

*Brown University*

# Urban Studies

2011-2012

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## Director's Greetings Hilary Silver

Last spring, when I became Director of the Urban Studies Program, I reminisced about my early years as an Assistant Professor at Brown. What did I think Urban Studies meant when I began my career? What did I hope the Program would be? The field is unquestionably different today than it was twenty years ago! And as my former students remind me, the Program has come a long way under my able predecessors, Vernon Henderson, David Meyer, Marion Orr, and Patrick Malone in the years since Basil Zimmer hired me. As the first woman to assume the Directorship, I hope to add my own perspective on Urban Studies too.

One of the first things we did was enrich our faculty. We searched for and hired a new Assistant Professor of Sociology and Urban Studies, coming full circle and renewing our ranks. Dr. Josh Pacewicz will be joining the faculty from the University of Chicago, after a postdoc at Stanford. He will be teaching "The City," our multidisciplinary introductory course, and as an ethnographer, his own version of "Fieldwork in the Urban Community." Josh will be a presence in the Urban Studies building, and I hope you will welcome him this coming fall.

We are expanding our ranks in other ways, too. I have reached out to faculty in Economics and Anthropology, Environmental Studies and Engineering, to expand our curriculum into new fields. Professors Neumann and Zipp are helping us develop stronger ties with RISD and urban design. Professor Katz is working to enhance our role in the Humanities. We are internationalizing our offerings through conferences, such as a co-sponsored one on urban China this February, and through guest lectures. The latter include a presentation on the connected foreclosure crises in American and European cities by University of Amsterdam Professor Manuel Aalbers last fall, and on the rescaling of citizenship and social policies to the local level by Professor Yuri Kazepov of the University of Urbino, Italy. But we still have our old standbys: "City Politics" with Prof. Morone, "The Politics of Community Organizing" with Prof. Orr, urban economics with Prof. Henderson, urban history with Prof. Chudacoff and Prof. Zipp, and lots of great urban literature with Prof. Katz and Morone.

Our DUG is active and vigorous. Last September, a group went to Water Fire together (with a cooler), and we had a great lunch together following Rachel Reeves' presentation of her honors thesis. The DUG has set up a Facebook page, and we now have urban affairs magazines, periodicals, and even reading chairs in the building. Heather Parker, our academic program coordinator, regularly emails our concentrators the Urban Studies News with up-to-date opportunities for internships, jobs, and events of interest.

The DUG's greatest accomplishment this year is the organization of a decennial conference on urban affairs, which they named, "City Off the Hill: Working Together for Sustainable Urbanism," held March 9-10. Urban practitioners from around the country and here in Providence joined alumni and students for some serious brainstorming. Panels included public servants, business people, and professionals who work on comprehensive and sustainable solutions to urban problems across specializations in housing, transportation, environment and land use. The keynote speaker, introduced by our own Providence Mayor Angel Tavares, was Mayor Luke Ravenstahl of Pittsburgh, who showcased the accomplishments of his revitalized "comeback city." Given the negotiations between Brown and the City for payments in lieu of taxes, which is on the edge of bankruptcy, it was heartening to have Mayor Tavares join us.

Urban Studies alumni are making news and sending us updates. Recent graduates include Alex Morse, who was recently elected mayor of Holyoke, MA, and Stephen Larrick, who is the economic development director of fiscally strapped Central Falls, RI. Speaking at the conference were Chris Cirillo, an affordable housing developer in New York with the Richman Group, and Rebekah Scheinfeld, who is now chief planning officer and senior vice president of the Chicago Transit Authority. We also heard from other successful alumni – architects, planners, consultants, and so on – who would like to join us at such events in the future.

Please "friend" us on Facebook so we can stay in touch more regularly. <http://www.facebook.com/groups/BrownUrbanStudies/>

Let us know what you have been doing, post internships and job openings for our students, or propose activities, research topics, or articles on urban affairs. If you are coming back for reunion/graduation, please be sure to drop by our reception at the Faculty Club, after the events on the Main Green. We hope you will stay part of our community, on campus and online! ●



Join us on Facebook!

