ART WORKS: THE CREATION OF A CONTEMPORARY ART CENTER IN
JOHNSTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA

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Abstract

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The research collected in this thesis follows the development of a contemporary art center in a mostly rural, post-industrial city. While there are several similar and successful art centers across the country, there is very little written regarding their initial development. So, how does one go about creating an art center? Will the audience of the city affect the success? What about sustainability and governance?

The case study follows the first year of the contemporary art center called ART WORKS, located in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. Through direct observation, site visits, and interviews of individuals involved with the development, along with resident artists at the space, information was collected to provide examples of implementing a successful art center. While only time will tell if the center will survive, the ability to form partnerships with nearby universities, area organization, artists, and the community have provided strong roots. The creation of this art center has had a slow start but it would appear that it will continue to flourish and develop as a permanent institution of Johnstown’s redevelopment and growth.

Approved: _____________________________________________

Alison Colman

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CHAPTER 1: THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

Introduction

Why do we need places to see art? Why do we need places to create art? Why do we need places to learn more about art? Where are these places, and do people actually go there anymore? In larger, metropolitan cities, the arts are prevalent, from architecture to art galleries, but in small, more rural cities, the arts can be far and few. Larger cities have greater demographics of individuals, attracting a variety of livelihoods, and can be seen in sections, often referred to as neighborhoods, devoted to specific ethnic groups or lifestyles; these individuals bring with them a multitude of interests and backgrounds. What happens when smaller cities, where there is less of an influx of new individuals, try to introduce larger city ideals? The arts are an inevitable springboard for new ideas and inspiration but also for controversy. Would the introduction of a new art center in a community, that had nothing like it before, and located in a neighborhood of old ethnic traditions and new cultural redevelopment survive?

Purpose of the Study

The decision to study a developing art center in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, sparked great curiosity as the majority of my interest and focus in art education revolves primarily around community arts and the interaction between art centers (including museums) and the audiences they serve. My research is based on purely personal interest; I hope that my work will provide future knowledge and assistance to others who wish to develop new, or run existing art centers in similar communities. I want to give something back to the area
in which I spent my childhood and in which many of my early art experiences took place. However, this particular research was intriguing because I believed, especially at the beginning of my research, that a contemporary art center would not be able to take root. I wanted to see those doubts changed and supporting my assumption that the city was changing; that something I had hoped for so long could be accomplished and supported. My initial question, broad though it was, was the first thing I found myself saying out loud when I heard the initial news…“How do they expect to create an art center in Johnstown?”

I had worked and exhibited at several art centers and museums in both Johnstown and nearby Pittsburgh, so of course I was very interested when I heard about the development of a new, contemporary art center in September of 2005, just as I was beginning my graduate studies at Ohio University in Art Education. I was not sure where graduate school would take my husband and me after we were done, and returning to Pennsylvania, to Johnstown, did not seem all to appealing, primarily because there were few career opportunities in my particular field other than teaching in a public or private school. When I first heard about the plan for the contemporary art center, ART WORKS, I wanted to investigate possible career opportunities but the project itself was so intriguing; after all, I thought I knew Johnstown fairly well. My husband and I grew up near Johnstown and what I considered to be the “non-existent art world of the region”. My skepticism regarding the level of visual arts awareness in the region had always leaned towards a more negative viewpoint. When I think about exhibitions of contemporary art, I immediately think of various venues in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, such as the Mattress Factory, the Warhol, and Society for Contemporary Craft along with
the many galleries in Lawrenceville, but I never viewed Johnstown as a canvas for the contemporary art scene, or for that matter, any art scene. However, it now appeared that Johnstown had been changing; quietly and slowly under the radar. Perhaps, this could be a place I could return and work when I completed graduate school? Maybe there had been enough fresh minds and new faces that had relocated to Johnstown who would open more opportunities and experiences for both the arts and culture?

My parents, who would often mail newspaper clippings from the Tribune-Democrat, the local Johnstown newspaper, saw an article about ART WORKS and sent it to me. After I read the article, I visited the ART WORKS website and contacted Janie Leck-Grela who was at that time the current Director of ART WORKS. I received a quick and positive response to my initial email and Janie was eager to answer any questions I had for her; she invited me for a visit when my husband and I returned to Pennsylvania over the Thanksgiving holiday. A few weeks later, over the holiday break, I met with Janie and inquired about the ART WORKS project, which at this time was in its early infancy. Janie was excited to meet me, our backgrounds were similar: both from the Indiana University of Pennsylvania in Art Education, both artists, both having worked in museums and in education. Janie had recently returned to Johnstown from Phoenix, Arizona, with her husband and young daughter and commented that many individuals, who originally had moved out of the Johnstown area, in what was call the “brain-drain” phenomenon, which is the migration of our talented and educated young adults fleeing the area due to lack of jobs or resources had begun returning home with families in tow (Murtha Announces New Jobs, New Contracts for Area Businesses, 2004). Prior to the year my husband and I moved to Ohio, we began seeing this too, though it was very slow.
I remember reading articles in the daily newspaper that would feature community pieces about successful individuals, such as chefs, lawyers, businessmen, teachers, and etcetera. These individuals were returning home to Johnstown from the larger, urban and more metropolitan cities, of Philadelphia, New York and Chicago; individuals who had supported both arts and culture and who were now looking to support their livelihood in Johnstown or retire to a familiar community.

Call it bias, but I grew up around Johnstown and the majority of my family’s heritage is linked to the surrounding region. Visiting Johnstown as a child, I remember the Glosser building, which was the department store for the city; the steel mills before they were used for scrap yards, the Central Park area, and the various downtown shops with gifts and specialties. I also remember when the first Modern, public art came to Johnstown from sculptor James Wolfe in 1989. The large steel forms were his homage to the unique history of the city. In preparation of the artworks Wolfe lived in the city for a year to interact and research Johnstown’s inhabitants and their steel heritage. His sculptures are in various locations throughout the downtown area and the John Wolfe Sculpture Trail features steel sculptures along a two-mile trail on the hillside overlooking the city created from of pieces of steel found at the closed Bethlehem Steel plant. This trail is also boasted as the “first sculpture trail in the United States”, and though I have not been able to find anything that challenges this statement, I find it amusing that the trail is very rarely advertised or featured as an asset to the city (Johnstown Inclined Plane Walking Trails, 2006). I remember my parents taking me to see the works of art and I also remember the personal experience of hearing public’s reactions to the sculptures. Recalling the resistance and apathy to these pieces made me question the city’s
acceptance of a contemporary art center; wondering if enough time had passed to usher in change? While my research questions have changed and transformed over the past fifteen months, the information has continued to develop and grow, all the while surprising me with the outcomes. I wanted to see if it could be done, how it would be done, and what plan ART WORKS had for sustainability and a secure future in Johnstown.

Significance of Study

The city of Johnstown was founded in 1800 by Joseph Schantz, who immigrated from Switzerland in 1769; the anglicized name of Johns later replaced Schantz and thus creating 'Johnstown'. Upon arriving in Somerset County, which is directly south of current day Johnstown, Johns began farming and laying out plans for a city, which he would later give the name of Conemaugh. This name was borrowed from the name given by the Delaware Indians for the small river which ran through the area and meant "little otter" or "otter creek" (Muson, 1989). Four years later, this northern section of Somerset County was sectioned off to create the current Cambria County, but unfortunately this meant that the city was now in the southern end of the new county and not in a position to serve as the proposed county seat, much to Johns' disappointment (Wallace, Gillespie, Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record, & America's Industrial Heritage Project, 1989). Though not located in a central part of the newly formed county, nor the county seat, the city prospered over the next seventy years through the canal era, the railroad, and with industry in both iron and steel. As the city became connected with the rest of the east coast and other parts of Pennsylvania, more
individuals migrated to the city. In the beginning, German and Swedish labor forces were prevalent in the valley, followed by the Irish, Welsh and Scottish, and Jewish immigrants; the 1870s, brought an influx of Eastern and Central European immigrants to Johnstown (Muson, 1989). African Americans had lived and worked in Johnstown prior to 1840, but the majority migrated to the city during the 1920s (Muson, 1989).

Despite the rapid growth and recognition of its iron and steel producing capabilities of the past, the city is more famously known for its tragedy; even the "world's steepest vernacular incline plane" pales in comparison (Johnstown Inclined Plane Walking Trails, 2006). No matter where you are, you can usually announce that you are from Johnstown and inevitably someone will respond with the word 'flood'. Johnstown, also known as 'flood city' by the locals, is known for its three devastating floods which destroyed the city; the most horrific of these was the 1889 flood, in which twenty millions tons of water crashed upon the city killing over 2,200 people (Muson, 1989). Devastation washed over the city again in 1936, and once more in 1977. As each wave of water brought destruction to the city and its inhabitants, each incident brought a new opportunity to rebuild the city. However, Johnstown’s history also includes lighter moments as well; does the high school football drama All the Right Moves starring a young Tom Cruise sound familiar? Bruce Springsteen even sang about the city, its steel industry, and the union workers in his song entitled The River. Steel, sports, and traditions were an important component of life in the valley and united many groups throughout the years.

Johnstown is considered a rust-belt city, which is defined as a post-industrial city, typical of the Appalachian region, and generally considered to be in decline (Mitchell,
The city consists of several neighborhoods which surround the main downtown area; my research mainly involves the Cambria City neighborhood of Johnstown which lies to the northwest of the city. The neighborhood is considered to be the most ethnic section of the city due to its inhabitants' history, which once included Serbian, Croatian, Polish, Yugoslavian, Slovenia, Hungarian, and Ukrainian groups of individuals (Muson, 1989). Cambria City was referred to as the 'Rotten Row' due to the tenement-style housing proved by the Cambria Iron Works Company for its workers; over the years that steel ran the valley, the houses were torn down twice, only be built again each time to house the workers and their families (Muson, 1989). As time passed, the various ethnic groups migrated to nearby neighborhoods which resembled their former homeland's geographical landscape (Muson, 1989). What remained in the Cambria City neighborhood were the institutions of the various ethnicities, which were the churches, lodges, and meeting halls.

Growing up near Johnstown, I knew where the BOTTLE WORKS Ethnic Arts Center was and occasionally my family would attend events and activities at the center. BOTTLE WORKS oversees ART WORKS while ART WORKS awaits it status as a non-profit, which will occur during the summer of 2007. BOTTLE WORKS is located directly in front of ART WORKS and its staff and board of directors were the individuals involved in the creation of ART WORKS; BOTTLE WORKS in many aspects is the parent organization of ART WORKS. During the annual Johnstown Folk Fest, an annual celebration held over the Labor Day weekend, the street directly in front of BOTTLE WORKS closes to traffic and all of the various churches, mostly of Eastern and Central European heritage, celebrate with ethnic foods, games, and entertainment; the traditional
staples of the weekend celebration are polkas, pirogues, and beer. The Johnstown Folk Fest has since been moved to a new location closer to the downtown area but the street is still closed on Labor Day weekend; polkas are still danced, and the churches still sell pirogues and beer.

BOTTLE WORKS deserves some recognition as well, as it was the first of its kind in the city. It was the first post-industrial structure to be used for a community center, specializing in the arts, within the city and surrounding region. It was conceived in 1992, after interest from the community of Johnstown emerged to create a center to celebrate and promote the city's various ethnic heritages. BOTTLE WORKS was built in the former Tulip Bottling Company building, and officially dedicated as the Jacob and Renee Goldhaber Ethnic Arts Center in 1996 (Bottle Works Ethnic Arts Center, 2006a). The center itself is rather small even though it hosts a Black Box Theater, a few small studios, offices, elevator, kitchen, and gallery space. The center has received additional income as a rental space for events, parties, and performances when space is available (Bottle Works Ethnic Arts Center, 2006b). While both BOTTLE WORKS and ARTWORKS will operate on their own, separate from each other’s missions, they will collaborate to support programming and draw audiences. Considering the city, history, and current development, it will be interesting to see if ART WORKS will emerge as the success story it hopes to become in the next few years. The study will attempt to document this process and catalog the process of starting an art center from scratch in its infancy; examining a few of the elements which should enable ART WORKS to remain a permanent and sustainable entity within a city such as Johnstown.
Definition of Terms

There are several terms used throughout my research which deal directly with geography, architecture, education, and the arts. By defining these terms, a greater understanding of the research can be achieved by the reader. Contemporary art is defined broadly in this research as any art that is currently being created by artists; utilizing methods and subject matter that are relevant to society today, such as digital or video and computer media and technology. Many of the contemporary works created today, including those works created in the past twenty years, have a difficult time being exhibited due to size restrictions, or in the case of technology, the lack of equipment for viewing the works (Thompson, Whitman, Thompson, & Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, 2000). The rise of visual culture and use of technology and digital media has created a need for renovation of existing spaces for exhibiting these works.

Also, the subject matter involving contemporary works today are often fueled with current events and numerous viewpoints; many which may be shocking to a community and its audiences that view themselves as far removed from the larger, urban, and globally tied cities.

Gentrification is a term which is often seen as negative since its purpose is to purge an area of one class or type of individual in hopes to attract a new and more appealing group; this also applies to business as well. The term was used widely in the 1970s to describe the influx of individuals, often single men, women, same sex couples, and married couples without children, and usually aged twenty through forty, back into the city from the suburbs. Typically, renters or individuals on the lower end of the socio-
economic ladder are pushed out as gentrification occurs; bringing with them the need to open new restaurants, galleries, antique shops, and specialty stores to cater to these new tenants of the neighborhood. Many of these individuals returning to the city have at least a college degree or higher, which could attribute to their increased interest in various elements of culture (Gale, 1984). The return of individuals to Johnstown’s neighborhoods and the city itself is a slow but steady gentrification process which is currently occurring today.

