

# Rumor Mill

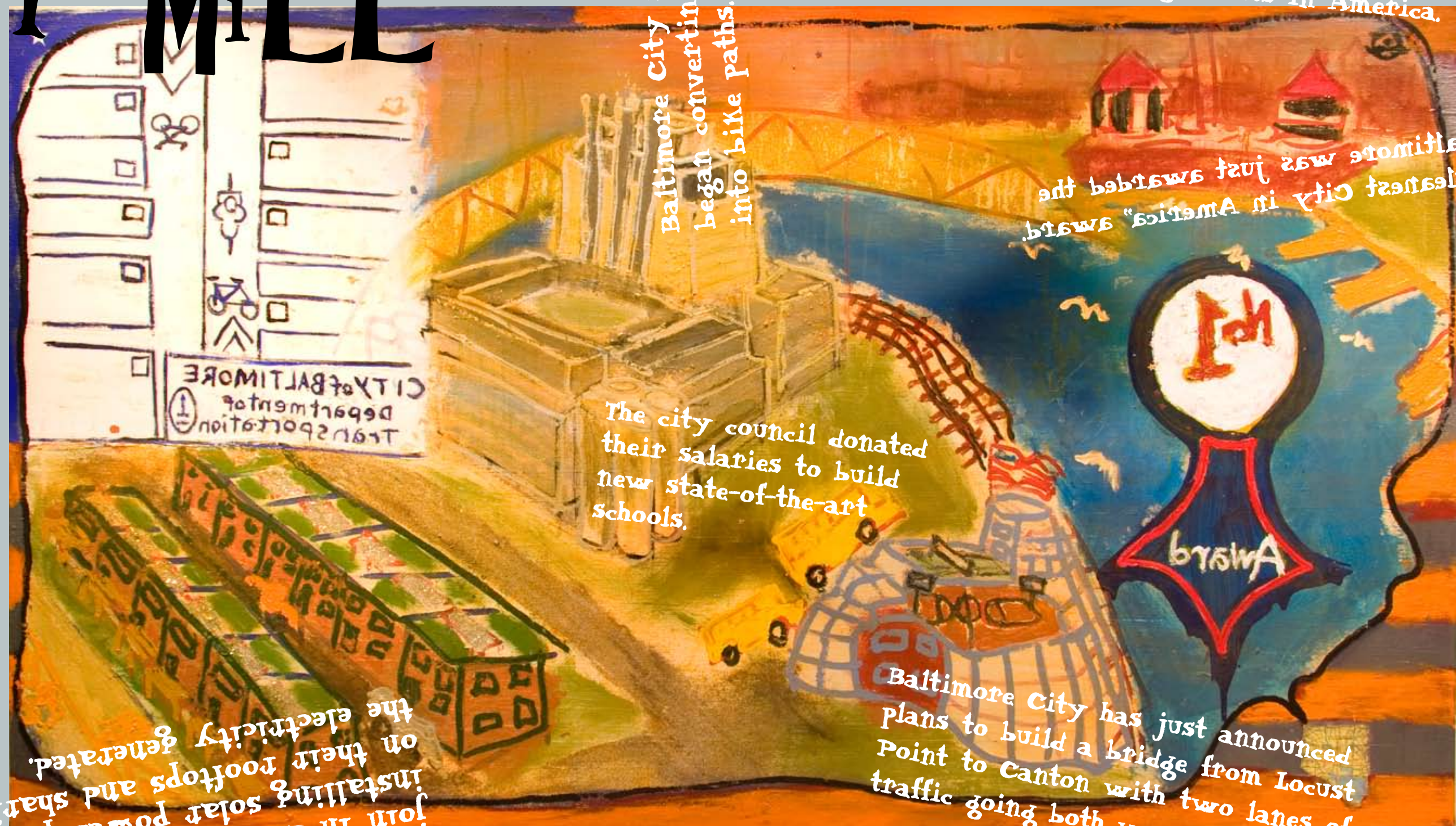
Inspired by the power of ideas and the whimsy of urban legends, Jeffrey and I explored a variety of concepts but kept returning to things such as the Internet, flash mobs, and a kind of viral civic action—or at least the idea of it.

In some ways, we are inverting our own cynicism and attempting to invent a mindset for change and action through, well, lies. What if we systematically spread rumors of amazing things happening in Baltimore—both to inspire a sense of wonder and possibility in our community, and just maybe so that some of them might come true? Like conspiracy theories, but just the opposite: instead of disempowering rumors of shadowy agents secretly controlling events, rumors of ordinary people doing amazing things. Their power is in the idea itself—part fancy, part satire, part liberal dreaming. The best lies work off an alchemical formula of just the right amount of plausibility, a veneer of authority, and generous helpings of the unthinkable.

I am best known for creating the Great Halloween Lantern Parade, which marches into Patterson Park each fall. Although there are certainly floats to be built and stilters and musicians to be organized, really my job is a kind of fanciful crowd control. I work very hard at orchestrating the event so it has an organic flow and my own guiding hand is barely felt. Jeffrey's powerful paintings explore mangled communication and media messages. Together we have aspired to imagine a community in which change is intuitive and action sublime.

—Molly Ross

Artwork by Jeffrey Kent



Groups of townhouses will join in an energy co-op, installing rooftop solar panels on their rooftops and sharing the electricity generated.

## TEAM 4



photo by La Kaye Mbah

Baltimore has the highest per capita rate of working artists in America.

Baltimore was just awarded the "Cleanest City in America" award.

The city council donated their salaries to build new state-of-the-art schools.

Baltimore City has just announced plans to build a bridge from Locust Point to Canton with two lanes of traffic going both ways.

Molly Ross is a multi-disciplinary artist working in performance, sculpture, and community art. She is the creator of the annual Great Halloween Lantern Parade; the director and principal artist of Nana Projects Studio, which specializes in cultural performances that engage communities; and an adjunct faculty member at Maryland Institute College of Art.

Boston native Jeffrey Kent is a self-taught artist and a 2010 MFA candidate in the Hoffberger School of Painting at the Maryland Institute College of Art. In 2003, he founded a space for art studios and an art gallery called the Sub-basement Artist Studios in downtown Baltimore.

For more from this team, go to [www.urbanitebaltimore.com/project/teams/team4](http://www.urbanitebaltimore.com/project/teams/team4).