

Memories of Migration

Event Report

Partner: Queens Library: Queens Memory, Fresh Meadows Community Library, Children's Learning and Discovery Center, and the Older Adults Program
Staff Name: Lori Wallach, Natalie Milbrodt, Richard Lee, Lynn Cole, Kevon Ajodhia
Event Name: Memories of Migration: Making a Talking Family Story Quilt: Workshop #3
Event Date: October 7, 2017
<p>Event Description: This session was focused on teaching participants about the LilyPad and its related components. Lynn began by having the attendees gather around one table, where she and Kevon showed them a complete set of components sewn into the sample quilt square, with alligator clips connecting the speakers as a temporary method. Using a diagram handout, they explained how conductive thread would ultimately be used to connect the speakers. We then gave each participant his/her own set of components and had them practice connecting the parts with Lynn and Kevon's help. Most of them also had time to loosely sew the electronics onto a piece of fabric (with standard thread) to get a feel for how they will attach to the quilts. Once the devices were all assembled, we gave everyone the mini SD cards containing the clips we created from their interviews, and they were able to listen to the clips through the LilyPads using earbuds or the speakers.</p> <p>While the participants were working on their components, Lynn pulled a number of books on quilt design off the library's shelves and brought them in the room for people to browse. Several participants checked out the books to take home with them.</p> <p>At the end of the session, we collected the assembled LilyPad sets for safekeeping and took back the SD cards in case edits needed to be made. All the participants received their full interview recordings plus the clips on flash drives to keep. We reminded them that Karen, the quilting instructor, would lead the next session and that they needed to bring their fabric and quilt design ideas.</p> <p>The session ran two hours, from 2:30 to 4:30 pm.</p>
Memories of Migration Activities: Participants listened to their interview clips and in two cases, requested minor edits. They also received recordings of their full interviews, which will be added to the Queens Memory collection.
Number of Participants: 5 registered attendees, all adults, plus 3 visitors, one of whom was a teen
<p>Comments and/or Concerns: At the start of the session, a library patron came in and asked if she and her teenage son could participate. We explained that this was the third of a six-part workshop and therefore too late for her to join the project, but invited them to stay for the demonstration. They stayed for approximately one hour, and we let the young man assemble an extra set of components along with the group.</p> <p>Once the participants started playing their interview clips through the speakers, we realized that the sound quality was not that good; even using earbuds, the volume was too low. Lori will amplify the clips' volume on the SD cards, but we probably would look for higher-quality speakers for future projects. We also learned that standard headphones require too much power to be used with the LilyPads; earbuds work fine.</p>



Today's demonstration did not include the use of a soldering iron to attach the speakers to the LilyPads. In later sessions it became apparent that this was necessary, so it would have been better to include that technique in this session.

Analysis of Event: We thought this session went extremely well. Since this was our first time working with the LilyPads and most of our participants had little electronics experience, we were unsure if two hours would be enough time or if everyone would catch on quickly. Thanks in large part to Lynn's clear instructions and patient teaching style, every attendee succeeded in connecting the devices and listening to their clips. (One participant, Ying, has significant technology experience and also helped her fellow quilters.) The participants all seemed to enjoy the process, and we even had time to consider matters such as how the LilyPads could be placed on the quilts to allow easy access to the charging ports and headphone jacks. We were glad all five of the quilters were present for this important session, and think they are in good shape to begin the quilting phase next week.

Observing this session was a Queens College graduate art student, Naomi Kuo, who is interested in partnering with us next semester to create a similar story quilt project.

