

### Station North, a neighborhood worth caring about?

In the City Paper article entitled "Blinded With Science? Johns Hopkins University brings in international pop star Thomas Dolby to 'do a neighborhood' and act as an evangelist for its model" (November 5, 2014), Baynard Woods writes about Dolby coming to town to help develop a "digital incubator" that might turn Station North into an east coast "Silicon Valley for the arts." Right, and how did that "Silicon Valley" thing turn out for the ordinary people living in places like [San Francisco](#)?

Dolby is quoted as saying when walking Station North for the first time, "... it was daytime so I didn't stray too far from civilization." Woods considered Dolby's comment about "civilization" discomfoting. Me too. He suggested Dolby's attitude about Station North's distinct neighborhoods might be colored by the institutional agents orienting Dolby's thinking about the area. Me too. What's the message? Once again, the-powers-that-be think they know best and through the institutions they rule plan to take-over the "uncivilized" areas of Station North and do what?

It's this type of languaging that creates a nest for gentrification to emerge. Let's be clear, gentrification, a term coined by British sociologist Ruth Glass in 1964, is a dynamic that occurs during the revitalization of a neighborhood when the people who live and/or work in that neighborhood can no longer afford to do so. It's that simple and direct. Gentrification is a consequence of careless revitalization.

For example, the idea of making Station North a part of Baltimore where technology and the arts intertwine to create a hub for something new to emerge is fantastic. I embrace a construct for creating spaces where something unique can occur, BUT combining the arts with technology is not enough to make a project desirable or unique. At least not for me, you see I care. Sorry.

I care about the people who **now** live, work and travel through Station North. So, for me, in order for the arts and technologies to generate something new and fair it must be humane. This entails participation by all throughout the processes. A willingness to explore cultural similarities and differences when designing outputs and hopefully inputs. And most importantly, an opportunity for all those interested in participating to articulate their desires: my desires, your desires, our desires. This requires an ability to deal with conflict as a necessity, since our conflicts are often a consequence of our desires. Desires do differ don't they? So what now?

The technologies to make the shift are here – now. The arts that make it possible deep creativity, are not embraced by many, only a few and they, we are not popular – yet.

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