

# How to Let Visitors Create Their Own Experience

Ran Yan, Caroline Drabik, Maya Pindyck, Audrey Dimola

# LatimerNOW & Museum Anarchy

The Lewis H. Latimer House Museum and its surrounding communities.  
How to revitalize old space & invite visitors across cultural barriers?



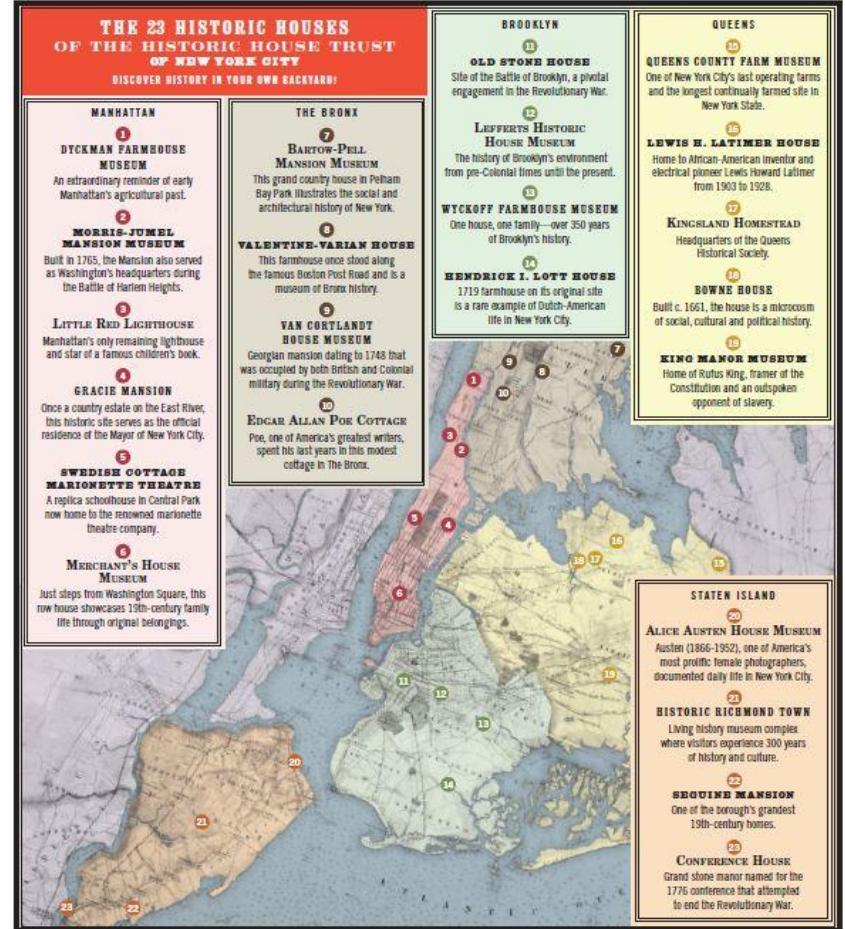
- **Partnerships** on different levels outside the museum with community stakeholders and organizers
- Create activities **with** visitors - interpret Latimer's legacy using their own voice



# Historic House Trust of New York City



NYC Parks



## THE 23 HISTORIC HOUSES OF THE HISTORIC HOUSE TRUST OF NEW YORK CITY

DISCOVER HISTORY IN YOUR OWN BACKYARD!

### MANHATTAN

#### 1 DICKMAN FARMHOUSE MUSEUM

An extraordinary reminder of early Manhattan's agricultural past.

#### 2 MORRIS-JUMEL MANSION MUSEUM

Built in 1765, the Mansion also served as Washington's headquarters during the Battle of Harlem Heights.

#### 3 LITTLE RED LIGHTHOUSE

Manhattan's only remaining lighthouse and star of a famous children's book.

#### 4 GRACIE MANSION

Once a country estate on the East River, this historic site serves as the official residence of the Mayor of New York City.

#### 5 SWEDISH COTTAGE MARIONETTE THEATRE

A replica schoolhouse in Central Park now home to the renowned marionette theatre company.

