

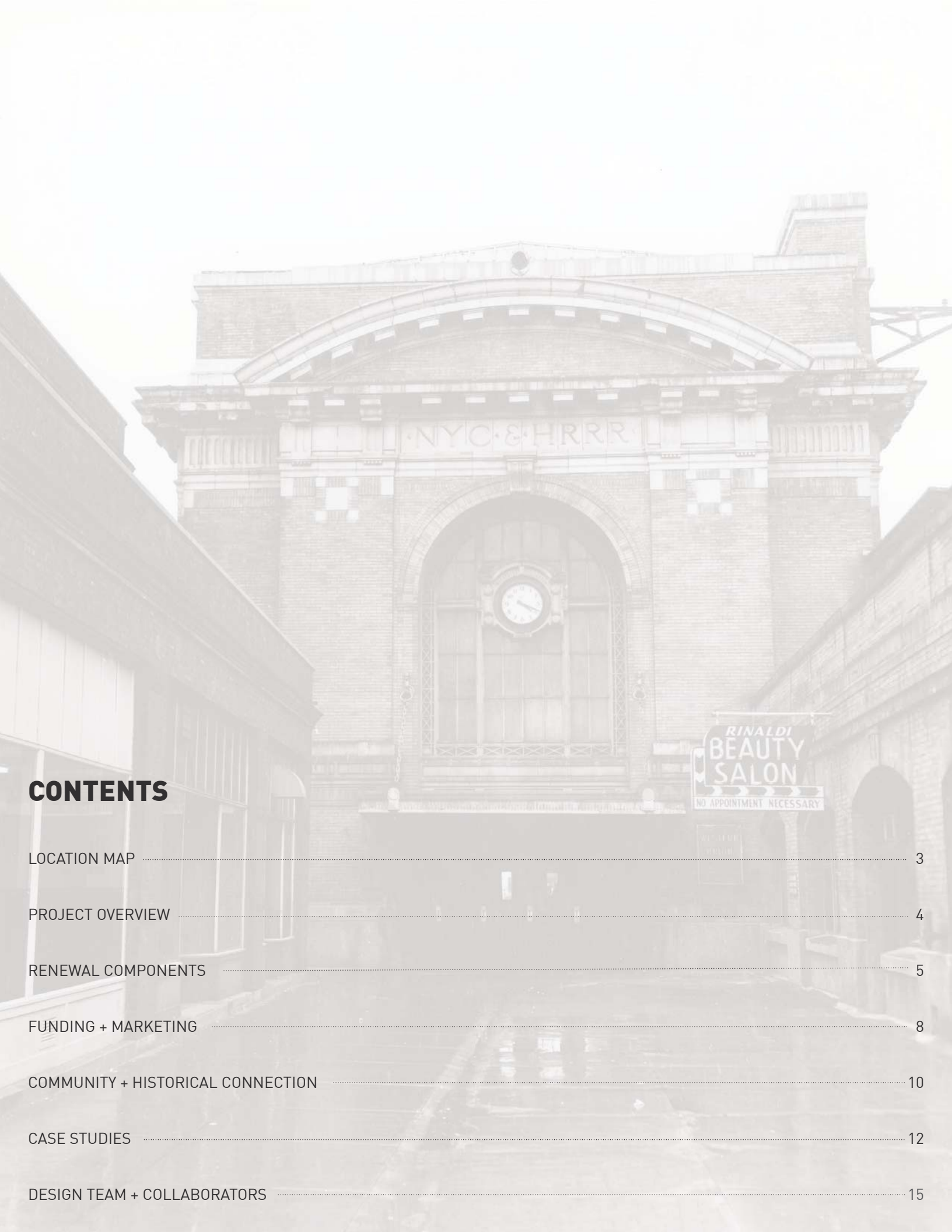
# OPERATION

# RAILBRIDGE



## DRAFT PROJECT OVERVIEW





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\*RAILBRIDGE SITE NUMBERS CORRESPOND TO EXISTING LOCATION PHOTOS ON FOLLOWING PAGES



SCHENECTADY, NY  
OPERATION RAILBRIDGE PROJECTION



RAILBRIDGE SITES | SENSUAL ATTRACTORS



STREETSCAPE | RENEWAL



RAILROAD | ELEVATED



# OPERATION RAILBRIDGE

## PROJECT OVERVIEW – SCHENECTADY, NY

**Operation Railbridge** is a project focused on activating the railway underpass spaces that recur throughout downtown Schenectady. There are nine key locations where this condition repeats which currently fragment neighboring districts from each other. There is the potential for these spaces to become the constant connecting ribbon that respond differently at each instance (cultivation, fashion, workshop, art, botany, dance...). This project seeks to incorporate wayfinding + district definition through a cross-disciplinary public design process. This includes design charrettes drawing from regional fields of expertise to arrive at provocative strategies that mitigate the existing abandoned infrastructural conditions.

