



THE ALBERT AND TINA

**SMALL
CENTER**

FOR COLLABORATIVE DESIGN

2023-2024

INDEX

MATERIALS OF ABOLITION	6
JOHN THOMSON LEGACY CENTER	12
PLAY IT LOUDER	16
DON'T STAND ALONE	20
ENGAGED URBAN DESIGN SEMINAR	26
ALEXANDRIA, LA	30
PUBLIC INTEREST DESIGN SEMINAR	34
SUMMER FELLOWSHIP	38
PROJECT CREDITS	46

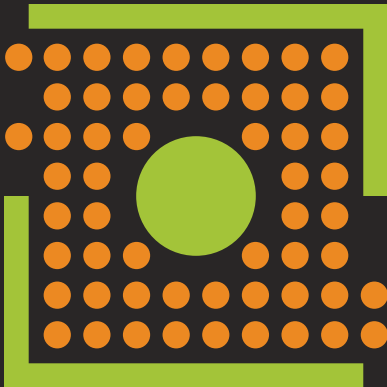
I am thrilled to share another exciting year of work of the Tulane School of Architecture's Albert & Tina Small Center for Collaborative Design. From material research to neighborhood planning, the 2023-24 annual report highlights how the center's work engages with societal issues at multiple scales, expands knowledge on the built environment and responds to community identified needs.

At the core of these projects, design/build, exhibitions, graphic design advocacy, urban design and planning, is a belief that each of us should be empowered to shape the places we live, work and play. In the past year, the center had the privilege of partnering our design expertise with artists, makers, non-profit organizations, and local governments to bring their ideas to life through collaboration. Through all these efforts, we are training the next generation of designers to reimagine their role and responsibilities and understand the power and importance of engaged design practice.

The Small Center is excited to celebrate our 20th anniversary in 2025. Let this marker be an invitation to get involved with the Small Center. Visit small.tulane.edu to make a tax-deductible donation. Stay connected on social media. Attend a public program. Spread the word about our work to others. Volunteer your expertise. And finally, please feel free to reach out with your thoughts or ideas for the Center; we would love to hear from you.

ANN YOACHIM
DIRECTOR

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Ann M. Yoachim". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.



WELCOME COMMUNITY

The Small Center is a space for community to gather around a shared belief that *design should be leveraged as a tool in the fight for justice and equity.*

We believe that *every resident of New Orleans has the right* to be part of the conversations that shape our built environments.

What are the borders and openings that define our community?



MAKE SPACE

Public Interest Design is about *making space together.*

Including multiple perspectives while creating a vision is not just a benefit, *it is a requirement for our work to move forward.*

What perspectives are and should be informing the design of space?

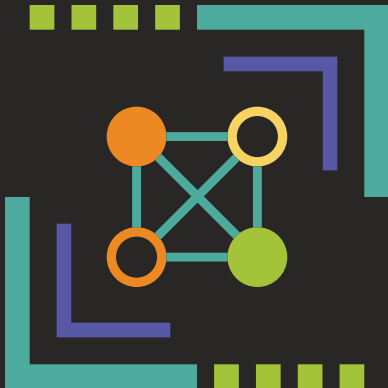


EXPLORE LINKS

We believe it's important to honor and celebrate the work of those *that came before us and to identify and support those who want to carry it forward.*

Past projects, experience, and research should serve as *anchors and bridges that provide perspective and inspire* new ways of knowing and doing.

Where do ideas and solutions that move us beyond what we see and know emerge?



CULTIVATE KNOWLEDGE

Cultivating and sharing knowledge is at the core of our work. *We recognize knowledge can be expressed in many ways and exists beyond our scope of view.*

We aim to create space where *moments of exchange offer opportunities* to find common ground and produce new knowlewwwdge.

How can we amplify our collective knowledge within and beyond the spaces we occupy?

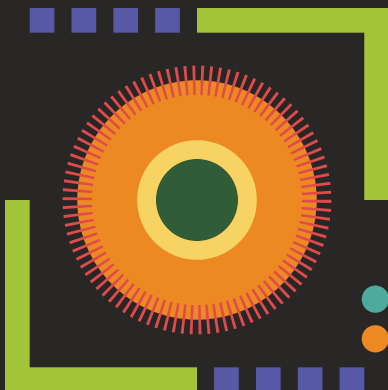


BUILD NETWORKS

Part of our role is to serve as a conduit between *partners, resources, and possibilities*. We do this by zooming out and leaning on the skill sets of our interdisciplinary team and partners.

Building networks that center intentional collaboration means *all entities contribute and benefit*.

How might we leverage these networks to expand and grow ourselves and our work?