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### Urban Studies Apparel

No better way to be chic than in your Urban Studies t-shirt! The shirts contain the Urban Studies logo (pictured here), designed by our very own Amy Kendall '10. The shirts are white and available in S,M,L, 2XL, and 3XL and are 100% cotton. One can be yours with a \$10 donation to Urban Studies. Contact Heather\_Parker@Brown.edu to arrange payment and delivery





**From the Editor**  
Lizette Chaparro '12  
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Our Urban Studies program has accomplished some impressive feats in the past academic year. In March, we hosted City Off the Hill, a conference that featured some of the country's leading urbanists. The conference is covered by Pearse Haley, Bonnie Kim, and Alex Lipinsky on page five.

This year's newsletter also includes stories about places beyond Providence. Benjamin Gellman tells us about the vibrant culture of the Marais in Paris, France and Austin Boxler tells us why Cleveland is the new place for tourists. On page seven, Caleb Townsend tells us about the orchestra of street sounds in New York City.

This year, we also welcomed Professor Hilary Silver as our new director. We look forward to the exciting changes that the department will see under her leadership. In addition, Josh Pacewicz joins our list of faculty, adding his expertise of current economic and political trends in American cities.

It is my pleasure to bring these updates to the larger urban studies community and I hope you enjoy this edition. ●

## New Faculty: Josh Pacewicz



Josh is an ASA Postdoctoral Fellow on the Current Economic Crisis at Stanford University and a graduate of the Sociology Department at the University of Chicago, where he also worked for a time as associate editor of the *American Journal of Sociology*. His dissertation research consisted of a community study of urban and partisan politics in two rust-belt

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cities. The study focused especially upon development personnel who market the city to various outside audiences, and shows how such efforts promote the emergence of urban coalitions predicated upon avoidance of divisive issues in favor of broad-based partnerships. The central argument of the dissertation is that these urban dynamics have disorganized the partisan political system by creating a mismatch between urban and partisan politics. Many urban leaders now view political commitments as divisive and disruptive of development coalitions and this has paradoxically left the reigns of the two political parties in the hands of ideologically motivated, and vocal, activists. Josh is currently completing a book manuscript based on this research titled *Partisans and Partners: The Politics of the Post-Industrial Economy*, which is under contract with the University of Chicago Press. In future, Josh hopes to begin a new project focused upon the increasingly complicated world of municipal finance, which will explore how the evaluations of credit rating agencies and other financial institutions transform urban development patterns and practices. ●



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## Rachel Reeves '12: Senior thesis

My thesis examines current anti-obesity food regulations in New York City in the context of the city's public health history since the nineteenth century. By seeking continuities and discontinuities in how New York City responded with both official regulations and social attitudes to health concerns ranging from indigestion and temperance to smallpox and HIV/AIDS, I aim to evaluate how concerns regarding race, class, and morality shape reactions to and conceptualize illness in an urban context. To evaluate public health responses I chiefly utilize both historical and contemporary articles from the *New York Times*, interviews conducted with New York City Department of Mental Health and Hygiene employees and scholars specializing in obesity in New York, and sociological and political science frameworks to understand current and past stances regarding public health. Ultimately, I aim to suggest that current attitudes and behavioral interventions surrounding obesity are in part a continuation of historical classism and nativism in New York City. ●

## The City Off the Hill: Working Together for Sustainable Urbanism March 9-10, 2012

Pearse Haley '13 [victor\_haley@brown.edu], Bonnie Kim '12 [kim.bonnie@gmail.com], and Alex Lipinsky '13 [alexander\_lipinsky@brown.edu]

For the last three decades, Brown University has held large decennial conferences that have drawn leaders and scholars to discuss urban issues. The 2012 urban affairs conference, organized by undergraduate concentrators in Brown's Urban Studies Program, started with a different premise than the earlier ones: that fresh solutions to perennial problems – poverty, unaffordable and segregated housing, unemployment, economic change, and environmental degradation—require the creative collaboration of those “on the hill” as well as those “off the hill”.

