LEGO® PLAY: IMPLEMENTING A CULTURE OF CREATIVITY & MAKING IN THE ACADEMIC LIBRARY

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RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

@MCLotts
INTRODUCTION

• Outreach, Engagement, Making, and Creativity & Innovation in Academic Libraries.

• Creativity & Making can stimulate broader conversations among patrons and Library employees about the value of the libraries.

• Making spaces can be scholarly, fun, affordable, and a new way to engage w/patrons and connect to communities.

• I’m trained as a painter & installation artist and I spent many hours in college working in academic libraries.
HOW THIS ALL BEGAN...

THE I2C2 CONFERENCE IN MANCHESTER, UK

• LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY®
  http://www.seriousplay.com/

• This workshop involved participants building models about their work existence and the challenges we face as we seek to make our library services more innovative
IMPLEMENTATION

• Installed in August 2014
• Used existing table in Art Library
• Created signage
• All Legos were upcycled for project
Check out Rutgers Today [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iZHhlwoy9Yc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iZHhlwoy9Yc)
LEGOS FOR LEISURE  Colorful student-made lego models can be found at the Lego playing station at Rutgers Art Library. The project was inspired by a serious Lego play workshop in Manchester, England, in March 2014. TIAN LI / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
BLOCK PARTY

Scarlet Knight Days, models created by library faculty, library staff, graduate students, and undergrads

Block party
Rutgers University Art Library
September 10, 2014 12-1pm

Art Library Lego® Playing Station Celebration
Refreshments will be served.
A special exhibit of Lego models on the theme of libraries on display for reception only!

Come Create & Play!

Visit the Lego Playing Station at any time during regular Art Library fall hours of M-Th 8:30am-10pm, Fri. 8:30am-5pm, Sat. 10-5pm, Sun. 2pm-10pm. If you have questions about this project please contact Art Librarian, Megan Lotts at: megan.lotts@rutgers.edu or (848)932-7189.
Like the Rutgers Art Library on Facebook

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LEGO CHARACTER CONTEST

Create a Character Contest – Win a PRIZE!

NAME:

Please submit your entries to Art Librarian, Megan Lotts, at the Art Library on Voorhees mall no later than October 1st, 2014. All entries will be displayed in the Art Library.

Have questions email: mclotts@j intimately.edu

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CREATE YOUR IDEAL LIBRARY...
WIN A $20 GIFT CARD

- Stop by the Rutgers Art Library Lego Playing Station and create a model made with legos depicting your Ideal Library.
- Post an image of your model to the Rutgers Art Library Facebook page or email your image to megan.lotts@rutgers.edu

Submit your image no later than midnight on Monday December 1, 2014. All entrants names will be entered into a drawing and one winner will be randomly chosen. If you have questions about this contest please contact Megan Lotts Art Librarian at megan.lotts@rutgers.edu
CREATE YOUR IDEAL LIBRARY CONTEST

Mason Gross Printmaking class.
Art Library Lego Playing Station Assignment

Throughout the semester we have heard multiple lectures and discussed the theme “starting over”. For this assignment you and your partner will meet at the Lego Playing Station located in the Rutgers University Art Library.

You and your partner will work as a team to create a lego model that you think best depicts the theme “starting over”. As with most of our in-class group work I will not be giving you any parameters for this assignment. To find a solution think back to the lectures and activities that you have taken part of in the course. You may want to create a shelter or space to live in if you had to “start over” or you may want to go conceptual and use a theme or topic from the lectures such as extinction, justice, sustainability, apocalypse, etc...This project is meant to build critical thinking skills as well as an opportunity for you to work as a team. Please note this assignment is due no later than Monday Nov. 3rd at noon.

Once you have created your lego model please submit an image of the model and no less than 100 words of why you and your partner created your model to: megan.lotts@rutgers.edu. For extra star points, post an image of your model to the Rutgers Art Library Facebook page.

If you have questions contact me at megan.lotts@rutgers.edu or stop by my office in the Art Library.

• Thank you so much! My partner and I were playing with the legos for at least two hours. I even snapchatted my lego model to all my friends.
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
EDA COURSE

• Way to connect with Landscape Architecture Freshman.
• Gets Landscape Architecture students into the Art Library which is on a different campus than their studios.
• Working with Faculty, Students, and Staff in Landscape Architecture helps me better understand the needs of their department.
LEGO WORKSHOPS
RUL FACULTY & STAFF

• Team building & learning hands on

• Creative thinking about library resources & spaces

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In January 2015, team building lego workshop with 6 Academic Coaches for a Lego workshop including an introduction to the library & Info Literacy skills.
Comments from the Art Library Lego Playing Station Comment Box

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Would Play Again&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;A Masterpiece&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;I love you, thank you&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;More Legos&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;I wish Alexander Library had Legos too&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;THIS IS AWESOME!! Great Idea&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Legos are noisy&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;wish the Legos weren't at my favorite table&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;I never see anyone use these legos and they take up valuable space to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>study. I would most prefer to use this table to study. Thank you for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>your time&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;This is so cool&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Bus Stop + Voorhees Mall + Art Library. More people flow to bus stop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and building than to the beautiful aspects of Voorhees Mall&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;it is a way to quiet to feel comfortable rummaging through buckets of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>legos. I love this idea though&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Crowdsourcing of images has primarily been images taken of table on daily basis.

Most people were more than happy to allow me to take their picture.

I’m concerned I choose the wrong social media platform.
ART LIBRARY LEGO PLAYING STATION

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WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT

• We are more likely to learn or come back when we are having FUN!

• Creativity, making, & engagement helps build critical thinking skills & these are skills that are applicable to library research.

• Creativity, making, and engagement creates community.

• Making with others can be inspiring.

• All people have a voice & want to be heard.

• There’s a lots of ways to make or create scholarship.
ASSESSMENT

• Documentation- Analyze the images
• Surveys
• Monitor the Facebook page for “Lego”
• Observation & stories
• Counting reference questions
HOW CAN YOU MAKE IT HAPPEN..

• You don’t need any money to create Lego Playing Station but you will need Legos & a table (or any making events for that matter)

• Marketing & Outreach.

• Cross-disciplinary collaboration is good.

• Incentives can help.
CONCLUSION

• Art Library Lego playing station has explored & expanded conventional research functions of an academic library through encouraging creative and problem solving techniques associated with Art & Design.

• Legos can be an international 3-Dimensional language that uses hands on active learning to communicate and build critical thinking skills, as well as an activity that makes people happy.
CONCLUSION

• Art Library Lego Playing station has been a catalyst for building bridges and making connections with students, faculty and staff on the RU campuses, which has led to a greater understanding of the possibilities of an Academic Research Library and how the act of making and implementating a culture of creativity can influence library patrons.
One of the most interesting parts of this project is coming into the Art Library every day to see what has transpired at the table. Some days it appears that a group of grubby young children have been let loose at the table and Legos strewn everywhere, including the floor. Other days the author finds elaborate models that tell stories about the students, their lives, their imaginations, and their dreams.
QUESTIONS

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like the Rutgers Art Library facebook page at www.facebook.com/rutgersartlibrary