#### 6 MERCHANT'S HOUSE MUSEUM

Just steps from Washington Square, this row house showcases 19th-century family life through original belongings.

### THE BRONX

#### 7 BARTOW-PELL MANSION MUSEUM

This grand country house in Pelham Bay Park illustrates the social and architectural history of New York.

#### 8 VALENTINE-VARIAN HOUSE

This farmhouse once stood along the famous Boston Post Road and is a museum of Bronx history.

#### 9 VAN CORTLANDT HOUSE MUSEUM

Georgian mansion dating to 1748 that was occupied by both British and Colonial military during the Revolutionary War.

#### 10 EDGAR ALLAN POE COTTAGE

Poe, one of America's greatest writers, spent his last years in this modest cottage in The Bronx.

### BROOKLYN

#### 11 OLD STONE HOUSE

Site of the Battle of Brooklyn, a pivotal engagement in the Revolutionary War.

#### 12 LEFFERTS HISTORIC HOUSE MUSEUM

The history of Brooklyn's environment from pre-Colonial times until the present.

#### 13 WYCKOFF FARMHOUSE MUSEUM

One house, one family—over 350 years of Brooklyn's history.

#### 14 HENDRICK I. LOTT HOUSE

1719 farmhouse on its original site is a rare example of Dutch-American life in New York City.

### QUEENS

#### 15 QUEENS COUNTY FARM MUSEUM

One of New York City's last operating farms and the longest continually farmed site in New York State.

#### 16 LEWIS H. LATIMER HOUSE

Home to African-American inventor and electrical pioneer Lewis Howard Latimer from 1903 to 1928.

#### 17 KINGSLAND HOMESTEAD

Headquarters of the Queens Historical Society.

#### 18 BOWNE HOUSE

Built c. 1661, the house is a microcosm of social, cultural and political history.

#### 19 KING MANOR MUSEUM

Home of Rufus King, framer of the Constitution and an outspoken opponent of slavery.

#### 20 ALICE AUSTEN HOUSE MUSEUM

Austen (1866-1952), one of America's most prolific female photographers, documented daily life in New York City.

#### 21 HISTORIC RICHMOND TOWN

Living history museum complex where visitors experience 300 years of history and culture.

#### 22 SEGUIN MANSION

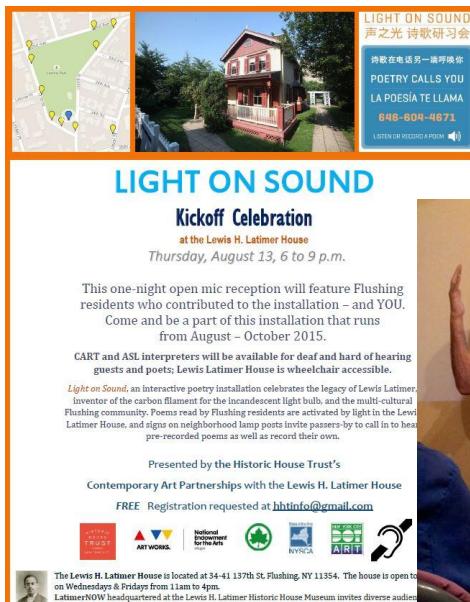
One of the borough's grandest 19th-century homes.

#### 23 CONFERENCE HOUSE

Grand stone manor named for the 1776 conference that attempted to end the Revolutionary War.

# Contemporary Art in Historic Houses

- Community as stakeholder / HH obligation to serve
- Offers new experiences - inspiration - inclusiveness - expression
- Encourages repeat visits, diversity and builds partnerships



**LIGHT ON SOUND**  
**Kickoff Celebration**  
at the Lewis H. Latimer House  
Thursday, August 13, 6 to 9 p.m.

This one-night open mic reception will feature Flushing residents who contributed to the installation – and YOU. Come and be a part of this installation that runs from August – October 2015.