Greg Lindsay, a contributing writer for *Fast Company* and co-author of the international bestseller *Aerotropolis: The Way We'll Live Next*, spoke about a project working on Cicero, Illinois. Last spring, architect Jeanne Gang asked Lindsay to join her team at Studio Gang Architects to participate in the Museum of Modern Art exhibition, “Foreclosed: Rehousing the American Dream.” Charged with reimagining public housing and the future of suburbia in Cicero, Illinois, Gang's team created “The Garden in the Machine” — a more flexible form of housing underpinned by new forms of

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## Mistake on the Lake No More

Austin Boxler '12 [austin.boxler@gmail.com]

Cleveland. After riding the wave of industrialization and urbanization in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Ohio's once most populous city started to experience major problems. All across the Rust Belt, deindustrialization after World War II started to eat away at the old structures of America's largest urban centers. Like its counterparts, Cleveland's population declined after the 190 census, accompanied by other serious problems like the fire on the Cuyahoga River in 1969 and the city's bankruptcy declaration in 1976. As the interior city continued to decay into the 1980s, Cleveland's once impressive reputation as "Fifth City" faded; the city became known as "the mistake on the lake." Dealing with economic decline, the city struggled to rebrand itself and rebuild its economy partly on tourism revenues. But with a nickname like "mistake on the lake" why would anyone want to vacation in Cleveland?

The truth is that over the last few decades the city of Cleveland has made great progress in rejuvenating and rebranding itself, and is now one of the best kept secrets in the tourism industry. Over the summer, thanks to the Goldberg Fellowship funding I received through the Urban Studies department, I was able to study this transformation of the city first hand. Working at Positively Cleveland, the convention and visitors bureau of northeast Ohio, I was able to see how city organizations are capitalizing on and marketing new investments in an attempt to refresh the city's reputation. I was speak with visitors at many of the local attractions and get their take on the Rock and Roll City. It turns out, visitors love the new Cleveland.

Although Cleveland has such a wide variety of tourist activities and attractions to explore, from its world-class museums to its stunning architectural treasures, the city is especially getting attention for its music and food scenes recently. So forget everything you may have heard about Cleveland's problems in the past and look at some of the best things Cleveland has to offer in the present.

Michael Jackson's infamous silver glove, John Lennon's "Give Peace a Chance" guitar, Jimi Hendrix's couch, and Johnny Cash's tour bus, along with other memorabilia, can all be viewed at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. The building, designed by famed architect I.M. Pei, was completed in 1995 and since its construction the city has embraced its role as the Rock and Roll city, decorating its streets with artistic guitar statues that lure visitors to the museum. Once inside the museum, visitors can watch a film chronicling inducted rockers or they can explore the evolution of rock and roll through interactive exhibits and displays. Cleveland's various concert venues, including the House of Blues, further embrace the city's rock identity with live performances regularly occurring. But Cleveland's music scene goes well beyond rock and roll, and may actually surprise visitors. The Cleveland Orchestra, founded in 1918, is one of the finest symphonies in the world, often being compared to the New York Philharmonic. Concerts are usually held in the impressive Severance Hall located in the picturesque University Circle neighborhood of the



Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Cleveland Skyline <sup>5</sup>

city. During the summer visitors can even catch an orchestra concert at Blossom Music Center, an outdoor concert venue located in Cuyahoga Valley National Park. If musical theater is more appealing, Cleveland's Playhouse Square hosts a variety of professional musicals throughout the year. Playhouse Square is the the largest theater complex outside of New York City, second only to Lincoln Center, and boasts some of the most beautiful theatres of the golden age of American urbanism. After the sun goes down, Nighttown is the perfect place to listen to live jazz music; this lounge was recognized as the best for jazz in the state of Ohio and is perfect for relaxing while having a meal. The restaurant and lounge also functions as the Cleveland Journalism Hall of Fame, adding quirky character to the venue.

