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■ **after august** MUSEUMS AS MIRRORS

Submitted to the faculty of the School of the Arts of
Virginia Commonwealth University in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree:
Master of Fine Arts in Design/Visual Communication

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Flagler College
BA in Graphic Design 2006

VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY

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after august

MUSEUMS AS MIRRORS



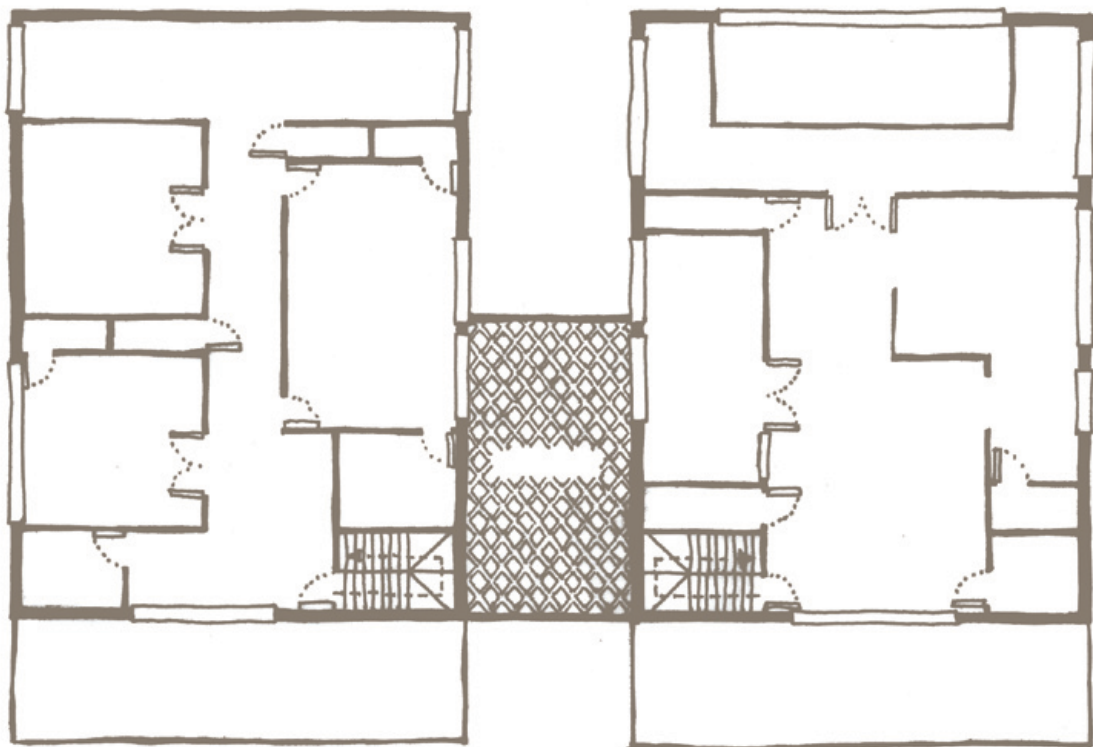
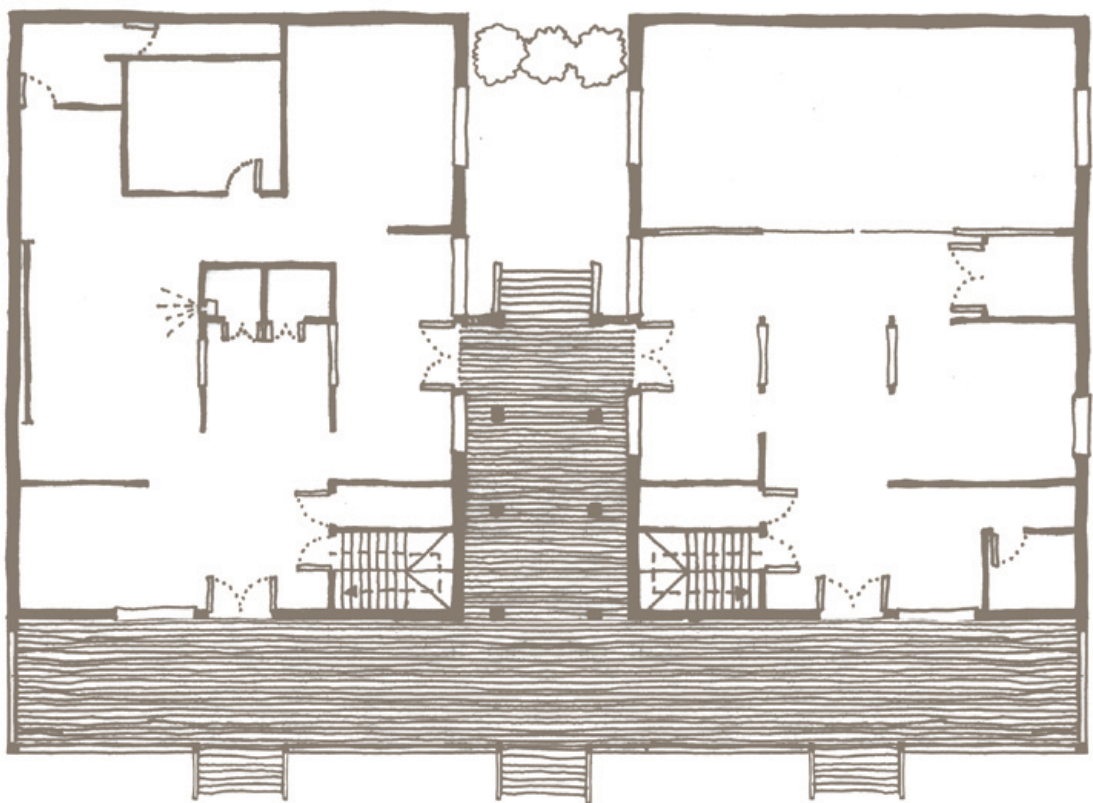
WILLIAM W PINHOLSTER

2008

MFA CREATIVE PROJECT

DESIGN / VISUAL COMMUNICATION

VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY



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THE CITY OF
NEW ORLEANS

LOUISIANA.
to accompany
APPLETONS HAND BOOK OF SOUTHERN TRAVEL
1873.

What cannot
happen when
lifetimes are joined
another.



HAROLD KUSHNER

01.



abstract

THE MORAL OF THE STORY

The After August Museum collects and exhibits an open, user-generated body of content. Its primary objective is to help heal the post-Katrina Lower Ninth Ward community. It is respectful and considerate of the area's established traditions, present concerns, and future goals. The museum assumes multiple shapes and plays multiple roles as it acts as the center of the transitioning community.