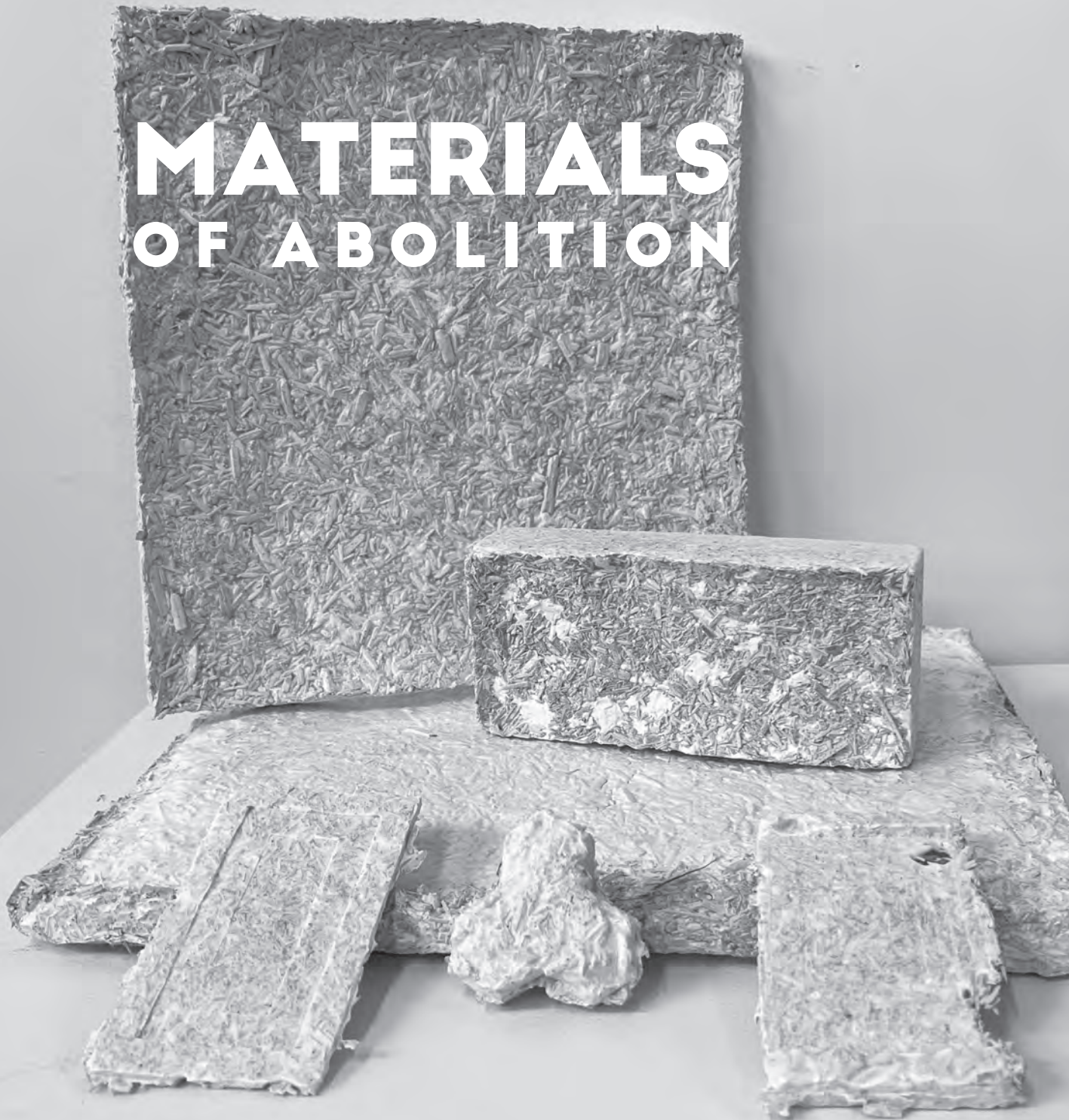
VISION FUTURES

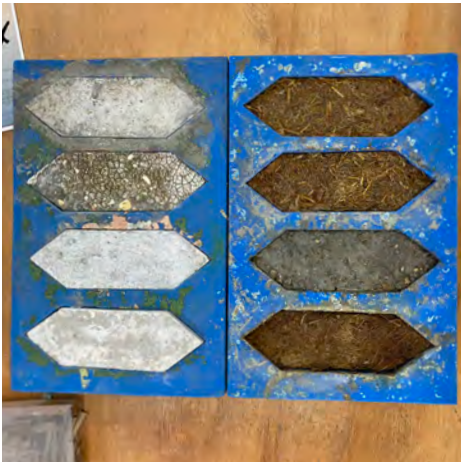
We work collaboratively to *ensure broad participation in the development of a collective vision*.

Working together to envision a project *allows for big ideas to be tested against real needs and obstacles*.

Let's imagine a world where our vision has been actualized; *what's our next step?*

MATERIALS OF ABOLITION





Small Center worked closely with artist and educator Jackie Sumell and her organization Solitary Gardens to offer a design/build research studio called Materials of Abolition. More than 2 million people in the United States are currently incarcerated, and around 90,000 are subjected to indefinite solitary confinement every day. Solitary Gardens' sites utilize the tools of prison abolition, permaculture, contemplative practices, and transformative justice to facilitate exchanges between persons subjected to solitary confinement and volunteer proxies on the "outside."

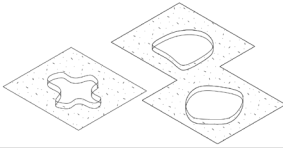
Growing from an understanding of how systems we have created have failed us — from the prison industrial complex to modes of construction, the studio focused its research on: 1) understanding the material palettes and practices that shape our built environments, 2) the potential of material compositions and production to reduce our carbon footprint, and 3) how we can seed more equitable design processes and outputs to cultivate sustainable social, economic, and environmental ecosystems.



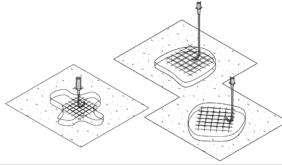
Students explored hyper-local material and manufacturing, grounding investigations in the work of our partners at Solitary Gardens. Building on the bio-based materials work of firms like Grimshaw, Material Cultures, and academic research projects like the Parsons Healthy Materials Lab, the studio developed new material composites using bio-based byproducts of local industry, concluding in the design and fabrication of two small-scale structures and an exhibit sharing the research outcomes. The pressing environmental and social issues we face are complex, layered, and seem beyond an individual's ability to change. The semester was a case study in small collective acts with impact and interdisciplinary collaborations that raise awareness, build support, and advocate for change.

Following iterative material and sustainability research and extensive mock-ups, students built Reclamation, an installation testing mycelium tiles as a roofing material (above and at right). They also constructed Manifest Dismantling (following pages), a twisted arch structure designed to facilitate connection and covered with cob material made from local clay.

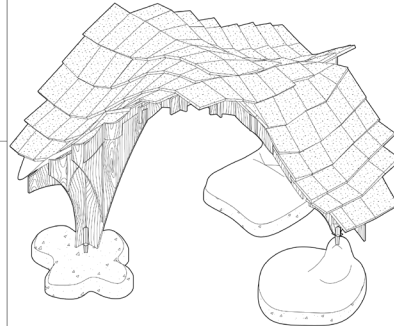
1 Dig holes for footings



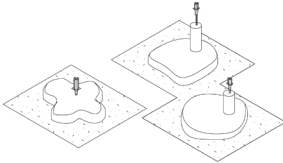
2 Find placement of J-hooks



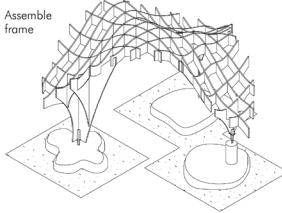
8 Attach mycelium shingles to the roof



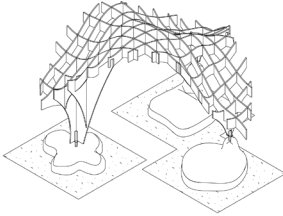
3 Pour oystercrete footings



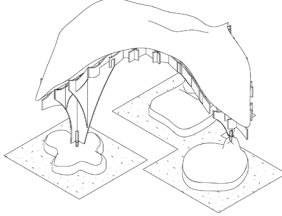
4 Assemble frame



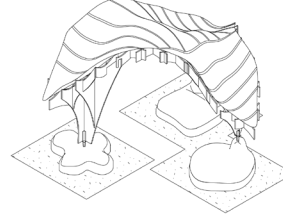
5 Cob over the oystercrete

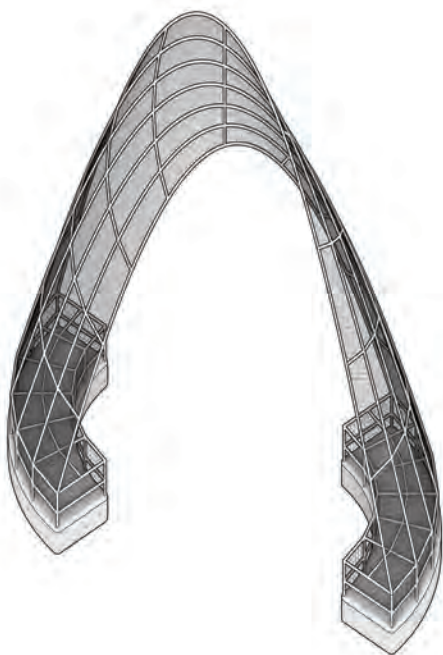
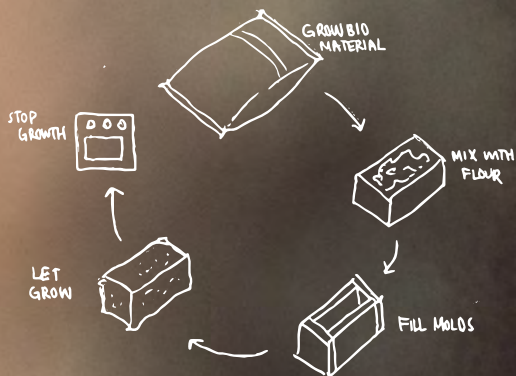
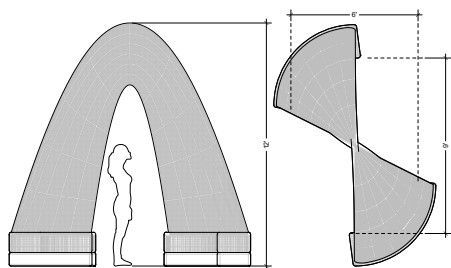


