

Magazine Journalism Coursework Samples

Six Samples

Outline Sample

Christina Rodriguez

Intro:

With the changing of seasons comes the changing of city government officials. One may not be aware of this change even happening because it may run in the background of their lives, like the changing of the seasons, inevitable, but something that always happens anyway and has nominal effect in their lives. What one fails to realize however is that when there are not enough voters going out to the polls during the primaries to determine the candidates for the November elections, there is a need to have run-off elections to determine who out of the closest two candidates will get to be on the ballot for November. In one's opinion, one may think that why are run-offs necessary if we have the primaries? The answer is simple, not enough people came out to vote the first time. We need a second election to determine who the candidates will be for each party. The real question is why people didn't come out in the first place.

I will talk about the recent races, a little bit about the candidates and the positions they are running for and how they are vital to the way the city runs.

I plan on switching back and forth between the comments of New York City residents and the comments from different city agencies that deal with the voting process and elections.

When speaking to the people, I am going to ask the following questions:

About the Primaries:

- Were you aware of when the primaries were?
- Were you aware of what the positions that were being voted on were or who were the candidates for each party?
- Did you receive any literature on the primaries, the voting process or on the candidates in the mail?
- Did you go vote in the primaries?
- If you did not, why didn't you?
- Do you care about these races?
- Do you hear about them in the news and take the time to see what they are?

About the Run-offs:

- Were you aware of when the Run-offs were?
- Were you aware of what the positions that were being voted on were or who were the candidates for each party?
- Did you receive any literature on the run-offs, the voting process or on the candidates in the mail?
- Did you go vote in the run-offs?
- If you did go and vote, why did you vote for the run-offs, but not the primaries?

- If you did not, why didn't you?
- Do you care about these races?
- Do you hear about them in the news and take the time to see what they are?
- Did you notice if there was more advertising from the candidates in the days leading to the run-off elections?
- Do you think run-offs are necessary?

For city government agencies that are in charge of elections and the voting process, I would go to the Board of Elections, the League of Women Voters, the Voters Assistance Commission, the Campaign Finance Board, the campaign offices of some of the candidates and if all possible, the candidates themselves or someone who represents them in the press.

When talking to these agencies and boards, I would ask for statistics on who voted in the primaries and the run-offs. I would also ask the following questions:

- What was the campaign strategy for the candidates?
- How often did they speak to the people?
- How much literature was sent out about voting, the elections and the candidates?
- Who was the lowest percentage age group and ethnicity that voted in the primaries and did they increase for the run-offs?
- What efforts were made to make sure people got out to the polls for the run-offs?
- Do you believe that run-offs are necessary? Do they take much out of the city's budget to run?
- What efforts were not made for the primaries that should have been made to get voters out there?

I would also take my questions to the popular social networks and see what people have to say there. During the days before the primaries and the run-offs, I did see people try to let others know about the elections and the candidates. Being that most people in college and beyond are always on their social networking sites, I think it would be a good opportunity to get a discussion going and as many opinions as possible.

Conclusion:

Many people may think it's a waste of time to vote. They may say that they don't have the time or the knowledge of the candidates or the positions they are running for. They may even say that this will not affect them. However, these city government positions are vital to the way the city runs and how we resolve issues and spend our money here in New York City. More education about these positions and the elections are needed so that more people can go and vote in the primaries and lead to conclusive results instead of there being low percentages at the polls and creating a need for run-off elections. Many people may dislike the hassle of going to vote on the days of these elections, but they have to realize that if they go the first time around, they would prevent having to take another day with elections like the run-offs. It saves time and energy for the big elections in November, when we finally decide who will run these offices.

Kim Addonizio Book Review

For a lover of the arts, there is a certain intensity you feel when you pick up something that amazes you. Whether you are leafing through a book in Barnes and Noble or listening to samples of new CD releases at your local Target, there is a moment where your life temporarily stops and the world around you grows quiet.