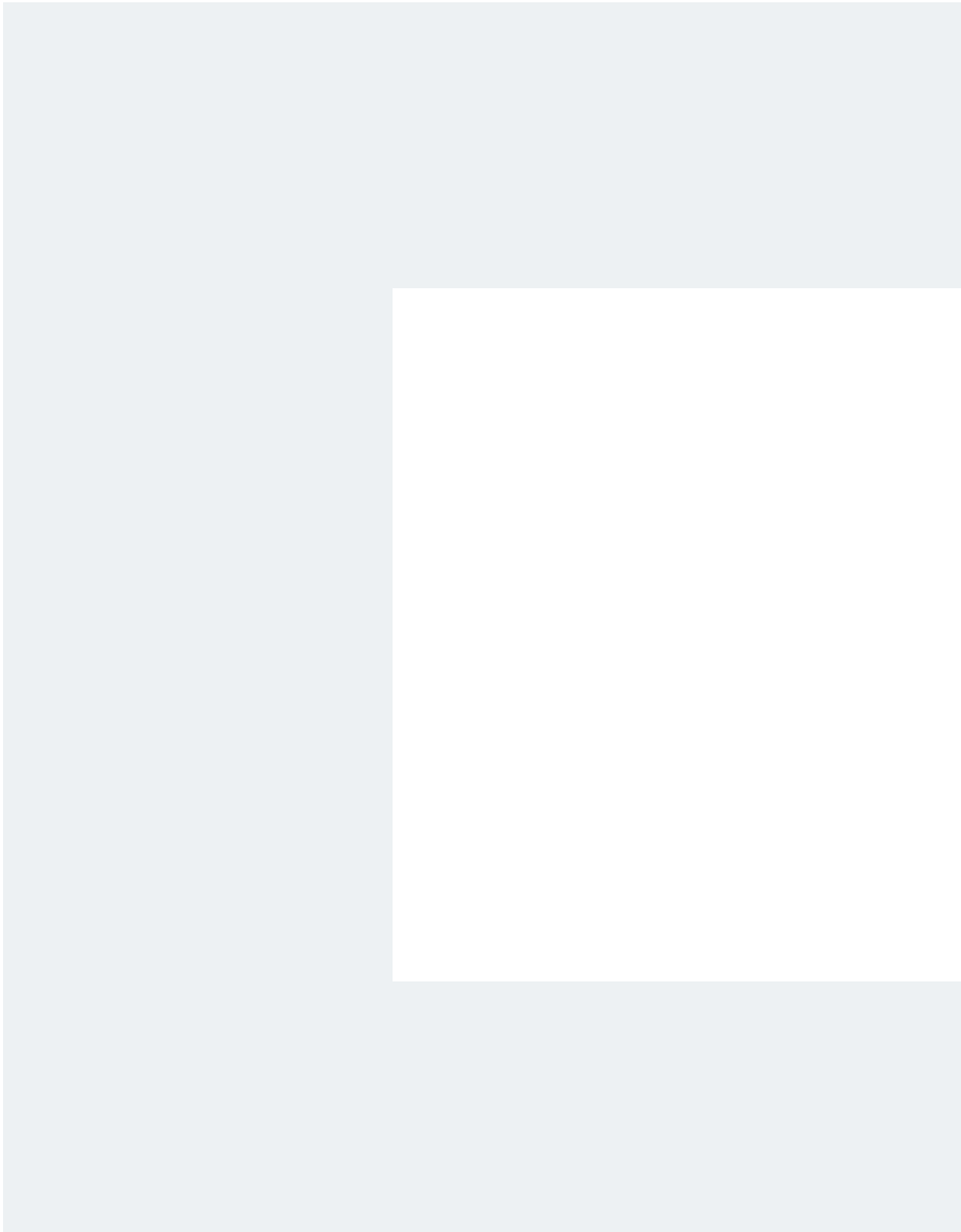
introduction

A HISTORY OF DESIGNED ENVIRONMENTS

I am a designer. As far back as I can remember, I have found or created order in everything that surrounds me as a means of making sense out of my environment. Stones were gathered from a mountain stream near my mother's parents' cabin in South Carolina—this pile for round and brown, this one for round and white, this pile for square and brown, this one for square and orange. Corners of sheets of notebook paper were meticulously aligned perpendicular to pencils, the angle of their blue lines compared to the pencils' ridges (I still do this).

After years of studying graphic design, refound interests in three-dimensional space led me to the field of exhibition design. I am particularly interested in the exchanges that can be made between a fixed physical environment and an everchanging community of visitors.

This project is an exercise in balancing those exchanges, in creating a physical space that receives as much information as it sends. It is an attempt to develop an example of what I believe is the great potential that museums and their design have to facilitate positive social change.



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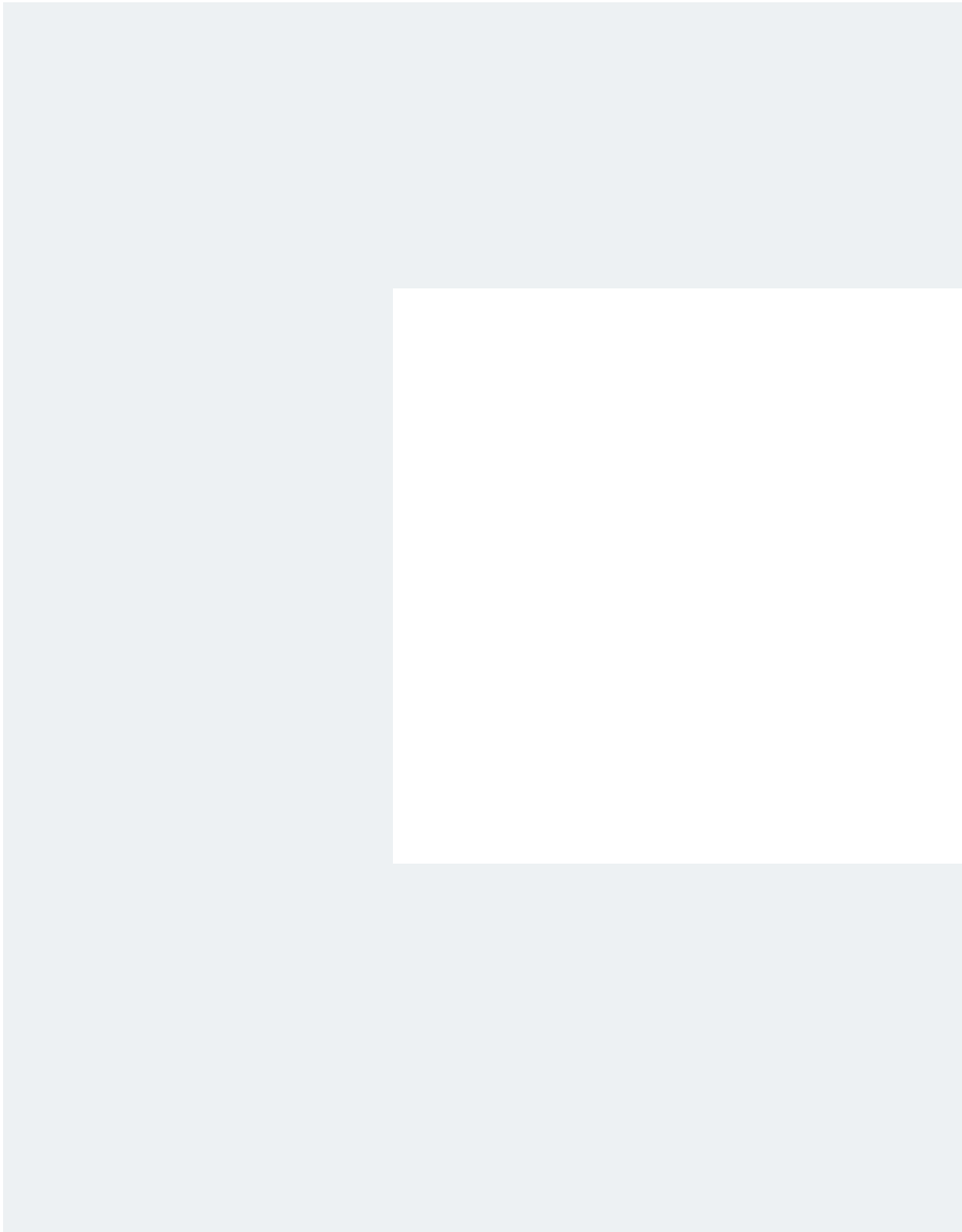
A HISTORY FOUNDED IN STORIES

I am a Southerner. In college I exchanged stories of my upbringing with peers who had grown up in completely different regions of the nation or world. Recognizing contrasts between our stories, I became interested in learning more about what exactly being a Southerner meant. Over the next couple of years it became clear that being a “Southerner” (a term I had defined as separate from other relatable terms like “confederate” or “redneck”) was something of which I could, and should, be proud.

My investigations of Southern culture covered a broad and unfocused range of topics. I read dozens of stories about the *ante bellum* South, Native Americans, Spanish forts, and swamp villages of outlaws. I read books that recounted the struggles of families of crackers (a term widely abused today) living in the undeveloped Floridian scrub by the crack of their bullwhips with which they drove their cattle to sale on the coast. I dug up yellowing newspaper articles that reported the comings and goings of pirates and horse thieves, new developments on Henry Flagler’s railroad as it crawled down the Atlantic coast toward what would become known as Miami, and accounts of marches led across the state by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The mythical past of the South, as good or bad as it may have been, seduced me.

This came as no surprise to those who knew me best. There has never been a time in my life when the recitation of a folk tale or the private whisper of a personal anecdote didn’t demand my attention. From Perseus to Paul Bunyan to my parents’ childhood memories, something in every story turned into part of my own life by which I could live.