6 Drape recycled sail over the frame



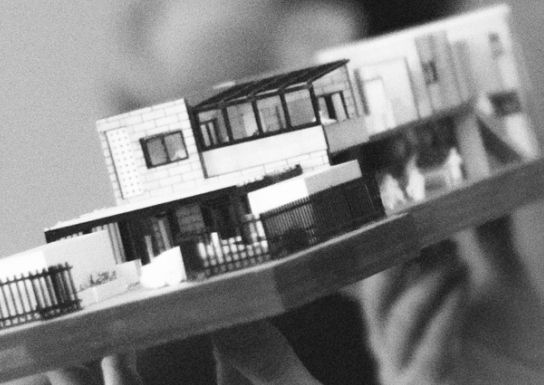
7 Nail in reclaimed cedar strips over the sail



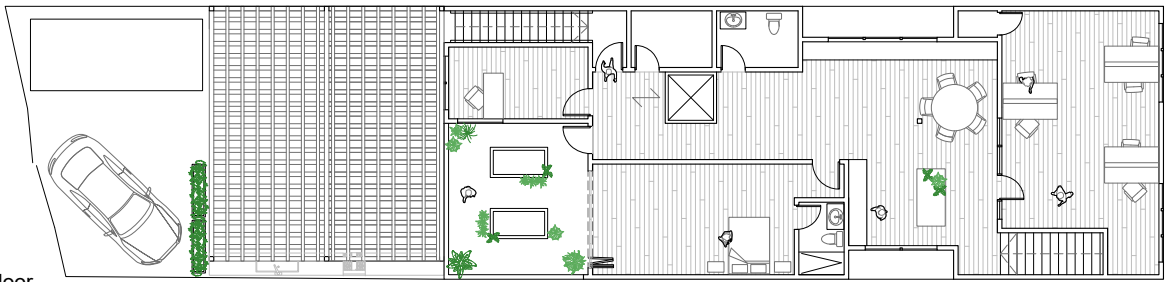




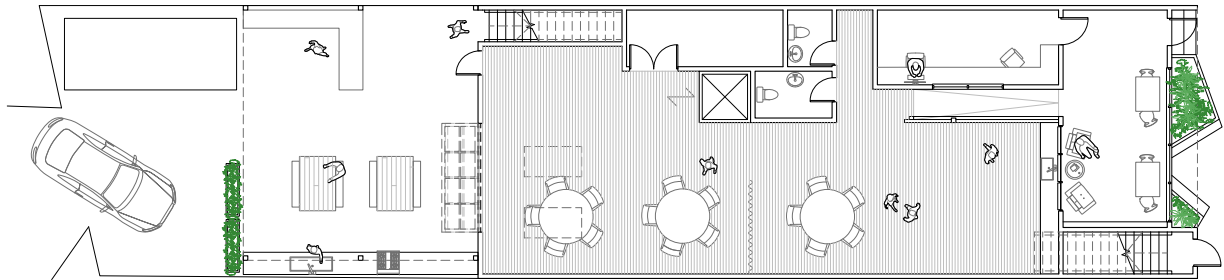
JOHN THOMPSON LEGACY CENTER



Second Floor



First Floor



In 2019, Small Center worked with the John Thompson Legacy Center (then called Resurrection After Exoneration) to reenvision its headquarters in order to relaunch the center in the wake of its founders' passing. Four years later and with new programming partners, Small Center worked with JTLC again to create a detailed renovation plan for their building. The project brings together a wide network of supporters to create a space to support those most impacted by the criminal legal system and help them to thrive.

To gather information on the current uses of the space, goals and aspirations, and better understand the impact and legacy of John Thompson, Small Center conducted engagement sessions that helped shape and inform a design direction for 1212 St. Bernard Avenue. The final vision addressed issues of accessibility, expanded the multipurpose space into the back courtyard, and reimagined the second floor to include a greenhouse and artist in residence program.



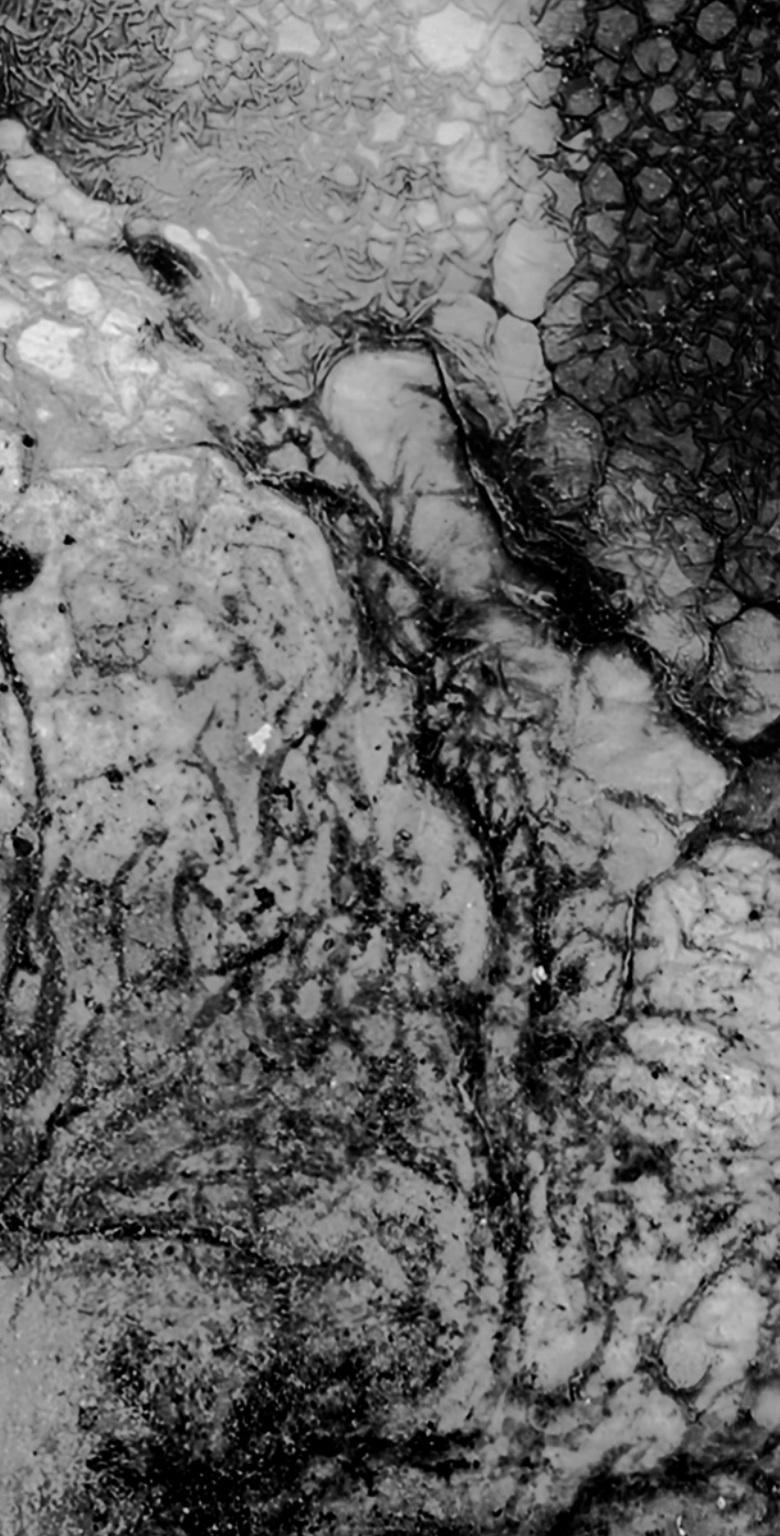


PLAY IT LOUDER

AMPLIFYING CARCERAL REALITIES & ABOLITIONIST FUTURES

Too often, data dehumanizes, is incomprehensible, and can be used to manipulate the truth. Small Center staged an exhibit entitled *Play It Louder* to counter these realities, creating space for students, artists, and community partners to collaboratively explore the architectures of carcerality and abolition. Through design investigations, interactive works, and installations grounded in data and research, the exhibit aimed to amplify the impacts of carceral systems and the potential of abolitionist principles to restore.

