<u>Sandy Sampson and Laurel Kurtz Artist Philosophy</u>

As artists and educators our approach to community-based art making is process driven and prioritizes the experiential, giving all participants agency in the evolution of the outcomes. Participants include ourselves as facilitators and initial conceptual framers, those intentionally invited to participate, as well as incidental collaborators. This approach holds true for both institutionally supported projects we have done as well as self-initiated works.

Process for us encompasses everything from the first moments of research and outreach to the final documentation and often extends via newly formed relationships that continue to evolve even after the project is officially ended.  Our research starts with an exploration of communities and resources already existing in the location we will be working.  This is important for a couple of reasons, in any situation there is already rich source material to work with and a local base of knowledge that may inspire amplification. As social practice artists we find the intersection between our own interests and knowledge, with that of others, results in a more fruitful sharing of authorship.  This initial research often yields discovery of a pre-existing platform to conceptually launch the project from. This is also a methodology that helps to ensure that the project that evolves is relevant to the hosting community.

As we said, our process is experiential.  By this we don't mean to imply that there is no product, or exhibition material to show, but rather that every point in the process is its own outcome. The nature of this kind of work is fluid and nuanced with many points of entry. Because of this discussions around documentation, what to document, how, or even if, have always been integral parts of our collaborations as it is important to us that any documentation reflect more than just our experience.  In this particular instance we look forward to sharing this responsibility and these discussions with students.

Our role as facilitators of community-based work is always to provide an initial concept and working structure.  In this case there will be the additional role of working directly with students and assisting them in their individual initiatives in the larger community so that we all stay focused on a common benchmark that we evolve together, regardless of the diversity of our approaches.