As long as I have stories, I’ll have a compass to help me find myself. And I’ve never met anyone who didn’t have a story, something to tell and teach. This project celebrates the stories of people whose teachings are seldom recognized, but highly important to generations of their community to come.



introduction_{CONTINUED}

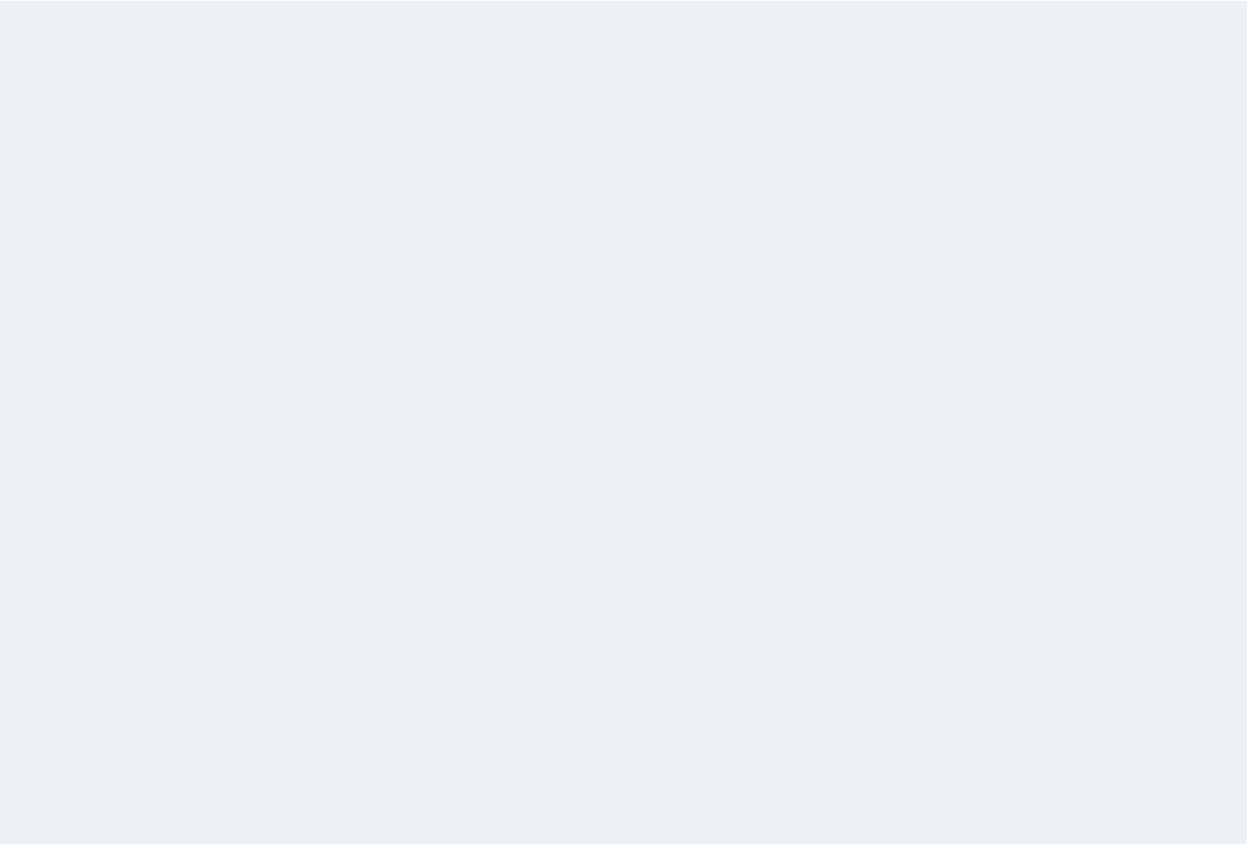
A HISTORY OF FAMILIAR WEATHER

I am a Floridian. At my core there exists some combination of pine trees and pinecones, palm trees and palmettos, sand and salt water, oranges and key limes, and tropical storms and hurricanes. There will never be a time in my life when the warm months of the year fail to remind me of the driving winds, horizontal rains, and bending trees of hurricane season. Having been born in Florida and having lived there for the subsequent 23 years—a period of increasingly frequent storms—I am personally familiar with the phenomenon of a hurricane.

Luckily, I have never known a friend or a member of my family to fall victim to such a storm. The most meteorological devastation I've seen was observed in the aftermath of the storms when every instance of damage was buffered by a relief in knowing I had made it safely through the worst of the danger.

That consistent luxury of relief, my many exemptions from tragedy became, after August of 2005, the source of an incredible impetus to help provide as much relief as I could to the American Southeast's victims of hurricane Katrina. However, as a student trying to finish college and only one among millions eager to help, I never made a chance (or the time) to exercise my sympathy for all those people who, in three days, were delivered tragedy.

This project is, in large part, a product of that sympathy and of the guilt of never having acted on it as so many other people have (among them my own father, the busiest man I know). This project is a big first step in my search for a way to do my part almost three years later.



problem statement

GOOD INTENTIONS

Nearly three years after Katrina, the New Orleans region is still largely in disrepair. While parishes like the famous French Quarter have been completely cleaned of any signs of past disaster, others, specifically those of lower average incomes like the Lower Ninth Ward, have been relatively neglected. A good percentage of residents who evacuated these areas have elected not to return, and with good reason; there isn't much at all to come home to. Those who stayed during the storm and survived or the few that have returned are living in a state of virtual chaos. Despite the nearly constant attention from the media and public service organizations from around the nation, these communities are still struggling. In fact, it may be a stretch to call them communities at all.

In my 23 years of hurricane springs and summers, I became able to count on certain occurrences following the severe weather's passing. One of these predictabilities is a coming-together of neighbors to assess their damages and offer helping hands to those who may need them the most. It was in this time that the rebuilding of the community would begin—the diagnostic first step toward healing. Possibly because so many residents have not returned, possibly because of the sheer amount of damage, the Lower Ninth Ward and areas like it never made this first step on any relative scale. The results: individuals struggling to face the challenge of regrowth on their own and a community with no center—therefore, a decentralization of resources.

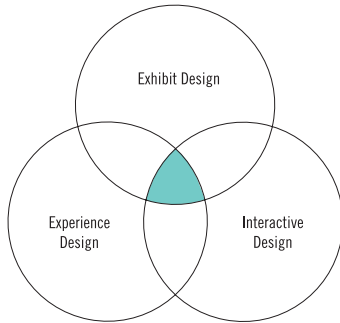
This is where I believe museums can help.

The current residents of the Lower Ninth Ward need more than the average museum. They need a museum that acts as a community center where they can come together to share and distribute resources and information;

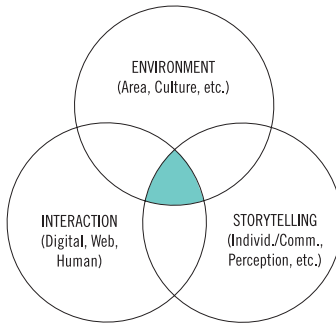
a memorial where the members of the community lost to Katrina can be paid respects and be therapeutically remembered; and a place where their stories of the storm can be collected and presented as true pieces of history from which all who listen can learn. No committee of museum directors and coordinators has the knowledge of the storm that these survivors have. The history of such a disaster belongs to no single person, but to each survivor.

A museum that is to fully meet its potential in serving such desperate communities would necessarily sacrifice its singular, authoritative perspective of the storm as merely an event in national history. It would design itself around personal histories told by those who lived it to an entire world of us who were exempt of its pains. Such a museum, looking past the restrictions of convention, may be able to provide the services requisite in helping the community of the Lower Ninth Ward to heal itself, all the while presenting an honest history of the globally-recognized disaster to an entire world of sympathetic on-lookers who did not experience the storm firsthand.

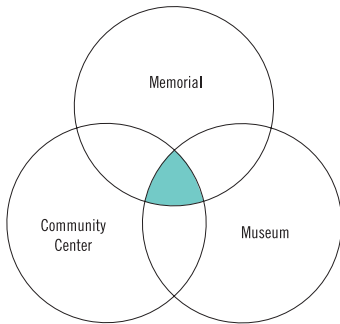
With this project, I present, in the form of its proposal, one such museum. It will be a museum wherein participatory visitors can come together to build a larger, truer perspective of hurricane Katrina and the events that surrounded it by telling their own personal stories of the storm. It will be a museum that relies on visitor-generated content to exist, and therefore feels a continuing responsibility to those visitors and becomes an active member of the community. It will be a museum built on the fundamental principles that storytelling brings people together and brings them understanding, and that understanding and togetherness can heal communities.



