

Architectural Hauntology

Revealing Ghosts within the Built
Environment

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the Built Environment

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Masters of Architecture

Thesis Studio 2022-2023

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*“Since flesh can’t stay,
We pass the words along.”*

-Erica Jong, “Dear Keats”

Acknowledgments

Thank you to all of those who helped me along the way. First to my Advisors, Virginia Stanard and Fr. Gilbert Sunghera, who helped me right the ship when things looked dire. Thank you to my peers and professors for all of your criticism and encouragement. Thank you to my friends for helping me stay sane when I was seriously stressed. And thank you to my family for supporting me all the way.

Thank you Dad, who could not see the end of my journey, but whose presence I have felt for every step of it. I know you're proud. I miss you.

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Abstract

This thesis is about ghosts as they manifest within and influence our experience of the built environment. In this study, ghosts are defined as things of the past which are no more, yet they affect our experiences nevertheless. This thesis employs a qualitative methodology, studying and refining the knowledge of architectural ghosts by reviewing previous literature, collecting memories and experiences through interviews, and the creation of interpretive art.

Through the study of numerous philosophers, sociologists, anthropologists, architectural theorists, and other thinkers, our unique, individual experience of being haunted is explored. Previous definitions of architectural ghost vary wildly, yet they all include an undercurrent which suggests a broader umbrella definition. This thesis seeks to question what an architectural ghost is; how the past helps to build our own understandings of the built environment; and how architects can and have used these “Ghosts” in their designs.

As this thesis is particularly focused on the phenomenological aspects of this topic, it employs methods which experiment with the definitions and unique phenomena being explored. These methods include conducting interviews and using social media to obtain personal memories of specific locations; crafting interpretive, mixed media art pieces, films, and installations; and writing poetic narratives to further develop the atmospheres created by these works.

Ultimately, this thesis seeks to create a framework for evaluating how ghosts manifest in architecture as well as how they influence our experience of the spaces they inhabit. This framework is then applied in two different scenarios. The first scenario details “ghost hunting” within the University of Detroit Mercy Architecture Building. The second suggests different routes on how to “reincarnate” the ghosts of the recently-demolished Allen Park Theater. This is all towards emphasizing storytelling and framing architecture in our own unique realities, exploring and confronting our pasts in interesting ways, and- perhaps- beginning to explore more alternatives to historic preservation.

Thesis Statement

Introduction

In this thesis, the phenomenon being studied is the influence of our collective and individual pasts on our present experiences within the built environment. This relationship is framed through the metaphor of ghosts- things from the past which haunt us. These hauntings are not inherently a bad thing, as so often depicted in popular culture, but can range from traumatic to nostalgic based on the past being recalled by the user. The way in which these hauntings manifest within the built environment, and how users are influenced by them is elaborated upon as well.

Supplemental to this is an exploration of specific phenomena which impact the experience of the built environment. The first investigates how we experience immaterial qualities through the lens of Rudolf Steiner's concept of anthroposophy- the idea that human beings can perceive spiritual realms of reality through intuition. Next evaluated is how ghost stories and memories intermingle, creating "Ghostlore," as described by Prof. Elizabeth Tucker. And finally, how our imaginations affect the poetics of space described by Gaston Bachelard is investigated.

In the end, applications of this framework are presented, through an examination of the ghosts in an existing building, and the transmigration of ghosts into new spaces.

Background

Architectural ghosts have been an oft studied phenomenon, but one which is seldom agreed upon. Definitions range wildly. Scholar Jeanette Bicknell defined them as buildings which remain in the cultural memory even after they are demolished. Architectural Theorist Antoine Picon wrote on the field of architecture itself being haunted by all of the aspects of the past which influence the designer in the present, including things like precedents, canon, styles, aesthetics, and societal values. Artist Sunil Bald likened trauma so intense that it becomes palpable in the very environment (such as at the sites of the World Trade Center, or Hiroshima) to being haunted. Sociologist Michael Mayerfeld Bell took the concept of the Genius Loci or Spirit of a Place as being the symbolic presence of a location's previous occupants which can be felt.

The definition of ghost used in this thesis draws most closely to another sociologist, Avery Gordon, who wrote about how the actions of the past linger in the present and often lead to marginalization and oppression, as well as the field of "Hauntology" coined by Jacques Derrida. This thesis' definition, while not focusing specifically on the traumatic elements of previous definitions, views ghosts as being aspects of the past which no longer exist and influence our current experiences, common through-lines in each of the previous definitions.

Further reading comes in the form of theorists such as Rudolf Steiner, who wrote on the phenomenological experience of immaterial worlds. His theory of anthroposophy explored how humans can sense "spiritual" phenomena such as communication, thoughts, and personality. Also under consideration are the works of folklorist Carl W. von Sydow and his classifications of prose and oral legends; Prof. Elizabeth Tucker, and her studies of ghostlore in universities; as well as the seminal work *The Poetics of Space* by Gaston Bachelard.

Intent of Research

This thesis is most concerned with the phenomenological exploration of our memories and how “ghosts” impact our perceptions of the present. Through the synthesis of previous understandings, we can begin to frame and understand what ghosts are as they relate to architecture. The experiments and studies presented in this thesis begin to probe into questions of what ghosts are, how we are influenced by ghosts, how we experience ghosts, and ultimately, how can ghosts be utilized by designers to create more thoughtful, experiential places.

Thesis

Despite much disagreement around the topic, architecture deserves a place within the discourse around ghosts, as we have many tools for identifying and designing alongside these ghosts. This thesis seeks to refine architects’ knowledge of ghosts. In the end, a framework for evaluating the ghosts within a space, along with their effects, is produced, as well as depicting how these ghosts could be studied and designed with.

Evidence

This thesis has drawn heavily from existing research, historical documentation, interviews, and interpretive art pieces to explore the phenomenon of architectural ghosts and memory. Specific studies include:

- Studies of previous theorists have allowed for a synthesis of concepts which has become the main thesis point.
- Studies of previous theorists and precedential art pieces, which support the idea of feeling or sensing memory despite its

immateriality.

-Collections of personal memories which relate to feeling the past, which begins to show how memory and our senses are related.

-Collection of personal memories about the Detroit Mercy Architecture Building through one-on-one interviews with students and faculty, which begins to build on the idea that memories influence our individual perceptions.

-Interpretive art installation which attempts to stylistically disseminate the above-mentioned collected stories, seeking to see how others' memories transform our own experiences.

-Historical research about the Detroit Mercy Architecture Building to better understand the historical context.

-Exploration and documentation of memory traces within the Detroit Mercy Architecture Building, to begin developing an understanding of the physical traces left by architectural ghosts.

-Historical Research about the Allen Park Theater to better understand the historical context of this new site.

-Collection of Personal Memories about the Allen Park Theater through Facebook Surveys, to better understand the specific poetics of this unique space.

-Interpretive film which attempts to explore how these collected stories impact the poetics of space.

-Photo Collage which attempts to explore the concept of a memory landscape which extends beyond the walls of the Allen Park Theater.

-Interpretive collages inspired by precedent analyses which suggest future developments of the site of the Allen Park Theater which use its architectural ghosts.

Criticism

This thesis is highly subjective, and thus can be contested by anyone who does not share a similar interpretation of experience. The criteria for this thesis's definition of Architectural Ghost could also be debated. One major element which appears in many other definitions is the idea that hauntings and ghosts are inherently traumatic or generally negative, yet this aspect is not carried over into this thesis's broader look at the phenomenon. Additionally, the use of pseudoscientific theorists such as Rudolf Steiner could be problematic to credibility.

Limitations

As this thesis is framed around the inherent subjectivity of perception, there is no meaningful way to argue against the point that someone's perception may not align with this theory. This thesis' definition lacking the common aspect of trauma as it relates to ghosts is also valid. However, the reason for excluding this aspect was to include the memories of the past which are positive, as well as the negative.

The use of some pseudoscience, such as Steiner's Anthroposophy is not included because of a whole-hearted belief in the concept as a science, but in its application to the theoretical and hypothetical. This still becomes a challenge, as delving deep into the broader Anthroposophical movement brings forth era-appropriate, but still immoral and reprehensible conceptions of race.

In regards to limits of this thesis's process, while the surveys put out into facebook groups were useful for connecting with older demographics who may have experienced a certain building, it also limited the sample size in other ways. During an exploration of the Remick Bandshell in Belle Isle, MI, the feedback received was predominantly from middle class, white people. As Detroit is far more diverse, this is an obvious shortcoming of the methodology.

Conclusion

This thesis' exploration of how our experience of architecture is influenced by the past can help architects to work more thoughtfully, and create designs which have the potential to be in unique dialogue with the past. It can also be used as a unique lens through which we, as designers and users, can explore our wholly individual perspective on the reality we live in.

Concepts and Methods

Primary Framework:

Perceptual/
Phenomenological

Secondary Framework:

Intersubjective/
Contextual

Assumption:

There are ghosts in the built environment.

Assumption:

Ghosts affect our experience of the built environment

Framing Concepts:

Architectural Ghosts - non-beings related to Architecture.

Hauntings - A ghost's influence on our experience of the built environment.

Mediums of Ghosts - How ghosts manifest in the built environment.

Literature Review

Architectural Ghosts:

- “Architectural Ghosts” - Jeanette Bicknell
- “The Ghosts of Architecture: The Project and Its Codification” - Antoine Picon
- “Memories, Ghosts, and Scars: Architecture and Trauma in New York and Hiroshima” - Sunil Bald
- “The Ghost of Place” - Michael Mayerfeld Bell
- *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination* - Avery Gordon
- *The Spectres of Marx* - Jacques Derrida
- “What is Hauntology?” - Mark Fisher
- *Curated Decay: Heritage Beyond Saving* - Caitlin DeSilvey

Hauntings:

- *Haunted Halls: Ghostlore of American College Campuses* - Elizabeth Tucker
- *The Poetics of Space* - Gaston Bachelard
- *A Psychology on Body, Soul and Spirit* - Rudolf Steiner

Mediums of Ghosts:

- *Selected Papers on Folklore* - Carl W. von Sydow
- “Canon and Archive” - Aleida Assmann

Constructs

Ghosts of Buildings - Buildings which no longer exist as they once did.

Ghosts of People - People who no longer exist as they once did.

Ghosts of Time - Other things of a different time.

Ghostlore - How our memories and stories blur to inspire ambiguity and intrigue in a place.

Poetics of Space - How our imaginations use stories and our senses to create new realities.

Anthroposophy - How we can intuitively sense immaterial things.

Ghost Stories/Memorates - How we spread ghosts through storytelling.

Messages and Traces - How ghosts manifest physically in architecture.

Methods and Tactics

Interviews/Social Media Engagement - Looking to source specific memorates of ghosts from individuals.

Historical Research - Seeking out historical context for ghosts which have been identified.

Interpretive Art, Installations Narratives, etc. - transforming understandings of ghosts into something others can interpret.

Theoretical Research - Grounding all work on a strong foundation of theoretical precedent.

Questions

What is an Architectural Ghost?

An Architectural Ghost is a type of non-being (a thing which is simultaneously present and absent) which manifests in the built environment.

How do Ghosts affect the Built Environment?

Ghosts haunt our experience of the built environment through their manifestations in Messages, Traces, and Memorates. They do this by affecting the Ghostlore, Poetics, and Immaterial Worlds within a place.

How can Architects use Architectural Ghosts?

Architectural Ghosts can be used to deepen understandings

of a building's context in time, add further non-literal dimensions to spaces being created, and encourage new architecture to have dialogues with what came before it.

A Note on Writing Style

As you read this book, you may notice the language used is not as academic as usual. For example, first-person perspective may be used. This was done intentionally, with support from my advisors. This thesis often focuses on things which are personal. Personal to me, the author of this work, as well as personal to that which is being studied. As this thesis explores the concept of ghosts through a phenomenological framework, it looks at the individual realities we often build for ourselves, and occasionally, it necessitates breaking with standards to better tell the story being communicated in this work.

Ghosts

*“Shakespeare I think it is who treats
Of Ghosts, in days of old,
Who ‘gibbered in the Roman streets,’
Dressed, if you recollect, in sheets—
They must have found it cold.”*

-Lewis Carroll, “Phantasmagoria”



Figure 1.1: Proposal for Gamla Sildarverksmiðjan - Westfjords, Iceland

A Funeral for Fishes

*“Here lies the fishes of the sea,
And the men who made them flee.
Working, or Writbing, in the heat,
Now the work is all complete.”*

(1935-1954)

This could be the epitaph of a building, long abandoned. Only 19 years old when its industry suddenly died off, forcing the inhabitants to leave it abandoned. An old Herring Factory, the largest of its kind, nestled in a little town in the Westfjords of Iceland.

In Iceland, there is no need to embalm a body once someone has died. The weather is just cold enough to preserve it for a while longer. Funerals are very private things. Only a few people come to them: family and close friends. The body is lowered, and it goes.

The factory has since become a bit of a tourist attraction. A couple purchased the building some time ago and have been slowly renovating it. But I ask, is trying to return the building to its original state respectful of it? If your obituary only listed your accomplishments up until the age of 19, would it be respectful of your entire life? Are the layers of whitewash applied to the bare concrete anything more than trying to embalm a building that has long laid decaying? It makes no sense.

I propose the factory should become a gravestone to Iceland's Herring Adventure. A tombstone to the people who worked here and lost their jobs. To the industry that shattered this region's economy. And to all the fishes that died in the name of that industry. This place is for all the people that choose to remember these things. All those that mourn them.

* * *

There is a professor out of the University of Exeter named Caitlin DeSilvey, who wrote a book called *Curated Decay*. This book is all about architecture which is important to our heritage, but cannot- or maybe should not- be preserved. Sometimes, dead is better.

She writes "If memory is understood not as something that is deposited within material containers for safekeeping but as something that is 'ignited in dialogue between mind and matter,' then it does not necessarily need to rely on a stable material form for its expression." (14)

In other words, the past comes back to us, occasionally. We perceive it, even though it may not be as it once was. While DeSilvey never states it like this exactly, it returns to us like ghosts.

The project which introduced this chapter was my attempt at working with DeSilvey's "Post-Preservationism." Sometimes buildings cannot stay as they were. The only constant in life is change. And yet we cannot accept it. I know that firsthand.

I've always been fascinated by ghosts, and they have frequently appeared in my academic work. Besides this project, I've also written essays on the ghosts which haunt the City of Detroit, short stories about a family haunted by the death, as well as a screenplay for a short film about the ghosts which haunt us following trauma.

I knew I would have to do my thesis on the topic as well. And so, I begin this book by examining what a ghost is. This may seem like a question with an obvious answer, but this thesis does not seek to explore the bed-sheet ghosts which haunt old manors. Instead, it tries to explore the intersection at which hauntings and ghosts lay between many disciplines, and stake architecture's claim to the topic alongside sociology, philosophy, psychology, spirituality, folklore, and dozens of other fields.



Figure 1.2: "Oh, Whistle, and I'll Come to You, My Lad" by James McBryde

Ghost Stories

It is important, firstly, to explain why the concept of ghosts is useful as a metaphor, but to do this, we must unpack the connotations of the word. Most have some idea of what a ghost is due to popular culture, but things such as religion, literature, and mythology also muddle. The truth is, as we will further discuss in the next chapter, the definition of “Ghost” is surprisingly varied. This can be a blessing however, as this makes the use of the word far more nuanced.

