

community musicworks

Sharing Tables with Strangers

Strengthening neighborhoods
through community centric
concerts in the West End
of Providence

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Executive Summary



Can classical music concerts strengthen neighborhoods?

This fundamental question guides Community MusicWorks' recent evaluation of a "community-centric concert series" in its home neighborhoods of the West End and South Side of Providence, RI. With a grant from ArtPlace America, CMW was able to investigate these questions:

- ▶ How can the long-term presence of a place-based cultural organization impact the neighborhoods that host it?
- ▶ How does an organization with a long history of being deeply embedded in a neighborhood deepen its connection, and widen the circle of its impact?
- ▶ Can such changes be measured, and made visible? If so, how?
- ▶ What does CMW's experience say to the wider field about the role of arts and culture in building cohesive urban communities?

These questions are central to CMW's long-term mission of building cohesive community in urban neighborhoods. They also have implications for the larger field of place-making through the arts, offering insights to organizations interested in building strong, lasting, and impactful partnerships in communities, and in measuring the changes wrought by these relationships.

Background

Community MusicWorks (CMW) has been building long-term learning and mentoring relationships between professional musicians, children, and families in the West End and South Side of Providence since 1997. These neighborhoods are among the most diverse and underserved parts of Providence, Rhode Island, with 30 percent of households on public assistance, more than 35 percent living below the poverty level, and 64 percent of school children who speak a primary language other than English.¹ They are also rich in cultural and racial diversity, have deep traditions of activism and community building, and a long history of resilience.

Through CMW's long-term presence in the West End, including a comprehensive music education and mentoring program serving over 100 neighborhood children and a regular program of professional chamber music concerts, CMW is a living experiment in formulating new roles for musicians in today's society. The organization focuses on creating viable and satisfying career options for musicians to perform at a high level, teach in a community-based setting, and make positive contributions to community life.

I'm a Muslim, so if it wasn't for CMW I would have never entered a church. [laughs] I go to the mosque. And the other thing is, CMW helps open up a little to different cultures, different people.

Interview with CMW parent

Social cohesion in urban communities: Why it matters

Extensive research demonstrates the harm done by the continuing racial, economic, and cultural segregation that many urban families experience. Centuries of exclusion, combined with more recent urban planning policies, have created geographic dividing lines along racial and class lines, which continue the racial achievement gap in schools, and perpetuate a system of unequal allocation of resources.²

As dividing lines become more deeply etched into the fabric of society, neighborhoods have an ever increasing need for social cohesion – the ability of members of a society to form bonds with other members, allowing them to act collectively. These bonds,

often referred to as social capital, can be created through both *bonding* and *bridging*: relationships built between groups that share a common background (bonding), and groups of people from different backgrounds and experiences (bridging).³ Increased social cohesion – through bonding but especially through bridging – can change perceptions and assumptions about neighborhoods. It can break down barriers to mobility across different neighborhoods, and generate increased social capital through the ties that are created among community members. It can also lead to greater participation in neighborhood events/services, and a greater sense of engagement with the neighborhood.

Organizations like Community MusicWorks have long worked to create spaces in Providence in which divisions between neighborhoods can be overcome, and in which both bridging and bonding can occur. Over the past 20 years, CMW has worked to bring families and students to concerts on the East Side of Providence, and classical music lovers from the East Side to West End performances. The organization has worked to create a space in which individuals from the many cultures of the West End neighborhoods (Dominican, Puerto Rican, African-American, Asian – to name only a few) feel welcomed and valued, and in which members of these groups can encounter and build connections with individuals from different groups. CMW's community centric concerts are intentionally designed to offer a space where neighbors can cross the unmarked boundaries between cultures, and build relationships with individuals who come from backgrounds different from their own.

People come in and say, 'Oh, I'm kind of interested in this music thing.' And then they see someone else maybe that lives across the hall or downstairs or in the neighborhood as well that they know but didn't necessarily know that they had the same interest.

Interview with staff member of community partner

What role can music play?

The arts have a major, though underappreciated, role in building social cohesion. Opportunities for neighbors to experience creativity together, and acknowledge the creativity inherent in different cultures and traditions, can change individuals' perceptions about their own neighborhoods, and about neighborhoods they visit. Music (and particularly events where participants interact together with music, rather than passively listening to music) offers a strong pathway for social connections to develop: research suggests that synchronizing rhythms with others (as many of CMW's interactive activities encourage) creates positive social feelings towards those others, and can even produce chemical changes among participants that are implicated in social bonding.⁴

Experiencing cultural events in unexpected places can also give individuals and organizations permission to think differently about the role of art in their neighborhoods, leading to long-term shifts in cultural vitality. Ray Oldenburg, in *The Great Good Place*,

described “third places” in society: spaces distinct from home or work environments, where individuals are able to suspend their usual narrative in a freer exchange of ideas.⁵ In creating these “third spaces” in highly frequented neighborhood gathering spots, and centered around a shared experience of classical music, Community MusicWorks intentionally avoided the exclusive overtone that can often be present in Western cultural traditions, in order to affirm the varied experiences of all participants.

Designing Community Centric Concerts

Over 20 years, CMW has built a model of community centric concerts (CCC). As compared to traditional classical music concerts, CCC are performances which are 1) based on a deep understanding of the community in which they are to take place, 2) take into account the existing strengths and characteristics of that community, 3) offer opportunities for individuals of different ages, backgrounds, and familiarity with classical music to engage in the art form, and thus 4) strengthen social cohesion among individuals from different neighborhoods, socio-economic backgrounds, and cultural heritages. CMW is certainly not alone in presenting concert experiences to neighbors in the West End and South Side, but other musical series do not consistently address these four issues.

Through generous support from Art Place America, CMW expanded its work in community centric concerts with multiple events and concert series over the past four years. These performances included community dinners and concerts at local community centers, drop-in classes for families on CMW’s waiting list, and informal concert series in local cafes and restaurants. (A full list of CMW activities funded through ArtPlace is included in Appendix A.)

ArtPlace also provided support for this evaluation, which provides an in-depth look at a series of four concerts in the fall of 2015 at La Lupita, a local taqueria. Through surveys, interviews, and mental mapping exercises, we asked audience members and members of the CMW community about their experiences in and perceptions of the West End and South Side of Providence, about their connections to other audience and community members, and their involvement in their communities. By sorting responses based on the the depth of respondents’ involvement in Community MusicWorks, and also by looking at changes in the La Lupita surveys across the four months, the evaluation attempts to understand CMW’s impact on social cohesion and neighborhood mobility in the West End and South Side.

... the experiences that I’ve had through CMW have continually deepened my connections with the West End.

Interview with community member

Findings

While it is impossible to isolate the effects of this particular concert series from CMW's nearly 20-year residency, this evaluation suggests a culture of participation among community members in the activities of the organization. The community-centric concerts have had a network of interconnected effects. They have:

Built and strengthened connections among audience members

Strengthened the connection to West End/South Side neighborhoods among both residents and visitors

Increased connections within and outside community: these connections increase with a more sustained involvement with CMW, but even limited interactions with CMW increase connections

Improved neighbors' perceptions of each other, and their perceptions of West End/South Side youth

Shifted pre-conceptions about classical music, and about neighborhoods

Impacted participants' engagement in community – this is marked for CMW families and highly involved audience members, but even those less deeply involved with CMW report increased community involvement

Why does this matter to the field of placemaking through the arts? Performance organizations, and those who fund performance organizations, have an opportunity to build upon CMW's community centric concerts model to strengthen social cohesion in under-resourced neighborhoods – bringing individuals from varying backgrounds, classes, cultures, and belief systems together into a deeper dialogue with each other. While CMW's ventures in community centric concerts are deeply informed by the organization's near 20 year residency in the neighborhoods it serves, this evaluation suggests that thoughtfully designed concert series can change perceptions around neighborhoods, and increase connections between neighbors.

CMW has also developed a series of tools that can help other place-making organizations measure these perceptions and connections. In order to answer its research questions, CMW created data collection tools that (including surveys, mapping, interview questions

and word cloud exercises, found in the Appendices) that explore changes in assumptions and perceived actions for audience members, over time, as they participate in the cultural offerings of an organization.

Recommendations

The findings from this evaluation offer several important take-aways for Community MusicWorks, and for non-profits and service organizations in Providence. There are also wider implications for performing arts organizations working in urban neighborhoods.

For CMW

The evaluation suggests that community centric concerts help deliver on CMW's mission to strengthen community. To further the potential of this work, CMW should deepen its ability to communicate the power of collaborations, continue to hone its presentation of material at events, and strengthen its follow-up work after the conclusion of events. Specifically, CMW could:

- Do more to help partners understand the potential of the partnerships before they are underway.
- Expand and document youth involvement in the collaborations.
- Deepen the interactive presentation of music, planning concert series based on CMW's distinctive strengths, and further developing tactics to communicate to audience members at varying levels of involvement.
- Create a follow-up plan for events.
- Include versions of the La Lupita surveys more regularly in all of CMW's programming streams.
- Continue to support audience members to attend events in the West End and South Side of Providence.
- Investigate new partnership models that would allow a community centric series to be profitable without underwriting from outside the community.



For Providence Partners

This evaluation supports the community-building potential of well-designed community events created through strong partnerships. The results suggest that a shared community space – giving community members a regular space in which to gather and experience concerts as well as other community services – could be a critical community-building asset. Ideally, city planners would be involved in the creation, funding, and maintaining of a shared community spaces.

For the Wider Field of Arts and Placemaking

The evaluation finds that well-designed community-based concerts build connections, change perceptions about neighbors, neighborhoods, and art forms, and create stronger community. This is an important takeaway for Art Place America and other funders of place-based art making.

Organizations in the field also have the opportunity to use the data collection tools that CMW has developed to begin to understand changes in social cohesion in neighborhoods, and the ways in which these changes may have been influenced by arts organizations or cultural events. Both the surveys and word cloud tools are included in the appendices, are relatively simple to implement, and don't require extensive resources to conduct or evaluate.

The mapping activities also offer an engaging and interesting way to understand audience members' larger experiences in their neighborhoods. Though the composite maps could be difficult to replicate, the individual mapping exercises (asking about participants' perceptions of their neighborhoods before and after experiencing a specific art-based community activity) could be done by individuals without a background in cartography, and offer a helpful vehicle to talk about geographic mobility, and the changes in mobility over time and through exposure to cultural events.

I didn't know [the West End and South Side neighborhoods] at all before except to drive through -- now I have been to a great taqueria in Olneyville and the South Side Cultural Center and the Highlander school, and those places feel more familiar like I could go there again.

General Survey respondent

Part 1 | Community MusicWorks:
A Twenty-year Investment in Urban
Neighborhoods

History of CMW in West and South Providence



Founded in 1997, CMW is a “revolutionary organization”⁶ that seeks to create cohesive urban community through music education and performance in the West End and South Side neighborhoods of Providence, RI.

CMW is anchored by the work of salaried musicians-in-residence, who live in the neighborhood, teach neighborhood students through the organization’s education programs, rehearse in CMW’s storefront, and perform throughout the neighborhood and around Rhode Island. The organization frames itself as an essential neighborhood “service,” much like the library or the local barbershop, with the distinction that all of its neighborhood performances, and lessons, are offered free of charge. When asked about this unusual model, a longtime student responded, “I don’t think it’s strange [to have a string quartet in the neighborhood]. I think it’s perfectly normal because I grew up with it.”⁷

CMW operates on the assumption that musicians have a critical role to play in our society: creating spaces for people of diverse backgrounds to connect in community; opening opportunities for young people to develop a voice and participate in democratic practices; and modeling a practice in which participation in classical music-making becomes part of the everyday fabric of the community. The result is strong community support for the organization and a diverse audience for classical music in CMW’s home neighborhoods.

CMW has formed strong relationships with many of the community centers and schools in the West End neighborhood near its headquarters. Its presence on Westminster Street

is recognized, and recognizable: many students who walk home from school on this busy neighborhood corridor stop to wave, dance, or just make eye contact with the musicians during afternoon rehearsals. Through strategic use of school and community spaces, CMW locates itself in areas where the community already gathers, and weaves itself into the fabric of neighborhood life. CMW musicians and students also frequently present “pop-up” concerts in neighborhood coffee shops, bookstores and restaurants – to run through a concert program, or simply be present in the community.

Summary of Programs

CMW’s approach to arts education and performance underscores the relationship between music and social change. Founder Sebastian Ruth was influenced by philosophers Paulo Freire and Maxine Greene, who wrote that education must lead individuals to develop a critical awareness of the world around them, a capacity to change that world and to see new possibilities for themselves. The primary goals of CMW’s approach, then, are to facilitate young people’s paths toward critical awareness of the oppressions, potential resources, and the opportunities in their lives, and to empower them to use their music as a tool to imagine and achieve new possibilities. CMW rejects the notion that its educational program must be focused on either high technical skill or students’ personal growth and development; it maintains that the two goals can be complementary.

Likewise, in Community MusicWorks’ performance activities, performers maintain a dual focus on musicianship and presentation at the highest level of artistic sensibility, and responsiveness to the cultures and communities in which the artists perform. Many traditional performance practices (intentional distancing between performers and audience; strict performance norms in which clapping between movements or moving around during performances are frowned upon; an assumption of the classical music tradition as the dominant and most important musical tradition) are set aside in favor of an atmosphere that values the perspectives of each audience member equally, and offers multiple entry points to, and experiences of, classical music.

I grew up in an urban environment which had so much going on in terms of activism... a street full of loud dads and single moms, right? I would say CMW is the closest to that kind of experience in the sense of really doing an incredible service for the neighborhood and also for the city to bring people together.

Interview with CMW parent

Effects on children and families

CMW’s impact has been profound. In a community where only 50% of youth complete high school, 95% of CMW graduates enroll in college. (In addition, in 2016, CMW will send its

first graduate off to pursue an undergraduate degree in music performance, at Boston Conservatory.) A 2009 evaluation by WolfBrown found that CMW's youth programming helps students forge a curious and engaged inner life, and fosters qualities of persistence, personal agency, and participation in a wider world.⁸ The study found that students formed strong relationships, strengthened work habits and goal-setting, and developed a sense of mutual responsibility: the building blocks of both a strong community, and a successful future.⁹ The study also documented the ways in which family members supported their children's development through music: helping with practice, driving to events, and even taking music classes themselves. The report also demonstrated how CMW connected its students to mentors and advocates outside their neighborhood, expanding their sense of which parts of Providence were open to them and creating a wider circle of social resources.



Part 2 | Building Social Cohesion in Urban Neighborhoods through the Arts

As income gaps widen across the United States, and urban neighborhoods continue a long history of segregation along visible and invisible dividing lines, social cohesion is more and more threatened. Families and individuals in highly segregated neighborhoods move in ever contracting circles, as they encounter school systems in which students tend to be separated by race, by language, and by income, financial and retail systems in which residents have unequal access to goods and services, and transportation systems which offer easier and more frequent travel in well-resourced neighborhoods and limit traffic in less affluent areas.

