

# About the Exhibitions

*Infra-Specter* brings to the foreground what lies hidden, from what is veiled by language to what runs under our feet. In broad strokes, the exhibition explores how structures of power use laws, technologies, and language to influence and confuse, and to promote their economic and political interests, regardless of whether these harm the immediate environment. Sung Tieu addresses the mental and physical aspects of threats that are not easily seen, but are nevertheless deeply felt daily by individuals and communities. Through sculptures, drawings, and sound installations, she highlights the different methods used by those in power to prevent full transparency in accessing information that should be public knowledge.

Through collective storytelling, *Rituals of Speaking* reveals how artists and communities invite, gather, and represent the voices of many. The different projects that are part of this exhibition came out of a collaborative process that prioritized listening to the people involved, allowing the story to change along the way. If we were to put the two exhibitions in dialogue, we could say that *Infra-Specter* refers to the methods used to confuse or distract people from understanding the world around them, while *Rituals of Speaking* provides a model of care and resistance by creating awareness and giving the different community members a safe space to speak and share.



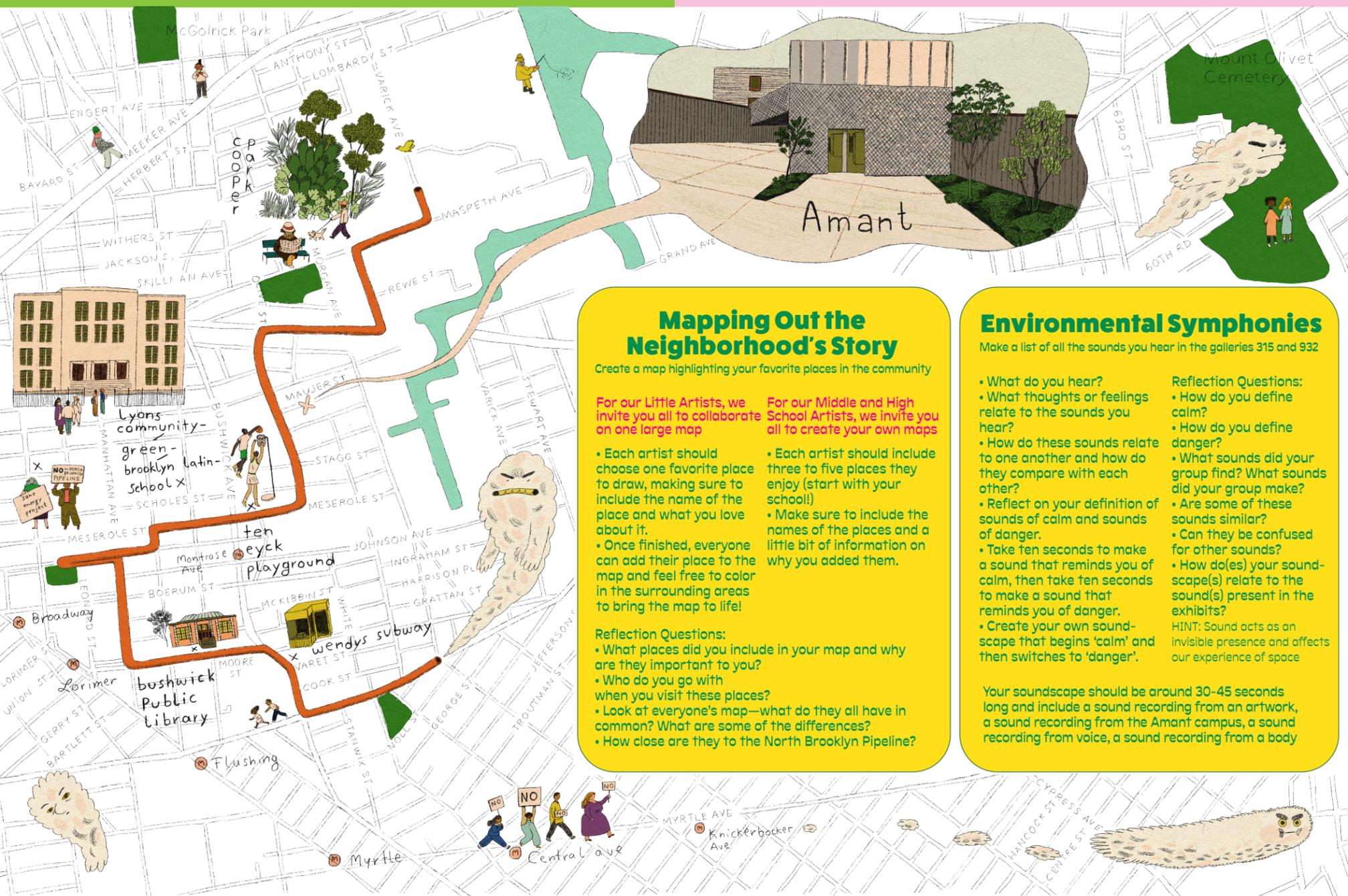
What stories exist around us? What stories hide under the pavement? Things we see every day, like sidewalks and roads, and things we don't see, like pipelines and utilities, affect our daily routines and our neighborhoods.