Supported by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, *Play It Louder* served as more than a collection of artifacts; it created a symposium of ideas, a dialogue between numbers and narratives, and an invitation to engage, empathize, and reflect. The exhibit built on past partnerships with jackie sumell of Solitary Gardens and the John Thompson Legacy Center, and featured art work by RENEE ROYALE, Langston Allston, students, and faculty.



We're in a season, again, where we have to be concerned with survival.



ng
tary
you,
aged
re it."



"I wa
afrai
of al
my c
wou
know

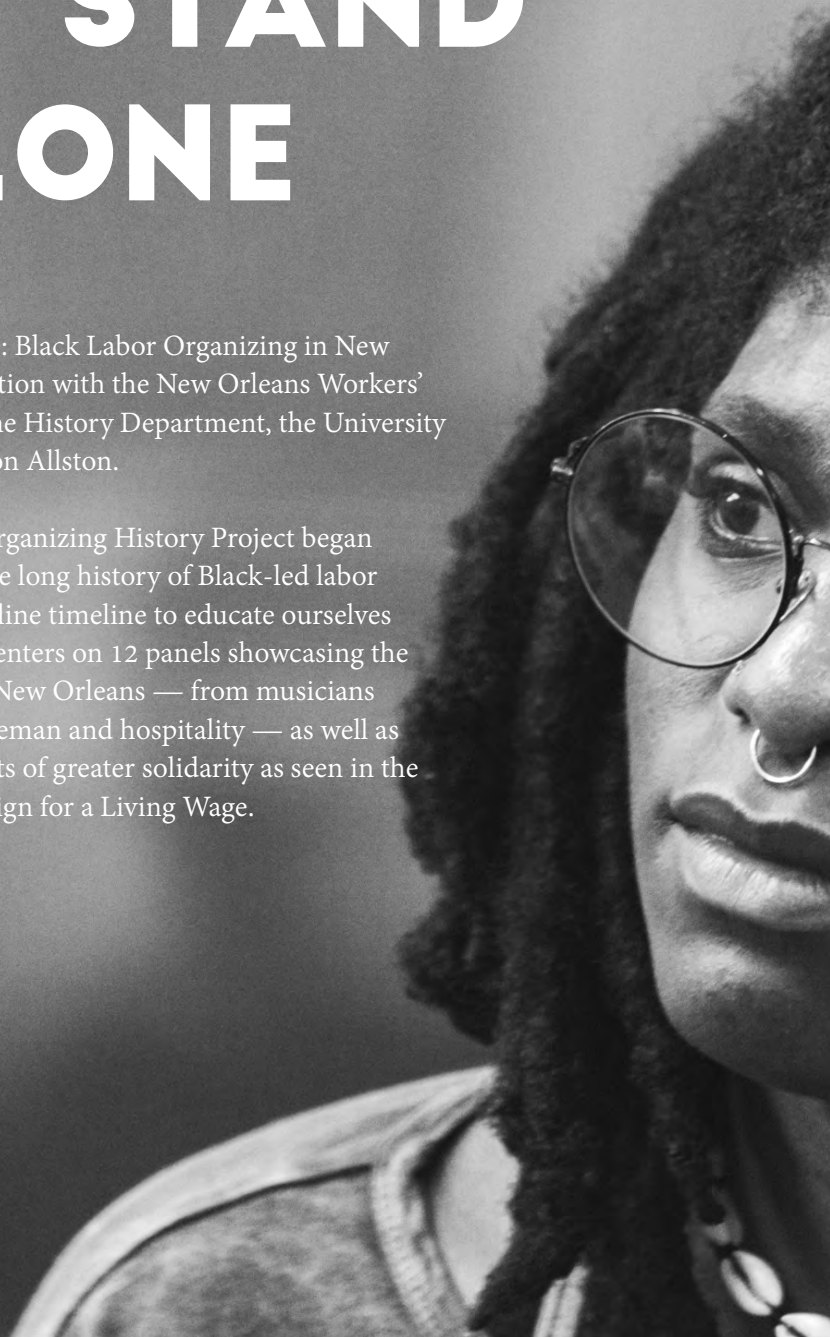




DON'T STAND ALONE

The exhibition “Don’t Stand Alone: Black Labor Organizing in New Orleans” was planned in collaboration with the New Orleans Workers’ Center for Racial Justice, the Tulane History Department, the University of New Orleans, and artist Langston Allston.

The New Orleans Black Worker Organizing History Project began in 2014 with the aim to raise up the long history of Black-led labor organizing here and publish an online timeline to educate ourselves and our community. The exhibit centers on 12 panels showcasing the wide range of labor organizing in New Orleans — from musicians and domestic workers to longshoreman and hospitality — as well as important campaigns and moments of greater solidarity as seen in the 1892 General Strike or the Campaign for a Living Wage.





GENERAL STRIKE OF 1892

One of the greatest working-class mobilizations in U.S. history happened in New Orleans – the General Strike of 1892. The strike was part of ongoing local and national labor struggles and Black peoples' continued fight for equality and freedom. In May, streetcar drivers struck and won a shorter 10-hour workday and a union shop, which required all employees to become members of the union. In June, Homer A. Plessy and the Citizens' Committee initiated their challenge to Jim Crow on railcars.

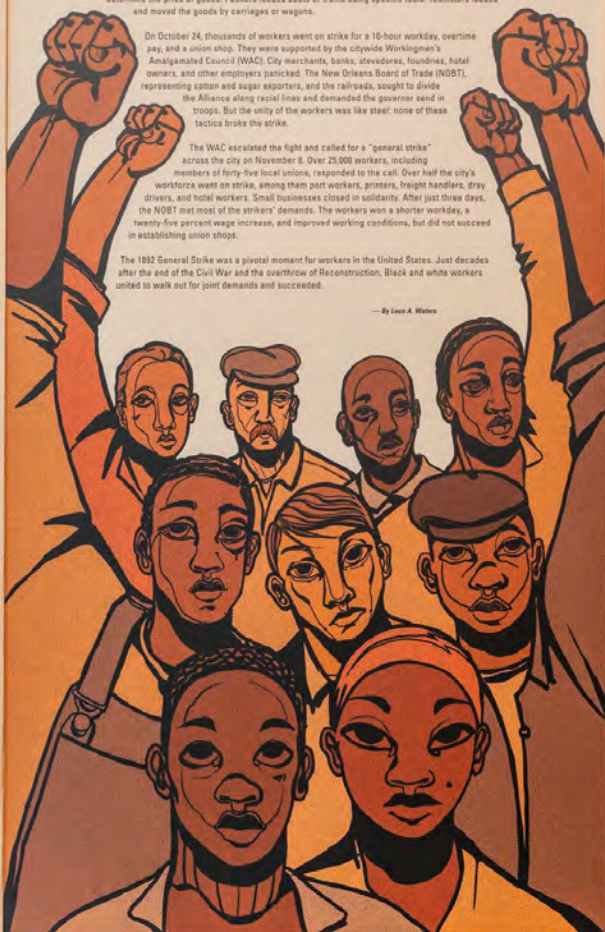
On the heels of these struggles, three key unions in New Orleans formed the "Triple Alliance," organizing across racial lines: White Stevedores, White Packers, and Black Teamsters. Working the docks, these unions provided essential labor for the port. Stevedores weighed commodities to determine the price of goods. Packers loaded boats or trains using specific tools. Teamsters loaded and moved the goods by carriages or wagons.