One of the more popular depictions of ghosts seen in things such as modern horror movies is the one more or less defined by the works of M. R. James, an English author of “Antiquarian Ghost Stories.” His seminal work *Ghost Stories of an Antiquary* (1904) told stories of scholars finding unusual artifacts and earning the ire of some phantom. James’ ghosts were evil. They harmed people. They are wrathful. They hated.

In perhaps his most famous work, “Oh, Whistle and I’ll Come For You, My Lad,” the protagonist is a professor on holiday, who explores a Templar burial ground near the resort he is staying at. When he unearths a whistle in the cemetery, he begins to be plagued by a mysterious, billowing figure in his dreams. Soon enough, the form manifests before the professor, driving him mad.

It should be noted, however, that not all ghosts are depicted

in that way. In the Motif-Index of Folk Literature created by Stith Thompson to categorize recurring tropes or elements within folk stories, Categories E200 through E599 all revolve around Ghosts. E200-E299 specifically documents “Malevolent return from the dead,” while E300-E399 is of “Friendly return from the dead.” While the negative connotations of ghosts do appear, it is not the standard. Oftentimes, Ghosts are just melancholy. Ghosts sometimes seek vindication, redemption, to be treated with respect.

In his infamous book *Scary Stories to Tell In The Dark*, Folklorist Alvin Schwartz collects several ghost stories which do not follow the Jamesian ghost story. While they are generally depicted as frightening, they are not evil. Some ghosts come back to be with their lover one last time. Some ghosts seek to have their murderer found, rewarding the person who eventually helps them find peace. Some ghosts appear as omens. Some ghosts (more humorously) come back because they refuse to believe they are dead.

The same is true of the literary classic *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens. None of the ghosts are evil, and really only half of them are even depicted as frightening. The Ghost of Jacob Marley only seeks to warn his former business partner of his potential fate. The Ghosts of Christmas likewise show Scrooge how he himself forged his chain and harmed himself and those around him in pursuit of wealth. They could be antagonistic to Scrooge, but it was all for the miser’s betterment as a person. The Ghosts of Christmas were also unique in that they were not the ghosts of people, but the ghosts of events throughout time.

Ghosts *can* be terrifying. This can be due to our fear of death, our fear of the unknown, or forgetting, or being forgotten. Our pasts can be shameful. Our futures may seem bleak. But ghosts still need to be confronted. A little fear keeps us safe. It is only dangerous when we feel too much fear to act, or feel too little and become apathetic or complicit. We must engage with what scares us.

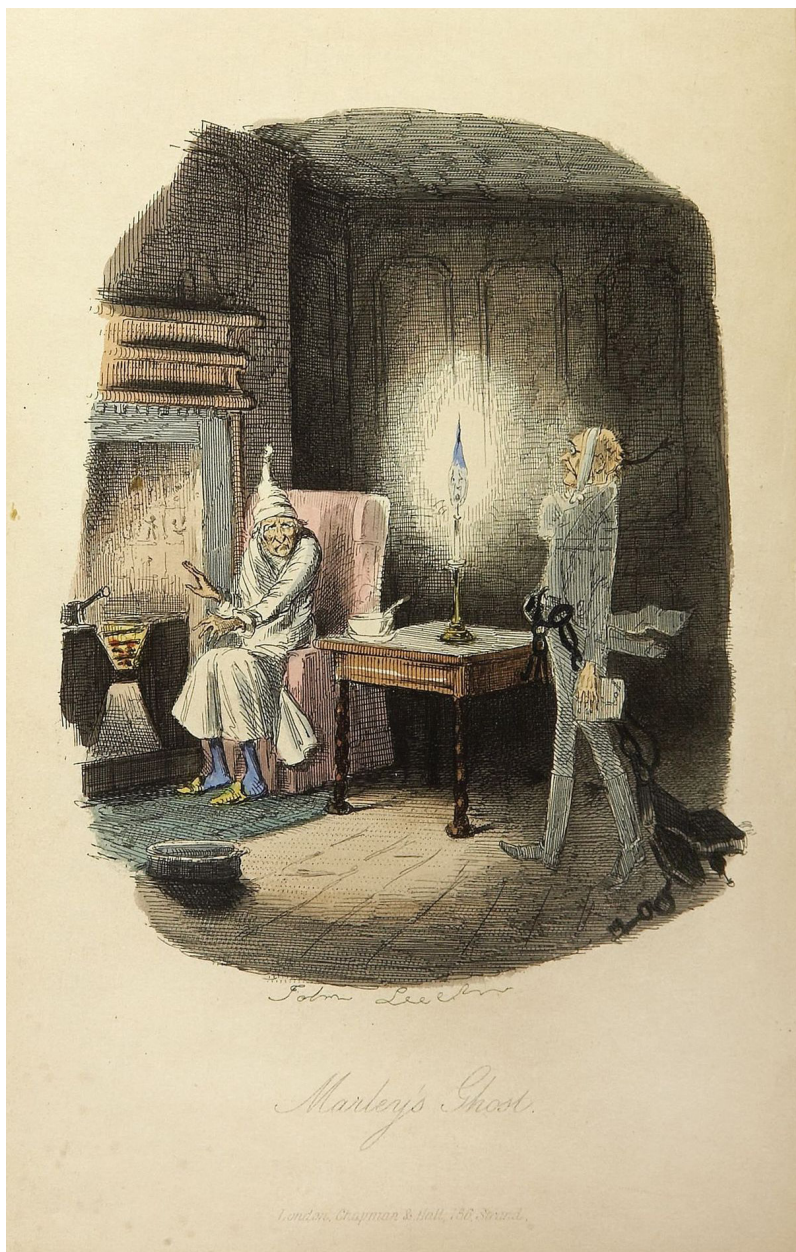


Figure 1.3: "Marley's Ghost" by John Leech

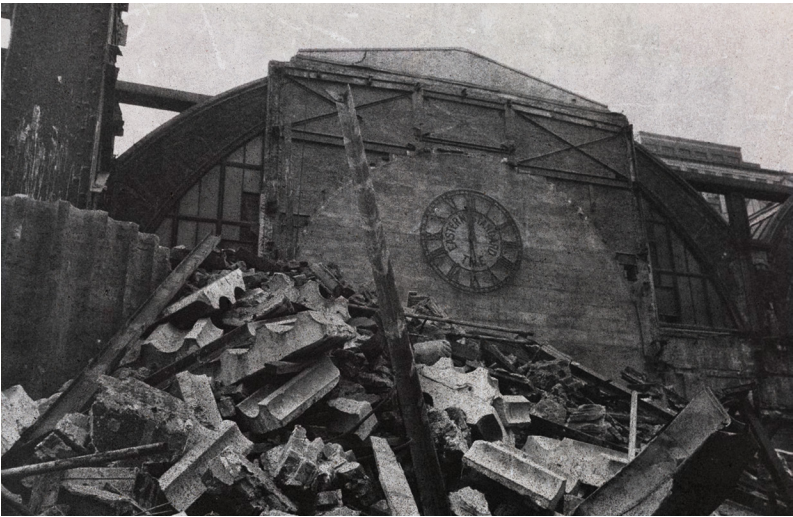


Figure 1.4: Penn Station

Architectural Ghosts

There is a problem with ghosts in architecture. Like with the ghosts depicted in fiction and folklore, ghosts have a wide range of meanings spanning many fields, such as architectural theory, philosophy, sociology, psychology, and more. There have been numerous theorists who have tried to dissect how ghosts interact with the world around us, and yet none can agree. This disagreement, while complicating finding a concrete definition, allows for considerable comparison between theorists.

Published in *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, the essay “Architectural Ghosts” by Jeanette Bicknell begins unpacking ghosts as they relate to the built environment. To Bicknell, ghosts are “human made structures that no longer exist and can now be known only through traces that they have left—in memory, in landscape, and in photographs, drawings, and paintings.” (435) It is through imagining a long-gone place as it would have been in life that the specific place becomes a ghost.

An example of an architectural ghost under Bicknell’s understanding is New York’s Pennsylvania Station, which was demolished in 1963. This building survives, in a sense, in photographs, as well as in the collective memory—especially, since the building’s significance in the history of the architecture preservation. History and aesthetic persevere, despite the literal building itself being taken away.



Figure 1.5: Parthenon

Antoine Picon, in his work entitled “The Ghosts of Architecture: The Project and its Codification,” writes of the broader field of Architecture as being haunted. The ghosts of those who established the traditions and canons we rely on in the present continue to haunt us. For instance, Picon explains that we have long pushed back against the 19th Century’s desire to maintain architectural styles, and have pretty much moved past the need for classifying architecture of the present with such designations, yet we still feel the influence of those people who codified such a practice. (10) Precedental inspiration too echoes some of what Picon is suggesting. The person of the past who designed a building has influence on the designer who takes ideas from it in the present.

While these ghosts can trap us in tradition, they can also be useful for reflection. Picon warns of Digital Architecture’s acceptance of economic value over its political value, something which the ghosts of Modernism “whisper in the ears of whoever will listen” (19) as a warning.

Artist Sunil Bald tackled the ghost as a metaphor for trauma in his work “Memories, Ghosts, and Scars: Architecture and Trauma

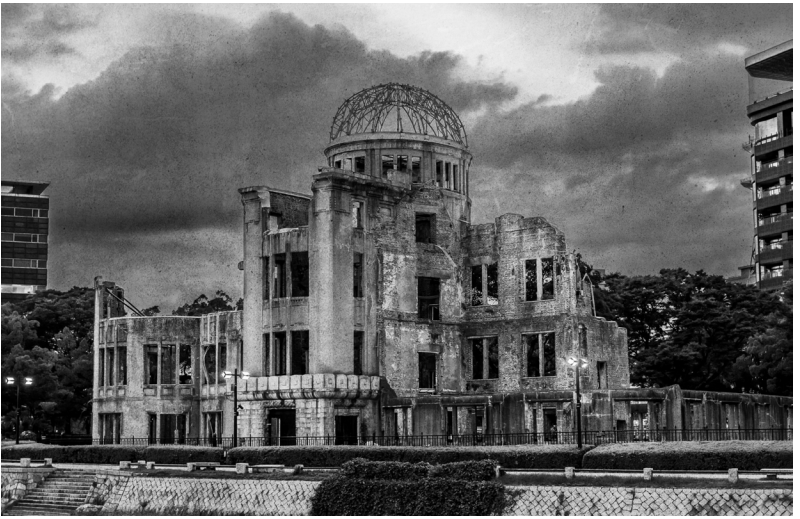


Figure 1.6: Hiroshima Peace Memorial

in New York and Hiroshima.” In this article, Bald explores the scars of two sites: The City of Hiroshima and the Site of the World Trade Center, as well as critiquing interventions on both sites. In this essay, places are haunted by the ghosts of traumatic events. In New York, Bald criticizes the plans for speedy, modest replacement of the lost buildings along with a victims memorial as reducing the tragedy of 9/11 to individual losses instead of confronting the geopolitical, international trauma that resulted from the attack. (53) Similarly yet inversely, Bald characterizes the redesigned City of Hiroshima as towards minimizing the city’s tragedy by turning it into a global, humanitarian tragedy as a way for Japan to re-enter the global political sphere, as well as covering up the country’s imperialistic past. (54) Each of these plans forgets inconvenient aspects of their trauma to better fit potentially propagandistic narratives.

Bald encourages making spaces that have dialogue with the scars left by these traumas. He presents us with the work of Isamu Noguchi or John Bennett, Gustavo Bonevardi, Julian LaVerdiere, and Paul Myoda, whose respective proposals for Hiroshima and Manhattan create “inquiry instead of dogma.” (56)



Figure 1.7: Stonehenge

Looking towards the sociological, Michael Mayerfeld Bell begins breaking down his own experiences with ghosts in “The Ghost of Place.” Here, ghosts are examined as an understudied lens through which to study the phenomenon of the Place. Because of the cultural meanings we embed into things- such as the built environment- Bell argues that we interact with Places socially, just as we interact with people socially. Each have a soul, in a sense, and so we “re-encounter the aura of social life in the aura of place.” (821) Through recognizing that Places have been occupied, we can imagine the ghosts of previous users.

Bell also suggests that Places in danger of demolition are often vehemently opposed by users because recognizing those ghosts transforms the space they inhabit into a shrine. It then becomes disrespectful to tear down a building in a similar way to disturbing or defiling a religious site. (820) The sites we project this imagined occupation onto, for instance a pre-historic site such as Stonehenge, thus become haunted.

Another sociologist, Avery Gordon, wrote of ghosts in her book *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination*, where she



Figure 1.8: United States Capitol Building

explores ghosts as absent “social figures [whose investigation] can lead to that dense site where history and subjectivity make social life.” (8) Gordon’s book specifically focuses on using hauntings to begin understanding those missing social figures and how their unknown contributions from the past still have influence in the present. Despite the distance the past may have to us in the present, we are shaped by it. We are haunted by it. And sometimes, because of those hauntings, we are marginalized or oppressed.

With the frightening rise of nationalistic, white-supremacist groups in the United States, it is obvious we are still haunted by the ghosts of Slavery, of Jim Crow, of the failure of Reconstruction. Even though those things are long in the past, their ghosts have never left us.

Gordon’s work aligns very closely with another conception of the ghost: Hauntology, the namesake of this thesis.

Coined by Jacques Derrida in his book *The Spectres of Marx*, where he discusses a Capitalistic world haunted by the unkillable ghosts of Socialism following the death of the Soviet Union. As

opposed to Ontology, or the study of Being, Hauntology focuses on the study of Non-beings. Things which are anachronistic. Things which exist because of broken time. There are the ghosts of constructed realities- fantasies of the nostalgic good-old days; and there are the ghosts of the futures which are not and cannot be. There are the ghosts of the unconsidered and forgotten. The neglected or ignored.

I admit here that at the time of writing this, I have not digested all of *The Spectres of Marx*, but I have come to understand the field more deeply through the work of Mark Fisher. In his article “What is Hauntology?” for the journal “Film Quarterly,” Fisher presents the dissolution of distinct place and time characterized by the rise of Capitalism. (19) Despite this rise in non-places and non-times, ghosts of both still remain. The traces of what once was are still felt.

Here, a working definition of what an architectural ghost is can finally be extrapolated. All of the previous theorists, while not agreeing, are not incorrect in their analysis of ghosts. Like the ghosts depicted in folklore and fiction, architectural ghosts are varied, and the theories presented each touch on a different aspect of the ghost.

Some ghosts are friendly, like Bell’s, or are malevolent, like Gordon’s. Some seek to warn us, like Picon’s, while others seek recognition and respect, like Bald’s. Some are the ghosts of buildings, or people, or times themselves.

But there is one trend in all of them, and is closest to the Hauntological definition: Architectural Ghosts are non beings- specifically things of the past- which have influence on the present. Their quasi-presence is how we recognize their absence within a place. This absence thus haunts us, as well as the built environment.

Hauntings


“Seeing-is-believing is a blindspot in man’s vision.”

-R. Buckminster Fuller

Ghosts



Buildings



People



Time



Mediums of Ghosts



Messages



Traces




Memorates



Modes of Haunting



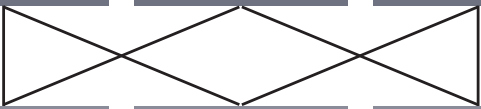
Storytelling



Sensing



Remembering




Haunting Phenomena



Poetics of Space



Ghostlore



Anthroposophy

Analyzing Hauntings

This thesis, having developed a solid foundation for additional inquiry and synthesis with what an architectural ghost is, seeks to explore another question: How do architectural ghosts haunt? We have come to the (perhaps obvious) conclusion that ghosts do haunt, but how they influence us is a little more undefined. As this thesis is focused on the architectural aspects of ghosts and hauntings, it will be looking into examining their effect on our experience of the built environment.