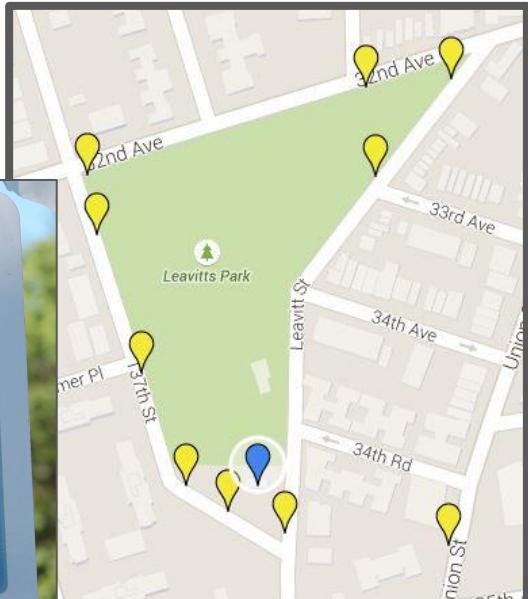
CART and ASL interpreters will be available for deaf and hard of hearing guests and poets; Lewis Latimer House is wheelchair accessible.

*Light on Sound*, an interactive poetry installation celebrates the legacy of Lewis Latimer, inventor of the carbon filament for the incandescent light bulb, and the multi-cultural Flushing community. Poems read by Flushing residents are activated by light in the Lewis Latimer House, and signs on neighborhood lamp posts invite passers-by to call in to hear pre-recorded poems as well as record their own.

Presented by the Historic House Trust's Contemporary Art Partnerships with the Lewis H. Latimer House  
FREE Registration requested at [hhinfo@gmail.com](mailto:hhinfo@gmail.com)



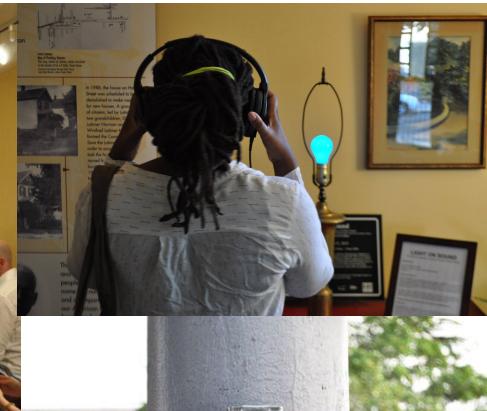
The Lewis H. Latimer House is located at 34-41 137th St. Flushing, NY 11354. The house is open to the public on Wednesdays & Fridays from 11am to 4pm. LatimerNOW headquarters at the Lewis H. Latimer Historic House Museum invite diverse audiences to explore the life and legacy of Lewis H. Latimer, a Black inventor and civil rights activist.