On October 24, thousands of workers went on strike for a 10-hour workday, overtime pay, and a union shop. They were supported by the citywide Workmen's Amalgamated Council (WAC). City merchants, banks, stevedores, foundries, hotel owners, and other employers panicked. The New Orleans Board of Trade (NOBT), representing cotton and sugar exporters, and the railroads, sought to divide the Alliance along racial lines and demanded the governor send in troops. But the unity of the workers was like steel: none of these tactics broke the strike.

The WAC escalated the fight and called for a "general strike" across the city on November 8. Over 25,000 workers, including members of forty-five local unions, responded to the call. Over half the city's workforce went on strike, among them port workers, printers, freight handlers, dry drivers, and hotel workers. Small businesses closed in solidarity. After just three days, the NOBT met most of the strikers' demands. The workers won a shorter workday, a twenty-five percent wage increase, and improved working conditions, but did not succeed in establishing union shops.

The 1892 General Strike was a pivotal moment for workers in the United States. Just decades after the end of the Civil War and the overthrow of Reconstruction, Black and white workers united to walk out for joint demands and succeeded.

—By Leola A. Wilson



DOMESTIC WORKERS MOBILIZE

For many Black women in the Jim Crow South, domestic household work was often the only option. Black women worked for white families as cooks, childcare providers, and housekeepers, and often all of the above. Their work was time-intensive, underpaid, and often isolating. Black domestic workers performed what scholars call "care work" for white families, interpersonal labor that often came at a great emotional cost.

Black domestic workers in New Orleans led campaigns to improve their lives. In 1918, Elmira Peete founded the Domestic Workers Union (DWU). It was one of the only such unions recognized by the American Federation of Labor. Peete recruited more than 1,000 cooks, housekeepers, laundresses, and caretakers working in the city's private homes. In opposition, prominent white women founded their own Homemakers' Association. They initiated the guilds to try to break the union by accusing its leaders of subversion during World War I. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) praised the DWU for improving wages and working conditions for the city's domestic workforce. According to DWU member Sarah P. Williams, the union was "one of the greatest things that has happened in years among the Negro women."

Black domestic workers resisted white supremacy at work in often hidden, but still fierce ways. Encoined in private homes, they demanded respect from the white women who hired them and fought back when white male employers attempted to sexually assault them. They also did the daily work of building community in churches and mutual aid societies that would form the backbone of later civil rights campaigns.

A new generation of activists followed in the footsteps of Peete and the DWU in the 1970s. Activist Bernette Johnson (later the first Black Chief Justice on the Louisiana Supreme Court) founded the Housewife Technicians of Louisiana (HTL) to educate workers and employers on their rights to minimum wages, sick leave, and paid vacation. The HTL supported the enforcement of landmark changes in federal regulations providing minimum wage and maximum hour protections and Social Security for domestic workers.

Johnson later recalled the impact of HTL's training program for domestic workers at the Fontainebleau Hotel: "All of that motivated and inspired people to make demands... Because sometimes an employer was paying some piddling sum and bus fare. So it gave them a little bit more backbone. They understood their value a little bit more."











ENGAGED URBAN DESIGN

Small Center has long worked with cities and towns across the Gulf South, engaging with mayors, neighborhood groups, and businesses to help envision the future of their cities. The Center has aided cities in re-imagining their public spaces after disaster, preserving cultural landmarks, engaging residents around public art, improving pedestrian and biking infrastructure, and more.

This year, the Engaged Urban Design seminar worked collaboratively with Broad Community Connections to develop design proposals for the Broad Street commercial corridor. These designs were based on field studies, in-class workshops, and community engagement with business owners and city leaders throughout the Fall 2023 semester.

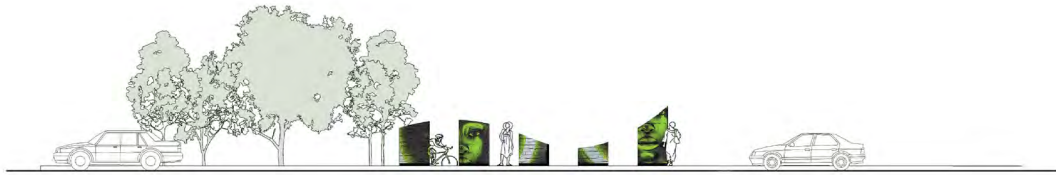


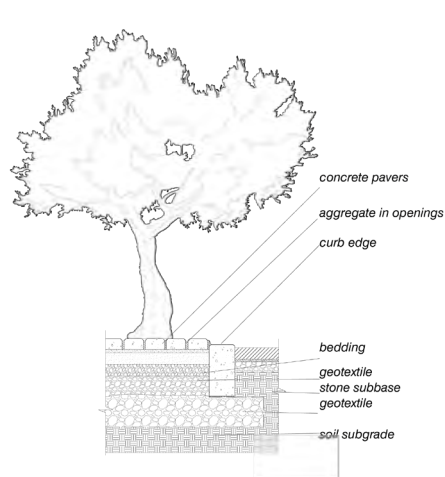
Hello
Justin M.