As lives become more isolated, individuals are increasingly in danger of being defined (and of defining others) by a solitary identity or association.¹⁰ Thus, it becomes all the more critical for individuals to be able to see another's identity as a complex combination of beliefs, connections, and hopes – some of which are similar to their own, and some of which may be different. Forming connections with others makes it possible to envision a shared future, and to begin to build social cohesion. Social cohesion does not imply uniformity, or homogenization; particularly in neighborhoods in which many cultures and classes co-exist, a homogenized culture would risk erasing the distinctive influences that enrich a multicultural society. But nurturing bonds and connections between individuals of different cultures and classes (bridging) can deepen neighbors' understanding of the strengths of the neighborhood, and of the ways in which their collective future is tied to the happiness and well being of their neighbors. As Maxine Greene describes it, "The heart of social justice is a real understanding of other peoples' worth and integrity. It depends upon a regard for other peoples' significance and potentiality."¹¹



In particular, the West End and South Side neighborhoods served by Community MusicWorks have a large proportion of residents who experience varying combinations of high poverty, low social capital, frequent moves, a dearth of educational resources, and high segregation. As some of these neighborhoods (most visibly, the West End) experience an influx of residents from more resourced backgrounds, with more social capital resources, neighborhoods can start to feel fractured along class and racial lines. Bridging opportunities can be extremely rare in segregated neighborhoods; but it is precisely this type of opportunity that can begin to address the isolation inherent in segregated neighborhoods, and potentially strengthen social cohesion within a neighborhood, and across neighborhood boundaries.

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development's Healthy Communities Assessment Tool cites social cohesion as one element of a community that supports collective health and well-being. According to HUD's web site, social cohesion measurements:

...assess how engaged and connected community members are to each other and to the community itself. Studies have found social cohesion is linked to high self-ratings of health and lower rates of mental illness and hopelessness within a community. Socially cohesive communities provide important support systems and a sense of belonging and well-being. Although quantifying the degree to which a community is socially cohesive is inherently difficult, studies on public health impacts tend to target the concepts of social capital, social inclusion, and racial discrimination and segregation. Longevity within the community, combined with participation in activities ranging from the electoral process to a social club or sports team appear to be major determinants of social cohesion.¹²

Of 25 ranked neighborhoods in Providence, the bottom six are all CMW core neighborhoods. Generally, these are neighborhoods that have a large proportion of residents who experience varying combinations of high poverty, low social capital, frequent moves, a dearth of educational resources, and high degrees of segregation from other neighborhoods.

HUD's ranking, while it highlights economic, educational, and public health challenges in the neighborhood, fails to highlight distinctive strengths of the neighborhoods. The West End and South Side neighborhoods are rich in cultural diversity, with a history of active community centers and churches, and a diverse and close-knit population. Metal-shaping and textile factories, as well as a peanut canning company, employed many residents for years. There is also a history of grassroots activism, with community groups including SWAP (Stop Wasting Abandoned Property), the South Side Community Land Trust, the Southeast Asian Economic



Corporation, the John Hope Settlement House, and the Urban League of Rhode Island advocating for opportunities for neighborhood residents.

In previous research, longtime residents have described the West End as diverse and connected. Resident Joe Caffrey described the Mashapaug Pond area as “a very very close knit community. We went to school together. We played baseball together. In the winter time, of course the pond was there, my older brother was a hockey player, so he used to ice skate on the pond...In the summer time, you’d see a lot of kids there fishing and so forth. It was just a great community.”¹³ William Guy, an African-American resident of the area, recalled: “probably it was the first integrated neighborhood of home-owners in Providence area. You know it takes a neighborhood to raise a kid. Well it [was] like that. Everyone got along. I had a lot of friends, you know [who] were white, were Caucasian. And [if] their parents told me to do something, we did it. It didn’t make any difference whether it was your parent or their parent because we all got along.”¹⁴

“I look like the people in the South Side. CMW performing in these neighborhoods gives me hope and opens up doors of possibilities.”

General Survey respondent

In this context, CMW’s community centric work creates a space where neighbors can return to the neighborhood’s rich multicultural heritage, crossing invisible boundaries and building relationships with individuals who come from backgrounds different from their own. As individuals preserve and build new connections, the neighborhood’s social cohesion may be affected, improving the ability of residents to connect with those from different backgrounds, to work together for common goals, and to recognize and protect the many assets which already exist in the neighborhood.

Part 3 | Designing and Presenting Community Centric Concerts



Research from the field suggests that carefully designed experiences with art can impact community and neighborhood perceptions. Yale University's Porch Light Program Study found that the public mural programs in the study increased residents' "perceptions of collective efficacy and neighborhood aesthetic quality in the years following installation."¹⁵ The Soul of the Community Study, funded by the Knight Foundation, also supports the importance of offering neighbors opportunities to come together around the arts, finding that "positive attitudes about community didn't vary much based on respondents' perceptions of the presence of jobs or the quality of basic services in their city," and instead were impacted more by "local social offerings, such as entertainment venues and places to meet, openness, or how welcoming a place is, and the area's aesthetics, or its physical beauty and green space." The study also suggests that individuals with positive impressions of a city are likely to have positive assessments of the city's amenities.¹⁶

CMW's community centric concerts build on the potential of the arts and music to create connections between people, and represent a long evolution in the organization's practice. The events have four strong and consistent features:

- They are designed to build on neighborhood assets (including existing gathering spaces, cultural and culinary traditions);
- They bring neighbors together in a non-traditional format to enjoy food and music together,

- They offer a classical music experience in which all audience members are valued participants, and
- They bring partners into the planning and execution of the event.

Looked at through another lens, community centric concert events are distinct from traditional classical music performance practice in that the events are free, the divide between the performer and the audience member is removed, unspoken performance traditions (such as not clapping between movements of a piece) are demystified or set aside, and audience members are encouraged to make personal connections to the music.

Other concert series in the West End and South Side of Providence fail to consistently address these four points. For example, a 2008 analysis of the engaging and wide-ranging Sunday morning music showcase at the Liberty Elm Diner, by scholar Bradley Hanson, notes that the “diner, though it is succeeding in attracting an eclectic cosmopolitan patronage from throughout Providence and Rhode Island, has, as of yet, failed in my estimation to connect deeply with the diverse immigrant communities that call the area home.”¹⁷

Two rounds of community centric events funded by Art Place included several distinct “strains” of programming:

Feasting on Original Works

CMW worked with community partners to create and present large community dinner and concert events at local community centers, focusing on a specific programming thread and creating entry points through multiple art forms and activities to foster participation among a wide range of participants. The most successful of these events were the May 2013 concert at John Hope Settlement House premiering the *Fantasia con Guayaba Habanera*, a salsa violin concerto written for CMW and violinist Johnny Gandelsman by Venezuelan composer Gonzalo Grau. The music features traditional Latin rhythms, a full salsa band, and the electric virtuosic playing of Gandelsman, as well as CMW students and teachers performing alongside one another. This event mobilized a specially convened Latino Advisory Committee, comprised of leaders from the Latin American communities of Rhode Island, to promote the concert event in the members’ networks, to build interest in Community MusicWorks, and to support the students’ experience connecting their musicianship with their community. Important partners included the Rhode Island Latino Arts Network, which co-hosted the concert, and Latino Public Radio, which created a live broadcast of the concert. The event also included salsa dancing, and a catered dinner from a local Venezuelan restaurant.

[CMW has] taken a venerable and traditional tradition and made it new for the age that we live in without dumbing down anything or cutting corners. I mean...they’ve stayed true to the craft and the seriousness, but they’ve made it accessible and they’ve made it relevant.

*Interview with
community member*

This concert was repeated in New York City, at the DiMenna Center, with the same guest musicians and additional student musicians, in October of 2014.

Another standout event in this “strain” of programming was the May 2015 concert at the South Side Cultural Center featuring composer and hip-hop violinist Daniel Bernard Roumain, and CMW teachers and students performing DBR’s Rosa Parks Symphony. This event was designed in collaboration with the Rhode Island Black Storytellers, a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the awareness, appreciation, and application of Black Storytelling in Rhode Island through performance, education, and cultural experiences. The event featured RIBS students performing poetry and dancing. The concert also included a premiere of a commissioned work, Jessie Montgomery’s *Twelve Moods*, based on poems by Langston Hughes. The concert was followed by a community dinner.

Outside the Box

A second programming strain involved multi-media explorations of classical music. These events included the April 2013 performances of Beethoven’s Quartet Op. 59 No. 1 by Community MusicWorks’ Fellows Quartet in the historic Tirocchi House (known locally as the Wedding Cake House), and featuring an immersive sound installation created by Zachary Barr, Catherine Murphy, and Jonsara Ruth of Salty Labs. While the quartet performed in one room of the house, audience members were invited to wander through other rooms, where the sound from individual instruments or duos of instruments was piped in, breaking down the sound of the whole into its component parts.

Come to the Table

A third strain included less formal concert events at local restaurants. The 2014-15 series at Friendship Café and the 2015 series at La Lupita, a local taqueria, were both examples of these community restaurant based concerts. The La Lupita concerts were notable for the enthusiasm, word of mouth, and attendance they generated, and are one of the main focal points of this evaluation.

Come and Play

The ArtPlace funded events also included two rounds of drop-in classes for children and families on CMW’s waiting list. These classes took place at Friendship Café, in the spring of 2015, and at the Manton Avenue Clubhouse, in the fall and winter of 2015.

It’s always amazed me how we can connect people from different backgrounds, at different levels, socio-economic, racially, education... how CMW is able to connect people through music. The ability and willingness of people to get out of their comfort zones and engage in conversation that otherwise you wouldn’t see happening.

Interview with community member

Part 4 | Evaluation Design



This evaluation was designed to look closely at the effect of a series of community centric concerts, in the context of CMW’s long residency in the West End and South Side neighborhoods of Providence. The conversations, surveys, and other activities were designed to help CMW explore the “ripple” effects of concerts, to understand:

- ▶ Do CMW **events** change a neighborhood for the better?
- ▶ If CMW events can shift perceptions for the better, are participants more likely to travel into the neighborhood, and avail themselves of other neighborhood resources?
- ▶ Can CMW events strengthen the neighborhood through an increase in social ties, greater participation in the neighborhood, and a greater sense of engagement in the neighborhood?
- ▶ How can the organization capture/measure the impact of the concerts on the neighborhoods in which it is located?

The evaluation activities took place between September 2015 and January 2016, and were largely centered around the La Lupita concert series. As the culminating concert series in CMW's ArtPlace activities, the La Lupita concerts were designed to build upon previous successes, and address challenges from previous concert series. (For example, through the concert series at Friendship Café, the organization learned important lessons about inhabiting a vital community space, engaging a diverse audience, and building momentum from one event to the next. Through the *Fantasia* and South Side Cultural Center concerts, the organization honed its approach to mobilizing "ambassadors" to bring friends and community members to events, commissioning and performing music of cultural significance to the community, and designing community dinners that would create space for neighbors to build connections around the concert experience.)

After many conversations with potential partners, the series was created in partnership with La Lupita, an Olneyville (South Side neighborhood adjacent to the West End) taqueria that is a vibrant, welcome gathering place for many of Olneyville's communities. The concerts were scheduled for Thursday evenings (a night that La Lupita was looking to activate more fully), and La Lupita welcomed the opportunity to offer free appetizers and drinks to its patrons/audience, choosing to try out several new menu items to gauge their success. The musicians worked with the physical layout of La Lupita to create a stage area that would offer audiences an intimate experience of the music, without feeling intimidating to patrons who were entering the restaurant without the expectation of a concert. CMW and La Lupita worked together to spread the word about the concert; CMW created fliers and posters that were distributed throughout Olneyville and the West End and in the takeout bags of La Lupita customers. One Neighborhood Builders added social media messaging, and word of mouth (literal and through individual social media accounts) created a growing "buzz" about the events.

Finally, CMW musicians worked together to spotlight music that they were presenting, focusing on "hooks" that would engage an audience of mixed ages and classical music experience, and invite participants to relate to the human qualities of the composition and the music-making. (For example, in presenting an early version of the Brahms piano quintet, originally composed for string quintet, the musicians explored Brahms' uncertainty about the form, and the feedback he sought from contemporary musicians. They then related this to the uncertainty any individual may feel about a new venture, and the ways in which our peers' opinions can influence the process and the product of creation. Audience members were also able to explore the complex rhythmic patterns of the work through clapping and saying rhythmic patterns with different members of the ensemble.)

[CMW concerts are] informal but also educational. It's like a conversation... I mean you're up close to the musicians and watching their interactions, but also I love when Jesse does any kind of talking before or during or after... the concerts are very joyful.

Interview with community member

With the La Lupita events as a focus, and CMW's long-term residency as a backdrop, data collection included:

A general survey of CMW's local constituency | This survey captured the broadest circle of CMW participants, measuring experiences of CMW in the West End/South Side over time, and without reference to a specific concert. By asking respondents about their level of engagement with CMW (as measured through concert attendance), we were able to understand how deeper levels of audience involvement with CMW can affect perceptions.

Audience surveys at each of the four La Lupita concerts | Short, 2-page surveys were designed to capture the experience of both new audience members and those more familiar with CMW. The survey asked respondents about their experience of the concert event "in the moment" before they left the venue.

Mental mapping with audience members and CMW families and students | Informal free-hand maps, guided by an interviewer, gave participants another way of discovering and reflecting on their perceptions of the various neighborhoods in Providence and helped to answer the research questions outlined above [see page 25] and some related, mapping-specific questions listed below [see Appendix D].¹⁸

Interviews with La Lupita audience members and staff of partner organizations | The interview process allowed investigators to dig deeper with staff of partner organizations, as well as with CMW familiars and new audience members about their experiences with the La Lupita concerts and other concert events.

While the interview process and general survey looked at the whole range of CMW activities, the evaluation intentionally focuses in on the La Lupita series, in order to look closely at a highly successful example of community-centric concert design. The evaluation built on CMW's successful 2008 experience with participatory evaluation, and its execution relied heavily on CMW staff, board members, and community members. All surveys were offered in English and Spanish, and are included in Appendix B [see page 60].



[Table One]

Change	Instrument	Sample Question
<i>Social Cohesion/ Connections</i>	General Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do your experiences with CMW connect you to others from your neighborhoods? From other neighborhoods? • Are you more likely to interact with individuals whose background is different from your own?
	La Lupita Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rate your level of connection with other concert goers • Describe one connection you felt
	Mapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw on the map where you live, where your friends live, where you get together with others, where you go for concerts, where you shop and eat
<i>Geographic Mobility</i>	General Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How have your shopping, eating and concert going habits been influenced by participation in CMW? • Are you more likely to travel to other neighborhoods due to your participation in CMW?
	Mapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw on the map where you go for concerts, where you shop and eat, where you feel comfortable and uncomfortable
<i>Perception of role of Music</i>	La Lupita Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did anything surprise you about tonight's performance? What?
	General Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has CMW changed your perception of classical music? If so, how?
	Word Clouds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondents generated one word responses to images of traditional classical music concerts and to community-centric concerts

All of the evaluation instruments use residents' and visitors' self-reports of their behaviors and perceptions at the time that participants attended a specific event. It was beyond the scope of this evaluation to attempt to track actual changes in behavior or perceptions over time. Rather, in order to measure changes in perceptions and behaviors the surveys, interviews, and mapping exercises asked respondents to report on their own thoughts and habits. For example, to understand connections with others, the general survey asked respondents if their experiences with Community MusicWorks connected them with others from their neighborhoods, and from other neighborhoods, and whether their circle of friends had expanded through CMW. The La Lupita surveys asked respondents to rate the level of connection that they felt with other concert-goers, and to give an example of one such strong connection. The interviews asked respondents to describe a relationship they had developed through CMW, and the mapping activities asked individuals to mark where their friends lived and where they got together with friends, and to reflect on how this would have been different if they had drawn their map before their connection with CMW. (Other sample changes in perceptions, data collection instruments, and questions are shown in the table on page 28. Full surveys, interview questions, and sample maps are included in the appendices.)