**Mission** - repeating abandoned infrastructure becomes sensual attractor that enhances the experience + mobility through the city, engaging designers, artists + the public.

## PHASED APPROACH

### P1 - EXPLORATORY STUDIES

Define team, partnerships + scope. Source funding for exploration of existing underpass conditions, future projections, + proposal development. This includes studies related to lighting, acoustics, pedestrian + vehicular dynamics, site adjacency diagramming and digital visualizations. Establish 'Post-Design' as entity for project management.

### P2 - BASELINE RENEWAL

Outline baseline renewal components + wayfinding to be applied at each underpass location. Develop cost estimate and funding strategies. Begin informal programming of underpasses.

### P3 - ART + DESIGN INTERVENTION

Select a focus area as a prototype to be developed for initial art + design intervention. Create a long term template to engage designers, artisans + the public to activate underpasses in an evolving way. May include annual competition for (temporary) artist installations, pop-up shop ideas, entertainment events, historic tours + community workshops.



b1 | front street



b1 | front street



b2 | nott + erie



b2 | nott + erie

# OPERATION RAILBRIDGE

## BASELINE RENEWAL COMPONENTS

### Aesthetic – Uniting Thematic Element

In an effort to mitigate the existing neglected condition of these sites, this project seeks to combine diverse areas of expertise to arrive at an attractive aesthetic, enhancing the public experience. The project's aesthetics will be the overarching glue in defining and connecting fragmented zones of the city. Developing a graphic language provides an essential constant that will be a symbol of Schenectady's vitality, vibrancy and future cultural expansion.

### Wayfinding

Wayfinding strategies applied to the railbridge sites will provide the graphic means to reconnect Schenectady's disparate zones. A legible and consistent language will describe local business, landmarks, historic sites, and commercial + entertainment opportunities. This serves to improve pedestrian mobility for residents + visitors to the city. Increasing the ease of pedestrian access to goods, recreation + boutique serves to connect makers with potential customers and reactivates a human interface with post-industrial infrastructure.

### Site Furnishings

Incorporating pedestrian amenities such as benches, bike racks, planting beds, signage, trash receptacles, wifi and charging stations will satisfy diverse uses. These amenities will enhance and expand the urban experience and set a foundation for future design development. A consistent aesthetic will be utilized to improve both wayfinding and site usage.

### Landscape

Urban Canopy – tree and vegetation strategies in the urban streetscape enhance the ecological, economic, social and aesthetic aspects of the city neighborhood. Landscaping + street vegetation also serve as corridors for the movement of many species and are important links between parks and open spaces throughout the city. Raised planter beds can create an opportunity to integrate seating walls as larger sidewalk elements.

### Storm Water Management Tools

Planting + permeable paving surfaces can effectively improve storm water detention + infiltration which have been an issue in many neighborhoods of the city. Swales (long, narrow landscape depressions) can be used to collect/convey storm water + improve water quality. Infiltration boardwalks can serve as pedestrian through-ways integrated with storm water management.





# OPERATION RAILBRIDGE

## LIGHTING CONSIDERATIONS

### Lighting Related to Wayfinding + Aesthetic

Lighting can be used to lead pedestrians along pathways and to draw attention to the next wayfinding elements along the path. Lighting will be used both as a tool to create an inviting environment and as a tool for communication. As this project progresses, lighting will be a tool used by artists and designers to create intrigue, excitement, experimentation or other artistic interventions in and around the rail-bridge overpasses.

This city has a rich history connected to lighting and electricity, and this is intrinsically connected to the railroad. There are many exciting opportunities to connect the history of Schenectady with the future of lighting technologies.