This thesis proposes a framework - an interconnected web-with which one may be able to begin identifying ghosts within the built environment and mapping out that ghost's influence. By flowing through the chart, starting with "Ghosts," one can begin to deepen their understanding of a specific ghost's role in the architectural experience.

"Ghosts," as established in the previous section, are the voids left by multiple different types of social figures. "Mediums of Ghosts" asks how these ghostly voids manifest within the built environment, and whether they can physically or immaterially appear. "Modes of Haunting" looks at how we individually perceive these ghosts. Finally, "Haunting Phenomena" explains three potential ways in which ghosts directly influence our experience of the built environment.

Ghosts

As much of this topic has been covered in the previous section, this chapter will briefly go over the three types of ghosts this framework will be looking at.

First, the Ghosts of Buildings. These are the ghosts described by Jeanette Bicknell. These are buildings which have been demolished, or are otherwise non-existent. This latter example could be due to remodeling, for instance, as the building in its original state is no more. The Ghosts of Buildings could extend to mean other sites in the environment or even items, but that is not the focus of this thesis.

Next are the Ghosts of People. These are the ghosts of Michael Mayerfeld Bell, Avery Gordon, and Antoine Picon. Like the ghosts of popular culture, the Ghosts of People are individuals or groups of people who are no longer present, either due to death or displacement. Like the previous set, this category could also extend to other living things which have become ghosts.

Finally, we have the Ghosts of Times. These are in more of a Hauntological vein, but also contain Sunil Bald's ghosts. These Ghosts are of past eras or events, as well as the lost futures described by Derrida and Fisher.

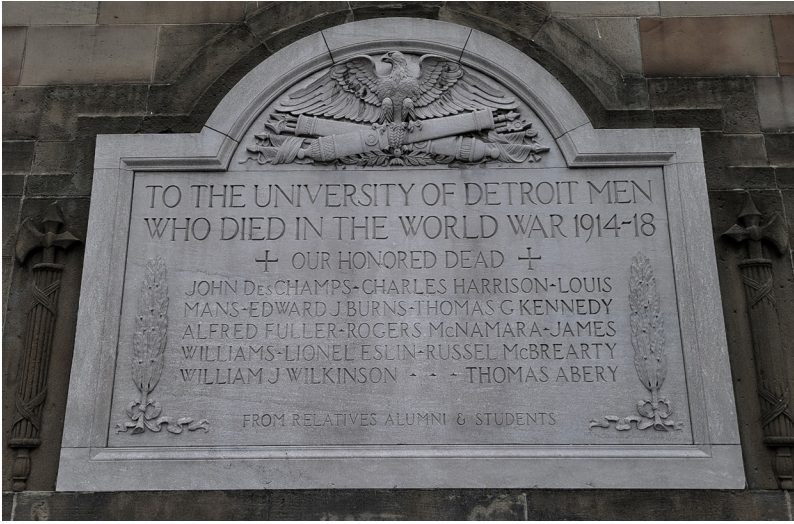


Figure 2.2: World War 1 Memorial at the University of Detroit Mercy Clocktower

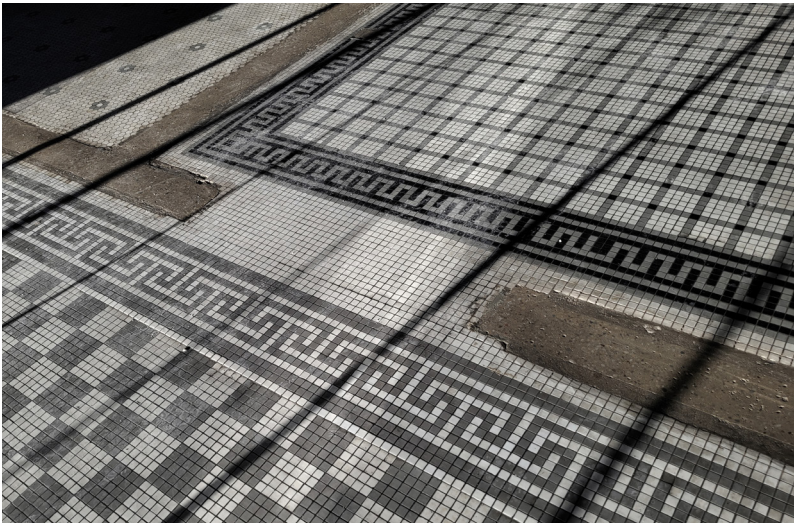


Figure 2.3: Wall Footprint Traces at Chroma, Detroit, MI

Mediums of Ghosts

As things which are simultaneously present and absent, the question is not whether or not a ghost appears in the built environment, but how. We may not recognize a ghost's manifestation at first, but they are present everywhere around us.

Messages and Traces

Described by Aleida Assmann in her writing *Archive and Canon*, there are two modes of Memory: Active and Passive, or intentional and incidental, respectively.

Active Memory is remembered through the things we codify, preserve, and memorialize. The physical remains of this actively remembered history - known as Messages - include items which we may curate, such as memorials and plaques.

Passive Memory is remembered through things which linger without our direct efforts to save them. The physical remains of these memories - known as Traces - include scars and imprints.

Assmann derived this train of thought from Historian Jacob Berkhardt. Assmann writes of Berkhardt's mistrust of Messages, as they can be manipulated or staged by the powers which call for their memorialization. A monument, like the examples discussed earlier

by Sunil Bald in New York or Hiroshima, can be used to instead push a propagandistic narrative. Assmann explains how, to Berkhardt, only Traces can offer “unmediated testimonies of a former era.” (99)

Assmann is more generous towards Messages in her paper. She suggests that while certain artifacts are actively remembered or put into Canon, some remain in an Archive, remembered passively. The Canonized Message retains its context, while the Archived Trace is stripped of context. Both conditions are neutral, unlike Berkhardt’s reading of them.

For this reason, this thesis includes artifacts such as film and photographs into the category of Message- having been taken to capture a subject at a specific time to be remembered actively.

Traces are placed into the Archive, as their context is almost entirely gone. The reason a scar appears may be forgotten by most, but the actual artifact of the damage or surgery still remains. Architecturally, traces come in many forms, from old foundations that suggest what used to sit atop it, to a hole in a wall where a nail used to sit.

Ghosts manifest in these two physical forms, as they call out the void of the ghost. The Message may depict or memorialize that which is no longer there, while the trace suggests that which may have caused it.

Memorates

When cataloging the many types of stories we tell each other, Folklorist Carl W. von Sydow describes a type of informal, anecdotal story we tell, which describes our own unique experiences, dubbed a “memorate.” These stories, part of a broader form of traditional storytelling referred to by the Swedish word “Sagn,” are often the beginning step in what could eventually become a legend.



Figure 2.4: “Old Woman All Skin and Bone” by Stephen Gammell

The stories we tell ourselves and others about our own experiences, whether involving the literal supernatural or how we uniquely feel the past’s presence in the present, are ghost stories.

Thus, the next way in which a ghost manifests becomes apparent. Unlike Messages and Traces, the Memorata is the immaterial remains of a ghost. While the built environment sometimes presents the voids within it, people present the voids they feel as well. It is only through spoken word that we begin to notice these ghosts. The Memorata may spread from person to person, each one giving their own spin on it, after being exposed to this ghost by someone else

Modes of Haunting

To begin exploring how Haunting affects our experiences, we must break down how we experience a ghost. A user experiences a ghost within the built environment after encountering the medium in which it manifests, but as each user has their own unique relation to the ghost in question, the mode in which they are haunted changes.

Some people know nothing of a ghost before it is experienced, and yet they experience it nevertheless. This is the “sensing” of a ghost. It is an automatic and unconscious response, as the user may not even realize they have encountered a ghost.

On the other hand, some people did know of a ghost before their experience with it. They may have known this ghost in life, and so are able to “remember” it during an encounter with it.

And in between those two extremes, there are those who have knowledge of the ghost, but may not have known it directly. This is often done through “storytelling.” A ghost may manifest in a way in which their stories are communicated to the user, whether that be through a literal story in the form of a memorate; a narrative presented in a Message; or something you can imagine after studying a Trace.



Haunting Phenomena

It is here we begin to dissect how a ghost actually influences our experience of the built environment. By which action does a ghost impose its influence on the world its void inhabits? This thesis explores three different, yet interconnected ways inspired by phenomenology, folklore, and spiritualism.

Ghostlore

The first of the three is Ghostlore. This folklore concept is discussed in the book *Haunted Halls: Ghostlore of American College Campuses* by Elizabeth Tucker. Drawing from the stories of her students, Avery Gordon, and Tucker's own knowledge of folklore, *Haunted Halls* investigates the importance of constructing and sharing a mythology within a place to transform it "into mysterious and magical places. Within these structures, amazing things can happen." (6)

This mythology built up around a place is co-constructed by storyteller and listener, of memories and other stories blurring together into something new. It inspires the user with mystery, with ambiguity, with fear and excitement. It can encourage users to seek out other ghosts in "legend quests." (182) Camaraderie between those who have encountered ghosts is developed at a certain place.

As our memories of experiences with ghosts build on and off of other's stories of ghosts, the Ghostlore is formed, situating this haunting phenomena at the intersection between the mode of Remembering and the mode of Storytelling.

Poetics of Space

Tied to Ghostlore is the Poetics of Space. Described by philosopher Gaston Bachelard in his 1958 book *The Poetics of Space*, this phenomena revolves around our imagination's influence on our perception.

In his book, Bachelard describes the mind's ability to make meaning out of space that extends beyond the literal aspects of a space. The phenomenological experience is just as important as the Noumenon. We live in a reality unique to us that is defined by our interpretation of our senses by our imagination.

Our imaginations can have a very powerful influence over us, especially when inspired by the Ghostlore of a place. Our imaginations can get the better of us, playing tricks. Imagine when you hurry up the stairs after turning off a light. One may know nothing unusual resides in the darkness behind them, yet their mind fills it with horrors. They feel vulnerable. They feel eyes on their back. Each stair builds tension as they think they hear a second set of steps following behind them. The imagination creates sensation all on its own, through the creation of the poetic image.

As our imaginations feed off of stories and our sensations to create these poetic images, the Poetics of Space are primarily affected by the Sensing and Storytelling modes of haunting. The ambiguity of the ghosts we sense, but know not of, and the ghosts we hear about from others allows our imaginations to fill in the blanks.



Figure 2.6: The Winchester Mystery House

Anthroposophy

With the final phenomenon, this thesis looks to the work of Rudolf Steiner and his spiritualist movement of Anthroposophy. While the movement is pseudo-scientific in nature and originated with some less-than-savory ideas about things such as race, the application of the ideas it poses through a phenomenological lens, it becomes useful for this exploration of ghosts.

Steiner frames Anthropology as a study of human wisdom, situated between the study of nature (Science) and the study of God and Spirituality (Theosophy) in his lecture “The Human Being and The Senses.” (9) In this space between the two fields of study, we can learn how nature and God speak to humans, or rather, how humans let nature and God speak through them.

Steiner explores this concept by breaking down how we perceive, as his theories stem from Goethean Phenomenology. Steiner believes we are capable of sensing the immaterial worlds around us. He begins by breaking down the twelve senses he believed a human might have. Broken into three categories based around the

source of the stimuli being sensed, these senses were divided into sets of four, though this thesis shifts a few around for consistency with modern understandings of these senses.

In the first category, there are the senses of Touch, Life, Movement, and Balance. These senses, the Senses of Being, all revolve around our ability to feel our own existence. Touch defines the boundaries of our skin; Life, the inner works of the space inside our skin; movement, our bodies as they travel through the space around us; and balance, our orientation within those spaces.

The Next Category is the Senses of Feeling. These are the senses we often think of as the 5 senses, excluding Touch. They are Smell, Taste, Sight, Hearing, and Temperature. These senses are how we make sense of the external stimuli of the world around us.

Finally, the Senses of Spirit. These are the immaterial things in which we can sense. They include the Senses of Speech, Thought, and Ego. Speech is how we sense communication from one person to another. Thought, how we understand the capacity for thought in others. And finally, the sense of Ego, or personality. Think about first impressions, how someone can tell what a person is like before they even get to know them.

These last senses are unique, as you need the two former categories of senses to perceive the latter. This is done through intuition. By combining the assorted Senses of Being and Feeling, we can extrapolate the immaterial. With this final set, Steiner does not limit it to these few senses alone.

In fact, it is within this category we may be able to place a “sense of ghosts.” Anthropology rests between the Remembering and Sensing modes of haunting, as regardless of prior knowledge, ghosts can be inferred based on our perception.

Senses of Being



Touch



Life



Movement



Balance

Senses of Feeling



Smell



Taste



Sight



Hearing



Temperature

Senses of Spirit



Speech



Thought



Ego

Figure 2.7: Steiner's 12 Senses

Application

Now that the individual parts of the framework have been established, it is time to explain the relevancy of this framework, as well as how it can be employed.

Firstly, this framework can be used as a tool for architects to “hunt” for the ghosts in the specific buildings around them. These studies are generally focused on identifying the ghosts which exist in a space, and how they manifest.

Additionally, it can be used as a design tool. After hunting for ghosts in a site, the chart can inform architects towards a phenomena they may want to accentuate in the new space. By doing this, the ghosts can “transmigrate” (or reincarnate) into new forms.

The following two chapters explore two case studies which each use the framework in one of these two ways. It is here that I admit that these case studies were partially developed before the framework came to be. More accurately, they were co-constructed, with the case studies informing the framework and vice versa.

Nevertheless, these case studies present unique looks at how the framework can be applied. The first explores the ghosts which reside in the Warren Loranger Architecture Building at the University of Detroit Mercy. The second endeavors to preserve the ghosts which haunt the Allen Park Theater in Allen Park, MI.

Ghost Hunting

“How it is that I appear before you in a shape that you can see, I may not tell. I have sat invisible beside you many and many a day.”

-Charles Dickens, *A Christmas Carol*



Figure 3.1: The Warren Loranger Architecture Building, from Livernois

Warren Loranger Architecture Building

The University of Detroit established the Department of Architectural Engineering in 1922. This department was originally based out of the Engineering building. The building we would come to know as the Warren Loranger Architecture Building would be constructed 1929, originally known as the Science Building.

Recognizing that Architecture is as much about Fine Arts and Philosophy as Engineering, Reverend Lawrence Green and Architect Bruno Leon would separate the Architecture Department from the School of Engineering. And thus, in 1965, The School of Architecture was established, with Leon as the first Dean of the School. Ten years later, the School would move out of the Engineering Building and into the Science Building. In the following years, the Polish Exchange and Summer Volterra programs would be established, in 1979 and 1987 respectively.

The building would go through a number of renovations, during the 90s and early 2000s, transforming the building into the place we use today. houses the School of Architecture and Community Development.



Living Memorates

In collecting ghost stories, we can begin to see which ghosts are already appearing in people's minds and where each of these ghosts are situated within the building. Speaking with faculty and students, I asked what notable memories or experiences they wanted to share that took place within the building.

