation. This partnership actively disrupts this approach by engaging participants with these artworks through their lived experiences. The Museum is given the opportunity to cultivate new audiences by stewarding relationships with project participants after their participation in the program.

This partnership is one of imaginative collaboration. How can unlikely partners assist each other in transforming or disrupting their historical arenas? Through this partnership, how can we look to disrupt the historically exclusionary museum space while simultaneously challenging criminal justice stakeholders to reimagine art's potential and their response to these low-level offenses? Moving forward, the museum will look to continue this work through new collaborative efforts, knowing that through the challenge of confronting differing perspectives, the most transformative creations can be made.



Control: on individuals perceptions about the underlying main causes of events in his/her life:

"Do you believe that your life is controlled by yourself, or by external forces?"

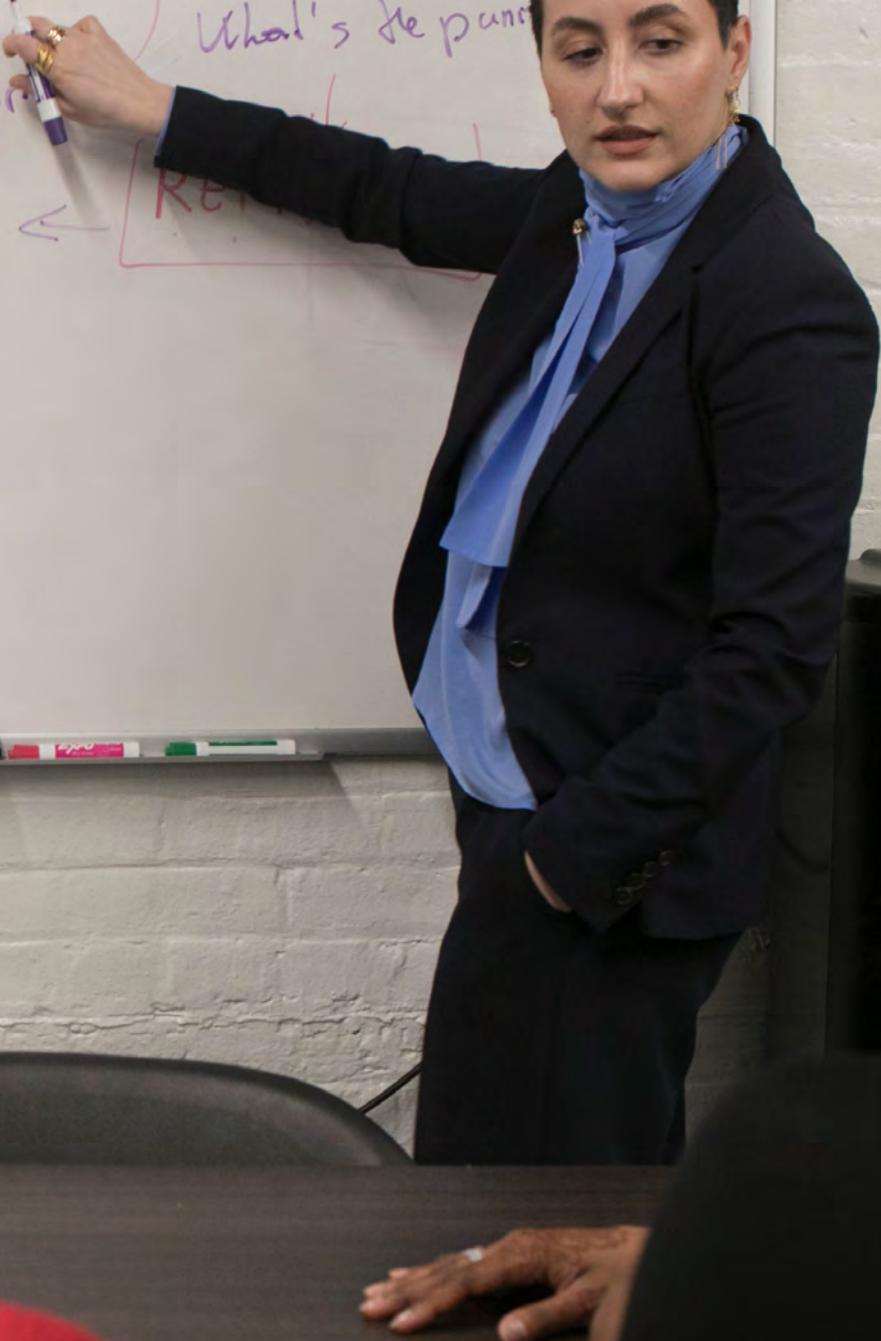
What happened? → What law was broken?

Who was affected → Who broke it?

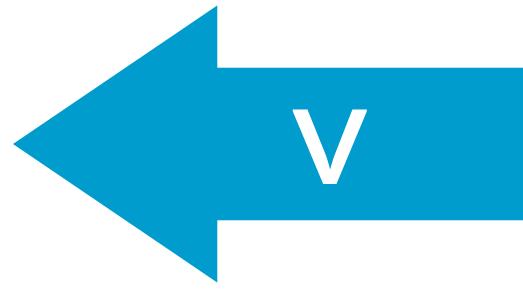
Why? → What's the punishment?

→ How can we repair the relationship?

REPAIR



Concluding Thoughts



Impact

There are many ways to measure the impact of Project Reset's arts and diversion programming. One way is by evaluating the changing attitudes towards arts programming in the pre-arrainment (pre-court) realm. Changing attitudes towards arts programming can be seen in the progression and expansion of Project Reset's arts-based work. From the early pilot program in collaboration with the Gavin Brown gallery exclusively offered to youth participants, to pioneering museum-based work with adults ages 18-25 with the New Museum, to offering a first of its kind all-ages adult museum-based pre-arrainment program with the Brooklyn Museum, the history of Project Reset's arts programming reflects changing perspectives on what arts programming has to offer and an expanding view of who can benefit from it and whom it is for.