Green building refers to the trend in architecture today to benefit the environment and conserve and utilize energy and resources more efficiently. It is often associated with LEED, which stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, and is based around a numerical point system. Buildings and structures are awarded points that utilize more sustainable and environmentally friendly practices in a move towards greater sustainability (Woolley, 1997-2000). Green building is becoming quite popular among colleges, universities, and museums, as well as other art centers and museums. The American Association of Museums (AAM) offered a panel presentation at the 2007 conference entitled “Creating the Green Museum: Making Museums Matter for Community Sustainability” which focused on the “support and demonstration of "green" construction as a critical function that can help museums establish value to the community” (Creating the Green Museum: Making Museums Matter for Community Sustainability, 2007). The ability though expensive to initially construct, can significantly cut utility costs in the future and aid in creating a sustainable financial outcome (personal interview with Anna Coughenour).
Methodology

It is believed that qualitative research is a "broad approach to the study of social phenomena" (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Characteristics of qualitative research include the following: occurring in the natural world, using multiple methods to collect information which are interactive and humanistic; it is emergent rather than prefigured, and is interpretive" (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). The research methods used for this particular study are qualitative, constructivist methodologies. Importance was placed on the observation in the most familiar and natural setting; the lived experiences of both the researcher and the subjects of the study. In a constructivist methodological approach, information or knowledge is understood through the lived experience; directly related to prior existing knowledge and newer knowledge interacting (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). ART WORKS itself will use a constructivist approach in its own learning and growth, as it utilizes the previous knowledge of its board members and artists' to adapt to new situations and experiences. Information was collected in the form of a case study; utilizing the art center as my research site and through direct observation and participation in various events and through interviews with participants. The decision to collect the research in the form of a case study was decided upon after examining the setting, ART WORKS, through "immersion…and rests on both the researcher's and participants worldviews" (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Participation, observation, and in-depth interviewing were used to construct information relevant to the study which took place over the past fifteen months.
Participants

The primary participants of this study were individuals directly involved with ART WORKS. These individuals include the BOTTLE WORKS Executive Director, BOTTLE WORKS board member and ART WORKS’ board president, the previous Director of ART WORKS, and the architect working on the primary studio spaces for the center. Other participants included the budding partnership with Indiana University of Pennsylvania faculty and administration such as the Dean of the College of Fine Arts, former Associate Dean of Curriculum and Instruction, and several studio faculty members. The three resident artists of ART WORKS during the summer 2006 were also included through email interviews. Members of the Johnstown community were also participants whom I observed and conversed with at various community events.

Data Collection and Analysis

Throughout my research and data collection over the past year, I have spent several days at the site of ART WORKS, BOTTLE WORKS and at various locations Johnstown and the nearby town of Indiana conducting interviews. Dinner meetings and lunch meetings provided informal and comfortable conversations regarding hopes and dreams of the fledgling center. Interviews were a significant source of information collected during the research; conversations with participants of various events held at the site during the past year also provided vast insight into the intended audiences views of the ART WORKS mission. Much of the correspondence with the resident artists and the director of the BOTTLE WORKS were conducted over email conversations to set up
visits and discuss partnerships. Interviews were primarily conducted and digitally recorded or obtained through emails over the course of the research.

**Assumptions**

My main subjectivity to the research arises out of the fact that it is home; it is familiar to me. It is this personal interaction with Johnstown’s past that made me doubt the success of a contemporary art center being introduced into the community. Many of Johnstown’s steel yards have been silent and cold for some time with little growth in industry other than medical or government related fields. Growing up, I remember the downtown area as dirty and cold. The Cambria City neighborhood where ART WORKS is located was split down Broad Street with residential homes and the numerous churches on one side and manufacturing and industry down the other. The inhabitants of the Cambria City section of the city were primarily the elderly. The neighborhood has sense been successful in remodeling itself where industry once stood. The Frank & Sylvia Pasquerilla Heritage Discovery Center, which shares a similar concept to the to the Holocaust museum in Washington D.C., where visitors follow an immigrant’s life through the museum, opened in 2001 in the former Germania Brewery company’s brick building from 1907. In November of 2006, construction began for Phase II of the center adding a Children’s Discovery Museum which is scheduled to open in fall of 2007 (personal interview with Rosemary Pawlowski). It could be assumed that since the Heritage Discovery Center currently attracts visitors and school tours, the developing Children’s Museum opening in the fall, and the location in proximity to ART WORKS, that this would benefit ART WORKS greatly with consistent visitor traffic in the future.
The changing atmosphere of Johnstown itself shall most likely aid in ART WORKS’ success but this cannot be measured in the time frame that I have allotted for this particular research. Therefore, my assumptions are limited to more measurable items. Since ART WORKS is looking at existing models of other successful art centers, such as the Torpedo Factory in Virginia, and utilizing those practices and ideas, and looking at other ways to sustain its daily income and expenses through various green building practices it is assumed that the new art center will prosper.

**Limitations**

I would support the notion that research similar to this subject is never over. It is however, safe to say that ART WORKS is still in its infancy stage and it is uncertain what events could alter its development during the course of the next five years. What this particular research is not, is a step-by-step guide. There is only one way to tell if ART WORKS will be successful and that will be time; models such as the Torpedo Factory took over twenty-five years to solidify its permanence and success.

The anticipated effect is that ART WORKS will be able to support itself through its set plan, which includes community support and the renovation and redevelopment of the structure itself utilizing environmentally friendly architectural elements which will be cost efficient over the course of the center’s life.

**Summary**

ART WORKS has a long road ahead of it to travel down but there are many stops along the way which will help point it in the right direction. The rich history of the city, the influx of individuals with varied backgrounds, the location of the art center within the
region, and the people who envisioned ART WORKS, along with those who will come in the future, will all play an important part in the development of the center. Looking at other existing art centers, in similar cities and situations, and utilizing cost efficient and enduring practices, will hopefully aid in the success of ART WORKS for years to come. The literature and study itself will demonstrate what has been done and what is and will be done when the center establishes itself permanently in the community.
CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Searching for information on how to start an art center is limited, as I quickly discovered in my research and therefore a primary reason for my interest in this particular topic. Thinking ahead to the future, what would I have done if I had wanted to start a community arts center? It seemed that since the concept of urban-renewal and revitalization of cities was relatively new, primarily within the past fifteen to twenty years, then the creation of art centers out of spaces within these cities would be new as well, and limited texts would be written on the subject (personal interview with Christopher Tartoni). Much of what was found was on the internet; providing information and links to other art centers’ histories of development and information collected through personal interviews. The vast majority of information regarding the creation of an art center, whether from the ground up or rather, the more popular path of remodeling, can be located from basic search engines.

The historical, economic and development plan that ART WORKS examined, was taken from the Torpedo Factory Art Center in Alexandria, Virginia. The Torpedo Factory prepares information packets which are able to be purchased by anyone interested in learning more about developing an art center. The packet includes a rather concise history of the first twenty-five years of operation at the Torpedo Factory and includes their hardships and triumphs. The packet also includes mission statements, by-laws, studio rental contracts, insurance information, codes of conduct, press information, and information about the jury process for artists who wish to work in studio spaces at the facility. It contains the most adequate information for adaptable use in creating an art
center. The packet of information offers the most comprehensive information for those interested in starting an art center; much of the information concerns the daunting task of paperwork accompanying the implementation of such programs. The very beginning of the packet’s information contains the *House Rules*, which provide a valuable starting point for developing rental contracts, lease rules, costs, and liability information (Marian Van Landingham, 1999). While the information provided is valuable for those wishing to develop an art center from an administrative end, it also provides information for those artists who may rent studio space and sell their art within the center walls. Below, listed under *Necessities* in the *Overview of Operations and Programs*, is the short but important mantra of a successful art center:

“What does it take to run an art center? Hard work and dedication, of course, and artists, and a building. The artists might form and organization: they will need *Articles of Incorporation*, a *Constitution*, and organizational bylaws. Money must be collected and paid out: they will need a *budget*, a *treasurer*, a *bookkeeper*. If more than one artist occupies a space, basic ground rules need to be agreed on. More artists? More rules. If staff is hired, policies must be written, and employee handbook adopted. It may sound like a huge undertaking, but it is well worth the effort. The complexity depends on the size of the building and the number of artists and organizations involved.”

Marian Van Landingham, the first director of the Torpedo Factory, penned the book *On Target: Stories of the Torpedo Factory Art Center’s First 25 Years*, which provides a detailed account of how the former United States government torpedo factory was renovated into a widely known and recognized art center. Landingham wrote the
following about the Torpedo factory in 1999, which was twenty-five years after the initial funding $140,000 from the city for the art center:

“\textit{It’s a place where a community of artists can still afford to work without sales being a primary motivation, and where they can interact with and educate the public. For the City of Alexandria, which has been their partner, the artists have created a major attraction that has enhanced the economic and cultural revival of Old Town Alexandria- becoming a model for artists and cities across the United States and around the world.}”

The original structure began construction on November 12, 1918, and officially given the title of U.S. Naval Torpedo Station (Marian Van Landingham, 1999). In later years, the center was expanded to include a total of ten buildings. After the WWII, the center was closed as a torpedo manufacturing facility and later used to store art and artifacts from the Smithsonian in Washington D.C., along with hundreds of government desks and filing cabinets, some with files still inside. It was in May of 1974, a group of artists and the City of Alexandria itself collaborated to begin the transformation which today is known world wide as the Torpedo Factory Arts Center (Marian Van Landingham, 1999). The history of ART WORKS is not unlike the history of the Torpedo Factory. Both were located in once historical neighborhoods of their cities; Alexandria being respectably larger than Johnstown however. The revitalization of these post-industrial structures links both of these facilities in their history. In its initial development stage, ART WORKS did not receive the opposition that the Torpedo Factory faced in their early development. Alexandria’s Old Town citizens and business owners who felt that the proposed art center would be a negative addition to the
community and hinder access to the waterfront area of the river behind the factory (Marian Van Landingham, 1999).

The development information that the Torpedo Factory provides includes a variety of information which will be utilized by ART WORKS and act as a guide of materials for future art centers. While ART WORKS is considerably smaller in size to the Torpedo Factory, which covers nearly one city block with 72,318 square feet of interior space, the atmosphere will attempt to be the same (Marian Van Landingham, 1999). The success of the Torpedo Factory appears to rest largely on its support from its artists which inhabit the studio space within the center. The Torpedo Factory houses over 160 artists in 83 studios; six galleries host over 1400 artists each year. In 2005, eleven exhibitions were shown within its galleries’ exhibition spaces, many of world recognition (Marian Van Landingham, 1999).

The Torpedo Factory, unlike ART WORKS, is owned by the City of Alexandria, which then in turns leases the space to the Torpedo Factory Artists’ Association (TFAA) and generally speaking, stays out of the way (Marian Van Landingham, 1999). ART WORKS was purchased through the BOTTLE WORKS but will act as its own organizational entity with its own governing board of directors. ART WORKS will have received it tax-exempt status as a not-for-profit organization by the summer of 2007, which will aid in the pursuit of grant funding by various government, public and private sources. However, though it was not stated, I would anticipate that the Allied Artists of Johnstown, a group of local artists in the region which join through jury and membership, will utilize the space and become more visible elements of ART WORKS. Similar in
nature to the TFAA, the Allied Artists of Johnstown often exhibit and use space at the BOTTLE WORKS (personal interview with Janie Leck-Grela).

While the Torpedo Factory was evolving in our country, it appears that the same type of redevelopment on post-industrial spaces was occurring in other places in the world as well. Malcolm Miles’ text, *Art Space and the City: Public Art and Urban Futures*, mentions the development of similar type art centers in Britain as well, such as the Newcastle Arts Center in Newcastle on Tyne and the Custard Factory in Birmingham (Miles, 1997). It would be important to mention that the observed intent in the development of ART WORKS, along with many of the other art centers mentioned in Miles text, replaces the term ‘urban development’ with the more appropriate term ‘urban regeneration’ which places importance on the neighborhood surrounding the center and the ‘street life’ of the community which will develop (Miles, 1997).

In 2004, Roger L. Kemp edited a collection of works found in the text *Cities and the Arts: A Handbook for Renewal* which looks at several cities which have used the arts in various formats to redevelop and regenerate their cities.

> “Since the mid-20th century, visual arts districts have been reviving neighborhoods. Old commercial/industrial with an oversupply of outdated, often vacant buildings are prime venues. It’s a perfect match for young artists in need of large, inexpensive places to work and live” (Kemp, 2004).

Meeker explains that art galleries are quick to follow arts districts, and renovations of other buildings begin as more traffic and visitors flow through the revitalized neighborhood. It is this constant cycle of visitors which benefits all participants in the neighborhood, whether they are associated directly with the arts or not; this includes food
service vendors and restaurants or other merchants. Reiterating that the arts are important supporters of improving “quality-of-life” and working as “direct and indirect contributors to the state economy” (Kemp, 2004).

Another post-industrial revitalized art center which received much attention and was viewed as a template for future revitalized exhibition architectural space is Mass MoCA (Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art). Located in North Adams Massachusetts, Mass MoCA developed along the same lines as the Torpedo Factory. The earliest date of the site of the center being used for industry was in 1768, when it was both a lumber and a cotton mill (Thompson et al., 2000). The former site of the Mass MoCA was developed over the years into the Arnold Print Works and later, the Sprague Electric Company. The concept of turning the barren and silent industrial complex into a contemporary art center first took place in 1986; one year after Sprague Electric Company had officially closed its doors (Thompson et al., 2000). Mass MoCA was developed as a venue to display and exhibit large scale, contemporary art works, which were unable to be shown in the more traditional and smaller-scale museums and galleries located nearby.

The architect, Simeon Bruner stated that one of the goals behind the overall design of Mass MoCA was to make the art which would be displayed inside more approachable; a scale of a museum in the materials and language of the artist’s environment (Thompson et al., 2000). This overall feeling of space and environment is similar to what ART WORKS is trying to recreate for its venue. While Mass MoCA and the Torpedo Factory are both monumental in scale when compared to ART WORKS, each of the renovations of these industrial spaces dealt directly with what Bruner
considers “essential problems… of architecture: space, light and the progression through space” (Thompson et al., 2000). Each of these art centers throw out modernist architectural design, and abandon uniformity of the renovated design; each element recalls that which the space previously was and signifies its rebirth (Thompson et al., 2000). These art centers’ spaces are raw and far removed from the smooth, white walls of so many museums and galleries today. The floors are also often left bare, proudly displaying the scars of the events from years before. ART WORKS is bringing this concept into much of its design and green building elements, leaving an industrial feel of a working and workable space.

