Matthew Slaats

5977 Jarman's Gap Rd. Crozet, VA 22932 | mbslaats@gmail.com | 434.249.6664

Education
University of Virginia – PhD Architecture/Constructed Environment - 2022
University of Wisconsin, Madison - MFA/MA Art 2006
University of Evansville - BA Archaeology 1999

Professional Experience

2021 Research/Training Coordinator - UVA Environmental Resilience Institute
- Developed an online training module for PhD and early career Faculty on community engaged research as a part of a larger initiative to support interdisciplinary research at UVA.
- Coordinated and implemented preliminary research for development of new university wide public service program.

2020 - 2021 Founder/Member – Virginia Solidarity Economy Network
- Initiated and coordinated a grassroots initiative to develop a solidarity economy in Virginia.
- Organized and facilitated weekly/monthly meetings.
- Hosted a monthly speaker series of local and national leaders in the Solidarity Economy.
- Develop and implemented a training program for community organizers on economic systems.
- Coordinated a mapping process to access grassroots organizing ecosystem in VA.
- Developed coalition of state organizations sharing solidarity economy goals and values.

2016 - 2020 Creative Director – PauseLab
- Designed, implemented, consulted on participatory budgeting programs in Virginia, Maryland, and the Gulf Coast.
- Coordinated creative placemaking initiatives in partnership with various community development initiatives.
- Pursued and received local, state, and national funding to support projects.
- Coordinated communication and engagement processes.

2019 - 2020 Director – Public Humanities Lab – UVA Institute for Global Humanities
- Coordinated monthly meetings of PhD students in support of public humanities research.
- Host national and global speakers to discuss Public Humanities.

2018 - 2019 Fellow - Community Design Research Center – UVA Architecture
- Pursued research at the intersection of health, equity, and community engagement.
- Organized a campus wide event to explore historical relationships between UVA and Charlottesville.

2018 - 2019 Regional Co-Director – Democracy Summer
- Developed curriculum for high school and college students interested in electoral politics and progressive issues.
- Marketed and recruited students for the program.
- Coordinated with local, state, and national campaigns to support fieldwork.
- Built relationships with a variety of advocacy campaigns to give students access to those efforts.

2016 - 2018 Special Projects Coordinator - UVA OpenGrounds/UVA Research
- Assessed the innovation ecosystem of UVA research and scholarship.
- Developed and coordinated events to support interdisciplinary research and collaboration.
- Organized courses that brought UVA faculty together with business and government.
- Pursued national grants to support interdisciplinary research.
- Led and represented UVA's involvement with the annual ACC Accelerate Innovation Festival.

2013 - 2016 Executive Director - The Bridge Progressive Arts Initiative
- Developed and set strategy with Board of Directors
- Enhanced development processes and coordination that saw the organization budget double and diversified income.
- Developed and coordinated relationships with local and national partners.
- Implemented new organizational structure focused on flexibility and transparency.

2012 - 2013 Producer/Creative Director - Dead Hare Radio Hour
- Produced and hosted a weekly hour long podcast about the arts.
- Scheduled and held interviews with local and national leaders.
- Edited and designed the podcast.

2010 - 2013 Executive Director - PAUSE (People Art and Urban Space Exchange)
- Developed partnerships across housing, food justice, environmental sustainability to support community revitalization.
- Implement creative placemaking projects in partnership with artists to engage community.
- Led a creek revitalization design and planning project to realized watershed improvements and community development.
- Pursued and received national and state grants to support projects.

2009 - 2010 Creative Director - Children's Media Project – Mobile Gaming Project
- Led a team of educators, technologists and teens to develop an augmented reality game of Poughkeepsie, NY.
- Developed curriculum and training for teens.
- Led content research, game design, and media development.
- Coordinated implementation and outreach.

2007 - 2011 Academic Computing Consultant for Visual Resources - Vassar College
- Responsible for the development of digital resources for innovative teaching.
- Consulted with faculty on teaching needs and integration of digital media.
- Oversaw media development for international research and teaching.
- Led implementation of college wide, community focus contentment management system.

Teaching Experience

2021 - 2022 — University of Virginia – Architecture

Solidarity Economies in Urban Latin America - PLAN 5500
Role - Faculty

As a global collaboration between UVa, Indiana Univ, and the Federal University of Parana, this course focuses on alternative, global economic systems that have been emergent in Latin American over the last 30 years. Students develop case study research through direct engagement with practitioners and will be presenting the work as a part of the World Social Forum.

The Design of Protest - UEP 3599
Role - Lecturer

The course focused on exploring the strategies, visual material, and spatial dynamics produced by protest movements in the US and Hong Kong in the late 2010s. Students explored core concepts, designed protests, pursued research, and then produced ARC/GIS Storymaps that integrated various forms of media.

Design Research - Arch 7100
Role - Teaching Assistant

As a preparatory course for completion of their graduate degrees, Students learned research methods and pursue an initial line of research throughout the semester, resulting in a publication that shared primary research questions, a conceptual framework for the research, historical analysis, and design projections.