The Center for Court Innovation and our criminal justice system and museum partners have fielded inquiries from all around the nation from arts practitioners, program providers, city agencies and prosecutors' offices interested in launching their own arts and diversion programs. This shift in perspective on the suitability of art-based interventions and interest in implementing this kind of programming is happening all over the country—something Project Reset has helped to influence. It was this interest that served as the impetus for this guide.

Why so many jurisdictions are interested in developing their own pre-arrainment programming is clear. From a systems perspective, the impact has been significant.

Reduced Recidivism

2% v. 8%
reduced future
convictions

14% v. 17%
reduced re-arrest

Over a one-year timeframe, Project Reset reduced future convictions to one-quarter of that seen in the comparison group and reduced re-arrest.

More Efficient Processing (according to a pilot evaluation)

71

days to resolve a case with Project Reset

257

days to resolve a case using traditional methods

Project Reset cases were resolved much more quickly than cases using traditional methods, potentially sparing participants the collateral consequences of an open case that can include negative impacts on housing, employment, and immigration.

Positive Perceptions of Project Reset

97%
participants believed
they made the right
decision to participate

96%
participants would
recommend the
program to others

Saving Resources in an Over-burdened Justice System

\$3,519 in projected savings per case

Arraignment diversion programs save justice systems time and resources; cost-benefit analyses project savings of \$3,519 per case. Using these metrics, we project that, in 2019, Project Reset yielded over \$5.8 million in annual savings.¹⁸

As for the impact of the arts component, we get insight from testimonials from participants. The following are excerpts and findings from surveys conducted with New Museum and Brooklyn Museum participants.

FOR NEW MUSEUM PARTICIPANTS

How did participants feel about their experience with Project Reset staff?

97%
participants had
a 'very good'
experience

98%
participants had
a 'very good'
experience with the
teaching artist

Participants were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with statements regarding their thoughts about the workshop:

The workshop was meaningful.

82%
strongly agreed

18%
agreed

The facilitator created an inclusive environment.

89%
strongly agreed

11%
agreed

I understand the purpose of Project Reset.

90%
strongly agreed

8%
agreed

FOR BROOKLYN MUSEUM PARTICIPANTS

How did participants feel about the length of the program?

71%
participants felt it
consisted of "the right
amount of time"

29%
participants felt their
time spent was too
short¹⁹

Brooklyn Museum participants expressed that they enjoyed the artistic elements of their programming best. Specifically, one participant stated that they liked the "expressions of art and culture." Another participant enjoyed the "group interaction."

6 out of 7

participants that completed programming reported
that they received information about other
programs available at the Brooklyn Museum.

How likely were participants to return to the Brooklyn Museum?

71%
extremely
likely

14%
extremely
likely

14%
somewhat
likely



Looking Forward

Project Reset's pre-arraignment diversion program is the product of a collaborative effort between institutions with very different perspectives. While each has varying ideas about how to address the crisis of mass incarceration and criminal justice system inequity, all share a goal of limiting the involvement of people, many of whom are Black and Brown, who are charged with low-level misdemeanor offenses with the court system. Studies have shown that the most effective way to mitigate the harmful effects of the criminal justice system and its innate biases is by limiting exposure to it all together.²⁰ In coming together to pursue this goal, all the partners have been able to share varied perspectives, challenge each other to think from their different institutional perspectives, and educate each other.

Hopefully, these expanded viewpoints born out of collaboration result in new and innovative reform initiatives. For example, the Center for Court Innovation has recently expanded Project Reset to all of New York's boroughs, and hopes to replicate the success of its existing arts partnerships.²¹ The Center is also looking to collaborate with organizations across the country interested in replicating this process in their own jurisdictions—bearing in mind the powerful impacts unorthodox coalitions and collaborations can have in enacting change. The hope is readers of this guide keep that front of mind as they embark on their own efforts to change responses to misdemeanor offenses and to harness the potential of pre-arraignment diversion and arts-based interventions in attempting to create transformative and healing justice community spaces.

VI. Appendix

This appendix includes two lessons plans from the New Museum and Brooklyn Museum.

Commentary throughout each lesson plan from the teaching artists and museum educators is in **BLUE**.

Please note that this commentary is sourced from various media, interviews, and reflections about the Project Reset facilitation practice from teaching artists and museum education department staff. These quotes have been woven through the curriculum to contextualize it and provide insight into Project Reset group sessions.

BROOKLYN MUSEUM SAMPLE LESSON PLAN #1

Shifting the Gaze | Titus Kaphar LOVE RULES | Hank Willis Thomas

Description

Participants will visit and discuss 1-2 works of art in the galleries. This will be followed by an artmaking exercise in the studio. Total session lasts 2 hours.

Objectives

To encourage discussion about shifting narratives and taking ownership of our stories and experiences so that they might be represented through new perspectives. Each participant will be introduced to the work of Titus Kaphar and then through art-making, exercise the authority to “shift the gaze.” Youth will walk away with a unique and unconventional art making experience and an introduction to looking at art and images critically.

- BKM: [The artworks for both youth and adult sessions were chosen for their] potential to spark dialogue around themes of agency, defining our own narrative versus being defined by others.*

Staff

Main facilitator (Sophia Dawson) will have support from one other staff member of the Brooklyn Museum education department (Lindsay C. Harris). This program will also require the support of one Project Reset (Brooklyn Justice Initiatives, Center for Court Innovation) staff member to facilitate all administrative requirements and activities.