The intent of these interviews was to see how the spread of ghost stories potentially affected the experience of space in the listener, an early experiment in building Ghostlore before I had discovered the concept. To this end, I created an installation within the architecture building to act as a proxy storyteller. This ghost had recordings of the interviewees projected onto it. Situated in a part of the building which users would stumble upon, the installation allowed people to approach the specter and listen in.

Everyone's story had a ghost, in some form. Some recounted ghosts of people, like old students who have graduated. Some reminisced about ghosts of times, like academic years of the past. And some recalled the ghosts of the school itself, in its previous iterations.

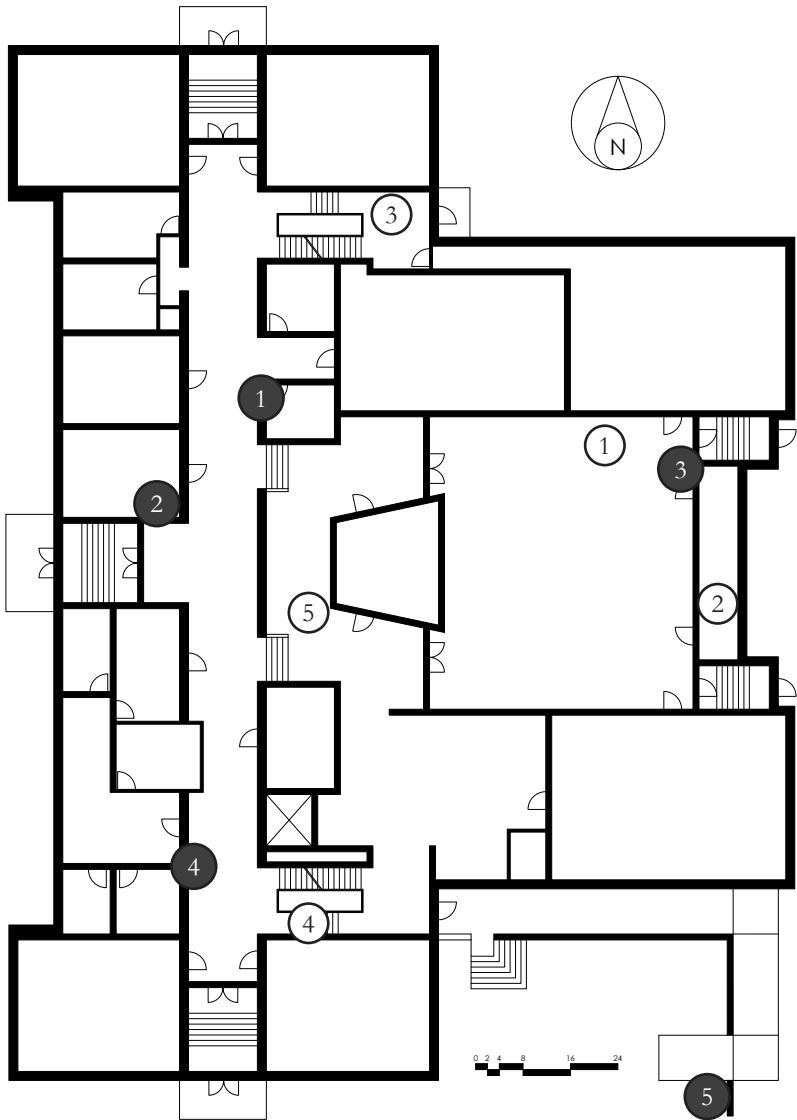


Figure 3.3: Map of Ghost Mediums on 1st Floor of the Architecture Building

Mapping Messages & Traces

This building, full of ghosts, has its history embodied in its walls. Through incident or through design, the ghosts are ever present. The scars of the renovations are everywhere. Bare concrete where floors met walls. Shadows of walls, long gone, give the suggestion of former room layouts. Or, littering the walls and doorways, are memorial plaques to the former professors, students, or other benefactors. These Traces and Messages, respectively, allow us to begin noticing the voids the ghosts make up.

I have compiled a non-exhaustive list of Messages and Traces throughout the first floor of the Architecture Building. Each one has a ghost which manifests through it. The Mediums are plotted on the floor plan to the left, with Traces in white and Messages in Blue.



Exhibition Room

Against the walls, under one of the pin-up boards, an outline appears on the concrete floor. Originally a staircase which led to a mezzanine level containing offices, and a computer lab, this L is the trace of the previous version of this room.



Figure 3.4: A Trace in the Exhibition Room

1



Ronald Titus
1957 - 2016

Noted Alumni (70s-80s)

Former UDM Faculty and Detroit-Based
Architect



Figure 3.5: A Commemorative Plaque to Ronald Titus

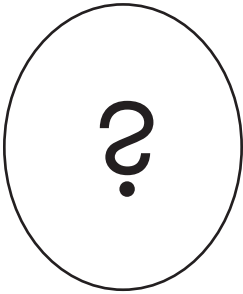
2

Exhibition Room Storage

In the storage room behind the Exhibition Space, there is a doorway which has been covered up with tile. This doorway once opened into a small office in the previous iteration of the exhibition space.



Figure 3.6: A Trace in the Exhibition Room's Storage Space



Rev. Lawrence Green, SJ

Founder of the School of Architecture
at the University of Detroit in 1965



Figure 3.7: A Commemorative Plaque to Rev. Lawrence Green, SJ

3

North Stairs

The bones exposed where a wall used to sit, likely enclosing the original stairwells. The chipped concrete and broken bricks remain in place.



Figure 3.8: A Trace in the Northern Stairwell

3



Jerzy Staniszkis
1914 - 2009

Former Faculty Member

Founder of the Polish Exchange
Program in 1970s



Figure 3.9: A Commemorative Plaque for Prof. Jerzy Staniszkis



South Stairs

A small imprint left by a previous handrail mount. The grout, likely broken out when removing the bolts of the previous handrail mount, has been filled in using wooden shims.



Figure 3.10: A Trace in the Southern Stairwell

4



Stephen Vogel

Noted Alumni ('70, '75)

Long-standing Faculty member and
Dean of the SACD for 18 years ('93-'11)



Figure 3.11: A Commemorative Plaque for former Dean Stephen Vogel

5

“The Pit”

This is another footprint exposed in the concrete floor. This wall originally opened into an enclosed conference room, before this whole space was remodeled and replaced with the “Hot Box” photography room and the “Pit” seating area.



Figure 3.12: A Trace in “The Pit”

5



Warren Lorranger

1924 - 2022

Noted Alumni ('51)

Proponent for the Renovation of the
Science Building into the School of
Architecture in 1975



Figure 3.13: The Sign for the Architecture Building, named in honor of Warren Lorranger

Transmigration

*“And so they were, and so were we all in the movies,
Which is how I remember it: Popcorn in hand,*

*Smoke in the air, gum on the floor—
Those Saturday nights, we ourselves*

*Were the story and the stuff and the stars.
We ourselves were alive in the dance of the dream.”*

-Alberto Ríos, “When There Were Ghosts”

New
MODERN AS TOMORROW

- Newest Projection
- Modern Lighting
- Efficient Cooling
- Air Conditioned
- 1250 Luxurious Seats

FREE PARKING

ALLEN ROAD
Near Southfield

DOORS OPEN 6:30 P.M.

Gala Premiere!

FRIDAY, SATURDAY, SUNDAY, MONDAY

A POWERFUL DOUBLE FEATURE BILL

POPULAR PRICES ADULTS **25c** CHILDREN 12 to 16 **15c** KIDDIES **10c**
PLUS TAX PLUS TAX PLUS TAX

"BAHAMA PASSAGE"
IN TECHNICOLOR!
Flora Robson · Leo G. Carroll
Mary Anderson · Cecil Kellaway

"THE NIGHT OF JANUARY 16th"
What's a night for a murder!

COMING TUES., WED., THURS.
ANOTHER DOUBLE FEATURE PROGRAM
"SKYLARK" Plus "HENRY ALDRICH FOR PRESIDENT"

ALLEN PARK THEATRE

Figure 4.1: Advertisement for the Opening Night of the Allen Park Theater - April, 1942

The Allen Park Theater

This section explores a quaint building in a quaint town just outside of southwest Detroit. This building was of a dying breed, killed like so many other small businesses trying to compete against the massive chains.

On the Day the Allen Park theater opened on April 22, 1942, the terracotta marquee glittered with light. You would purchase your ticket at the box office for 25 cents, the hundreds of bulbs overhead twinkling. You would pass through the lobby into the auditorium. The buttery scent of popcorn filled the air, following you to your seat. The auditorium sat 1,250 people, each comfortable in the air conditioned building. The lights dimmed and the silver screen came to life with some drama starring Sterling Hayden and Madeleine Carroll. Only a few months ago, Pearl Harbor had been bombed. But in the theater, perhaps one can escape from the dreads of the time, if only for a short while. This small haven was, as the flyers said, as Modern as Tomorrow.

It was opened by Nicholas George, a Greek immigrant who would soon begin a small theater empire in Michigan. He would eventually become better known for trying to rehabilitate the Michigan building and Theater in Detroit. The Allen Park Theater had been designed by a local firm, Bennett and Straight, who themselves had made an imprint in Southeastern Michigan with their art moderne and art deco theater designs. Perhaps their most

recognizable work is their renovation of Detroit's Majestic Theater facade.

Sometime in the 60s, George had the single-auditorium theater into a twinned, 2-screen theater. In 1986, the theater traded hands when George sold the theater to AMC Theaters. AMC further split the theater into 5 screens. It is also likely around this time when the terracotta marquee was changed to the teal one.

MJR Digital Cinemas eventually acquired the theater for some time, until it was passed to an independent operator- Mike Mihalich, the CEO and Founder of MJR. Following business restructuring within the company and years of underperformance, Mihalich eventually decided to sell the property. In 2019, the theater closed.

It was shortly thereafter sold to the City of Allen Park itself. The City put forward a 3-month call for proposals for adaptive reuse. Any plans, however, were put on hold following the COVID-19 Pandemic. During this time, the building rotted. The basement leaked. Mold grew in the old, sticky carpets. The facade, remodeled a handful of times over the course of its life, no longer glitters.

Plans for demolition eventually moved forward and the bulk of the building was to be leveled in August of 2022- with the marquee being preserved in memory of the icon of the city- but that plan too was delayed. Eventually, it came together and at the start of 2023, the interior began to be gutted. On April 6th, demolition officially began. By the time this book is printed, the building will almost certainly be gone completely, reduced to a ghost itself.

This building has significance to me. As an avid film fan and within walking distance to the theater, I have my own memories of the place. I remember going there as a child, expecting to see a kids movie with my visiting family. As a prank, they suggested we were actually going to see a gory horror film. I remember walking through



Figure 4.2: The Allen Park Theater - 1978



Figure 4.3: The Allen Park Theater - 2022

the lobby with my hands over my eyes. I peeked out for a moment to see that the auditoriums playing the two movies were right next to each other. My aunt led me to my seat and held my breath until the previews ended and I knew I was in the correct theater.

My last experience with the theater was in 2018, the summer after I graduated from high school. I was going to a graduation party at a church on the next street over from the theater, so I decided to arrive early and catch an early showing of Marvel's Black Panther. My shoes stuck to the carpets and my knees were against my chest in the narrow rows of seating. I'm not sure if I had known the building was destined for closure and demolition yet. I walked out the long, back exit and into the parking lot.

While in a historic preservation class in the first semester of my thesis year, we were tasked with putting together a plan for preserving a noteworthy, historic building in Metro Detroit, and I chose the Allen Park Theater. I spent the semester talking with local public officials and researching the history of the building, eventually culminating in my creation of the "Friends of the Allen Park Theater" Facebook group.

Here I shared some of my research with residents of the City, polled what people thought ought to happen with it, encouraged people to share their memories of the space, and networked with others who were passionate about this place. Following the start of demolition, it also became a place to document that process.

I know the building cannot be saved. It is almost entirely gone already. This section seeks to explore the ways in which the ghosts of the building, the ghosts of the film-goers who once used it, and all the other ghosts which may have appeared over the 80 years the building stood in this small city.



Figure 4.4: The Allen Park Theater - 2023



Figure 4.5: QR Code link to the Friends of the Allen Park Theater Facebook Group

*"Went to see The Tingler (1959) starring Vincent Price. Allen Park Theater had placed buzzers in the rows of seats. At certain points of the movie, the buzzers would go off and scare the s*** out of the younger kids. Look up the plot info on IMDB. Great times!"*

"I passed out there when I was first pregnant back in 1969. We went to see Bonnie and Clyde. It took a few years before I got to see the ending. Lol"

"Led Zeppelin song remains the same. There was so much pot smoking. You could get high walking to the bathroom. I remember usher's smoking hash up by the screen"

"I remember my Dad taking me to see Jaws. He fell asleep during the movie until the entire crowd screamed during one of the scenes. He jumped two feet out of his seat LOL and stayed awake the rest of the movie."

"I remember seeing a Herbie movie there and they had a whole Herbie Volkswagen in the lobby."

"Remember? There was a poultry shop down the street. As a teen, we would look inside. The guy would chop the head off a chicken and yet it would run still. Just to scare us kids. It worked! Then go see a movie, like 'Jaws'."

"My bff and I would walk from Lincoln Park to go to the movies a lot as early teenagers. I remember seeing The Sting. We sunk down in our seats and stayed and watched it again! We had crushes on Robert Redford and Paul Newman. Loved that movie! So many fun memories going there."

"Remember riding my bike there from Melvindale in the 70's. Seen Star Wars, Grease and many other classics. My mom worked at the triangle restaurant across the street and would stop in after to see her and eat."

Interpreting Ghosts

Like the previous exploration, this work begins by collecting specific memorates from users. These memorates have been collected through comments collected from several local groups on Facebook. The specific groups “I grew up Downriver...and I’m proud of it!” and “I grew up in Allen Park, Michigan and I’m proud to call it my Home Town!” contain around 32.7 K members combined- though there is likely some overlap between the two. Each group consists of people who grew up in the area around the Allen Park Theater and were likely to have memories within the building. It had also been shared by a member of one of the previously mentioned groups to the “Allen Park Historical Museum” group, where it also received some responses.

The informal prompt: “Hiya group! What stories do you have about the Allen Park Theater? I’m working on a project about this iconic 80 year old building, and I’d love to hear your movie memories.” received 253 responses. While a handful of them were not relevant, containing only emoticons or being completely off topic, the vast majority were specific memorates about experiences at the theater.

These memorates depict years of the lived experience of the theater over the course of its life, and its many ghosts. Dozens of stories of first kisses, and first jobs. Of childhood independence. Of the magic of cinema.



Figure 4.6: QR Code link

“Life of the Theater”

Seeking to create something that captured those experiences described in the memorates, the ghost of its very use, as well as the last night of its operation in a Message, I created a film. This short film uses photographs (taken by Facebook user Aco Blair, as well as historic), and clips of films previously shown at the theater over the years.

The end result attempts to further develop the Ghostlore of the theater by creating an artifact that engages with the memories of the viewers. And even though the theater is gone, perhaps it can capture the magic of seeing a movie at a small local movie theater, while encouraging new viewers to seek out additional stories of the site.



Figure 4.7: Haunting Framework breakdown for “Life of the Theater”



Figure 4.8: Frames from the "Life of the Theater" Short Film



worked there in the 90s and used to s

My bf and I would walk from Lincoln Park

on the house lights and shut down the movie and
to the movies a lot as early teenagers
could see smoke lingering over Detroit.