2012 - 2013 - Bard College - Environmental and Urban Studies

Practicum - EUS 3500
Role - Visiting Practitioner

Fall 2012 - Revitalization through Watershed - Students participated in an ongoing watershed and community revitalization project that took places in Poughkeepsie, NY. Students pursued research, built partnerships with community groups, and proposed an intervention that would further community goals

Spring 2013 - Food Systems - Students assessed the vibrant food ecosystems of the Hudson Valley through historical, cultural, and economic lenses. Through visits and meetings with farms, businesses, and restaurants, they considering the dynamics of local food systems.

2011 - 2012 - Marymount Manhattan College - Communications
Role - Assistant Faculty

Foundations of Digital Design - COMM 107
As a foundation of communications degree, this course exposed students to the core theories and practices of video, audio, and computer programming. Team taught, students move through 4-week modules on each area. I introduced students to the language, grammar, and syntax of computer coding.

Introduction to Web Design - COMM 220
Building on the foundations, this course focused on broadly giving the students an understanding of the structures and symbols that make up the internet and then train them to use html, css, and php to implement a website.

Seminar on Mobile Technology - COMM 450
Recognizing the ubiquitous nature of digital technology, this course explored themes of spatial understanding and the way technology was integrated into urban contexts. Students read core texts that grounded their knowledge, collaborated on a New York City wide research initiative to understand urban space, and then explored how a specific technology bridging digital and physical space.

2010 SUNY Purchase – Art Department

Video Art 1
Role - Visiting Faculty

Bringing together students from the Arts and New Media, this course focused on the theoretical, historical, and technical foundations of video art. Students engaged core readings from the field, experienced a breadth of historical advances, and were trained in video/audio production to produce their own art projects.

2007 – 2008 – SUNY:Westchester

Role - Lecturer

Introduction to Game Design
This course focused on giving students an baseline understanding of on game mechanics and narrative development which was explored through primary research, reading, and collaborative game development.

Foundations of Web Design
Focused on giving students a basis in web design, the course introduced the overarching structures of digital, online systems and then gave them initial instruction in coding using Adobe Dreamweaver to design a website.

Grants and Fellowships

National
2021 Graham Foundation - Carter Manny Award - Honorable Mention
2019 Albert Gallatin Graduate Research Fellowship – Global Municipalism Research
2017 US Department of Arts and Culture – Project Grant – Participatory Budgeting
2016 Enterprise Community Partnership – Community Projects Grant – Participatory Budgeting
2016 National Endowment for the Arts – Participatory Budgeting
2014 National Endowment for the Arts Our Town Grant – Play the City
2012 Art Place America - Finalist
2012 EPA Urban Waters Grant – Falkill Project
2010 Puffin Foundation
2009 Foundation Grant - Jane W. Nuhn Charitable Trust

Local
2021 Virginia Humanities – Planning Grant
2021 UVA Equity Atlas Grant

2021 UVA Double Hoo Research Grant
2020 UVA IHGC Global South Curriculum Development Fellowship
2020 UVA Race Religion and Democracy Lab Media Fellowship
2020 UVA Center for Global Health – Health/Civic Participation Research
2019 UVA Arts Council – Creativity and Democracy Research
2014 Charlottesville Area Community Foundation – Play the City
2011 New York State Council on the Arts – Hyde Park Visual History Project

Research Initiatives

Global Solidarity Economies Research

Working across scales of activity, from local Virginia based grassroots organizing to a network of US based universities, the World Social Forum to the US Solidarity Economy Network, the global solidarity economy research project is an effort to research and study the ways that alternative economic practices are in conversation between North and South America. Our specific focus is on the way practitioners of these ideas are mediating between the status quo and community values.

Black Coop Project

A partnership between the Highlander Center and a student research group at the University of Virginia, the Black Coop Project is working with Black led worker cooperatives in the Southern US to explore how these efforts are building more resilience communities.

Health and Community Engagement

Supported through a grant from the UVA Global Health Program, this research initiative explored the relationship between community engagement and health from global policy to the enactment of programs at the local scale. Using Richmond, Virginia as our point of reference, we studied both how health agencies engage communities about well being and the how health related needs were emerging in community engagement practices.

Creativity and Democracy

Responding to the traumatic 2017 events in Charlottesville, Va, the creativity and democracy research project brought both community, artists, and government officials together to explore new modes of community engagement and participation. This resulted in a series of program and events that used legislative theatre and study circles to develop grassroots policy.

Publications and Projects

Publications

Slaats, Matthew. "A Love Letter to a City Searching for Change." Medium (2020)

Slaats, Matthew. "Mapping Municipalism." Minim (2019)

Slaats, Matthew and Clara Ma. "From Water to Air: The Spirituality of Protest in Hong Kong" UVA Religion, Race, and Democracy Lab (2020)

Gold, Matthew K., et al. "Debates in the Digital Humanities: Scholarly Publishing Across Print/Digital Streams." *DH*. 2013.