Mass MoCA has proven itself to be a cultural tourist attraction and has aided in the economic impact in Northern Berkshire County, Massachusetts (Thompson et al., 2000). Similar to the Torpedo Factory’s success, both of these centers provide excellent examples for ART WORKS in Johnstown to examine and benefit from in terms of supporting and enriching the local community. As a guarantee of sustainability for both the Torpedo Factory and Mass MoCA, they majority of their income comes directly from rental contracts; ART WORKS anticipates that this too will provide the majority of their sustainable income. While the Torpedo Factory and ART WORKS are similar in studio rental income, Mass MoCA offers commercial retail and business space for rent. Director of Mass MoCA, Joseph Thompson had anticipated that after 2002, “over one-third of the operating and programming budget expenses will be off-set by pure rental income” from the 100,000 square feet of commercial retail space available (Thompson et al., 2000). While ART WORKS is not as large as the Torpedo Factory or Mass MoCA, covering only 18,000 square feet, there is opportunity for retail space as an income source, as with
the rental contract of the roof café. The local Back Door Café and Parrot Bay Café had originally expressed interest in a contract to supply ART WORKS with food services and staffing of the café (personal interview with Janie Leck-Grela). The Torpedo Factory also brings in visitors who would attend and visit The City of Alexandria Museum and Research Laboratory, which is a working laboratory which visitors can visit and learn more about the history of the Alexandria area and various techniques and procedures used in archeological research (Marian Van Landingham, 1999). There is also a school on site at the Torpedo Factory which also guarantees that a steady stream of visitors will always be entering its doors on a regular basis. While Mass MoCA features cutting edge computer and video as contemporary artwork, the local tenant of Mass MoCA’s rental spaces offer tenants with varied backgrounds in computer, design, commerce, and software engineering. Often, these individuals and companies add a part to the artists and art center in ways that ordinarily do not exist (Thompson et al., 2000). With the rise of Concurrernt Technologies Corporation, known in the area as CTC in Johnstown’s Industrial Park complex in Richland fifteen minutes from downtown, there exists a similar connection that could possibly exist between artists, technology, community, and local business.

The Torpedo Factory features artworks from mostly national artists; Mass MoCA exhibits work done by national and international contemporary artists, along with exhibitions of various contemporary collections. Like Mass MoCA, ART WORKS will have to decide when it too will exhibit national artists in their gallery space. The new digital gallery located inside of ART WORKS will attract contemporary works in digital media, such as internet art, video and film, and computer graphics which is a rising
medium in the art world and seldom able to be exhibited in existing and archaic marble
walled galleries and museums.

**Summary**

The literature points to many shared ideas and steps. Yet, when it is examined, it
is quite similar to a recipe. Three chefs can make the same dish with the same
ingredients, but it is hard to say that each creation will taste exactly the same. While both
the Torpedo Factory and Mass MoCA provide valuable information and
recommendations regarding starting an art center, it is extremely important to reiterate
that the atmosphere of the city, the location of the center itself, the participating artists,
the target audience, and the governing body of individuals involved, all place a crucial
role in the success of an emerging art center in today’s climate.
CHAPTER III: THE STUDY

ART WORKS was still in its very crude stages and at that time, not everything from the previous tenants had been vacated yet. The building was purchased from Hornicks Sporting Goods Inc., and had various hunting equipment left inside along with an enclosed 3-D archery shooting cage. After several email correspondences with the then Director of ART WORKS, Janie Leck-Grela, I traveled back home to Johnstown from Athens, Ohio, the first week of May 2006, to participate in festivities and observe the first public introduction to the ART WORKS space. I offered my assistance to help the BOTTLE WORKS set up for their Cinco de Mayo celebration, decorating during the day and talking with various volunteers and staff members. It also gave me time to talk with Janie about the future plans for the ART WORKS site. At this event, the public was only able to see a very small part of the interior space, which would eventually be turned into the studio spaces for the artists. The building was crude, dirty, and very industrial looking, but it was there and it was purchased, thanks in a large part to the former mayor of Johnstown, Donald Zucco. Mayor Zucco supported the idea of an art center in the city and donated the money to help purchase the building, which was overseen by BOTTLE WORKS.

The public's reaction to the art center during that first event was mixed. Many individuals had attended from nearby neighborhoods in Johnstown with their families. The other attendees were BOTTLE WORKS newsletter recipients and those who had seen the advertising promoting the event; live music, children’s activities, and Mexican cuisine was offered. The ages of those in attendance appeared to be split with half over
the age of sixty and the other half ages thirty to forty and with children. I met and talked with several individuals in the crowd that evening and from those casual conversations the reactions were mixed. Many individuals who attended the event did not know about the proposed ART WORKS site. I expected to hear reactions which supported the belief that the art center would not be of interest or that individuals would not see a need for an art center in Johnstown. However, the reactions were varied and surprising as several individuals were very interested in what the art center would bring to the area, while others were more concerned as to what it might mean for them personally, such as parking problems or increased visitors to the neighborhood. Others though it was a welcomed addition to the old neighborhood, which was slowly dwindling in population; as the older population moved out of the old row houses few individuals were moving into the area due to poor parking and house size (information collected during informal conversation interviews at the event).

Over the next three hours, I sat and observed, ate, talked and interacted with the audience members of the event, which numbered close to three hundred visitors. Due to the umbrella of the BOTTLE WORKS, many individual who attended the event thought that ART WORKS was an extension of BOTTLE WORKS and would offer similar programming. The concept of a contemporary art center was vague to many individuals; many thought that the center would compete with the nearby Cambria County Community Arts Center in Westmont, which is less than five miles away. The CCCAC offers craft classes, painting and drawing, and exhibition space for local artists in the more traditional mediums and subject mater of portraits and landscapes in watercolor or acrylics. I remember taking a ceramics class there when I was in elementary school and
enjoyed it.

The history of ART WORKS begins with BOTTLE WORKS, which is the parent organization guiding the fledgling art center. When the BOTTLE WORKS was built, it was anticipated that studios would be part of the center. However, when BOTTLE WORKS received a façade grant to renovate the former Tulip Bottling Company, later bought by Pepsi, and make the building useable, it greatly limited the anticipated renovation to preserve historical accuracy to the outside of the structure. In doing so, the building was renovated but the studio space on the inside and appropriate ventilation access needed for the various studios had to be removed from the master plan. The center has remained strictly for exhibitions of local arts, cultural and ethnic heritages on the ground floor space, with a few small spaces upstairs comprised of a kitchen, small classroom type studios and offices. The other space found in the upstairs is used by the Johnstown Ballet as storage for their costumes during the off season. Though BOTTLE WORKS did not have the studio space it originally desired, it did see numerous events and attract the public's attention to its small gallery and black box type theater space.

It was in 2002, when Rosemary Pawlowski, Director of BOTTLE WORKS approached her board of directors to ask permission to conduct a feasibility study of the building directly behind BOTTLE WORKS, which was the old stable and warehouse of the Tulip Bottling company. Pawlowski was born in Nanty-Glo, Pennsylvania, which is where both of my parents and their families were born and raised. Despite a brief five year hiatus in which she lived in Washington D.C., Pawlowski has live most of her life in Ebensburg, Pennsylvania and has worked in Johnstown for the past thirty-five years; working with BOTTLE WORKS for the past fifteen years. Her support of the arts within the city and of
BOTTLE WORKS appears to be a driving force in the implementation and success that ART WORKS has seen thus far.

The building behind BOTTLE WORKS was now of interest because it was thought that it could serve quite well as the studio and gallery space which BOTTLE WORKS had originally sought to have when it was created. Previous years saw the BOTTLE WORKS offering poetry readings, Irish step dance performances, and exhibitions of local ethnic art and artists but the space was becoming too small for what the center originally embodied. It was in this search of an expansion of ideas and space that Pawlowski and the BOTTLE WORKS obtained a $30,000 grant from the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) to conduct a feasibility study with Westview Associates, out of Philadelphia, that took almost two years to complete. A supplemental grant of $25,000 was also obtained from the Sustainable Energy Fund of the Community Foundation of the Alleghenies to research the concept of sustainable green building practices and LEED certification for use of a living roof. The feasibility study was conducted and over the course of time attracted a group of community leaders, from both civic government and private entities who shared interest and input. Artists were also approached through an online survey during the two years of the study and through word of mouth regarding their input. Primarily, the artists concerns were how the space would work for them; mainly studio use and space. In the end, the study showed a strong possibility and interest but no developers or investors had come forward to embrace the project.

In 2004, the individuals involved in the feasibility study regrouped and presented the study and ideas to potential developers. The presented materials were evidence
enough, and so out of this meeting, Johnstown mayor Donald Zucco offered his own money to purchase the building behind BOTTLE WORKS. The board of directors of BOTTLE WORKS then had to decide if the building would serve as an extension of BOTTLE WORKS or become something entirely separate; a new entity in the Cambria City neighborhood? Studio space was a primary necessity but was there something else that could be offered to the city of Johnstown? It was agreed upon that developing the building behind BOTTLE WORKS was to serve as an economic development project and that the mission of this new addition would be separate and different from that of the existing BOTTLE WORKS. A new mission warranted a new and separate board of directors.

John Kubinsky was born in Richland Township, just outside of the city of Johnstown. He left the area in 1981, for college, military service and other jobs, but ended up returning to the area in 1992. He now works as AmeriServ Financial Senior Vice President and met Pawlowski when they both served on a Main Street sub-committee for the city of Johnstown. Kubinsky eventually became involved with the BOTTLE WORKS and their governing board and took interest in ART WORKS as well. He now serves as president of the board of directors for ART WORKS. As Kubinsky was describing the make up of the ART WORKS board and the feasibility group’s members, a somewhat strange correlation appeared. While all of the individuals were interested in the arts, none were considered artists, or to be more specific, working artists; the only exception being the artists who participated in the initial surveys. Those who participated on the board of directors and in the feasibility study group were mostly individuals of business. Some were in real estate, other in finances or involved with local banks, while
others were in government or industry. At first, one could assume that this would devastate an art center; wouldn’t you want more artists on the board? Would it not make sense to include those individuals who are involved in the art world during the initial stages of development? If ART WORKS is determining its success on attracting artists, why would you not have artists involved in the initial planning sessions? Would the online surveys be enough input for these future tenants? Apparently, the answer is yes.

While artists were answering surveys and rating the order importance they found amenities in a studio space, the board of directors and others were looking at ART WORKS as a business. Kubinsky compared the process to real estate practices,

“*You have an idea, you find a space, you need to make sure people can get to your space easily, you have a product that people want, and you market your product, and so forth.*”

How do you keep your tenants happy? How do you keep a steady income of funds and how does a business keep its expenses smaller than its income? These individuals were removed enough from the space and what it offered, to look at it successfully. The key here is something called ‘invested interest’. Artists, while very influential and important in the development of the studio spaces being workable and useable in order to attract other artists, would not be able to remove themselves entirely from the larger picture. While working in a community studio space excited many of the surveyed artists, the actual behind-the-scenes elements of the proposed art center remained elusive. Now, by no means is this suggesting that all artists are bad at business or that all business individuals are horrible as artists. It merely suggests that when one is immersed or truly passionate about something the tendency can lend itself to only see the good and not the
bad; removing oneself from the subject of interest enables the whole picture to be seen.

ART WORKS main objective is to serve as a place for artists to create, teach and market their work (personal interview with Rosemary Pawlowski). The facility will feature a living green roof, the first of its kind in Johnstown and in the surrounding area which will alleviate high costs of summer cooling and winter heating (personal interview with John Kubinsky). Green roofs are a relatively new way of sustainable architecture practices which are becoming more visible in design. The roof top café will look out on the green roof with the ability for patrons to walk about in a garden like setting (personal interview with Anna Coughenour). Using a green roof is a wonderful cost efficient alternative to keeping fuel costs down and gain LEED certification but it can pose unwanted stress on the building. ART WORKS will have to strengthen its interior ceilings that received water damage over the years prior to constructing the green roof due to the large amount of weight that the dirt, grasses and plants will place on the building along with added weight of rain water and snow (personal interview with Anna Coughenour). The space will feature eleven studio sections fifteen feet wide and thirty-five feet in length. Originally designed to have permanent and stationary dividing walls, the studios will now be able to be expanded into larger spaces if an artist should wish to rent a larger studio area. Each studio space shall have a sink, phone lines to connect to the internet, and electrical outlets. The studio space designs were targeted by the artists in the initial surveys done during the feasibility study. Two of the studios will each have one of the large overhead doors as a fourth wall to move large sculpture in and out of the space or to open the wall and work in an open air studio. The doors will also allow a view into the studio to be seen at night; the glow of a studio, a blaze in light, and an artist working
late into the evening. The artists who were originally interviewed enjoyed the hard and industrial feel of the space and did not want things to be “too pretty” or “too clean”. The ruggedness of the space appealed to many artists who first saw images of the space or visited for the first time (personal interview with Anna Coughenour). This was also said of the Torpedo Factory when it was being transformed as Van Landingham mentions in her text that, “artists only really needed a sink” and “wanted to start working in the space right away”. Many of the artists who were interviewed by ART WORKS could not wait to get into the space to start working. ART WORKS received a grant to pay a stipend for three artists-in-residence in the summer of 2006. Since housing was not available yet, but is being discussed currently as an opportunity for workshops and artists in residence in the future, two of the three artists spent the summer staying with Anna Coughenour, an architect working on the ART WORKS project. This living arrangement worked out well as both the artists and architect had many opportunities to discuss what works and what doesn’t within the space as it was being developed and planned:

“I had two artists, Sarah and Jennifer, living with me at the time they were developing their ideas, and they would share their ideas and their point of view. (They) thought it was a great idea for Johnstown, a small community, where we could possibly open some minds. It’s a great idea for this community”.

In discussions with Coughenour we discussed elements that would be needed to make a workable space for artists. Lighting was a major concern for many artists. The lighting has to be functional but also add to the look and artistic feel of the whole space as well. I recommended making the lighting able to be moveable to accommodate the level and direction of the light needed. The track lighting that is being planned is unique
as it can move side to side in the track and up and down on a stem. This allows for maximum lighting of any work placed on the walls of the studio space; the walls will be of a surface material able to be nailed or stapled into without damage. Coughenour mentioned that she noticed that the artists she was housing used many clip-on spot lights when they were working and this lead her to factor in more electrical outlets in each studio space so that every artist can use as many lights and as needed with any additional tools, stereos, or laptops they may use as well. Several studios will have sky lights leading up to the green roof to allow for natural light. The current bricked windows will be returned to their original state and able to allow for more light into additional spaces and studios of the artists. The glass windows will be replaced and the original glass will be crushed and reused in another section of the building, perhaps as an outside mural texture; reusing existing non-hazardous materials raises LEED certification points. Anything that is being removed from the building is being carefully examined to determine if it can be used in a new way in another section of ART WORKS.