I was at the Allen Park Theater the afternoon the riots in Detroit broke out. They tilted out the front dock of the theater you could see smoke lingering over Detroit.

Remember riding my bike there from Melvindale in the 70's. Seen Star Wars, Grease and many other classics.
My mom worked at the triangle restaurant across the street and would stop in after to see her and eat.

My aunt worked at the triangle across the street so we would go there afterwards for French fries and chocolate cakes.

Went to the street dances next to it Frankie Avalon was there in 57"

We go to Falzone's drug store beforehand and buy a dime's worth of pe



...sneak my friends in to watch movies with me after we closed

When we couldn't get a ride there we would walk. The long walk was half the fun.

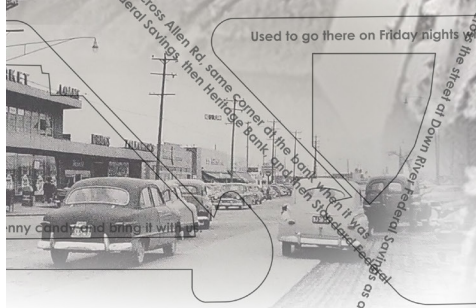


I always went next door to the record shop to buy a 45 after the Saturday matinee.

There was a poultry shop down the street. As a teen, we would look inside. The guy would chop the head off a chicken and yet it would run still. Just to scare us kids. It worked! Then go see a movie, like "Jaws."

When I worked at a pizza place, we would trade the employees pizza for popcorn.

Used to go there on Friday nights while my Dad worked across the street at Fosters Drug store.



Down River Federal Savings, then Heritage bank, and then State Street Federal.

When I worked at a pizza place, we would trade the employees pizza for popcorn.

When I worked at a pizza place, we would trade the employees pizza for popcorn.

When I worked at a pizza place, we would trade the employees pizza for popcorn.

Later, I worked across the street at Down River Federal Savings.



Figure 4.9: Landscapes of Memory

Landscapes of Memory

As I read through these memorates, an interesting trend began to emerge. The stories about the building frequently involved more than just the theater itself. The theater became something like an anchor for the memories of other local businesses, many now long gone themselves. Foster or Falzone's Drug stores, the Downriver Federal Savings Bank across the street, and especially The Triangle Coney Island. These memories creep out from the Theater and reach out into the environment. They create a poetic ecosystem—a landscape of memories, woven together like a web.

Figure 4.11: Marquee





Figure 4.10: Haunting Framework breakdown for Landscapes of Memory

Marquee

Since the City decided to demolish the theater, there have long been plans to preserve only one element of the original structure: the Marquee. It stands quite prominently in the center of downtown Allen Park and has become a landmark. The question becomes, what happens to the marquee after it is dismantled and reassembled following demolition?

This rendering suggests using part of the screen as a projection screen, calling back to its original use and building intrigue.

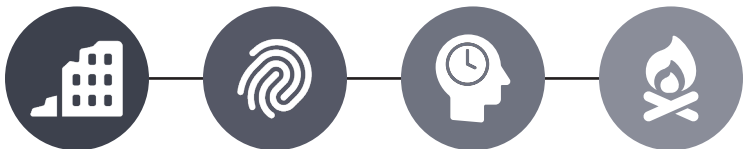


Figure 4.12: Haunting Framework breakdown for Marquee



Figure 4.13: Shades

Shades

Using light, this collage suggests how one can activate the traces left on a neighboring building once the theater's demolition is finished. By casting shadows on the once-interior walls, the scale and program of the space may be expressed, allowing our imaginations to place us in these non-existent places.

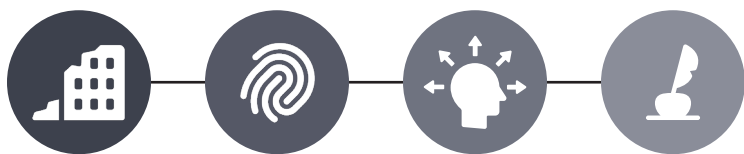


Figure 4.14: Haunting Framework breakdown for Shades

A Ruminatiun

*“Looking ahead in the grip of each fear
Recalls the life that we knew
The shadow that stood by the side of the road
Always reminds me of you”*

-Ian Curtis, “Komakino”

Why Ghosts Matter

There will always be ghosts. There will always be people who leave- this place or this life. There will always be buildings lost in favor of new construction. There will always be futures which cannot be and pasts which never were. We are all haunted.

And that can be ok. Ghosts are not all bad. They are just challenging, at times. We don't just look to the past for nostalgia. We look back to learn. We look back to mourn. We look back to face death. But, we have to seek the ghosts out in order to learn from them, to honor them, to confront them. Perhaps, with this framework, we as architects can look back too.

In *Ghostly Matters*, Gordon mentions something about the interdisciplinary aspect of this topic. "Not owned by anyone yet, this interdisciplinarity is in the public domain, which does not guarantee anything except that there is still some room to claim rather than to discipline its meaning into existence. *Ghostly Matters* looks for a language for identifying hauntings and for writing with the ghosts any haunting inevitably throws up." (7)

That is why it matters. Architects have much language for identifying hauntings, yet until now, few people have tried to refine it. And with our designs, we can dwell with these ghosts which are all around us.



Figure 5.1: A Ghost

Next Steps

This project has been a massive undertaking (as all theses should be, I suppose). There are many parts which I wish I could go back and change, though I must learn to let this haunt me. There is still time. There are ever more books to read and reread and refine my understanding and applications, as well as for others interested in the subject. Surely there are more ghosts who have not yet been seen by this and others' research.

As someone constantly interested in historic preservation (and DeSilvey's Post-Preservationism), that is the field I plan to pursue following graduation. With this framework, I hope to be able to look into how to appease the ghosts (and all those who are/will be haunted) when the death of a building comes around. There are many ghosts I am haunted by. Perhaps I can begin confronting them and learning to live with them again.

Thank you.

Appendices

SACD Interview Transcripts

Graduate Student

“Okay. Uh, do I have to introduce myself or anything? No. Uh, I’d say, I don’t know if this is true or not, but, um, there’s supposedly a connection to the tunnels in the basement of the architecture building, and I think I know which door it is, but I’m not sure. But that just, that area gives off a creepy vibe.

Definitely. Like, the entrance to the tunnels, kind of like, I don’t know what’s past that door. I’ve never seen it five years in this building. I still to this day don’t know. It could just be a storage room. I don’t know. But the thought of like the tunnels and the entrance to the tunnels, or an entrance to the tunnels, being down here is definitely creepy.

I don’t spend too much time in the basement knowing the fact that it could possibly connect to the underlays of the University or something, you know what I’m saying? I like the daylighting up here. But yeah, that’s it.”

Graduate Student

“All right. I think it was probably my, I’d say it’s my freshman year when I first got a sense of the community within the architecture

building, more so of, you know, you don't know that much about architecture, but you do have the people in your studio, right? So those times when you don't know what you're doing, but you've got five, six other people in studio working, helping you. You know, you might even stay in the studio till like 12 at night, but just knowing that you got those people there with you to kind of help you through those tough moments, those moments where you got blank, blank, uh, blank spaces in your mind. Uh, just that sense of community I think helps a lot.

Uh, and I noticed that my freshman year. That's all I got."

Professor

"Uh, so probably the first thing that came to my mind when, uh, Josh asked me the question about a significant memory that's based on the architecture building would be the first time that I came to the architecture building, which is when I interviewed for a job here. Um, so that was the first time I'd ever been on campus at University of Detroit Mercy.

And, um, when I came here, one of the first things that I did was give a lecture to the students and the faculty and alumni. Of the program in exhibition space where we are right now. And I was interviewing at a lot of places around the country at that time, and most of the time you would go to these interviews and, and do your job talk and there might be 20 or 30 people who'd come to the job talk.

So it wasn't very many people. Um, but when I came here, it was an evening time event and uh, the whole space was filled with people. So it was really like front to back, like very, very, very full. There were people standing on the edges and in the back, and it was just, you know, really, um, kind of surprising to me after having been at other places, which were larger schools, but had much smaller turnout to see, you know, who the new faculty members might be.

Um, and here there was such a big turnout and there were many questions at the end. And so, um, it did, uh, kind of make me feel like, um, you know, this was a place with a really engaged community, even if it was a smaller school, that it was more active and engaged community, uh, with architecture. So that's my, my memory and space."

Undergraduate Student

"Okay. Um, hello. My name is *****. I'm a fourth year senior. Uh, one space that has affected me, uh, greatly would be my very first studio space it's the studio right next to the bathrooms. Um, so you could imagine many pleasant and unpleasant experiences being next to the bathroom and the exits and a lot of noise.

But, uh, my studio was very, uh, rambunctious and we were the type of studio that really used the space all night long. And it's funny because my key card still works for this space. So, um, like last week I went in there and like all the memories just flooded back of us, like falling asleep on the tables. And it's just the real pleasant memories.

And I feel like at the time I didn't realize how much I loved this space because, um, there was points where like, I dreaded this space because that studio was also my studio for second year. And third year. So it was just like I was always in that space and now that I'm not, it's very like a, I feel like a missing feeling like I missed the space.

But I used to dread going in there. I would go to other spaces like the pit or the honors building and hide so I could hide from my teachers and avoid talking to them. But I think it's so weird that just like 12 desks in a room, a table and a janky couch just really brings like a flood of memories, of good times, desperation and just success all in one. So it's a very beautiful space."

Undergraduate Student

“Uh, I think for me, a space that’s always been very impactful for, um, to my time at the school has been the pit. Those who know me know that if you are looking for me, the best place to look for first is probably the pit. I’m always in there. Um, I always like the pit because it’s, it’s a place of crossing, you know, people go through it, transitionally, getting between classes or you’re sitting down, you’re doing work.

And it’s just, I really like the interaction, the, the, the hi’s, the hellos, um, I think, when my time, when I actually really like my time where I became infatuated a bit, there’s a weird word to call it, but where I kind of gave ownership to it was, um, two semesters ago, last fall when we were working really hard in PID and uh, our group kind of used that as our working space just cuz we didn’t- ran outta space in the studio.

I just really enjoyed it. It just said there was something kind of liberating about having a space that you didn’t own, but you are occupying at the moment. It’s a very temporal, um, condition. So I just enjoy the pit as a zone. It’s a place where you can do your work. It’s a place where you could eat your lunch and it’s a place where you could just goof off and do absolutely nothing, which we do often.

So yeah, it’s like one of my favorite places in the architecture building.”

Professor

“Hello, I’m *****. I am a new professor in community development here at SACD. And while I am new to this place, this building, um, it’s very familiar. I went to the Catholic school across the street, Gesu, and the brown bricks. You know, the, the structure is very similar. So the moment that I walked in here, um, there were

memories of being in the hallways at Gesu and all of the things that happened in elementary hallways, uh, talking to friends, walking to class, passing notes.

Um, and so it was a very, um, welcoming and warm feeling, even though I was very new and I just kind of stepped foot, um, on the campus.”

Professor

“Hello, my name is ***** . Uh, I’m a professor of practice here at the School of Architecture and Community Development with a graduate of the School of Architecture in 2012. Uh, earning my master’s degree. Then, um, this means I’ve been hanging out, learning, working, teaching in this building, um, for 15 years now, approaching 16.

And in that time there’s been a lot of growth and, uh, success and failures and, uh, relationship building with friends, professors, former professors, mentors, and, uh, colleagues now, and of course, uh, the current student body who I’m learning more and more about each and every day. Um, I came to this building 2007 as a freshman, 18 years old, and, um, I’m realizing I think each and every day how young I really was then.

And, um, how much growth, um, this building helped me or helped facilitate for me. Um, the first two years of my school education here, um, I entered the building, did what I had to do and left as um, swiftly as I could to pay attention to other areas of my life, which was a lot of hanging out with friends at other university campuses.

So it took me about two years to realign my priorities and stay in this building to facilitate conversations and development of myself, my projects, and uh, friendships. Um, with classmates and to learn with more intention with them and my professors. Um, what this led to,

and maybe the major point of this story is, uh, the building has a lot of different spaces that I think are finite, um, architectural areas in the building of all sizes, large and small, um, places to dwell, places to pass through. But, um, what brings this building to life are the students, um, and the sort of community that happens when you, um, just mix, um, backgrounds and interests and conversations and perspectives. So something that happened in third year, maybe a bit of second, was finding friends who also played music.

And that then we would spend a lot of time in here pulling all nighters, working on projects, but also taking time to go get a cheap meal, play video games in someone's dorm, or, uh, play music in the studio and learn songs together. So, uh, we this evolved to hanging out at each other's apartments or homes having jam sessions. Um, So, this Relationship that began in this building starts moving off campus, uh, into apartments on the riverfront in Ferndale and anywhere in between. By the time I was a fourth year undergrad, and, um, one of these people was, um, in his master's thesis year, we had formed a band called Eroders.

Um, and we played an end of the fall semester holiday party above the bowling alley at, uh, at the Garden Bowl. Um, it was really fun. We played in the student lounge outside of the DCDC office, um, to help gain interest and like bring joy during the middle of, uh, hell week. And so this idea that music began because of the school of architecture was then going to support the students, uh, by bringing like random acts of joy into the building out into a party somewhere else, um, was pretty awesome. And to this day, I spend a lot of, maybe half of my time outside of architecture just devoted to music. I, um, don't think I would be here, um, or doing architecture without the, the music aspect that this building introduced."

Professor

"Okay, so my name's ***** and I'm a professor. Um, I've been

here since 2000. I started here in 2000 as an adjunct and then got a full-time position in 2001. So, uh, it's been interesting to have a little bit of history in the building and, um, to now have been here working in this building longer than my current students have been.

Um, for eight years of that time period, sort of in the middle, I was the dean of the school. And, um, one of the things that that translates to in terms of my experience of the building and recollections of the building is, um, I would say I've probably spent more time in this building than anyone else when no one is here except me.

There've been a lot of instances when I'm here over a break or in the summer or evenings. Um, of course during the school year and evenings, most of the time there's some students in the building. But if I were here, um, you know, after five o'clock in the summertime, I would probably be the only person in the building.

So I feel like I have a, um, a deep and personal connection to the building in particular because during those years I was responsible for the building. So responsible for its upkeep and everything that's happening in- inside these walls. Um, I felt a sense of responsibility for, and that sense of responsibility leads to the, uh, first story that I wanted to tell you.

Um, it was Halloween in, um, 2017 and I was, um, as a person might be, um, sleeping at home in my bed. On Halloween night. And I had a dream. I dreamt that some students were in the building and had been up to something that they shouldn't be. It was on the lower level, and they had somehow disrupted some piping in the building and they had caused a flood and that had also set off the fire alarm which meant that, um, all the students had to evacuate the building, those who were here working in the middle of the night. It was a very intense dream. Um, really had this kind of sense of clarity to it. And, um, that's not that unusual. When you have a responsibility, you oftentimes have dreams that are related to that responsibility and

reveal your anxieties and I would often be anxious about what people might be up to in the building after hours. When I woke up, I turned on my phone, which had been turned off, and there were three messages from public safety on my phone. And at the time when I was having that dream, two students had thrown a Frisbee in the lower level hall and had dislodged a sprinkler head.

And there was a flood in the building and the fire alarm went off and I dreamt that. And when I woke up, the dream was real and was documented on my phone. Um, that was very bizarre. And um, you can ask my wife, I'm not making any of that up. So that is my most profound recollection of the dream of this building is the night I dreamt there was a flood and the flood was occurring while I was having that dream.