Slaats, Matthew and Jeanette Kim. "Fallkill Project: Report". Clearwater (2011)

Slaats, Matthew and Jeanette Kim. "Fallkill User Guide" Clearwater (2011)

Slaats, Matthew. "Call & Respond." *Visual Communication Quarterly* 16.3 (2009): 182-185.

Community Projects

Virginia Solidarity Economy – 2020 - ongoing
Recognizing the need for new economic systems and new state legislation, the VA Solidarity Economy Network is developing critical infrastructure to realize a new economic ecology for the State.

BeCville - 2016 - 2017
Inspired by the international participatory budgeting process, BeCville empowers residents to have a voice in the development of their neighborhood through placemaking and the arts.

Poughkeepsie Plenty - 2012 - 2013
Supported through a USDA grant, Poughkeepsie Plenty was a research initiative and publication that educated residents about food security issues, and at same time engaged residents in a city-wide process of strengthen access to healthy, fresh food.

Fallkill Project 2011 - 2013
The Fallkill project was a 3-year collaboration between PAUSE, Clearwater, and the Columbia University Urban Landscape lab to research and manifest a new future for the Fallkill Creek as a vital community resource.

Walking History - 2009 - 2010
Walking History is an augmented reality game about the City of Poughkeepsie that engage the community in seeing the city through historical, environmental, social perspectives.

Hyde Park Visual History Project - 2007 - 2009
Manifested as a series of interactive video installations, The Hyde Park Visual History project collected images from residents and then projected them back into the landscape to create dynamic links between the past, present, and future.

Organizational Projects

2017/18 Accelerate Innovation Festival – OpenGrounds – Washington DC
In partnership with the Atlantic Coastal Conference and partners at Virginia Tech, the Accelerate Festival presented over 60 innovative projects at the Smithsonian Museum of American History emerging from research taking place at each university.

2014 Play the City - The Bridge PAI - Charlottesville, VA
An NEA supported project focused on using a series of creative placemaking projects to enliven and express the vibrancy of a neighborhood undergoing change.

2012 City as a Laboratory - Poughkeepsie, NY
A project exploring the ways in which communities and artists can partner to active local knowledge and civic engagement.

Service

Community Economies Research Network Partner
Participatory Budgeting – Charlottesville and Richmond
National Endowment for the Arts - Our Town - Grants Panel
Participatory Budgeting Project – Amplifier/Advisory Group
UVA Arts Council - By-Laws and Grants Committee
Albemarle County - Crozet Community Advisory Committee
City of Charlottesville CDGB Grant Task Force
City of Charlottesville Community Bridge Builders Committee
City of Charlottesville Participatory Budgeting Committee
Virginia Health Department – Improving Pregnancy Outcomes Committee
Piedmont Council for the Arts - Create Charlottesville Cultural Plan
Hudson River Housing - Middle Main Revitalization Advisory Committee
New York Foundation for the Arts - Artist Advisory Group
Vassar College – Community Grants Committee

Presentations

Liviana Conference - University of Canberra - November 2021
Paper Title - Connections between direct action and community economies in the case of Charlottesville

Post Capitalist Possibilities Conference – University of Western Sydney - January 2020
Paper Title - Empowering Counter Narrative

Engaging Anthropology Conference – UMASS - October 2019
Paper Title - Infrastructures of the Marvelous

Creativity and Democracy Symposium- University of Virginia - March 2018
Paper Title - Imagination as Democracy

Innovations in Participatory Democracy Conference - March 2018
Paper Title. - Civic Creativity

Creative Placemaking Leadership Summit - February 2017
Paper Title - Creative Participatory Budgeting

Creative Time Summit - Washington DC - October 2016
Paper Title - Who Constructs the Future? Creativity, Participation, and Democracy Panel

Virginia Film Festive - University of Virginia - November 2015
Panel Discussion - Another Way of Living

College Art Association - New York - February 2015
Paper Title - Playing the City: Art as Community Engagement

Tom Tom Founders Festival - April 2014
Paper Title - Creative Placemaking in Charlottesville

Urban and Environmental Studies Program – Bard College - April 2012
Presentation - Engaging Space

Faculty Development Forum – Marymount Manhattan College - March 2012
Paper - Community, Art and Engagement

Public Interest: Project and Prototypes - LACE - November 2010
Presentation - Freespace

Plausible Artworlds - Basekamp - May 2010
Presentation - PAUSElab

Training

2002 - Dialogues on Race - Madison, Wisconsin
2013 - Participatory Action Research Lab - Public Science Project - CUNY Graduate Center
2015 - Participatory Budgeting Training - Harvard University
2020 - Mapping our Futures Training of Trainers - Highlander Education and Research Center
2021 - Participatory Action Research Institute - Highlander Education and Research Center