



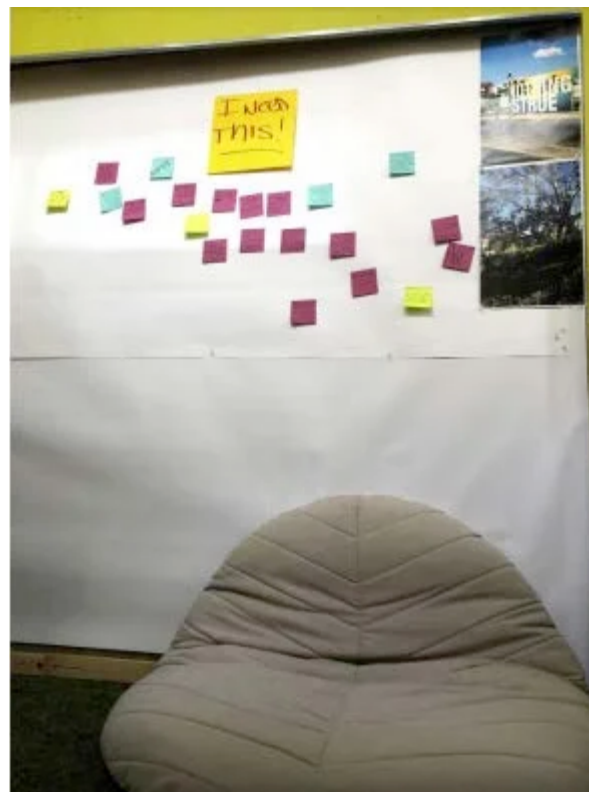
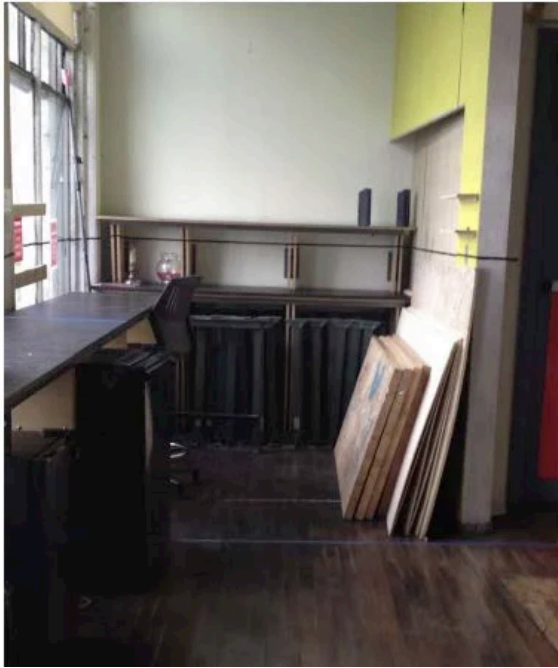
Tishman Environment
and Design Center