Sections of ART WORKS will feature bamboo flooring, a new floor concept compared to traditional hardwood flooring and much more durable; along with LEED approval as well. However, like Mass MoCA, the floor of the main studio spaces and gallery will be polished and left as it is now, showing its history of marks and scars. Coughenour had suggested rubber flooring made of recycled car tires but many artists were content with the floors as they were in the gallery spaces. When looking at ease of cleanup and evitable paint spills, either flooring will perform, however, I would prefer to stand on rubber than concrete, something that many artists may not have considered after falling in love with the raw space. With the many styles and designs of reusable and
recyclable materials out in the market today, Coughenour is not limited in what she would like to see used in the working spaces of the art center. Rubber flooring, bamboo, crushed glass, and grass roofs are all just a few of the many resources available to architects today designing under green building codes and LEED points.

The upstairs of ART WORKS will feature a café and classroom space which will both lead out onto the green roof. The classroom will maintain a industrial feel so that it can be used to make an artful and creative mess or to hold a business meeting using a projector and a screen for a presentation. The classroom will also serve as a place for the artists of ART WORKS to gather and talk. Over the course of the months I was working with Janie on the development of the center, the floor plans for the studio areas changed dramatically. A downstairs conference room, or lounge, for artists to commune was eliminated for the additional space. The upstairs classroom space next to the café will now hope to serve as a meeting place for the artists to converse.

The artists’ studios will feature the bare minimums of sink, outlets, lighting, and internet connection. All other materials, shelves and cabinets for storage, tables and chairs will be provided by the artists themselves. This enables the artist to make the most comfortable and workable space while utilize their space efficiently. The Torpedo Factory handbook provided several very helpful sections of the by-laws which address what an artist can actually bring into their studio, including the keeping of pets, which at this time has not been addressed by ART WORKS. It is important to keep in mind that artists will occasionally want to sleep in their studio space, something that ART WORKS will have to address when they are closer to their official opening and start leasing studios out to artists. ART WORKS will also have to decide the process for selecting
artists to fill the studio spaces. Will it be first come first serve or will they jury artists for
studios as the Torpedo Factory does? There was some concern when speaking with Janie
that the level of artist working the studio would need to be monitored. The set up is
similar to the Torpedo Factory in the sense that artists will be working in their studio and
the studios will be open to the public. Artists may also sell directly out of their studio
space in ART WORKS. However, in keep with the contemporary art feel of the space,
what types of mediums, styles ad themes will be accepted? The feel is that selection of
artists working in mediums such as painting, photography, and printmaking, will be
working in studios next to fiber artists, woodworkers, ceramicists, and blacksmiths.
Other may include instrument makers and book artist. It is important to mention though
that the work and caliber of artists being allowed to rent space will be monitored,
however, this does not eliminate doll makers, toy makers, and ethnic crafts artisans as
long as there are within the scope of the mission of ART WORKS and their work is of a
strong quality.

The outside of the building has gone through several design alterations. The
original round interior gallery was removed for a digital gallery space to show internet,
video and computer generated art. The original idea of hanging an exhibition in a round
gallery posed several problems for installation, which I discussed with Janie. The solution
was to hang the art work near the entrance of ART WORKS in an area that would also
serve as a public space for rental events. The entrance will also feature a visitor desk and
gallery attendant and artworks created by the various studio artists. Another idea that
Coughenour and Janie had both found of importance in the development of the center
was the inclusion of a store for art supplies. Other than the typical arts and craft chain
stores, there are no places with high quality art supplies; selling good quality brushes, paints, and various other materials for the public and artists. The store would also feature a frame shop for framing needs and supplies and be able to order supplies in for individuals.

It was important to also hear the perceptions and opinions of ART WORKS from artists who may serve as future tenants of the studio spaces. Even thought these spaces were nowhere near completion and in a very raw state, three resident artists worked and used the space during the summer months of 2006. The culmination of the summer residencies showcased an opening of these three artists’ work over the Labor Day weekend along with several local artists as well who were involved in supporting ART WORKS. The event also served as an introduction of the space to the public. Art work was exhibited in several locations throughout the ART WORKS space in order to create sense of the future use of the space as to what the finish interior of the center will resemble. This weekend was also chosen to bring in audience traffic during the widely popular Folk Fest Celebration in Johnstown and the Cambria City neighborhood where both BOTTLE WORKS and ART WORKS are located.

The summer residencies consisted of three artists who were familiar with the Johnstown area. The artists who worked in the space during the summer were Jonathan Rugh, Sarah Walko, and Jennifer Styperk. Styperk and Walko grew up in and around Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, while Rugh grew up in Johnstown and his parents still reside in the city. Walko, originally from Pittsburgh, was working in New York and heard about the ART WORKS project from Pawlowski’s son. Walko then shared the information with her colleague Styperk, who also grew up in Pittsburgh. Both artists remember
hearing stories of the great floods and steel history surrounding Johnstown. Rugh, who is currently living in Virginia, was brought aboard after hearing about the project from local friends. His contribution will be the building of a kiln capable of firing with both gas and utilizing vegetable waste; the kiln site is located across the street from ART WORKS and will begin construction in the summer of 2007. Rugh, who is working on his Masters in Architecture, was in interested in the physical aesthetic of the space.

The three resident artists were each enamored with the space when they arrived as well as the location. Walko was interested in the “rich history” and “making work that reached out to a community rather than (to the) people who go to art openings all the time”. Styperk envisioned the city as her grandmother had described in stories that she would tell of travels in her youth. The physical space of ART WORKS, even such a raw form was what truly captured the hearts and eyes of these three artists. Walko was intrigued at the “raw, intimidating and ambitious” space while Styperk, who was interested in the geography physicality of the landscape around the center as fuel for her work. Rugh saw much potential in the space and could support any type of creative work.

“*The space is so large (and) ripe with possibilities. Conditions presented in specific spaces can be and often, (serve) as a catalysis for critical thinking.*

*Buildings can frame a specific thought, especially the ART WORKS building framing a history and patina of a locale.*”

Each artist was interested in the interior space of the center and what would be done with the studios. Walko and Styperk lived with Coughenour during the residency as artist housing was not yet available. Pawlowski had mentioned that in the future the former convent down the street could serve as a short term housing facility for guest and visiting
artists. The previous concept of permanent studio spaces with immovable walls was something that Walko was adamant about changing in the design. The new design has studio spaces that can expand and remove walls for much larger studio spaces if artists choose. Other necessities included basic studio equipment that could be in an open access space such as saws, hammers, and drills. While the artists enjoyed the space as is, they did mention that a good cleaning would be needed too. The installation of a digital gallery and used of video and computer equipment, especially access to internet, was also a draw for the artists.

The artists’ interaction with the local audience was, much to my surprise, positive experiences. My initial perception was that the artists would not find the community as warm and enveloping as it was and less interested. Walko and Styperk both create with themes involving the history and interaction of the city’s inhabitants, and thought that their work was well received by the local public. Rugh stated that the general response talking to anybody in town was, “I have no idea what you are trying to do, but it’s cool cause you are doing it”. The Johnstown-Tribune also featured a large article on ART WORKS and the summer residencies, featuring Styperk on the front. The artists all felt that they had positive experiences with the public and inhabitants of the city of Johnstown and the Cambria City neighborhood. This is a surprise for me, not that I expected negative or harsh attitudes toward the artists, but that the public seemed to be embracing the work of the artists and ART WORKS. Could it be that the city was ready for a change? Yet, even with the front page article in the local paper, there were still friends and family members of mine who had no idea what was emerging from the former city of steel.
The three artists who participated in the first residency program provided great insight as to how ART WORKS could attract and retain future artists; each felt that a solidified mission statement should be the first thing accomplished. Next, publicity outside of the city, stretching across the state to Philadelphia would also be beneficial. Rugh stated that ART WORKS needs to develop a “good résumé and gain a reputation”; exhibiting work that is “intelligent and engaging” will attract other artists to the center to see what is occurring in the space and with other artists. Walko and Styperk also spoke of the use of centers such as ART WORKS as important tools for city revitalization and as sites which benefit both artists and public. Rugh commented that he “would like to see more communities becoming engaged in something larger than themselves” and the ideas that ART WORKS embodies exemplifies the changes that are occurring. However, while places like ART WORKS are great additions to cities, Rugh also believes that not every city needs an ART WORKS and that the “real difficulty is to create art centers with possibilities”. If too many centers like ART WORKS exist then it puts strain on what each is trying to do and creates competition. The main idea is quality not quantity. In order to ensure that ART WORKS does survive and prosper in Johnstown Styperk suggested that the center keep with the Torpedo Factory’s system of quality artist selection. Styperk also mentioned that “respect for the latest in contemporary art will be a vital (part) to ART WORKS”. All three artists were adamant that continual artist residencies would also be an important element to the success of the center as well.

Another way to ensure the success of the center is to partner with other existing organizations in the area. This included opportunities with the local colleges and universities and local public schools for classes and workshops offered at ART WORKS.
While the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown is located nearby, they do not have a fine arts program that could utilize the center for classes. However, Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP), located thirty-five minutes from Johnstown, is interested in forming a partnership with ART WORKS. Since I had worked for the Dean of the College of Fine Arts during my undergraduate studies, I introduced Pawlowski to Associate Dean Marjorie Arnett; Arnett left the university in August of 2006 but passed along the information to Dean Michael Hood. Hood was also interested in forming a partnership with ART WORKS and has continued to support the budding relationship. Hood sees many possibilities of interaction between the ART WORKS and IUP, which include class offerings that are not offered at the university.

One of the possible class offerings that interested Hood concerned the acquisition of the Lower Works across the river from ART WORKS. Lower Works will feature a blacksmith shop when completed and contain hot glass facilities. The blacksmith shop is currently being renovated and will feature the historic furnaces and forges that Bethlehem Steel Industry used to make its steel. Classes in blacksmithing and glass are not currently offered at IUP and could serve as a possible courses offered for credit. Other possibilities in the partnership include an internship for students who are interested in arts management and the business aspect of running an art center. It will also provide possible studio space for graduate students who are transitioning out into the art world after their studies.
Hood also commented on several additional areas that IUP could assist ART WORKS in as a partnership:

“I think there are a number of possibilities. One is having our faculty serve as artists’ resources…to the developing community of artists, both in terms of short residencies or master classes or simple visits for that matter. I am also interested in seeing whether or not there is an opportunity for our students to participate on any number of levels, including eventually applying for studio space and beginning their careers…and taking advantage of the intended community artist program that they are building in Johnstown.”

Hood is referring to the Kernville Neighborhood Artist Relocation Program going on simultaneously in Johnstown which is similar to the program in Paducah, Kentucky. Hood sees many things happening in and around Johnstown that are “well timed with some of the things going on at IUP, particularly in the visual arts”.

“We’ve had an enormous burst of activity, new facilities, new faculty, all making a difference in terms of doing what we do. I want to take full advantage of the opportunity that is happening in Johnstown, and Johnstown knows that we are a resource that they can depend upon. From my perspective, the most important thing I can do is to make sure the dialogue continues, so that when opportunity presents itself, people are familiar with one another and are able to take advantage of this. My interest in Johnstown is peaked. I am forming connections with people there that I think are and will be helpful to my university programs. I see Johnstown as a developing arts community, one that is really putting a commitment into this direction.”
Hood is also looking forward to what his faculty will say and how they will utilize what ART WORKS has to offer. Hood mentioned that the new ceramics professor and the sculpture professor are both very interested in the Lower Works space and with ART WORKS itself. While Hood does not believe that a graduating senior from undergraduate studies should rent a space from ART WORKS, rather, perhaps a graduate student instead. Finding employment or making a go at your career in the arts is difficult. Many individuals move to a large city to try their hand at their passion but few ever continue in their field. Hood reminded me of something I heard from a presenter at an Ohio Arts Council meeting in Columbus, Ohio:

“If the amount of individuals, who graduated with medical degrees, never went on to find work in their field, there would be research done as to why that was. However, there are hundred of individuals who graduate school with degrees in the arts, who never find employment or continue on in their field.”

Hood believes that ART WORKS will enable his students to pursue their dreams and career goals more efficiently than before. Utilizing the partnership, ART WORKS and IUP will work together to create venues and experiences for their students, faculty and their art. While IUP will benefit from the newness and excitement of the art center, ART WORKS will benefit from the legacy and the security that an alliance with IUP will bring.
CHAPTER IV: CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, IMPLICATIONS

The research presented here is only one small part of a larger movement in both the art world and in the urban redevelopment of cities. There is no magic formula for success either; what works for one community may not work for another. Over time, the success of ART WORKS may depend on several factors: funding, tenants (the artists who rent studio space), and audience (the community who visits). Yet, other factors, which were not discussed in this research, which may affect the art center’s sustainability include: additional area attractions to draw in tourists and community, lifestyles of the artists moving to the area, and everything from shopping choices to entertainment in the region. The art center appears to be well on its way to success and provided a usable and workable model for others who are interested in starting their own arts center. There will be rough weather ahead as the center officially opens its doors to its first artist and tenant and must learn to ebb and flow with the community and the target audience. The board of directors is knowledgeable and flexible in what they perceive to be beneficial to the center and are removed enough from the field to look objectively at the situation, which seems to be a prominent strength. The city itself is changing and moving toward different ideas, wants and needs which are also working in the centers favor. Securing a workable partnership with the local university has been one of the key points to ensuring a future for the center. As time goes on and exhibitions and artists start to take root in the center, more visitors and interest will come, along with financial stability and support. As the city embraces its new points of interest, such as the Kernville Artist Relocation District
and the Heritage Discovery Center, tourism to the region will increase the visibility of the
center will spread locally, regional, state wide, and nationally.

