Art + Culture in Chicago:
Grassroots Cultural Activism

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CHICAGO
“The Windy City”

- Population
  - 2.7 million residents
  - 3rd largest city in the U.S.

- Geography
  - Designed around Lake Michigan
  - Beaches all up and down the coastline

- Demographics
  - Very diverse- racially mixed, yet segregated

- Economy
  - World financial center, with second largest central business district in the U.S. after NYC
Dynamics of Arts + Culture

- **Strong History of Grassroots Arts + Culture Movements**
- Funding Structures
- Politics

- **Rich History in the Arts:**
  - Music - hip hop, jazz, blues
  - Improv Comedy - Second City
  - Theater - Steppenwolf
  - Visual Arts - Art Institute of Chicago

- International Cuisine
- Architecture - Frank Lloyd Wright
Chicago Non-Profit Organizations
What are the biggest issues the city faces?

- Economic Disparities
- Budget Cuts
- Gun Crime/Violence/Gangs
- Segregation
- Lack of Accessibility to Resources + Transport
- Corrupt Politicians/General Distrust in Government
- Trouble retaining artists
My Beginnings: Cultural Regeneration through Programming

- Stepping away from “CULTURE” as high art
- Identifying the need
- Every person and place already has a rich sense of culture to draw from
- Every form of cultural expression is valuable
- Creates reciprocal relationship
- Low cost
- Process = Product
Where?

- Workshops
- In-School Lessons
- Summer Camps
- Afterschool Activities
- Art Centers
- Street Festivals
- Music Festivals
- Markets
- Field Studies
Projects: Arts + Wellbeing

Line + Shape + Color to express who we are