Part 5 | In-depth Findings



The findings of the evaluation project fall into two major categories. The first is related to the goals of building stronger community through increased social cohesion, neighborhood mobility, and more positive or nuanced perceptions of the West End and South Side neighborhoods. The second category is related to partnerships engaged in by CMW. (See page 48) Finally, this evaluation will discuss the development of strategies to capture the effects of community centric concerts on audiences' perceptions of their own and others' neighborhoods and citizens.

Strengthening communities: Sharing tables

We will look first at results from the general survey, which demonstrate the value of CMW's long-term presence in the West End and South Side neighborhoods in terms of building connections among and across neighborhoods. Several examples of individual and composite maps flesh out the findings in this section. Then, we will look at the La Lupita surveys to understand how the community centric concerts allowed an already embedded community organization to deepen its presence and expand its impact in its neighborhood.

General Survey: Changing perceptions and habits

The general survey was designed to examine perceived impacts on behavior and perception (attributable by respondents to their connection with CMW), related both to Providence neighborhoods, and to the role of classical music in the life of the communities. The survey was e-mailed to 863 individuals: a combination of CMW's local mailing list, individuals who

came to Art Place events, and CMW families. We received 117 responses to the survey: a 14 percent response rate, with responses dispersed across CMW's various constituencies.¹⁹

In order to understand the value of CMW's long-term presence and the relationships it has built with audience members and families over many years, respondents were asked about their level of attendance at CMW events. Thus, in analyzing the data, we were able to look at respondents based on their levels of engagement: the 33 individuals who had attended five or more CMW concerts over the past year were classified as the "most involved" group; the 16 respondents who hadn't attended any events in the past year were classified as the "least involved" group. In addition, we created a group called "CMW families" which included the 14 respondents who were parents of CMW students, or CMW alums.

The results of this general survey suggested that involvement with CMW concerts has a strong impact on social cohesion; building ties among individuals from different backgrounds, changing individuals' mobility across neighborhoods, and changing perceptions about the West End and South Side neighborhoods.

Community Impact

- CMW activities build connections among participants and across neighborhoods;
- The depth of involvement with CMW increases connections within and outside community; even limited interactions with CMW increase connections;
- Involvement in CMW events shifts perceptions and habits, and increases neighborhood fluency;
- Involvement in music changes how neighbors see each other; in particular, CMW positively impacts perceptions about West End/South

Connections: People throughout the city become de facto neighbors

Involvement in CMW had a noticeable impact on perceptions and behaviors among respondents to the general survey. These impacts include connections to individuals from home and other neighborhoods, perceptions of the West End and South Side, and comfort traveling outside of home neighborhoods. The charts below demonstrate that these numbers increased among those concert-going individuals who were more deeply involved in CMW, and even more dramatically among CMW families.

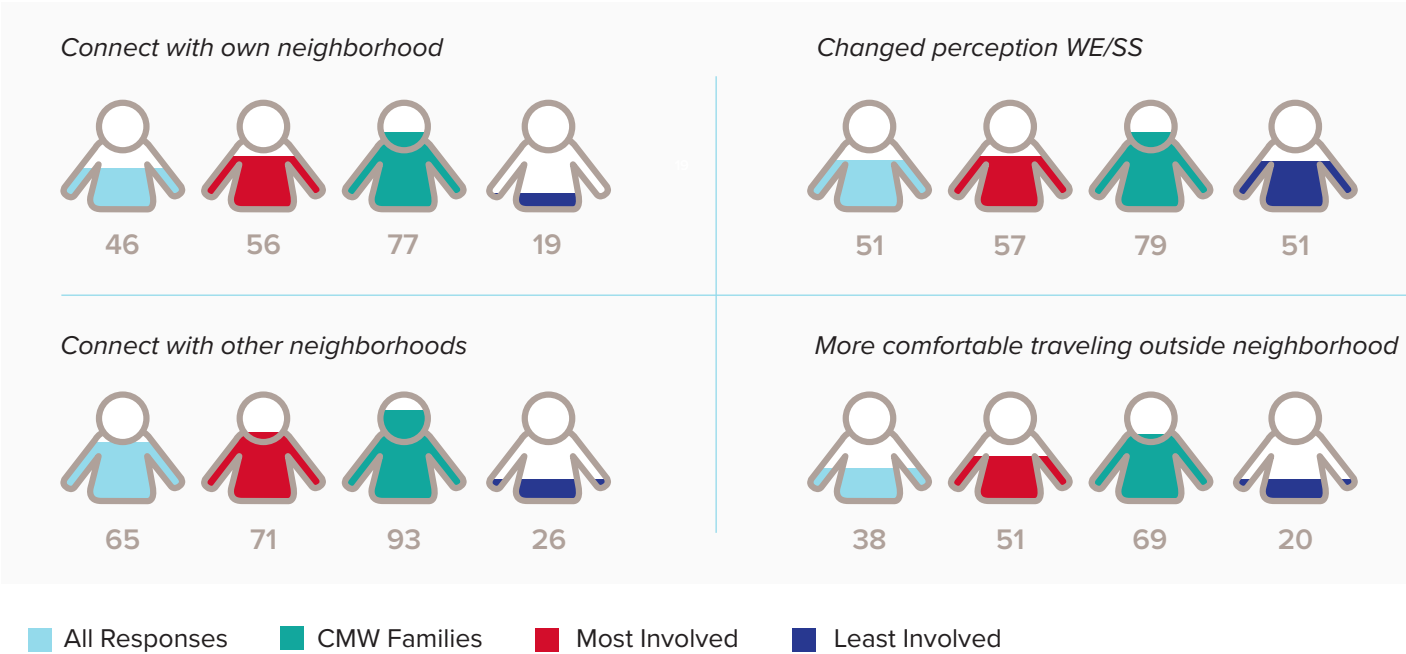
Among all respondents, 46 percent said they were "somewhat" to "a lot" more connected to their own neighborhood, and 65 percent to other neighborhoods. 51 percent said their perception of the West End and South Side had changed "somewhat" to "a lot," and 38 percent reported feeling "somewhat" to "a lot" more comfortable traveling outside their neighborhood. (Again, it's worth noting that these responses reflect individuals' perceptions of their own actions.)

Getting to know people...
having a venue to get to
know people better than
more casual conversations
has been great.

Interview with CMW parent

[Figure One]

Changes in perception/behavior



These results were stronger among respondents with a deeper involvement with Community MusicWorks. Among the “most involved” respondents, those who attended five or more events in the past year, 56 percent said they were “somewhat” to “a lot” more connected to their own neighborhood, 71 percent were “somewhat” to “a lot” more connected to other neighborhoods, 57 percent said their perception of the West End and South Side had changed “somewhat” to “a lot,” and 51 percent reported feeling “somewhat” to “a lot” more comfortable traveling outside their neighborhood.

Not surprisingly, these results are strongest among families involved in Community MusicWorks. Amongst families and students, 77 percent said they were “somewhat” to “a lot” more connected to their own neighborhood. Ninety-three percent of families reported they were “somewhat” to “a lot” more connected to other neighborhoods, while 79 percent said their perception of the West End and South Side had changed “somewhat” to “a lot,” and 69 percent reported feeling “somewhat” to “a lot” more comfortable traveling outside their neighborhood.

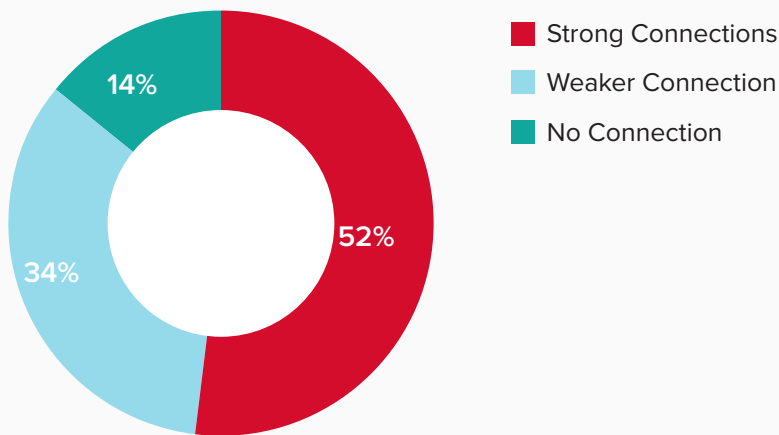
Even amongst the least involved respondents, results were strong, with 51 percent saying their perception of the West End and South Side had changed “somewhat” to “a lot,” and 20 percent reporting feeling “somewhat” to “a lot” more comfortable traveling outside their neighborhood.

CMW makes my physical community larger, more of Providence.

General Survey respondent

[Figure Two]

Describing Connections



When respondents were asked to describe the connections that they had made through Community MusicWorks to their own or other neighborhoods, the majority of the comments demonstrated strong connections.

Representative comments included:

Nearly all of the connections I have with other people in my neighborhood are connections I've made through Community MusicWorks.

My very idea of "neighborhood" has changed. The borders are much more porous. Also, through CMW, I have an opportunity to meet and get to know people face to face I otherwise wouldn't.

Yes, specially with the parents of the other students and also organizations and venues in our neighborhood.

CMW makes my physical community larger, more of Providence.

Many neighbors and friends have been easy to recruit, or just to share the pleasure of our mutual enthusiasm.

I always run into people I know at CMW concerts.

I have friends that I won't see much around town, but I'll see them at CMW.

I meet new members of my communities at every CMW event I attend. I find myself constantly surprised by who comes to the CMW events and the communities that come together.

Some comments also demonstrate weaker connections, for example:

Went to one concert with friends who live close by. We do see others from our neighborhood at concerts, though we don't really know them or "connect." We're new to RI.

Sometimes I meet new people there, or make a new connection.

And a smaller minority of comments demonstrated little to no connections:

I'm not involved enough, although I support the program.

No connection there for me.

Ironically, I feel less connected to the surrounding neighborhood. I don't think a lot of people know who we are.

CMW as a vehicle to build connections was a theme in many survey and interview comments: "My physical neighborhood doesn't have an institution that allows me to connect easily with my neighbors. Through CMW, I can connect with actual neighbors and folks in nearby neighborhoods. Providence is small enough that CMW becomes its own neighborhood, with people throughout the city becoming de facto neighbors, despite different zip codes."

Within neighborhoods, participants are also making important connections. A staff member of SWAP, a partner organization on the Friendship Café series and the first drop-in class, recalled watching the interactions of residents of SWAP properties interacting in the concerts, and learning something new about each other in the process. "People come in and say, 'Oh, I'm kind of interested in this music thing.' And then they see someone else maybe that lives across the hall or downstairs or in the neighborhood as well that they know but didn't necessarily know that they had the same interest."

The mapmaking activities also supported the idea of increased connections and mobility for CMW audiences and family members. The map on page 70 was drawn by a woman whose two children are beginning (Phase I) CMW students. She decided to focus on two aspects of

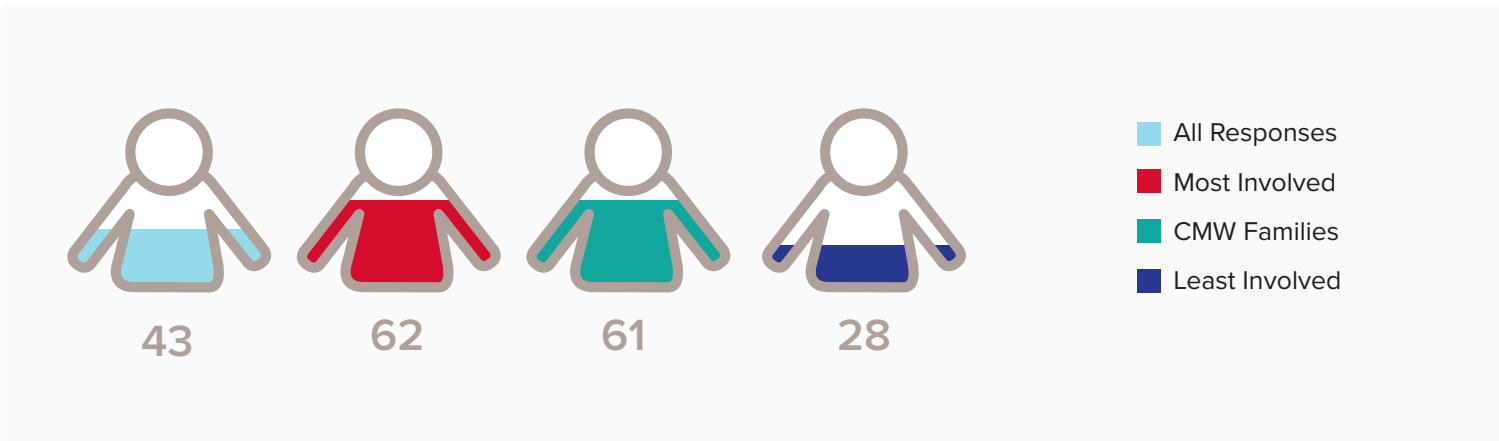


the mental mapping: friends she had before and after her involvement with CMW and where she listened to music before and after involvement with CMW. A third element she mapped was where friends and listening to music happened in the same spaces. Her maps (the West End on the left, and the whole of Providence on the right; pink shows friends and experiences developed since joining CMW) clearly show increased social cohesion not only in the West End where she lives, but also in many areas of Providence, both targeted and non-targeted CMW areas.

Participants in Community MusicWorks, on all levels, are building connections with other individuals; frequently, these connections are with individuals from other neighborhoods and cultural backgrounds. 43 percent of all respondents to the general survey reported that, since becoming involved in CMW, they were interacting more often with individuals whose backgrounds were different from their own. Among highly engaged respondents and families, this number jumped to 62 percent and 61 percent respectively.

[Figure Three]

"Somewhat" to "a lot" more interaction with people from other backgrounds



Shifting perceptions and habits: My very idea of neighborhood has changed

Perceptions about the West End and South Side neighborhoods of Providence are strongly affected by involvement in Community MusicWorks. Changes were evident in the way that respondents reported traveling in/to and using neighborhood services in the West End and South Side, and the way that they view residents, in particular youth (as described above), of the West End and South Side.

As noted above, among all survey respondents, 51 percent said their perception of the West End and South Side had changed “somewhat” to “a lot.” In addition, 38 percent of all respondents report that they’re more comfortable traveling outside their community since becoming involved in CMW. (This percentage jumps to 51 percent of highly engaged respondents, and 69 percent of CMW families).

In addition, 28 percent of all respondents reported that, since becoming involved in CMW, they frequent different restaurants. (Again, this percentage jumps to 39 percent of highly engaged respondents, and 53 percent of families.) 52 percent of all respondents report listening to music in new places since becoming involved in CMW, with 69 percent of the highly engaged and 54 percent of families reporting the same.

Many audience members who were not residents of the West End and South Side were especially vocal about the shifts in their perceptions of the neighborhoods, citing an increase in comfort in traveling in the neighborhoods, and often an increased sense of engagement in the neighborhoods.