Your heart starts to beat along to the words "Oh My God!" running rapidly through your head and your eyes temporarily shift out of focus, much like the moment you experience climax in a moment of extreme pleasure. There is a part of you that wants to look away or close your ears to this mind blowing discovery and there is a part of you that can't believe that it even exists.

How could something this breathtaking be a part of this world, just sitting here, waiting for me to pick it up?, you wonder. This so amazing/wonderful/magnificent and any other word you can come up with along those same lines. If it is something that you yourself practice as a craft, you wonder how you can become as brilliant as that. This is the way you want or wish to write/sing/act or whatever it is you do or want to do.

You wonder how did you live your life before you picked up this book/CD/film or whatever it is and you know that you would do anything for it, whether you have to beg, borrow or steal for it. All you know is that it just changed your life and your view of the world will never be the same again.

Lucifer at the Starlite by Kim Addonizio is one of those books. You can flip through the pages and find a line or a poem that will take your breath away and vibrate through your soul hours after you read it.

Addonizio is bold with her word choices, never being sleezy and crude, but never hiding behind the veil of innocence. She talks about subjects that people may have desensitize themselves to or may have forgotten. For instance, she writes about the tsunami that happened back in 2004. She reminds us of the war still going on in Iraq. Addonizio has us remember the little old lady sitting in a home or the old man sitting on the porch while she plays a blues song the harmonica. You may learn about an ex-marine who tells you what men "really want" or a man with a prosthetic leg whom she used to have relations with. You never know who you will meet along the way, but one thing is for sure is that you might even meet Lucifer, looking to seize the day and all that happens in it. And you certainly meet Kim.

This is Addonizio's fifth collection of poetry. She also has two non-fiction books on how to write poetry, one being out since the beginning of the summer called *Ordinary Genius*, and she has two novels. This collection consists of poems that have already seen the pages of literary magazines like the *American Poetry Review*, *the Harvard Review*, *Barrow Street* and *Agni*. One poem has made an appearance as early as 2006, in appearing in the *Best American Poetry 2006*, edited by Billy Collins.

Addonizio delivers a collection of poetry that reminds of us the good and evil sides of the world. You will receive moments of clarity within the world and the self, while seeing

the crass view of some of the evils that lurk in the shadows of every well-intentioned good moment. Though this book is a short read, with only about 96 pages, they are pages that make you look at what you read over and over again, to make sure you really just read what you thought you read.

The title poem, *Lucifer at the Starlite*, is a modern take on a poem by George Meredith called *Lucifer in Starlite*. Addonizio's poem first appeared in the Summer 2007 edition of *The Threepenny Review*. Take a look at both of the poems below:

Lucifer In Starlight

by George Meredith

On a starred night Prince Lucifer uprose.
Tired of his dark dominion swung the fiend
Above the rolling ball in cloud part screened,
Where sinners hugged their spectre of repose.
Poor prey to his hot fit of pride were those.
And now upon his western wing he leaned,
Now his huge bulk o'er Afric's sands careened,
Now the black planet shadowed Arctic snows.
Soaring through wider zones that pricked his scars
With memory of the old revolt from Awe,
He reached a middle height, and at the stars,
Which are the brain of heaven, he looked, and sank.
Around the ancient track marched, rank on rank,
The army of unalterable law.

Here is Addonizio's take on it.

Lucifer at the Starlite

—after George Meredith

Here's my bright idea for life on earth:
better management. The CEO
has lost touch with the details. I'm worth
as much, but I care; I come down here, I show
my face, I'm a real regular. A toast:
To our boys and girls in the war, grinding
through sand, to everybody here, our host
who's mostly mist, like methane rising
from retreating ice shelves. Put me in command.
For every town, we'll have a marching band.
For each thoroughbred, a comfortable stable;
for each worker, a place beneath the table.
For every forward step a stumbling.
A shadow over every starlit thing.

