


BURNING MAN 2024


COOL & CURIOUS INNOVATION SPRINT

FINAL REPORT

Prepared by: Sarah ("Serendipity") DaVanzo

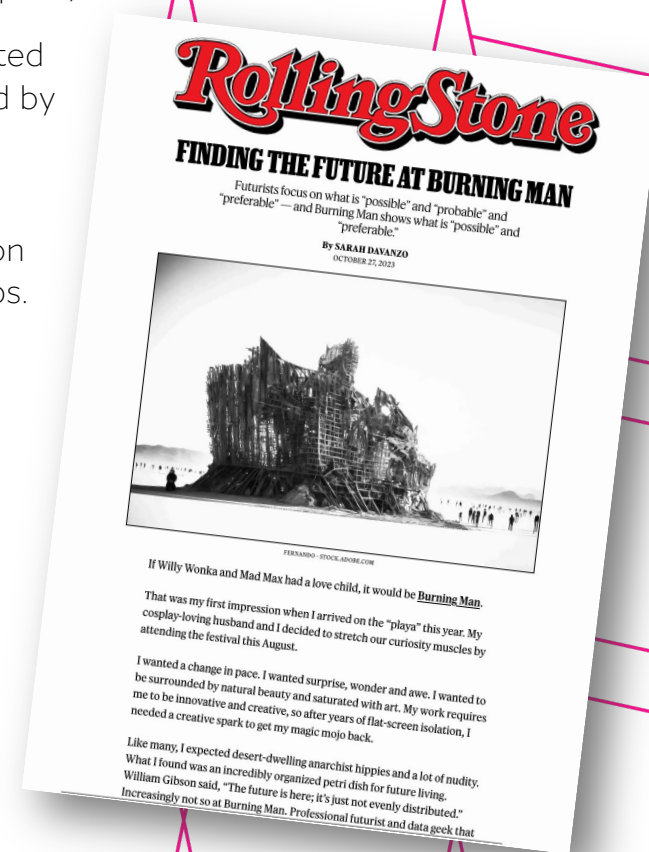


IN 2024 BURNING MAN WAS “LEARNING” MAN, AS BURNERS WERE EDUCATED ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE URGENCY TO GET OFF FOSSIL FUELS. THE COMMUNITY LEARNED ABOUT WAYS TO STAY COOL SUSTAINABLY CHanneLED INTO PROBLEM SOLVING.