### Lighting Exploratory Study

In order to install the baseline lighting needed to create a minimum level of safety and security for pedestrians and community in the rail-bridge overpasses, an overall lighting assessment should be conducted to identify the current effects of daylighting and electric lighting in the spaces. This should include, at a minimum, lighting measurements inside the rail-bridge overpasses during the day and at night. It should identify the electric power that is accessible and what would need to be available to maintain a minimum acceptable lighting level during the day and at night. This initial study should also identify lighting specific environmental elements that may affect lighting such as saline content in the environment, vibrations due to passing trains and necessity for vandal-free equipment.

This study should identify the lighting levels of the adjacent streets and pathways that approach the underpasses as well, to ensure that the eventual lighting design scheme fits into the local environments. Each rail-bridge overpass will be considered from any possible vantage points available at that site.

The results of this study would inform the baseline lighting plan which would address lighting for safety and security as well as energy efficiency and controllability.



# OPERATION RAILBRIDGE

## ACOUSTICS, SAFETY + POWER

### Acoustics

The acoustic influence of the underpasses needs to be considered from three routes of inquiry:

1. Site noise, primarily due to train passing and automobile traffic, will need to be documented and reviewed for the safety of participants. Data gathered in this effort will also be used to inspire and inform potential artistic installations.
2. Infrastructure should be developed to accommodate installations that have audio components. The details will need development, but the ability to mount and power a range of loudspeaker numbers and types will be important.
3. The “natural” acoustic character of the underpasses should be studied and documented. Each space exhibits its own mix of acoustic reflection, absorption, and reverberation that could serve as an inspiration to artists.

### Safety

Each underpass will need inspection for structural integrity to insure safety of participants of Operation Railbridge. In addition to structural integrity, other factors influencing safety will need to be reviewed and upgraded as needed, including but not limited to sidewalk surfaces to reduce trip hazards, railing conditions to protect pedestrians from automobile traffic, and sufficient lighting to make the areas safe at all times of day and night. ADA accessibility will also need to be reviewed. Note that all such conditions should be reviewed in any case, aside from Operation Railbridge requirements.

### Power

Sufficient power will be needed to enable a wide breadth of artistic expression, especially as a reflection of Schenectady as the “Electric City”. Power requirements should be developed concurrently with lighting and audio requirements.





# OPERATION RAILBRIDGE

## FUNDING

Funding for the fit up of the spaces is envisioned to come from a variety of diversified sources. Possible areas to explore include Public Infrastructure Improvement Funds, Sponsorship Dollars (Corporate and Private), Targeted Grant Funding, and Event Based Fundraising.

### Project Partnerships

In addition to a hard cash outlay, it is envisioned that project partnerships with established companies may also be a way to provide resources that are needed to accomplish specific project locations while creating a community based solidarity between corporate interests and local neighborhoods. (Example: Expertise, Labor or Materials)

This innovative approach to public / private collaboration could create a new model for the development of distressed public infrastructure assets while helping to provide pragmatic and quality of life enhancements.

### Phasing

P1) Team Contributions (Initial Meeting, Mission and Scope)

P2) Exploratory Proposal Funding : Raise funds to create a solid plan approach with visualized assets

P3) Community Awareness through Targeted Events | Actual Improvement Work on Targeted Infrastructure





# OPERATION RAILBRIDGE

## MARKETING / PR

Communications from a Marketing and PR perspective will be created in conjunction with the needs of each particular Phase of the project.

### Phase 1 (P1)

Narrative Project Approach Document for P2 Funding |  
Macro Level Draft Approach  
Draft Mission Statement and Goals

### Phase 2 (P2)

Advanced Proposal Funding Document with Visuals  
Baseline Bookmark Website  
Plan socialization through Key Project Partners