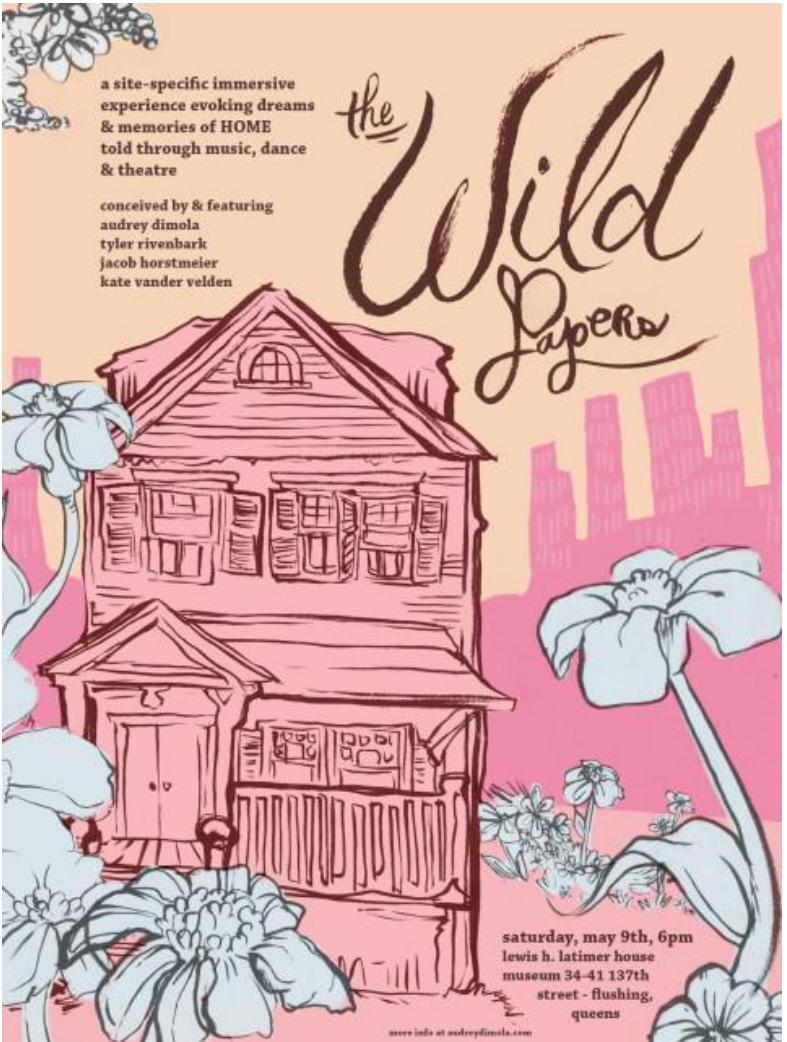


# Light on Sound: A Public Poetry Installation

- Who: Lewis Latimer's legacy / Flushing community today / Workshop participants / Translators / Public (visitors)
- What: Interactive poetry installation / Ongoing sparking of poems through light & phone calls / Community workshops / Kick-off poetry event
- Where: Museum / Surrounding neighborhood
- When: August 2015 - January 2016
- Why: To reactivate public experiences with poetry / To bring Latimer's work in new relation to public







## THE WILD PAPERS!



How to engage visitors at a historic house?  
*Make them part of the story...*

# THE WILD PAPERS site-specific experience (2015)

- A site-specific theatrical performance: “**the whole house is our stage**”
- **Generated entirely at the Latimer House**- brainstormed, written, rehearsed, performed- around the ideas of HOME, memory, nostalgia
- Artists in residence under the **#MuseumAnarchy** initiative thanks to Monica Montgomery, breathing **new energy** into the space
- Performer-collaborators **Audrey Dimola, Tyler Rivenbark, Jake Horstmeier, Kate Vander Velden, and Diana Benigno** integrated music, movement, monologue, improv, dance, poetry/prose into a **seamless experience**

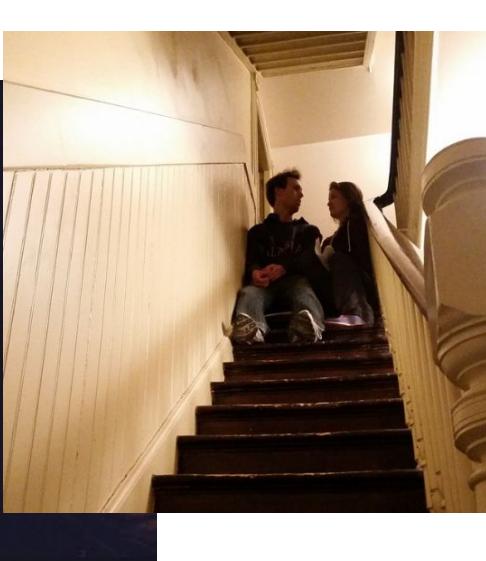
# **Two big elements to the experience...**

**#1**

Our experience **as artists**  
creating inside and in response  
to the **house itself**

Utilizing the **indoor space and grounds**

Layering **our memories** on top of **Latimer's-**  
inspired by the **“Creative Spark”**



# **Two big elements to the experience...**

**#2**

**The addition of the visitors!**

The **unexpected** movement and involvement of the attendees

**Improv and subtle cues**

**No division** between performer and audience





One of the most challenging,  
illuminating, exhilarating, enriching  
projects to date... [WILD!](#)

The TRUST given to artists by HHT & Latimer House to *create what we wished to experience* and fully inhabit the space

