SOUTHSIDE STORIES

An audio walk into the Southside
of Williamsburg, Brooklyn
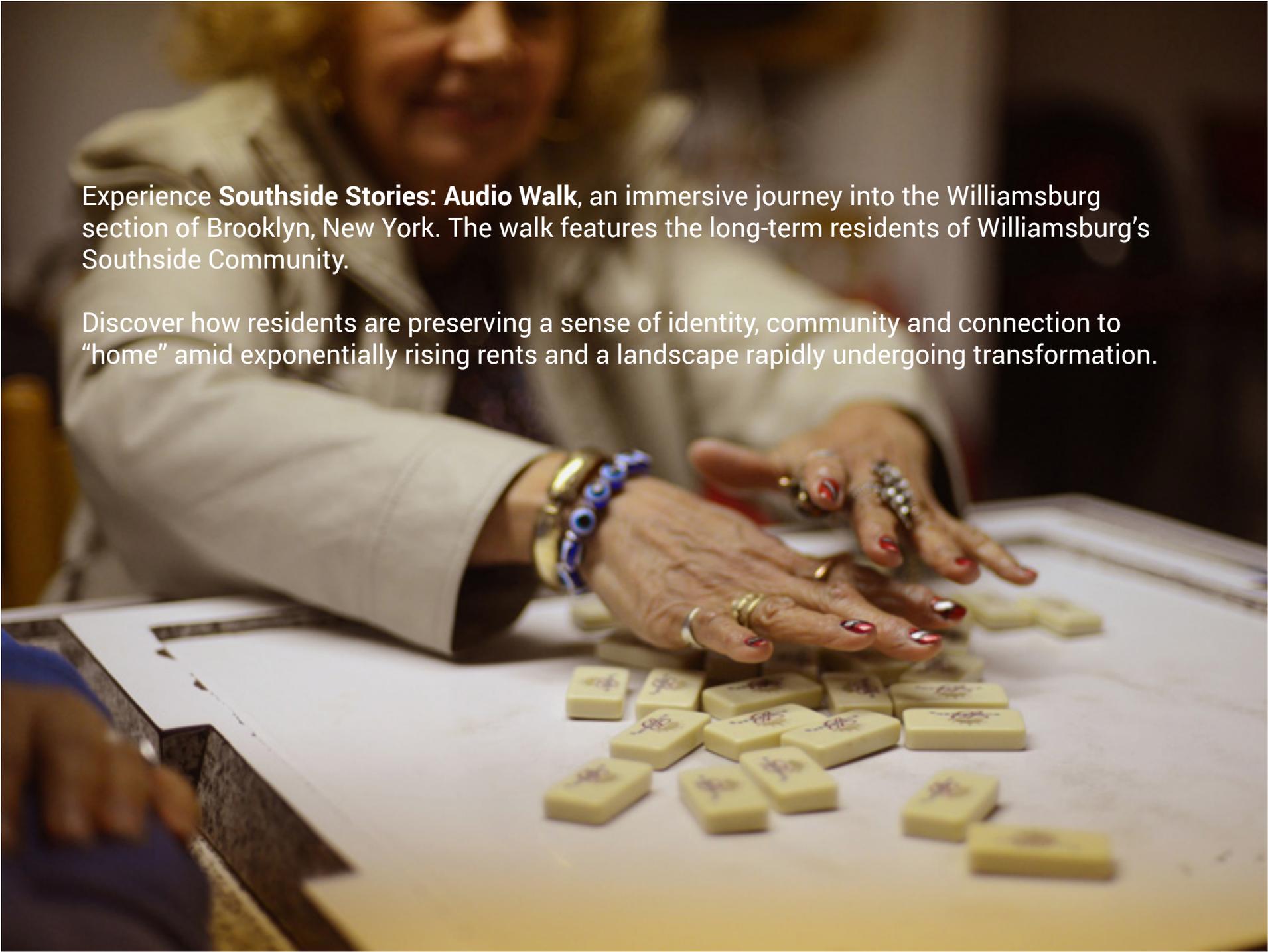
Experience **Southside Stories: Audio Walk**, an immersive journey into the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn, New York. The walk features the long-term residents of Williamsburg's Southside Community.

Discover how residents are preserving a sense of identity, community and connection to "home" amid exponentially rising rents and a landscape rapidly undergoing transformation.

