

HOW CAN CURATED SPACES SUBVERT SOCIAL NORMS THROUGH PLAY?



THE PROBLEM

Many spaces silently enforce “don’t touch, don’t linger, don’t play”, even art spaces.

I tested this norm through two events: a public park performance and a gallery installation designed to challenge the rigid expectations

of how we are to consume art by blending chaotic, nostalgic elements from childhood and turning viewers into participants.

BELLISSIMA
ARRIAGA-PATTILLO

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THE EXPERIMENT

I start by identifying how the space is normally used and then reversing those rules. I treat curation as experience design: not isolated pieces but as environments where people could become a part of the art and become vulnerable through play.



I designed cues for play with prompts, signage and performances.



Dollhouses invite viewers to play.



The spaces hosted friends and guests.

Whether at an established gallery, a bus stop, a park, or a stairwell, there are always opportunities for subversion.

In each space I designed to lower the social risk of being seen playing. How can I bring this into more spaces?

THE INSIGHT



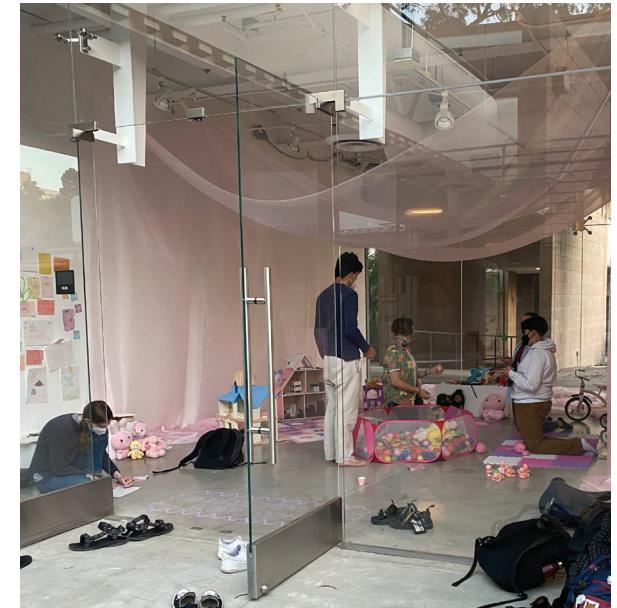
When given the opportunity to play, we become kinder, braver, and more connected with our inner creativity. Our barrier is the risk of being vulnerable.



Whimsy can be a tool for disarming our social anxieties around play and through this play, we can form

communities and conversations around the role of play in an adult's life. Whether a short game of hide & seek or doodling

together, play can provide new ways of seeing the world. How can we bring more play into our day?



THE

OPPORTUNITY

Play can become a new method for community building and an opportunity to create safe spaces for conversation that influences behavior, reduces social isolation, and reimagines how we use existing spaces. In future spaces I create, I want to design new norms of whimsy and joy through play.

These ideas can also be directly applied to products, programs, and installation. The value is beyond the fun, it's the community building.

Bellissima Arriaga-Pattillo
UC Santa Barbara

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