LOYALTY
UNIVERSITY
NEW YORK

URS LINES

ESPLANADE





examples of permeable pavement systems

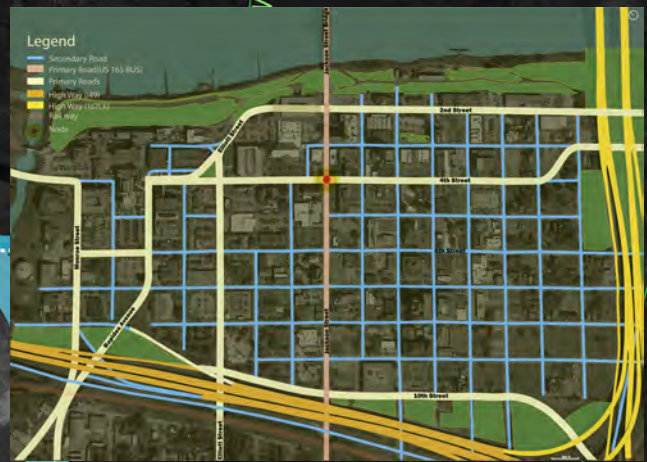
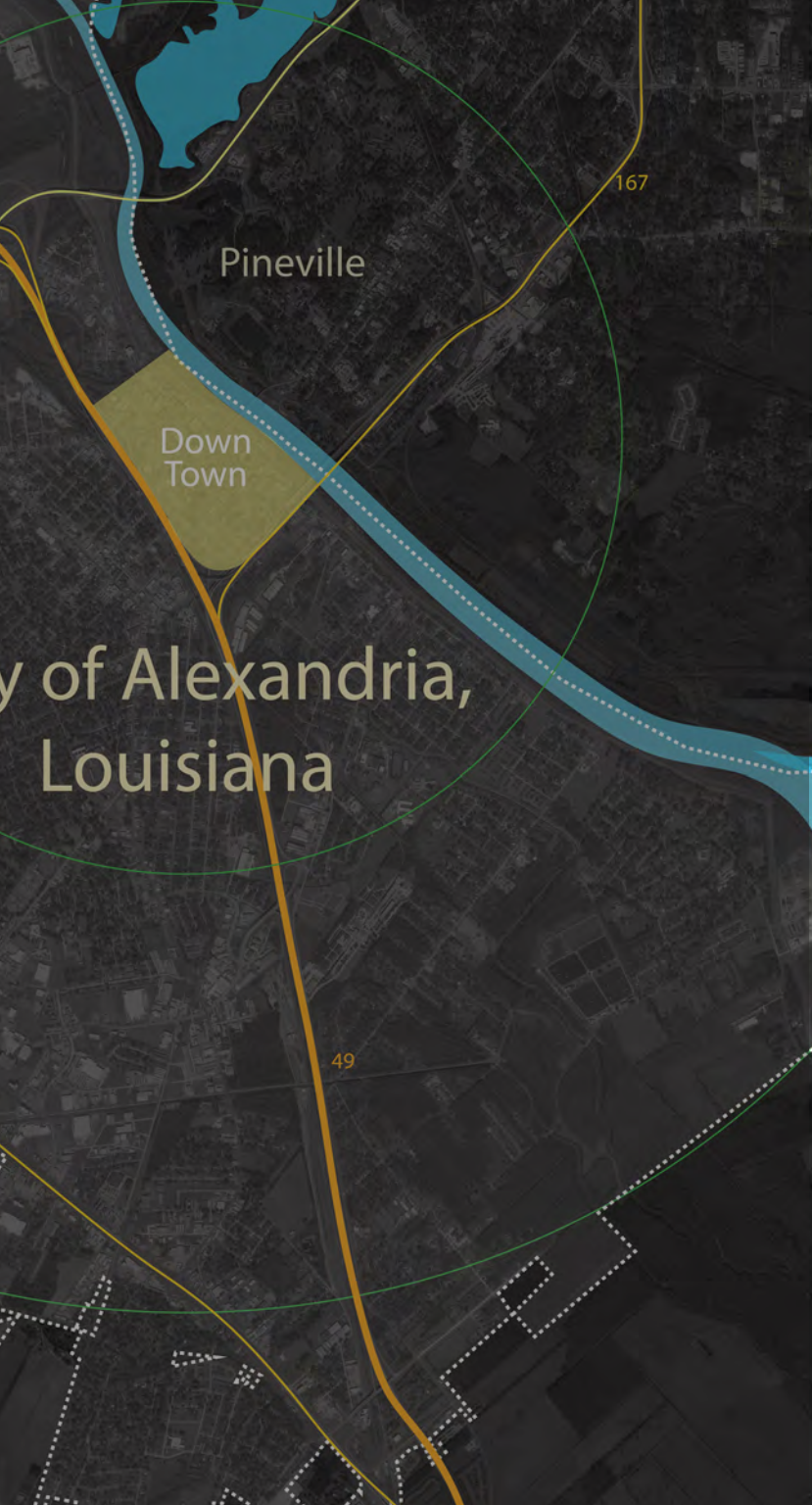


An aerial photograph of Alexandria, Louisiana, overlaid with a semi-transparent dark grey map. The map features several colored lines: a yellow dashed line in the upper left, a green line curving through the center, and a yellow solid line in the lower right. A blue river is visible in the top right corner. The text 'Alexandria International Airport' is in the top left, and 'City' is partially visible on the right. The number '28' is located near the center. The main title 'ALEXANDRIA HOUSING' is centered in large white letters.

Alexandria
International
Airport

ALEXANDRIA HOUSING

Small Center studied downtown Alexandria, LA in response to a market study calling for infill housing in the downtown, and as a follow-up to the City's participation in the Mayors' Institute on City Design. Working with the mayor and other city officials, the study included planning analysis, site selection, and schematic designs sensitive to historic context, scale, and potential to serve commerce centers and achieve river views. The project demonstrates the possibility for modestly-scaled multi-family housing that would blend in with the scale of the historic core while taking advantage of unique assets such as the riverfront and serving known markets including the medical sector.



0.50 Miles





PUBLIC INTEREST DESIGN SEMINAR



Design in the Public Interest is a seminar that introduces students to collaborative design practice through engagement with nonprofit partners across the city. The class uses photography as a practice of inquiry and conducts community engagement through a collaborative storytelling and design project.

This year the seminar worked in partnership with Broad Community Connections, building on previous work in Small Center's Engaged Urban Design seminar. Students worked with businesses along the Broad Street corridor to visualize and communicate stories of the past, present, and future at the intersection of community, culture, and commerce, all while imagining a more pedestrian friendly corridor.







SUMMER FELLOWSHIP

Small Center's annual Public Interest Design Fellowship is an intensive 6-week paid internship opportunity for students enrolled in the Tulane School of Architecture to work on real-world projects with community-based organizations in New Orleans.

This summer, the fellows primary project was to research and design Small Center's Fall 2024 exhibit focused on the materiality of coastal sustainability, entitled "What Matters Here!?" Students also collaborated directly with local non-profit partners on fast, 2-day design charrettes, providing schematic design for those organizations to use in fundraising towards implementation. These partners and projects are outlined on the following pages.