The development of this art center happens to be occurring at the right place and
at the right time. Everything is working in favor of the center’s success as an intuition
and organization of the arts in this particular region. It would appear that ART WORKS
is well on its way to sustaining itself but I will not put the cart before the horse. However,
I feel that my own perceptions about my home have changed and evolved. I no longer
believe that Johnstown is the “non-existent art world” of the region and I am glad to see
the positive changes that are occurring. I look forward to reading about the future
successes of ART WORKS and the partnership that is budding with IUP. Having a large
university to work with will certainly help in securing a place as a part of the local
landscape. The board of directors which serves ART WORKS is also a positive addition
and will no doubt aid in the future successes of the center. Now, only time will tell what
ART WORKS will become.
References


Appendix A

Front of ART WORKS in Johnstown

Cinco de Mayo May 2006
Windows will be refurbished. The outside bricks which cover the windows will be used in another area of the building.
Future Supply Store and Frame Shop
Future Interior Digital Gallery Space

Upstairs Café and Classroom Space
Upstairs Café and Classroom Space

Site of Future Outdoor Kiln (across the street from ART WORKS)
The Lower Works Foundry for Blacksmith and Glass
Located across the river from ART WORKS and connected
by a pedestrian bridge.

Inside the future Blacksmith Foundry at Lower Works.
Field Notes from Cinco de Mayo Celebration May 5, 2006
Questions asked of audience (very informal setting and conversations):

Question: “So what do you think about this proposed art center?”

Responses: “Why do they need one, they have BOTTLE WORKS?”

“There is too much going on to go see things.”

“I think it is great because we have nothing like it in the area and Pittsburgh is too far to drive.”

“It will be interesting to see it when the work is done, right now it does not look very good.”

“I do not know if parking will be an issue. I had trouble finding parking tonight.”

“If there are more people coming to Cambria City, then there will be more traffic and this road (referring to Broad Street/Rt. 56) will be even busier than before.”

“Will artists be moving into the building or the neighborhood because that would bring in new people?”

“Will you be able to take classes from the artists?”

“It doesn’t look like much right now but I hope they are able to do what they want with the space. It is good to keep the historic buildings in the area.”

“Where did they move Hornicks?”

“The Mayor purchased the building, wow I didn’t know that. Will this cost the city anything?”
**Question:** “Do you think that there are enough cultural or arts opportunities in Johnstown now?

**Responses:** “I would like to see more activities for seniors, like bingos and dances. Maybe they (ART WORKS) could have something for the seniors in Johnstown.”

“No, not by far. I think they need more opportunities for people. Start bringing in people from outside the area and the area will change to fit those interests.”

“We have the Folk Fest and the Log Cabin Art Festival...I think that there are too many events all at the same time and no one can go see them all.”

“It certainly creates another venue of activity for those who are not fans of the Polka Fest and Thunder in the Valley.”

“Well they have the art center in Westmont too, which has been around longer and more established and I hope this does not hurt them because they have such nice art up there and classes in painting and gardening.” (Cambria County Community Art Center)
EMAIL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS SENT TO ART WORKS ARTISTS

Sent on 1/22/07

Hello ART WORKS Artists! I am using ART WORKS at Johnstown as part of my thesis research. Rosemary has provided me with your contact emails so that I might ask you a few questions regarding your involvement and perspectives of ART WORKS. Please feel free to decline this request but if you could please email me back and let me know if you chose to do so I would greatly appreciate it. Please include your full name, medium, and where you live now (state, city).

Thank you,
Nicole Tartoni

1. When did you first hear about ART WORKS?
2. Were you familiar with Johnstown, Pennsylvania prior to coming to ART WORKS?
3. What attracted you/interested you to ART WORKS?
4. What was it about the physical space that appealed to you?
5. What would you change or add to the space to make it usable as an artist if you had a studio there?
6. What could ART WORKS do to attract other artists like yourself?
7. Did you have any other interaction with the city and its people while at ART WORKS? (Any positive or negative experiences in particular?)
8. Would you like to see more places like ART WORKS in other cities?
9. What in particular does ART WORKS need to be successful in your opinion?

Thank You for any information you could provide me.
Nicole Tartoni
Appendix D

EMAIL INTERVIEW WITH ART WORKS ARTIST

Date: Wed, 31 Jan 2007 10:59:00 -0500
From: Jennifer A. Styperk (jenniferstyperk@gmail.com)
To: Nicole Tartoni (artiseducation@yahoo.com)
Subject: Re: Art Works at Johnstown

Hi Nicole,
Sorry for the delay. Hope this helps. I am not sure how you are using this. So I would be happy to elaborate. I just wanted to be sure to answer before too much time passed.
Jennifer Styperk

1. When did you first hear about ART WORKS?
I heard about Art Works from my respected colleague, Sarah Walko. Often this is the case, I have more interest in programs if I know an artist whose work I admire is behind the mission.

2. Were you familiar with Johnstown, Pennsylvania prior to coming to ART WORKS?
Having grown up in Pittsburgh, PA, I had heard about my grandmother making summer trips to Johnstown when she was growing up. She had cousins there. I also had known about its place in the Steel Industry and its history of floods. It was a city that lived in my imagination and intrigued me.

3. What attracted you/interested you to ART WORKS?
Time and space to work in my art was the largest incentive. And once there the landscape and history in Johnstown helped to fuel my work.

4. What was it about the physical space that appealed to you?
Funny, how did you anticipate the answer to the last question! The bridges and mountains...the way the old Bethlehem Steel buildings sat along the river was at once hopeful and forgotten....this blending with the gorgeous mountains...and the way the church steeples and arches of the bridges seem to nod and dance with the mountains.
5. What would you change or add to the space to make it usable as an artist if you had a studio there?
I am interested in Art Works keeping up a temporary residency program. So for this living accommodations that are a “walkable” distance from the studio spaces.

6. What could ART WORKS do to attract other artists like yourself?
In my opinion, it is about getting the right artists and offering a stipend (again for residency programs.) Depending on the type of artist and the mission of the program, supporting artists at every stage of development would be wise.

7. Did you have any other interaction with the city and its people while at ART WORKS? (Any positive or negative experiences in particular?)
Some of my pieces were created, in part, to facilitate interaction. The history and experiences in the people of Cambria City is overwhelming, fascinating and important.

8. Would you like to see more places like ART WORKS in other cities?
The Art Works I experienced was a developing summer residency program. I believe these sites benefit any community in which it is housed. And in turn benefit the artists who in turn contribute to current and future understanding of our place and time...so yes, absolutely, art is vital to life and undervalued in America.

9. What in particular does ART WORKS need to be successful in your opinion?
I believe that in order to be truly on the map in the art world, Art Works needs to offer residency programs for artists. This will allow Art Works to gain momentum and become known nationally and internationally. Attracting artists who are at the beginning of their career and who are accomplished will make it a vibrant place for artists. Money and names seems to be part of the game. But respect for the latest in current, contemporary art will be vital to Art Works rising above community and folk art which has a wonderful home next door at Bottleworks (and is no less or more important but distinct).
EMAIL INTERVIEW WITH ART WORKS ARTIST

Date: Tue, 30 Jan 2007 17:20:11 -0500
From: Sarah Walko (sarah.walko@gmail.com)
To: Nicole Tartoni (artiseducation@yahoo.com)
Subject: Re: Art Works at Johnstown

okay- finally!! so sorry
Sarah Walko-New York, NY

1. When did you first hear about ART WORKS?
From Rosemary Pawlowski’s son Thaddeus who also lives in New York.

2. Were you familiar with Johnstown, Pennsylvania prior to coming to ART WORKS?
Yes, I am from Pittsburgh originally and my sister went to college at UPJ.

3. What attracted you/interested you to ART WORKS?
The mission statement of the organization, the strange town with a rich history of the floods. Making work that reached out to a community rather than people who go to art openings all the time.

4. What was it about the physical space that appealed to you?
How raw, intimidating and ambitious it was.

5. What would you change or add to the space to make it usable as an artist if you had a studio there?
More moveable white walls but no permanent walls. Some facilities would be a nice bonus as well- such as more digital projectors or video equipment.

6. What could ART WORKS do to attract other artists like yourself?
Write a clear mission statement about the diversity, the place, the space and what sets it apart from other residency programs.

7. Did you have any other interaction with the city and its people while at ART WORKS? (Any positive or negative experiences in particular?)
Absolutely- all of my projects were based on the community.
8. Would you like to see more places like ART WORKS in other cities?
Absolutely- there are models starting to crop up- which is great to see. But I think artist play a vital role in city revitalization and programs like this are an example of that.

9. What in particular does ART WORKS need to be successful in your opinion?
Maintaining quality dedicated artists in the program- ones with an understanding of how ripe the organization and community is for artists- not artists who simply work inside a box.
Summary Sarah Walko sent Rosemary Pawlowski:

Artworks of Johnstown Summer Residency 2006

My experience as one of the first resident artists at Johnstown was invaluable for many reasons. I spent the month of August confronting a space which was raw, vast and ambitious. I also spent that month in observation of it's surrounding, Johnstown Pennsylvania. The space itself demanded a lot of me as I often work on a smaller scale and often inside neutral environments. The artworks building forced me to stretch myself well beyond a white cube and made me address my work to be not only formally and aesthetically aware of it's competitive context but also, the relationship of the warehouse within the context and history of the community. I found Johnstown a strange and interesting town with a fascinating history. For this reason it is a ripe ground for any artist, working in any medium. The support I received from the artworks monetarily, with materials and even hands on in the days leading up to the opening made the exhibition a success on every level. I learned a great deal about my own practice and the community turn-out and feedback was inspiring. My experience there was overall fantastic and I would recommend this unique program to any artist.

Let me know if you need anything else. I have a lot of images of the exhibition I could send as well.
Appendix E

ART WORKS Interview with Rosemary Pawlowski, Executive Director for BOTTLE WORKS Ethnic Art Center and John Kubinsky, ART WORKS, Board of Directors President, October 9, 2006

Nicole: Thank you both for meeting with me today (greetings and legal forms were handled and signed prior to the interview recording). Because I am looking at part of this thesis as looking at the demographic of the area and the audience, could you both tell me how long you have lived in the area?

Rosemary: I was born in Nanty Glo, Pennsylvania. I have lived mostly in Ebensburg for my entire life except for 5 years when I lived in Washington D.C.. I move to D.C. in 1967 and moved back to the area in 1971 and have been in Johnstown for 35 years.

Nicole: How long have you been with the BOTTLE WORKS?

Rosemary: 15 years.

John: I was born in Richland Township, just outside of Johnstown. Left in 1981, for college, military service, graduate school, and other jobs. I moved back here in the end of 1992.

Nicole: And how long have you been with BOTTLE WORKS, again?

John: I am newly on the board this year and with ART WORKS as well.

Nicole: How did you first become aware of BOTTLE WORKS?
John: I knew of BOTTLE WORKS from living in Johnstown. It is clearly a part of the community, even before it got started. There have been wonderful exhibitions and displays here through the years, and so I got aware of it. Rosemary and I knew each other at the time I came back to town. We used to be on a Main Street subcommittee for the city of Johnstown.

Nicole: The birth of BOTTLE WORKS…how did it come about, how it was initiated? (The BOTTLE WORKS Ethnic Arts Center is the organization which is currently overseeing ART WORKS. The BOTTLE WORKS building is the located directly in front of ART WORKS.)

Rosemary: When we first conceived the BOTTLE WORKS, we wanted the opportunity to have studio spaces. Since we followed the façade grant, we had to maintain the historical architecture of the building. It did not lend itself to having artists who needed appropriated ventilation and so forth. So the BOTTLE WORKS does have a couple of studios, but it is basically, almost exclusively, used for the programming for the exhibits for the celebration of heritage and tradition. The idea of having studio spaces did not go away. And when the building next door, which was a warehouse and a brewery from the 1870s, we asked the board if they would allow the BOTTLE WORKS, and myself really, to make an application for a DCDE grant for a feasibility study to ascertain whether that building merited having artist studios. That was in 2002. And we did get a grant for $30,000. The BOTTLE WORKS shepherded that feasibility study, and allowed me to work with a consultant, which was Westview Associates, and that was a one or two year process. At the end of that time we had a pretty formidable feasibility study. Throughout the study there was a group of community leaders, civic government and private who share input with which went into the feasibility study. So the feasibility study was done, but there were really no developers, investors, and so forth. We really had the body of the work. And last year, members from that original planning group came forward and talked with the potential developer. And out of this came offer of the mayor of the city (Donald Zucco) to put up private money to buy the building. And soon after the buying of the building, we had to decide whether this would be an extension of the BOTTLE WORKS or whether this would be a separate entity. The agreement was that the mission was different, this was an economic development project, and it should be a separate board. And so that is how the present board of directors of the ART WORKS in Johnstown came to be.

Nicole: You are both relatively new with the (ART WORKS) board, but how much have either of you had with the initial plans as far as the space being used? What input have either of you had in how the space would be used?
Rosemary: I think a lot of the information that went into planning the space came from the artists who responded to the survey that was on the website for the BOTTLE WORKS. So there was a lot of direction from there. And those requests were then passed along to the architect. John can speak with the function and the role that the existing board of directors had. I think more of their focus was financial.

John: We’re very hands on. As Rosemary stated earlier this year when Don and Nancy Zucco bought the building next door, there was initially a working group. We weren’t officially incorporated or anything like that. But we were a working group of members of the business community, government, and the arts, and also the city, who met to talk about the building. And as the feedback came in, there were designs done by the architect. And as a working group, we were very comfortable with the plan. We were very excited about having multiple galleries, thought that 11 studios in that building would work very easily, the classroom space which would be very key, and also the living roof. Again, that working group sort of morphed into the actual board of ART WORKS this spring (2006). I would say all the members from the working group, plus a couple of other members joined the board once we became incorporated and got control of the project. The group was very comfortable with the plan, and we had to be, because we needed to reach out to some possible funding sources. We needed to be comfortable with the plan and be able to talk about it. There really haven’t been any questions or debate on the board about the plan.

Nicole: What architectural group are you using?

John: Pawlowski and Associates.

Nicole: (Looking at drawings and discussing gallery changes) How did the idea to have a green building come about?

Rosemary: Soon after we got the feasibility study for ART WORKS in Johnstown, we started thinking about incorporating those techniques ("green techniques") and materials into the renovations. And so we applied for a feasibility study from the Sustainable Energy Fund from the Community Foundation. We got $25,000. So that study is nearly completed, so that is good. It is a pretty formidable study. LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Green Building Rating System) buildings are classified by points. If the implementation is like the planning and the design, we should have enough points for a Gold certification (Gold is the second best certification under
Platinum), which would be major. This would be the first green building in Johnstown, the first art center that I know of that would be a green building (After the interview I was able to find several larger art centers and museums in the country that have already gone “green”).