Cleveland's food scene has also taken off over the last few years, in large part because of Iron Chef Michael Symon's culinary creativity and devotion to his city. Symon's Lola Bistro, located on the highly acclaimed East 4th Street, showcases the best of what local purveyors are producing just miles away (try the beef cheek pierogi or wild boar ragu). Next to Lola is the Greenhouse Tavern, restaurant of the acclaimed chef Jonathan Sawyer. This restaurant goes out of its way to use local ingredients and to be as environmentally friendly as possible. Much of the decor, in fact, is made from recycled and reused materials. In the Ohio City neighborhood, visitors adore the West Side Market and the Great Lakes Brewing Company. Built in 1912, the main building of the market awes visitors with its vaulted brick ceiling and its various stands selling everything from crepes to meat to baked goods to ethnic treats. In a separate building, the freshest and best priced produce in the city is sold. Vendors yell out at customers offering deals and free samples in an attempt to convince them to buy, creating an experience nearly unrivaled in the United States. Across the street, Great Lakes Brewing Company offers free brewery tours with a reservation and great dining options. Most of the beers take the names of important events and people in Cleveland history, but all of the beers are special in their own way. The brewery's most popular beer is Dortmunder Gold, but the Burning River pale ale is almost too funny to pass up. In addition to these hot spots, Cleveland offers too many culinary attractions to list. Local food specialties include pierogis of all kinds, walleye and perch (fish

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ownership. Scott Wolf, the executive director of GrowSmartRI, spoke about the difficulties of rigid zoning and the need for incentives for economically feasible, sustainable, and aesthetic urban development and GrowSmart RI's work to that end.

The first panel discussion, titled "Federal Partnerships," included the New England administrator for the Office of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Barbara Fields; Department of Transportation program manager, Joanne Telegen Weinstock; Office of Planning and Program Development Federal Transit Authority (FTA); regional administrator, for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) New England, Curtis Spalding. Ms. Fields noted that the 2009 Interagency Partnership for Sustainable Communities emphasized the "UD" in HUD: "urban development" which is best achieved when federal offices work together. Ms. Weinstock and Mr. Spalding noted some challenges, but many benefits of cross-agency communication and effort.



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Luke Ravenstahl, mayor of Pittsburgh, delivered the keynote address. Ravenstahl spoke about his successful efforts to bring Pittsburgh back from bankruptcy and its population increase while still discussing the city's unemployment rate. He also noted that Pittsburgh has been named one of the top ten "American Comeback Cities" by *Forbes* magazine.

The "Transportation Alternatives" panel provided innovative ideas for more efficient, sustainable, and comprehensive transportation. Brian Leary, CEO, of Atlanta BeltLine Inc., a group in charge of the largest parks and transit project in the nation, outlined the BeltLine's potential to revitalize Atlanta's inner core and emphasized the need for regional cooperation in metropolitan transportation. Director of research & communications for GrowSmart RI, John Flaherty, detailed his organization's effort to make Rhode Island's streets more accessible to bikers and pedestrians. He also advocated more complete streets as a means of increasing sustainability and access in the urban environment. Chief planning officer of the Chicago Transit Authority, Rebekah Scheinfeld '97, described her department's efforts to expand Chicago's transit to new areas and improve its overall service. She emphasized that truly comprehensive transit is essential for a city to maximize its potential and meet the needs of all of its citizens.

The "Greening the Urban Environment" panel showcased strategies for reusing vacant land, enhancing existing green space, and strengthening communities. Rebecca Salminen-Witt, president of The Greening of Detroit, spoke about the organization's mission to cultivate a healthy urban community with trees, green spaces, food, education, and training opportunities. Sarah Aucoin, director of the Urban Park Rangers in the City of New York Parks & Recreation, spoke about their aim to connect New Yorkers to the natural world through environmental education, outdoor adventure, wildlife management, and active conservation. Leo Pollock, director of programs at Southside Community Land Trust, gave the panel local context for the greening efforts happening in Providence. SCLT provides access to land for members of the community to grow their own food in environmentally sustainable ways and provide education through an onsite children's garden and additional expertise. Tei Carpenter '05 is currently serving as an adjunct lecturer at the Spitzer School of Architecture at the City College of New York. She discussed a design to create a large scale aquaculture facility in an abandoned Detroit neighborhood, reusing the existing water and sewage infrastructure.