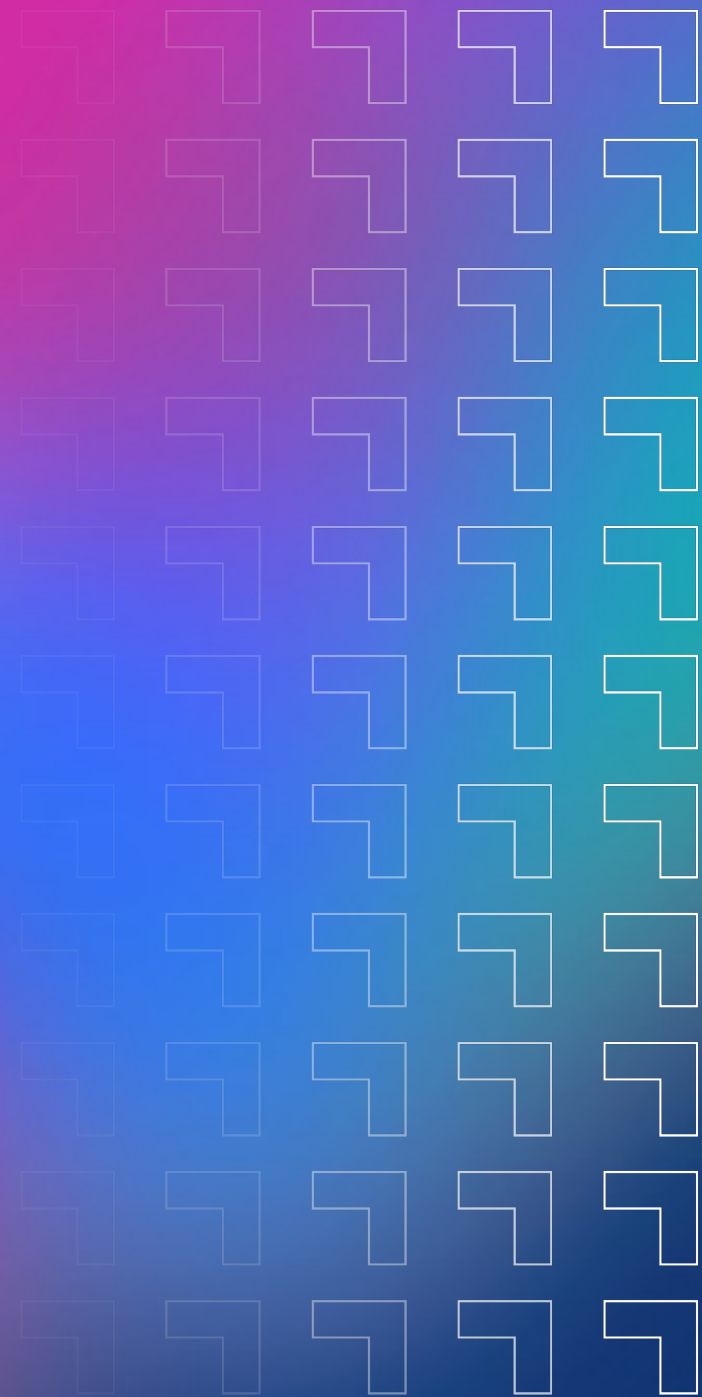
INTRODUCTION

- On November 15, 2023 at a NYC fundraiser Sarah ("Serendipity") DaVanzo was introduced to Burning Man executives Marian Goodell and George Reed, who had noticed Sarah's *Rolling Stone* article, *Finding the Future at Burning Man* (Oct 27, 2023) about the innovation culture of the festival.
- At the fundraiser, Burning Man's leaders announced the formation of a Regeneration team focused on getting Burning Man off fossil fuels, achieving sustainability goals (e.g., carbon neutral by 2030) and transforming the organization into an innovation engine.
- Sarah, an inventor who specializes in curiosity science, futurism and experienced in leading innovation sprints offered to support Burning Man with her skills.
- Over six months (January-August 2024), Sarah collaborated with George Reed and his Regeneration team to build a program of co-creation activities to invent sustainable cooling practices to enlist the Burning Man community in problem solving.
- The Burning Man leaders introduced Sarah to David Shearer of Black Rock Labs, which became the hosting venue for many of the Cool & Curious Innovation Sprint activities. (Many thanks to the Black Rock Lab's for its participation and support.)
- Sarah funded, planned, promoted and executed the Cool & Curious Innovation Sprint assisted by her husband, Michael ("Infostack") Elling.
- This is the report to share the innovation outcomes from the Cool & Curious Innovation Sprint program and recommended next steps.





***WHAT
HAPPENED?***



BACKGROUND

With global warming, mitigating extreme heat is a wicked existential problem needing solutions.



BACKGROUND

Additionally, the Burning Man organization wants to reduce CO2 emissions, especially from refrigeration.



BACKGROUND

So, this year at Burning Man 2024 we exploited the community's curiosity, creativity and resourcefulness to invent sustainable cooling solutions.



BACKGROUND

We had a hunch that the people, vibe and conditions of Burning Man are perfect for innovation and collective problem solving. We were right!



BACKGROUND

And, with the theme “Curiouser & Curiouser” we used curiosity science to amplify invention—*and the results are remarkable!*

A photograph of a desert landscape at dusk or dawn. In the foreground, a sign on a metal frame reads "I HAVE DUST IN CURIOUSER PLACES" in large, bold, black letters. The sign is partially obscured by the legs and feet of two people standing next to it. The person on the left is wearing a black jacket and a backpack, and the person on the right is wearing a black jacket and orange camouflage pants. In the background, there are various structures and people, including a large, ornate, cage-like structure. The sun is low in the sky, creating a warm, golden light. The ground is dry and dusty, and the overall atmosphere is one of a remote, outdoor event.