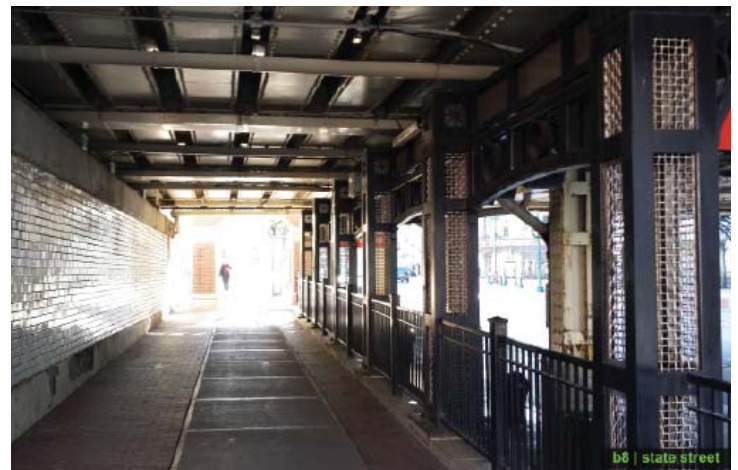
### Phase 3 (P3)

Full Project Website with Interactive Mapping

Visual Content Driven  
Mission | Description of Project Goals  
BLOG

Temporary Installation and Performance based at targeted Railbridge locations. Some planned and some in a surprise and delight 'flash mob' style. (Summer 2015 Soft Kickoff)

Public Relations Campaign : This would be accomplished via direct PR releases through the organizational entity including joint releases via public and private sector project partners. PR channels will include print media, television and online media including general public and industry specific vectors.



# OPERATION RAILBRIDGE

## COMMUNITY CONNECTION

Drawing on and developing multi-scale community connections is the core of Operation Railbridge. A multitude of stakeholders will contribute to, and benefit from, the reanimation of recurrent railway underpass spaces, turning dark tunnels of disconnection into inviting and animated passageways between neighborhoods.

This project seeks to showcase both the shared history and culture that unites the city and the diversity of different Schenectady neighborhoods through wayfinding and district definition. Diverse community stakeholders (group and individuals) will help these spaces become nodes in a city that is in the process of reinvigorating its former connectivity and cultural wealth. Highly local experience, knowledge and skills will feed into site-specific designs that respond differently to the historical and cultural situatedness of each site, resulting in corridors that celebrate local flavor.

The railbridges, in this way, will not only draw on pre-existing community connections; they will also serve to draw together new collaborations of experts, public/private partnerships and cultural leaders. These spaces will serve to host multiple modes of expression including cultivation of thriving landscapes and botanical installations, showcasing local fashion creations, community-led workshops of myriad kinds, art education and performance.





# OPERATION RAILBRIDGE

## HISTORICAL CONNECTION

The turn of the 20th Century was the height of the industrial phase of Schenectady's trajectory. This came with a need to elevate the railway system that served as a major connection between General Electric and the American Locomotive Company (ALCO). In 1905, the railroad tracks were elevated alleviating public safety issues while creating a new spatial condition of the underpasses lining downtown. The historic Railroad Station was constructed in 1908 and provided a beacon for commuter travel. This was integrated with various shops in the substructure of the rail line that activated an otherwise divider in the urban landscape.

The corridors between some of these railbridges have been thriving spaces of commerce, connection and centers of community. In 1969, the historic Railroad Station was demolished along with several other structures to make room for the automobile in the city. It was at this point that these railbridges started to become dividers, dark uninviting spaces that fragment neighboring communities. Operation Railbridge seeks to restore the potential of these spaces as a reflection of the city's celebrated history.

- 001 | New York Central track elevation under construction at State Street intersection, c.1905
- 002 | Weaver Street at Edison Avenue underpass, c.1905
- 003 | Former Railroad Station + associated shops in structure below, c.1910

