

Ben Ashworth

<https://www.benashworth.me>

4400 University Dr.
Fairfax, VA 22030
E: bashwort@gmu.edu

EDUCATION

2016 MFA , Sculpture, George Mason University
1999 BA, Studio Art, George Mason University

TEACHING, CREATIVE AND SCHOLARLY ACTIVITIES

- 2019-2020 Smithsonian research collaborator and consultant for the 2020 and 2021 Folklife Festivals.

My classes are currently designing and building a modular and mobile community-based platform and skate-able amphitheater for a variety of actions and research in collaboration with the Smithsonian, National Park Service, Yale University, Georgetown University and more.
- 2018-2019 Innovative Pedagogy

Over the last 3 semesters I created and taught multi-disciplinary and immersive field experience-based courses that allow students across media to co-produce ongoing community sourced public art projects on and off campus. Students have the opportunity to workshop, design, and realize public art projects in collaboration with other colleges on campus, off campus and with visiting artists and institutions and agencies as varied as, the DC Office of Planning, the DC Mayors Office, The National Park Service, the Smithsonian, The Kennedy Center, Yale, UCLA, and many more.

Art as Social Action -AVT 309
Public Art Practice-496
Research in Public Art as Social Action-599
- 2018 Field Research/Performance/Short Film/ Hollywood Broadcast
The Ford Theatres co-presented 9 days' worth of Finding A Line events with the Center for the Art of Performance UCLA and Yale Schwarzman Center. Highlights included a "Arts in A Changing America" National Broadcast of a panel discussion on "Issues of Race & Diversity in Skateboard Culture and I also performed two nights with Jazz greats Bennie Maupin(a Miles Davis collaborator) and Jason Moran and the Bandwagon. While in Hollywood I also worked on two short [films](#) documenting our shared research on stage and in the city of LA as the FAL founder and community activator.
- 2018 Presentation
Keynote Speaker Association of Performing Arts Professionals Annual convening NYC, Co-presented with MacArthur award winning composer, Jason Moran and Garth Ross, Vice President, Community Engagement at the Kennedy Center. Plenary Topic: Transdisciplinary Impact-Exciting cross sector partnerships are breaking new ground in both the arts and the world beyond. Discover how exemplary arts/non-arts alignments are defying expectations and reshaping both the way we think about performing arts and their impact in the world.
- 2017 Co-Curator Kennedy Center Open House:Celebrating JFK at 100. Designed outdoor skatepark and music stage to collaborate and cross-pollinate with pioneers of vertical dance BANDALOOP, street dancers FLEXN, and audience members who were invited to skate, dance and create space in a session format.
- 2017 Speaker/Host for ArtChangeUS@Kennedy Center National Conversation Series including an open

skate session accompanied by a DJ and emcees. Interactive conversation on urbanism and place keeping between Rome prize winning architect Teddy Cruz, myself and muralist Alice Mizrachi. ArtChangeUS: Arts in a Changing America is a project based at California Institute of the Arts(CalArts) that seeks to explore and understand the dramatic demographic transformation of the United States and its profound impact on arts and culture.