A long time resident of the East Side explained that, “I was always interested in it, but from a distance because I didn’t have any avenues into it and I was working very intensely on the other side of the city. So I was open to discovering it...the experiences that I’ve had through CMW have continually deepened my connections with the West End, made me more familiar with it, so that now I drive over there, I go to see people, I go to see restaurants, I go to take people over there to discover the things the things that I’ve discovered.”

Relative newcomers to CMW show how this expansion of exploration begins to develop. A first-time CMW concert attendee at the La Lupita concerts (who works in the West End) noted in an interview, “I haven’t really spent that much time in that particular part of the West End, so I think from that perspective, I had never been to La Lupita, before...When my husband and I go out to dinner we mostly stay downtown or go to the East Side or somewhere we can walk – so it was very neat going there, and having the food and...I guess that’s a place that we’d like to explore a little bit more.”

Another concert-goer noted in the general survey, “I didn’t know [the West End and South Side] neighborhoods at all before except to drive through – now I have been to a great taqueria in Olneyville and the South Side Cultural Center and the Highlander School, and all those places feel more familiar like I could go there again.”

Residents of the neighborhoods also experience this same expansion. A CMW parent noted in an interview, “I’m a Muslim, so if it wasn’t for CMW I would have never entered a church.

I think it shows in a very... obvious way, that there's a lot of possibilities in neighborhoods, and I think that it's something we could all...I can learn from that about what's possible in a city neighborhood.

Interview with community member

[laughs] I go to the mosque. And the other thing is, it helps open up a little to different cultures, different people. The example I always give is my daughter when she started in CMW she was in third grade, she was so shy she wouldn't even lift her eyes to look at anybody, and now she stands in front of hundreds of people and she's playing and she's comfortable." And, residents spoke of their pride in their neighborhood: "I have more reasons to invite people to my neighborhood, I have more reasons to feel honest pride about something happening in my neighborhood."

The past Executive Director of One Neighborhood Builders, another local partner, said in an interview that, "[the concerts] change the perception of the neighborhood. And neighborhoods like Olneyville, that's really important to them... especially over 16 years being there, just seeing the difference that arts have made in that neighborhood."

In addition to the many comments above, a number of responses to the general survey described residents and visitors who already took pride in their involvement in the West End and South Side neighborhoods. This response is typical of this subset of responses: "I am already pretty comfortable with the communities in and around Providence. I think Community MusicWorks does wonderful work, but I don't think it has had an effect on my comfort level as I am already relatively engaged with the West and South Sides."

A minority also noted that their involvement with CMW was centered only on the East Side of Providence: "none of the concerts I go to are in the West End/S Side," suggesting that CMW still has work to do in bringing residents from the East Side to events outside of their own neighborhood.

Finally, a subset of responses involved an erosion of the idea of physical neighborhood boundaries altogether, and a re-conception of neighborhood as community-based rather than strictly defined by geography. This survey response was typical of this trend: "My very idea of 'neighborhood' has changed. The borders are much more porous. Also, through CMW, I have an opportunity to meet and get to know people face to face I otherwise wouldn't." Another response suggests stretching the geographical boundaries: "I guess you could say it just stretches the neighborhood to include all that share in the joy of CMW concerts."

Mapmaking activities also vividly show how involvement with CMW can make a substantial difference in how people perceive and interact with the spaces of Providence. The map on the next page is by a 12-year-old African-American boy who came to the December La Lupita concert with the family of his friend, a boy who is a CMW violin student. The 12-year-old mapmaker is primarily into playing football, likes video games, and hangs out downtown

"The West End, I just don't feel perfectly comfortable there and maybe if I haven't been for Community MusicWorks I wouldn't go there that often but I do...consider it part of my community."

Interview with community member

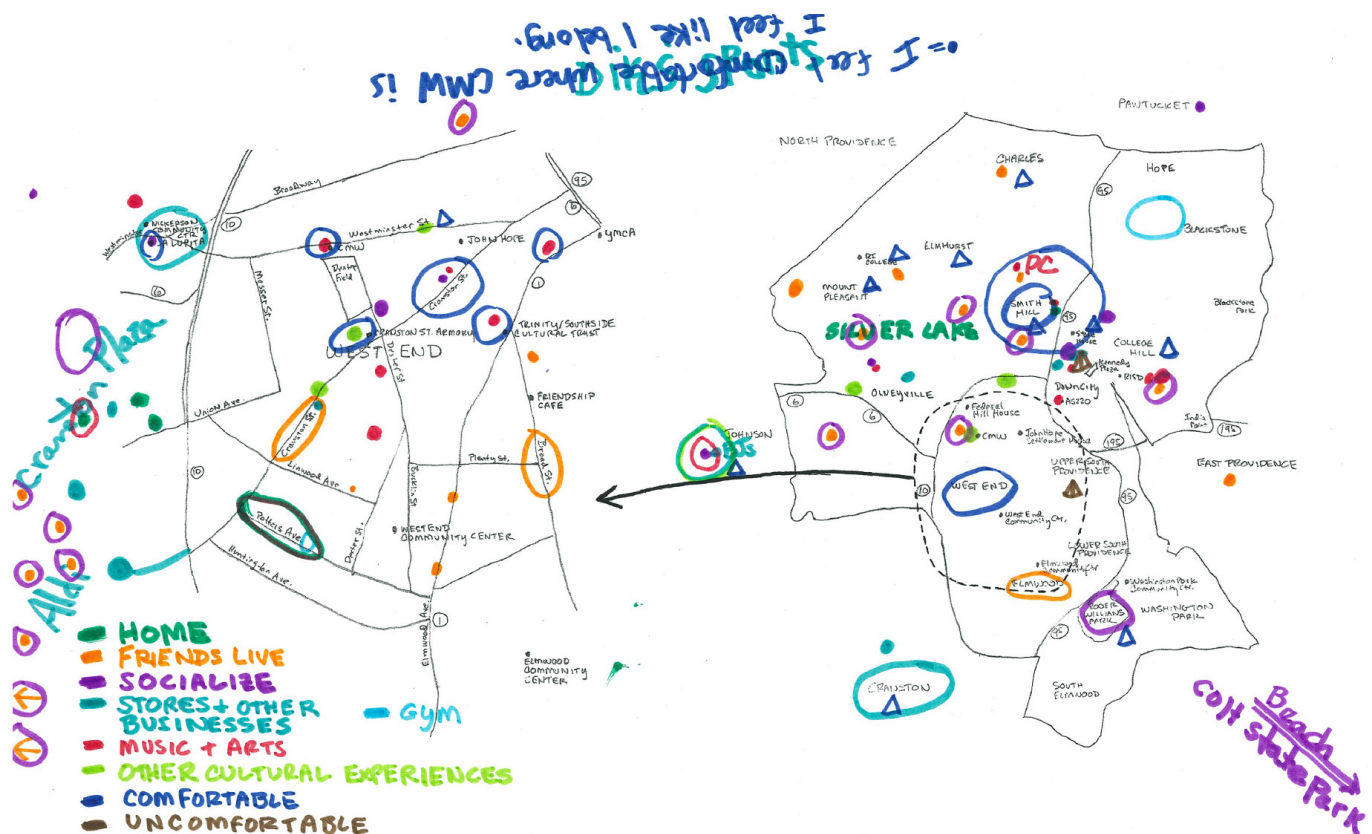


and in Roger Williams Park, but has been going to CMW concerts since he was 8 because of his friend and because he “likes listening to classical music.” On his map, he showed several places where he has listened to music, including Rhode Island School of Design, which is some distance from his Washington Park home and from the West End, where all his friends live.

Several composite maps demonstrate the ways that Community MusicWorks can deepen connections in the West End and South Side neighborhood over time. (Because the maps were created to convey a thought process, they may be difficult to decipher, but we have included them to provide a window into the process.) The map on page 72 is composed of the mappings of six people who live in more affluent areas than CMW’s focus neighborhoods; five live in the East End of Providence and one lives in Warren, RI. This can be compared to the composite of the eight CMW parents’ mappings on page 73, all of whom live in neighborhoods where CMW focuses its services. The maps show that both groups visit and utilize the other group’s home bases, but this is much more pronounced in the CMW parents’ mappings, in all respects.

Another composite (below) is made up of maps by five immigrants (two are fathers of children who are on CMW's waiting list; two are young Latinos who came into La Lupita to eat, unaware there was a CMW concert going on; and one is a CMW mother). As a group, the maps by immigrants, and the conversations that accompanied the making of them, are different than those by native-born Americans.

[Map Five]



The two fathers who are immigrants (one from Guatemala and one from Nigeria) expressed the hope that their children would soon become CMW students, because they see that through this their children will have a better life in the US. The Nigerian man was very explicit about this, saying his he hopes his daughter “will be very good, can play in college, can enter world competitions, and can make a very successful career as a musician.” The Guatemalan father thinks similarly, though doesn’t have quite as ambitious a vision for his son. Both fathers are very religious, with their churches figuring greatly in their social lives and where they are able to experience their cultures. The Nigerian man, who has only been in the US for five years, indicated in his map that he has a more expansive activity space in Providence than does the man from Guatemala, especially when it comes to listening to music: he has gone to CMW events at RISD’s Metcalf Auditorium and Providence

College, which might not be that far in geographic distance from his home in the Silver Lake neighborhood, but are greatly different in terms of affluence and living experience generally. The Guatemalan man, when asked where he listens to music in Providence, replied “at church.”

Though he did not mark places of comfort or discomfort in Providence on his map, the Guatemalan father talked a great deal about “dangerous” areas in the city. In fact, at the very beginning of his mapping session, unprompted by the facilitator, he spoke about two bicycles being stolen from his house in the Silver Lake. Later in the session, he said he does not like living in Providence because it’s “dangerous” and “hot,” and that “one day I will move,” probably to Cranston or Johnston. He continued: “It’s not the whole city that’s dangerous – [the] Charles and Hope [neighborhoods] are pretty nice, where the rich people live, but mostly Providence is dangerous. I don’t feel comfortable on the street.”

The Nigerian man indicated on his map areas where he is comfortable, but not where he is uncomfortable, which he verbally identified: “I prefer Westminster, but not Broad St. and not Elmwood – there are too many ‘layabouts’ there.”

The other two immigrants, young Latinos, live in Smith Hill and the West End, and they are much more focused on sports than on music. Their social interactions are almost always close to home, and this is also where they seem most comfortable.

The map on page 75 shows the individual map of the CMW mother who is an immigrant. At the top of her map, the facilitator translated in light green what she said in Spanish about places of comfort in Providence and CMW: “I feel comfortable where CMW is. I feel like I belong.” This quote, combined with the places she circled in the West End in the same “comfort” color, are powerful testaments of the effect CMW has had on her and her presence in the city.

Overall, these five immigrants indicated their activity space in Providence is rather sparse, especially when compared to the other 33 people who made maps at La Lupita. In conversation, it was apparent that the immigrants tend to socialize mostly with family members and friends who share the same countries of origin with them (their presence in Providence being a primary reason for moving here). However, as indicated by the text on the CMW mother’s map and by the Nigerian man’s movements toward CMW concert venues, CMW has and will likely continue to play an important role in extending immigrant’s involvement and sense of belonging in the city.

One of my early memories of being involved in Community MusicWorks was Josh Rodriguez playing viola when he was about 12 years old or 13 years old with his baseball cap on backwards and his baggy pants and, you know, full adolescent mode, except that he played the viola so beautifully... and that was a huge wakeup for me.

Interview with community member

Changed Perceptions of Youth: A huge wake-up

When describing changes in perception about West End and South Side youth, the survey and interview responses were universally positive. Many audience members commented on their positive perceptions of the youth in the audience at the La Lupita concerts; the owner of La Lupita, for example, said in his interview about the concert series, “I see very young people around, which is good. I believe it's a good example for the youngsters to see, come and join this beautiful music.”

Beyond simply their presence, however, many audience members noted the students' engagement in the concerts, for example: “I was struck by the intelligence of their engagement and their questions.” Another interviewee noted, “I loved watching the children kind of plop themselves down and really, really listen and engage and so I thought that was great.”

In addition, youth involvement in the arts helps parents deepen their involvement. A member of SWAP, a partner organization on the Friendship Café series and the first drop-in class, talked about how “sometimes even the kids drive it more than the parents do to go and check it out.” The curiosity of the kids brings parents to events, and seeing kids engaging helps the parents engage as well. In addition, having CMW youth performing in the concert series was mentioned in multiple interviews (partners and also audience members) as profoundly affecting their experience: “Those moments I would say are the most memorable, when you see the older students performing. And sometimes the older student's performing and it's like bringing tears to my eyes... it's not because of anything to do with having messed up or not messed up but just because the performance is so good. Those would be the most memorable moments, I would say.”

For CMW parents, the involvement of students is obviously of primary importance, both in watching them perform, but also in the way that the students become part of a larger community. One parent noted that CMW provides his children with the same type of engaged community of families that he enjoyed growing up in the South End of Boston: “I grew up in an urban environment which had so much going on in terms of activism... that was in Boston in the South End...like all these kids I grew up with are basically like neighborhood cousins, and a lot of the parents were like secondary parents. So, a street full of loud dads and single moms, right? I would say CMW is the closest to that kind of experience in the sense of really doing an incredible service for the neighborhood and also for the city to bring people together.”

At La Lupita, I remember three little kids sitting on the floor right up front and they were... doing some coloring or something, but they were just there for the music. They were not running around, they weren't there eating tacos... I mean they were eating tacos, but they weren't just eating tacos. They were clearly listening to the music.

Interview with community member

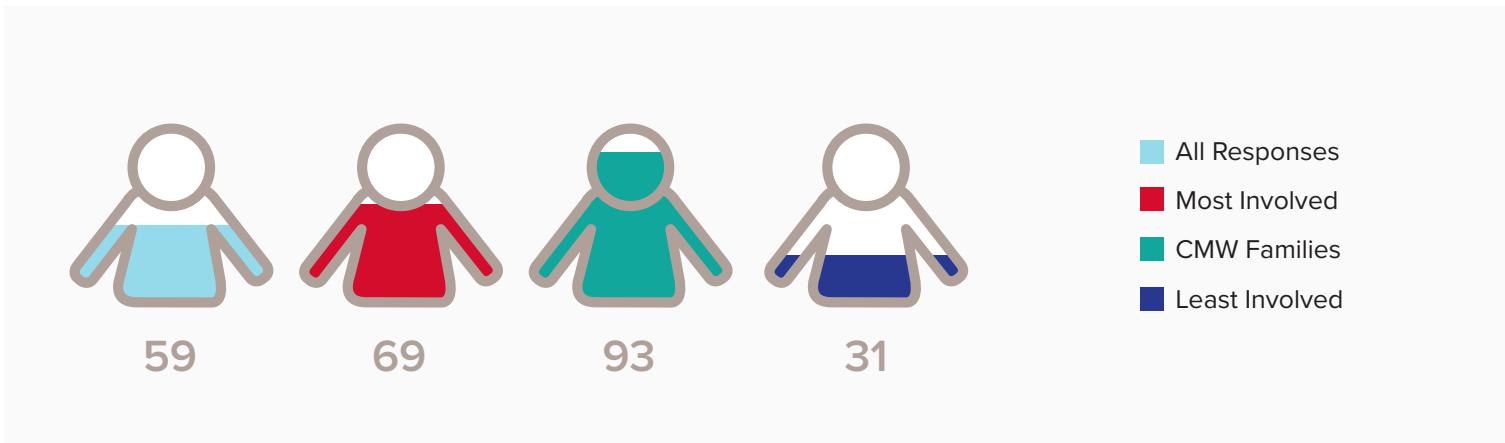
Changed Perceptions of Classical Music: Making it relevant

Comments in the general and La Lupita surveys, as well as follow up questions in the individual interviews, help us understand how respondents' perception of classical music has shifted through involvement with Community MusicWorks. Comments about a broader understanding of who classical music is for, and where it occurs, were typical:

- *Getting over stereotypical ideas of who plays music and how music can be.* (interview)
- *CMW has made it more accessible to someone like me.* (interview)
- *So many more facets are attached to the music that the listener leaves with a much greater understanding of the material.* (survey)

[Figure Four]

Changed perception of classical music



This change in perception was more marked for individuals who were more deeply involved in Community MusicWorks. Among the “most involved” respondents, 69 percent said that CMW had shifted their perception of classical music concerts “somewhat” to “a lot.” For families and students, that number jumped to 93 percent. Even among those who were least involved in CMW, 31 percent reported that CMW had shifted their perception of classical music concerts “somewhat” to “a lot.”

