

# Madeline Avram Blount

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## EDUCATION

Yale University: B.A. *cum laude* Literature, Anthropology (2008); Concentration in Physics  
Santa Fe Institute: Non-Linear Dynamics, Mathematical Approaches; Foundations of Complexity (2014)

## DESIGN/CODE/PRODUCTION WORK

Unlock NYC: co-founder and founding engineer, developing tech tools for housing justice; created a mobile phone tool that allows tenants to record their calls to combat housing discrimination; project chosen as part of the 2019-2020 Catalyst cohort, \$50k accelerator funded by the Robin Hood Foundation; coding in Node.js (Twilio/Airtable/Landbot/DigitalOcean/FaunaDB APIs; also website in Netlify/Github/11ty); strong focus on co-design, user research, SMS and voice chatbot writing, and security/privacy, encryption (2019-2021)

Creative Technologist: freelance, lead on immersive web projects, from research to design to development; tools include HTML/CSS/Javascript/jQuery/Node.js with Mapbox/GIS, Final Cut Pro, Logic Pro; solo photography + ethnography trips to Singapore, Myanmar, Senegal; worked with NYU Development Research Institute to research economic history and migration for online documentaries; secured project funding from Templeton Foundation; built online UX/UI framework and created original sound designs for projects; work featured in *WIRED*, *Atlantic City Lab*, *Hyperallergic*, *Fast Company*, and at the Center for Architecture (NYC). (2014-present)

Web Design/Code: freelance, full-stack engineer and designer, from consultation to design to code and deliverable site; clients include Center for Neighborhood Knowledge (UCLA), Development Research Initiative (NYU), Center for Advanced Defense Studies, Africa House (NYU), Financial Access Initiative (NYU), Pratt Design Corps, MASS Design Group, Right to Counsel Coalition, as well as law firms, nonprofits, small businesses, and artists; tools include HTML/CSS/Javascript/jQuery/Node.js/APIs with Airtable, Squarespace, Webflow, Mapbox, Netlify, Heroku, Github; special focus on data visualization, cartography, and video (2012-present)

## DIGITAL/POLITICAL ORGANIZING WORK

Crown Heights Mutual Aid: founding member, COVID-19 local response; Tech Working Group, Intake Working Group, and Pod Organizing Group; developed organization from 30 members to over 2,000; organized and trained members entirely through digital and remote organizing; collaboratively built phonebanking system (Twilio, Github, Airtable, Slack, Node.js/JS) that facilitated grocery delivery to over 3,000 families during height of pandemic in NYC (2020-2021)

Digital Early Vote Organizer, Organizing for America: Obama campaign in Chapel Hill, NC; created social media feeds for city's youth office, including original photography used state-wide; trained + organized hundreds of university students; implemented national digital strategy; reported canvass data nightly to headquarters (2012)

Bank of Ideas + Occupy LSX, London: reclaimed space + free social center in Hackney; coordinated space for workshops, talks, performances + street events, including professors, journalists, community groups, musicians Thom Yorke + Massive Attack; member of tech collective; facilitated communications between labor unions and student groups, direct action (2011)

Field Organizer, Obama for America: in Portland, OR; responsible for votes in the highest-density precincts in the state; recruited + trained hundreds of volunteers; organized + reported data on voter registration/contact nightly to headquarters; cut turf for canvasses using GoogleMaps/GIS/VAN; OR = 86% voter turnout in general election (2008)

## FELLOWSHIPS/AWARDS

Awesome Foundation Grant: awarded collaboratively for Unlock NYC digital housing rights project (2020)

Blue Ridge Labs Fellowship: Collaborative research and design+build incubator, for technologists looking to create digital tools that improve the lives of low-income New Yorkers, with a focus on housing justice. Funded by the Robin Hood Foundation. (2019)

NYU Interactive Telecommunications Program Camp - Instigator Fellowship: chosen as part of small group to contribute to ITP Camp with skill-sharing and community organizing; tuition-free scholarship to month-long program (2019)