- BKM: Staff completed reflection sheets and documented each highlights and challenges for each session. This allowed teaching artists to adapt [their lesson plans according to in-session observations of what was or wasn't working].*

Material List

White gesso, black gesso, paint brushes, napkins, watercolor paper, gluestick, print outs, newspaper clippings, scissors

Pre-session Preparation

Print-outs/ copies of art and articles for art-making activity should be printed and stacked on the table, container with water, napkins and paintbrushes laid out, white gesso and black gesso in trays, smocks, trays vs. bowls, prep examples, chair layout with project reset station

Activities/Procedure

■ PROJECT RESET INTRO

Participants are instructed to sign in and join a large group table. Snacks are provided. When all participants are present (or a cut off time has past), Project Reset staff begin with an introduction to Project Reset and implications for participation (letter of completion in the mail within weeks, arrest will not appear on record, answers for any questions about process)

- Introductions to key staff, including teaching artist and education staff

- Kraig Blue: I think it is important for the participants to have Sophia and I discuss our work; this helps them to understand our commitment to being practicing artists working for the museum and collaborating with the Center for Court Innovation.²¹*

- Sophia Dawson: [After the session] we all exchanged Instagram information and she*

wanted to know about our exhibitions and work. [One of the participants] was excited about the prospects for her own work.²²

■ CHECK IN

(outside of Rembrandt to Picasso exhibit)

Check-In Questions:

- How do you feel on a scale of 1-10?
- If you could travel anywhere in the world, right now, all expenses paid, where would you go/ who would you bring? (one person)

■ COMMUNITY RULES

One mic, respect, listen to each other, no phones etc, have fun, don't touch the art, photography of art is ok without flash, there are no wrong answers, everyone's opinions, thoughts and ideas are VALID.

■ View *Shifting the Gaze* by Titus Kaphar and discuss



GUIDING QUESTIONS

- What is happening here? Describe what you see that makes you think/ or say that.
- What else can we find?
- What does that tell you about the piece?
- What else do you physically see in this piece?
- What does that tell you about the piece?
- What year do you think this painting was created?
- What makes you say that?

KEY FACTS

- This painting *Shifting the Gaze* was created by Titus Kaphar in 2017.
- This painting is based on a seventeenth-century Dutch portrait of a prosperous white European family. (TAKE A LOOK AT THE ORIGINAL).
- After recreating the Dutch painting, Titus Kaphar painted over the family during a TED TALK IN 2017. He only left the black boy visible who was believed to be the family's servant. This is not an original painting, it was recreated by the artist then painted over with white paint, thus "shifting the gaze". The artist wanted to know who this young person was who was hidden in the original painting.
- By refocusing the viewer's gaze to the boy, Kaphar draws attention to groups who have been excluded/ left out from art historical narratives and points. He aims to amend these histories so that they are more honest and inclusive.
- Do you think that the artist successfully accomplished what he was trying to achieve?

- View *LOVE RULES* by Hank Willis Thomas and discuss



GUIDING QUESTIONS

- What is the first thing that you notice when you looked at this piece?
- Which word/ words stand out?
- When you look at the word “rules” what does that make you think of?
- After viewing Titus Kaphar shifting the gaze, do you think that Hank Willis Thomas was also trying to “shift the gaze” of the viewer with this piece?
- What does overrule mean?

overrule: v. reject or disallow by exercising one's superior authority.

synonyms: countermand, cancel, reverse, rescind, repeal, revoke, retract, withdraw, take back, rule against, disallow, override, veto, set aside, quash, overturn, overthrow, repudiate, recant, annul, nullify, declare null and void, invalidate, negate, void, abrogate.

- Return to the studio for artmaking.

ART MAKING STEPS

1. Choose at least two clippings (one newspaper image and one headline, one newspaper image and one work of art, one, one work of art and one headline).
2. Arrange the clippings on watercolor paper to make an interesting composition (cut out and revise if necessary).
3. Glue down composition.
4. Add white gesso or black gesso to change the narrative (If you could shift the gaze in this work of art how would you do it? What would that look like?).
5. Share and critique each other's work.

- *Sophia Dawson: [These collages that are meant to explore how we can] shift the gaze on how someone looks at you personally... on how people see your community, your neighborhood.²³*

■ REFLECTION

Art is interpreted through our own experiences.

CIRCLE (Check Out)

What would it look like if you could “shift the gaze” in your community, in your life, or in the justice system? What do people see now? What do you want them to see?

PROJECT RESET CLOSING

Repeat information about participation impact on arrest and letter of completion; sign out metrocard; hand out journals with passes and more info on Brooklyn Museum opportunities.

BROOKLYN MUSEUM SAMPLE LESSON PLAN #2

The Judgement | Bob Thompson Art is in the “I” of the Beholder



Description

Participants will experience and discuss Bob Thompson’s *The Judgement* and interpret the work collaboratively by generating their own title for the work, and considering the question: Who is the position of judgement, and who is being judged? Following the discussion, participants are tasked with the role of the artist to take agency over the art process, and together, they will create their own collaborative artwork. Everyone is asked to focus on one figure in *The Judgement* and draw the figure in the gallery space. Participants are encouraged to change the scale, crop, and change the figure in any way they see fit. Moving back down to the studio the participants are provided with a quick lesson on the use of oil pastels, and then color their figure. Each participant then cuts out their figure, and together, the group makes choices of how to organize each figure together, to create one work of art. Finally, the group decides on a title for their artwork, as they did with the artwork on view in the Museum’s galleries.