A word cloud exercise [see Appendix E] conducted as part of concert evenings invited respondents to share descriptive words in response to images of more traditional classical

music concerts, and to Community MusicWorks images depicting untraditional spaces and audience involvement, demonstrating CMW’s community-centric concert approach.

Generally positive terms accompanied all images, but the community-centric images included more terms like “fun,” “community,” “informal,” “diverse,” and “engaging.” For the images of the more traditional concerts, the more prevalent terms included “formal,” “traditional,” “intimate,” “lovely,” “serious,” and “professional.” Examples of words with potential negative connotations were “chaotic,” for the community centric concerts, and “expensive,” “distant” and “removed” for the traditional concerts.

La Lupita surveys: Growing audiences, building connections

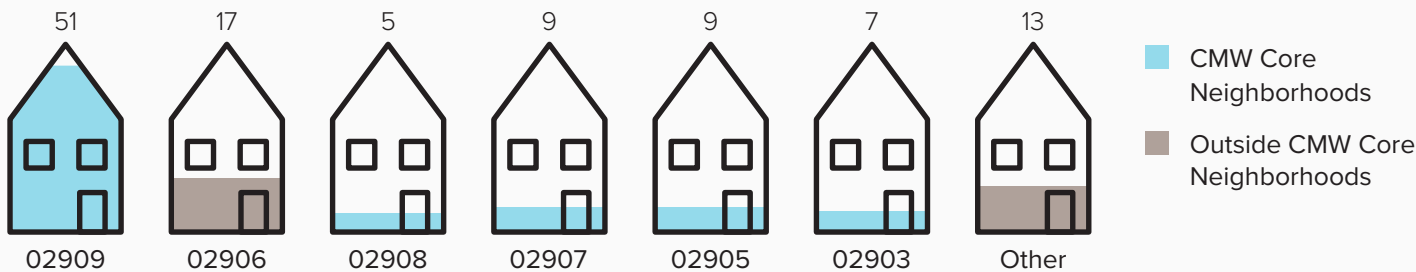
While the general survey helps understand how CMW impacts community over time, the La Lupita concerts offer a snapshot of responses in real time (both individuals familiar with CMW, and new to CMW), and demonstrates how successful community centric concerts can begin to build the connections that lead to stronger social cohesion.

The growth in attendance at the La Lupita concerts over the four months was marked, with a total of 364 individuals attending concerts between September and December.²⁰ Of these total numbers, 115 concertgoers filled out the post-concert survey (a 31.5 percent response rate).²¹ 73 of the respondents were residents of the neighborhoods served by CMW; 37 came from outside of CMW’s core neighborhoods.

Much of the growth in attendance, according to survey responses, was due to word of mouth. Between 42 and 69 percent of respondents (varying by month) reported that they had heard about the event from friends. Also, many audience members returned, attending multiple events. 11 percent of survey respondents in October reported that they

[Figure Five]

La Lupita Respondents by Zip Code



had attended the previous concert, and 26 percent in December. (Many audience members chose not to fill out surveys multiple times, so these numbers likely under-estimate the number of repeat audience members.)

The major findings from the La Lupita surveys included:

- A growth in sense of connection over the course of the concerts
- Overwhelmingly enthusiastic audience response (for each concert, 100 percent enjoyed it)
- The “surprise” factor remained high
- Most respondents were not new to classical music
- All respondents would return to CMW, and almost all to La Lupita.

Most notable for CMW’s goal of increasing social cohesion through concerts was the growth in the sense of connection that respondents reported at the La Lupita concerts. Respondents who marked that they felt “somewhat” to “a lot” of connection with others in the room, by month, was: 46 percent in September, 35 percent in October, 61 percent in November, and 86 percent in December. The audience for the first concert had a high proportion of regular CMW attendees, which most likely accounts for the relatively high level of connection at the first event. From there, the sense of connection grew steadily through the three events: even though 61 percent of respondents in December had not previously attended a CMW event, 86 percent felt some connection to others, and 43 percent marked that they felt “a lot” of connection to others. No respondents, in any of the concerts, indicated that they felt no connection to others.

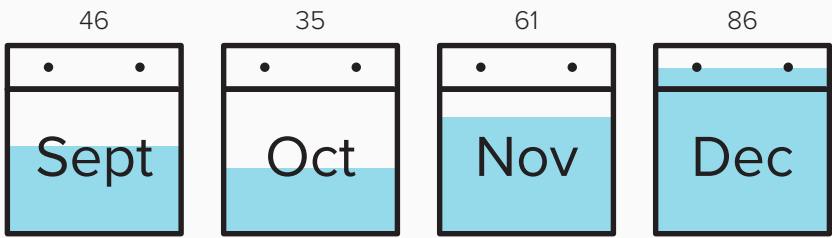
This growth in connection is significant, and is related to the connection responses in the general survey, showing a growth in connections among individuals from the same neighborhoods and from different neighborhoods, over time as their connection to CMW grows. (See page 32)

What’s one connection you felt tonight?

- Compartir con gente nueva
- Everyone sharing space and not being annoyed by it
- Connection to feelings expressed in music
- Talking to people
- I felt a connection through the music
- The peacefulness around the room
- Getting to know new people
- Seeing old friends in this context felt great
- I met new people
- Talking to people at my table
- I sat with people I didn't know and made friends
- Sense of community!
- Friendships beyond business relation as customer
- Singing and participating in the concert together
- All of us were enjoying the music.
- Proud of Providence!

[Figure Six]

Respondents who felt somewhat to a lot of connection to others, by month



As noted above, all respondents who filled out surveys at La Lupita reported enjoying the concert, and all said that they would return to another Community MusicWorks event. However, most respondents were not new to classical music: between 94 and 100 percent of respondents (depending on the month) reported that they liked classical music before that night, and between 81 and 96 percent (depending on the month) reported that they had been to a classical music concert before. (See Response to La Lupita concerts chart, Appendix F)

While this finding suggests that CMW is not reaching audience members with no experience of classical music, it's also important to note the context: CMW is in its nineteenth year of residency in the West End neighborhood, and the reception to classical music in the neighborhood is likely affected by the longevity of this connection. (To elaborate, it's possible, though this report did not investigate this question, that the number of individuals who reported liking classical music would be lower in a tacqueria in a neighborhood with similar demographics, but without a group of resident musicians.) It's also possible that these classical music listeners were not previously classical music concert-goers; the La Lupita survey did not ask participants in what context they had previously heard classical music.

While the vast majority of La Lupita's audience was familiar with classical music, however, a majority at each concert noted that they were surprised by something about the event.²² Representative comments about the "surprise factor" are below, grouped by themes that emerged from the data, including the community, the audience composition and participation, the location, and the quality of the music.

When arts organizations present examples of traditionally "high" culture (classical music being a prime example) in underserved areas, the specter of gentrification (the economic displacement of longtime neighborhood residents or businesses) is an ever-present caution. One resident who has lived in the West End for several decades noted this fear when he spoke of his neighborhood, saying, "I feel very nervous for the West End."

Answers in response to the question, *What surprised you?*

Community

- How complete strangers offered to share tables
- It was a wonderful community fully spirited
- The community/familial feeling/atmosphere was very attractive
- Like always, the community coming together for CMW

Performance

- The talent and dedication with which the instruments were played
- Best Vivaldi I have heard
- The quality of the music and the great energy in the room

Composition of Audience

- Well attended
- La Lupita has become very white (September)
- The diversity was awesome (October)
- The connection to the different communities.
- The size of the crowd
- Turnout of people and variety of people
- The range of people attending-more diverse than other venues
- How the room look like a quilt representing our diversity

Location

- Surprised by location, great way to make the music accessible to new audiences
- Bright lights and classical music together, and with futbol
- The meeting of classical music in a Mexican food venue unexpected
- So wonderful to be close and experience performers and their instruments, rather than listening to recordings or being in a large music hall
- The juxtaposition of neon and Haydn
- How well suited the space was for a concert (with performers in window)
- The whole event! I just came to la lupita for good food and got a super treat
- Just that it was going on

Audience Participation

- "Audience participation"
- "I was surprised that they let us yell and scream"
- "I was surprised about the audience interaction"
- How engaged the audience was

CMW combats the potential for displacement by working to build events that welcome community members and celebrate existing community assets, including restaurants like La Lupita, and community fixtures like the West End Community Center, the John Hope Settlement House, and Federal Hill House. Musicians seek to underscore the elements of their performance that have broad appeal, and minimize the elements of traditional performance practice that can be alienating and confusing to those less familiar with concert hall performance practices. CMW's ultimate goal of social cohesion through these concerts addresses some of the tensions that can exist in gentrifying locations – ensuring that the concert experience is welcoming, relevant, and connective for all audience members. One audience member, noting how much he enjoyed the performances, and specifically seeing CMW students perform, wrote that: “I look like the people in the South Side. CMW performing in these neighborhoods gives me hope and opens up doors of possibilities.”

Partnerships: Multiplying the Sticky Surfaces

CMW worked closely with partner organizations in the West End and South Side neighborhoods on all of the Art Place concerts, including SWAP, One Neighborhood Builders (formerly Olneyville Housing and Community Works RI), the Providence Department of Art, Culture + Tourism, La Lupita, and RI Black Storytellers, to build audiences, address and understand community needs and strengths, and develop programming.

- ***Stop Wasting Abandoned Property (SWAP):*** A Community Development Corporation, SWAP partnered with CMW to provide program space at the Friendship Café and Community Room in their development at 500 Broad Street.
- ***One Neighborhood Builders:*** A Community Development Corporation, ONB partnered with CMW to provide pop-up performance space at the in-development Paragon Mills in Olneyville, and support Olneyville performance events.
- ***Department of Art, Culture + Tourism:*** Provided support and connections among community partners.
- ***La Lupita restaurant:*** La Lupita provided provided program space in the restaurant, and food for the concert events.
- ***RI Black Storytellers:*** Worked with CMW to design the concert event at South Side Cultural Center, building programming and collaborative performance pieces.

Connections between different individuals are more likely to result when there are multiple ways for people from different backgrounds to connect to the event, and to feel like they belong there. CMW sometimes thinks of this in terms of offering multiple “sticky” surfaces to adhere to. In the most successful community centric concerts, CMW worked with the partner organizations listed above to ensure that participants were offered multiple “sticky” surfaces. These included bilingual publicity and event hosts, free community dinners, programming that showcased neighborhood children and highlighted neighborhood concerns, a presentation of classical music that emphasized participation and connection, and opportunities for audience members of all ages to feel included.

As an example, take two different restaurant collaborations that CMW embarked upon in Providence’s South Side and Olneyville neighborhoods. In 2014-2015, CMW worked with the Friendship Café, a SWAP (Stop Wasting Abandoned Property) property that was run by Amos House, a social services agency. On paper, the mission alignment of CMW and Friendship Café was compelling (Amos House offers food preparation training and employment opportunities to unemployed shelter residents at the Friendship Café); however, by the time the concert series had begun, Friendship Café had ceased functioning as a regular restaurant, instead operating only as a catering and job training site. While the staff at Friendship Café was excited to host the concerts, the lack of a regular clientele at the site meant that Friendship Café’s ability to bring in residents from SWAP housing was limited. CMW worked to offer relevant and interesting programming in the Friendship Café concerts, but without a community partner offering an entry point to neighborhood residents, the audience members tended to be already affiliated with CMW.

CMW’s 2015-2016 collaboration with La Lupita café offered a different result. La Lupita has a large clientele who felt very comfortable in the taqueria’s space, but were new to CMW. The first sticky surface, therefore, was simply the patrons’ comfort in their familiar neighborhood taqueria: patrons who were entering an already familiar space were ready to be receptive to a new experience in this location. Once the regular patrons were in the front door, CMW consciously worked to make sure that there were additional entry points for them into the experience. CMW parents (who were asked to function as hosts for the events) greeted patrons at the door in English and Spanish, explaining the event, and inviting them to stay and listen to the music. CMW parents also went table to table as the music started to greet the restaurant patrons, and make sure that they knew that they were welcome to stay. In addition, CMW musicians (as noted above) worked to demystify the concert experience, and to offer accessible “hooks” into the music. While some patrons chose not to stay to hear the music, many did stay, and enjoyed the event.

“The [musicians] didn’t seem to feel that they were just there performing their music and leaving. They were really making an effort to interact, especially with the children...who were getting a chance to listen up close and participate in a casual and intimate way...”

Interview with community member

One customer of La Lupita who didn't know that the concert was happening later wrote that they were surprised by "the whole event! I just came to la lupita for good food and got a super treat." Another patron who was new to CMW was surprised by "the music, very pretty. The people, very friendly."

La Lupita was surprised, in turn, by the warm reception their clientele gave to the concerts. Since the collaboration, the owners have re-modeled their restaurant space, creating more spaces to eat but preserving a "stage" area, and are considering adding a regular salsa music night. The La Lupita owners are convinced of the power of live music in their space to bring people together; in this case, classical music allowed them to understand this connectivity and led them to think about the potential of salsa music to grow these connections, though it is perhaps more common for the progression to happen in the other direction!

Findings

In conversations with representatives of partner organizations and with CMW staff, there were several important findings about the benefits of partnerships to partner organizations, and to the success of the project. There were also takeaways about the need for better communication before the project is underway, and better follow-up after a project is completed.

Partnerships help partners understand the strengths of their own organizations

Several partners raised this point, noting that seeing themselves through a new lens helped them understand what they could bring to the table, and perhaps also how to build upon their own strengths.

Partners emerge with a changed perception of what is possible through collaboration/collective impact

La Lupita's owners, soon after the final concert, mentioned that they were now thinking of expanding to have more room, and were interested in continuing the partnership and looking for additional musical partners. Several other partners echoed this sentiment. A SWAP representative noted that, "It's been really kind of easy to work with you guys, so I think that's helped us to kind of reach out to other groups." The SWAP representative pointed to a regular partnership with a yoga studio, and a partnership with the Rhode Island School of Design and the City of Providence to create a lighting exhibition in a graveyard close to SWAP as strongly influenced by SWAP's partnership experience with CMW.