Scans sourced from the Schenectady County Historical Society

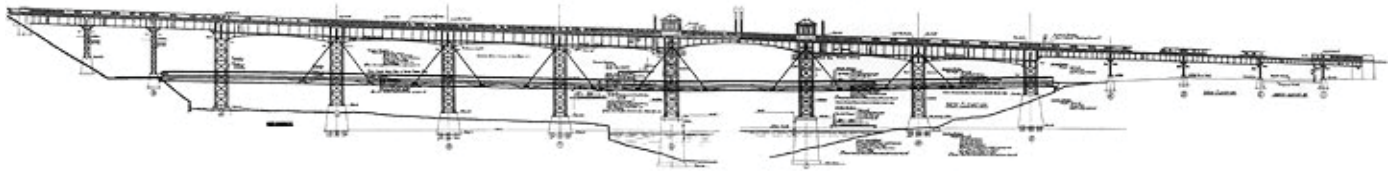




# MARSUPIAL BRIDGE

## CASE STUDY - MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

The Marsupial Bridge is a pedestrian walkway that uses the existing Holton Street Viaduct structure as its “host”. The bridge weaves through the existing structure that was originally engineered to support trolley cars, a transportation system which was abandoned with increased automobile use in the early 1900s. Hanging opportunistically from the over-structured middle-third of the viaduct, The Marsupial Bridge responds to the changing transportation needs of the city by increasing pedestrian and bicycle connections. The bridge is a “green highway” that activates the unused space beneath the viaduct, encourages alternative forms of transportation, and connects residential neighborhoods to natural amenities, Milwaukee’s downtown, and the Brady Street commercial district. The Marsupial Bridge’s undulate concrete deck offers a counterpoint to the existing steel members of the viaduct, inspired by the notion of weaving a new spine through the structure. Recalling the wood docks along the Milwaukee River, formerly an industrial corridor linking northern territories with the Great Lakes, the concrete deck is finished with wood deck and handrails, and stainless steel stanchions and diaphanous apron. Floor lighting is integrated behind the apron, and precision theatrical fixtures are mounted above to create a localized ribbon of illumination with minimal spill into the riparian landscape below. ([www.ladallman.com](http://www.ladallman.com))





# THE STANDARD BIERGARTEN

## CASE STUDY - HIGH LINE - MANHATTAN, NEW YORK

The High Line is a public park built on a historic freight rail line elevated above the streets on Manhattan's West Side. It runs from Gansevoort Street in the Meatpacking District to West 34th Street, between 10th and 12th Avenues. Reclaiming this raised railway as a public park has opened the opportunity for the innovative use of underpass spaces below this infrastructure. This includes gardens, shops, restaurants, exhibition space, art, vendors etc. Under the canopy of The High Line, The Standard Biergarten is an integral part of the redevelopment happening in the Meat-Packing district with an authentic open-air space. (<http://www.standardhotels.com/high-line>)

