

# PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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The Fox Point Branch Library and local artist Jean G. Cozzens present

## **New Your City** a participatory city-building project for all ages

Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays March 1-30, 2007 3-5 pm

Gallery Night Celebration: Tuesday, April 3, 2007 5-8 pm

**Fox Point Library, 90 Ives St. Providence**

**PROVIDENCE, RI** – During March 2007, as part of the Providence Public Library's Youth Art Month, local artist Jean Cozzens will engage children and their families, library patrons, artists, and friends in the envisioning and construction of an imaginative city at the Fox Point Branch Library, using cardboard and other waste and recycled materials. Anybody and everybody is invited to come and help build, to share their vision of what a city should be, and to create buildings, structures, and landscapes for New Your City. Your creative visions and desires will determine what the city will become.

(From the first New Your City project, in 2006: David lays out roadways while Tanisha works on the roof of her school.)

On Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays in March, from 3 to 5 PM, we will be working in the library, involving young people and elementary school students to build a city based on their own ideas, aided and abetted by local artists, parents, and library staff. Industrial materials from the Recycling for RI Education center, collected junk, fabric and string, colored paper and boxes, and giant pieces of cardboard will be turned into buildings, bridges, parks, vehicles, highways, people, and anything else we can imagine. During construction, we will keep a city record notebook: each participant will write, draw, or dictate something about what they have built for the city.



The inspiration for buildings and structures will be playful as well as political, practical or purely fanciful. Like a real city, New Your City is a combination of many different people's intentions, goals, and dreams; carefully organized in some places, and in others, all mashed up together. Anybody interested in cities and buildings is welcome to come by and see what we are doing, or add buildings and structures to the city. Any and all children and/or parents are welcome to participate. Children age 6 and younger should be accompanied by an adult if possible.

On April 3<sup>rd</sup>, from 5 to 8 pm, we will have a final Gallery Night Celebration, where children, parents, community members, and friends will come together to celebrate and show off our hard work,

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and admire the city we built together. The What Cheer? Brigade street band will perform their energetic and rambunctious music for us in the library.

All aspects of this project – the city-building activity and the final celebration – are free and open to the public.

The New Your City project began in February of 2006 as a simple plan to involve children from the Fox Point Library in building a city out of cardboard and recycled junk. Jean Cozzens and Ann Schattle (a children’s librarian at the Fox Point Branch) wanted to translate their interests and experience in architecture and urban planning into a hands-on, participatory project with kids. The collaborative creation quickly expanded into an intricate, elaborate urban landscape which sprawled over the entire children’s section of the library, annexing bookshelves with colorful parks and airplanes, and stretching tall skyscrapers and smokestacks up to the ceiling. The project demanded to be repeated and expanded!



(A composite image of New Your City 2006 near the final stage of its construction, with the FBI base in the foreground, the Junior Heights Mall identifiable by its large pink wall, and many highways, skyscrapers, parks and towers also visible.)

New Your City 2007 is supported by funding from the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts, through an appropriation by the Rhode Island General Assembly and a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. The Providence Public Library, the Recycling for RI Education center, and the energy and dedication of many volunteers also are crucial in making this project possible!

Jean Cozzens, originally from Philadelphia, has lived in Providence since 1999. A RISCA merit fellow in design, she is a silkscreen poster printer, an artist and emerging architect, interested in how people live and interact in cities and buildings. She has bachelor's degrees in Architecture and Fine Arts from the Rhode Island School of Design. Her work was recently featured in the RISD Museum's *Wunderground* print exhibit, and she is currently working on a series of prints about how everyday living spaces affect people's lives.

For further information, visit [www.secretdoorprojects.org/newyourcity](http://www.secretdoorprojects.org/newyourcity), or contact Jean Cozzens: (215) 983-7715 or [secretdoor.projects@gmail.com](mailto:secretdoor.projects@gmail.com). Additional photos are available on request.

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