The planning and economic development coordinator for Central Falls, RI, Stephen Larrick '11, introduced the "Affordable and Efficient Housing" panel. Larrick encouraged current students to invest their degrees in small urban areas that are in great need. The senior vice president for research and development at Neighborhood Progress, Inc., Frank Ford, spoke about the foreclosure crisis in Cleveland, Ohio. He noted that the burden for the crisis had been shifted to taxpayers, but if codes were enforced and lenders held accountable, that trend could be reversed. Chris Cirillo '95, vice president for development at the Richman Group, observed that market downturns often inspired creative approaches to problems. Arnold "Buff" Chace, managing general partner of Cornish Associates LLP, spoke of the need for continued revitalization in downtown Providence and its potential to attract and retain new members of the workforce.

The last panel reflected on ways in which public, nonprofit, private sector organizations, as well as housing, transit, and environment specialists can forge effective partnerships for the same goal: sustainable urbanism. George McCarthy, director of the Ford Foundation's Metropolitan Opportunity Unit, discussed his organization's nationwide efforts to encourage partnerships across different levels of government and stakeholders. McCarthy emphasized the need to connect the resources of national programs with the energy and expertise of local public sector leadership. Laurie White, president of the Providence Chamber of Commerce, offered a local perspective, describing Providence's Knowledge District, an initiative that drew from the public and private sectors.

"The City Off the Hill" was recorded and is available for viewing, along with speaker presentations, at [www.brown.edu/academics/urban-studies](http://www.brown.edu/academics/urban-studies). ● 5

## Entrepreneurship in Poor Neighborhoods

Alexander Lipinsky '13 [alexander\_lipinsky@brown.edu]

Many students in Urban Studies, as well as similar fields, end up working for nonprofit organizations. These internships and entry-level jobs provide opportunities to improve inner city neighborhoods, more often than not. The work being done in these nonprofit organizations is extremely beneficial, in my opinion. After working with a community development corporation for an entire summer, I learned the major drawback of this organizational model: the funding.

Drawing from my own experience and talking to my peers, this seems to be a common theme; a significant amount of the work being done is to secure more funding. This was very frustrating as a person who wanted to go into the neighborhoods and have a large impact as quickly as possible; meetings, grants, and phone calls held the organization back from any work that may be of benefit to this community. Grants are often very specific about how their money can be spent. For example, the organization I worked for had previously received grant money so that a crew of teens could be sent out to cut the lawns of vacant properties. The summer I was there, that grant was not received. So while the organization had increased their funding, there were half a dozen teenagers without a job. The idea that grantors decide programs and priorities can be a very frustrating process for organizations.

My most memorable experience from this summer was my very last day at my internship. Alongside another unpaid intern, I was measuring the side of an abandoned nightclub for the painting of a \$15,000 mural. A teenager from the neighborhood we were working in rode his bike over and asked if he could work with us for the day to make a little money. After I explained how we weren't getting paid and we were about to leave, we began to talk about finding a job. He explained to me that there were no jobs within biking distance, and because public transportation is terrible in the city, he didn't have very many options.

I present a teenager who has ambition, but has little to no opportunity. Teenagers may cause trouble when they're full of energy and have no positive outlet. This can be in the form of a petty crime, but it can also grow to something as serious as drug experimentation.

One need of high priority in poor neighborhoods is part time and summer jobs for teenagers. Summer jobs are one of the best learning experiences for someone like this teenager, and they also translate to great career skills. Along with better schools, giving students jobs skills and experience can be the best thing to guarantee future success. This leads to investment through small business in poor neighborhoods, and job skills for the residents. Virtually a win-win.

As young, idealistic, zealous college students and soon to be graduates, we may not want to deal with the funding challenges of nonprofits. However, our desire is still to make cities better, and so I propose we look into starting a small business. Poor, disinvested neighborhoods have some of the cheapest real estate and other assets that can easily be attained.