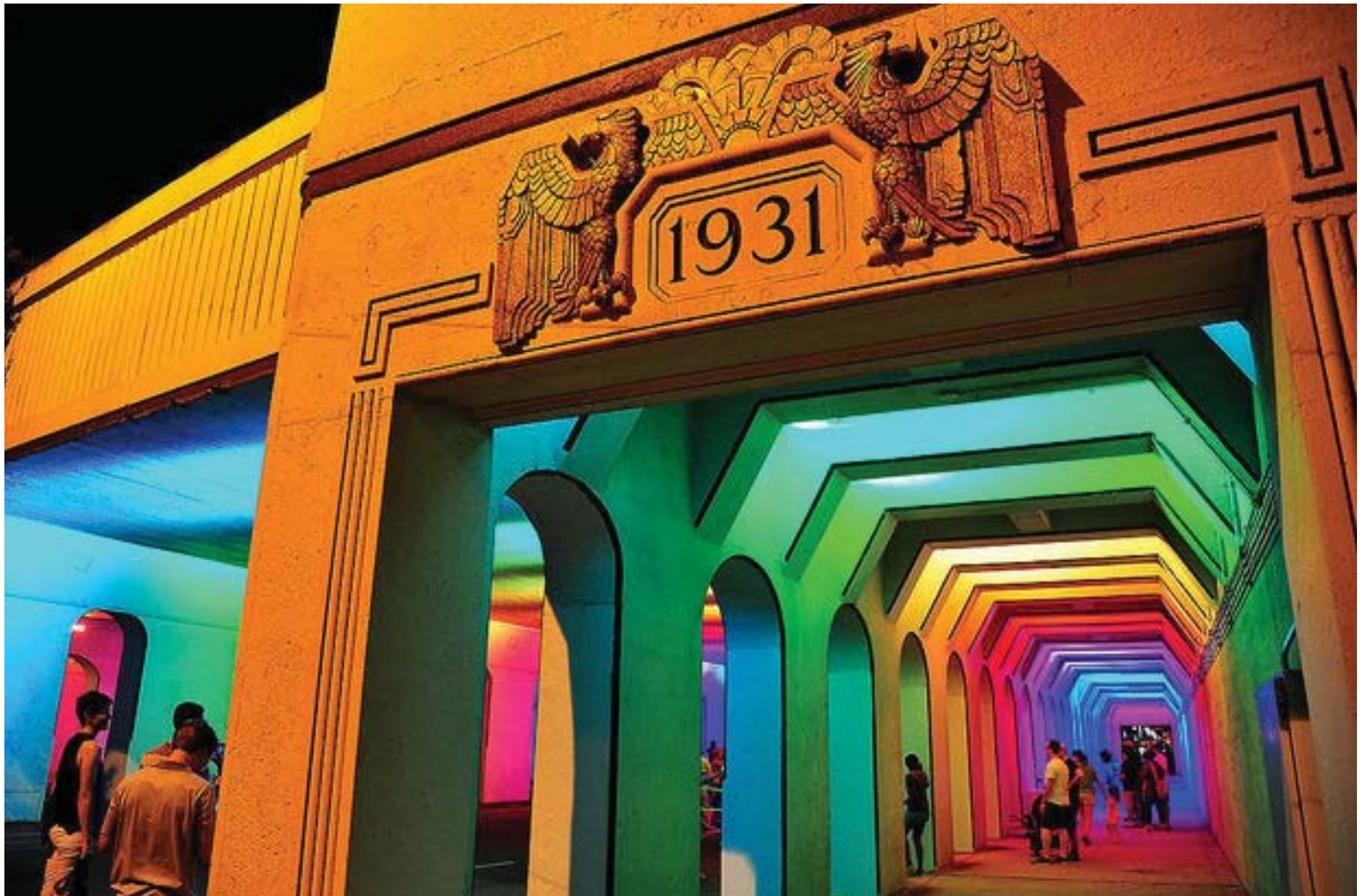




# LIGHT RAILS

## CASE STUDY - BIRMINGHAM - ALABAMA

Light Rails is a light-art installation by San Antonio artist, Bill Fitzgibbons, that transforms walkways beneath downtown viaducts more inviting to encourage pedestrian and cyclist traffic. A network of thousands of LED lights can be programmed by the artist from a range of 16 million options of varying speed and color to offer different moods in the space. The Art Deco tunnel was built in 1931 and has been reactivated creating a strong link between two areas of the city. (<http://thecreatorsproject.vice.com/>)





# OPERATION RAILBRIDGE

## DESIGN TEAM + COLLABORATORS

**Post-Design** is a creative studio focused on re-imagining abandoned (public) space and engaging artisans in long-term urban design interventions. This entity acts as an agent between people and municipality to realize innovative projects by forefronting community interest in + beyond the design process. Post-Design works with project-based consultants and partners as needed and will vanguard design + program for Operation Railbridge. It was initiated by architects, Kristin Diotte + Paula Rand.



### **Kristin Diotte | Architecture . Project Management**

Kristin Diotte is an Architectural Designer and Project Manager at Re4orm Architecture, focused on downtown redevelopment in Schenectady, NY. Her projects include restaurant, office, and higher education fit-ups in the mixed-use Center City building, apartment lofts and riverfront development. In 2010, she was on the design/fabrication team for Blindfield: A Soundscape Installation deployed at EMPAC. She was also Design Co-Chair and Coordinator for the 2013 Vanguard Showhouse in direct benefit of the Albany Symphony Orchestra. Kristin received her degree in Architecture from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, studied abroad in Italy, China and Peru, and is a practicing percussionist with Ensemble Congeros. She is currently on the Board of Directors for the Post Contemporary in Troy and Vice-Chair of the Millennial Council in Schenectady. In 2015, she founded Post-Design and is dedicated to cultivating a lifestyle through the layering of these practices.



### **Paula Rand | Architecture**

Paula Rand is an Architectural Designer at Katz Architecture, a full service firm providing design, management and consulting. Current projects include commercial reuse and consultation/design for El Museo. Past work varies from high end residential and furniture design to MTA site rehabilitation and Bank/ATM redesign and ADA evaluation for Santander Bank. She has a Bachelor's of Architecture from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, where she was an undergraduate researcher and designer at CASE, a multi-institutional and professional office research collaboration co-hosted by RPI and Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM). While at RPI she was on the design/fabrication team for Blindfield: A Soundscape Installation at EMPAC, and a Peck Prize nominee for her thesis AQUATECTONICS, Connecting water flow and dwelling in informal Dhaka. Paula is interested in the intersection of the urban environment, material, water and contextual experience. She lives in Brooklyn and works in Manhattan.