- 2017 Mentor for “Kennedy Center Citizen Artist Fellows” of 2017
- 2017 Lecturer/Workshop/Exhibition/Visiting Artist as part of World Table/Finding A Line Session- and East Coast Sculpture Exchange, James Madison University Harrisonburg, VA
- 2017 Speaker for Clock Tower Radio broadcast with Christopher Kardambikis for an episode of Paper Cuts, a program on Clocktower Radio that documents the contemporary world of zines and DIY publishing.
- 2016 Creative Times Summit DC: Speaker/Break out Session Leader at Gallaudet University STEAM Research Space- Finding a Line bowl. Hosted Filmmaker Maen Hammad to discuss “Pushing Borders” Skateboarding and Self-Development. We discussed the immense role skateboarding can have on marginalized communities as a self-development tool and presented stories of young men and women in Occupied Palestinian Territories. Our conversation centered on topics that are relevant and important to our communities globally and in the DMV area, such as resilience, youth leadership and fostering active and empowered youth. Sponsored by Kennedy Center, Provision Library, Ford Foundation and the Lambent Foundation.
- 2016 – Ongoing Finding A Line(CRATERS) combines skating, music, and media as a socially-engaged platform for a variety of research. The project has recently migrated to DC Pavilion in collaboration with the art and physics departments at Gallaudet University. Major support for Finding A Line comes from the Kennedy Center, NASA, Gallaudet University, JBG Development, and Invaluable volunteers.
- 2016 Co-Curated Funk Parade Concert at Shaw Park and built skate-able sculpture as part of the ongoing community sourced public art project, Finding A Line. This Art, Skateboarding, Music, and Media event was presented by The DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, The Kennedy Center, and George Mason University.
- 2016 Virginia Department of Transportation commission to produce ongoing large scale public art piece, LOVE: Is In the Making, at the Workhouse Arts Center, Lorton VA.
- 2015 Served as panelist for Arts Council of Fairfax County to award Strauss Artist Grants
- 2014 – Ongoing Kennedy Center Community Project, Washington, DC , artist Ben Ashworth and Kennedy Center Advisor for Jazz Jason Moran explore Aesthetic Parallels between Skateboarding and Jazz.
- 2014 Collaborative Partner for Daylight Saving/ a 25-hour bilingual, roving, online broadcast exploring the policies and poetics that regulate public time, economy, and communication. The broadcast streamed from a truck roving the capitals geometries, stopped at a variety of sites while hosting sound, music, dialogue, and language experiments. DC’s Green Skate Lab was our selected site. Topics and experiments revolved around Sun Rah, time machines, skateboarding, and jazz. Selected by Artist Augustina Woodgate for DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities temporary public art project 5x5.
- 2014 “Exchanged III”, group exhibition, Brentwood Arts Exchange, Brentwood, MD May – April
- 2013 “Exchanged II”, group exhibition, Artwork Gallery, James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA
- 2011 Rocky Run Park Public Art Design Concept, Arlington VA, artists Ben Ashworth and Richard Vosseller public art concept for Arlington County Parks and Recreation
- 2011 – 2015 *Finding a Line*, Washington DC, artist Ben Ashworth with Workingman Collective public art project that takes the improvisational act at the core of skateboarding - finding a line through physical

space - and applies it to the process of transforming a community space. Selected by curator Laura Roulet for the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities' temporary public art project 5x5.
NOTE: Finding a Line is a TED City 2.0 award finalist

- 2004 – Ongoing Green Skate Lab , Construction Foreman for public recreational skate park collaborative design + build project emphasizing recycling, physics, and environmental science. Multiple semester project with professional, student, and community labor, Langston Recreation Center, Washington D.C. Green Skate Lab is recognized as the country's first "green" skatepark.
- 2004 – 2010 FCDC, Principal partner for private recreational and creative space for skateboarding, arts, music, documentation and construction. After two years of increasing popularity and a wildly destructive party, a media campaign was organized to proclaim the "death" of FCDC. Meanwhile, operations continued with emphasis on more low-key celebrations, social experiments, and exhibitions.

