



ARTIST STATEMENT

The NEST is a child-led playscape exploring an illusive, migrating Creature as it inhabits public spaces. Together, we create a collective and evolving home for this unknown Creature. As an unstructured art and play experience, it creates a "third space" for young people to explore identities and work through differences, understanding conflicting ideas can coexist. The NEST was created with the intention to make public the often invisible wisdom of marginalized young people and families in cultural spaces.

Did you know the U.S. is one of three members of the United Nations who has not ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)? The CRC is a multilateral human rights treaty that promotes the rights of all children worldwide. It defines a child as any human being under the age of 18 and calls on state parties to take appropriate measures to ensure that children's rights are protected. There are 54 articles in CRC that set basic rights for all children which include: the right to develop to the fullest potential, the right to be protected from exploitation and the right to participate fully in cultural and social life. By not signing the CRC, the U.S. is willing the \$150 billion industry of modern slavery- the exploitation of children through human trafficking, forced labor and sexual exploitation (humanrightsfirst.org).

The NEST believes young people are assets to our communities. We know young people are capable, creative citizens (meaning members of the community regardless of documentation status) who have boundless and untapped civic, cultural, and social capital to offer. They deserve meaningful and developmentally-appropriate cultural spaces to showcase their ideas. **We urge you to rethink the ways you see young people.** Let's acknowledge them as they are right now. As fully-formed, capable human beings. When we take the focus off what they will "become" as adults (i.e. grown-up consumers) we can create space for a more inclusive and connected world.

COME PLAY WITH US!

The NEST was created in 2014 through a FINE Artist residency at Children's Museum of Pittsburgh. Since then, the Creature has travelled to Pittsburgh (CM Pittsburgh), Los Angeles (Skirball Cultural Center), Santa Cruz (Museum of Art and History) and St. Louis (Public Library System).

Megan Flød Johnson is an interdisciplinary theatre artist who seeks to disrupt dominant narratives and expectations around performance experiences to designate space for process, experimental thinking, play and multiple points of view. She is an independent artist, teaching artist and programmer from St. Paul, MN. Megan is a 2019-'20 Jerome Hill Artist Fellow in performance. www.meganflod.org.

Follow the Creature's travels at: www.thenestiscoming.com

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