The Audio Walk

Walking the streets of the Southside—a square mile area nestled around the base of the Williamsburg Bridge—one bears witness to its sometimes violent past and struggles, but also to the strong sense of community and cultural pride that emerges.
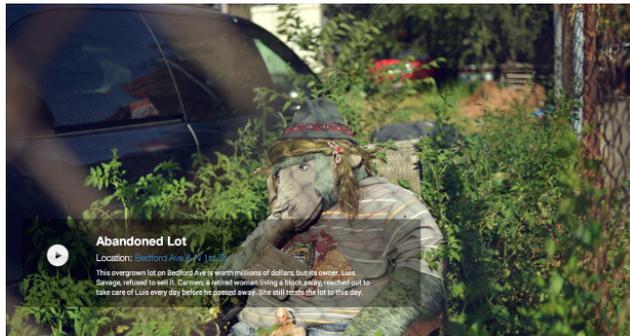
The audio walk features stories from the neighborhood's recent history as a predominantly Latino neighborhood juxtaposed to a landscape rapidly undergoing transformation and synonymous with hipster culture. The walk encourages a reinvigorated sense of discovery and responsibility in a participant's relationship with the city.

The Experience

Through the walk's 35-minute route, participants unravel the stories of people and places. Stories from residents are peppered with instructions for audience members to take off their headphones, go into local businesses and interact with locals. Participants are given permission to go into places they may not normally. Binaural audio recordings create an immersive aural experience that transforms sense of time and place.

Amid exponentially increasing rents and changing businesses, the experience reveals how residents preserve a sense of identity, community and connection to "home" while almost no neighborhood demographic in New York City stays the same for more than 60 years. The walk will encourage conversations between newcomers and long-term residents about the community's past, present and future.

How to Participate

Download the audio track to a device of your choice, print out the map, and go to the walk's starting point in Brooklyn, NY.

Audio Track (35 min) »
Map Route (PDF) »

Start: In front of the Dunkin Donuts at Bedford Av, Brooklyn NY 11211 (formerly the Northside Pharmacy). Across street from L train Subway entrance.

End: Caribbean Club, 244 Grand St, Brooklyn NY 11211.

Promotional Materials

Southside Stories

Postcard, logos, high-res images and team headshots.

Download files on Dropbox

Website Screenshots

Technology

The walk uses binaural audio recorded throughout the neighborhood to create an immersive landscape that transforms participant's sense of time and place. Binaural audio is best listened to with headphones. The Southside Stories website (**southsidewalk.com**) mimics the experience of walking from one location to the next by using CSS3, HTML5, JavaScript, and animated GIFs.

Project Notes

In fall 2012, our team embarked on Collaborative Fellowships at UnionDocs, a center for documentary art in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. As part of a group of twelve fellows, we were assigned with creating work for UnionDocs multi-year project, *Living Los Sures*. The project uses the 1984 feature film *Los Sures* (dir. Diego Echeverria), as a starting point for investigations into the neighborhood of South Williamsburg. UnionDocs recognizes the history of the cinematic documentary tradition, while supporting work that expands the definition of what documentary can be.

We set out to create an audio walk that featured stories from the neighborhood's longterm residents, inspired by audio walking tours like *Passing Stranger: East Village Poetry Walk* (dir. Pejk Malinovski), *Her Long Black Hair* (dir. Janet Cardiff), and *Soundwalk: Hasidic Williamsburg*. We were motivated to take documentary out of the cinema, onto the streets and in public spaces.

Within a generation, the neighborhood of Williamsburg has drastically changed. Rents have steeply increased and places once considered unsafe are now highly desirable, a sense of connection to home and community has been ruptured. The legacy of neighborhoods like Williamsburg are constantly changing. The New York City of a decade ago doesn't exist anymore, and New York in a decade will be a very different place.

The walk opens a space for conversations between newcomers and long-term residents about the community's past, present and future. Participants get an opportunity to see the neighborhood from a different perspective, walk in the shoes of another person and ultimately empathize with their experiences.

— Shannon Carroll

About

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Website: southsidewalk.com

This project is part of **Living Los Sures**, a UnionDocs Collaborative Production. The UnionDocs Collaborative Studio is a one-year program for a group of emerging media artists from the US and abroad. Learn more at **http://uniondocs.org**.
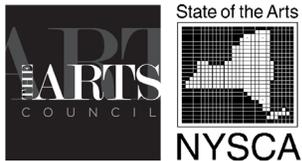
Core team: Shannon Carroll, Jen Epstein, Andrew Hinton, and Federica Sasso

Special thanks: Pejk Malinovski, Lu Olkowski, Craig Sinclair and Robert Anasi

UnionDocs Artistic Director: Christopher Allen

Collaborative Program Director: Toby Lee

2012-2013 Collaborative Fellows: Maria Rosa Badia, Beyza Boyacioglu, Emilia Bilinska, Shannon Carroll, Sebastian Diaz, Jen Epstein, Andrew Hinton, Constanza Mirre, Federica Sasso, Anthony Simon, Tamer Hassan, Mike Vass and Parul Wadhwa