Both resonant and paint a pretty picture of the intentions of the Prince of Darkness, but Addonizio not only adds a bit of comic relief, but a quick and simple 'here I am' persona while sketching metaphors that the average reader wouldn't see and only the best of the best writers could ever think of. Addonizio leaves her mark on the 'initial-scarred tabletop' of the world.

Draft Example for
1000 Word Piece

Christina Rodriguez
Draft One

Have you ever thought about how life would be without the worry of harassment? Instead of worrying about if someone will grab you inappropriately on a crowded train or having someone verbally assault you while you are on the bus, you can peacefully be on your way to and from home, work, school and social activities. What if there was a solution to that? In other countries, there are.

Recently in the news, there was an article in the New York Times about how India is solving the problem of harassment during the daily commute. For years, the working women of India and young women who attend school in India have been harassed by men who do not like the idea of women being independent and educated. The trip to work or school was nearly unbearable and even though the government has tried to stop harassment with security and giving the women their own cars on the trains, nothing has been that effective.

That has changed recently in four major cities of India with eight trains. These eight trains are called the Ladies Special and are female-only commuter trains. No men are allowed on the train at all. The trains have female ticket agents and security. They are cleaner, safer and less crowded than the regular commuter trains and have made the women who get to ride them feel safe and content. Men still try to cause problems for the trains by writing profanities on the cars, trying to board and even going as far as urinating on the cars. But these trains and the people working with them are doing everything possible to make sure that these trains stay safe.

The women of the United States are lucky to not receive as much grief. However, there is still harassment on public transportation and women have to make sure to be cautious, especially at night. What if the women of the U.S. didn't have to worry about that? What if we started a program similar to India's in a major city like New York? Would it be beneficial and stop the harassment that happens on public transportation in the U.S.? Or would it create a further gender divide?

This question has been presented recently to residents of the five boroughs of New York City and even some former New York City residents. In general, the idea was liked for the women of India, but was thought of as impractical for cities in the U.S.

Justin Lin, a senior at Brooklyn College, thinks that "Until now, I couldn't think of anything worse than the MTA fare hike. Well, technically speaking, I didn't think of this either, but it's real bad. I don't see any reason to have a female-only commuter train. Based on the New York Times article, it may seem like a good idea, but just because it works there [India], doesn't mean it'll work here."

"Plus I don't think it's safer. If anything, it's less safe because there could be rapists on the prowl who would think, "Holy fuck, it's only females on those trains, no guys gonna stop me if I go and rape them!" proclaims Lin.

"I also don't think it would stop harassment that happens on transportation," said Lin.

Shem Sempath, a former Queens resident who now lives in North Carolina and is of India descent, thinks that it wouldn't be much progress in the United States because of the different lifestyles of Indian and American women nor would it be cost effective. "It really wouldn't be progress. The lifestyle is completely different. Men over there just go

after women and women don't or can't do anything about it. And I don't think they care about separate trains.”

“Over here it's different. Women want to be treated equally. Also, this idea sounds like it's going to cost money. Something better than female only commuter trains would be more police officers at subway stations. I think that would stop harassment more effectively,” said a thoughtful Sempath.

Cherisse Raghoo, senior at Brooklyn College, like the idea for India but points out something not mentioned in the article but, should be taken into consideration. “I like the idea for the trains in India because of the sexual harassment problems over there that they outlined in the article. The women-only vehicle could be targeted however. As soon as the passengers get off, they could be in harm's way. Sure the ride would be okay, but what would safeguard them when they get off? Hopefully that's where law enforcement comes in to make sure that these women get home safe.”

“I applaud their government for this effort in improving the lives of women, its something they're trying; and if it doesn't work out, maybe they'll build on it somehow. Those who oppose to this program in the article need to come up with a better idea instead of chewing it out completely,” said Raghoo.