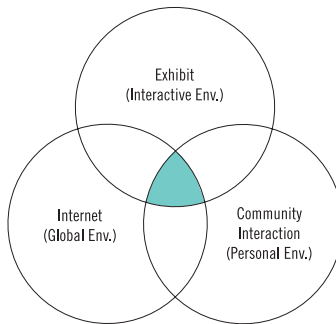
PROJECT REALM



PLANNING SIGNIFICANT FACTORS

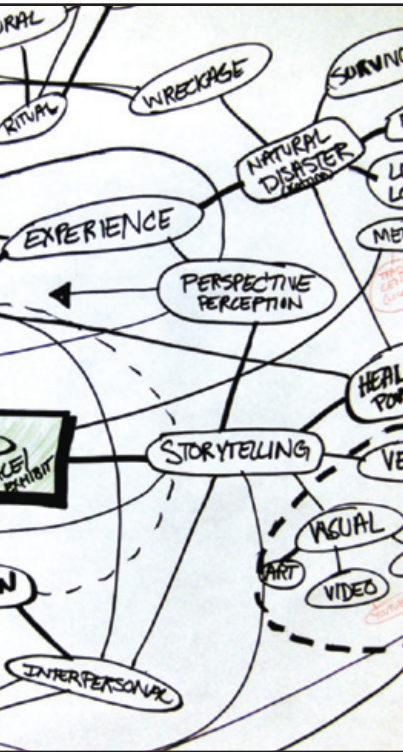
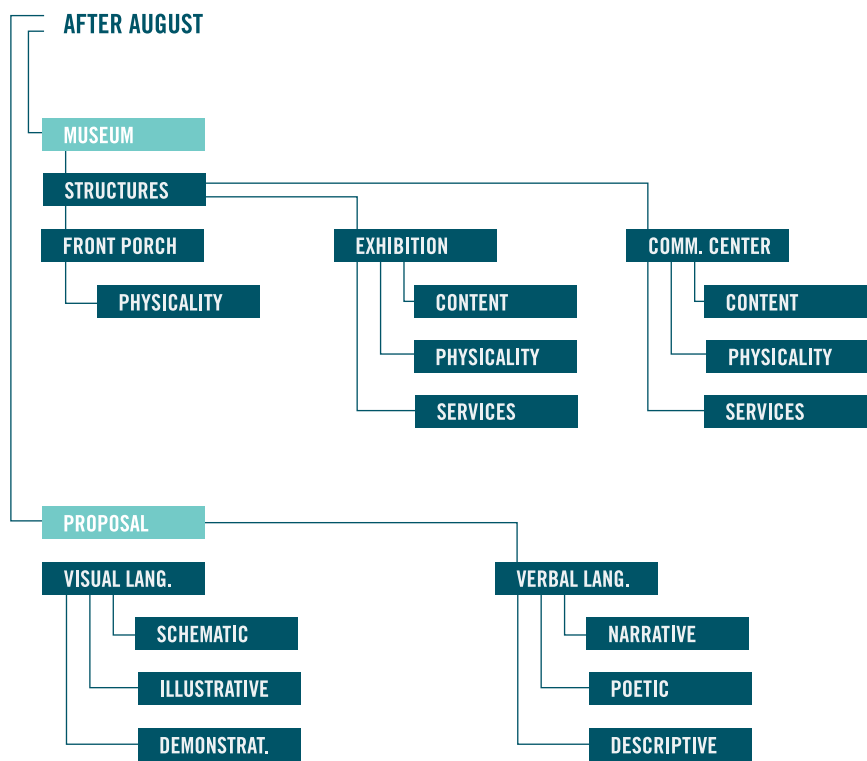


FUNCTIONS



INTERACTION MODES





ALL Early diagrams that helped determine the role and composition of the After August project.



**Coming together
at a beginning,
together is power,
working together
is success.**



**ether is
staying
progress,
ether is**

HENRY FORD

02.



processes & methods

RELATED WORK & PRECEDENTS

After meandering in and out of several related bodies of research into varying contemporary forms of storytelling (hypertext writing, wiki and open source forms of authoring, and a sort of miscellanea of odd and nonlinear forms of publishing, including a small number of experimental exhibitions), I narrowed the focus of my investigations to methods that allow many people's stories to be collected and represented as a grander narrative, communicating a larger meaning, a gestalt message. Then, keeping in mind my chosen content of post-Katrina New Orleans and my objective of healing a community inclusive of both storytellers and their audiences, I set out on a search for people and projects, past and present, that might help to inform the development of my project.

These precedent projects include websites, publications, academic programs, non-governmental organizations, organized events, design theorists, cultural museums, and other forms of public architecture. The following are a few precedents I found in my research that had the most obvious effects on this project.

RIGHT Exhibit space in
Neighborhoods, NOLA's
2426 Bradish Place show.



Out of the Art World

The first project specifically related to New Orleans was a group of fine art installations. The Neighborhoods-NOLA installations took place in residential homes of different wards, or neighborhoods, around the city. Typically the homes were, like many homes in the city, still under construction. The artworks were created by New Orleans residents. The proceeds from the series of three opening receptions went toward rebuilding the particular neighborhood in which the installations occurred.

Neighborhoods-NOLA's installations were influential to my project in their efforts to rebuild their communities through the participation of an audience made up of mostly members of that community. This same method became, with some slight differences, one of the founding principles in my project. Also, the installations' use of existing homes as venues led to another very key concept in the museum's planning.



Architecture's Contribution

Rural Studio was the architectural program that served to inform my project most consistently. Rural Studio is an academic program offered by Auburn University's Architecture school. Its founder, Sam Mockbee, began the program in 1993. Since then Rural Studio has sustained their respectable reputation within the architecture community by designing and constructing homes and community buildings for the residents of Hale County, Alabama, the nation's poorest county. Their designs utilize local materials and often-volunteered local labor, consider local climate and resources, and provide intriguing and functional structures for the community. Throughout the process of my own project, I have tried to be as thoughtful of materials and sensitive to its communities' situation as Rural Studio has been in their projects.

New York-based SHoP Architects' 39571 Project stands in Pass Christian, Mississippi, one of the many areas ravaged by the winds and waters of Hurricane Katrina. SHoP was approached by a Pass Christian resident, offering her plot of land to be the site of a new community center building. While the building was absolutely beautiful and adequately respectful of the surrounding community and environment, it was not exactly the kind of structure I could see being built in post-Katrina New Orleans. Its modern complexities and seemingly foreign form did not seem fitting for a place like the Lower Ninth Ward, where residents were still living in homes without walls and partial ceilings. However, the services this building housed were responsible for a small epiphany that reshaped a noticeable part of my museum. The SHoP community building was a place where the residents of the area could come to do things as practical as their laundry. Reading about the transparent functionality of some of its spaces, I incorporated some purely practical areas into my own project.



TOP Interior of Rural Studio's "Lucy House."

Photo: Timothy Hursley

LOWER Rural Studio's HERO Children's Center in Greensboro, AL.

Photo: Timothy Hursley

RIGHT Front entrance into the laundromat of SHoP Architects' 39571 Project.

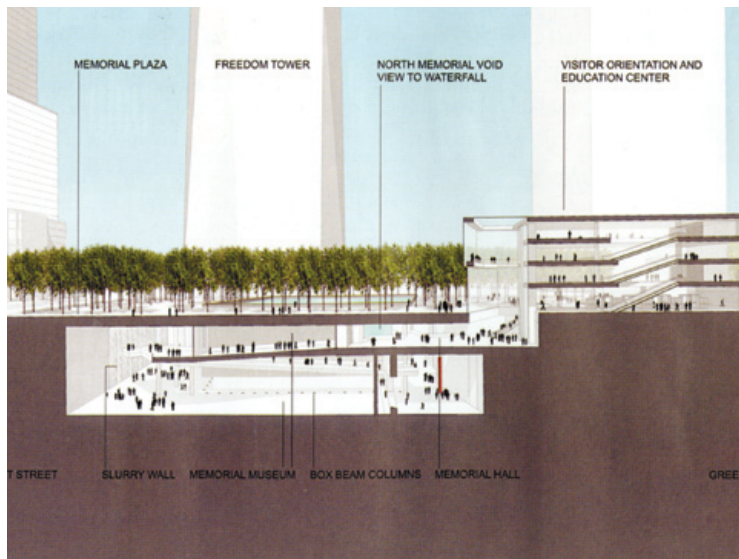
Photo: Roy Zipstein

Within the Design Bubble

Since their birth in Alexandria during the third century B.C.E., museums have experienced an evolving relationship with their audiences. Early museums simply provided education or a sense of wonder to their audiences. Then, as time went on, they offered programs of services beyond the display of objects and information in which visitors could participate. Visitors later began to be considered and consulted by directors and curators during the planning of museum exhibits and programs. Then their experiences and interactions became a central concern in museum planning. Recently, visitors have been given the opportunity to directly contribute, as individuals

or in groups, to the content the museum exhibits to all of its audience, which could extend via Internet around the world. This application of user-generated content, predominantly a web-based methodology, to the physical world of museums was my primary focus in researching related museum and exhibition designs.