### **Kathryn Sweater Hickcox | Lighting Design . Lighting Certified (LC)**

Kathryn Sweater Hickcox, LC holds a Master of Science in Lighting (MS) from the Lighting Research Center (LRC) at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI), and a Bachelors of Fine Art from the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD). Kate's company DWAAL is a custom architectural lighting fixture design studio located in New York, USA and the Hague Netherlands. Dwaal focuses on design and technology to make beautiful long-lasting fixtures that are energy efficient and clever. Kate is also part of the interdisciplinary design team INTER. Inter lies somewhere between object and space, focusing on lighting and acoustical design but considering the entire space.

Previous to Dwaal, Kate worked as a Senior Research Specialist at the LRC, with responsibilities including research and testing of LED and solid-state lighting systems and technologies, as well as supporting the application of lighting technologies through education and design.



### **Maria Diotte | Curation . Spoken Word . Healing Arts . Education**

Maria Diotte is the founder of Enlightened Bliss, an organization which encourages all to be mindfully aware of health and wellness, the value of the arts and our connection to nature and other beings. Through Enlightened Bliss, she has been cultivating a community arts project called Creative Connections. Creative Connections is a series of events and workshops featuring artists of various mediums, from painters to dancers to storytellers to musicians to poets and others. Creative Connections aims to provide a platform for people to experience the arts in connection with others, to learn a new medium or style from artists who practice that medium and to heal and be inspired. Maria is also a Reiki practitioner, spoken word artist and writer. She received a Bachelor of Science in English and Adolescent Education from the State University of New York-College at Oneonta where she graduated with high honors. Having a background in Education, she strives to create meaningful, reflective, educational experiences for those who participate in the workshops she organizes.

# OPERATION RAILBRIDGE

## DESIGN TEAM + COLLABORATORS - CONTINUED



### **Lyndon Julien-Sehl | Architecture**

Lyndon Julien-Sehl is a trained Architect and Project Manager at John G. Waite Associates, Architects PLLC, an Albany based firm specializing in Historic Preservation, Restoration, and Adaptive Reuse. He is currently working on a variety of research intensive and historically appropriate systems and envelope upgrades to municipal, civic, ecclesiastical, and cultural buildings. He received his B. Arch from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, NY, and has studied and completed design work in Italy. He is the recipient of the 2011 Harriet R. Peck Prize for his thesis in Architecture, Technofuturism: Towards a Cyborg Ecology. He is deeply invested in the intersection of precedent, technology, and extrapolation within the practice of architecture, and how it can enrich the urban environment and the human experience. Lyndon lives in Brooklyn and works in Manhattan.



### **Zackery Belanger | Acoustic Design**

Zackery Belanger is a designer, consultant, and researcher whose work is centered on the acoustic performance of architecture. He holds Master of Science degrees in Physics and Architectural Sciences, and spent eight years working with Chicago-based acousticians Kirkegaard Associates. In 2013 he became the inaugural Researcher-in-Residence at the Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center [EMPAC] where his research is advancing the way buildings are designed for sound. He is the founder of Arcgeometer, a boutique acoustic design firm.



### **Dr. Brandon Costelloe-Kuehn | Product Design . Ethnography . Lecture**

Brandon Costelloe-Kuehn holds a doctorate from the Department of Science and Technology Studies at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute where he is currently a Lecturer in Media, Sustainability and Design. Using multi-sited ethnographic research methods, his research examines, and participates in, the design of media systems to address the communication and collaboration challenges of politically and scientifically complex environmental and urban-planning issues. He works within a number of collaborative endeavors, including an ethnographic project called the Asthma Files, the Platform for Experimental Collaborative Ethnography and the Digital Practices in History and Ethnography Interest Group within the Research Data Alliance. Brandon is also the lead designer and developer of the Multispecies Salon website, produces video for a variety of projects and has worked with organizations regionally and nationally such as the Sanctuary for Independent Media, the Contemporary Artists Center at Woodside and the Institute for Regenerative Learning.