So I don't think you're gonna duplicate a story like that. Um, you had said that your, um, thesis is about this sort of concept of ghosts and the idea that, um, there is a memory that people have associated with places and events. And sometimes perhaps that can have an influence on a place. And I think there is some truth to that.

Um, at least in the minds of people who experience a place over a period of time, I would say. And so for someone like me who's been working here for over 20 years, I have many memories in every room of the building. Um, interacting with students who have since graduated. And so, at least from my perspective, um, there is, um, a real history of the place that is actually about the people who have come before.

That's hard for students to detect because they're only here for a short period of time and they can't access, um, a recollection. Um, students that are more than four years older than them, and it can be sometimes amusing. Uh, from an old timer's perspective. Sometimes students will think of something that happened last year as a tradition and they have a kind of nostalgia about something that happened last year, and that's the only year that that thing ever happened, and they

sort of attach a meaning to it as if that's been happening here every year since the beginning of time.

But for those of us who have been around, there's kind of a reverse effect. Where I can remember a conversation with a student over in that corner, um, a very vivid conversation. It, it was a student I was concerned about, and I don't, I don't know why this particular memory is coming to mind right now. Um, I'm not gonna go down that rabbit hole.

But the, the point is that, um, the way the faculty teach the students today is influenced by the students who were here yesterday. And the students who are here today can't necessarily access that and see it. But I, I would say that there is such a thing as a ghost in the sense that, um, the people who are occupying the building today are influenced by the people who they've never seen that occupied the same spaces before them.

Now, if this were not a situation where the faculty were more constant, I don't know that that would be as relevant. But the point is, That a student that I taught 10 years ago influences the way I teach today. So that student's personality, um, is, um, by transitive effect translated to the way we're having a conversation about architecture today.

So the work of previous generations slowly over time influences, um, previous generations. Um, I will give you a corollary, um, example of that. I went to graduate school at Cranbrook Academy of Arts. It's a very small program, um, very personal. There are six students in a department in a year, and one faculty member.

So you spend an awful lot of time with those students and the six students who are just one year ahead of you. That's a place where even the students sort of feel the ghosts of the students that came before them. You've heard stories about, in that kind of a situation where it's very different.

Everybody's doing a very- essentially a thesis, but it's even less structured than it is here. Um, very personally motivated and, and anyway, you have an awareness of the thesis projects that happened 2, 3, 4 years before you, and you kind of feel a sense of, um, somehow your work has to make sense in relationship to that trajectory.

That's not real. Those students are gone. They could care less if your work has any relationship to theirs. But you at least, you know, during the time period when I was there, we felt the presence of the students that we never met, um, somehow that their work was relevant to the work that we were doing. And we actually referred to them that way, that it always felt like there were ghosts in the building, that there was somehow a sense of the life that had unfolded before we were there, um, was present.

You know, it's, um, I sometimes get a little bit of a sense of that um, at my home, um, you know, just a, a momentary just sort of imagining the family that was there before and celebrated Christmas, you know, probably on the floor the way we did, cuz you're right in front of the Christmas tree and it was a different family and a different tree.

But you can kind of get a sense of that. And so, um, I, I think it is a real kind of phenomenon that that exists. And, you know, sometimes there are little traces left behind. Uh, I'll leave you with one last story and then I think I've talked more than long enough. Um, there is an architectural model in this building that was left by a student named Teddy.

And Teddy had a little bit of a wild streak and did a lovely project, made this really fabulous basswood model of the project about six feet long, and that model's still in this building. In a space that no one is supposed to go. Um, and most people can't get access to this space, but it's there. And I know it's there and Teddy knows it's there.

And now ***** knows it's there. And a few students, um, who are

rapscallions have discovered it and know it's there. But sometimes there are little traces like that, um, left behind as well. And you don't really know where they came from, or you're not necessarily even conscious of them being traces, it might just seem like a random thing that's present in the building.

So it's a really interesting topic and, and, um, I think you're onto something. The question will be like, how do you translate that into something that then can somehow be a source of inspiration when you're making a space? Uh, and I tend to think of that as well. You're making a brand new space and you're trying to anticipate that

many, many lives will unfold in that space over a long period of time. And sometimes those lives will overlap in ways that are visible and sometimes that overlap will be invisible. So the prospect that that invisible overlap is still a real thing, I think is really interesting. So unless you have any follow up questions, I think that's it."

Professor

"I can tell you a uh, uh, a funny story about how the different twists of, uh, reality can happen. So I was, um, this is, has completely nothing to do with the school, right. But had happened and it happened a few years back. We were in Poland with *****. We were shopping in this sort of farmer's market area, and uh, I was carrying bags with.

Uh, with the things that we had purchased before. Joanna was, uh, sort of picking and, and, and, and choosing and asking for, uh, new things that we would put in the bags. And at some point she wanted to actually, um, purchase some more, uh, produce. And I put both bags in one hand and I put my right hand, my right hand in my pocket and grabbed some cash.

And this guy who is selling the produce, he names the price in his,

let's say \$9 and 26 cents, and I open my palm and there is \$9 and 26 cents. Exactly. So I believe that there are things that we cannot describe, right? That there are coincidences or strange twists of, uh, time, space continuum that make us actually wonder, you know, why this is happening, you know? Um, but uh, on the other hand, I read this beautiful quote in a book that there is no such a thing as supernatural, because if it happens, it's natural, right? And if it was, if it were to be supernatural, would not be happening. And so we should, we just may not simply have senses.

We may not be able to use those senses, which allow us to actually see things which are super, which we call supernatural. And that's the reason why we call them that way because we have not been able to actually use those senses, or we are not equipped to actually see that. It's like people who cannot see color, they cannot discuss color.

It's like people who are not, we are not able to see infrared. We are not able to see ultraviolet. We're not able to see. Um, radiation, right? We are not able to see certain things and yet they exist, right? It's the same thing that, you know, we can say spirits or ghosts or those twists of, uh, time space continuum.

It may be that. In the space, you know, for me it is all that time space continuum. I don't know how many people pay attention to this little plaque there, right? That actually says something about the man. Nobody seems to care about anymore because, uh, you know, that's just a little plaque next to a door that nobody uses.

But it's about the man who was one of the first, who was actually the first professor hired by Bruno Leon when he was establishing this school. His name was Jerzy Staniszkis. And he was, uh, originally from Poland, but moved to the United States at the end of 1950s. And he started to work here at the school as, uh, in the, you know, 1960s when the school was first established.

He was the first, he was the person who, um, proposed to organize

and organize the Polish Exchange program in 1979 at the time when nobody would've thought it was possible. Later when he, so he signed the program that we are still continuing. Um, later when he retired, he moved to Poland. He, um, that, um, uh, enter competition for a monument of this sort of, Partisan army in Poland, he won the competition.

The monument is standing right in front of the building called the Parliament of Poland, and there is a plaque just underneath that, uh, that monument. And it's right, right next door to the Parliament of Poland that says that this monument was designed by Professor Jerzy Staniszkis, professor of the University of Detroit School of Architecture.

So you know how small a world can be. We have our footprint, essentially of this school in front of the parliament building of the, of the, uh, uh, of Poland, right? Um, thanks to that guy who's plaque is right there. So, um, you know, I, I could tell you endless stories like this about the balls. The, the, the parties, the events that took place in this place.

And those, you know, when I close my eyes, I see those events. I remember when I was here at the exchange program, I actually, I didn't have, there was a Halloween party here and I didn't have anything to actually put on as a dress, so I essentially flipped my jacket inside out. And I, I don't remember what else I did, but as I was coming out from the, uh, from the. From the dormitory. I actually did not open the door carefully. You know? Then the door actually hit me back on my forehead. It started to bleed, and you know, I washed it off a little bit, but otherwise left it there and it was a perfect decoration, perfect Halloween costume, everybody said, oh, it is so realistic as well, because it is real.

And that, that event took actually place right here in this, uh, in this very room. So, um, you know, there, my other office was actually upstairs in that studio in which Mikołaj is teaching. And again, the

foot, the, the, the, the imprint of the walls is still there. And there was, um, my office, uh, uh, was, you know, in one of those spaces, in, in that present studio.

The really interesting thing about it is that one day I walk into my office and I see a bullet hole in the window. Small, 22 caliber. Right? But someone must have been shooting across the street, maybe, or from down below. Obviously they were not aiming at me because I wasn't there. Right? It must have been some random shooting there, but it was a reminder for me for many years.

It was a reminder of, you know, you never know. You never know. And whenever I go to that room, the, obviously that glass has been fixed long time ago and it's no longer there, but it was, uh, one of those things that I was always going to remember. That I walk in one day and it just, you know how it makes your heart jump, you know, I could have been there when that shooting happen or not, right?

So anyway, um, so yeah, I have a lot of those stories, but I'm not going to part with them. They're sometimes boring, sometimes exciting for me, they're important because they, they, they are about the spirit of this building. Oh, by the way, I, you know, um, when I came here as an exchange student, I, before the end of the semester, a friend of mine and I, we went on a hitchhiking trip from Detroit to Los Angeles and back.

We, when we came back, it was middle of the night and it was after the end of the semester. There was nobody else in the school. We didn't have the key to our dormitories anymore. So we laid out, um, our sleeping bags in front of the main office and we actually slept there. And, um, this main office, by the way, was right here where the, um, where the, um, small computer lab is, right?

So it was right across the, the hallway from here. And I remember the secretary at the time, or associate dean at the time. I woke up at some time in the morning and I saw her tiptoeing around us. She didn't

wake us up because we were trespassing or we were doing something wrong. No, no. She was just tiptoeing not to bother us in our sleep so that, that, again, you know, however long I'm going to live, that image is going to stay with me. Anyway, thank you very much."

Professor

"Yes. Um, is it okay if I give both of 'em? Cool. Okay. How was that? All right, so my first idea is that, um, like just in general, when you talk about ghosts and things like that and like, you know, memories or, uh, sort of, um, like you don't know the imprint or whatever of the building. And of course like when you think about ghosts, I think about like the people, which would be like students here. And um, I haven't been here too long, but a couple years now. This is like my fifth academic year. So, um, I've had like students come and go, you know what I mean? And now it's been like one, almost one full cycle start to finish. So, uh, uh, I usually like get to know people when they're like in the fabrications class, so I would have, um, like certain students, like just a very small handful.

So I get to know them pretty well. And then, you know, especially like when I teach 'em how to weld or something like that, so they're like, you know, it's a lot of like one-on-one or like, um, two or three, groups of like two or three people and me, like, you know, working on like, you know, welding or something like that.

And so we get a little bit of like time to like, you know, talk and things like that and like feel like get kind of, uh, get to know them or whatever. So then they wind up leaving or, or for example, um, uh, actually, you know what? Screwed that up. Can we start over? So, so then we have those students that come and go, but especially when they become like work studies and things like that, they become like my, you know, people that I'm relying on to like run stuff when I'm not here or to help me out with, you know, stuff like for example these, um, uh, pinup boards. We got 20 of 'em now. And like I've

had, uh, probably about three or four students that have helped me, um, you know, all summer long, make these things and uh, things like that. So, uh, I start to like, you know, help them develop skills and they're helping me get stuff done.

Sometimes they're the ones doing everything cuz Yeah. Um, so, So then they, they kind of, you know, matriculate, they, they graduate and leave. And then, uh, I'm kind of like, man, I gotta like fill that void. So I kind of feel like their personalities and like what they're strong with and what, like, what they, what gaps they're leaving behind since I like, you know, either taught them or they brought in, you know, the skillset already or whatever.

Um, so that would be sort of the non-literal idea of, you know, the figurative sort of form of, uh, the, the ghost, right? So then like there's these students that we've had and then they just kind of pass through and then, you know, sometimes they come back and like, need something laser cut or, you know, need to use the MIG welder or something like that.

And, uh, sometimes they don't. I don't, you know, see them in the shop or whatever. Uh, and yeah, so that's kind of like, you know, a ghost popping in and out kind of funny. Um, the more literal sense. It's kind of funny, like, you know, down in the basement all the time, and I usually don't get here till, you know, late morning, early afternoon or noon.

Um, and uh, a lot of times I'm here like I am right now, like working on stuff, either catching up with CNC jobs, laser jobs, or whatever, um, or doing like, you know, a lot of the, the side work that I do and that requires me to be here pretty late sometimes, or like late on a weekend or something like that. So a lot of times I'm here when there's literally no one else, or, you know, during like, uh, that, like first full year of the covid restrictions here, I was the only one in the building a lot of times.

Uh, so it was kind of spooky, weird feeling, but, uh, um, you know, big empty shop late at night, you know, I'm making loud noises, but aside from me, there's no other noises, except for the radiators clicking and tapping and clanking and things like that. So they're always like, has it like, "wait, was that?" Like someone hitting something, like, or putting a wrench down on a steel tabletop in the shop or something?

Or was that, you know, the, uh, cast iron expanding and contracting or things like that? Um, so, so there's that aspect and it also reminds me of, uh, you know, very early on when I first started working here, I was talking to, Um, uh, someone from DCDC and we were, we were talking about that storage area that the DCDC has next to the shop, and it's a big dark area.

Even with all the lights on, it's still dark and it's a little spooky- bunch of crap everywhere. A bunch of like really thick columns that you can't see around. Um, and, uh, I made a joke only about it, like asking if it was haunted, and this was like very early on when I started working here. And then this person was telling me like, "you know, like back when I was in grad school here, I would hear weird things and like, you know, everyone thinks it's like pretty spooky down here and it's like haunted."

And I was like, "oh, that's funny cuz ghosts aren't real." And she was like, "well I guess you'll find out" and you know, haven't found out yet. But, uh, you know, uh, a lot of times I'm isolated and I think about that and I'm like, you know, I have like headphones on, like noise canceling, you know, um, headphones and I'm listening to something else.

And I'm like, you know, uh, not able to hear if there was, you know, a ghost saying something or making noise or whatever. I guess I'd see it maybe. But anyway, I haven't yet, so that's more of the, uh, literal sense of ghosts anyway."

Allen Park Theater Facebook Comments

Participants' names are omitted for anonymity. Comments have been lightly edited for grammar and spelling, as well as removing emojis.

“I grew up in Allen Park, Michigan and I’m proud to call it my Home Town!”

“Loved a going to the matinee on Saturdays.
Then, I went with my boyfriend, *****, on date nights.”

“My aunt work there at ticket booth for 15 years”

“Seeing Help! The girls wouldn’t stop screaming”

“My boyfriend and I saw Gone With the Wind there and sat in the very first row.”

“Walked there in the 70’s to see Jaws with friends from neighborhood”

“That guy was so mean.... I was tall for my age, I guess. He would not let me in for the kid price, can’t remember if it was 25 cents or fifty cents. Yelled at me and embarrassed me in front of everyone for trying to sneak in and rob him. Another memory was when they turned off the movie because everyone was throwing things.”

“Took my boyfriend there to see ‘West Side Story’ in 1963 (which we both loved). Got married to him in 1965 & were married for 50 years. He passed away 3 months after our anniversary.”

“I remember the penguin with the message ‘it’s cool inside’ on the door to the left when facing the theater.”

“I remember being 8 years old and going with my cousins and a neighbor to see a child friendly movie and returning home to tell my mother that ‘High School Confidential’ had been run instead. I don’t think she was happy.....”

“Met my husband there while we both worked there in 1996 when we were in High School. I worked Concessions (sometimes the ticket booth) and he was an usher.”