Together, the visible and invisible structures shape how we experience our surrounding environment. While governments, corporations, and institutions play an important role in developing cities, it is the people who make their neighborhoods what they really are.



## Methods of Distraction, Models of Care

This Learning Resource departs from our two exhibitions, *Infra-Specter* and *Rituals of Speaking*, to explore infrastructure, access to information, environmental justice, and community sharing. It was developed and designed through many conversations between Amant's learning team and a series of learnshops with the Lyons Community School Science team educators Nicole Beall, Chris Fields, and Dexter Wilson and Clair Beltran from the Center for Urban Pedagogy.



### Mapping Out the Neighborhood's Story

Create a map highlighting your favorite places in the community

For our Little Artists, we invite you all to collaborate on one large map

For our Middle and High School Artists, we invite you all to create your own maps

- Each artist should choose one favorite place to draw, making sure to include the name of the place and what you love about it.
- Once finished, everyone can add their place to the map and feel free to color in the surrounding areas to bring the map to life!

- Each artist should include three to five places they enjoy (start with your school!)
- Make sure to include the names of the places and a little bit of information on why you added them.

Reflection Questions:

- What places did you include in your map and why are they important to you?
- Who do you go with when you visit these places?
- Look at everyone's map—what do they all have in common? What are some of the differences?
- How close are they to the North Brooklyn Pipeline?

### Environmental Symphonies

Make a list of all the sounds you hear in the galleries 315 and 932

- What do you hear?
- What thoughts or feelings relate to the sounds you hear?
- How do these sounds relate to one another and how do they compare with each other?
- Reflect on your definition of sounds of calm and sounds of danger.
- Take ten seconds to make a sound that reminds you of calm, then take ten seconds to make a sound that reminds you of danger.
- Create your own soundscape that begins 'calm' and then switches to 'danger'.

Reflection Questions:

- How do you define calm?
- How do you define danger?
- What sounds did your group find? What sounds did your group make?
- Are some of these sounds similar?
- Can they be confused for other sounds?
- How do(es) your soundscape(s) relate to the sound(s) present in the exhibits?

HINT: Sound acts as an invisible presence and affects our experience of space

Your soundscape should be around 30-45 seconds long and include a sound recording from an artwork, a sound recording from the Amant campus, a sound recording from voice, a sound recording from a body

# Context

For *Infra-Specter*, Sung Tieu created a new installation *Liability Infrastructure* (2023), comprised of different sculptures, documents, and sounds. In it, she analyzes the construction and operation of hydraulic fracturing sites, where gas is extracted from rock deep underground. This project breaks down this drilling process and looks at the pipeline system used to distribute the fracked gas and the methods of hiding important information, such as health risks posed to those living nearby.

In *Liability Infrastructure*, Sung examines how language is used to confuse public perception. For example, fracking is the way most of our natural gas is extracted, yet the term "natural" gas is misleading. Natural gas is sometimes presented as a "green resource," similar to the renewable energy produced by wind turbines and solar farms. However, unlike those green energy sources, natural gas is a non-renewable fossil fuel, and how it's extracted and transported across the country can be hazardous to people's lives and the environment.

We take Sung's work as a starting point to look closely at gas in our own neighborhood.

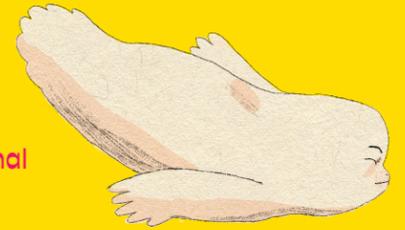


# In Our Neighborhood

Did you know there's a heavily contested gas pipeline crossing Brooklyn? The North Brooklyn Pipeline (officially known as the Metropolitan Natural Gas Reliability Project) is set to be over 7 miles long, bringing fracked gas from other states into Brownsville, Bed Stuy, Bushwick, Williamsburg, and Greenpoint.