SELECTED EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS AND ENGAGEMENT

- Finding A Line Originating in 2012 for the DC Commission on Arts and Humanities temporary public art initiative 5x5, Finding a Line was presented again in 2015 at the Kennedy Center as a 10 day festival and then again in 2017 for Kennedy Center Open House:Celebrating JFK at 100. Designed outdoor skatepark and music stage to collaborate and cross-pollinate with pioneers of vertical dance BANDALOOP, street dancers FLEXN, and audience members who were invited to skate, dance and create space in a session format. GMU School of Art students are actively engaged in the ongoing production.
- Open Source Bi-Annual and curated undergraduate/graduate student exhibition, Hemphill Fine Arts, Washington DC, Inaugural exhibition March 2011
- Container Space Student/faculty design build project resulting in the adaptive reuse of a 20' shipping container as an off-the-grid programmed exhibition and experimental resource. This project was aligned with the goals of the University commitment of creating a zero carbon footprint and sustainability action/awareness. Construction 2007 – 2010, ongoing programming, containerspace.blogspot.com/
- East Coast Sculpture Exchange An on-going visiting faculty/student exchange program for the production of an on-campus artwork and coordinated with student involvement. University of Georgia, Athens, GA, and James Madison University, Harrisonburg, Initiated 2007
- Green Skate Lab Foreman and student coordinator for Public recreational skate park, collaborative design + build project emphasizing recycling, physics and environmental science. Multiple semester project with professional, student, and community labor, Langston Recreation Center, Washington D.C. 2004-07
- Cubicle Ten Co-organized / curated student exhibition in Baltimore, MD, Schools participating: GMU, Corcoran College of Art, University of Maryland, Maryland Institute College of Art, Virginia Commonwealth University. 2004
- Earl House Project Co-organized the production and exhibition of student site-specific artwork in and on the grounds of a university owned farmhouse slated for demolition. George Mason University, Fairfax, VA 2004
- Developer Co-organized exhibition of George Mason University sculpture students in four thousand square foot vacant retail space in downtown Washington D.C., December 2003
- Cottonwood House Secured vacant house for creation of temporary artwork production/exhibition, McLean, VA Fall 2001

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| Andros Island Nassau, Art Project | Collaborative project partnership between George Mason University and the College of the Bahamas, and the community of Staniard Creek, Andros Island, Bahamas. Using the Bahamas Environmental Research Center, a field station in Staniard Creek as our base, projects engaged artists, local citizens, students, and environmental researchers in the production of public artwork, community interventions, and work that resonated with local eco-systems. Staniard Creek, Andros Island, Bahamas, 1998-2001 |
| Resource Workshop | Assisted and co-organized four-day site specific sculpture workshop that included private tours of Frank Lloyd Wright's Falling Water, Kentuck Knob, and the creation of temporary artworks on 300 acre farm, Garret County, MD, April 1998 -1999 – 2000 |

AWARDS/GRANTS

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| 2016 | NASA Space grant to develop Finding A Line STEAM research space at Gallaudet University |
| 2011 | 5x5, DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities' temporary public art project grant, 25K. <i>NOTE: Finding a Line is a TED City 2.0 award finalist</i> |
| 2010 | Thomas W. Iszard III Distinguished Alumni Award, George Mason University, College of Visual and Performing Arts |
| 2004 | Tony Hawk Foundation Grant, 14K Project Learning Tree Grant, 6K |

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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| 2018-Present | Innovative Pedagogy Over the last 3 semesters I created and taught multi-disciplinary and immersive field experience-based courses that allow students across media to co-produce ongoing community sourced public art projects on and off campus. Students have the opportunity to workshop, design, and realize public art projects in collaboration with other colleges on campus, off campus and with visiting artists and institutions and agencies as varied as, the DC Office of Planning, the DC Mayors Office, The National Park Service, the Smithsonian, The Kennedy Center, Yale, UCLA, and many more. Art as Social Action -AVT 309 Public Art Practice-496 Research in Public Art as Social Action-599 |
| 1996 – Present | Sculpture Studio Supervisor, George Mason University, School of Art |
| 1994 – 2004 | Gallery Assistant, George Mason University, School of Art |
| 2000 – Present | Environmental Health and Safety Liaison, George Mason University, School of Art |

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Publication recognizing FAL as a radical interdisciplinary research classroom. The National Academy of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine included the Finding A Line initiative in the book titled, [THE INTEGRATION OF THE Humanities and Arts with Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine in Higher Education : Branches from the Same Tree \(2018\)](#)

[Grassroots Leadership and the Arts For Social Change](#). (2017). Japan: Emerald Publishing Limited.
Garth Ross, "Chapter 15: Finding a Line from Fight Club to the Kennedy Center: How We Learned To Cross Invisible Bridges"

Sadie Dingfelder, "[ArtSpace Likely to Get Railroaded](#)," Washington Post Express, July 18, 2013.