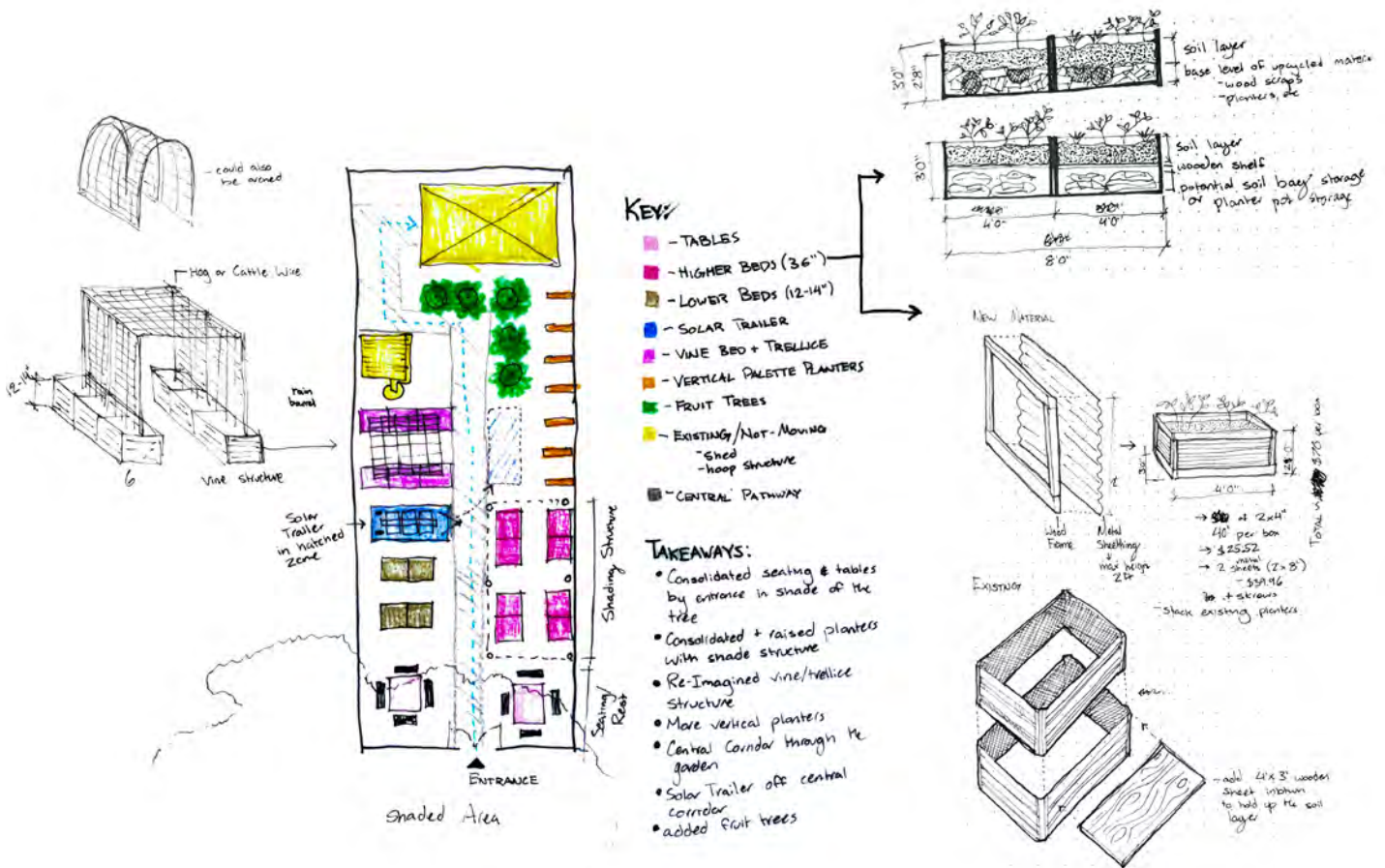






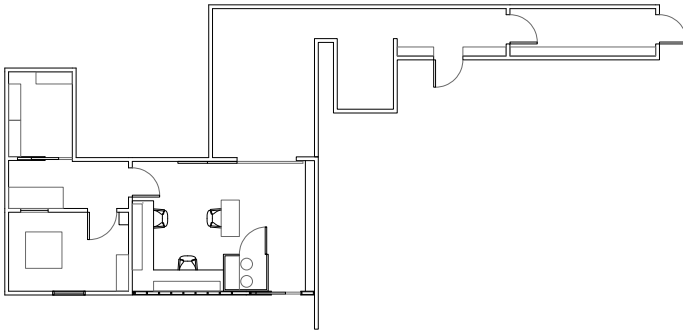
HOLLYGROVE-DIXON

The Hollygrove-Dixon Neighborhood Association asked Small Center to assess their current community garden, suggest spatial layout adjustments and accessibility concerns, and design new elements considering seating, shade, and an aging gardener population. Students also assessed infrastructure along two blocks between the Community Center and the Garden to suggest improvements in water management and locations for green infrastructure interventions.

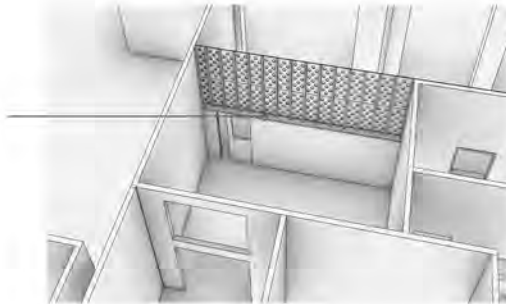


SoFAB

The Southern Food and Beverage Museum worked with the summer fellows to reimagine their office, podcast suite, and storage areas to create a free-flowing and functional area to better serve adjacent exhibit areas. Students engaged with SoFAB staff and leadership, proposed new designs, and created a detailed budget for subsequent grant submissions.

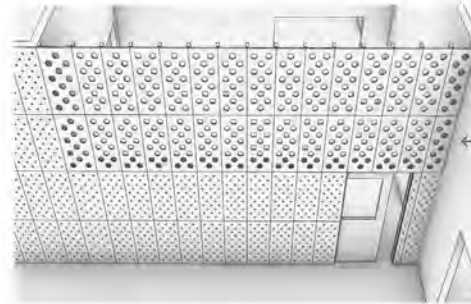


- SHELF EDGE ON OFFICE SIDE OF WALL FOR STORAGE + DECOR



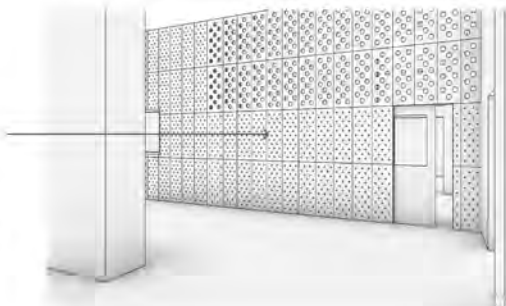
- PERFORATED PANELING ON UPPER HALF OF WALL

- LESS DIRECT LIGHT, DIFFUSED

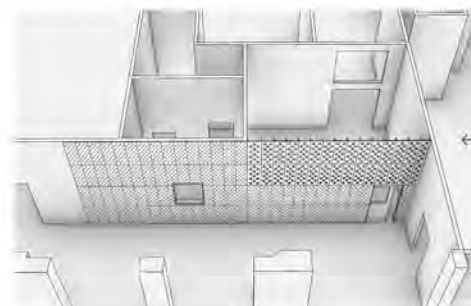


- MORE, SMALLER PERFORATIONS FOR EXHIBIT WALL SPACE

- CAN BE USED AS A PEGBOARD OR SLOT SYSTEM FOR MODULAR, CUSTOMIZABLE SHELVING + DISPLAYS



- PANELING CONTINUES ONTO EXISTING PERMANENT WALL



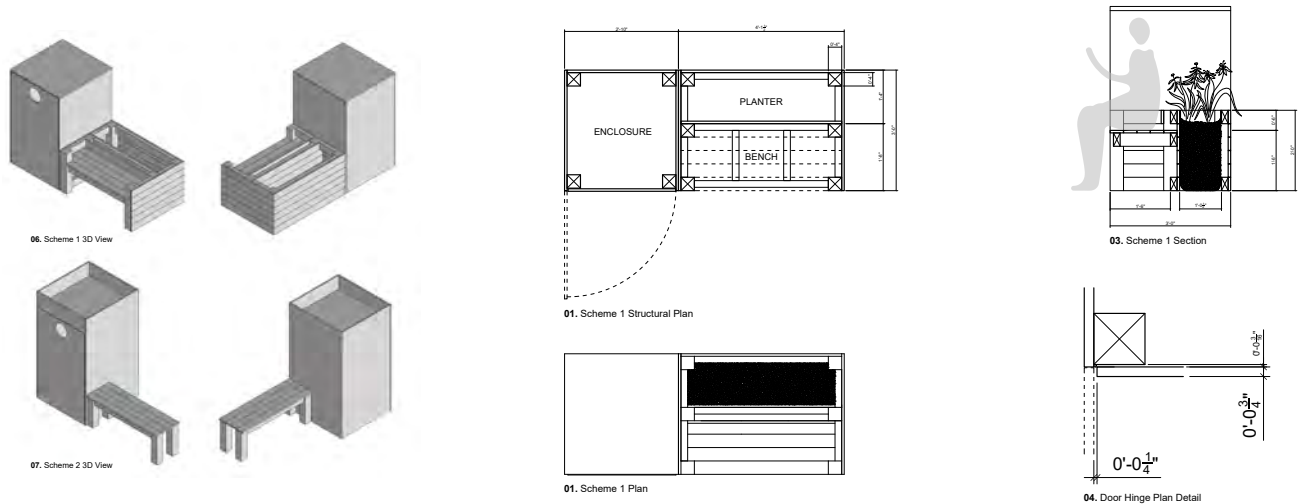
GREEN PROJECT

Local upcycler and architectural salvage store The Green Project approached Small Center about an underutilized courtyard space in their warehouse building. Used for everything from employee breaks to educational programming, students reenvisioned the multipurpose space, designing for seating, shade, events, and more. The team also assessed Green Project's second floor for possible future renovation as an arts and maker-space.




