Notes From Workshop #24: Food And Arts: A Marriage In The Public Market

JANUARY 26, 2016

FROM THE WORKSHOP ANNOUNCEMENT:

What kinds of installations, performances, and interactive engagement will work in the Boston Public Market/The KITCHEN? What does, or could, a marriage between food and art look like? Are there ways to incorporate into this new generation of activation other elements within the Trustees’ portfolio – which now includes The KITCHEN – of community gardens and open space?

Helping to frame up this brainstorming workshop were: John Vasconcellos, formerly Senior Regional Director, Boston and the Southeast, for The Trustees; Cheryl Cronin, CEO of The Boston Public Market; and Mackenzie Sehlke, Assistant Market Manager, Programming. This will be the start of a long-term initiative, and we’ll be announcing next steps at the workshop itself.

Workshop participant responses/recommendations, by category:

1. Illumination
   • Outside: projections/light shows/lasers/lighted sculptures
   • Signature art piece: cf. BSA Green Staircase
   • Simple, but fun, signage

2. Marketing/communications
   • Need to communicate experience to those who may be interested (both in- and out-of-town)
   • Consider building’s visibility
   • Generate attention/curiosity via building mapping, projections, art
   • Lighting: opportunity for contemporary projection on exterior

3. Vendor engagement
   • Programming: vendors bring live music from their area/farm/town
   • Local music/local food
   • Screens in market with recipe ideas, based on specific ingredients from vendors
   • Branded bags with spaces for vendor-specific info stickers

4. Civic engagement
   • Outside “directional” interventions/art that lead people to the BPM/KITCHEN
   • Live streaming video of kitchen activities, visible in the market and/or on the street
• Create a “community table,” instead of a buffet experience: people talk about their food experiences/share recipes/knowledge
• Field trips: from schools to market, AND from market to schools, via truck/bus
• Students study grocery/market layout, food production, entrepreneurship, design
• Traveling empty school bus w/pop-up kitchen
• Farm visits: sign up at Market
• Culinary competitions: different age groups
• Interview people: experience in the market; sound bites for media

Develop a BPM/Kitchen app, to include:
  Storytelling (about vendors, farms)
  Pop-up BPM/Kitchen-branded stall(s) to be placed in different communities
  Community Garden “State Fair” – e.g., which garden has the best tomato?
  Connect Market to:
    Local gardens
    Economic diversity
    Cultural diversity

5. Partnerships: “home-made food,” “home-made art”
Bring artists/artisans into Kitchen to demonstrate
  • Metal fabrication
  • Woodworking
  • Letterpress printing
Find out what surrounding groups/businesses/organizations do/need, and find a connection via the content of the Market/Kitchen.

Promote homesteading programming:
  • Canning, cheese-making, kombucha-making, candle-making, etc.
  • Give space over to craft market once/month or so, focused on food-farm-related items
  • Work with region-wide waterfront fish businesses, including fishermen/women

6. Food-as-art
  • Vegetable art
  • Latte art
  • Competitions for all ages to make food art

7. Venue
  • Extend market and kitchen images/atmosphere/character into (throughout) other parts of the building
  • Kitchen doesn’t look inviting from street; looks like private space: make it look exciting
  • Both BPM and Kitchen need to be or feel “messier”
  • Make the street entrance the primary entrance

Activate the public/private perimeter – i.e., the outside edges around the building
  • Flowers, stands with produce, street performers, painted murals on sidewalks
Add art in hallway + lighting + vendor programming and art in hallway: call it *Nourish*

- Art installation in hallway, changeable, a la Dewey Square
- Overall, plan for/implement ongoing series of temporary installations throughout the two spaces