The earliest examples are a collection of exhibition projects designed by Manhattan-based firm, Local Projects. They are probably best known for their involvement in the development of the Story Corps booth and interface. This booth is a one-room traveling exhibit that invites pairs of visitors to collectively tell their story and undergo an



LEFT Schematic of Local Project's plans for the World Trade Center Memorial Museum.

OPPOSITE Local Project's digital, interactive StoryMap exhibit.

RIGHT Local Project's Story Corps Booth in NY Public Library.



interview. The audio of these interactions are recorded inside the booth, represented on the exterior of the booth, and, with the help of National Public Radio broadcasts, podcasts, and websites, delivered digitally for worldwide enjoyment and enlightenment. Local Projects is currently in the process of creating an exhibit for the World Trade Center Memorial Museum that is based on similar principles, just executed through different media applications. The Memorial exhibit will be a collector and presenter of the stories and memories its audience—also extended globally via the Internet—as of September 11, 2001. The archive of stories becomes a portrait of the day that is, at the same time, personal and international.

While these approaches to exhibit design and museum curation are impressive, they do not directly benefit their audiences. Their main purpose is to represent a collection of stories to expand awareness of the issues pertaining to those stories to a secondary, unfamiliar audience. In my project, I have tried to apply these methods of collecting stories through different sorts of media and interactions to a situation that directly gives back to the contributory audience, a community to which the museum belongs.

There are, however, other design groups around the world beginning to explore these kinds of museum experiences. Of this very small list, ESI Design is responsible for the project that was most relevant to my project. Headed by the firm's Director of Creative Strategy, Gideon D'Arcangelo, ESI's exhibits for the American Family Immigration History Center on Ellis Island both allow visitors to reference information already stored in Ellis Island's records and, more interestingly, allow visitors to input new facts about their family's history that they have gathered on their own. These additions can include written, photographic and audio information. To reach a greater audience, an accompanying website allows Internet visitors to contribute in the same ways. While this is, in intention, very much in line with my project, such high-tech interactives may be economically insensitive and unsuitable for the post-Katrina situation in New Orleans.



TOP Photos of damage caused by Katrina in the Lower Ninth Ward.

Photos: [tergiversation](#) (Flickr.com)

APPROACH

I began reading and collecting stories from survivors of Hurricane Katrina, stories similar to those that might appear in the museum that was beginning to take shape as my project developed. I found and read books of edited collections of these stories, followed personal and topical blogs, and searched out relevant newspaper articles. I listened to podcasts, downloaded audio files, and watched documentary films. Having a collection of stories being told through a variety of media was very important to me. I hoped to build a body of stories that represented a wide spectrum of the different kinds of accounts of the New Orleans area during and after Katrina. I looked for stories about lost loved ones, missing persons and pillaged properties. I also wanted stories of lives saved, heroes and miracles. And, at the same time, I did not discount the value of smaller stories of odd observations, facetious adventure tales, or conspiracy theories. As a means of maintaining objectivity, or at least an informed, broader perspective toward the content, I made no effort to filter the stories I found. In fact, the opposite is true. Each story was as vital in shaping the vision of the Katrina and Post-Katrina experiences as every other story. While it was difficult at first not to overlook the eccentricities and nuances, to search out only the dramatic and impressive, I soon developed the habit of archiving the stories before having even read them through.

Eventually, though, I did have to read them, and it was an emotional undertaking. I have become quite invested in stories of the New Orleans area, even contemplate a move there after my studies conclude. For this, I have taken very seriously every decision I've had to make in the progress of the project.

One of the earliest and most significant of these kinds of decisions I had to make determined how realistically or hypothetically I wanted the product of this project to be. On one hand, a realistic or practical approach would probably result in more rational responses to the problems and solutions I present and, additionally, be a more likely candidate to be proposed as something that could actually be seen through to fruition. On the other, a hypothetical

approach to solving the problems I've given myself might produce a more poetic and, at the same time, more innovative end more likely to inspire other similar projects into realization. I ultimately decided on what I thought to be a healthy balance of the two. I would take every available opportunity to keep the design of the museum and its proposal realistic, short of financial concerns. My time is better spent on matters greater than money; being free of monetary burdens would allow me to entertain the hypothetical. I would also take for granted the hypothetical open-mindedness of my audience, considering that any person's refusal to stray from more traditional forms or roles of museums and proposals would never be under my control.

This means that, in considering the architecture of the museum, I first did research into the architecture that already exists in the area where the building I was planning would stand. I also needed to consider the materials locally available to build and maintain the structure. But then I developed a set of services the museum would provide under the assumption that there would be money to pay the employees of the museum who would actually be providing those services. This balance was a constant difficulty. In the case of this project I found the line separating the involved realities and hypotheticals to be quite blurred.

One reality I could not, however, look past was my inability to actually build the museum itself as a product of my project. This, combined with my now personal attachment to the idea of this project and its content, resulted in my refusal to narrow my focus to any incomplete portion of the museum. In my mind, every detail of the museum I have planned is inextricably connected to every other part of it. Without the whole, the magic was gone for me. These two facts are what necessitated this project's product to be the proposal for the museum that I had been researching and planning. This then would add the extra challenge of adequately communicating both the physicality of the museum and the experience of it in book form.



ALL Photos taken at Belle Isle and Chincoteague, Virginia.

DEVELOPMENT & DELIMITATIONS

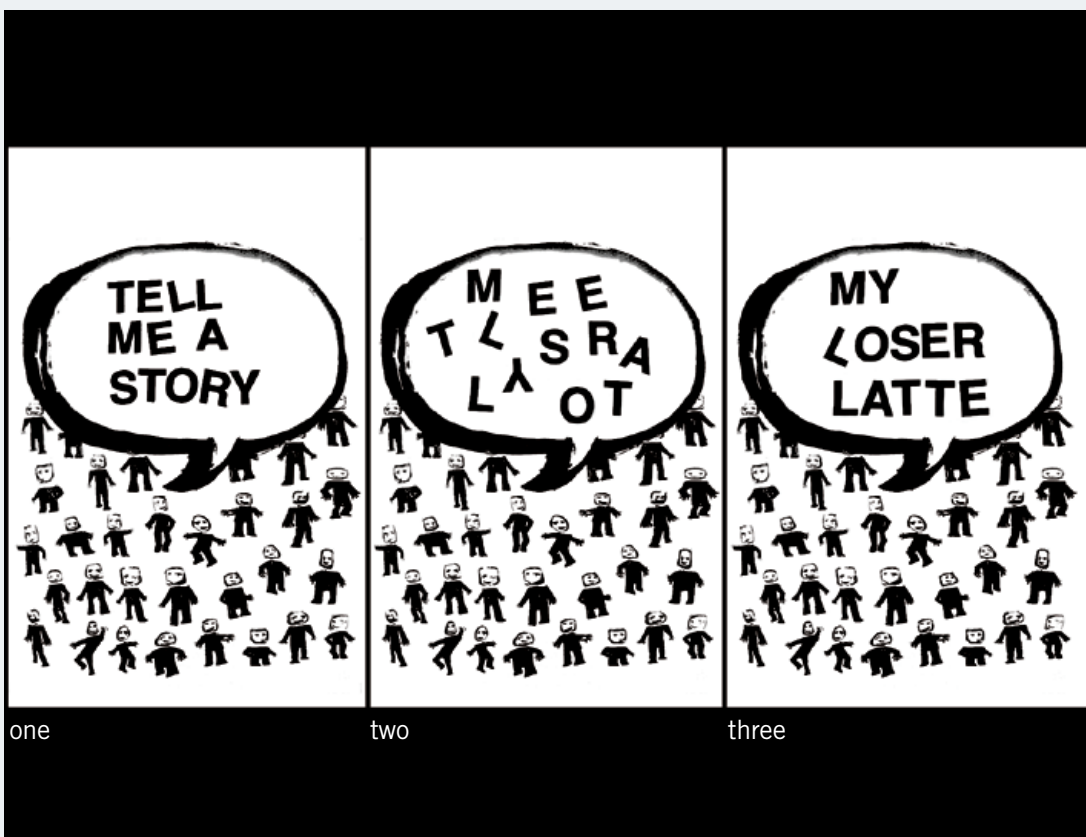
Having done nearly all of the research and planning of the museum described in my project early in my process, I had a very clear picture of what I wanted it to be before I really began working, giving it form. It goes without saying that I also had very clear ideas of what I did not want my project to be.