Shobhana Bipat, a sophomore who attends the Borough of Manhattan Community College and travels on the train from South Ozone Park, Queens to Chambers Street in Lower Manhattan, points out a flaw in the proposed idea for the U.S. “I don't think there is a reason for female only commuter trains in cities like New York. Yes, there are cases of harassment, but that behavior is not accepted over here and it is not as plentiful either.

Also, the point seems null if the doors of the "Women Only" train open and empty into a mixed gendered platform. Harassment happens everywhere.”

“In my opinion, it happens more on the street and in the workplace than on public transportation. The only way to stop it would be to separate the men from the women in all aspects of life; and even so, harassment, sexual or another, goes on between people of the same gender as well.”

“Furthermore, I think it would be a step back for women in regards to the efforts of everyone who has ever participated in the women’s rights movement. It may be a step forward for the women in India, but it just isn't something that is needed in the U.S.,” said Bipat.

Magazine Profile Sample

Christina Rodriguez

If you have ever sat down and had a conversation with Joanne Keo before or after class, you would think that she is somewhat of a perfectionist, always worried about how she is doing with her studies. Once you get to know Joanne a little better, you would discover that she is only a recovering perfectionist.

Keo is a pretty 20-year-old college sophomore whose motto is "Play hard, work hard." She is a journalism major with a minor in computer science. Keo sees herself as Josie Geller, the journalist posing as a student for a story, from her favorite movie, "Never Been Kissed." Like the character, Keo finds herself discovering a new confidence in her pursuit towards a journalism career.

Improving herself, physically and mentally, is important to Keo. Most would not guess that Keo is on a diet and that working out consumes most of her life. She eats about six small meals a day and goes to work out on weekday afternoons and weekend mornings before breakfast. Today, she had three boiled eggs, some spinach and string cheese for her morning meal. "I have to think of myself as a superhero when it comes to training," said Keo. It helps her get through the temptations of making the wrong food choices and going back to what she calls her "fatass eating."

Ninety percent of her goal to have her body the way she wants it is complete. To her, each day she gets closer to her goal is like a little quiz to pass. Keo will happily make a muscle with her arm and have you feel the firm bump while she beams proudly. While the Bronx resident is proud of her progress in both her education and personal life, she does realize that for most of her life, she has secured herself too much and did not allow herself to make mistakes. She was always been determined to be perfect and failure was not an option.

Keo was obsessed with getting good grades. "There is no such thing as a limit to learning," said Keo, but she has been learning that it's okay to relax your standards and go after what you want without killing yourself along the way. She says that she owes the continuing pursuit of that lesson to her support system, which for her is her boyfriend, a guy who is the opposite of her, especially when it comes to their diets. Unlike Keo, her boyfriend eats once a day and when he eats, it's late at night and he eats "like a monkey."

Between school, her diet and her personal life, Keo finds her pursuit of life to be fulfilling. She said that, "It's like opening up a bottle of water and pouring it into a cup, letting it flow and become full."

Magazine Profile: Ingrid Newkirk

Christina Rodriguez
Ingrid Newkirk Profile

“There are so many perceptions of who I am. I am a devil, I am a selfless person. Everybody has whatever image they impose on me. If I had one wish, I would have all the cruelty in the world to any living being go away.”

Ingrid Newkirk wears many different faces in public. She has supporters and enemies in her line of work. She is a hero and a villain. One does not know whom to expect when they meet Ingrid Newkirk.

Many have heard of her organization “PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals)”. Others have heard about her tactics to spread awareness for animal rights, whether it is shocking commercials and ads or throwing paint on people who are wearing fur.

People have read and heard the stories from the media or have seen the many websites that choose certain parts of interviews or profiles about her and PETA and that imply intentions that are not pure. Any way you put it; you know Ingrid Newkirk has a reputation. But few realize that Ingrid Newkirk also has a story.

She was born on June 11, 1949 in Surrey, England. She was on European soil until the age of seven, when her family moved to New Delhi, India. When she was eighteen, her family moved to Florida, due to her father's work in the United States Air Force. By the age of twenty-one, she was in Maryland, where her life as an animal rights activist would bloom. She now resides in Washington and runs PETA in Norfolk, Virginia.