“I worked there in the early 70’s when I was 16. I could tell you some stories about broken candy boxes (we couldn’t sell them). Free pop, popcorn (we made our own). Flirting with the boy ushers from southgate. Getting my friends in for free through the back door. We thought the manager was mean. I can’t remember her name. The guy running the projector was a pervert in today’s standards. My first crush worked there. What a fun job lol. I’ve already said too much!”

“Saw many movies and took several girls on dates there when in Jr high school I remember 35 cents good deal. Haven’t been to the movies once the prices hit 4 dollars in the mid 80’s or there about.”

“I fondly recall my dad taking my younger brother and I there to see the 1970 movie, Patton, when it came out. He must have really wanted to see it. I think of him and the theater whenever I see that movie.

So, what was on the Movies TV channel last night? Patton! How ironic, which brings back the aforementioned memories once again, ha!”

“St. Frances Cabrini School took us there to see ‘The Ten Commandments’... 1950s.”

“I think back to the 1950’s and I believe it cost \$.35 for two movies, a cartoon, and a Batman episode.”

“Remember going to see ‘The Seven Voyages of Sinbad.’ The line went around the block.”

“When I was a kid ‘going to the show’ meant our parents dropped us off on a Saturday afternoon. I think it was once each month they had a drawing for bicycles and every kid held their ticket stubs in sticky little hands until the big moment. You could sit in the theater and watch movies all day long, of course, back then there was only one screen and sometimes only one movie over and over. You could get a small popcorn for a nickel, most candy bars at twice the size of today’s cost the same. We go to Falzone’s drug store beforehand and buy a dime’s worth of penny candy and bring it with us. There was always a cartoon or two prior to the main feature and it was ‘cool’ to sit as close to the screen as possible. The very first 3-D were shown there and everyone got a pair of paper glasses to watch and be twice as scared or thrilled. Good times with my childhood buddies ***** and *****. The older kids looked out for the little ones but wanted nothing to do with them once inside the theater. And on Saturdays the floor was always sticky.”

“My grandparents owned a flower shop on Park Ave. and they went to the AP theater all the time. When I was 3, they took me there to see ‘Sound of Music’! I remember it was only 1 auditorium then and there were velvet curtains over the screen until it started. I also remember the smell of popcorn and the excitement of the crowd anticipating the movie. I absolutely loved the movie and my grandmother told my mom I behaved well. So, my parents took me to see the movie again the following weekend. That was the beginning of attending countless movies there from the mid 60s to the early 80s. It was always a treat to go there for a movie and then

lunch at the Triangle on Saturdays. I also remember feeling so grown up when my mom said I could go alone with my friends! I remember throwing popcorn at my friends and other kids before the movie, instead of eating it, lol! I am saddened to see it torn down.”

“Such wonderful memories there. In the 50s, there were double features, cartoons and a newsreel. All for 25c or less. I remember seeing *The Creature From the Black Lagoon* and *The Day the Earth Stood Still*. Cheesy yes, but scary as hell back then. It was in the 2nd or 3rd row that I dared to kiss a girl...wow, talk about being scary.”

“Went there on Saturday nights in the late ‘60s with my boyfriend. My brother worked there in the early ‘70s. Said he felt like a babysitter for hundreds of kids every Saturday.”

“best part when Mr ***** was *****’s boss there. Such a nice guy and of course I would go in and watch a movie.”

“Many Saturday matinees with my sister and friends to see Elvis movies. At this theater I also saw *Gone With the Wind*, *My Fair Lady*, *Mary Poppins*. Many wonderful memories. Years later, I worked across the street at Down River Federal Savings as a teller.”

“I worked at the candy counter when you were an usher! Fun job!”

“I worked there for a couple of years when I was a teen. Too many memories and stories that are better off not told.”

“Free Popcorn when you went to see *WestWorld* with Yul Brennon!”

“Went to see *The Tingler* (1959) starring Vincent Price. Allen Park Theater had placed buzzers in the rows of seats. At certain points of the movie, the buzzers would go off and scare the s*** out of the younger kids. Look up the plot info on IMDB. Great times!”

“Led Zeppelin song remains the same. There was so much pot

smoking. You could get high walking to the bathroom. I remember usher's smoking hash up by the screen"

"People were so high I had to count their money for them at the candy counter!"

"I worked the candy counter when I was 16, 1976. The Led Zeppelin movie 'The Song Remains The Same' came out during my time there. The manager called a meeting to let us know we would all be working late because of the late night showings. I didn't mind at all, I loved it! I would finish my shift then sneak into a theater to watch the movie over and over again. Listening to the soundtrack I still think of how I fell in love with Led Zeppelin at the Allen Park Theater!"

"Ben Hur, with my dad, thought it would never end!!!"

"We went on rainy days in the summer in the 60s."

"I lived in Dearborn Heights and my friend and I rode our bikes to the theater. The movie was a horror type thing (The last house on the left, maybe?). I don't remember riding there or the movie, but I remember the ride home. It was torture and we didn't think we would make it home."

"Going to the Saturday matinee with a big brown bag of homemade popcorn with my brothers and sisters."

"Bonnie and Clyde, and the three Stooges go to outer-space, Robinson Cruso"

"My friends and I used to love walking to the show."

"I remember going to see my first movies with a friend (without my parents). It was a double feature of The Love Bug and The Computer Wore Tennis Shoes."

“My mother ***** was the first ticket seller to work in the booth and was a friend of Mr. George for the rest of his life.”

“We would walk there with 35 cents each - a quarter for the ticket and a nickel for candy for each movie of the double feature. We would use the empty candy box and blow into one end and make a loud squeaking noise. Oftentimes, the management would stop the movie midstream and yell over the loudspeaker telling everyone to be quiet and stop throwing popcorn and empty candy boxes!”

“My first visit was May 1977 when my uncle took me and my brothers to see Star Wars”

“Blazing Saddles , Carrie , Smile , Escape from the Planet of the Apes , Willard and countless others”

“My buddy and I went to the show on the weekend. If I remember, a child’s ticket was 12 years and younger. We were both 13, but we decided we could still pass as 12, so we bought the cheaper kids ticket. We get into the lobby and hand our tickets to the ticket taker and he asks us if we were brothers. I said no and my buddy said yes. He then said we better get the regular tickets. Busted!”

“I remember way back in the ‘40’s, when we went there to see Hank Williams, Sr!”

“Remember seeing the movie Help with Beatles around 1965”

“I believe I saw the same movie with some buddies and remember quite a few popcorn containers frisbeeing through the air!!”

“We loved going there in the late 50s/early 60s for the Saturday matinees! Previews, 2 movies and cartoons for 25¢! We would spend hours there and it was always packed! Fun memories and we hate to see it go.”

“Floors so nasty your shoes literally stuck to them when you walked around the interior.”

“Went to the street dances next to it Frankie Avalon was there in 57”

“Patton and Saturday monster movie marathons.”

“Going to the Saturday matinee to see monster & sci-fi movies in the 50’s and 60’s is a cherished memory. Walking on floors that stuck to your feet with a theater full of screaming kids throwing things at each other was so cool.”

“That was the best place to be. We would either walk or a parent would drop us off and pick us up. Felt like we were being treated to something special without the parents.”

“When I was in 5th grade I threw a big Slo Poke at the screen and got kicked out.”

“Went to see Gone With the Wind by myself”

“Free kids movies on select Sundays. Took my kids early 2000’s.”

“Parents took turns driving neighborhood kids to Saturday matinee. One time the movie was ‘Horrors of the Black Museum.’ My sister and I were so scared afterward that our parents had to check in the closet and under the bed before we could go to sleep. Parents went to the movies to check it out and decided it was so scary that the kids shouldn’t have gone. Several years ago it was on tv and we HAD to watch it as a family. Part of our family legend.”

“I always went next door to the record shop to buy a 45 after the Saturday matinee.”

“In 1980 the parents took all the kids on our block in Southwest

Detroit to see Herbie Goes Bananas, many of us still bring it up to this day(‘remember when?’). Another day when it was over 100° outside my dad took me and my siblings to watch 3 different movies to get out of the heat all day. May have gone to that theater 1,000 times, including the final showing on closing night of A Dog’s Journey. Somehow the dog seemed like a perfect metaphor for the theater, it was so fitting. Afterwards, everyone just wandered the theater taking it all in one last time, not wanting to say goodbye. All the showings were selling out in the last days, people wanting to relive those memories one more time. I still have a sign that somehow ‘fell’ into my jacket that hung above the door to one of the theaters that says ALLEN PARK CINEMAS PRESENTS... it hangs above the doorway in my living room.

Down to the last day, their popcorn always seemed better than any other theater. I always wondered if they kept the old delicious ingredients when the bigger theaters switched to the supposedly healthier oils. Many times I went in to buy popcorn to take home for a special movie night at home.”

“My sister was an usher at the show.I would walk to the show on Saturdays,and see two movies back then...Ma and PA Kettle movies,they were funny. The Long, Long Trailer with Lucille Ball. It was very cheap.maybe 15,25 cents.lol”

“Went to matinees in the 40s. Either 10 or 12 cent admission. 2 double features, cartoon, a newsreel, and a serial episode. I was hooked on movies there. 1 or 2 nights a week would go with my mom and her friend for dish night. She wound up with a whole set. Matinees were usually cowboy movies, I loved them. Good memories.”

“Remember watching the Woodstock Movie there as well as the Song Remains the Same with Zeppelin!”

“They always had double features and I remember my Dad smoking in his seat.”

“We went there as kids. Walked 25 cents show. My sisters and I then as teenager went with friends. I saw west side story there. Long walk lived on Keppen St. by three sisters restaurant. You all remember that? Then as adult I took my daughter there and then I have been there many times since 2005 when I moved back to Allen park. We went so much they knew us and let us go in to take the pictures and get some of their delicious popcorn on their last day. Sad to see it go.”

“Teenagers from Outerspace and It Came From Beneath the Sea. And Gorgo.”

“In the mid 60’s Saturday matinee, .35 cents admission for a double feature, being dropped at noon & picked up at 5:00 pm, my brother *****, ***** & *****, ***** & *****, *****, *****, *****, *****, *****, ***** all from our neighborhood, plus seeing friends from school and other neighborhoods in A.P.”

“Many great memories there as a kid. When we couldn’t get a ride there we would walk. The long walk was half the fun.”

“It was my first movie theater. I Think they were still showing newsreels and cartoons before the main movie in the mid 50s.”

“I used to go with my brother and remember getting in for \$.25. First movie I can remember the first one I saw was The Mysterians. Screaming kids and the smell of popcorn permeating the air..”

“Star Wars date!”

“My mom took us to see Star Wars. She fell asleep and her wedding ring fell off...had to crawl on that sticky floor to find it!”

“The late 50s early 60s on Saturday afternoon the theater was filled with kids, no adults that I can remember. I saw such a cheesy movies

like Attack of the 50 Foot Woman, The Tarantula, and The three Stooges. One day the movie must have been bad, popcorn and popcorn boxes were flying through the air. That poor usher was helpless and ran away. That Monday our principal at Bennie got on the PA and scolded us. I don't remember it happening again. But later I saw A Hard Days Night, West side Story, Exodus with my parents. I have fond memories of that place. But later when it became a dollar theater the floors were so sticky. So sad.

Late 50's, House on Haunted Hill, Seven Voyages of Sinbad, with the cyclops.

And Gorgo

There is a lady still alive in her late 90's that worked there on the opening night as an usher in 1941 or whenever it opened."

"Class/school field trip (Cabrini) took us there to see "Song of Bernadette"

"I was at the Allen Park theater when I was really young when Tom Tresh, a 1959 graduate of Allen Park High and currently playing for the New York Yankees, came home to speak to his hometown kids. He spoke there that day and it was really exciting"

"I was at the Allen Park Theater the afternoon the riots in Detroit broke out. They turned on the house lights and shut down the movie and told us we all had to go home. When you walked out the front door of the theater you could see smoke lingering over Detroit. As a young teenager that was pretty eerie"

"I remember leaving the theater on a Sunday afternoon , walking home not a single car on the road , thinking this is really weird . Once home found out the reason , Detroit riots"

"I remember my Dad taking me to see Jaws. He fell asleep during the movie until the entire crowd screamed during one of the scenes. He jumped two feet out of his seat LOL and stayed awake the rest of the movie."

“Used to walk up there in the 60’s with my brother, best friend and her brothers. At first it cost .35 and .15 for popcorn. We drank water. Then the price went up to .50. Saw lots of good movies there.”

“Mrs. ***** was the ticket lady when admission was 35 cents. I saw my first big screen movie there, my first date was there, my first date with my future wife was there. All in the 1960s.”

“Saturday afternoon matinee with Officer *****.”

“When I worked at a local Pizza place, we would trade the employees pizza for popcorn.”

“I saw ‘Cool Hand Luke’ about 1967. One scene changed my life.”

“My husband and I went on our first date there, 18 years ago. I still have the stub. Our kids saw their first film there as well.”

“I remember a friend making me sit with her through two showings of ‘Romeo and Juliet’ Early 70’s.”

“I worked there as an usher in the 70’s. I also had to put up the marquee for movies showing. One time I put up a movie starring one of my friends rather than the actor. Seems like it took a few days to be noticed.”

“I think it was like .50 in the early 60s to get in.”

“Wow memory lane from Mr limpet. The computer that wore tennis shoes. Bond movies tour Tora Tora. And my ending favorite.

THE SONG REMAINS THE SAME

led Zeppelin 70s Allen Park your missed... I left there and started the 80s. A P H rules. football!

AND GOT TO GIVE A SHOUT OUT TO ROCKY

HORROR...???.”

“In 1982 my oldest brother and his friend took me and my buddy there to see a PG-13 movie. Instead, my buddy and I were told to go see that movie (can't remember that PG-13 movie) so that they could both go see, THE THING! Long story short, the PG-13 movie let out a few minutes earlier, so we waited in the Lobby. But my brother and his friend didn't come out to meet us. My brother's car was gone! We had to walk all the way home in the neighborhood of the Brant Park Baseball Field. Came to find out my brother's friend was so horrified by the movie, he walk out into the Lobby to get himself together. But ended up passing out on a velvet rope Pole and almost broke his own jaw! So my brother took him to the Hospital. Too this day, my brother's friend hasn't/won't see that movie...”

“I hate seeing the front with ticket booth go I understand the rest is standing by habit. Hope it continues as a space for Community to gather in so/many ways.”

“Lots of Saturday afternoon movies in the 60s when it was just one huge picture screen. It gave us a chance to meet kids from the other AP schools. Several years ago I started collecting dvds of the scary movies from back then. My aunt worked at the triangle across the street so we would go there afterwards for French fries and cherry cokes. Oh...and I got my first kiss there”

“My friends and I rode our bikes there and saw Grease a total of 13 times. lol we made our own club and also remember my uncle taking me to see Tommy... I am sure he was ummm feeling good since he had to spend a day with his little niece. I wonder if he was being punished for something lol”

“I used to work for a cleaning company that used to clean it every night. I can tell you a few of those theaters were haunted”

“Affectionately known in our family as ‘The Rat Palace’ in the years before renovation to 3 theaters.”

“I remember the first time we weren’t able to bring our own popcorn in and we can only buy the popcorn they were selling. \$.15 and then we could get a Coke out of the machine for \$.15.”

“I remember seeing Rumpelstiltskin there. That is my earliest memory.”

“Saw my first movie in a theater there! A Wednesday matinee for a quarter. Mary Poppins!”