Creative Time Amanda Weil Lecture: performed lecture with slideshow of original photography and film at Creative Time Summit, on the theme “Art, Place, and Dislocation in the 21st Century City,” based on artistic/ethnographic research conducted in Cyprus; chosen from international open call <https://bit.ly/1KUI1kF> (2013)

MIT Hacking Arts: team of 5 collaborated in 24 hours to win in Motion Capture category for re:Gesture, an exploration of fractal geometry and dance with generated art; danced in motion capture suit, built prototype for data analysis (2017)

Hannah Arendt Prize in Critical Theory: from Pacific Northwest College of Art, 2nd prize, wrote essay on surveillance and politics (2012)

Charles P. Howland Fellowship: awarded 1-year service and research grant, investigating border sites, conflict zones, urban and geopolitical space, and the role of the arts in conflict resolution in Nicosia, Cyprus (2009)

National Geographic Glimpse Correspondent: selected from international open call, wrote features and published photography on new media platform, working remotely with editor from National Geographic while living in Nicosia, Cyprus (2009)

Calabresi Prize for Best Undergraduate Thesis in Literature, for “Writing on the City: Graffiti, Urban Texts, and the Politics of Taking Space.” Yale College (2008)

Sapir Prize for Undergraduate Work in Anthropology, Yale College (2008)

Stavros Niarchos Research Fellowship: grant for independent field work in contemporary Greek politics (2007)

Rensselaer Medal: national award, given to students distinguished in math and science, scholarship worth \$100,000 (2003)

## **TEACHING/SPEAKING/RESIDENCIES:**

Tech-In-Residence Corps, City University of New York (CUNY): selected to join a pool of technology professionals who teach upper-level computer science courses in the CUNY system to support the NYC Tech Talent Pipeline (2019-present)

Digital Naturalism Conference (Dinacon) Residency: jungle prototyping studio, created works in code and video; collaborated with other artists, scientists, and technologists studying the intersection of nature and computation; Gamboa, Panama (2019)

NYU Interactive Telecommunications Program, ITP Camp: taught graduate students, professors, and industry professionals in art and technology, “Subversive Chatbots,” “jQuery for Immersive Work in the Browser” and “Archaeology of the Ancient Internets” (2019, 2021)

Princeton Graduate Student Union, skillshare: “No-Code Tools and Organizing” (2020 - zoom)

Pratt Design Corps., guest critic for student web designers working pro-bono for non-profits (2015)

Connecticut College, Prof. Marie Ostby’s class, “The Revolution Will Not be Tweeted: Literary Activism and Social Media,” guest-taught class on intersection of online and physical “IRL” activism (2016-2020)

Connecticut College, invited participant: Ammerman Center Summit on Art + Technology (2020)

Brooklyn Community Services, lectured on Kierkegaard, Thoreau, and Whitman for a community philosophy discussion group (2013)

Tent City University, “Writing on the City,” networks of graffiti lecture, Occupy London LSX (2011)

## **SELECTED PROJECTS: CODE, INSTALLATION, PERFORMANCE**

*Complexity and the Leafcutters*: code/sound installation, presented in Gamboa, Panama [[documentation](#)] (2019)

*Networks Beyond Borders*: immersive web documentary, collaboration with Dr. William Easterly + Development Research Institute, NYU <http://migration.nyudri.org> (2016)

*Large Mammal Confessional: a performance/lecture for city ghosts*, writing, performance, sound and projection design; collaboration with Raphael Soifer, Pangurbot Studios, New York (2015)

*Dancing & Drone*: performance, dance with drone; at *Barbora*, curated by Agnes Borinsky, New Ohio Theatre, New York (2015)

*First Volcano/Last Glacier: (a voyage to the last glacier on earth before it melts)*: performance with sound, video, dance, piano; collaboration with Treya Lam, Bowery Arts & Science, New York, NY (2014)

*The Greene Street Project*: immersive web documentary, collaboration with Dr. William Easterly + Development Research Institute, NYU <https://greenestreet.nyc> (2014)

*Crime Scene*, dance video and sound design, collaboration with Karl Paquemar, shown at Athens Video Dance Festival, Athens, Greece (2010)