To know who Ingrid Newkirk is, is to first know what PETA is. According to the PETA website, “People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) is an international nonprofit charitable organization based in Norfolk, Virginia, with affiliates in the United Kingdom, Germany, the Netherlands, India, and the Asia-Pacific Region.

Founded in 1980, PETA is dedicated to establishing and defending the rights of all animals. PETA operates under the simple principle that animals are not ours to eat, wear, experiment on, or use for entertainment. PETA educates policymakers and the public about animal abuse and promotes kind treatment of animals.”

This has been Newkirk's life for the past twenty-nine years. She has created campaigns that have shocked people like the “I rather be naked than wear fur” campaign. She has also created shocking television ads like the one that shows how we are killing dogs in pounds by not adopting, by showing a family who ends up adopting a dead dog in a body bag. Newkirk's mission has always been about peace for animals. “Humans always talk about peace, yet we wage war on wild animals without value to their life,” said Newkirk. “We strive so hard to find something that separates us, to make us the superior being.”

She was twenty-one when she gave her life to the lives of animals. Before then, she did some of the things that she is against today. She ate meat. She wore fur.

“My family did like animals – but we ate them, we ate them all,” said Newkirk. But her life was changed when she found kittens that her neighbor had abandoned and took them to an animal shelter. What she saw there horrified her enough to get a job cleaning kennels and start investigating the abuse that animals went through in these places. And from this, the idea of PETA came about.

It took some time, however, for her to stop eating animals. “I stopped eating animals almost one at a time,” said Newkirk. She started off taking small steps. “I first stopped eating snails. I liked snails in garlic, she said. “Going home I put the bags of snails on the seat. I got the feeling that I was being watched.”

“I looked over and the neck of the bag had been opened. All these snails had come up towards the edge of the bag and they were looking up. I thought, ‘For God’s sakes.’ So I let them loose,” said Newkirk.

Her kindness towards animals and her reaction towards how people treat them have always been in her. As with any person who feels strongly about something, Newkirk gets angry. She gets angry when a deeply held belief is challenged. “I am not a particularly timid person, if I believe in something I am pretty aggressive,” Newkirk said.

Even at the age of eight, she would not take the injustice of an animal being hurt. In India, a bull was pulling a cart along the highway when it fell over. The owner started to beat the bull with a stick. The young Newkirk was so angered by this that she went and wrestled the stick away from the man.

When she was in Washington as an adult, she had seen a man choking a Doberman. She had told him to stop, but the man continued to choke the dog. So Newkirk hit him. “He stopped,” said Newkirk of the man’s reaction. Violence is not always the answer, but animals are Newkirk’s life.

There are not too many people in the world who live for their passion almost 24-7. There are also not too many people who would make up a will that suggest what should be done with their body parts when they die in the name of activism. For example, Newkirk wants her feet turned into umbrella stands and her skin used as leather for wallets.

Newkirk had a near death experience when she was on an airplane years ago, when a tornado had hit the area where her plane was flying in the Carolinas.

“Damn – if I had died, my activism would have been over,” said Newkirk of her feelings towards the experience. “So I started to think what could I do...If my body is still around I won’t need it and maybe I could use it to continue the activism.” This is when Newkirk started thinking of ways she could continue her work after death. This is when her infamous will came to life.

But there is more to Newkirk than her life with PETA. While she seems to conceal who she is personally, there are signs of who she is behind her constant talk of work.

Newkirk's daily routine starts early, at ten past five in the morning. "I look at BBC news every morning to see if there is something that we can jump on top of that might have an animal message," said Newkirk. She has breakfast which sometimes has faken bacon and usually is accompanied by tea. Until she is ready for bed, she answers her e-mail after a day of working on projects with PETA.

When she was young, Newkirk was studying to be a stockbroker when her life of activism emerged. "I got lost," said Newkirk of her career choice.