**John:** And it’s really important in managing the ART WORKS once it is complete because anyone who have been involved with a studio or gallery, utility costs can be quite high. With a green roof in the summertime, the temperature doesn’t go above 70°. It also provides insulation in the wintertime. It dramatically lowers utility costs.

**Nicole:** I am finding that out through my research and especially, working in an art center now. The cost to keep your doors open to the public for one day is often not what you take as income in a month. As non-profits, you and I know this, but the public often down not.

**Rosemary:** It’s a year round process. John was talking about saving on air conditioning. You spend money in the summer on air conditioning and cooling and in the winter, heat, and it’s a never ending process.

**Nicole:** How do you feel about an arts center in the community? Do you feel that an arts center other than the BOTTLE WORKS is needed? Do you think that it will compete with other art centers in the community? Will ART WORKS address a need that is not currently offered in the surrounding community?

**John:** What we’ve been finding out in visiting different groups is that the project is extremely well received, even from long time existing art organizations. The unique thing about ART WORKS is the educational aspect because it is going to provide artists an environment to interact and create, but at the same time, service a catalyst for economic development and growth. The other thing too, what you see here if you start at the Discovery Center (Johnstown Heritage Discovery Center) on Broad St. and work your way toward Kernville (site of the Artists Relocation Program similar to Paducah, Kentucky), our board penned the phrase “the cultural corridor.” With the BOTTLE WORKS, ART WORKS, we have blacksmith shops across the river and continuing into downtown with the (Johnstown) Flood Museum and finally into Kernville with the Artist Relocation Program, we are really seeing how art and culture can help revitalize a depressed community. The educational piece is probably the most important piece, but then we look at the spin-off effect. And the groups that we talked with have also echoed that. Whether that would be IUP (Indiana University of
Pennsylvania), Westmont (referring to the Cambria County Community Arts Center), there really hasn’t been anything negative about having the studio here because really, none of them offer the number of studios for artists to rent. We’re seeing demand from the surveys and the preview exhibition. We had two or three artists that said “When can I rent?”, because they are currently working in space that is inadequate for them, so if we could put a roof over their head today, they would be in there working.

Rosemary: I think also the fact that it's a raw space. I think the artists know that he or she doesn’t have to be tidy. It’s a little more down and dirty. It’s really a working space.

John: And when you look at having the kiln on a little piece of property across the street, a digital gallery, there is certainly things that are unique that will make us stand out. When you talk to our friends over at IUP, they’re often forced to look at Pittsburgh, and that is so competitive down there now and maybe cost prohibitive…this project (ART WORKS) they’ve embraced it (IUP), and I think they’ll be good partners with us down the road.

Rosemary: It is interesting too with IUP and our partnership.

Nicole: (Here, I talk with Rosemary and John about the international programs IUP has to offer for students in the College of Fine Arts. Students and faculty form IUP travel to Croatia, Slovenia, and Poland and vice versa. The area where BOTTLE WORKS and ARTWORKS are located has Croatian and Slovenian and Polish roots.)

Rosemary: And IUP is also partners with the Pasquerilla Performing Arts Center (located on the campus of the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown) because they need a performing arts space for the next year while renovations are being done. So there is going to be some IUP presence (in Johnstown).

Nicole: Who would you like to utilize the ART WORKS space? Who is your target audience? Who do you see using this space?
John: All age groups. Starting with the basics, just having the galleries we have. I think people are hungry for art in Johnstown. We were pleased with the turnout over Labor Day at the festival (opening for the ART WORKS space to the public). The weather was terrible and the folks still came. So I think the gallery will attract all ages. The classroom space...IUP may offer some master classes and some beginning art classes too. We’ve talked to IUP about some internship programs or someone with an MFA or MBA who wants to get into studio management. Or even someone with a BFA taking some business courses. The arts themselves, I think there will be artists who are clearly over 18, someone who is more proficient, and it is part of their life. We had a photographer who was 19 and a woman who did needlepoint or something who was in her 60s or 70s, so you can see the age group we have, and then artists-in-residence too, who were in their 20s, but in various stages of their career (talking about the artists who were working in the space and exhibited their work during the Labor Day opening). So it will cover all age groups, through the studios, through the classes that could be held there, and there really is no age limit other than being over 18 to have studio space there.

Rosemary: I think we would be attracting those under 18 more in groups, high school groups. When they come to the BOTTLE WORKS, we do. We bring in artists and consultants who work with them and the same thing could happen over there (ART WORKS) too. Classrooms will be very attractive because they will be on the roof (Rosemary is talking about school groups and tours of school students). When you are able to attract a signature master artist, whether it’d be for watercolor or iconographer or whatever, you’re bringing someone who is national or international level. That will attract artists of a very broad range to come for a week or so workshop. And that has been done very successfully at the community arts center. We don’t have a lot of room (currently at BOTTLE WORKS). We will have that at the ART WORKS, so that will serve the project well.

Nicole: Are you still going to go with the jury selection process for artists to have studio space, like artists at the Torpedo Factory (in Virginia)?

Rosemary: I am sure there will be a group who will need to review and evaluate the work that the artist is doing…it won’t be us.

John: It may be some ad hoc group that the board commissions to do that for us. (Ad hoc is a term used to describe a group which has been formed to handle a specific situation and will most likely be disbanded when no longer needed and the situation is resolved.)
Nicole: Is that how you envision the artists being selected?

John: Yes. But at the same time too...everybody talks about the Torpedo Factory. How rigid that jury is I am not sure. I think that will evolve over the next year or so.

Nicole: So you have a lot of artists already interested in renting?

John: We have one who was willing to sign a lease six months ago, and I think he still feels that way. We had two or three that has approached us over the preview weekend. There others in the area that I know of that are in different spaces that I think they'll be more curious as this project starts to take shape, and they see what the studio looks like. They may want to move from their current locations.

Rosemary: We're maintaining dialogue with those artists who had contacted us originally (from the original webpage survey), which is several years old. That survey is no longer on the website. However, we are working with the Community College (Pennsylvania Highlands Community College) and developing a website specifically for ART WORKS, and we're going to put the survey back on.

Nicole: What has your public reaction have been?

John: Very, very positive. (Going back to the preview exhibition) When you have two or three hundred (visitors) flowing through there on any Friday night, with less numbers on Saturday and Sunday due to weather, you look at government officials, you look at education, our friends at IUP, those who actually create...their reaction was very positive. The two artists-in-residence over the summer were very pleased to have this space. They helped us promote it, and I think are dedicated to it. Our ceramic artist is coming back over Thanksgiving to fix the kiln. He'd love nothing more at some point in time to come back to Johnstown and do his career. The reactions were very good and the media has been positive...both the television and print. Rosemary and I have talked a little about doing some public radio spots and we probably need to get that coordinated to get some radio time. I couldn't have been more pleased with what we have seen.
Nicole: Could you talk more about...sustainability and the project. How will ART WORKS be able to stay open and running once the doors have opened and everything is running?

John: The rental income will come from the studios. The programming that can be held in the classroom can also provide income. We're looking for ongoing support by donors...memberships in the ART WORKS as the BOTTLE WORKS has. Rosemary has been very good at pursuing various applications for grant money for the artist-in-residence position(s). I would see also when we get to point of having an executive director that we would also be looking for grant money for that. One thing about the financial models is that through a lot of the rent and a little of the programming, that place would pretty much break even...and then it's where you take it from there.

Rosemary: And we are (applying for) a non-profit.

John: We have applied, and it is a long process. Six to ten months, you may get a provisional sooner, but it may take longer to get the final.

Nicole: Have you thought about the Pennsylvania Council for the Arts (PCA) as a funding source?

Rosemary: Actually we had a representative visit (from the PCA) last week and she is very impressed. And actually they've been aware of this project; it's been on their radar for a couple of years now. Unfortunately the way things are with PCA is that we have to commit a funding stream...unless you are over $100,000 dollars you won't get into a regular track. In fact they're trying to keep out the smaller art centers from the big track. We're going to have to start out modestly, as far as PCA funding is concerned. But I think we'll be able to pick up some additional funding if we're creative. There is quite a bit out there; you can write grants all day long.

John: Much more for programming than for capital.

Nicole: Do you see a conglomeration of art centers, including ART WORKS helping each other out? Partnerships with other centers?
John: I do see some cooperation. The closest spot I see is next door between BOTTLE WORKS and ART WORKS. That is the most logical one. We would like to see programming flow between BOTTLE WORKS and ART WORKS. (John is referring back to the Labor Day opening) We’ve talked with Michael Hood (Dean of the College of Fine Arts at IUP) about some of the possibilities. When can we sign them up and when can we get involved? Community Arts (Cambria County Community Arts Center) in Westmont…the same way. The gentlemen in charge of getting the blacksmith shop (at the Lower Works) up and running was at the preview exhibition, and spent some time with both me and Rosemary. He sees opportunities between both. You have groups that are much more (about) programming, and we are more facility and display. We’ll have classroom space so that those that provide programming can use the ART WORKS space for what they need. Same thing is true with education…IUP, some of the local high schools. We’ve talked about SAMA (Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art) we’ve talked about Saint Francis University (Lorretto, Pennsylvania).

Rosemary: SAMA is a very good relationship because their artists would be prime candidates…and the money could come from the PCA fellowship program…but they would be prime for leading master classes or artists in residencies.

John: We’ve been purposeful in making sure that we are inclusive. And we’ve reached out. The people we’ve talked to already are ready to work with us now, and are pleased that we’ve reached out to them. I think in a lot of ways, we have been very proactive in that…we’ve pushed relationships fairly early on in the process. You look at where we’ve been in six months so far and it’s pretty amazing. I think one thing about our board is that there’s strong business knowledge there and we’re looking at this like a business. When you run a business you have to find suppliers and customers. And that is the approach we’ve taken. (Commenting on separate boards) It’s really like a real estate company, when you look at the numbers and you look at the renting space you almost have to treat it like an office building; you get tenants for the office building. And how is your office building going to attract business? Clearly our focus is education and creativeness, but it is also a financial (business) endeavor as well.

Nicole: How many individuals on the board have an arts background?

John: You have a lot that appreciate the arts, but I am not sure about actually creating art.
**Rosemary:** (Seconds Johns remarks) There is one man that is interesting; he has a Masters in managing and a minor in art education. But he is not a working artist.

**Nicole:** Do most of the individuals have business backgrounds?

**John:** I think if you look at a common denominator between all of the board members is that they have a greater background in community development and community service.

**Nicole:** I think that sometimes that makes a difference in the success of many arts organizations. Sometimes, I wonder if too much of an invested interest...too many cooks in the kitchen you could say, would hinder the progress. Sometimes, those with a lot of passion for a specific thing or program end up butting heads because everyone is too similar.

**Rosemary:** I think that's the difference. When we had the planning group meeting, we did have artist coming to the meetings. They mostly listen and at times contribute their thoughts, but we kept the artists in a special artist's focus group. And they've shared a lot of ideas that were brought back to the planning group. I would say that the success (of ART WORKS) at an accelerated pace for this project is because of those who are really community leaders, who have business and financial skills.

**John:** It’s a very pragmatic board. It’s good because it is grounding. Those who know the business side, those who know the taxing side, those who know the fundraising side, etc, etc,...we challenge each other all the time. Are we doing the right thing? Are we pushing hard enough? But at the same time, we’re not totally art illiterate on the board.

**Rosemary:** I am not a business person, I am an arts promoter, but I am not an artist.

**Nicole:** I think that, as an artist and as an educator, I would have a hard time seeing the business side, which could be detrimental to the success of the center. I would have too much invested interest in my own areas to even be able to really grasp the others. That is why I think that having your board of directors from all other areas is what could be your greatest success and why ART WORKS is advancing ahead so fast.
John: We’ve have talked about bringing an artist on the board, as the board evolves, maybe someone from academia...maybe someone who actually manages a program.

Rosemary: An art promoter who wants to capture the faith and the support, and the energy of business people, what they both need to do is get themselves involved in community projects. That’s where I met John. We were on the board that started the Kernville Artists Relocation Project, then going back further to the Main Street program. Get involved in community projects, where business people look at you and say “Wow, you really have an interest, you are really doing a good job”. If someone is doing something, because I respect that someone as a person, I should listen to what they have to say. That’s how you should come into it.

Nicole: Sometimes artist don’t do that.

Rosemary: They’re (artists) trying to live on their art alone. Does that make George self-serving (Rosemary is referring to George Turner of Allied Artists of Johnstown)? Maybe? But George is the president of Allied Artists, and he is going around trying to find spaces for exhibits, trying to find other area to appreciate, trying to make it more regional. So it can be done. But sometimes artists are forced to think about their own sustenance, so their conversations are very electric when around other artists. So why should they broaden their scope of activities? But it’s when you get into the public eye, when you start doing community projects; you need to earn the respect of the people who can help your cause.

John: Artists can get involved in low cost market housing programs because what happens there is when you look at those programs, one: you typically have local government involved, two: local banks are involved, three: local CPAs are involved. There’s the big three when it comes to finding money. That is one way that if an artist wanted to get involved in a community, that’s one way to look at it.

(Pause)

John: That could be through Habitat for Humanity or could be through the Redevelopment Authority at the city or county level. They’re always looking for people to help; they’re always looking for board members, and that’s the way you connect with people.
Rosemary: For instance, (referring to the Labor Day Opening)...you can’t keep all your art to yourself. More of those forums need to take place; artists and non-artists conversing.

John: What is interesting too is that (referring to IUP) when you look at someone who has their Doctoral degree, is teaching in a university environment, and is tenured, they have an appreciation for the business side (grants and programming). Most of the people we know have been teaching 15 years. Michael Hood, being on the teaching side and running a department, looking at university budgets, paying salaries,...individuals like him wouldn’t be where they are today if they hadn’t picked up those skills along the way.

Rosemary: And everyone is involved in development; everyone should be involved in development. I am sure Dean Hood looks at that as well.

Nicole: Will you have a fee for gallery space? Will it be free admission for the public?