I have had enough experience with storms to know that these people and their stories deserve my greatest sympathy and respect. It is because of this respect that I, after a tangential turn or two, realized that I could not empathize with Katrina's survivors. Therefore, I would not attempt to recreate or represent the impact of their experiences with my own words and images.

From the beginning, I have been aware of all the political and social controversy surrounding the events proceeding, during, and following hurricane Katrina. It has never been my intention that this project, or the museum it describes, be shaped by or play into any of these issues. Conversely, it has consistently been my intention for it to be shaped by all of them—universally inclusive rather than universally exclusive. I do not see it as my place to decide whose opinions or beliefs are valid and whose are not.

As in many design problems, the restraints in solving the problems inherent in my project helped to shape its final solution. Limitations of time and location kept me

from actually visiting and observing the situation in New Orleans firsthand. This, being probably my most notable limitation, played an obvious role in forming my project. It was not possible for my proposal, unlike most, to solely feature photography of local wreckage sites, neighborhood street scenes, or residents' portraits. These were not resources feasibly available to me, so, in telling the story of my museum of stories, it was necessary to illustrate the situation with more poetic language and symbolic imagery. This, after primarily being seen as an unrecoverable shortcoming, became an opportunity to incorporate features not often found in museum proposals. Hence, the initial worry brought on by limitation was resolved and transformed into a unique and endearing aspect of my proposal.



one

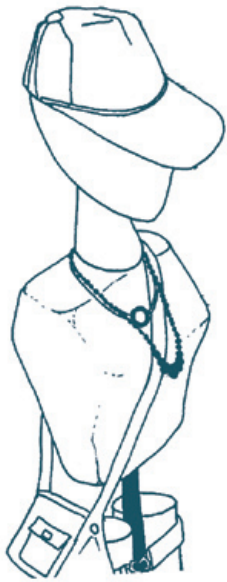
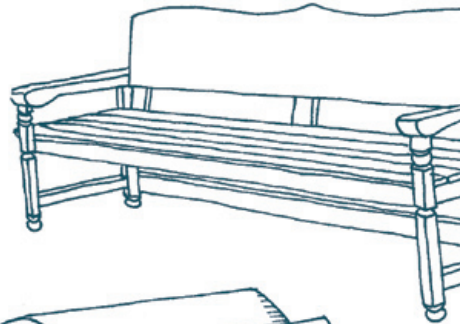
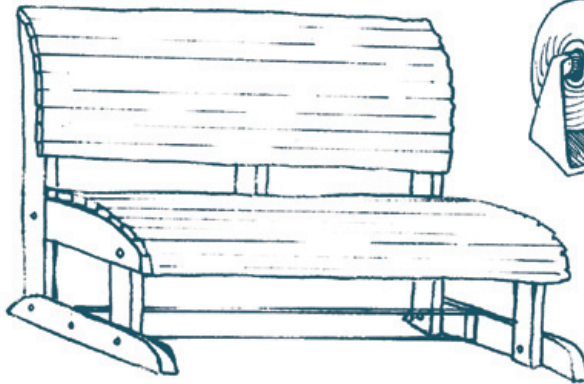
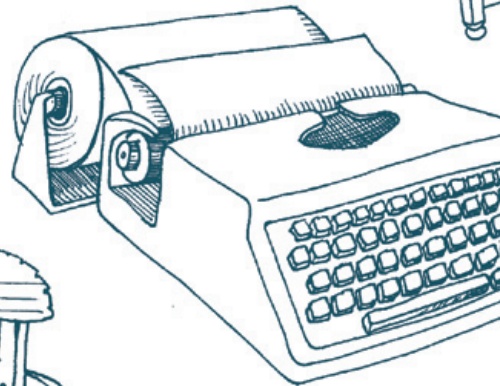
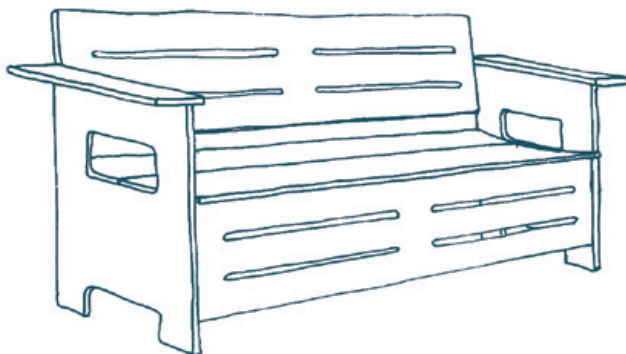
two

three



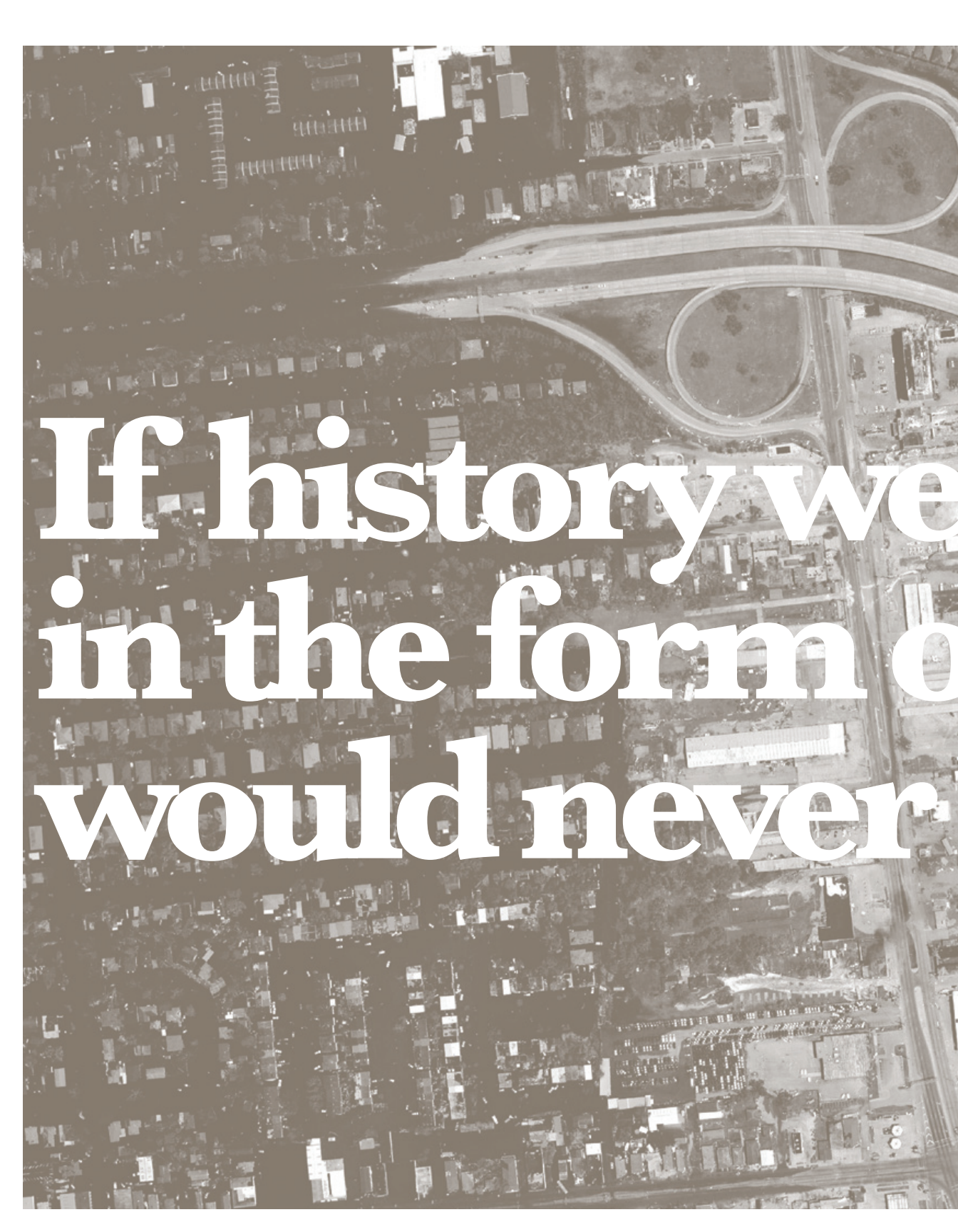
OPPOSITE *Interactive poster used during candidacy presentation at the end of the first year.*