While she is certainly not timid, Newkirk is soft-spoken. This may be one of the most surprising aspects of meeting Newkirk. Her voice does not match the monster that she made out to be by the media and those against her work. Her voice is as soothing as her regular cup of tea.

Her favorite food since turning vegan is wheat of meat and she enjoys making a meal of fake fried chicken with jalapeños. Another thing among her favorites is her passion for auto-racing, a love equal to her love for animals.

Newkirk is a lover of words. You can find her admiration and use of literature in her lectures. One of her favorite pastimes is doing crossword puzzles. Her love for words is even implied in the name of her favorite book which is "Yemen: Travels in Dictionary Land" by Tim MacKintosh-Smith.

"I am not religious," Newkirk has stated. "I was taught to support the belief of God. If there is a God, it must be a pretty mean God."

She would, however, meet the most prominent figure in Christianity, if given the opportunity to meet anyone in the world, dead or alive. "Gosh, that's a toughie... maybe Jesus," Newkirk mused. "He was an interesting man."

Happiness for Newkirk is a victory in her work. Her victories are celebrated in small ways however. You wouldn't find her having a party. She would be in bed, doing a crossword puzzle while having a cup of tea.

She will complain that she is boring. Others may see her as crazy. Newkirk's public image and her private life may always blur with each other, with images of the woman who wants to have her feet turned into umbrella stands and the woman who enjoys crossword puzzles and auto-racing. At the end of the day, it cannot be disputed that Ingrid Newkirk has passion for her work, the only fact that anyone should need to know about who she is publicly or privately.

Magazine Article: Storefront Art

Christina Rodriguez

Why pay an entrance fee to the Museum of Modern Art to find art? You can find works of art right in your own backyard, while you walk around or shop in the streets of Manhattan or Brooklyn. Since the beginning of the economic recession, there have been more closed down stores with "For Rent" signs hanging from their doors or on top of boarded up windows, left barren and taking up space. Building owners are losing money as the empty space they own stays unoccupied.

They have been trying out solutions such as renting out the space to temporary stores that close as quickly as they opened, still leaving the space empty most of the time. With this problem, a unique solution has transpired. A temporary store may not attract people, but a store front filled with art, sometimes opening up into a small art gallery will at least pique their curiosities.

There are organizations, programs and artists willing to fill these empty spaces. Often, these empty store fronts are the inspiration for these projects.

While walking along Madison Avenue one day, Manon Slome was peering into vacant storefronts and idle stores with sales people pretending to tidy up piles of clothes, waiting to be bought. She started to think about everything that has been happening with the economic crisis and started to dream up an exhibition called "Empty". She had thought, why not use stores like these and ones that have become vacant.

From there, the exhibition went from being called "Empty" to "No Longer Empty", bringing life and creativity back into these blighted buildings with art. It also increased traffic in the area, which helped the local merchants.

The first exhibition was in an old tackle and bait store at the Chelsea Hotel this last June. Since then, there has been a tremendous and positive response to the organization. There have been three other exhibitions and they have an upcoming one in December. The young organization has programming planned until March and has even been invited to fill up the store front of one building.

"One building has invited us to take possession of their store in late March as a way of launching it and making the public aware of it. It's a nice ratification of what we are doing now," said Slome.

The exhibitions are themed and are constructed along the way. No Longer Empty's first exhibit had a seaside theme, for the space was an old fish and bait store.

"The idea of the exhibition comes from the prior use of the store or the neighborhood. We focus on the kind of show we want to do and then we look for the artists whose work would be a fit for it," said Slome.

Once artists are found, they come in and install their work. Most of the expenses are privately funded and people volunteer time, supplies and of course, art which makes the exhibitions low cost events. The spaces are usually donated to No Longer Empty rent-free by the landlords.

The artists who exhibit with No Longer Empty come from all over the world and are in different mediums of art. The experience is usually helpful to their career and leads to other projects and other experiences.