Objectives

Using cues from artist Shaun Leonardo that “interpretation is not accidental,” everyone encountering a work of art brings every memory, emotion, and experience they’ve had to date—these all inform how we see art and the world. In this lesson, each participant is asked to take ownership of their art viewing experience and interpret the artwork with the wealth of life experiences they travel with every day. The objective is that each artist/participant will leave the Museum having had a personal experience with the work of art, taking agency over the interpretive and artmaking experience.

Staff

Main facilitator will have support from one other staff member of the education department. This program will also require the support of one Project Reset staff member to facilitate all administrative requirements and activities.

Material List

Gallery chairs, 9" x12" or 11" x14" white drawing paper, Ebony pencils, drawing boards, tape, oil pastels(chubbies), and paper towels(for smudging)

- Optional list: watercolor sets, assorted brushes, cups, paper towels, 9"x12" or 11"x14" watercolor paper, salt, and water.

— *Kraig Blue: [In the virtual lesson plan created during the pandemic the workshop is modified using] materials found in participants’ homes. This gives us all a chance to have fun and express yourself using found materials in our respective homes; proving that art can be made from anything.^{24 25}*

Pre-session Preparation

Tablecloths set up in the art room prior to participants entering, along with paper towels. For oil pastel workshop: tablecloths, oil pastels, and paper towels. One space set up for the artist/educator to demonstrate materials use and techniques.

Activities/Procedure

- Introductions: 7 minutes
- Transition to gallery

GALLERY

1. What is going on in this picture? (in your mind, think about this independently)
2. Open up the question to the group to share their responses.
3. Switch viewing positions.
4. Once everyone has switched positions, ask again: What is going on in this picture?
5. Now what I would like you to do is come up with a title for the work with someone next to you, and then I'll ask you all to share out your ideas.
6. Share the title, *The Judgement*. Share that Bob Thompson, an African-American, painted this during the Civil Rights Movement. Ask how does that effect the way you're viewing it?
7. Who's being judged and who is doing the judging?
8. General recap—reflect the judge and the judged can be interchanged and even by changing where we are sitting and viewing the art work, our perspective and positionality changes.

- The painting holds many truths, and we can read it and take away different meanings. This depends upon our own experience/personal perspective which will give different meanings as well.
- 9. Now focus on a figure that intrigues you, that you're curious about, and sketch it. Note:
- Model sketching basics

- Taking up whole page and using space
- Technical proficiency is not a requirement

10. Take some time to sketch.
11. Take a moment to stop drawing and look at your drawing. Look at your figure. What do you think they are thinking? What moves them? Motivates them?

- *Kraig Blue: They draw. I tell them I don't care what it looks like—just draw, be free... When they leave we've left the past behind us.*²⁶

12. Now go back to your sketch, look at how you want to modify the figure? Change the scale, add details, remove details, etc.
13. Transition to the studio
14. Demo on watercolor
 - Color mixing
 - Mark making
 - Smudging
 - Remind that they can change the color from the original figure they viewed
15. Spend time creating in the studio space
16. Cut out figure
17. Now we are going to create our own artwork and title. Model how to place the figure on the wall, and ask for someone to place their own. Throughout the process, talk about the curatorial choices that participants are making as they are placing their work.
18. Ask: what is the title of our new work?



■ FINAL REFLECTION

Now that we have had time to have a discussion together, you've thought about how it connects to your own lives, and we've come to multiple interpretations, how does the experience of interpreting *The Judgement* together, and then creating our own artwork connect to your arrest experience, and being here?

- *Kraig Blue: [Regarding virtual art sessions], there is nothing that can take the place of being in the museum and engaging a piece of art. All of the sensations that accompany viewing art in an active environment lends to the observational experience. Scale, color, and the visceral interaction engaging a work of art cannot be substituted. What virtual teaching provides is a larger audience that may not have access to visiting a museum. Although the conversation changes when viewing work online, there is still the act of seeing which provides participants with the experience of analyzing and discussing a work of art in a conversation friendly environment.*



NEW MUSEUM SAMPLE LESSON PLAN #1

We the People | Homeland Sweet Homeland | Nari Ward

Description

Participants visit the New Museum to engage with selected works within *We the People* by Nari Ward, a retrospective of the work of artist Nari Ward and reflect on restorative justice and their experience. A teaching artist leads participants in close observation and discussion of selected works in the exhibition, *We the People*, and the group explores connections of themes regarding community, systemic responsibility, and restorative justice. The program concludes with art making based on the exhibition and connecting themes.

Objectives

The goal of this program is three-fold. We aim to:

- Engage participants in selected works by artist Nari Ward through observation and critical thinking.
- Encourage participants to process their experiences, including their arrest experience, through meaningful engagement and conversation with art and their own artistic expression .
- Nurture a relationship in which participants in Project Reset view Midtown Community Court and the New Museum as accessible resources for social services and art experiences, respectively, during and after the program.

Staff

Lead teaching artist Cherrye J. Davis facilitates inquiry based discussion and art creation. Project Reset (Midtown Community Court, Center for Court Innovation) staff provide administrative and program support as well as a transparent understanding of the program's direct outcomes for participants and its relationship to justice reform.

Material List

Butcher paper/ roll of paper (6-10 feet long), post-its/scrap paper for notes, markers/pencils (assorted colors and sizes), individual sheets of paper (assorted, lined, graph, etc.), 1-2 tables (for writing/collaborative mural building) *1-2 tables, depending on number of participants, chairs

Pre-session Preparation

(30 minutes-1 hour before program)

Space, chair, and table set-up, refreshment station set-up (bottled water, snacks), Project Reset check-in/check -out station set up (sign in sheets, printouts of paperwork, final surveys, etc), audio set-up (bluetooth speaker), print-outs of guiding materials (if applicable)

Activities/Procedure

■ INTRODUCTION/WELCOME/ICE BREAKER

Participants are warmly and enthusiastically welcomed into the New Museum to sign in and to the meeting space for the program (theater). After a grace-period (5 mins), the group begins to get to know each other with a response to an icebreaker question and introductions by name. Staff also participate and include their role in the program. Provide basic introduction to the mission of New Museum "New Art, New Ideas," as a non-collecting museum showing contemporary art, art often made by living artists who engage with our time and historic legacies. We hope you will enjoy your experience with art today and return to spend more time exploring in the future.

