



Rara Avis, detail, by Cassandra C. Jones
(site-specific installation wallpaper). Courtesy of
the artist and Nathan Larramendy Gallery, CA.

CONNECTING COMMUNITIES was created to involve superb artists with adults and children who have had little access to the arts in the creation of potent works and, in doing so, to unite and strengthen the region.

SIDEWALK STORIES

In 2008, the Arts Center's *Connecting Communities* program is bringing to life a dynamic public art project: *Sidewalk Stories*. Since early February, adults and children have been working with Texas artist Anne Wallace to collect life stories that make Sheboygan unique. Participants have collected stories by attending meetings on the history of labor at the Local 731 Carpenters Union, by conducting interviews at retirement homes and community clubs, and by interviewing individuals and families. Participants have dropped in at The ARTery to interview each other. Many of the stories are currently on view in The ARTery; stop by to read them, or contribute your own. Brief excerpts will be selected for the sidewalks, embodying the diverse history of the region and its people.

In the next phase, Wallace will work with project participants to create images that illustrate the stories of our community's past. Join the *Sidewalk Stories* project, and take an active role in creating these images by attending one of the open studio sessions listed below. Use the oral histories that were collected as inspiration to create images. Or bring in old photographs and other images that document your experiences in Sheboygan or that you find significant to the region. The sessions are FREE and all ages can participate. Ages 13 and younger must have an adult collaborator attend with them.

Open Studio Sessions:

Tuesdays and Thursdays, March 11–20, 5:30–7:30 p.m.
in The ARTery

Beginning in June, you are invited to collaborate on the design of the final layout for the text—almost like typesetting a book. Then in late July and August, help embed the stories and images into the sidewalks of General King Park and throughout Sheboygan.

Look for details in the next newsletter, or call the Arts Center for a full schedule of activities. Individuals can be involved in all aspects of the project, from collecting histories to creating the images to pouring and stamping the concrete!

Connecting Communities projects are made possible in part by an **anonymous donor** and an award from the **National Endowment for the Arts**, which believes that a great nation deserves great art. Funding for *Sidewalk Stories* also comes from the **Robert W. Baird Co. Foundation, Inc.** and partnership with **Quasius Construction** and the **City of Sheboygan, WI**. In-kind support from our Community Partners is vital to every *Connecting Communities* project.



Photo of the installation process for the community based public art piece in San Antonio, TX, titled *Everything Was Close*. Photo courtesy of Anne Wallace.

DIY SERIES—SAVE THE DATE TO DO IT YOURSELF A CONNECTING COMMUNITIES COLLABORATION Begins June 19

This summer and autumn, eight artists will lead a series of weekly workshops on do-it-yourself (DIY) crafts. The DIY craft movement emphasizes sustainability, individuality, and living simply. DIY craftspeople strive to stop the homogenization of American culture and to create work driven not by capitalism but rather by a sharing community.

This project promotes DIY ethics to make craft technologies and skills accessible to all and to encourage individuals to create their own material goods. Join the community of DIYers to learn new skills, create fabulous objects for your personal use, or even to create a means of additional income.

The artists will include, among others, Sarah Kate Burgess, whose DIY rings are made of plastic cups and other accessible materials, and Shoshana Berger, editor-in-chief of *ReadyMade Magazine*, who believes in encouraging creative thinking as much as, if not more than, making repurposed objects. Projects will run the gamut from transforming vinyl records into functional objects such as bowls, jewelry, clocks and other objects to using found objects to create furniture and transforming office supplies into works of art. Participants will even have an opportunity to sell their creations at the Arts Center. Check the Arts Center's website (www.jmkac.org) or call 920-458-6144 for a full schedule of workshops, their cost, and additional information.