For Tara de la Garza, she gained valuable connections to the art world. De la Garza is a graphic designer and artist who has also become a curator at No Longer Empty. She has worked with Slome in various projects such as an online exhibit called Aestheticsofterror.com and a catalogue of a project at the Chelsea Art Museum called "The Incomplete". "Having various skill sets and passions has really helped with this project," De la Garza said.

"This has helped my art career in intangible ways," said de la Garza. "The network created is invaluable. This is something that would take a lot longer to build up without this project. I have a card file of arts industry people now that I can invite to my next opening. Meeting people without giving them a hard sell about my personal projects makes them feel more comfortable about being in the presence of an artist."

De la Garza's network offers an audience and a web of expertise that most artists dream of obtaining while fine tuning their craft.

"I now have a great studio through contacts made through No Longer Empty. I have also exhibited my work in one of their shows and I have a show coming up at Chashama, which is indirectly due to our association," said de la Garza. "I can now invite people to my studio who have a wonderful knowledge of the arts industry who will give me advice on my progress. I feel more connected to a world that is hard to break in to."

As being a member of the No Longer Empty team, de la Garza has some insight to the process of finding a store front and how an exhibit changes the neighborhood it is in.

"Finding the storefronts usually involves a sixth degree of separation. Someone has dinner with someone, who knows someone who owns a vacant storefront. It is very hard to get people enthusiastic about your project through cold calling," said de la Garza. "I think it is getting easier though as realtors and landlords realize the benefit to their spaces being open and on display rather than shuttered up."

The No Longer Empty projects brighten up the neighborhoods they are in and for de la Garza, this is a satisfying experience.

"This is also great for the neighborhoods as it brings a sense of optimism to a neighborhood. I am seeing that at the moment with a show I am curating at 223 East Broadway that opens next Thursday (Nov.12). I have organized a few projects there

already and the reception has been staggering - bringing art to areas where people don't normally see it is a very rewarding process."

De la Garza has found that meeting others while doing these projects a great experience and how it brings in people quite literally into her work.

"Meeting some extremely talented artists and art workers has been a great experience. Also the reaction and enthusiasm of people in neighborhoods where people don't necessarily go out of their way to see art normally," said de la Garza.

"I am working on a project where I take photos of passersby By The Light (also the name of the exhibit) of their cell phone. This brings locals into the art space and I also project their images onto the wall. The sense of community this creates is exciting. It makes art accessible to many."

This experience has taught de la Garza about these spontaneous, but thought-out pieces and hopes that the trend will continue.

"This project has shown me that you don't need to have a big budget and a lot of lead time to create something amazing. You just need lots of energy and creativity and that is infectious," said de la Garza. "Artists need a forum for their work and this is a wonderful and unconventional way of displaying it."

De la Garza believes that No Longer Empty's exhibits makes artists rise up the challenge of using their medium of art to bring together a theme.

"I hope this becomes the norm. This is an unconstricted way of showing your work," said de la Garza. "Theme-based shows are also good for making an artist do work that may be a little different from their normal practice and therefore challenges them in different ways."

Amanda Browder became connected with No Longer Empty through another artist who was in one of the last exhibitions with her at an old belt factory on Bergen Street in Brooklyn. She has had a great experience, with meeting other artists and volunteers and with participating in the panel discussions that No Longer Empty occasionally host. She sums up how this has helped her career with three quick points.

"Press, conversation and a place to see my work," said Browder. "The panel discussion about public art in the non-traditional manner was very helpful. I work with large scale pieces outdoors that interact with community efforts and I was able to meet some new people in the neighborhood that are interested in similar processes."

A lot of Browder's work was dependent on the location. She explains what she used and why it went well with how she does art.

"A lot of my work is site specific, and after speaking with Manon, the curator, we both agreed that it would be great to incorporate the belt material stored on the third floor of the warehouse," said Browder.

