

The Proposal

Participatory art is defined as “...an approach to making art which engages public participation in the creative process.” This means letting them become co-authors, editors, and observers of the work.” This means that the art itself is incomplete without the input and participation of the audience. In my case, this means an invitation. An invitation to my peers and the larger Skidmore community to create a work of art with me.

Canadian communication theorist Marshall McLuhan once said “the medium is the message.” McLuhan was referring to media theory and television, but Luhran’s point still remains. It is to demonstrate the inherent communicational nature of censorship, and the importance of solidarity with all speech, even the speech we personally do not agree with. The choice to participate in my installation outlines an important truth about fighting against censorship. In order to avoid your own ideas being censored, you must fight for the rights of all.

GOAL

A work of community-based participatory performance art with the aim of illustrating the evils of censorship and the community building solidarity inheritance in the fight for free speech titled *The Solidarity Project (the Writing on the Wall)*

THE PROJECT

A table is set up in a very public location on campus. At the table, I sit, with a collection of pens and many strips of pastel colored paper. In front of me is a large clear fishbowl. To my right is a chalkboard (referred to as “the Wall”)

Students take a slip of pastel paper and fill out their own personal statement using the words “I believe...”

Then, they draw another person’s slip of paper from the fishbowl. They must write that stranger’s own personal anonymous statement, word-for-word on the Wall. After they have done so, they may submit their own statement to the fishbowl.

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

1. All statements must begin with the words “I believe...”
2. If you choose to transcribe another’s statement, you must write, as it is written on the slip, word for word.

3. You can choose to not participate in the project after reading the statement you must transcribe, but then you revoke your own right to have your statement added.
4. All statements will remain anonymous.
5. No statements will be removed from the fishbowl or the board unless the speech included in them is unprotected under the First Amendment or violates the Skidmore Code of Conduct (i.e. threats, defamation, ect)

FAQ:

Can political messages be included on the board?

Yes. As long as the statement begins with the sentence “I believe...” it can include any political message you wish. Or no political messages entirely. It can be about anything. You can make a political statement, or say that “I believe that pineapple should never belong on pizza.” Because this is performance participatory art, the public is involved in this creative process as well. Express yourself however you see fit.

What if someone writes something I find offensive?

The nature of this project means that it is very likely that you may not agree with, support, or even stomach everything that is written on the Wall. However, in the spirit of fighting against censorship for all, it is recommended that you submit something about your disagreement to the Wall yourself. You are welcome to write your own statement to be submitted that talks about why you find theirs to be offensive. This project is about conversation and speech, and that includes being critical towards speech we may disagree with.

Do I have to write the statement I drew from the fishbowl? I don't agree with what is being said.


You don't *have* to do anything. You can opt out at any time. But keep in mind that by refusing to write the statement you drew from the fishbowl on the Wall, you sacrifice your own sentence's placement on the Wall. If you disagree with the statement so intensely that you are willing to forgo your own opportunity to have your thoughts heard, that is fine. But in the nature of leaning fully into this discomfort and the project, I would encourage you to consider writing it anyway.

Can statements be removed from the Wall?

Not unless it violates the categories of speech unprotected under the First Amendment or Skidmore's Student Code of Conduct.

Estimated Budget and Needs

Item	Image	Link	Price	Description
Large glass fishbowl		https://a.co/d/a8NUzL4	\$20.49	Used to hold the pastel pieces of paper with people's statements. Participants will write a slip of their own, then draw one from the bowl to write on the Wall
Pastel packs of paper slips (Pack of 500)		https://a.co/d/ajGLRQU	\$11.99	Used for people to write their statements on, and will later be drawn from fishbowl. Comes with 500 sheets, will cut each paper into three strips, making a total number of possible strips 1500
Yardstick		https://a.co/d/6FM1AdD	\$13.19	Used for measuring, positioning of lines on board, and making sure the title is in a straight line

<p>Set of multicolored chalk markets (2)</p>		<p>https://a.co/d/aqAjn4S</p>	<p>\$26.99 x 2 = 53.98</p>	<p>Used for transferring statements on the paper onto the chalkboard. Markers are more advantageous than chalk due to their vibrancy and staying power.</p>
<p>Letter Stencils</p>		<p>https://a.co/d/6mOglyv</p>	<p>\$25.99</p>	<p>For writing the title at the top of the board. 12 inch stencils to be sure the letters can be seen</p>
<p>Custom Chalkboard</p>		<p>https://www.orkboard.com/pages/custom-chalkboards</p>	<p>Unknown, need to consult measurements</p>	<p>Surface for the Wall, will need to also consult company and revise this list after seeing if an easel or wall attachment is a better choice</p>
<p>Black felt-tip pens (2)</p>		<p>https://a.co/d/00YcNHC</p>	<p>\$8.99 x 2= \$17.98</p>	<p>Sold in a set of 24, want two sets. Used for writing on the strips of paper that will be submitted into the fishbowl. Will also be used to write/type the “rules of engagement”</p>

				on the poster board
Poster Board		https://a.co/d/7VxnhgP	\$17.99	Placed in front of the table/studio to show the rules and intention of the project.
Easel		https://a.co/d/emlBoiD	\$70.00	Easel to display the poster explaining rules of engagement.
			Total estimated budget: \$211.12	