Partners didn't understand benefit of partnership until project was underway

La Lupita's owners confessed that at first they had "no idea this was different from a party" when they were first approached by CMW. It was only after the concert series was underway that they understood the potential of the collaboration to serve their clientele, and to increase their business. The Executive Director of One Neighborhood Builders agreed: "It was probably only seeing the programs that I kind of understood it."

Partners are excited to partner with CMW

Frank Shea, the past Executive Director of ONB, mentioned that "Community MusicWorks is such a well-respected high-impact organization that we really appreciated the opportunity to work with them and would have been excited to do lots more." This was a general theme in the partner interviews.

Youth are important carriers of the impact of partnerships

A staff member of SWAP talked about how "sometimes even the kids drive it more than the parents do to go and check it out;" the curiosity of the kids brings parents to events, and seeing kids engaging helps the parents engage as well. In addition, having CMW youth involved in the concert series was mentioned in multiple interviews (partners and also audience members) as profoundly affecting their experience. A typical comment cited the "the intelligence of [the youth's] engagement and their questions."

If partnerships are to galvanize the community; there is a need for better follow-up to retain/strengthen engagement

In several instances, the partnerships created energy for more events and partnerships (see above). In some cases, interviewees cited the lack of follow-up after an event as disappointing. A member of the Latino Advisory Council, who worked for months to develop community engagement with the *Fantasia* project, mentioned her disappointment that nothing was done after the concert to harness the energy that had built up in the community and the Advisory Council.

Part 6 | Next Steps: Building a bigger shared table



The findings above offer several important take-aways for Community MusicWorks, and for non-profits and service organizations in Providence. There are also wider implications for the performing arts organizations working in urban neighborhoods.

For Community MusicWorks

The evaluation suggests that community-centric concerts, such as the La Lupita series, can help to deliver on CMW's mission to strengthen community. To further deliver on the potential of this work, CMW should deepen its ability to communicate the power of collaborations, continue to hone its presentation of material at events, and strengthen its follow-up work after the conclusion of events. Specifically, CMW could:

- Do more to help partners understand the potential of the partnerships before they are underway, perhaps with multimedia presentations to potential partners that show examples of strong partnerships, and communicate the potential benefits of the collaboration to the community, and to the community partners.
- Expand and document youth involvement in the collaborations. Partners and audience members agreed that the youth involvement communicates the power of the work most directly to all constituents.
- Deepen the interactive presentation of music, planning concert series based on CMW's distinctive strengths, and further developing tactics to communicate to audience members at varying levels of involvement.

- Create a follow-up plan for events. Partners and audience members spoke of the amount of energy and excitement generated by specific events, and series. To keep this energy alive throughout the community, CMW needs to work with partners to create a plan to capitalize on the energy and excitement post-event.
- Include versions of the La Lupita surveys more regularly in all of CMW's programming streams, to better understand how the different streams build connections, and where there are opportunities to strengthen CMW's performance practice.
- Survey responses suggest that there are still audience members from locations outside of CMW's core neighborhoods that don't come into CMW's core neighborhoods to hear concerts. CMW has more work to do to continue to support audience members to attend events in the West End and South Side of Providence.

The community-building potential of community-centric concerts is clear. In particular, the La Lupita series stands out as a strong partnership model. The format in which these concerts were offered, however, requires support from an outside grantor or other partner; it's worth investigating additional partnership models that would allow the series to be profitable without underwriting.

For Providence Partners

Several partners mentioned their interest in exploring the potential of shared spaces (SWAP in particular is already experimenting with a model of a storefront space shared between different community uses). Could a shared community space offer a home for a La Lupita type concert series, or a continued drop in class – giving community members a regular space in which to gather and experience concerts as well as other community services? And could city planners be involved in creating, funding, or maintaining these shared community spaces?

For the Wider Field of Arts and Placemaking

This evaluation supports the position that well-designed community-based performance series build connections, change perceptions about neighbors, neighborhoods, and art forms, and create stronger community. This is an important takeaway for Art Place America

and other funders of place-based art-making. CMW's community centric concerts have built connections among residents of the West End and South Side neighborhoods, as well as among residents of other neighborhoods in Providence – strengthening a social fabric in which neighbors from different cultures and backgrounds can interact, connect, and learn from one another. Essentially, CMW's community centric concerts have created a wider community for the West End and South Side neighborhoods. More people, even those living in other neighborhoods around Rhode Island, identify with and care about what happens in the West End. At the same time, West End residents have an increased sense of pride and possibility in their neighborhoods.

In addition, the data collection tools that CMW has developed offer the field a way to begin to understand changes in social cohesion in neighborhoods, and the ways in which these changes may have been influenced by arts organizations or cultural events. The La Lupita survey questions around connections, as well as the general survey questions around connections, mobility, and changes in perception can provide a blueprint for organizations hoping to measure change over time in neighborhood behavior and perceptions. The word cloud exercise, paired with relevant photos, can also be helpful in capturing participants' perception of the way the organization's art form differs from a more traditional concert or arts experience. Both the survey and word cloud tools are relatively simple to implement, and don't require extensive resources to conduct or evaluate.

The mapping activities also proved an engaging and interesting way to understand audience members' larger experiences in the city of Providence. Though the composite maps could be difficult to replicate, the individual mapping exercises could be done by individuals without a background in cartography, and offer a helpful vehicle to talk about geographic mobility, and the changes in mobility over time and through exposure to cultural events.



Appendices

Appendices

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CMW Activities Funded Through Art Place America

First Round of Funding

- **September 6, 2012** Open rehearsal at 1388 Westminster. Season Opener rehearsal with music, food and speeches.
- **September 13, 2012** Pop up concert at the Armory Park Farmers Market.
- **October 20, 2012** Concert at John Hope Settlement House, with music, food, and student performances.
- **December 13-15, 2012** Residency by the Catalyst Quartet, featuring performances and masterclasses at West End Community Center and Bell Street Chapel.
- **January 22, 2013** Dinner and concert at Paul Cuffee Middle School, at the West Broadway Neighborhood Association Annual Meeting.
- **February 15-16, 2013** Musical residency of CMW in 500 Broad Street storefront, including experimental music concert, and Beethoven concert accompanied by student art and digital media projects.
- **March 3, 2013** Community concert and workshop at John Hope Settlement House, with music, food, and student performances.
- **April 25-27, 2013** Multi-media interactive performance experience at the “Wedding Cake House” on Broadway, featuring music, food, and art.
- **May 11, 2013** Concert in the West End as part of WBNA Neighborhood Stroll.
- **May 17, 2013** Concert at John Hope Settlement House, featuring a commission by Gonzalo Grau, and including music, food, and dancing. Promoted by a Latino Advisory Committee and the RI traditional dance community.

Second Round of Funding

- **September 26, 2014** Traffic Jam at 1388 Westminster. Season Opener Street fair with music, food trucks, speeches, Big Nazo puppets, party favors.

- **October 10, 2014** ArtPlace "Inhabit" Jam at Friendship Cafe with students performing various pieces. Performance and spaghetti dinner, free and open to the public.
- **November 14, 2014** ArtPlace "Inhabit" Jam at Friendship Cafe. Jesse Holstein presented a "Bach Talk" and musical demonstration. Performance and spaghetti dinner, free and open to the public.
- **December 15, 2014** ArtPlace "Inhabit" Jam at Friendship Cafe. Jessie Montgomery and Adrienne Taylor performed movements from a new composition by Montgomery, "Duo for Violin and Cello." CMW Phase II students and their parents were in attendance. Performance and spaghetti dinner, free and open to the public.
- **Friday, January 16, 2015** ArtPlace "Inhabit" Jam at Friendship Cafe. Jesse Holstein gave a talk and musical demonstration on "Music and Mindfulness." Performance and spaghetti dinner, free and open to the public.
- **January 16 – March 6 2015** Eight "Flexploration" drop-in educational events for children and families at SWAP's 500 Broad Street development's community space.
- **May 2, 2015** Dinner and Performance commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act, featuring a commission by Daniel Bernard Roumain, and in collaboration with Rhode Island Black Storytellers.
- **September 24, 2015** ArtPlace "Inhabit" Jam at La Lupita, Olneyville. Performance and dinner, free and open to the public.
- **October 8, 2015** ArtPlace "Inhabit" Jam at La Lupita, Olneyville. Performance and dinner, free and open to the public.
- **November 5, 2015** ArtPlace "Inhabit" Jam at La Lupita, Olneyville. Performance and dinner, free and open to the public.
- **December 3, 2015** ArtPlace "Inhabit" Jam at La Lupita, Olneyville. Performance and dinner, free and open to the public.
- **October 8-December 2, 2015** Eight Week Flexploration drop-in educational events at Manton Avenue Project.

Sample Survey instruments

[Figure A]

La Lupita Survey

Thank you for coming to a CMW/La Lupita concert! Your responses to this survey will help us understand what these concerts mean to people like you.

Your Name : _____ Age: _____ Zip Code: _____

How did you hear about this event?

- ☐ I didn't know about it. I saw the crowd and decided to check it out.
- ☐ Someone told me about it (Who? _____)
- ☐ I saw a poster
- ☐ I got an Email
- ☐ I came to a previous concert
- ☐ I got a flier in my takeout bag
- ☐ Other: _____

- | | | | |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Did you enjoy tonight's music? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Did you like classical music before tonight? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Did you like Mexican food before tonight? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Did you enjoy tonight's food? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Did anything surprise you about tonight's event? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | If yes, what? |

Have you been to Lupita before? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Have you been to:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| A concert before? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| A classical music concert? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| A Community MusicWorks event before? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

Would you come back to La Lupita? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Would you come to another CMW event? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If you would be willing to talk more about your experience at tonight's event, please include your phone or email here: _____

Would you like to do your interview: (Check/circle all that work for you).

- ☐ In a short phone interview?
- ☐ By answering some questions in Email?
- ☐ By coming to a dinner and discussion group?

What did you feel in the concert? (Select all that apply to you)

- ☐ Peaceful
- ☐ Interested
- ☐ Distressed
- ☐ Curious
- ☐ Inspired
- ☐ Sad
- ☐ Refreshed
- ☐ Happy
- ☐ Excited
- ☐ Bored

What other feelings did you have?

What did you expect from this concert?

How was that different from what you experienced?

What are one or two things you learned from the concert?

How much did the concert connect you with others at La Lupita?

	YES				
Not at all	A Little	2	Somewhat	4	A Lot
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

What is one strong connection you felt?

When you look back on this concert a year from now, what is one thing you'll remember?

Thank you for helping us out. We hope to see you again!

[Figure B]

General Survey

How are you connected with Community MusicWorks? Mark ALL that apply.

- ☐ I am a CMW supporter
- ☐ I got to CMW events and concerts
- ☐ I am a CMW Board Member
- ☐ I am a parent or relative of a CMW student
- ☐ I am a CMW student
- ☐ I am a CMW alum
- ☐ I am a musician
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Over the past 12 months, how many CMW events have you attended?

0	1-2	3-4	5+
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How often do you attend performances or other cultural events? (CMW or otherwise)

Never	1-2 times a year	Once every couple of months	1-2 a month	3 or more times a month
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How likely are you to travel outside of your own neighborhood to go to concerts or other cultural events? (CMW or otherwise)

Not at all	A little		Somewhat		A lot
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Has coming to Community MusicWorks changed your perception of classical music concerts?

Not at all	A little		Somewhat		A lot
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please explain:

Do your experiences at Community MusicWorks connect you with other people in you neighborhood?

Not at all	A little		Somewhat		A lot
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please explain:

Do your experiences at Community MusicWorks connect you with the people from other neighborhoods?

Not at all	A little		Somewhat		A lot
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please Explain:

Has Community MusicWorks changed the way you think about the West End/South Side neighborhoods?

Not at all	A little		Somewhat		A lot
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please Explain:

Has your comfort level or interest in traveling to different neighborhoods changed due to your involvement in CMW?

Not at all	A little		Somewhat		A lot
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please Explain:

Has your comfort level or interest in traveling to different neighborhoods changed due to your involvement in CMW?

	Not at all	A little	Somewhat	A lot
The skill of the resident musician	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The music that is played	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The way the musicians interact with the audience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The audience's level of involvement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The participation of students from the West End as performers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Something else? Please tell us:

Since becoming involved in Community MusicWorks... (Check the best box for each sentence)

	Not at all	A little	Somewhat	A lot
I travel outside of my own neighborhood more often	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I got to different restaurants	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My circle of friends has expanded	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am more involved in my community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I listen to different music	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I play music in new places	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I listen to music in new places	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am more involved with my child's school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am more likely to interact with people whose background is different from my own	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Something else? Please tell us:

Sample Interview Questions

Interview Instruments

CMW ArtPlace evaluation, October 2015

Art Place Interviews - audience members, students and families

[bold suggestions are for people who first experienced CMW through a recent La Lupita concert or other Art Place event]

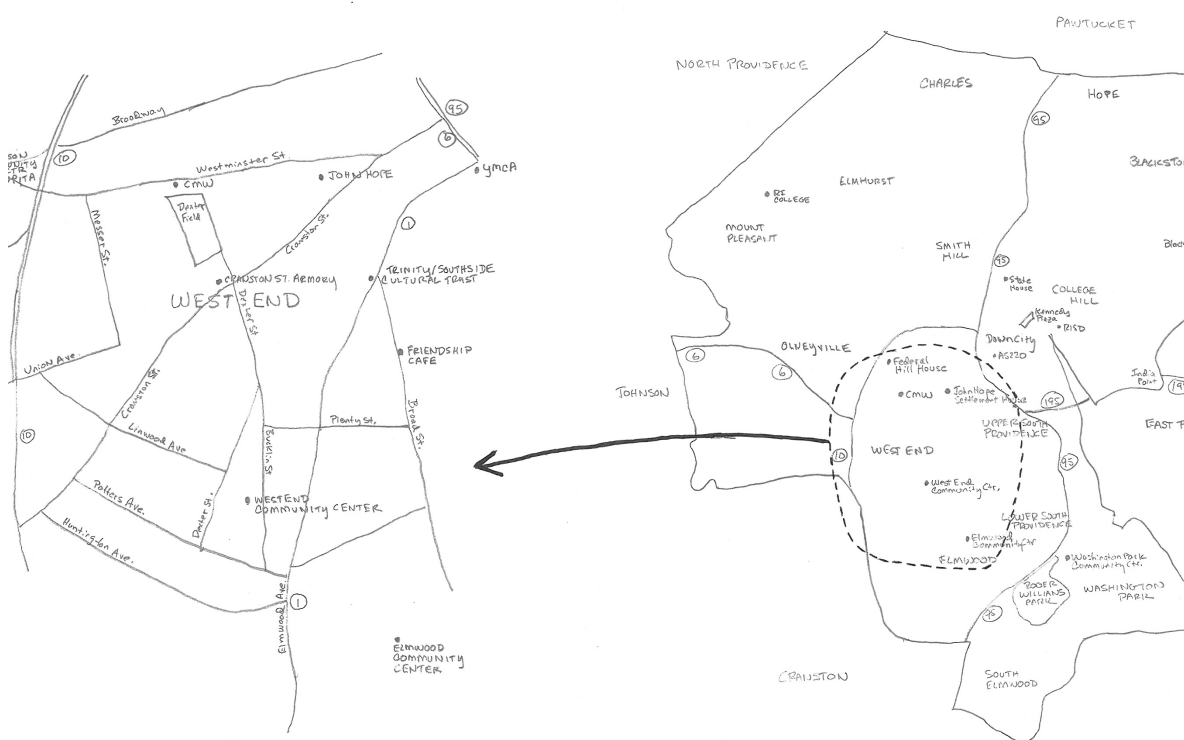
First, introduce yourself and your affiliation and talk a little bit about the Art Place evaluation project. We're doing a series of interviews of community members, hoping to get people with a wide range of experience with CMW, to understand the impacts of our performances and musical residency in the West End of Providence. We hope to learn more about what these concerts mean to people like you, and whether there are any ways in which there are "ripple" effects from these concerts – subtle changes in the ways people experience the neighborhood over time. Tell the subject that we hope this interview will take about 20 minutes to half an hour of their time.