John: I think both. And I think there will be some things where...the festival weekends (such as Johnstown’s Folk Fest events), that may be just an open event. If were having an exhibition tied to the university...if one of the candidates is displaying his/her work, those may be free. Other than that, I would like to see memberships. I don’t know how well paying $7.50 at the door works. We’re looking at how you can make it at a break-even standpoint first, once you get it up and running. And then you look at how to expand your finances to support maintenance of the structure, and also development of programming and keeping your staff on board. You have to look at it that way.

(Pause)

John: If you go into it thinking we have to pay $7.50 and we need so many people to come through the door, you’re pushing it in Johnstown. I would rather have a busload of people who visit the Flood Museum stop here at ART WORKS and the Discovery Center and pick up a membership packet or buy something at the gift shop, than to charge admission. It’s hard to make that work here. Perhaps, Chicago, Washington DC, Pittsburgh...you may be able to get away with that (admission fees), but I don’t think in Johnstown you can do that.
Nicole: I know what you mean. I find that many people will turn around and walk out the door and may never come back if the first thing they are greeted with is an admission fee. Many people who wander into the art center where I work, have never visited before, and are not expecting an admission fee. When they turn around and walk out the door, often, they never return because they were just passing through town or traveling from farther away.

John: (I would rather give a visitor)...a membership packet with a membership card or a donor card. I would rather do that than charge admission. And then have some background on the building and who will be there on exhibit this month and other stuff.

Rosemary: I think we have to get some local artists too. SAMA has “primo” exhibits.

Nicole: Membership and donor packets have worked well where I work. People seem to like it and they will take it with them, think about it, and send it back. They are also more likely to return even if they are farther away because they are placed on a mailing list when they join.

John: I would hope sometime down the road, that we have a permanent collection. We could have one of the galleries open at all times.

Rosemary: And that is part of the lease agreement...how many hours we can have the gallery open.

Nicole: What other types of exhibitions, besides the digital gallery and possible movies and video or internet art will be here at ART WORKS? Will you have national artists coming in and exhibiting?

John: We are hoping to have artists-in-residence ongoing. One of the things that the artists-in-residence will be challenged to do is to have a display of their work. We hope there is art made during their stay with us, but they are going to have to bring other pieces with them. But that is what we saw during the preview exhibition...not everything that was there was made here. Will it be a draw for someone major to come in? Possibly, but they can’t really be our focus. I think we are looking at local and regional artists.
(Pause)

**John:** The digital gallery could help us attract from a broader area just because there is not a lot of it out there, but we'll have to see.

**Nicole:** Do you think you will rent to touring exhibitions that may come through?

**John and Rosemary:** Yes

**John:** I think the other thing too, is that one of the things we will see there is a partnership with BOTTLE WORKS…ethnic (art) type exhibitions, Iconographers from the area. I can clearly see an iconography display; I can clearly see needlecraft from different groups.
Nicole: Thank you for meeting with me today. I want to first start by gaining some background information from you regarding ART WORKS. Were you with the project from the start?

Anna: No. I came on board later. James (another architect in the firm) started working on the project. There were still works when I came aboard.

(Some files are handed to me as Anna continues.)

BOTTLE WORKS (Ethnic Arts Center) had originally developed the idea. I started last July, when I was introduced to the project and when the building was purchased. After the building was purchased, it became more realistic that something could be done with the building. Before (the building was purchased), they were just doing preliminary ideas…what was being done…how it would work, etcetera.

Nicole: Have you had a chance to speak with any of the artists about the usability of the space?

Anna: Yes. We had an exhibit in September (Labor Day Weekend). There were artists interested in putting their works in the exhibit. There were a lot of people who attended and everyone was happy with the exhibition. I had two artists, Sarah and Jennifer, living with me at the time they were developing their ideas, and they would share their ideas and their point of view. Sarah and Jennifer thought it was a great idea for Johnstown, a small community, where we could possibly open some minds. It’s a great idea for this community.

Nicole: Do the artists like the industrial feel (setting) of ART WORKS and the city?
Anna: Yes. We have to do renovations to the building to make it “green” (the required Green Building renovations), but other artists wouldn’t change anything. They are so “minimalistic” (Anna is referring to the artists needing very little to work in the space. They love the place as it is. All they really need is a couple of switches, some light, and some power…maybe a sink to wash their hands, that is all, they (meaning the artists who Anna has spoken with) could just move in right now.

Nicole: I was in there in May (2006), and the spaces were still closed off. Then I came back yesterday and it looks like a completely different building. I really like the larger room where the 3D archery shoot was with the ceiling and the beams. It just has a really nice feel to it.

Anna: Everyone loves that feel (Anna shows me floor plans of the archery room). Our plan is to put in some studios for artists and movable walls. You will be able to open up everything to make one big space.

Nicole: So an artist could say “I would like two studios as one”, and they could have a larger area?

Anna: Yes.

Nicole: What is the plan with the room with the mezzanine?

Anna: We’re going to have a gallery here. I talked to Rosemary and Janie, that’s how we developed the plan because there were certain rooms that were needed and not only the studios, they wanted to accommodate it the digital gallery plus restrooms and an additional staircase here. (Discussing the floor plan: explaining where works will be placed in the main entrance and what mediums of art) In the foyer, will be a display wall for the artist working there. In the digital gallery, movies may be shown, but I am not really sure. (Rosemary Pawlowski is the Executive Director of BOTTLE WORKS and Janie Leck-Grela then current Director of ART WORKS.) (Anna and Nicole review the floor plans.) And here will be the corridor to the gallery and the gallery will be on the bottom. Then a new staircase going up to the mezzanine. Then you can walk up…to the walkway, kind of an extension to the mezzanine where everything, right now, is empty. We’ll have a railing that the people can actually look at the sculpture below. We’re going to have painting exposed on the walls. With the windows in the existing open area, we’re planning to make the windows its own piece of art, with
the help of some stain glass artists. I think it would look very nice. And we don’t want too much light in there, just natural light. And underneath the mezzanine, we’re going to have the art supply store. The store will be necessary because they (the artists who will have studios in ART WORKS) are in the middle of nowhere, but they will have supplies on hand, so that’s good that they have something like this (Anna is alluding to the fact that unlike Pittsburgh or a larger city there are no art supply stores in the area). That’s pretty much all on the first floor. We’ll have an elevator and stairs going to the second floor and have a kitchen/café. We’ll have an exit outside to a walkway with our green roof (a green or living roof has grasses or plants which grown on the roof surface), and a classroom that is actually a new addition to the building. From the artist point of view, I think this is going to be nice because I had the idea to do an exhibit place on top of the roof…in the summertime they can do something here (the roof). A fountain will be here and maybe some sculptures here; kind of a gathering place where they can talk about their art. From this area, they have access to the gallery and the classroom. Everything is pretty much circular.

**Nicole:** This area here, is that your HVAC system; your heating/cooling system?

**Anna:** Yes. It is going to be on the roof. There are some things necessary for this building. And this studio is going to have a skylight…but not every studio will have a skylight. (Anna and Nicole discuss the window set up.)

**Nicole:** I remember Rosemary saying the brick there (I am pointing to a section of the floor plan) had windows behind it.

**Anna:** Yes. We are looking to replace all the brick fills with windows instead of the skylights to provide light for them. The rest of the studios will have the skylights.

**Nicole:** And in the studios, they will be fitted with electrical outlets and accessibility?

**Anna:** Yes.

**Nicole:** And what about things like water?
Anna: Each studio will have a sink and access to the main restroom here (points to floor plan). They are all going to have electrical switches. I don’t actually have an electrical plan ready yet, but...

Nicole: The sink has a nice touch because the first thing I was thinking was…I always need a sink for something, so that is good to have one.

Anna: I just spoke to the lighting person about lights because, what is the most important thing in a studio...lighting. Yes. I told the lighting person I need something that I can move and that I can adjust because when we do a different project, we need different lighting. Sometimes you can’t live with a light that is just in one place. Some artists had clip-on lights, and they worked perfect. So we (ART WORKS) are going to provide as many outlets as possible for use of the clip-on lights for those who like to use them, and we are going to do the track light around the studio...I think on the wall. And then in the middle (of one of the rooms), this is the spotlight we are probably going to use in the gallery to light up the sculptures, here, here, and here (points to floor plan). And you can move them to adjust the angle.

Nicole: Removable light is a very valuable resource and such a necessity for artists.

Anna: Yes it is.

Anna: Would you suggest anything? The lighting?

Nicole: I think (referring to the studio section) having the track lighting is a very good idea because...well, I would first ask about the wall material. Is it something that you’d be able to tack stuff on?

Anna: Yes

Nicole: Then I think the track lighting is good, especially if they are doing two-dimensional things, then they can put it up and take a look at it as they are working on it. But it is good to have each studio with the ability to have spots where they can move around.
Anna: I know that he (Anna is referring to the lighting specialist) said that you can move the track lights...you know that they could just slide in...

Nicole: They are going to be on the ceiling.

Anna: He said you can adjust them to different heights and you can actually put them in different places. But it's also about "look" too. I am going to talk to him today about the possibility of having this light movable and how this is going to work. What do you think about lights like this? (Anna shows me track lighting that can be suspended for different levels.)

Nicole: I guess I would want to know the ease of moving them is first because if it is something that...if I'm moving around in my studio and I am working on several things in a space, then I might want to be able to just grab a light and move. But for studios where artists work in one area and have their supplies in another area, and if its more like a painting or fabric artists, then those would be fine because you're not moving them...not moving around the space as much as a three-dimensional artist might.

(Anna discusses the lights and the styles.)

Nicole: These lights (probably the ones pertaining to the sculptures) can be lowered and raised. Something you cannot do with traditional track lighting. If artists are using that studio as their own little gallery space, being able to move the light vertically I think would create more of an environment in their space too.

Anna: Good point.

Nicole: I really like the lights that come down from the track, but they come down on a pole, they are set down lower on the pole, and light is more concentrated.

Anna: I know, but they don't give you much light...really.

Nicole: They are good for an area right above a table space.
Anna: Yes. We are going to have something like that in the café area. I got this idea (not the café lights) from the artists clip lights because that is what they were using the most.

Nicole: There is one light that I used that was like the mini-spots with very intense, bright, white light. It worked for a lot of area where there is a lot of text to be read and with fine details of things. Depending on the artists, say for example a jewelry artist or a fabric artist, someone may want a more intense light.

Anna: How far did they come down?

Nicole: Pretty far. The suspension poles were roughly this length (I gesture a measurement with my hands). The light part was more like a small bell.

Anna: Now this light was pretty much like the one you were describing. This is the one I had in mind…something like that (shows light fixture from catalog).

Nicole: I like tracks. Were you thinking of a rectangular light?

Anna: Yes. We were talking about shape too (Anna and ART WORKS). I don’t remember the last time we were talking but…I think we were taking about shapes here because of the curved shapes in the foyer. With the studios, I don’t know if they would serve much purpose, you know. (Anna is referring to a curved track lighting system in each studio.)

Nicole: Are the studio spaces going to stay with the cement floor?

Anna: We don’t know that yet. What I am thinking is we are going to put in a rubber flooring made of recycled tires. But right now, when I talked to the artists, they really didn’t need anything…they wanted to stay with the floors there now.

Nicole: When working with a green building, do you have any limits in wanting to use some materials for a specific aesthetic, but not being able to, because they are not “green”? 
Anna: I am trying to use materials that have some percentage of recycling materials, but there is so many on the market right now that they are not limited like you would think. You can find many materials, even carpeting, that have some percentage of recycled material in it. What would you suggest?

Nicole: I would much rather have the rubber floors because if I am standing a lot, concrete would be horrible on my back. Rubber is much easier to clean up than a carpet that could stain too.

Nicole: In your classroom space, are they thinking about having projector and screen?

Anna: Yes. This is pretty much the last step in our design. It is a little bit more expensive, and it is not really what we need right now, but they are working on the future that they (ART WORKS) would like to have some kind of classroom where artists can teach some art classes and make presentations.

Nicole: Are the desks movable or are they mounted into the floor?

Anna: I don’t know that as of yet.

Nicole: Are you thinking of the room as more of a conference style room with carpeting or are you thinking of a more open room where you could do, say, watercolor with more chance of a mess?

Anna: It’s not going to be a conference room or anything like that. It’s pretty much going to be a regular classroom with the possibility or making a mess. It's going to serve the purpose for artists to gather together and talk. The room is still going to have that clean yet industrial look; an open look. I would say that it is going to be more of a cold, clean space than a warm, “homey” space. That’s what I was saying earlier. The artists are minimalistic and don’t need much. All they need is a little light.

Nicole: I like to have a place that I can organize, with organizational things. Which, I don’t know if this would be part of the plan, but having bins or something to store thing in, which they could probably bring in themselves. I don’t know if later down the road that would be something to add, like a movable something to store stuff in. I guess if they were going to rent the space for a year they would bring some movable shelving or something.
**Anna:** What do you think about the size of the studios? 14 to 15 feet wide and 34 and 35 feet in length?

**Nicole:** I think that would be enough space. What’s nice about the space is that it is not a cube, and the length of the space give you a set back and really look at something.

**Anna:** It’s also high too. Yeah, I think its going to be comfortable. An artist came in and was disgusted that we were going to remove the industrial look and divide the spaces.

**Nicole:** I like the size and shape of the space. And then those are the two bays that can open up (I am asking about the two studios with the back wall made of an existing overhead door to move large sculpture in and out)?

**Anna:** There is also going to be glass too (Anna points to studios which have a wall facing the street). We are thinking of adding windows so you can see artists working from the streets, which might inspire some people. But another point is I don’t know how the artists would feel about people seeing them working, but sometimes the work in progress is more interesting than the exhibit.

**Nicole:** It would really depend on the artist. But chances are if an artist is coming to this space, similar to the Torpedo Factory in Virginia, that they would expect that they will be open to the public view. But also, since the idea is a community, then artists may want to share their experience with each other.

**Anna:** That’s what I was thinking too…that artists would want to expose their work and attract other artists.

**Nicole:** Especially at night because they have their lights on and you’re driving past and you can see them working there and…

**Anna:** That’s what I was thinking because it would be such a nice look, 12 feet high and…seeing the reflections of the track lights and everything else.
Nicole: Maybe adding some shutters or something just in case if they wanted something to “unveil” they could add some privacy to their space.