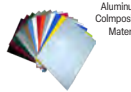
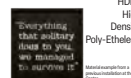


GLASS HALF FULL / GLASSROOTS

The glass recycling organization Glass Half Full intakes glass in a variety of ways, from warehouse drop-off to residential pick-up. As they pilot neighborhood drop-off hubs, they asked Small Center to design stations appropriate for neighborhood settings and inclusive of signage to encourage proper recycling practices.



Glass Roots Material Brainstorm

Material	Where to Buy	Price per Sheet	Total Price per Container	Why this Material?
 <p>Vinyl Banner</p>	Signs.com Printmoltz.com	@ 60" x 34" = \$55.42 @ 60" x 36" = \$57.75 <small>Does not include shipping and handling</small>	4 sides = \$226.34 <small>Not including shipping and handling</small>	The cheapest most reliable and realistic for the current vision of Glass Roots, will generally look good when attached with zip ties. Very easy to customize and personalize. Downsides is that it's easy to steal/detach, might cause problems when stormy.
 <p>Marine Grade Plywood</p>	Home Depot Lowe's Total Wood Store	<small>Prices can vary greatly depending on quality, thickness, availability</small> -\$106 / sheet (1/2" thick) -\$137 / sheet (3/4" thick; Lowes) -\$135 / sheet (3/8" TWS; BULK 8)	4 sides using 1/2" = \$274 <small>Can probably get away with using only 3 sheets if more willing to save material (\$41 for 3 sheets)</small>	Marine Grade Ply is one of the more durable and relatively inexpensive materials. Cost doesn't include the service to have it CNC milled, painted, or 'decalled'. It would be easy to paint and apply a varnish to ensure more durability for inclement weather - also easy to nail down to prevent theft or pieces falling off. Also very visually appealing and easy to cut.
 <p>MDO Wood</p>	Home Depot Lowe's	<small>Prices can vary greatly depending on quality, thickness, availability</small> -\$70 / sheet (3/8" thick) -\$80 / sheet (1/2" thick) -\$85 / sheet (5/8" thick)	4 sides using 3, 3/8" = \$210 <small>Will likely need 4 sheets due to the geometries of the container and 4'x8' board (\$50 for 4 sheets)</small>	Not as strong or expensive as Marine Ply, but MDO is still an aggregate of wood and used as structural elements. Easy to cut and use a CNC mill, could also be bolted to the existing frame, or be assembled as a stand-alone structure.
 <p>Aluminum Composite Material</p>	Piedmont Plastics	-\$76.42 / sheet (1/4" thick) <small>From Piedmont Plastics Quote</small>	4 sides using 3, 1/4" = \$229.28 <small>Will likely need 4 sheets due to the geometries of the container and 4'x8' board (\$52.8 for 2 sheets)</small>	This material will last decades if assembled and maintained correctly. Decals can easily be applied to ACM and because it is a soft metal it's easy to mill. It will also look visually striking (especially with a 'Glass Monster' carved in) which will help attract attention and interest. Although somewhat pricey, this is an excellent material.
 <p>HDPE High Density Poly-Ethylene</p>	Piedmont Plastics	-\$184.40 / sheet (1/4" thick) <small>From Piedmont Plastics Quote</small>	4 sides using 3 panels = \$553.20 <small>Will likely need 3 sheets due to the geometries of the container and 4'x8' board (\$368.70 for 2 sheets)</small>	This material is also extremely durable and visually appealing. However, due to its price and method of production, it may not be the most suitable material for this project.

PROJECT CREDITS

Materials of Abolition / JTLC

Project Partners

Solitary Gardens, jackie sumell, Prisoner's Apothecary, John Thompson Legacy Center

Students

Abby Carlton, Naomi Smith, Joey Tomshe, Malia Bavuso, Anna Kathryn Becker, Tracy Jones, Shanelle Brown, An Le, Anthony Gagliano, Tom O'Brien, Ryan Russell, Riley Siltler, Allison Slomski, Yi Wei

Project Lead // Project Manager

Emilie Taylor Welty // Jose Cotto

Staff

Ann Yoachim, Nick Jenisch, Endale Bekele

Support

Trapolin Peer Architects (exhibit)

Alexandria Housing

Project Partners

City of Alexandria, LA

Students

Andrew Hall

Project Leads

Nick Jenisch, Endale Bekele

Staff

Ann Yoachim, Jose Cotto, Emilie Taylor Welty

Play It Louder

Project Partners

Solitary Gardens, jackie sumell, Prisoner's Apothecary, John Thompson Legacy Center

Students

Emily Brandt, Kristin Hamilton, Analiese

Project Lead

Jose Cotto

Staff

Ann Yoachim, Nick Jenisch, Emilie Taylor Welty, Endale Bekele

Support

Trapolin Peer Architects

PID Seminar

Project Partners

Broad Community Connections

Students

Rose Barnes, Ruby Bienen, Alex Cohen, Charlotte Fisher, Chester Griffiths, Brian Harris, Cole Schwabacher, Kris Smith, Jackson Stephens, Jose Varela Castillo, Shanelle Brown, Jonathan Hall, Katherine Schwab, Riley Siltler

Project Lead

Jose Cotto

Staff

Ann Yoachim, Nick Jenisch, Emilie Taylor Welty, Endale Bekele

Don't Stand Alone

Project Partners

New Orleans Workers' Center for Racial Justice, Tulane University History Department, University of New Orleans, Langston Allston

Project Leads

Jose Cotto, Endale Bekele

Staff

Ann Yoachim, Nick Jenisch, Emilie Taylor Welty

Support

New Orleans Workers' Center for Racial Justice

Engaged Urban Design

Project Partners

Broad Community Connections

Students

Shanelle Brown, Riley Siltler, Tahlor Cleveland, Brooke Mehney, Elliot Slovis, Kate Galvin, Marhaba Nigar, Charlie Crawford, Ryan Russell, Joshua McGrew, Katherine Schwab, Dang Doan, Kailash Ramkhelawon

Project Leads

Nick Jenisch, Dasjon Jordan

Staff

Ann Yoachim, Jose Cotto, Emilie Taylor Welty, Endale Bekele

Summer Fellowship

Project Partners

Liz Camuti, Glass Half Full/Glass Roots, The Southern Food & Beverage Museum, Dixon-Hollygrove Neighborhood Association, Green Project

Students

Corwin Almo, Emilia Bertoli, Ben Cornett, Kris Smith, Emmett Tanzer-Tragatsch, Sofia Vladimir

Staff

Jose Cotto, Ann Yoachim, Nick Jenisch, Endale Bekele

Support

National Academy of Sciences Gulf Research Program

S M A L L

P R O J E C T S

L A R G E

I M P A C T S

G R A N D

A M B I T I O N S

small.tulane.edu | 504.314.2330 | 1725 Baronne Street, New Orleans, LA 70113



@smallcenter.tulane