Place in History Presents
Long Island City Grounded
A Public Art Competition

Place in History seeks proposals for site-specific public art installations in Long Island City, Queens.

Long Island City, one of New York City’s most dynamic and misconstrued neighborhoods, sits on the eastern shore of the East River, directly across from Midtown Manhattan. Developed largely during the late 19th and early 20th Centuries, this swath of western Queens has a long history as one of New York’s most impressive centers of industry. Once home to sugar refineries, bakeries, gasworks, car manufacturers, electrical equipment fabricators, and oil refineries, among many others, LIC played a critical role in establishing New York as an economic giant.

Like many other industrial neighborhoods in New York City, LIC has seen most of its larger industrial businesses close or relocate during the last fifty years, leaving behind a range of smaller industries, commercial uses, and a variety of residential enclaves (including one of the City’s largest public housing projects). Although still a viable industrial center, the neighborhood has increasingly become the focus of ambitious urban redevelopment efforts, ranging from Dream City plans for Sunnyside Yards to waterfront Olympic Villages.

In 2003, Place in History initiated a project entitled Long Island City in Context, an oral history and research project that culminated in a document that examines 54 sites throughout the neighborhood. These sites include places that exist only in memory, places that continue to serve a vital role in the community, and places that exist exclusively in plan form. Utilizing strategies culled from the fields of planning, architecture, history and art, the book offers a counterpoint to those who perceive LIC primarily as a blank slate for redevelopment.

Long Island City Grounded, a public art competition that grows out of this work, represents phase two of Place in History’s LIC initiative. Place in History seeks proposals for site-specific installations to be located at any of the 54 sites examined in the book. Entrants must demonstrate an understanding of the social and physical history of the area, must interpret this context, and must make an explicit effort to engage a local audience. A CD copy of the LIC in Context book will be provided as a baseline for submissions, but it is our hope that the competition will also prompt entrants to visit the neighborhood and obtain a first-hand feel for this incredible, difficult to fathom place.
Long Island City Grounded Competition Guidelines

Proposals should be formatted on four 11" x 17" boards, and a digital copy of the display should be submitted on disk or CD. Place in History will expect submissions to include a general design concept, a description of interpretive elements, site analysis, fabrication details, and a discussion of viability, durability and overall cost. Budgets should not exceed $7,500, and additional points will be awarded to more cost-effective projects. Audio or multi-media presentations are acceptable, but must be accompanied by a board describing installation details, and all audio or video materials must be submitted on CD or DVD. Whimsical or theoretical projects will be considered, but implementation and viability will be a key factor in establishing finalists.

As noted above, entrants will be expected to brief themselves using the LIC in Context document, which includes information from oral history interviews, current and historic plans for the area, and a host of physical, social and economic background. Prospective project themes might include, for example, the tension between industrial and residential uses, the emergence of a cultural district, the social ecology of the Rikers Island drop-off area, the development of a power generating cluster, or more than 80 years of redevelopment efforts. Entrants are encouraged to consider the future of the neighborhood in the context of its past.

Place in History will organize an exhibition of selected submissions in 2005 and will provide funds to implement the winning entry.

Submission Deadline: March 1, 2005
Registration Period: Jan 1 - Feb 15, 2005
Registration Fee: $20
First Prize: $750
Second Prize: $500
Third Prize: $250
Registration Form: www.placeinhistory.org
Questions/Contact: info@placeinhistory.org

Entries should be addressed to:

Place in History
LIC Grounded Competition
1205 Manhattan Avenue
Unit 1212
Brooklyn, NY 11222

Place in History

Place in History, a nonprofit organization founded in 1997, sponsors interdisciplinary public projects about New York City’s development and redevelopment. Place in History works with collaborative teams of artists, planners, architects and urbanists to stage public history installations, community-based design charrettes, educational programs, publications and competitions.