LEFT *Initial study of museum's structure, architectural model.*





ALL Sketches of exhibit furniture in the After August Museum.



**If history were
in the form of
would never**

An aerial, black and white photograph of a complex highway interchange with multiple lanes and overpasses. The surrounding area includes industrial buildings, parking lots, and some greenery. The image has a grainy, high-contrast aesthetic.

**are taught
of stories, it
be forgotten.**

RUDYARD KIPLING

03.



creative project

THE THING ITSELF

The following pages contain the complete proposal for the After August Museum.

“Up to now much of museums’ time has been devoted to building their collections and sharing them through ‘outreach’ to the larger world. Now they must help us create the new world of ‘inreach,’ in which people, young and old alike, can ‘reach in’ to museums through experiences that will help give value and meaning to their own lives and at the same time stretch and enlarge their perceptions of the world.”

from "An Agenda for
American Museums in the
Twenty-First Century," 1999

■
HAROLD SKRAMSTAD
*President Emeritus of the Henry
Ford Museum and Greenfield
Village in Dearborn, Michigan*

*Restoring and
preserving New
Orleans' Lower
Ninth Ward and
its stories.*



In August 2005 one of the gravest disasters the U.S. has ever known blew in from the Gulf of Mexico. Hurricane Katrina finally dissipated days later after having made her way up the eastern seaboard. To date, the storm has cost the nation about 1,900 lives and \$90 billion in damages, making it the costliest and deadliest hurricane to attack American soil. Countless families were scattered to other parts of the nation, displaced by the storm that took their homes and loved ones. Those who stayed or have returned are slowly making progress as they rebuild their homes and attempt to bring order to their lives.

INTRODUCTION

THE CONTEXT

Exaggerated by the recent nationwide sub-prime mortgage crisis, the housing situation in New Orleans is dire, to say the least. Around 182,000 homes were lost to Katrina in New Orleans alone (of which only two-thirds have been rebuilt). The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) responded to the initial need for housing by providing trailer homes for the displaced residents staying in the area—many are still displaced in other areas of the country. Recently FEMA has begun reclaiming some of the trailers, leaving those living in them to search elsewhere for shelter. There has been talk that the Agency will soon begin to require rent payments from the inhabitants of the remaining trailers. Additionally, for home-owning residents attempting to restore their houses back to livable conditions, much of the financial aid the government planned to provide is yet to be seen. Of the 182,000 homes destroyed by the storm, only 41,000 homes' renovations have been helped along by government checks.

Regretfully, it is a common belief among the many still in need of help that the federal government and its agencies should not be relied upon for assistance in restoration, whether it be of particular homes or of public services. A very many citizens have given up hope of governmental aid and now count only on their neighbors, their families, and themselves for help.

Among the damaged, and still recovering parishes of New Orleans, the Lower Ninth Ward bears the deepest and freshest wounds. The low percentage of residents there, trying desperately to regain control over their lives, are facing extremely hard times.



There is a simple thing that happens after the passing of a hurricane. However simple though, it has unparalleled effects. When the clouds have cleared and the evacuated neighbors return there is an information exchange. Through conversations in the street or neighbor-to-neighbor phone calls, damages are assessed, knowledge is shared, and resources become collectivized. It is an informal centralization of residents, each person bringing to the group a specific way of providing for all.

Whether because most of the residents of the Lower Ninth Ward have not returned or because the all-time high crime rates have neighbors scared into sheltered isolation, people there have not been able to come together as a community capable of helping each individual and the parish as a whole.

Sometimes something as small as a single building can act as the nucleus of a community: a directory of all its resources, a home for its history, a seed for its future.



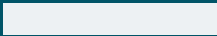
*Home in the Lower Ninth Ward
damaged by Hurricane Katrina.*

I heard from my aunt last night that my cousin Denise made it out of New Orleans; she's at her brother's in Baton Rouge. From what she told me: her mother, a licensed practical nurse, was called in to work on Sunday night at Memorial Hospital (historically known as ... to those of us from N.O.). Denise decided to stay with



they were running on generators, there was no air conditioning. Tuesday the levees broke, and water began rising. They moved patients upstairs, saw boats pass by on what used to be streets. They were told that they would be evacuated, that buses were coming. Then they were told they would have to walk to the nearest intersection, Napoleon and S. Claiborne, to await the buses. They waded out in hip-deep water, only to stand at the intersection, on the neutral ground (what y'all call the median) for 3½ hours. The buses came and took them to the Ernest Morial Convention Center.

Denise said she thought she was in hell. They were there for 2 days, with no water, no food, no shelter. Denise, her mother (63 years old), her niece (21 years old), and 2-year-old grandniece. When they arrived, there were already thousands of people there. They were told that buses were coming. Police drove by, windows rolled up, thumbs up signs.



OVERVIEW

o.05	FLOOR PLAN
o.08	MISSION AND CONCEPT
o.09	<i>A Place For the Present</i>
o.10	<i>A Home For Past</i>
o.10	<i>A Seed For the Future</i>

After August

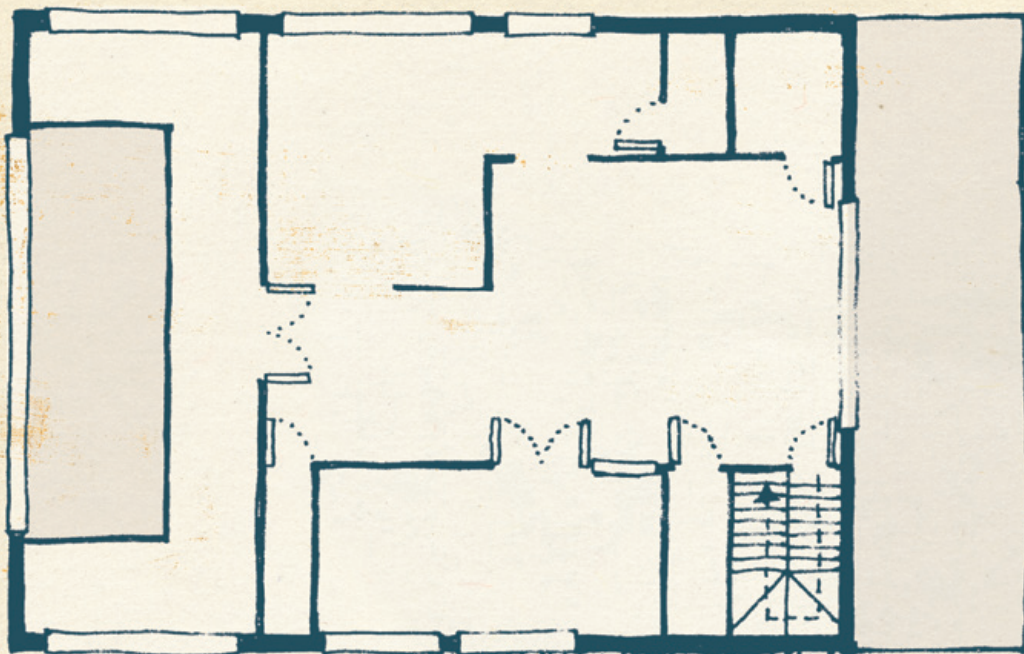
Somewhere beneath a sun
that occasionally disappears
and out beyond the places where
passing time and traveling money combine,
further on than the wind
that blows the sounds of smoky brass
through iron flora, over patterned paths,
sleeps again the torso of the sea
one arm wrapped calmly around
the hips of our city
where we give those restful
tidal dreams our blessings
breathing, in the same breaths,
a trembling and unconvinced hope
for our lives, once overtaken
by a tossing nightmare of a summer sea,
to somehow find again
a cadence, calm and confidently without
the alien desperation we've felt growing
within the walls of our homes and whining
in the hinges of aluminum signs
swaying streetside and ignored,
without the malicious hush
that replaced the familiarity
of chattering foot traffic
in the last anger years
after august.