*Systems & Sh\*t*: photography, installation, and community organizing, Utopia Space, Nicosia, Cyprus (2009)

*Why don't you let me vanish from your site*, sound design and asst. choreographer to Arianna Economou, Platforma Festival, Limassol, Cyprus (2009)

*Aposteriori*: performance, dance and sound design, devised with Natalie Heller and Karl Paquemar, No Body Festival, Nicosia, Cyprus (2009)

## **PRESS + REVIEWS:**

*Fast Company, World Changing Ideas*: "This chatbot helps New Yorkers report housing discrimination" 2021

*Hyperallergic*, "Brothels, Artists, and Exorbitant Real Estate on One NYC Block" 2015

*Wired* "From Brothels to Luxury, Mapping 400 Years on One NYC Block" 2015

*Urban Omnibus*, "Counter-narratives of Place: A Recap of the Creative Time Summit" 2013

## **PUBLICATIONS:**

"Writing on the City" *Arteri*, Cyprus, Issue #10, June 2009

## **TRAINING: DANCE/PERFORMANCE, SELECTED WORKSHOPS**

Gaga.Dancers, Saar Hariri and other teachers, Mark Morris NY (2014-present)

Sidra Bell, Advanced Contemporary Dance Workshop, Mark Morris NY (2018)

Yoann Bourgeois, Movement Master Class, Brooklyn Academy of Music NY (2016)

Anne Bogart, Interpreting Myth and Drama, BAM Humanities NY (2015)

Bobbi Jene Smith, Batsheva Dancers Master Class, Brooklyn Academy of Music NY (2014)

Keith Hennessy, Composition Workshop, PICA Portland, OR (2012)

Kyle Abraham, Abraham.In.Motion Dance Workshop, PICA Portland, OR (2012)

Jay Scheib and Natalie Thomas, SITI Company Master Class NY (2011)

Kenji Takagi of Pina Bausch Tanztheater, Movement Research NY (2011)

Marcello Magni, Performing Myth, Athens Festival Greece (2007)

Yale Theatre Studies (David Krasner, Elinor Renfield, Connie Grappo) (2004-2008)

## **OTHER ARTS WORK:**

S.E.M. Ensemble, Producer/Assistant to Conductor, Petr Kotik: built new media for NY-based international contemporary music ensemble; edited archival films for media campaigns; coordinated production and press releases from NY office during Ostrava Days festival in Czech Republic; included in Best of 2013, *ArtForum* (2013)

Portland Institute of Contemporary Art: Press Corps, TBA Festival; performance and event photography; images published in *Willamette Week*, *Mercury* (2011+2012)

Sounds of Brazil, lighting designer at music venue in W. Village, New York (2011)

Control Group, Yale Experimental Theatre Ensemble, devised theatre, co-director in 2007/2008 (member 2004-2008)

## **OTHER COMMUNITY WORK:**

KISA The Movement for Equality, Support, Anti-Racism, Cyprus: NGO; wrote Cyprus report for EU-FRA project "Separated asylum-seeking children in EU Member States," conducted narrative field interviews with social workers and translators (Arabic, Farsi, Kurdish); advocated asylum for Kurds from Turkey and Syria at Cyprus Migration Authority (2008+2009)

Common Ground Relief: direct action, mutual aid, community organizing, construction labor, roofing, gutting, truck driving, urban gardening, and cooking; working and living in Lower 9th Ward, New Orleans; organizing with returning residents to get their FEMA grants (2010)

## **SELECTED FORMAL RESEARCH EXPERIENCE:**

Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, research assistant at Yale University, Egyptology laboratory (2006-2008)

Aegean Institute, Paros, Greece, collaborative research on underwater archaeology, PADI certified scuba (2006)

Nuclear Research Reactor, Reed College (2003-2004)

## **LANGUAGES:**

fluent French; advanced Modern Greek; intermediate Portuguese, basic Turkish, basic Spanish

And I've cooked on the line and tended bar - jobs I'm grateful for that required urgency, dexterity, and patience.