In the Rust Belt, where I am from, there are numerous people trying to attract investment into neighborhoods that have seen decades of decline. We need more people going in and investing in sustainable businesses in order to help the residents of these communities. ●



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### Lessons from the Marais

Benjamin Gellman '14 [benjamin\_gellman@brown.edu]

Over winter break I had the privilege of visiting my sister in Paris. Curious about the diverse array of neighborhoods at my fingertips, I was most eager to travel to the Marais—the city's undisputed hub of LGBT culture and also the historic center of France's Jewish community—to see how these cultural currents have manifested themselves in a complex metropolis.

As my sister warned me that the Marais has been processed into the gentrified tourist core that marks other neighborhoods in Paris. Old Jewish delicatessans have been pushed out of business by soaring

rents. A one-bedroom studio on the Rue d'Temple, which lies along this thoroughfare—costs two thousand euros a month.

The Marais is undergoing a culture war endemic to economically thriving urban cores. Throughout the last five centuries, it offered a haven for Jewish families who were excluded, through legal and political means as well as the economic conditions that sometimes bound them to the neighborhood. In more recent decades, the Marais has served as a countercultural haven given rents that were comparatively lower to those in surrounding enclaves. During the 80's and 90's, the community was a hodgepodge of falafel stands and Jewish bakeries, gay curio shops, dive bars and nightclubs.

Things have changed. Walking around the Marais, I could not sense any distinction between this lively community and those around it. While the Marais continues to serve as the nucleus of gay life in Paris, it is tremendously upscale like the surrounding neighborhoods; the dive bars, coffeehouses, and curio shops that once marked the neighborhood have yielded to Starbucks and high end hotels. The same forces of gentrification have also forced many Jewish families out of the Marais, leaving only a handful of bialy bakeries and falafel houses left behind.

Debates over gentrification seem especially relevant in neighborhoods revered for legacies of inclusion and acceptance. The Marais, once the only area of Paris that welcomed Jewish residents and oft regarded as a haven for gay culture, is simultaneously becoming exclusive by way of high rents, the corporate takeover of its business districts, and its placement on Paris' already expansive tourist map. ●



The Highline in New York City <sup>8</sup>

## Native Plants: A Sonic Terrarium of New York City

Caleb Townsend '11.5 [caleb.f.townsend@gmail.com]

Headphones are New York City's most ubiquitous subway accessory. On any given train at rush hour, packed to the gills, about half of the passengers will have a cord snaking up their shirt and into their ears. More than about listening to a favorite song every morning, this is an attempt to shut out the world and create a semblance of much needed personal space. They reject or even refuse to acknowledge the roar of the city, opting instead for an attempt to transcend their screeching surroundings. It is hard to blame them for doing so: subways peak around 94 decibels, a volume comparable to that of a running chainsaw at arms length. But it is a futile endeavor. Even the most expensive of noise-canceling technology cannot block out the rumbling, grinding and shrieking. This creates a fascinating and not always unpleasant juxtaposition: a layer of city sounds inserts itself within the music. It is acknowledged only as an aggressor, and even for that it must be particularly egregious to crack the

subway rider's willful ignorance. No one "listens" to the subway, and everyone holds steadfast to the conception that the music coming from their headphones and the sound coming from the subway car surrounding them are separate and distinct entities: one good, one bad.

Three observations regarding noises of the urban environment: first, sound is never ending. Especially in a city, sound never stops; it only changes, gradually or abruptly, from one location or situation to the next. There is always a plane overhead or a siren or a couple of people shouting at each other outside your window. In the absence of any noticeable sound events, there is inevitably an air conditioner or distant telephone or the wash of distant traffic.

Second, no two places sound the same. Every place has its own collection of sound generators: subway trains, crowds, bodies of water, cars, church bells. Everything makes a sound: everything interrupts air to some degree and creates waves. Perhaps this is the root of George Michelsen Foy's observation that there is a low roar which constantly underscores a city. The combined output of infinite shaking, whirring, buzzing, creaking objects and people and buildings and trees is carried through sidewalks and walls and into the air all around everyone, a common element.

