

## FREE RADIO

We seek to use the CUE space to build *Free Radio*, a functioning radio station with related educational materials and programming. Our objective is to reconsider the notion of a cultural hub altogether so as not only to be a place that catalyzes discourse and the dissemination of information, but also a site for tool building and mining the identity of a community. This project has three basic elements that all support a mission rooted in education and unfettered access to information.

The most salient element will be the construction of an in situ radio station. The station will be built over the course of five days, used for a one-hour test broadcast when completed, and disassembled every week during the life of the exhibition. In addition to the perpetual live performance of building and using the radio station, there will also be a simulcast via a host of websites and social media sites that extend the experience of learning how to build a radio station beyond the gallery walls, thus not only serving the immediate community in an educational capacity and by suggesting the possibility of such an endeavor on a variety of scales, but also acting as a beacon that transcends distance and establishes a larger community.

Another element will be an exhaustive educational display dedicated to the history of radio technology and programming. Not only will there be time-lines, and gadgets, but there will also be actual recordings and transcriptions of important historical broadcasts that galvanized communities or led to some sort of social equity and progress. This element is designed not only to contextualize the project's primary gesture – the building of a radio station—but also to serve as a community resource from which visitors will get a sense of the invaluable role public discourse and communication plays in the relative success of an egalitarian society.

The final element of this project is the transmission of an hour-long test broadcast at the end of each build. Each program will be facilitated by a different person or group within the community and will be dedicated to a different subject that may seldom be represented in radio. With particular emphasis on educational programming that serves the community, broadcasts will air at times appropriate to the subject matter and/or target listener. Programming may include but is not limited to: children's book readings, a loop of oral accounts of a little known or talked about event in history, important speeches that led to social justice, a panel discussion about the function of communication or its absence in a

community, instructional broadcasts on how to make a saw horse or fishing pole, and a recording of a live, on-site open jam session between unacquainted community members. Though the opportunity to broadcast will be facilitated by those outside the New York community, the content itself will be generated by local participants, effectively broadcasting a collective community voice.

*Free Radio* is as much about being a participant as it is about being a witness. This is something that necessitates a presence in a cultural hub – the gallery – as well as a decentralized open forum for information such as the web or radio. *Free Radio* will not only re-imagine the role of a gallery within a community, but will also provide a service. *Free Radio* is based on the idea that teaching someone how to make a fishing pole is inherently more valuable, and more resonant, than merely giving them a fish or a pole.

**Brian Gillis** is a multidisciplinary artist whose practice examines relevant socio-cultural issues that may have fallen on deaf ears, been buried over time, or simply obscured by something else. He is interested in history as both an archive and a mine, as that which can at once chronicle and act as a catalyst for the reconsideration of one's world. His work is discursive, research based, and uses a variety of production strategies ranging from observation and representation, to comment and action.

Gillis is the recipient of numerous awards, including an Illinois Arts Council Individual Artist Grant, a Brink Award Nomination, and Sculpture Space residency in Utica, NY. He has exhibited nationally and internationally, including recent solo exhibitions at Tacoma Contemporary, WA, The Icehouse, Phoenix, AZ and the Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts, Grand Rapids, MI. Gillis received his MFA from NYSCC at Alfred University and is currently an Assistant Professor of Art at the University of Oregon.

**Robin Lambert** is a socially engaged artist and educator. Born on the Sunshine Coast of British Columbia, his childhood was spent traveling throughout Canada before eventually settled in Northern Alberta. These wandering ways continued through his adult life even as he earned a BFA with distinction from Alberta College of Art and Design and an MFA from the University of Regina. He has received numerous grants and awards including a Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada Masters Grant and an Alberta Creative Development Initiative Grant. Most recently he won a Red Deer Mayorial Recognition Award.

His theoretical and studio research interests include: relational aesthetics, participatory work, art and craft theory, craft culture and the role of both the artist and the art object. Lambert's work is often a simple gesture highlighting something that may not be fully appreciated until fully explored – daydreaming, napping, letter writing and sharing dinner are his tools.