Anna: Good idea.

Nicole: The kitchen. Will it be for the café, or will it be universal…say for cooking classes or other functions?

Anna: The kitchen will serve two purposes and depends probably on the schedule (when the café is going to be open). The café is going to be pretty much simple stuff; coffee, sandwiches, small stuff. We would also like to have cooking classes here, and that is why we have the cooking equipment and the table just for the purpose of the cooking classes. I think it’s big enough. (Taking about the windows) We are going to demolish the glass block windows and replace them with energy efficient windows. And we will try to recycle the glass blocks. We have two options. We can sell or drop off the glass at the recycling center, or we were thinking to just use the glass for our purposes for the building or crushing the glass for art work. Maybe use the glass to decorate the outside of the building.

Nicole: Yeah. I was wondering if there would be any decorations on the outside of the building.

Anna: Not too much, just probably the front, with a clean, nice composition. We would crush the glass in different pieces and put them in selected areas in the front. I thought it would be a good idea to use the glass in this way for the green building. We also have to replace the windows on the “neighbor” side of the building, probably just the upper part; something that won’t bother the neighbors, but will provide enough light.

Nicole: How will the roof support the additional weight of the living roof?

Anna: We will have to add some additional support, the engineers have said. There are some areas that are in good condition, but there are other areas where there are holes and will need to be fixed and supported. We don’t know what we are going to use to add the extra support, yet. Maybe some additional joists, that don’t take ART WORKS away from the original look and feel. We’ll definitely have to do something, though, to support the additional weight.
Nicole: It’s really come a long way since I last saw it. When I saw ART WORKS in the first rendering, it was hard to envision what it would look like all fixed up. It’s a great space here; it’s big, and it’s even bigger now then when I first saw it. I think the artists will like it, and I hope a lot of artists come. I am originally from the Johnstown area, so that is why I am interested in doing this as my thesis.

Anna: I like your subject. I think it’s great. In your study, is the green building going to be important?

Nicole: Yes. There is not much literature on developing an arts center, which is one of the reasons I wanted to do this as my thesis. Part of my thesis is a literature review on existing works, but I am not finding anything. I am interested in studying the green building and the use of materials especially because many non-profit organizations are using outside sources of funding, and grants, and this helps with costs in a way. It is more expensive to start up initially, but in the long run, much more sustainable. Being able to manage, for example, heating and cooling is important. I work at an arts center now and it is shocking to know what you need as a minimal daily income to you’re your doors open to the public just to pay the electric bill. Having a green roof, or solar cells, better windows and proper insulation will help keep those costs down, among many other options.

Anna: Yes. We are insulating the building and putting in energy efficient windows should help. I’m still new at this, but I am researching and learning how to run an arts center like this. There are so many questions that the engineer asks me, like what kind of light and how many people are going to be here, and you don’t really know, you can only speculate. The engineers have to design the heating and cooling systems based on how many people are going to live here, and that is a number that is never set in stone.

Nicole: And artists may decorate the space their own way. And by that I mean they may take down the track lighting, or other fixtures you design into the space, so you want to make sure the space is as user friendly as possible too. Were there any other places you’ve went to that had a design similar to what you are doing here in Johnstown at ART WORKS?
Anna: Rosemary Pawlowski (Executive Director of BOTTLE WORKS Ethnic Arts Center) went to some places and you should talk to her. She went to the Torpedo Factory in Virginia. I drove by it one time, it was really late. But what I remember from it… it was so visible at night. You could see people working in the windows after business hours; you can see their sculptures and whatever else they were making.

Nicole: I like the idea to be able to see the work at night. I would say having more outlets would be good just in case they needed more light or use some tools that require power. Again, I think having sinks is a good idea as well. Storage space can be a good idea. It’s not needed in the floor plans, and they might bring something of their own for storage.

Anna: It’s something to think about when we do furnishing. We just have the space for the desks and the essentials because we need to get this space ready to occupy. It’s also important when the people get here, they will tell you what they need, and then you can buy it for them.

Nicole: Most artists will bring in their own things; tables, materials, storage. I think the flooring will be good because…I would like a space that I would feel okay getting dirty in, and if I spill something, I could clean it up without worrying that I was going to get removed for damaging the brand new carpet.

Anna: We were thinking of linoleum, but thought I might be a little slippery if you spilt something; the rubber flooring in not slippery, and I think that would work much better.

Nicole: Will each studio have internet access?

Anna: Yes. We were also debating how many phone outlets we were going to need, and I think we came up with three, or maybe four. When the two girls (referring to artists Sarah and Jennifer) were living with me they had their laptops with them all the time and they had to go to the BOTTLE WORKS to use them; they couldn’t use them where I lived. So I think internet access is a must.

Nicole: I can’t wait to come back when this is all finished and see it again. It’s really exciting. There hasn’t been anything like this in the area before. (I finish with telling Anna some history and stories of the area concerning other arts organizations and events.)
Nicole: If I can have you talk about how you became aware of ART WORKS, can you elaborate on that?

Michael: Well, it’s a combination of things. There was a buzz around the office, and I spoke to Rosemary Pawlowski, who is the director of the BOTTLE WORKS Ethnic Art Center in Johnstown. It was her invitation for me to visit her there from her visit here. Rosemary came here and met with my Assistant Dean, Marjorie Arnett…you were there too. (Michael is referring to the initial meeting I set up with Marjorie Arnett, Rosemary and Janie Leck-Grela who was the current director of ART WORKS.) I happened to duck my head in, things sounded good, and I think I was able to get a brochure at that time. That was my first real formal indication of the program, and then that was followed by a visit to BOTTLE WORKS (Ethnic Arts Center).

Nicole: What did you think of the space when you saw it?

Michael: Oh I thought it was really exciting, but when I saw it first, I saw it in the process of a more potential viewing than an actual reality. But I could see great potential, and in terms of the size of the space and its location in conjunction with the BOTTLE WORKS location, and close to the Heritage Center (the Johnstown Heritage Discovery Center is located a few blocks away from ART WORKS). Also, I was given plans that show the roof garden, classroom, and multi-use space…the kitchen…all the things that would make it a very workable project. And I think I met one of the first artist-in-residence that day…a ceramicist, and I was aware of the kiln-building as well, so it all looked like a good idea to me.

Nicole: Michael is referring to the meeting I had with Janie, Rosemary, and myself in June. I will double-check the date and notes on that. What would you like to see between IUP and ART WORKS, as far as a partnership?

Michael: I think there are a number of possibilities. One is having our faculty serve as artists’ resources to the community of artists there, to the developing community of artists there, both in terms of short residencies or master classes or simple visits for that matter. I am also interested in seeing whether or not there is an opportunity for our students to participate on any number of levels, including eventually applying for studio space and beginning their careers, those
of them who are interested in careers in art making. Beginning their careers there and taking advantage of the intended community artist program that they are building in Johnstown (Michael is referring the Kernville Artist Relocation Program similar to Lower Town in Paducah, Kentucky). So there are a lot of things happening all around currently, in Johnstown, which are well timed with some of the things going on at IUP, particularly in the visual arts. We’ve had an enormous burst of activity, new facilities, new faculty, all making a difference in terms of doing what we do. I want to take full advantage of the opportunity that is happening in Johnstown, and Johnstown knows that we are a resource that they can depend upon. From my perspective, the most important thing I can do is to make sure the dialogue continues, so that when opportunity presents itself, people are familiar with one another and are able to take advantage of this. And that is already happening. My interest in Johnstown is peaked. I am forming connections with people there that I think are and will be helpful to my university programs. But secondarily, we have our main performance space on campus closed down for renovation. As a consequence, our major ensembles in the music department have to play but are unable to play here on campus. Coincidentally, the larger ensembles are scheduled to play in the Pasquerilla Performing Arts Center at the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown (UPJ), starting this Sunday. I see Johnstown as a developing arts community, one that is really putting a commitment into this direction; I thought why don’t we look to see if what Johnstown has in a market for our music, and for that matter, a market for our educational institution. I want people to know that IUP has great things to offer. And so instead of just buying a bus, ( to take our students and community to Johnstown for the music performances) I’ve gone to the institutional advancement office and have invested thousands of dollars into getting busses but also to publicize those concerts…a series of five of them across the next two semesters. And we are going to make IUP Johnstown’s University, at least as far as the arts are concerned. There is, of course, UPJ which is great, but they don’t have a developed arts program, and we do. We are right here, and I think we are the University that should be serving that area and those students.

Nicole: I think, more on a personal note, living near Johnstown my whole life and seeing what is going on (the whole art movement) is exciting. Wondering what can be done and if it can be done, and it seems that Johnstown is taking these giant steps…big risks, and it seems to be working. One of my questions I had asked ART WORKS was regarding partnerships between organizations, and with artists, I feel that they keep to themselves. “I don’t want them to know what I am doing.” But you can’t do that in the arts, because I feel if you are in art, you are in art to share art, even if it is with one other person. Organizations within the arts needs to help other local organizations or both could fail.
Nicole: Who else is involved from IUP with ART WORKS?

Michael: We’re working directly with Jim Nestor (sculpture professor) and Kevin Turner, the new ceramics professor, have been engaged in the dialogue at least at the fringe of things, and if my schedule was free this week, we would be going together (Michael is talking about another visit to the ART WORKS site). We’re looking at the blacksmith operation in the old mill shops (the future site of the proposed Lower Works), more for curiosity’s sake. This is a space that was basically left the way it was on its last day of operation, and we would like to see it before someone does something to it. Both of these guys (Nestor and Turner) are heavily into craft and heavily into hot art, and so going into a hot space I think would be intellectually and artistically satisfying for them and for me. I am the Dean of Fine Arts…I am a theater person. But because I am the Dean of Fine Arts, I get to learn new things all the time. And I get to learn things not too far away from what I have been trained to do, but far enough away that it is exciting for me.

(Digital recorder is turned off while Michael takes a phone call.)

Michael: My wife and I did attend their opening over Labor Day (ART WORKS opening). We got to meet the artists and had a great time, made some connections in Johnstown, I don’t know what will come of them. One of them was with Don (Donald) Zucco who was formerly the mayor, and who is trying to set up a lunch with Mark Pasquerilla, someone who has major capabilities as far as funding. Don’s intent was to come back to us because he believes in what I am trying to do. He gave his own money to ART WORKS too.

Nicole: In developing the center, I know they (ART WORKS) are working a lot with “green building”, and with LEED points. I think that will be something of interest once that is done, and my thesis is looking at that process in relation to other arts organizations and venues in the area. There are not many green buildings in this local area. Hopefully AW will pave the way for other green buildings to be built, or renovated, which help a lot with costs and efficiency to run them. If someone from IUP would want to build a green building on campus, then they would have that as a starting point to look at.
**Michael:** I should think that IUP will be very, very friendly to that. I know that the ART WORKS project and, as you know, Center for Turning and Furniture Design would be interested. Wood reclamation projects are very focused in terms of “green” kinds of issues, and though not much in terms of producing green types of buildings it would still be of interest. So, I think it’s a conversation that will eventually happen.

(IUP is going to be building new student housing over the next several years and green building issues would be of interest to the University.)

**Nicole:** The arts district that is proposed for Kernville…How do you think that will affect IUP?

**Michael:** Well, I am looking at it in terms of its possibilities. They need someone to say “yes.” They need several “someones” to say yes. I don’t think a graduating senior in visual art should be the first person to take a studio over there. I think we need some people who have developed careers to decide that this part of Pennsylvania is a place that is inexpensive, beautiful, and is close enough to major art centers that they don’t have to live their entire lives in those major art centers. Those are all big questions.

(Michael discusses almost moving to New York City.)

In New York City, everything is there…but NYC is there too. That means that as easy as it is to get around, it is as hard to get around too. You have all the public transportation around, but if you have a fourth floor studio with no elevator…then it may not be the best place to go. And I think while there is not a direct correlation between…(Michael shares a personal story related). I have a brother who has been a working artist in NYC for 27 years. And it gets harder and harder for him to make a living. It’s a competitive place. He’s a graphic designer there right now. So many people coming out of schools with what they think are qualifications in graphic design, much of which is a “drag and drop” approach that will not get you a job where your creative capabilities will keep you “in the work”. But he has to compete with all of those people, just getting through the door, and for years he painted and then freelanced. It harder and harder to get that freelance, and it is much harder to get that assignment because right now, artists in NYC are a dime a dozen. So maybe it’s time to move out of New York.
(Michael pauses for reflection.)

How do you get to your market? How do you survive while getting to your market? I think Johnstown is doing some good things to attract people, with low interest mortgages with renovation incentives, but you have to have an income if those things are going to be helpful. So as I said, I think you need to have established artists, and there are reasons for established artists to move out of larger cities, like NYC, particularly those who use the web. And there are incentives to go to Johnstown, so I would hope that they can attract some people who can make it, because that will then attract people who are taking a little bigger risk.

Nicole: I think Johnstown is trying. The city is renovating buildings into loft-style apartments to have that feel of the “big city”. But within the arts district, as well, you would hope down the road that artists from around the country, who are established, would like to move there. And that partnership that hopefully will exist with IUP will be one of those…you have a performing program here, you have events going on, and its closer here than Pittsburgh.

Michael: And we can take what we have to offer there (Johnstown). I was at BOTTLE WORKS the other day and the Pennsylvania Rural Arts Alliance was handing out some grant money, and we had a small grant to pick up. I met a woman who is connected with the Roxbury Bandshell, and learned that they were doing regular Sunday performances. They were so popular that they extended their season past Labor Day. They were loaded with talent. I brought word of this home to IUP, and immediately had interest shown by our faculty brass ensemble. And they’re in connection with the woman in charge (of the Bandshell), and I believe they will be playing there (at the Bandshell) and taking IUP to Johnstown next season. That will be a nice way to showcase our talent, and at the same time provide service to the region. We are at least a regional university, and some of us would argue that we are a national and international university. I don’t think we’ve done a very good job of sharing our wealth, which is the “buzz word” for my college this year. I told the faculty that the overwriting thematic arch this year will be “share the wealth.” And so that is what we’re trying to do. There’s a wealth in Johnstown, and we’ve certainly been treated well there.

Nicole: Well, I thank you very much Michael for your time and insights in this research and I hope to see you at ART WORKS in the future.