The North Brooklyn Pipeline is a clear example of environmental injustice: running through primarily Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) and low-income communities, it exposes them to extra environmental harm. Many local organizations and people have successfully fought against National Grid, the international company who owns this pipeline, but National Grid keeps trying to construct its pipelines.

Learn more: Renewable Heat Now Campaign, The New York Energy Democracy Alliance (EDA), Energy Legislation with the Mayor's Office of Climate and Environmental Justice, American Geosciences Institute-- Interactive map of pipelines in the United States, Maxwell Smith-Holmes "Toxic Workplaces, Nuclear Homes, and Irradiated Landscapes" in *Eflux Sick Architectures* issue, Charles D. Ellison "Infrastructure Failures, Like Flint, Are a Crisis for Black America" in *The Root*.



# HOW DO WE SEE GAS IN OUR LIFE?

Many people use gas in their daily lives—it heats homes, water, and is how most people cook food. How do we get this gas? There are many ways to extract gas, and fracking is one of them. Fracking, technically known as hydraulic fracturing, is a way to take gas from rocks deep underground and collect it for our use. This gas is commonly referred to as "natural gas," and it's the main gas used for domestic heating and cooking.

While it's used as a common energy source, gas is a significant source of Carbon Dioxide (CO2) and Nitrogen Oxide (NOx) pollution. These chemicals contribute to climate change and can negatively affect our health and indoor air quality, which can make conditions like asthma more severe.



Fracked gas extraction and distribution 'transforms the land, pollutes water, and impacts our health. Fracking sites release toxic fumes and chemicals that cause severe headaches, asthma symptoms, childhood leukemia, heart problems, and congenital disabilities. These chemicals—over 1000 of them!—often seep into water supplies of surrounding towns and have been connected to higher rates of cancer. The pipelines that transport the gas to our homes can also leak, which puts surrounding neighborhoods at even higher risk.

# THE GAS WE DON'T SEE

Despite these proven health risks, communities are often left in the dark about how energy companies transport gas into their homes and how harmful they can be to communities. Drillers aren't even required to report the chemicals they use or how they affect the environment.

While some organizations like the large multi-national corporation National Grid see fracked gas as a valuable resource, it is important to understand the local risks and to learn how your voice can shape your neighborhood.



In New York 19% of childhood asthma cases can be attributed to household gas stoves.



and in New York City black and latinx children and young adults make up 80% of hospital visits for asthma.



burning fossil fuels in buildings not only accelerates climate change, but it also worsens existing inequalities.

# WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Frack Outta Brooklyn (@frackouttabk) is a Black, Brown, and Indigenous-led effort that resists Brooklyn pipeline construction and extractive infrastructure. This coalition, a group working towards a common goal, is composed of many other Bushwick grassroots organizations including Mi Casa Resiste (@micasaresiste), Earth Strike (@earthstrike\_nyc), CN Brooklyn (@c.n.brooklyn), the Indigenous Kinship Collective (@indigenouskinshipcollective), the New York Boricua Resistance (@nyboricuaresistance), and Mayday Space (@maydayspace).

Local organizations have been able to prevent National Grid from expanding their pipeline and further hurting our neighborhoods. Inform yourself, do research, and then go to local orgs and campaigns. To help get you started, we've provided a few key players below, including their mission statements and Instagram handles, to keep you connected.

Sane Energy Project (@saneenergy) is a nonprofit whose mission is to replace fracked gas infrastructure with 100% democratically controlled renewable energy in New York State. They see their work through the lens of racial, social, and economic justice, and they initiated the No North Brooklyn Campaign which effectively stopped the construction of the pipeline from Williamsburg to Greenpoint.

WE ACT for Environmental Justice (@weact4ej) has a long history of organizing New Yorkers around climate and environment injustice. They were founded in 1988 and was one of the first environmental organizations in New York State to be run by people of color, and the first environmental justice organization in New York City. WE ACT began as a result of local community struggles around environmental threats, environmental injustice, and resulting health disparities.

# THE FIGHT ISN'T OVER YET!