“I grew up Downriver...and I’m proud of it!”

“Remember? There was a poultry shop down the street. As a teen, we would look inside. The guy would chop the head off a chicken and yet it would run still. Just to scare us kids. It worked! Then go see a movie, like ‘Jaws’.”

“My bff and I would walk from Lincoln Park to go to the movies a lot as early teenagers. I remember seeing The Sting. We sunk down in our seats and stayed and watched it again! We had crushes on Robert Redford and Paul Newman. Loved that movie! So many fun memories going there.”

“Remember riding my bike there from Melvindale in the 70’s. Seen Star Wars, Grease and many other classics. My mom worked at the triangle restaurant across the street and would stop in after to see her and eat.”

“Saturday matinees. The owner (or maybe the projection guy) would stop the movie because kids were throwing popcorn and candy at each other. He would threaten to kick us out and never be able to come back.

Only one screen. Early 1960s”

“When I was about 9. I walked from Ln. PK. TO THE MOVIES

AND SAT THROUGH DOUBLE FEATURE CARTOONS. NEWS AND PREVIEWS TWICE. My Mother was so upset and my butt was so red”

“My favorite memory at Allen Park theater is seeing the original He-Man movie with Dolph Lundgren.”

“My mom would drop me and my older brother off at the show on Saturday matinees to see the Disney films. Absent minded professor, Son of Flubber, in junior high had my first girls meet the guys up at the show to see Bonnie & Clyde. Lots of memories in that building !!!!”

“My Dad used to work rotating shifts, changing every week. Sometimes when he was scheduled to go in on Friday night he would take us to see a movie in the early evening before his shift. I remember seeing Laserblast there on one such occasion. It would have been 1978.”

“Was my first job, made .50 cents an hour, was a usherette. One of the things I remember most was having to go back behind the screen to open the curtains and there was a big cardboard poster of Frankenstein in the corner. No matter how many times I went back there it still scared the crap out of me!! Oh and the fact that I must of seen Around The World In 80 Days at least a thousand times. Worked there couple years, good memories.”

“My first movie was ‘Lady and the Tramp’. It was sold out, and Dad held me up to watch the movie in the standing room area behind the last row.”

“Went there often in the 60’s, Dad would drop a car load of kids off. They only had 1 large screen at that time.”

“ya saw Ben and Willard in a Saturday double feature matinee. 1976 maybe..”

“As a teenager, I worked all through high school. This was in the Early 70’s. I worked concessions. On Saturdays we would always sell out the 1200 seat theater. The projectionist was this little old man named *****. He was in his 80s and knew so much about movies! This job was so much fun!
Oh and by the way..... I made a whopping \$1.65 an hour! Lol”

“We have 3 kids and it was so expensive for a family of 5 to go to the movies. While visiting family in Allen Park our first stop Friday night from a 12 hour drive from CT was to go to the movies. The kids and me and my hubby always looked forward to the cheap movies!”

“I grew up in Allen Park. We went to Saturday matinees almost every week in the 50s . Great times with the neighborhood kids. Oh and my Mom and Dad had many many date nights there”

“I remember seeing the movie ‘A Star is Born’ there.”

“Double features. Saw movie like ‘blob”

“Ohhh I remember going there with my Mom & sister & as we got older “11/12. Our parents would drop us off..”

“Used to go there with my mom to watch all the new Disney movies & with my Brother to see the Adventure movies of the day.. also with friends to see Grease & Battlestar Galactica in Sensurround sound on the original large screen.

Twice each.

Sad that only Money & greed survives good times.
Everything else gets Demolished with enough time..”

“Wifey and I went there to see E.T. for our first date 38 years ago.”

“Where I had my very first kiss”

“In the early 2000’s I used to meet a friend there every Monday and

we would go in and see whatever the next movie that was starting.
Lol”

“Saw Disney Movies , Top Gun there !”

“Sitting there with my mom and watched Grease three times in a row.
She just loved it!!”

“I remember so well This is where I saw all of the early 80’s classics!
Great memories”

“Every weekend of my almost 25 year marriage...cheap and could
take little ones until 6pm.”

“I saw Tommy Tresh there in 1962. He was an Allen Park high
graduate that played outfield for the New York Yankees. He talked to
us kids in the theater about his career as a Yankee. It was pretty cool
for a 9 year old.”

“First movie I ever (knowingly) saw there: The Great Muppet Caper
(1981)

Last movie: My Super Ex-Girlfriend (2006)”

“I passed out there when I was first pregnant back in 1969. We went
to see Bonnie and Clyde. It took a few years before I got to see the
ending. Lol”

“Great memories. My 1st movie date. I think I was about 12 or 13 .
Seen a movie with Chubby Checker in it with Debbie Oniel lol”

“Saw Grease their with my bestie”

“Saw original jaws movie there when it was released”

“I recall it was the first place I was allowed to walk to alone. My first

memory of a walk there to see Old Yellow.”

“I worked there in the 90s and used to sneak my friends in to watch movies with me after we closed”

“We always went here in grade school/high school, I grew up in Ecorse but went to Cabrini”

“I remember seeing a Herbie movie there and they had a whole Herbie Volkswagen in the lobby.”

“I remember seeing Mary Poppins with my mom, aunt & my sister there in the bigger screen room, and taking my kids to the reduced price movies”

“Used to go there on Friday nights while my Dad worked across the street at Fosters Drug store.”

“Almost every Saturday we went to the Theater”

“Saw first Star War movie in front row
With Southgate Hockey kids”

“Spent hours there. One ticket lasted all day.”

“Early 50s 3 of us would walk there and watch 2 westerns, cartoons and newsreels on Saturday. Got in for 14 cents under 12 and 10 cents for popcorn. We got in for that until we were about 14.”

“I Many Great Movies There, Star Wars Twice, Harry Potter Movies, Jaws, Lady And The Tramp, Beauty And The Beast, Snow White, Star Is Born, Saturday Night Fever, Grease And So Many More”

“Me and my siblings along with our friends used to go to the Saturday matinee every week. Our mom would give us each .50 cents. .35 for the ticket and .15 cents for snacks. We always stopped at the

party store on the way for .5 cent candy.”

“Saturday nights or Sunday afternoon movies with my daughter when she was young in the cold winter months..”

“going to see the original karate kid was fun!”

“Very young Kurt Russell movies in the 60’s.many many more.went there for 30 yrs”

“Was an usher there from 76-79”

“A long, long time ago I went there to see a scary movie called Hush, Hush Sweet Charlotte.”

“Grew up there. I remember being 10 years old, being dropped off there for the old Disney movie. Crazy. Can’t do that anymore”

“Great place to cool off in the summer.”

“As a young kid we saw The 10 commandments; Bonnie and Clyde; so many great movies there with family and friends.”

“I saw ET there !! Please reopen”

“I seen Benji there lol”

“Can’t share my memories if PG.”

“Seen Grease there about 7 times.”

“Used to go all the time matinee”

“I WENT THERE ALOT OF TIMES, JUST SAYING”

“Watched saving private ryan there with my grandma. It’s my first

clear memory of a theater. But she used to take me there all the time as a small kid. Born 82'

Worked across Allen Rd, same corner at the bank when it was Down River Federal Savings, then Heritage Bank, and then Standard Federal."

"Saw my first movie there (to my recollection) Bad News Bears 1976"

"I will miss this show. I went to see several movies over my lifetime."

"Here's one I posted a couple years ago:

Many a Saturday afternoon was spent at The Allen Park theater when mom would drop us off with a quarter to get in, and enough to buy a rock candy (our crack) and maybe a Good-n-Plenty. The matinee typically consisted of a couple of low budget horror flicks like Mr. Sardonicus and 13 Ghosts, where you were issued 2 pairs of glasses, red shades if you wanted to see the ghosts, and blue for the scaredy cats."

"There was red mohair upholstery on the original seats."

"Went there on a date . He bought us pop and only one straw in one container. CHEAPSKATE"

Allen Park Historical Museum

"Hi, I had been going there since the late 60's with my family n friends. It was my favorite place to be, especially on weekends to watch the Matinees. My dates would take me there to watch movies n I would meet my friends there and all sit n have fun watching exciting movies there for years. I was heart broken when they decided to close it down. It's like a lil piece of my heart had been ripped away from me. It's irreplaceable. I wish they would have gotten a Grant to restore it instead of tearing it down. People now a days are uncaring

and cruel. Not caring about the Generations of people who grew up going there and love this wonderful Theater.”

“I remember when my mom took me to see Star Wars there, probably spring 1978 (it was not at the Allen Park or most other theaters locally opening day) and we were going to a 1 PM show. The line was so long that it went all the way down Philomene, wrapped around the back of the theater, up White, and around the corner again to Allen. By the time we got to the ticket booth we saw the 3-something show. I was very young and probably drove my Mom nuts with my excitement to finally see Star Wars.”

“Saw my first movie Herbie goes Bananas there.....Star Wars was next. Dad had to hold the seat down because I didn't weigh enough”

“I believe my mother worked there in the late 1940's”

Personal Ghost Stories

Over the course of this thesis, I encountered many ghosts, but here are two which are personal to me. The first is from my mother, when she was a teenager growing up in Dearborn Heights, MI. The second is about my father, who passed away in early 2019.

Mr. Henson

Mr Henson worked for my Grandfather in his garages. He became a close family friend when my mother was a child. He'd come visit the house with gifts for everyone. My mother always remembered his cologne. It was something like baby powder at first, but there was something more. The longer you smelled it, the more complex it got.

Mr. Henson eventually moved on from my Grandfather's business, moving to California. And when my mother was 10, she and the rest of the family found out Mr. Henson had been in a terrible accident at his new job. He had been operating a forklift, and something broke. The fork fell on top of him, and he was crushed to death.

Years had passed and my family moved on. My mother was now in high school. And one day, she came home from class to an empty house. My grandfather was probably out at work, and my grandmother, at the store. But as soon as my mother walked into the kitchen, she smelt something familiar. Like baby powder, but more.

She turned to face the source, but nothing - no one was there. She simply smiled, and said "Thanks for coming to check in on us, Mr. Henson." The smell slowly faded out of the house.

Pocked Marked Walls

For as long as I could remember, there were pictures of airplanes across the walls of my basement. My father had always been fascinated by World War II. He made models of planes, he collected books on planes, and he surrounded himself with photos of them. When he and my mother separated, she attempted to remove the pictures, but he had used nails on every corner of every photograph. Frustrated, she stopped shortly after.

I'd see my father every other weekend. I met his new wife and her family. Back home, the Basement eventually became my place. I would be down there pretty much every evening, drawing or watching a movie.

I grew dissatisfied with the photos. I found a small hammer and a pair of pliers and spent an entire summer prying and plucking nails from the wall. Slowly, picture after picture came down, and the green, now pock-marked walls grew empty.

One afternoon in February, I got a text. My dad was in the hospital. He had an unexpected heart attack. He would not survive. Now, every time I am down there, I see the pock marks. I mourn him. But in a sense, he is there, on the walls. I remember how he encouraged me to make art, to draw, to design. How he loved schlocky slasher movies and old spaghetti westerns. But most of all, I remember how much he loved me.

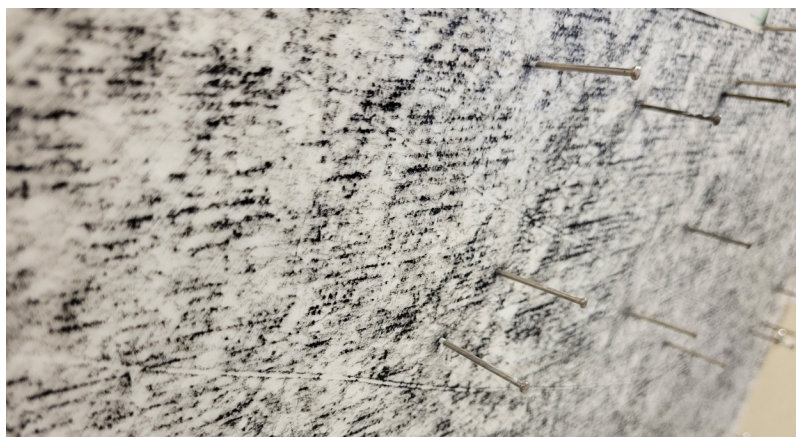


Figure A.1: Materiality Rubbings; pastel on trace paper, brad nails.

Additional Precedents

This section lists several additional precedent projects and case studies which were under consideration at times throughout this thesis. These originally were explored as a study into anthroposophy, but ultimately were used to guide the interpretations in the “Transmigration” section.

Walls

Suso33

Even after a building dies, it may live on, imprinted on its neighbors. The suggestions of walls- of entire rooms- is all it takes to understand what is now lost.

Artist Suso33 uses this to create even further narratives, painting shadows on the walls. Ghostly people, living in a ghostly building.

Figure A.2: "Walls" by Suso33



Les Dormeurs (The Sleepers)

Sophie Calle

Film is an important tool for preserving the past. It allows us to see a snapshot of something which no longer exists as it had the moment the shutter clicked. It literally captures ghosts with every flash. Especially when taken of the strangers, distinct, unknown people which Sophie Calle is fascinated by.

Rest now, and be immortalized. Exist forever in celluloid memory. We can always remember the time you came and slept for me. Names and faces and empty shadows in my bed.

Figure A.3: “Les Dormeurs” by Sophie Calle



Calle to 1st cleaner. Sunday April 1st 1999. 5.30 p.m. Anne D. who must share the bed, is late

Intimate Landscapes of the Shotgun House

J. Yolande Daniels

Stories have power. Through Intimate Landscapes of the Shotgun House, we get to read the stories of so many people had been stripped of their homes, their identity, their agency.

This house was provided for you. Not by kindness, but by necessity. It's bare-bones. It's crammed with others like you. Forcefully uprooted and sent here. No one listens to you because no one thinks of you as a human.

But finally, your story is heard. Your voice matters. Your words cascade down the walls and across the floors of the house you had to call home. And people listen.

Figure A.4: "Intimate Landscapes of the Shotgun House" by J. Yolande Daniels



Black Bottom Street View

Emily Kutil

Neighborhoods change. Change is inevitable, but often it is traumatic. And sometimes change is violent, like Detroit's Black Bottom. Memories are ripped away, reduced to refuse along with the buildings that lined the streets.

Sometimes, all it takes for the memories to come flooding back is a reminder. A reconstruction of what was. What could have survived.

Figure A.5: "Black Bottom Street View" by Emily Kutil



The FireBreak Houses

Detroit Collaborative Design Center

How do we reclaim something which has been deemed a “blight?” How do we use the terrain vague which litters our cities without stripping it of its identity?

FireBreak sought to transform buildings destroyed by arson into art pieces, simultaneously calling attention to their decay while also turning them into new public space. To send it off to the afterlife as something better than just another blighted building.

Figure A.6: “The FireBreak Houses” by DCDC



Rubbing | Loving

Do Ho Suh

Even after the end of inhabitation, a building still carries its memories on its walls. But what happens when the walls are gone, or no longer accessible to you? You've lived here for practically as long as you remember. It's always bittersweet having to leave. This is your last chance to live here.

So you touch every inch, one last time. You etch each nook onto the paper with pastel. You cherish every caress. You remember the good times and the bad.

Do Ho Suh created Rubbing | Loving as a way to preserve the memories and minutiae of his first apartment and studio.

Figure A.7: "Rubbing | Loving" by Do Ho Suh



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