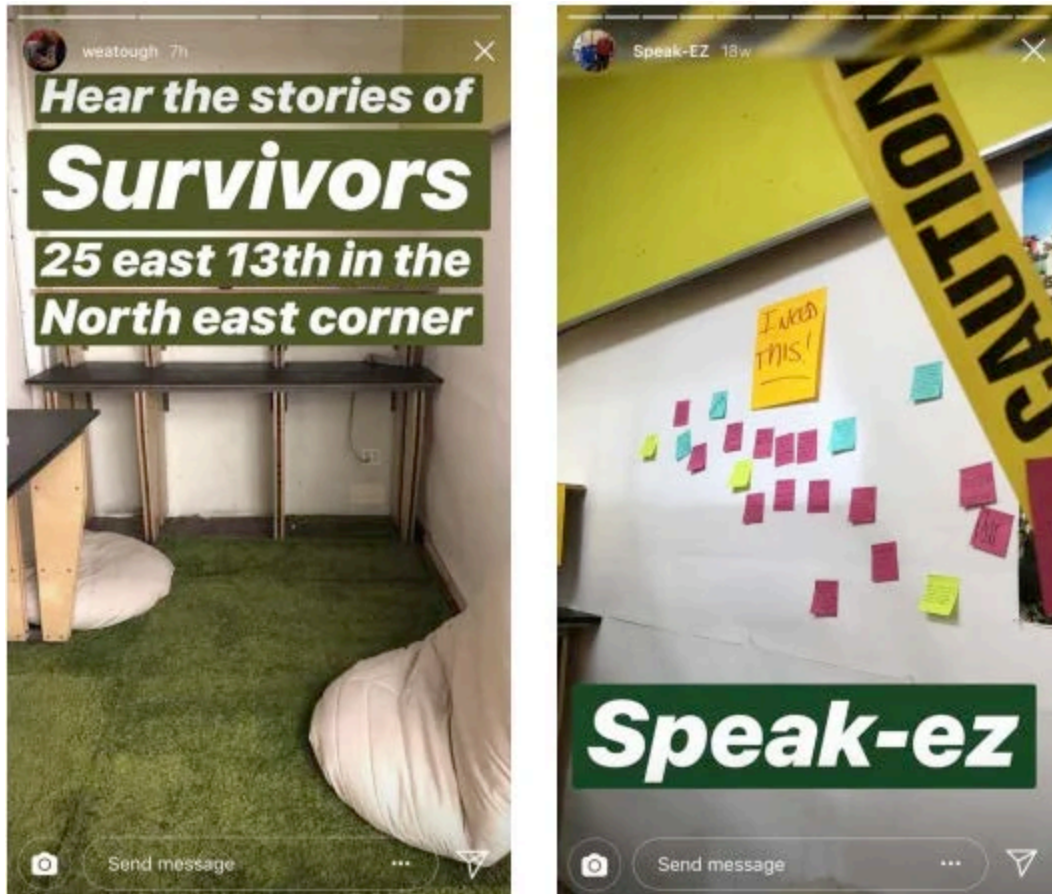


TISHMAN CENTER · AUGUST 23, 2018

Speak-EZ for Disrupting Climate Injustice







By Gisbel Videla, Dual Degree Graduate, School of Constructed Environments, Parsons

"A place where we can openly feel the depth of our own and others' experiences and responses to Climate Change. A place where we can 'Speak-Easy.'"

Kicking off 'Disrupting Climate Injustice' week on February 26th 2018, the Tishman Environment and Design Center and the School of Constructed Environments at Parsons launched a pop-up installation, Speak-EZ. Located in the north east corner of the second floor of 25 East 13th street, the Speak-EZ transformed an underutilized niche

of the open studios into a comfortable, cozy place for listening to and reflecting upon the stories of transformation and recovery of climate disaster survivors. We live in an incredible, anxiety producing, time where news information is available at our fingertips at seemingly every moment. “It often feels like we are being bombarded in rapid, unrelenting succession with shocking images of extreme weather and its devastating impacts.” (Jean Gardner) This experience of information removes and disconnects us by further emphasizing the ‘other’ and the ‘self’. “This often leads to inaction.

Underlying these sensations are horror and deep sadness about the realities of Climate Change and Climate Injustice. Additionally, our current teaching and learning structure does not easily allow for such feelings to be felt, recognized and responded to.” (Jean Gardner)

The Speak EZ was designed to answer the following questions.

“How can WE (designers, artists, makers) answer the call when we have cut ourselves off from fully ‘taking in’ this collective challenge? How can we imagine what it is to have everything torn away from us by the very Elements we thought we had insulated ourselves from: fierce winds, torrential waters, mudslides and earthquakes, and raging,

consuming fires?” (Jean Gardner) I have found that the easiest remedy for positive transformation is storytelling. Perpetually catching glimpses of destructive climate change keeps the narrative suspended in the point of incidence or climax. Entering a story at that moment in time generates feelings of hopelessness and drowning in a seemingly insurmountable obstacle. Listening to the full story can “establish a connection with the people in the narrative by remembering or imagining similar experiences of their own.” ([Laura Simms](#)) Listening to the full story can “provide a deeper understanding of how we got here.” ([Alan Bruton](#)) Listening to the full story can inspire “transformation by identifying opportunities for change.” ([Luis Berrios](#)) Listening to the full story can encourage one to “take action!” ([Wendy Brawer](#)) The four stories available for listening in the Speak-EZ had a few key points in common. They are about people (artists and designers) who witnessed climate change and climate injustice. Their stories are filled with what they experienced, what they felt, how they responded, and how it transformed them. Now imagine, walking up the stairs of Parsons 25 East eager to work on your design assignment but having difficulty finding inspiration of a worthy topic.

As you walk through the familiar blue door and arrive on the second floor, a captivating image of a dark sky and landscape with a sun illuminating green cloud formations catches your interest. The sign directs you to walk down the east corridor towards the large northern windows. It is a clear, brisk, early March morning, and the diffused, daylight has filled this end of the studio. Contrasting the sprawling, dark wood floor, a bright, mossy green carpet denotes the modest sixty-five square foot Speak-EZ from the rest of studio. A sign, kindly asking for the removal of shoes before entering, instantly requires you to actively change. Once you take a moment to slip out of your shoes, you are rewarded with the soft fuzzy texture of the carpet beneath your toes. Oversized, beige, leaf shaped cushions that rest on the carpet call for you to sit on the ground and find a comfortable position. Once you are here, your body relaxed, a slower calming energy felt, and a mind open, you are in the Speak-EZ. Headphones connecting to tablets containing four incredible stories of climate disaster survivors are queued up and ready for your listening at the push of a button. Please look us up on [SoundCloud](#) to hear these stories!!www.soundcloud.com/parsons_speak-ez

More in this series:

[Lower East Side & New School-
Parsons Community Members Meet
to Prep4TodayLISTENing to Earth
Sounds](#)



Comments (0)

Newest First

Preview POST COMMENT...

PREVIOUS

LISTENing to Earth Sounds

UNCATEGORIZED

NEXT

Preparing for Disaster & Disrupting Climate
Injustice: Reflections on 2017-2018 Tishman
Environment & Design Grant

EVENTS, HIGHLIGHTS