1. Name, zip code, number of years affiliation with CMW [**How long have you known about CMW?**]
2. Has CMW [**or the concert you recently attended**] changed your ideas about where classical music concerts are or should be played? How about who concerts are for? How about what a concert is?
3. Tell us about a memorable CMW concert moment [**memorable moment from the concert you just attended**] that you wouldn't otherwise have met. Is this relationship important to you?
4. Have you had an experience through CMW that has changed the way you look at your neighborhood/the West End? [**Did you experience at the concert change at all the way you look at/feel about the West End?**]
5. What do you think is the primary benefit of CMW to the West End/South Side neighborhoods? To Providence as a whole?
6. Has your behavior changed in any way since or because of your involvement in CMW [**because of your attendance at the concert**]? (Think about things like people you're in touch with, stores that you frequent, places you go, ways that you interact with people, etc.) Have you visited places you wouldn't otherwise have gone because of CMW?
7. WORD CLOUD exercise [for in person interviews] (look at the following photos of CMW events, and come up with 5 words for each to describe your impression of this concert experience)
8. How would you describe your race/ethnicity?

Thank the subject for participating and tell them that we hope to have a full report in January, and that if they're interested, we would be happy to share the results! And also, if they have any further thoughts, please email them to evaluation@communitymusicworks.org.

Sample Maps

Below are the base maps that were used for the mental mapping; these maps were developed by Marie Cieri in consultation with CMW Education Director Chloë Kline and Artistic Director Sebastian Ruth, then tested with a CMW parent, two CMW students, and a CMW artist.



The map on the right shows all of Providence, with some adjacent communities indicated, and the one on the left shows the West End, where CMW is located, blown up in scale. The base maps were meant to give mapmakers sufficient, but not too much, spatial reference to Providence and adjacent communities, i.e., enough spatial information to help mapmakers locate areas or landmarks in Providence that figure in their perceptions, but not so much as to predetermine what Providence “is,” or what it contains. (Of course, what was included/excluded from the base maps was a subjective determination by Kline and Ruth, but, in practice, the base maps seemed to display just enough spatial referents for the mapmakers, or, occasionally, not enough, with the facilitators stepping in to help people locate what they wanted to mark on the maps.)

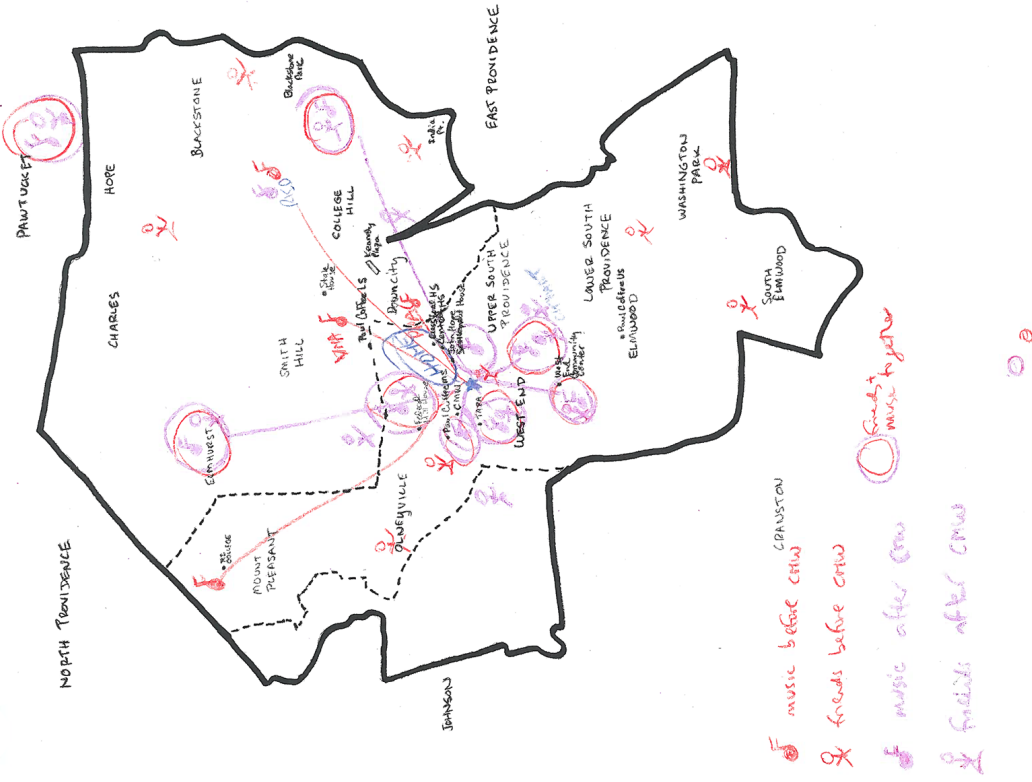
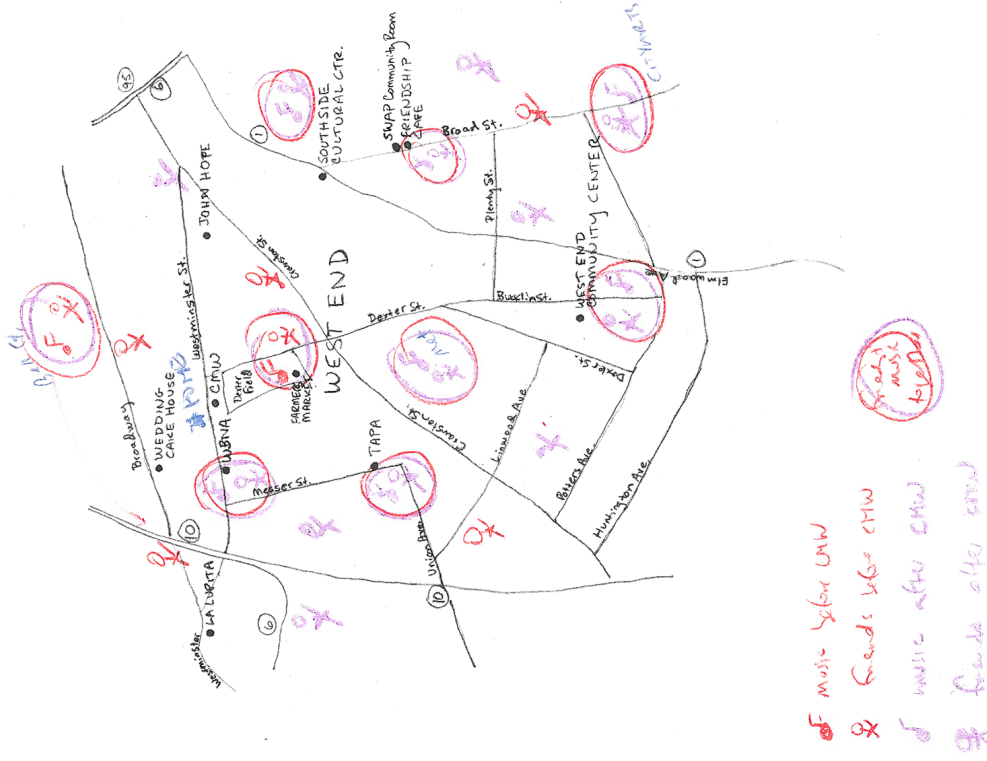
In all, 55 people made a total of 53 mental maps (two maps were made by a pair of people): 38 were made at four La Lupita concerts in the Olneyville neighborhood, from September to December 2015, and are the focus of the map analysis below, and 17 others were made by CMW students, mostly at a September gathering of Phase II (older) students at the West Broadway School in Providence's West End.

Of the 38 people who made maps at the La Lupita concerts, eight were CMW parents and two were CMW parents. The rest were general audience members. Five of the 38 were immigrants from Latin America and Africa. The race/ethnicity of the 38 were as follows: African-American 7, or 18%; Asian, 3, or 8%; Caucasian 17, or 45%; Latino/a 11, or 29%. Of the 38 La Lupita mapmakers, 24, or 63%, lived within CMW target areas and 14, or 37%, outside CMW target areas.

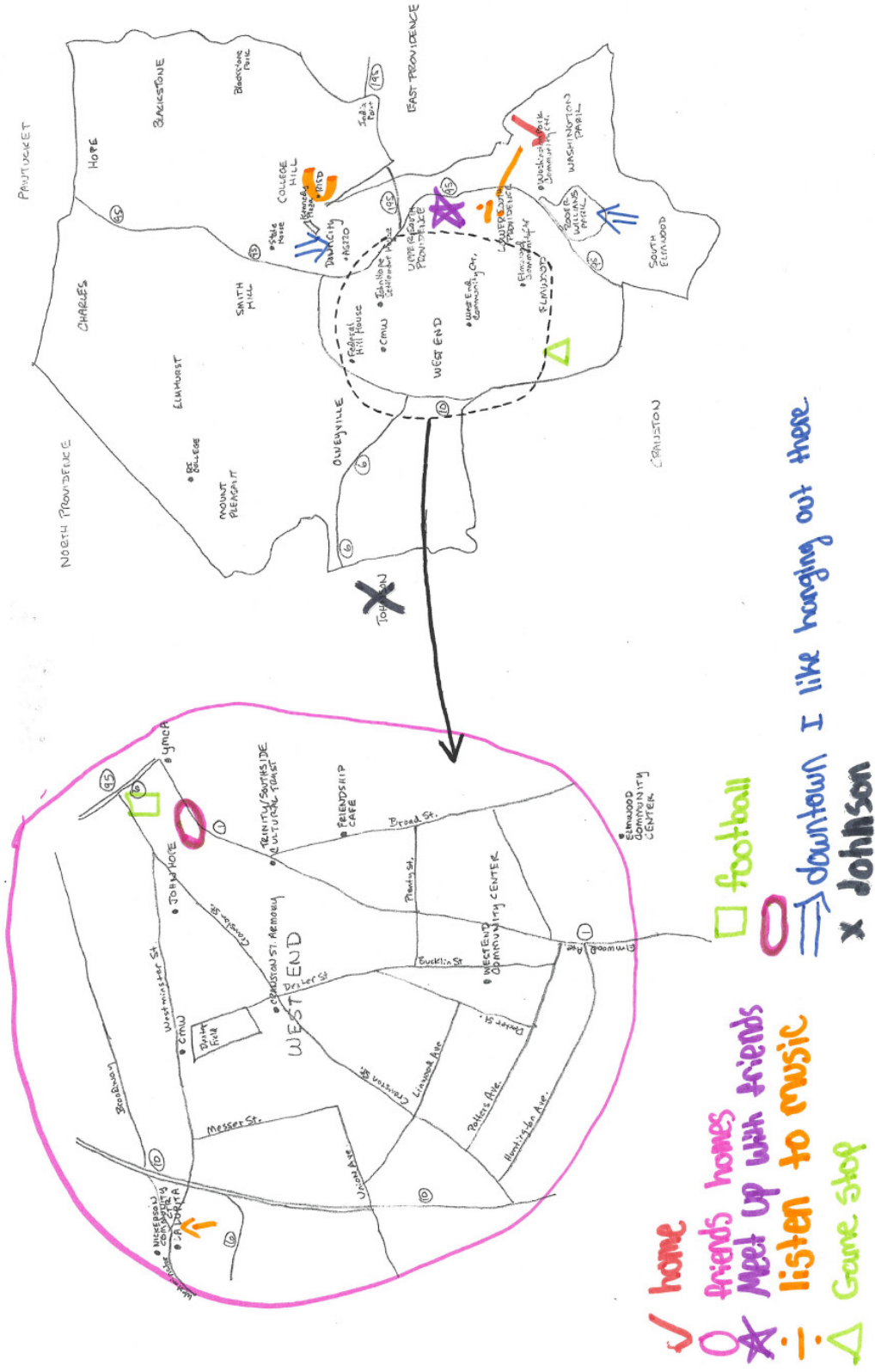
Mental Map Analysis and Composite Maps

Maps were analyzed by social geographer and cartographer Marie Cieri (Ph.D., Geography, Rutgers University, 2004), either individually or by compositing maps according to certain themes, e.g., maps by CMW parents, maps by immigrants, maps by first-timers to a CMW event. In order to analyze individual maps, she relied on the legends mapmakers were asked to make on their maps and on the audio-recordings that were made during mapmaking sessions. The color palette used for these individual maps was chosen by the mapmaker and is indicated in the map legend.

The composited maps were made by Cieri, who used a light box to trace the markings on each individual map onto the a new set of base maps to create a composite of, for example, the eight maps by CMW parents. In doing this, she stayed as close as possible to the gestural markings of the original mapmakers in her tracings; the only thing she substantially changed was the color palette; it would have been impossible to read, analyze, and display the composites if each mapmaker's chosen palette had been used in the composites. The color palette used in each composite is indicated in that map's legend. (Some of these composites are very densely marked, so the best way to read them is to visually isolate each color in the legend.)

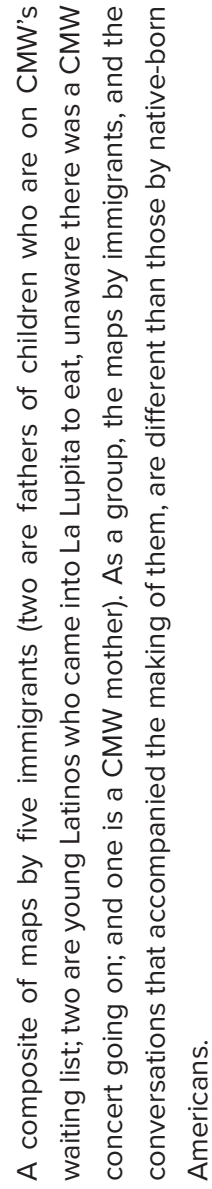


A map drawn by a woman whose two children are beginning CMW students, showing friends before and after her involvement with CMW, where she listened to music before and after involvement with CMW, and where friends and listening to music happened in the same spaces. The West End is on the left, and the whole of Providence on the right; pink shows friends and experiences developed since joining CMW.



This map is by a 12-year-old African-American boy who came to the December La Lupita concert with the family of his friend. His map several places where he has listened to music, including Rhode Island School of Design, which is some distance from his Washington Park home and from the West End, where all his friends live.