Sadie Dingfelder, "[Playful Public Art: Finding a Line at Bridge Spot](#)." Project Play, *Fun is Never Frivolous*(blog). February 2, 2013.

Ronit Eisenbach and Welmoed Laanstra, "Capital as Context: 5x5, a new curator-driven public art festival for Washington, D.C." Public Art Review, Fall/Winter 2012, Publicartreview.org

"Skating on Art at New Rocky Run Park," Arlington Mercury, May 25, 2012.

Melissa Bell, "[Skaters' Paradise Lost](#): How a group of friends turned a decrepit D.C. warehouse into a mecca for punk-rock cool-and how it all fell apart." Washington Post Magazine, October 10, 2010.

Holly Jones, "[What's Fight Club Without the Fighting?](#)" Timothy McSweeney's Internet Tendency: Dispatches From the Capital: Dispatch 6, January 8, 2010.

Susan Hines, "Leftovers: In Washington, D.C., castoff tires and spare dirt have become a skatepark,," Landscape Architecture, Volume 95, no. 8 (August 2005): 38-43.

Dave McKenna, "Cheap Skates," Washington City Paper, December 17, 2004. 22.

TECHNICAL EXPERTISE AND CAN-DO

Wood

Operational and safety knowledge and experience with a variety of woodworking power tools, such as: table, radial-arm, jig, saws-all, chainsaw, scroll saw, panel saw and band saws; planers; drills; routers, and sanders.
Experienced in routine maintenance and trouble shooting with all equipment listed above.

Metal Fabrication

Operational and safety knowledge and experience with a wide variety of metal equipment processes such as oxygen-acetylene torch cutting, bending, welding, brazing, stick/arc welding MIG, spot welding, plasma cutting, riveting, with aluminum, steel, and stainless steel.
Also proficiently skilled with Beverly shear, Tennsmith shear, brake/ bender, portable bandsaw, blast cabinet, rollers for bar stock and sheet goods, metal chop-saw, bandsaws, grinders, and finishing tools.

Stone

Carving experience, cutting, shaping, and drilling

Concrete

Mold making, casting, surface finishing, experience with ferro-cement and large-scale work design build on site.

Mold Making and Casting

Plaster molds, rubber blanket and block molds, casting plastics, foams, rubber, press casting, resins and fiberglass, alginate and body casting

Printmaking Studio

Provides routine preventative and corrective maintenance to Printmaking presses, paper beaters, vacuum forms, screens, pressure washers with Printmaking faculty and staff

Safety

Safety conscious of self and others, first aid and CPR trained, fire extinguisher training, respirator training, forklift certified

Skate, all terrains and surfaces

REFERENCES

Tom Ashcraft, Professor, Sculpture Division Director, School of Art, George Mason University, Fairfax, VA
Phone, (703) 993-4575 Email: tashcraf@gmu.edu

Suzanne Carbonneau, Professor, School of Art, George Mason University, Fairfax, VA
Phone, (202) 256-7832 Email: scarbonn@gmu.edu

Peter Winant, Director, School of Art, George Mason University, Fairfax, VA
Phone, (703) 993-8385 Email: pwinant@gmu.edu

Garth Ross, Yale Schwarzman Center Executive Director
Phone, (202) 438-7725 Email: garth.ross@yale.edu

Joshua Silver, Lead Planner for Strategic Initiatives and Partnerships District of Columbia Office of Planning
Phone, (339) 243-0212 Email: joshua.silver@dc.gov or jdsilver76@gmail.com

Diana Ezerins, Director of Public Programs for the Kennedy Center
Phone, (301) 268-2574 Email: dmezerins@kennedy-center.org