"I work with recycled materials, specifically fabrics. The process of taking a space that is unused and making into something interesting has been a parallel goal for me as an art maker. Instead of purchasing (consuming) more items to make large sculptural gestures I appreciate the process of recycling, reusing and recontextualizing objects in the everyday that might not be used traditionally for art making."

Browder believes that filling up store fronts will continue to be a trend in New York City and that it works well with the cityscape. The recession has made the art world in New York go beyond the typical places you would find it at.

"Chelsea has become shaken by the recession," said Browder. "Artists, curators, and critics are looking outside of the "hub" of the commercial art scene to find shows to attend and write about. The decentralization of the art scene has given these types of projects more valor and credibility."

Browder is confident that New York City can make projects like No Longer Empty successful and stand out from the art scene in other states.

"I think New York City is a place where this can flourish. Other cities such as Chicago or LA have a more disparate scene, and it's more difficult to attract this much attention to a collection of shows in one city at different locations. It proves that just "doing it!" can be just as successful," said Browder.

Guerra de la Paz is a Cuban born duo that live and work in Miami, Florida. The artists, Alain Guerra and Neraldo de la Paz, use pieces of clothing in their work, making abstract sculptures with them. They enjoyed the exposure and opportunity that working with No Longer Empty has given them. They are even doing another project because of the connection.

"It exposed our work to a new audience of curators, collectors artists and the public. Exposure is an important factor to the livelihood of a work of art and an artist."

"We are doing a special project in Miami titled "Beyond the Daily Life" with Julian Navarro, who was one of the associate curators for No Longer Empty."

Guerra de la Paz had to fly into New York from Miami. From there, they had an incredible job ahead of them.

"We had to pick up and transport 83 heavy extra strength garbage bags filled with segregated color garments that were in storage in Brooklyn," said de la Paz. "These garments composed Tribute, which is the sculptural installation of solid color coded

garments. The installation of the piece took three days. Tribute is a color coded solid mound of loose garments where each single item became part of the whole."

The challenge of putting the piece together did not undermine the final product.

"While installing a work in unconventional environments is challenging, however, it is magical when the space and the work become one and reinforce each other."

Guerra de la Paz is a big believer in making art an experience that happens outside of the galleries. They believe that a trend like this one is important to art.

"It is important to do exhibitions out of the standard art environment like galleries and museums. It makes the art experience a part of everyday life. Art is everywhere," said de la Paz. "We believe it is important for artists to exhibit their work wherever they feel it needs to be seen and unconventional venues are often the most memorable ones."

There are other organizations that have been doing projects similar to No Longer Empty. The MetroTech Business Improvement District (MetroTech BID) created the Willoughby Windows Project in Brooklyn. Twelve vacant store fronts on Willoughby Street were filled with art. MetroTech BID worked along with the AdHoc Art Gallery to create these exhibitions. Unlike the No Longer Empty projects, Willoughby Windows is only a temporary solution until the spaces are renovated and sold.

"It's just a solution to enliven a dead block," said Catherine Hickey, who is involved with the project.

Hickey does not believe that this is something that will continue on in the art community, though she does recognize the trend of adapting art into empty retail storefronts.

"It's a temporary trend. I don't see too much of a long term coming out of it because at the end of the day, property owners want rent. It's given to artists to help reactivate the retail space, but I don't think it's a solution to a lack of retail," said Hickey.

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Whether this is a trend that stays or goes with the coming of new businesses, projects like No Longer Empty and the Willoughby Windows Project have inspired many artists who have been able to participate. The ability to showcase their art and help transform a vacant space into a full masterpiece from scratch is the most liberating element of the experience.

Guido Albi Marini, an artist who works and lives in Italy, loved the freedom it gave him. He felt that doing projects like "No Longer Empty" is an experience that every artist should do if they get the opportunity.

"Do your art because you love it and do it only where you are free to do it," said Marini.
"Send your message around as much as you can and something will happen. This is magic."