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Word Clouds

[Word Cloud One]



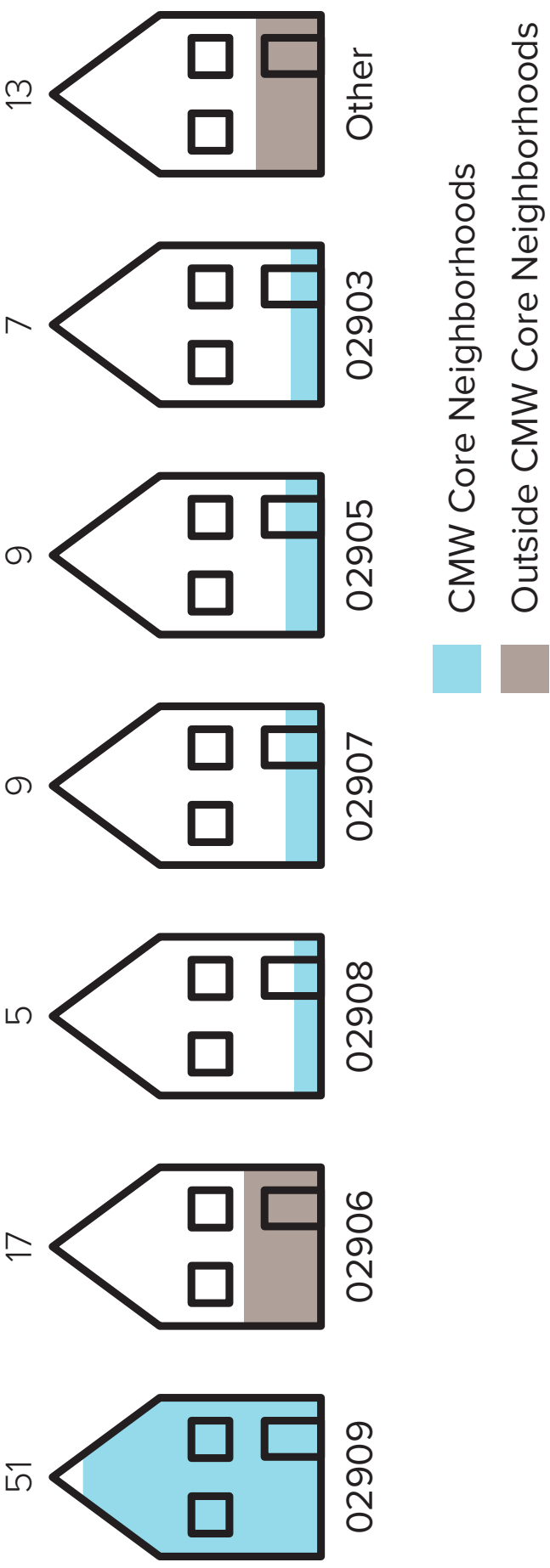




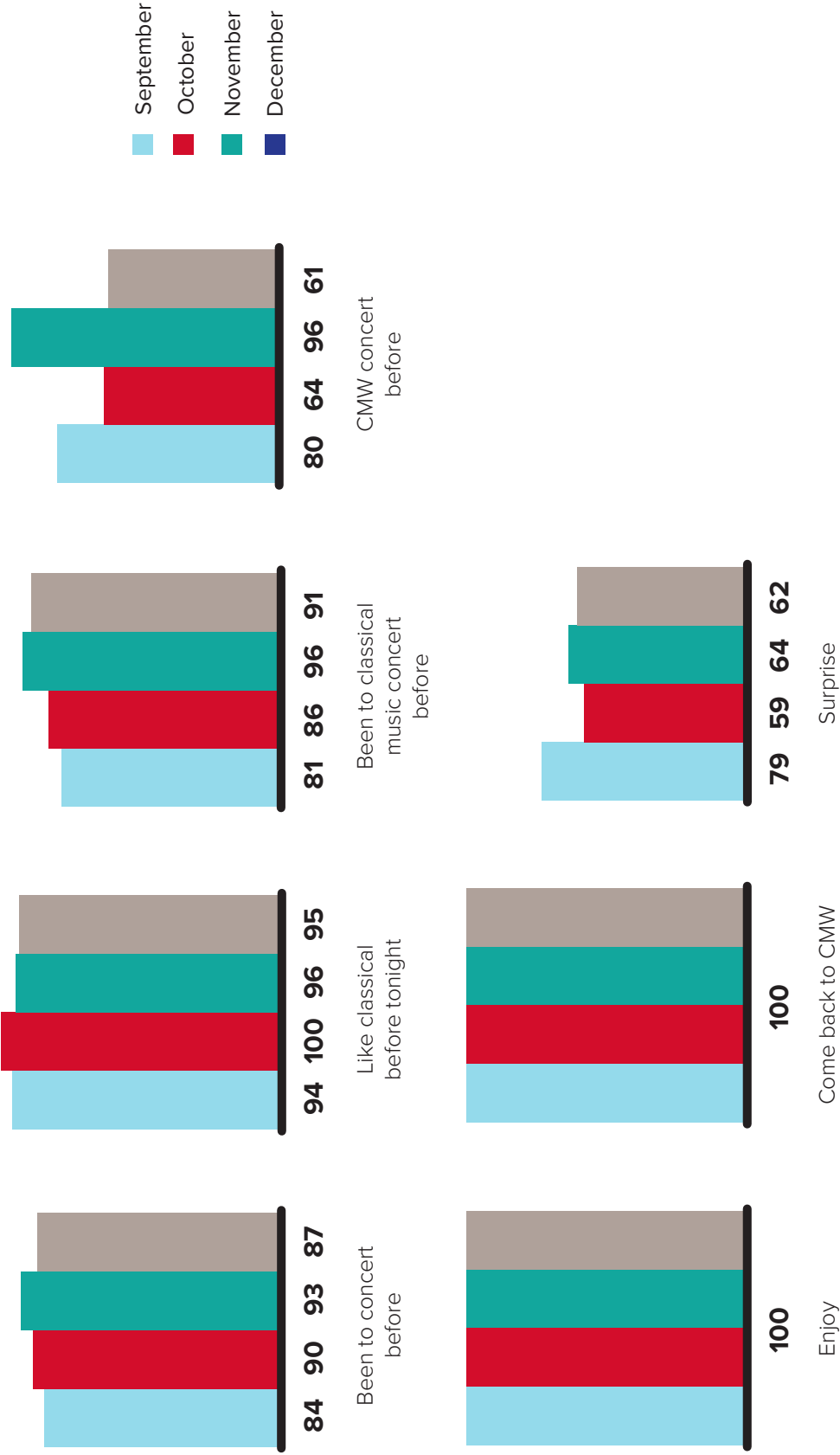
[Word Cloud Four]



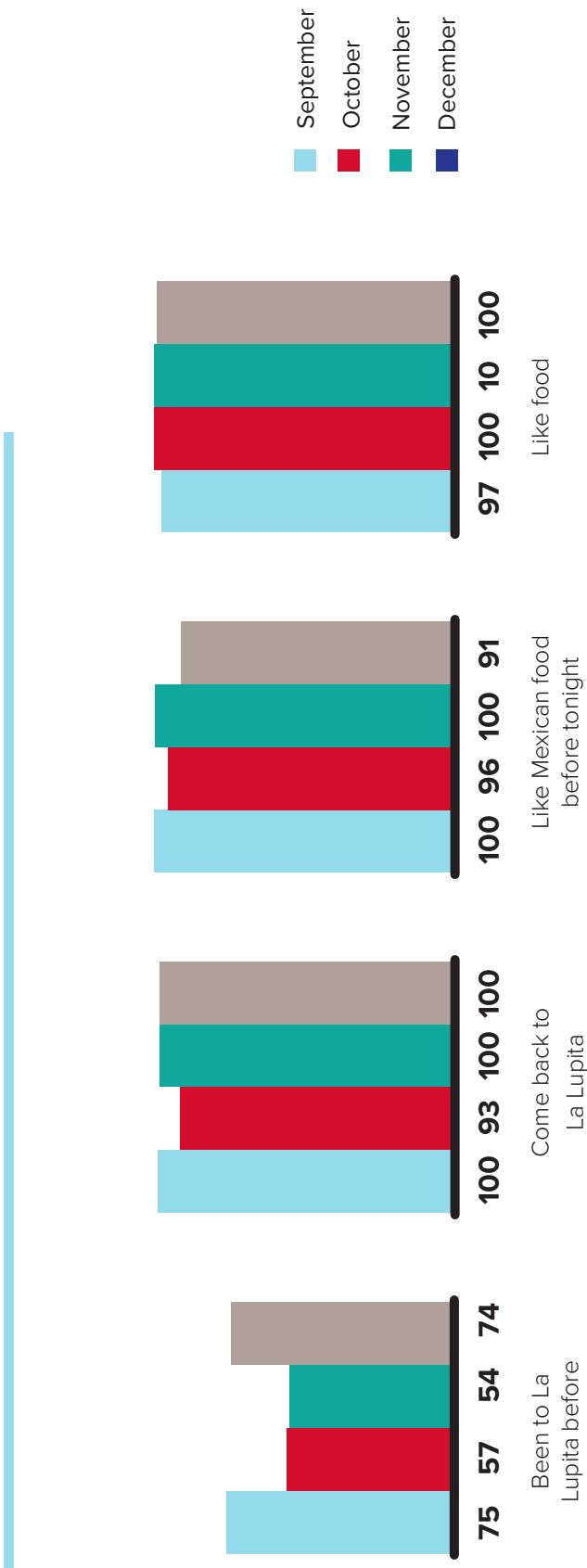
La Lupita Respondents by Zip Code



Response to La Lupita Concerts



Response to La Lupita Concerts [continued]



List of Interviewees

Sidney Argueta

CMW alumna

Christina Bevilacqua

Community member, 10 years

Vincent Bucci

Community member, 10 years

Ann Clark

Community member, new to CMW

Doris De Los Santos

*Member of Latino Advisory Council, past
CMW parent, 8 years*

Rocky Dione

CMW parent, 5 years

Amy Hill

Community member, new to CMW

David Karoff

Community member, 19 years

Nicole Lambert

*Housing Program Director, Stop Wasting
Abandoned Property, CMW partner*

Luis Ortiz

CMW alumnus

Jaime Blancas

Owner of La Lupita, CMW partner

Karen Romer

*Community member, past Board member,
17 years*

Jacque Russom

*Community member, past Board member,
15 years*

Frank Shea

*Executive Director of One Neighborhood
Builders, CMW partner*

Dan Wood

CMW parent, 5 years

Interviewers

Alicia Luzon

CMW Board member

Sidney Argueta

CMW alumna

Linda Daniels

CMW parent and Board member

Siobhan Cute

CMW parent and Board member

Endnotes

¹ **Providence Neighborhood Profiles, Providence Plan.** Accessed Feb 16, 2016

http://local.provplan.org/profiles/ssd_main.html

² **Rothstein, Richard. “The Racial Achievement Gap, Segregated Schools, and Segregated Neighborhoods – A Constitutional Insult.”** November 12, 2014, *Race and Social Problems* 6 (4), December 2014. <http://www.epi.org/publication/the-racial-achievement-gap-segregated-schools-and-segregated-neighborhoods-a-constitutional-insult/>

Also, the Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods,

<http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/PHDCN/>

Also, “Understanding Neighborhood Effects of Concentrated Poverty.” *Evidence Matters*, Winter 2011. Office of Policy Development and Research (PD&R)

Also, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

<http://www.huduser.gov/portal/periodicals/em/winter11/highlight2.html>

³ **Putnam, Robert. *Bowling Alone*.** New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000

⁴ **Tarr, Bronwyn, Jacques Launay, and Robin I. M. Dunbar. “Music and social bonding: “self-other” merging and neurohormonal mechanisms.”** *Frontiers in Psychology*. 2014; 5: 1096. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4179700/>

⁵ **Oldenburg, Ray. *Celebrating the Third Place*.** New York: Marlowe and Co., 1999

⁶ **Ross, Alex. “Learning the Score.”** *The New Yorker*. September 4, 2006: 82

⁷ **Vasquez, Fidelia, and Chloë Kline. *Ten Years... Ten Stories: An Interview Project Celebrating the tenth anniversary of CMW*,** Interview with Carolina Jimenez
<http://archive.communitymusicworks.org/10Years...10StoriesCarolina.htm>

⁸ **Wolf, Dr. Dennie Palmer, and Steven J. Holochwost. *If You’re Walking Down the Right Path and You Are Willing to Keep Walking: A Participatory Evaluation of Community MusicWorks*.** December, 2009
http://archive.communitymusicworks.org/images/eval_profile/CMWProgramEvaluation.pdf

⁹ Research by Mandy Savitz-Romer and Suzanne Bouffard suggests that identity development, articulating aspirations and expectations, forming and maintaining strong

peer and adult relationships, motivation and goal-setting, and self-regulatory skills aid students in their long-term success. Savitz-Romer, Mandy. *Ready, Willing and Able: A Developmental Approach to College Access and Success*. Cambridge: Harvard Education Press, 2012.

¹⁰ Sen, Amartya. *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny*. London: Penguin Books, 2006

¹¹ Greene, Maxine. Interview with Sebastian Ruth, October 2011.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4wy9sp8m_4I

¹² U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Healthy Communities Assessment Tool, <http://hcat.providenceri.com/indicators> accessed 4/7/2016

¹³ Bolz, Lucy. "A Brief History of Urban Renewal and Displacement in Providence's former West Elmwood neighborhood." Compiled from Grafting Memory, the graduate thesis of Lucy Boltz. http://www.upparts.org/uploads/4/5/8/2/45820603/01-a_brief_history_of_urban_renewal_and_displacement_in_the_former_west_elmwood_neighborhood.pdf Accessed 5/2/2016

¹⁴ *ibid*

¹⁵ Tebes, Jacob Kraemer, Samantha L. Matlin, Bronwyn Hunter, Azure B. Thompson, Dana M. Prince, and Nathaniel Mohatt. *Porch Light Program Final Evaluation Report*, June 2015
http://consultationcenter.yale.edu/Porch_Light_Program_Final_Evaluation_Report_Yale_June_2015_218966_1095_5.pdf

¹⁶ *Knight Soul of the Community, 2010: Why People Love Where They Live and Why it Matters*. Knight Foundation in partnership with Gallup, 2010.
<http://knightfoundation.org/sotc/what-makes-people-happy-their-communities/>

¹⁷ Hanson, Bradley. "The Liberty Elm Diner: Making Music and Building Community under the Cosmopolitan Canopy." *Technomusicology: A Sandbox Journal*, Vol 1 No. 2, December 2008 <http://journals.brown.edu/index.php/MusicGrads/article/view/72/63>

¹⁸ These maps were made with the facilitation of either social geographer/cartographer Marie Cieri, a research consultant (Ph.D., Geography, Rutgers University, 2004), or Joshua Rodriguez, a Spanish-speaking, Afro-Caribbean violist and former CMW student who lives in one of CMW's target areas.

¹⁹ Of the respondents, 63 percent identified themselves as CMW supporters, 72 percent as attendees at CMW events and concerts, 10 percent as CMW Board members, 12 percent as family members or alums, and 22 percent as musicians. (Respondents were able to select

more than one category to describe their connection to CMW.) Twenty-seven percent of respondents came from CMW's core neighborhoods. Twenty-nine percent came from the East Side of Providence, and 44 percent came from other neighborhoods.

²⁰ By concert, the counts totaled 60 in September, 72 in October, 102 in November, and 130 in December.

²¹ Observations suggest that respondents who were acquainted with CMW were more likely to fill out surveys, so there is likely some bias towards people who were already familiar with CMW.

²² 74 percent in September, 59 percent in October, 64 percent in November, and 62 percent in December.