— *Cherrye (CJD): The introductions are so important; They establish that we see*

our participants as guests, artists, and colleagues, not as criminals. I also like to make the ice breaker something that both relates to the theme and invites the participants to share something about themselves, opening the door for more personal, meaningful interactions between the group members.

■ PROJECT RESET BACKGROUND

Project Reset staff (Kristina Singleton) leads group in a brief info-session. This section frames Project Reset in the context of the system and the meaning of diversion and restorative justice with examples. The discussion includes background, questions and prompts such as “The criminal justice system treats people fairly (agree/disagree?)... What words come to mind when you think of the words “fair” and “unfair”... What do you think of this route instead of going to court—is it a fair response? Participants learn what they can expect after completing the program.

■ COMMUNITY GUIDELINES, EXPECTATIONS, AND AGREEMENTS

Participants are expected to:

- Be present for and participate in the full 2 hour program.
- Keep food and water away from the exhibition floors.
- Refrain from touching artwork (unless okayed by the artist).
- Take pictures without flash.
- Excuse yourself for restroom or water, and return in a reasonable time frame.
- Any unexcused, extended absence can result in a determination of an incomplete program.

■ PROVIDE AND CROWD SOURCE BEST PRACTICES

What are some good guidelines for speaking and listening in a group?

- Listen to understand, not to respond
- It is ok to change your mind!
- Speak from your own perspective, i.e. “I think” or “I believe”
- “Share the air”

- If you have questions, ask! If staff doesn’t have the answer, we can point you in the right direction!

— CJD: I always love to ask the group for their ideas of “best practices”: We can learn each group’s communal and individual boundaries, access needs (asking for pencils to take notes), and respect for identity by inviting participants to share pronouns and the name they use that may differ from paperwork for a variety of reasons.

■ View We the People by Nari Ward (20 Mins)



Nari Ward, *We the People*, 2011. Shoelaces, 96 × 324 in (243.8 × 594.4 cm). In collaboration with the Fabric Workshop and Museum, Philadelphia. Collection Speed Art Museum, Louisville, KY; Gift of the Speed Contemporary, 2016.1. © The Speed Art Museum, Louisville, KY

THEMES

Division/Unity; Cultural coding; Historic Inclusion/Exclusion

Participants are asked to consider the following questions. Questions can change and build from participants responses:

- First Impressions
What do you notice first? How does it make you feel?
- Look Closer

Is there any familiar material that you can identify? Does work make you think of other things you've seen? The word or the style of the text? What other details do you notice—color, the difference between looking from afar or close up?

□ Interpretation

Is there a message here? What does it make you think about or ask? What do you think the artist is asking us to think about with this piece? Who do you think "we the people" includes? Why do you think he chose this material?

Share and discuss key information that can be woven in with participants responses:

- "We the People" are the first three words of the Preamble of the Constitution of the United States of America, a document that was written to define the framework of the Federal Government intended to unify the thirteen colonies after independence from Britain as the United States.

1. The whole preamble states:

We, The People" in order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.
— Signed September 17th, 1787, Ratified 1788.

2. This declaration of "a more perfect union" asserts a path to justice, liberty, domestic tranquility for "the people". However, as the human rights of women, enslaved Africans, Indigenous peoples, and immigrants went long ignored and unacknowledged in both law and practice, it is understood that White men were the true intended heirs of this "more perfect union".

3. By building these words on the wall in formal type, and hanging colorful shoe laces, a common material, Ward highlights the many

"threads' that comprise and tie America together.

- 4. Ward is also drawing on the urban practice of throwing old shoes over phone lines, often memorializing a beloved member of the community who recently died.
- *CJD: As I built out this art making activity, it was helpful to plant a question that would echo into the remainder of the program: Based on the promise of the preamble, and the history of America, how "perfect" is our union in your opinion? What would it take to make a more perfect union?*

■ **View Homeland Sweet Homeland by Nari Ward**
Homeland Sweet Homeland, 2012, Cloth, plastic,



megaphones, razor wire, feathers, chains, and silver spoons, 96 x 59 3/4 x 10 in (243.8 x 151.8 x 25.4 cm), Produced in collaboration with the Fabric Workshop and Museum, Philadelphia, Pérez Art Museum Miami; Museum purchase

with funds provided by Jorge M. Pérez, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, and the PAMM Ambassadors for African American Art

THEMES

Racialized policing, American iconography, History of American carceral system, individual and community responsibility for information and inheritance.

- First Impressions

What do you notice first? Any shapes or words that jump out?

- Look Closer

How is this work made? Is there any familiar material that you can identify? Does it make you think of other things you've seen?

- Interpretation

Let's put these thoughts together: Is there a message here? What does it make you think about? What do you think the artist is asking us to think about with this piece of art?

KEY INFORMATION

1. *Homeland Sweet Homeland* examines the physical threat of racialized policing on Black bodies, but also the weight of our communal responsibility to educate.

Drawing on the Black American folk tradition of quilting as communication (a tradition that is reported to have been used to instruct enslaved Africans in their escape to freedom), the piece shares knowledge with youth, people for whom this is a new homeland, and others interacting with law enforcement. A person may not know they can assert the statements listed on the center of the crest, if they don't have access to knowledge of what's within their rights, or have been taught they don't apply to them. Ward himself is most familiar with these statements as they have been shared and advised by his brother who is a lawyer.