Third, the sound of a place is greater than the sum of its parts. Sound is a wave. The folds of earth and brick and steel and plant native to any one place will shape the way sound careens off its surfaces before entering a pair of ears. Everything is experienced simultaneously as a continuous barrage. Even music from headphones can be assimilated. It inseparable from the environment in which it is played.

From these observations was born Native Plants, an immersive piece of music I created for my senior thesis in the Multimedia & Electronic Music Experiments department. Native Plants was presented in five channels, surrounding the listener from all sides to create a full sonic space. It has its foundation in field recordings made around New York City. I spent a summer cataloguing a wide variety of the city's most ubiquitous export, the wasted byproduct of every dispersion of energy by a population of eight million. I recorded the subway, I recorded midtown Manhattan, but I also sought out the quiet and unique: I took my recorder on a kayak in Jamaica Bay and for a ride on Coney Island's famous Cyclone roller coaster. I then set about weaving these scenes together, and composing and creating music with which these found sounds could interact. Saxophone is paired with garbage compactors, loops of handball create a rhythm for electric guitar, drumbeats emulate the clattering subway cars. I attempted to divine the music of the places I had recorded, cajole melodies out of the air and rhythm out of the ground.

Sound is perhaps the most convincingly mimicked sensory experience. Sizzling bacon with no visual component is virtually indistinguishable from rain, as employed for some fifty years now by sound designers for film. It is space that lends, even imposes an individualism on sound, by juxtaposing varieties of noise and their reflections into a single experience. Sound, in turn, returns the favor. It is a natural, and naturally ignored product of a space: the vibrations of a place's every component. Generic rain, yes, can be easily synthesized, but the rain outside the South Ferry subway station on the southern tip of Manhattan can only be captured. The compositions of Native Plants are a means to this end. They call attention to the sounds of the environments with which they are juxtaposed, gesturing at them and with them to suggest that the sound too, is music: songs of and by the sidewalks and forests of New York City. ●



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## Green and Healthy Homes Compact

Kate Blessing '13 [katherine\_blessing@brown.edu]

On Earth Day 2011, Providence Mayor Angel Taveras became the first mayor in the country to sign the Green and Healthy Homes Compact. The Compact is an agreement between the City of Providence, the Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources, the Rhode Island Department of Health, The Rhode Island Foundation, and the Coalition to End Childhood Lead Poisoning to bring the Green & Healthy Homes Initiative (GHHI) to the City of Providence.<sup>1</sup> On March 5, 2012, I attended a meeting at the Providence Planning and Development Office to learn more. Providence is among 15 pilot cities across the country chosen to implement GHHI, an effort to make housing in low- and moderate-income neighborhoods safer and more efficient. The need for such a program is all too evident—much of Providence's housing is unsafe and outdated. The initiative will help homeowners with energy efficiency, health safety, lead hazard reduction, and weatherization. Implementation will start in Olneyville and the Valley, affectionately named "Valneyville." Though pilot cities will receive no additional funding, HUD is encouraging them to develop "best practices" that can be scaled nationwide.

The program has one application, one whole home audit, and a resident manual for home ownership. Community outreach efforts surrounding GHHI are ongoing, with a corps of resident educators enlisted to spread word about the program. The initiative will generate jobs where they are needed, also providing a training program for minority contractors. ●

<sup>1</sup><http://www.providenceri.com/mayor/mayor-taveras-signs-green-and-healthy-housing,4/12/12>

(continued from p. 4)

from lake Erie), and the infamous Polish Boy (kielbasa, hot sauce/bbq sauce, coleslaw, french fries, and occasionally pulled pork all on one sausage roll). Northeast Ohio also specializes in ice wine, a sweet dessert wine made from grapes that are pressed after the first frost. For these reasons, Cleveland is actually a great tourism destination with too much to do in just one visit. The years of decline, environmental degradation, and financial instability are over and thus the city's reputation as "the mistake on the lake" is no longer warranted. Go see it for yourself! ●

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### Photo credits:

Cover design by Caleb Townsend '11.5

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- (8) <http://thebrickhouseco.blogspot.com/2012/04/high-line-new-york.html>