**I HAVE
DUST IN
CURIOUSER
PLACES**

PROBLEM

Cooling is the #1 contributor to CO2 emissions at Burning Man, so inventing new sustainable cooling solutions is a priority of the Burning Man organization's Regeneration team.

CHALLENGE

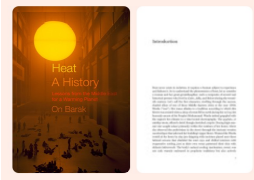
Invent sustainable solutions to dramatically reduce cooling power usage and CO2 emissions in curious new ways to cool down spaces and people—*including physical, mental and perceptual cooling concepts.*



METHODOLOGY

PLANNING

May-June 2024



INDIGENOUS INSPIRATION

Discussions with Professor and author On Barak in Tel Aviv, about ancient Middle Eastern techniques to stay cool.

July-Aug 2024



FUTURIST SURVEY

A 10-question survey of 52 international futurists about the "future of cooling."

July 2024



BIOMIMICRY INSPIRATION

Analysis of inventions inspired by nature's cooling systems and biological cooling mechanisms.

Aug 2024



POLAROIDS TURNED INTO "PROPERTIES"

Polaroids of ideas (invention concepts) were fixed to the 50ft hacked monopoly game.

Aug 2024



POLAROIDS OF WHITEBOARD INVENTIONS

Doodled inventions were photographed with a Polaroid camera.

Aug 2024



INVENTION WORKSHOPS

Teams doodled on personal whiteboards and built pipe cleaner prototypes during innovation workshops.

EXECUTION

Aug 2024



COOLOPOLY GAME

A giant customized gameboard (50ft) stimulated discussions, ideation and voting on cooling concepts.

Aug 2024



FUTURES FRIDAY TALK

Early insights and preliminary inventions were shared on center stage in Center Camp.

Aug 2024



CURIOSITY SCIENCE PLAYSHOP

50 Burners participated in a workshop experience that stretched curiosity muscles and fostered self-awareness about curiosity.

Jan 2025

SHARING INVENTIONS TO THE BURNING MAN COMMUNITY

Zoom meeting to discuss outcomes and align on next steps.

Sept-Nov 2024

INVENTIONS ORGANIZED & AUGMENTED WITH AI

Report with findings and insights created for sharing.

ANALYSIS



***WE STRETCHED
OUR CURIOSITY
MUSCLES***



WE PLAYED HARD ON THE PLAYA







*AND WE
BUILT
STUFF*

4 THINGS HAPPENED THIS YEAR

1

COOL & CURIOUS INNOVATION SPRINT

A wonder-full hands-on playshop to solve an existential problem and invent sustainable cooling solutions with "curiosity science."

**TUES, AUG. 27, 2024
@ 12-2pm
BLACK ROCK LABS (2:15/F)**



2

COOL & CURIOUS MONPOLY GAME 2040

Play a massive, customized Monopoly game to solve an existential problem—invent sustainable cooling solutions together.

**FRI, AUG. 30, 2024
@ 1-3pm
CENTER CAMP**



3

CURIOSITY PLAYSHOP

Stretch your curiosity muscles with a Curiosity Scientist & Futurist to open your mind to possibilities and inspire invention.

**FRI, AUG. 30, 2024
4-5:00pm
MEET @ CENTER CAMP**



4

FUTURISTS SURVEY: THE FUTURE OF COOL

Insights & ideas from a survey of 55 futurists about the future of sustainable cooling.

**FRI, AUG. 30, 2024
3-3:30pm
MAIN STAGE @ CENTER CAMP**





**WE PLAYED
GAMES TO
INVENT**

We ran a 50ft handmade hacked monopoly game in Center Camp designed to spark invention and collaborative problem solving thru gaming ways to cool sans CO2.





Strangers bonded over passionate conversations about the climate. Kids played with adults as silly ideas morphed into serious inventions. Passersby doodled profound improvements to inventions.