2. Ward has committed to continuing the practice of sharing knowledge of rights when interacting with law enforcement, handing out

business cards with the statements to people he meets out in his neighborhood of Harlem.

- Perspective

What conversations and questions come up in Ward's work? Do you see any connections to your own lives?

— **CJD: I love not only encouraging participants to explore the work based on what they see and feel, but also by putting themselves in conversation with the artist. As Ward's work directly speaks to modern policing, this provides a great opportunity for participants to reflect on their own experiences as much, or as little as they wish. Many participants were inspired to articulate their feelings about their arrests, lessons, and regrets in this exhibition.**

■ ACTIVITY/MURAL BUILDING: A NEW PREAMBLE

- How do we, the people, form a more perfect union?

Participants have 25 minutes to collaborate to create a mural based on this question. This large sheet of paper with responses, poems, pictures, advice, and desires for themselves and others.

- Participants are welcome to use their own arrest experience, conversations explored in the exhibit, the figures, and the materials (Markers, paper, collage material, glue sticks) to create a new Preamble. What do "We, the People" want in a more just, fair, more "perfect" union?

- Some ideas: Equal protection under the law, reformed police practices, wrongful arrest patterns, increased access to resources.

— **CJD: As a performing artist, I have found it exciting to create a mural as it opens the door to different types of art coming together on one canvas. It helps to emphasize that poetry, sketches, stylized text, cartoons, collage all come together in a mural that represents this particular group. It's a work that cannot be replicated. Each mural looks and feels different, and that is a**

gorgeous testament to the beauty of a live collaborative art making experience.

■ REFLECTION/CLOSE OUT

- Have group “step back”, mount mural on wall and admire their “Preamble”.
- What does our more perfect Union look like? Move around to another side of the mural, and see what others wrote!
- Consider the actions needed to make this more perfect union true. What do you have power to do right now?
- Encourage group to take their mural “home” with them via photo, but please leave mural work with us. Perhaps it can be a preamble to inspire continued artmaking at home.
- Review ways that participants can continue to stay connected and return to the Museum

and/or find the Midtown Community Court/Center for Court Innovation as a resource.

- Project Reset may use this work anonymously or credited based on participant permission.

CJD: I have seen a few instances where two participants begin the program as strangers and leave the program together to continue exploring the New Museum. I love those moments. In the many times where participants talk about their arrest, many also look for an outlet and/or companions to process their experience. Creating the space and resources to communicate and process through art is a powerful piece of what art diversion can and must do. It is often the best part of my job, and one I look forward to facilitating every single time.



NEW MUSEUM SAMPLE LESSON PLAN #2

Grief and Grievance: Art and Mourning in America” | Okwui Enwezor | A Virtual Program

Description

Participants meet virtually to focus on Garrett Bradley's short film *Alone* (2017) featured in *Grief and Grievance: Art and Mourning in America*. A teaching artist leads participants in collective observation and discussion of the themes and artistic strategies that Bradley utilizes to tell a story about the current carceral system and how its effects reverberate across families and communities. The program concludes with art making that connects Bradley and her subjects' intimate, creative approach to documentary storytelling to an invitation for the participants to reflect on their own arrest experience and restorative justice.

Objectives

The goals of this two-hour program are to:

- Introduce participants to the themes in the exhibition “Grief and Grievance,” through observing and thinking critically about selected art in the exhibition.
- Encourage participants to process their experiences through meaningful engagement and conversation with art as a jumping off point and their own artistic expression through art creation.
- Nurture a relationship in which participants in Project Reset view Midtown Community Court and the New Museum as accessible resources for social services and art experiences, respectively, during and after program.

Staff

Lead teaching artist Cherrye J. Davis facilitates inquiry-based discussion and art creation. Project Reset (Midtown Community Court, Center for

Court Innovation) staff (Kristina Singleton, Harriet Holder) provide administrative support, as well as a transparent understanding of the program’s direct outcomes for participants and its relationship to justice reform.

Material List

Zoom link, PowerPoint Program, Link to *Alone* (2017), Garrett Bradley: <https://vimeo.com/241579722>

Pre-session Preparation

Zoom Login, Tech Set Up and check (sound sharing, video sharing, screen share).

Activities/Procedure

■ INTRODUCTION/WELCOME/ICE BREAKER

Participants are enthusiastically welcomed into the virtual space. After a grace-period (5 mins), the group begins to get to know each other with a response to an icebreaker question and introductions by name. Staff also participate and include their role in the program. While we cannot visit the New Museum as group today—has anyone been before? Provide basics of where it is and what the mission of “New Art, New Ideas,” as a non-collecting museum showing contemporary art, art often made by living artists who engages with our time and historic legacies. We will hope you will visit us onsite and we will provide information for how you can at the end of the program.

— *CJD: Virtual icebreakers can be a challenge: the intimacy and energy of our in person group sessions doesn't directly translate to video conferencing. I have found it helpful*

to have people introduce themselves, and then select the next person. This allows for a familiarity with everyone's names, and warms the group up.

I also have found it helpful to use an icebreaker that both connects to the artwork's themes and the group's purpose. For this lesson my ice breaker was "What is a loss you have experienced recently?" This allowed participants to share as little, or as much as they feel comfortable – from the disappointment of a lost object, or experience, to a person in their life, to begin connecting with each other. Staff also share in this vulnerability and model supportive listening.

■ PROJECT RESET BACKGROUND

Project Reset staff (Kristina Singleton) leads group in a brief info-session. This section frames Project Reset in the context of the system and the meaning of diversion and restorative justice with examples. The discussion includes background, questions and prompts such as "The criminal justice system treats people fairly (agree/disagree?)... What words come to mind when you think of the words "fair" and "unfair"... What do you think of this route instead of going to court—is it a fair response? Participants learn what they can expect after completing the program.