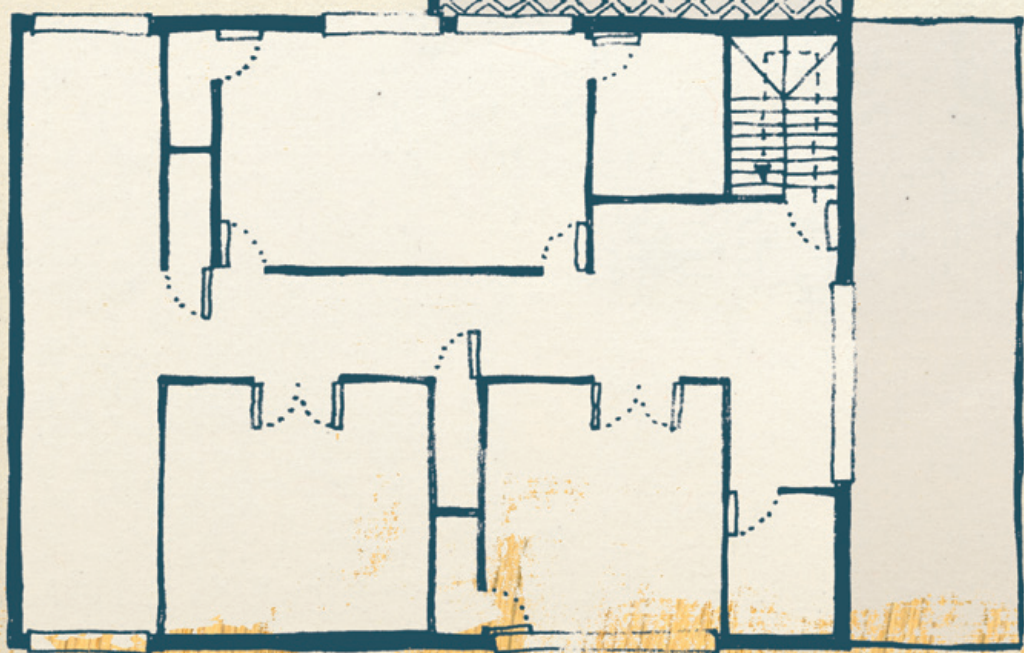




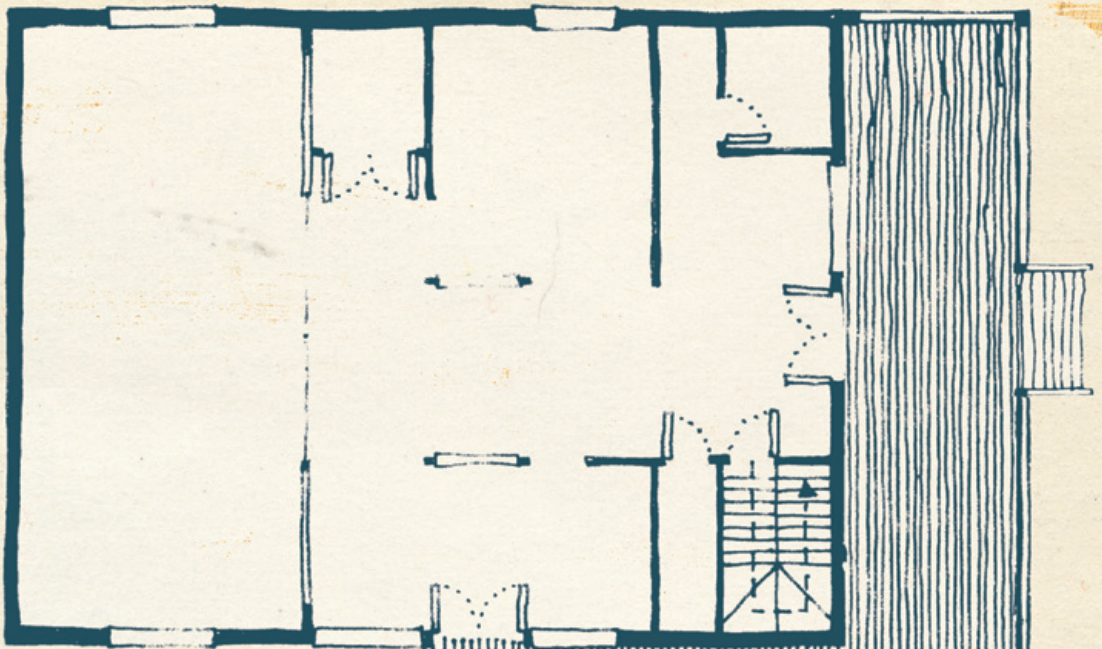
EXHIBITION BUILDING
Second Floor



COMMUNITY BUILDING
Second Floor



EXHIBITION BUILDING
First Floor



COMMUNITY BUILDING
First Floor



AFTER AUGUST

Overview

FLOOR PLAN

OVERVIEW

MISSION AND CONCEPT

The After August Museum serves as a center of the Lower Ninth Ward community. It is a home for its memories and its aspirations.

The After August Museum is comprised of three main elements. These elements define the organization of this proposal. While they are presented in individual sections and have the potential to function independently,

each element serves its part in creating a greater whole. All elements of the After August Museum working together or individually help the Lower Ninth Ward community to heal itself in the wake of disaster.

Two of the Museum's main elements take the shape of residential houses. From the outside, the houses appear rather typical and fairly common to the area. The remaining element—a vast porch links the two houses in space and function. The three are inextricably linked to the community of the Lower Ninth Ward. Among other things, each element addresses the community according to its relationship to time.

A PLACE FOR THE PRESENT

The After August Museum's large front porch does more than structurally bridge the two buildings. It serves as a place for stories to be told and conversations to be had. Physically, it is a platform protected from weather yet open to the environment. Beyond that, it is a perch from which to look out on the goings-on, a place to quietly sit and contemplate or jovially discuss the here and now.



Home in the Lower Ninth Ward that has been abandoned by an owner that could not gather resources to repair it.



A HOME FOR THE PAST

The first of the three elements is a renovated home divided into a number of exhibit spaces. Through a variety of media and interactions, the exhibits collect and present content made up entirely of the stories members of the Lower Ninth Ward have about their experiences during and following Hurricane Katrina.

A SEED FOR THE FUTURE

Since Katrina, many of the residents currently living in the affected areas of the Gulf Coast region of the United States have vocalized how difficult it is without order, a life beyond any predictability, to try and manage. The last of the three elements of the After August Museum helps to provide such an order or, at least, works as a tool to help in the fight for its restoration. Serving to collect and organize any information and resources that may be needed, this second house helps members of the community make the next step in the rebuilding of their homes and lives.

In the following pages, this proposal will describe the physical and functional workings of each of the three elements of the After August Museum.

A lot of my family, they didn't even want to leave. Everybody in New Orleans didn't really think it was going to hit. So I had to make them atleast go to a hotel with me. It was safer than the house, and I didn't have a vehicle large enough to handle my whole family, my children, my couple of grand I got three ro came.

After the storm out a few places to see how I talked to interstate where first floor of me turn around

I turned around wife," They had laid down hour. When of water. I

leave the hotel, because they didn't have any lights or water. I told my wife I wanted everybody to leave, but I wanted to make sure everybody leaves. A guy took his truck and brought my mother-in-law, my wife, and my children to my mother-in-law's house. But the truck took in a lot of water and he didn't come back for another trip.



... sister, her and a packed, but the hurricane

nd, checked friend's house last person as on the above the e was making on the interstate.

I told my " And I tes to an t four feet was trying to