

Notes In The Balloon with the yes/no boxes

Results

Dozens of pedestrians enjoyed the balloon popping installation on Saturday evening. A major contribution to the large turnout was the pleasant, sunny weather. We directly invited people to engage with the play installation by asking, “Do you want to play by popping a balloon?” More than half of the pedestrians responded positively to this invitation. We also allowed passersby to discover the play on their own without the vocal prompt by just reading the sign. Some reactions to the installation included:

- “Popping balloons feels really good!”
- “I thought this was a marriage proposal. What is this?”
- “I’m scared to pop a balloon and I don’t know why!”
- “This is fun! Can I pop another?”

After we finished the installation, we compiled the “Yes” and “No” answers and learned a great deal about the preferences people have about the U-District. Through the playing process, we got 164 note feedbacks, and had further understanding about people’s concerns for the U-District.

Process and Construction

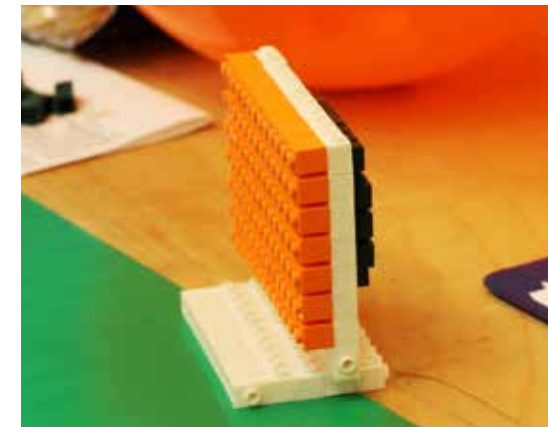
We inflated 300 balloons and covered approximately 30 linear feet of a construction fence with signs inviting pedestrians to pop the balloons. We wanted to activate play at the corner of the street by asking forty different “Yes” or “No” questions on small notes inside of the balloon. Some of these questions included:

- Do you feel safe walking in the U-District?
- Is the U-District a healthy place?
- Is the U-District a fun place to hang out?
- Is the U-District a good place to raise a family?

Passersby could answer the question on their note by placing their preference in a “Yes” or “No” box tied to the fence. We also decided to use green and orange balloons to symbolize the changing of the season from summer to autumn.



A conceptual drawing of the balloons at the site



A conceptual model designed with Legos

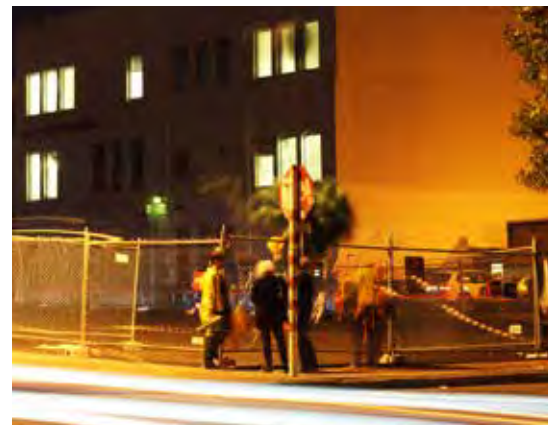
NOTE IN A BOX

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+ Sophie Glass + Fangyuan Hong + Hao Liang

Big Balloon Pop’n in the U-District

Our “Insight, In Site” urban play installation was located on the southwest corner of the future light rail station in the University District (43rd St and Brooklyn Ave). The arrival of the light rail to the U-District will dramatically alter the neighborhood’s character and economy. Already its construction has impacted the area: over the course of just a few months, a historic house, a bank, and a building all disappeared to make room for the light rail station.

For our play installation we wanted to capture the sense of change that is sweeping the U-District, particularly this area. By using balloons – and encouraging pedestrians to pop these balloons – we emphasized the ephemeral nature of the built environment in the U-District.



People longing for more balloons to play with



Reading a question after popping the balloon



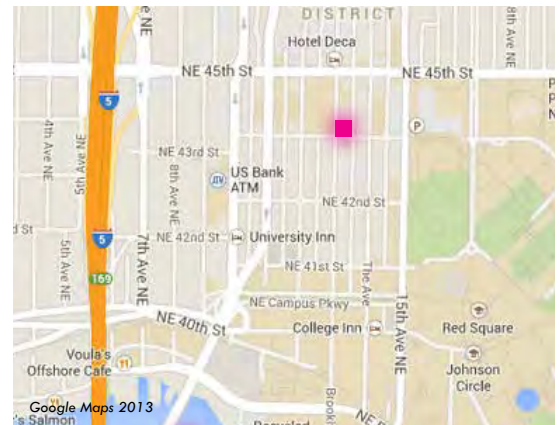
Curious people gather around to participate



A pickup truck brought the balloons to the site



300+ balloons were all inflated in studio



■ SITE: NE 43rd St & Brooklyn Ave