■ COMMUNITY GUIDELINES, EXPECTATIONS, AND AGREEMENTS

Participants are expected to:

- Be present for and participate in the full two-hour program
- Leave cameras on, unless requested to turn them off
- Mute and Un-mute as to participate in conversations
- Excuse yourself for restroom or water, and return in a reasonable time frame.
- Any unexcused, extended absence can result in a determination of an incomplete program.
- Be present for and participate in the full 2 hour program.

- Keep food and water away from the exhibition floors.
- Refrain from touching artwork (unless okayed by the artist).
- Take pictures without flash.
- Excuse yourself for restroom or water, and return in a reasonable time frame.
- Any unexcused, extended absence can result in a determination of an incomplete program.

■ PROVIDE AND CROWD SOURCE BEST PRACTICES

What are some good guidelines for speaking and listening in a group?

- What are some good guidelines for speaking and listening in a group?
- Listen to understand, not to respond
- It is ok to change your mind!
- Speak from your own perspective, i.e. "I think" or "I believe"
- "Share the air"
- If you have questions, ask! If staff doesn't have the answer, we can point you in the right direction!

■ INTRODUCTION/ABOUT THE EXHIBITION WITH SLIDES AND IMAGES

- This multi-media exhibit conceived by curator Okwui Enwezor before his passing includes work by 37 Black artists responding to racial, political, and social injustice, focusing specifically on the grief and grievances that shape experiences of Black people in the U.S.
- Today, we will look at a couple of selections from this exhibition, and see how the work of these artists relates to the grief and grievance.
- Ask participants to define or share their associations with the words "Grief" and "Grievance." Provide dictionary definitions as just one way of articulating these experiences.

grief: deep and poignant distress caused by or as if by bereavement

grievance: a cause of distress felt to afford reason for complaint or resistance

As the exhibition's title indicates, today we will encounter difficult topics, such as death, loss, grieving, social and political injustice, and violence. If you need to take a moment to collect your thoughts or pass on a question, please do so.

- Let's practice a centering deep breath... (guided invitation to breath together, brought back in other moments of transition).

■ **View *Alone* by Garrett Bradley, video, 12 minutes**



Ask participants to view the short film and take note of what they notice—hear and see and how it makes them feel.

After viewing, ask participants to consider the following questions. Questions can change and build from participants responses:

- First Impressions
What do you notice first about this film—images, sounds, mood, tone, details? How does it make you feel?
- Look Closer
Who/what is important in this film? How is it similar or different than other films or videos you've seen? Does it make you think of other things you've seen or experienced?
- The Story
Is there a message here? What does it make

you think about or ask? What do you think the artist is asking us to think about?

SHARE AND DISCUSS KEY INFORMATION

- Bradley's story of *Alone* centers on what the artist calls "The chronic possibility of separation" within the Black Community.
- Bradley and her subjects connect this separation to enslavement, Jim Crow Laws, historic incarceration practices, socio-economic disadvantage, discriminatory law enforcement patterns, and other factors.
- In the highlighted video, we observe not only the effects of her fiance's incarceration on *Alone*; we witness the breakdown between families, the effect of bureaucracy resulting in long waiting periods, connections between enslavement and incarceration, and the emotional toll taken on a young woman left in limbo.
- Restorative justice and diversion programming are efforts to lessen the devastating impacts of the current carceral system. These motions aim to consider the human tolls of systems and emphasize human rights and society building.

FOCUSING QUESTIONS

- Who is affected?
- Who/what is being grieved?
- Is there a grievance or complaint that can be raised when discussing the current prison industrial complex?

■ **BREAK**

- Chance for water/restrooms/set up for art-creation

■ **ART BUILDING PT. 1**

Grief and Grievance, Arrest and Affect
Take a moment to consider your own arrest experience. Let's write down:

1. Grief

Are there any things you lost in your arrest experience? Either things you or someone

else did that resulted in a loss? i.e. time, relationships, moments with loved ones, feelings, such as certainty, trust, confidence.

2. Grievance

Regarding your arrest experience, Are there grievances to raise? Do you have a complaint or problem with something you, or someone else did, or how the situation was handled?

■ ACTIVITY, PT. 2

Grief, Grievance: What is Lost? What is Gained?
We have looked closely at one work in an exhibition that involves a many artists' voices and different approaches to art making that have been brought together as they relate to themes and questions. Let's create our own individual artistic reflections on grief that we might have experienced or are thinking about from our discussions today and share our diverse creative voices, perspectives, and expressions.

- Your Prompt: Create a work of art that expresses What is lost? What is gained?
- *Use whatever you have around you (pens, paper, markers, objects). Choose one of the following 3 forms:
- Visual Art
Use paper, pencil, pen, phone camera, and/or art materials to which you have access to create a sketch/drawing, or other type of image that responds to the prompt. Be ready to put it on camera/screenshare/or otherwise take a picture and drop it in the chat.
- Spoken Word
Write/read a 12-20 line poem that responds to the prompt. Be ready to share your words to the group.
- Movement
Make a short movement/dance piece (1-2 minutes) that responds to the prompt that you can share on camera. Feel free to play music in the background.
- Is there another art form you'd prefer to experiment with in the time that we have allowed for this activity?