### **Corey Aldrich | Project Management . Marketing . Production**

Corey Aldrich is the owner and founder of 2440 Design Studio. He has over 20 years of sales and marketing experience with a 10 years focus in a variety of Real Estate products and development. His current focus is on FP/NFP business process, branding and marketing consulting and major event production. He has worked on some of the more notable regional projects in conjunction with national industry leaders including Northeast Health's Glen Eddy in Niskayuna and United STEP 1 located in the NYSEDA backed STEP Park (Saratoga Tech + Energy Park). In addition, recent clients and partners include Albany Catholic Diocese Project : Avila Retirement Community, Proctors, The Ellen Sinopoli Dance Company, Universal Preservation Hall in Saratoga, The Foundry for Art Design + Culture in Cohoes and the Wendy McDaris Fine Arts Gallery in Hudson in addition to a variety of small, regionally based independent businesses. Corey is also the founder of Electric City Couture, a FP organization promoting regional fashion design and production, specifically regionally produced design and services that can help stimulate economic development through the fashion based creative economy.

Past experience includes oversight of a 5 person specialized team including project management and support, event planning, creative / brand design and budget tracking and oversight functions. Project oversight includes design, marketing and sales management of budgets in excess of \$200K and project values in excess of \$15M - individually. Multiple project oversight through strategic team management and senior level oversight has been accomplished.



# OPERATION RAILBRIDGE

## DESIGN TEAM + COLLABORATORS - CONTINUED



### **Mary Theresa Julien | Urban Planning . Geospatial Analysis . Grant Writing**

Mary Theresa Julien Holds a Master of Art in Geography from the University of New York at Albany, with a concentration in Urban Planning, as well as Graduate Certification in Geographic Information Systems and Spatial Analysis. Mary Theresa has cultivated a solid background in Geospatial Analysis with expertise in records management, grant writing and grant administration. She has been providing these services through her business, Marigold Consulting since 2008. From her historic Hudson River home, she is a practicing herbalist, an active writer and a dedicated proponent of social justice and responsible stewardship of the natural environment.



### **Richard Lovrich | Photography . Public Relations . Site Documentation**

Richard Lovrich is the Creative Director of Proctors, Capital Repertory Theatre and Universal Preservation Hall. He formerly held the position of Art Director at the Albany Times Union where he began in 1996 as an editorial artist, moving to Proctors in 2006 where he began in the same role. As Creative Director, he coordinates a seasoned team of professionals, with the goal of synchronizing and stimulating creative for Capitaland's premier theatre group. Richard is formerly from NYC, where he worked as a photographer and designer with clients in banking, pharmaceuticals and fashion. When not at the theaters, Richard can be found penning and performing very short stories and photographing local artists.



### **Patrick Harris Jr. | Video Production . Community Engagement**

Patrick is the owner and founder of Probity & Company, a project development and digital marketing/media firm in Troy, NY specializing in video production and content curation. A graduate of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute's EMAC program and former board member of the Arbor Hill Development Corporation, Patrick has focused his efforts in the non-profit sector since his graduation working with organizations like the Capital District YMCA, Capital Roots and the Northeast Kidney Foundation. He has produced projects with companies like Ecovative Design and notable community figures such as Jim Barba, CEO of the Albany Medical Center, Nobel Peace Prize nominee, Barbara Smith and Kathy Sheehan, mayor of Albany. Patrick and his company focuses on creating, capturing and highlighting projects (and people) that produce works centered around design, sustainability and community engagement.



### **William Faubion | Financial Advising . Banking**

William Faubion's career in the banking industry has spanned nearly 35 years. He is a currently vice president and senior commercial relationship manager in the commercial banking division of NBT Bank and is presently based in Schenectady, NY. He earned a bachelor's degree in business management and finance from the State University of New York and has completed numerous industry training and management education programs throughout his career. He currently volunteers his time and talents to serve Ellis Medicine as its Treasurer of the Board of Trustees. Additionally Faubion serves as board chair of Hometown Health, the local Federally Qualified Health Center. Mr. Faubion has provided board leadership to several community organizations, including the Chamber of Schenectady County, Epilepsy Foundation of Northeastern New York, the Epilepsy Foundation of America, Schenectady Boys and Girls Clubs, and American Heart Association. Additionally, he is a past chair of the Schenectady Chamber of Commerce and the Epilepsy Foundation of Northeastern NY.