— *CJD: With a prompt this open and flexible, the art making becomes virtually accessible, creating space for all comfort levels and art proclivities. I recommend providing a list of ideas, from poem starters to desktop installation concepts, to further spark the imagination, rather than leave the participants overwhelmed by too many options.*

■ SHARE OUT/CONCLUSION

- Participants share their work and anything they would like for people to know about it. Participants comment or ask questions about each other's work
- What will you walk away with today?
- Ways you can visit the New Museum: website for information and programs; contact for free passes; information on pay what you wish hours

Education Gallery



Endnotes



VII

1. FEELEY, MALCOLM M. *Process Is the Punishment, The: Handling Cases in a Lower Criminal Court*. Russell Sage Foundation, 1992. JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/10.7758/9781610442015. Accessed 6 June 2021.
2. Neighbors in Action, Brownsville Community Justice Center, Harlem Community Justice Center, Midtown Community Court
3. Much of what is known about the effect of the arts on justice-involved people is a result of research and evaluations done on adults and youth who are incarcerated. This research has demonstrated that engagement with the arts nurtures opportunities for personal growth and operates as a gateway for participants to engage with other educational and vocational opportunities (Brewster, 1983). Art can help express ideas and feelings and lead to empathy with other people and the world (Sautter 1994; Feder and Feder 1981) and art programs offer opportunities for participants to take ownership, responsibility, patience and endurance. Many arts program evaluations find positive outcomes related to protective factors, such as improving relationships with peers and authority figures (Cleveland, 1992), increasing self esteem and a sense of group responsibility (Cohen, 2012), and developing better socialization skills (Gussak, 2004).
4. <https://www.recessart.org/assembly/>; <https://www.youngnewyorkers.org/>
5. Brewster, 1983; Sautter 1994; Feder and Feder 198; Cleveland, 1992; Cohen, 2012; Gussak, 2004
6. <https://www.courtinnovation.org/publications/reset-the-podcast>
7. [According to survey responses], many described Project Reset as a “second chance.” Some respondents were worried about how a criminal record would affect their access to higher education and future employment, and were grateful that Project Reset allowed them to avoid a criminal record: “I feel like it helped me a lot because of my future and how jobs and colleges view me.” https://www.courtinnovation.org/sites/default/files/media/document/2019/projectreset_eval_2019.pdf
8. Project Reset cases were resolved much more quickly than cases using traditional methods (71 v. 257 days)
9. The majority of participants surveyed believed they made the right decision to participate (97%) and would recommend the program to others (96%).
10. <https://citylimits.org/2021/08/02/opinion-to-improve-public-safety-in-nyc-send-fewer-people-to-jail/>
11. Over a one-year timeframe, Project Reset reduced future convictions to one-quarter of that seen in the comparison group (2% v. 8%) and reduced re-arrest (14% v. 17%). Project Reset participants were four times less likely than matched comparison defendants to be convicted on a new arrest at one year. https://www.courtinnovation.org/sites/default/files/media/document/2019/projectreset_eval_2019.pdf
12. A desk appearance ticket is an order issued upon someone’s arrest to return to New York City Criminal Court for an arraignment. “A desk appearance ticket can be issued for misdemeanor crimes, violation offenses, and some E-felonies. In these instances, a person is brought to a precinct location, fingerprinted and photographed and, if found eligible, subsequently released on their own recognizance with a ticket with an appearance date for the Criminal Court arraignment. Eligibility for either a Summons or DAT is based on statute and written police guidelines.” (<https://www.nycja.org/publications/desk-appearance-tickets-prelude-to-bail-reform>)
13. <https://www.courtinnovation.org/programs/project-reset/more-info>
14. <https://www.nydailynews.com/opinion/ny-oped-for-a-safer-nyc-save-this-progra-20200925-vgje262bwbtomj6oaylmsy7e-story.html>
15. “Project Reset allows for a chance to better understand and address the root causes of crime—whether due to mental illness, substance abuse, or poverty—in order to help individuals make better choices and avoid the revolving door of the criminal justice system, while still holding them accountable and greatly benefitting the safety of our communities.” – Staten Island District Attorney Michael E McMahon
 “[Project Reset gives people the chance] to move on with their lives without fear of repercussions when seeking employment, applying for loans, housing and education opportunities.” – Bronx District Attorney Darcel Clark
 “[The goal of Project Reset is] ending a criminal justice system that turns minor offenses, minor crimes into lifelong problems.” – New York City Council Speaker Corey Johnson
16. <https://www.courtinnovation.org/publications/be-fair>

17. <https://www.courtinnovation.org/publications/be-fair>
18. Rempel, M., Labriola, M., Hunt, P., Davis, R. C., Reich, W. A., & Cherney, S. (2018). NIJ's Multisite Evaluation of Prosecutor-Led Diversion Programs: Strategies, Impacts, and Cost-Effectiveness. New York, NY: Center for Court Innovation, RAND Corporation, Association of Prosecuting Attorneys, and the Police Foundation.
19. Surveying and interviewing at the Brooklyn Museum were cut short due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The volume of participants was not large enough for researchers to glean insight and varied perspectives about the program overall. What is reported in this document highlights the findings that researchers were able to obtain before the project was discontinued.
20. <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/policy-solutions/poverty-and-mass-incarceration-new-york-agenda-change>
21. Reflection from an online session led by Sophia Dawson,
submitted by Kraig Blue
22. Reflection from an online session led by Sophia Dawson,
submitted by Sophia Dawson
23. <https://hyperallergic.com/522716/minor-offenders-can-substitute-jail-time-for-an-art-class-at-the-brooklyn-museum/>
24. Reflection from an online session led by Sophia Dawson,
submitted by Kraig Blue
25. Virtual Reset Lesson
26. Quote from 2019 Introductory Press Conference at the Brooklyn Museum, Kraig Blue
27. Quote from Brooklyn Museum Tips and Tools for Virtual Teaching,
Kraig Blue

Notes



Brooklyn Museum

**NEW
MUSEUM**