



THE ALBERT AND TINA

**SMALL
CENTER**

FOR COLLABORATIVE DESIGN

**ANNUAL REPORT
2022-2023**



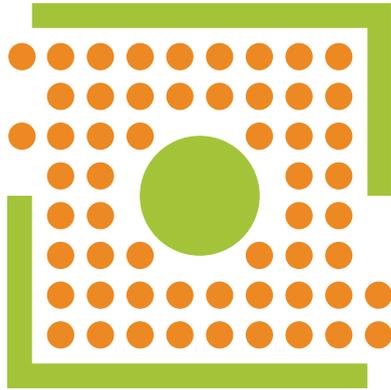
A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

I am thrilled to share another impactful year of work at the Albert & Tina Small Center for Collaborative Design. This short report serves as an update of our work in 2022-23. Inside are our most recent design-build, visioning, public programming, and planning projects, designed and created collaboratively in partnership with a number of dynamic non-profit community-based partners.

Embedded within the School of Architecture, our responsibility to train the next generation of designers to understand that each of us should be empowered to shape the places we live, work and play underpinned each of these projects. As Director of the Small Center I am extremely proud of what we have accomplished even as we recognize the ongoing needs of our community.

The Small Center's work is only possible with the generosity of supporters, talent of our collaborators, and committed students. As ever, we hope you will become involved with the Small Center in whatever way you can, through financial support, by following us on social media, or attending a public program. To make a fully tax-deductible donation, visit us at small.tulane.edu. We look forward to hearing your ideas for the Center as we approach our 20th anniversary in 2025!

Ann M. Yonack

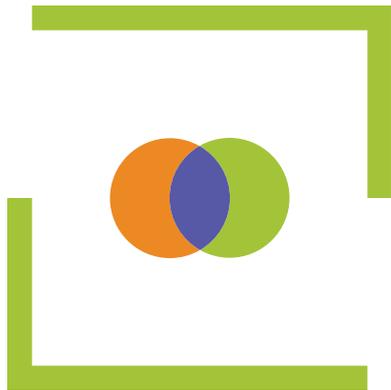


WELCOME COMMUNITY

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?

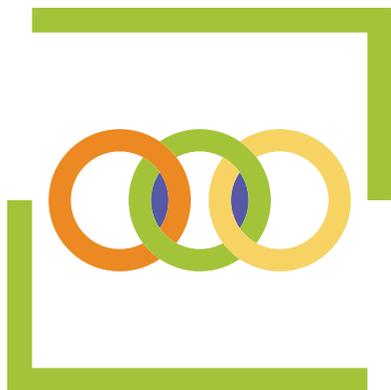


MAKE SPACE

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?

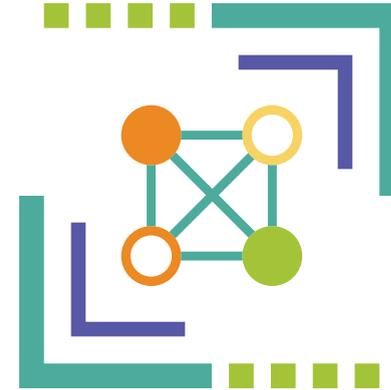


EXPLORE LINKS

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?

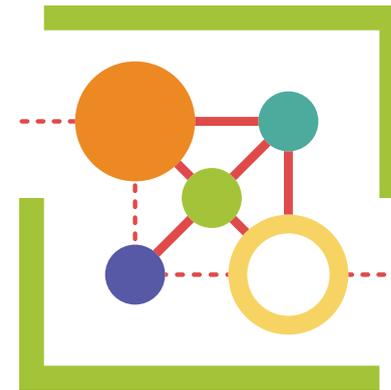


CULTIVATE KNOWLEDGE

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 knowledge.

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

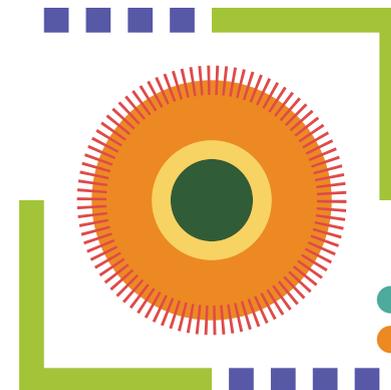


BUILD NETWORKS

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?

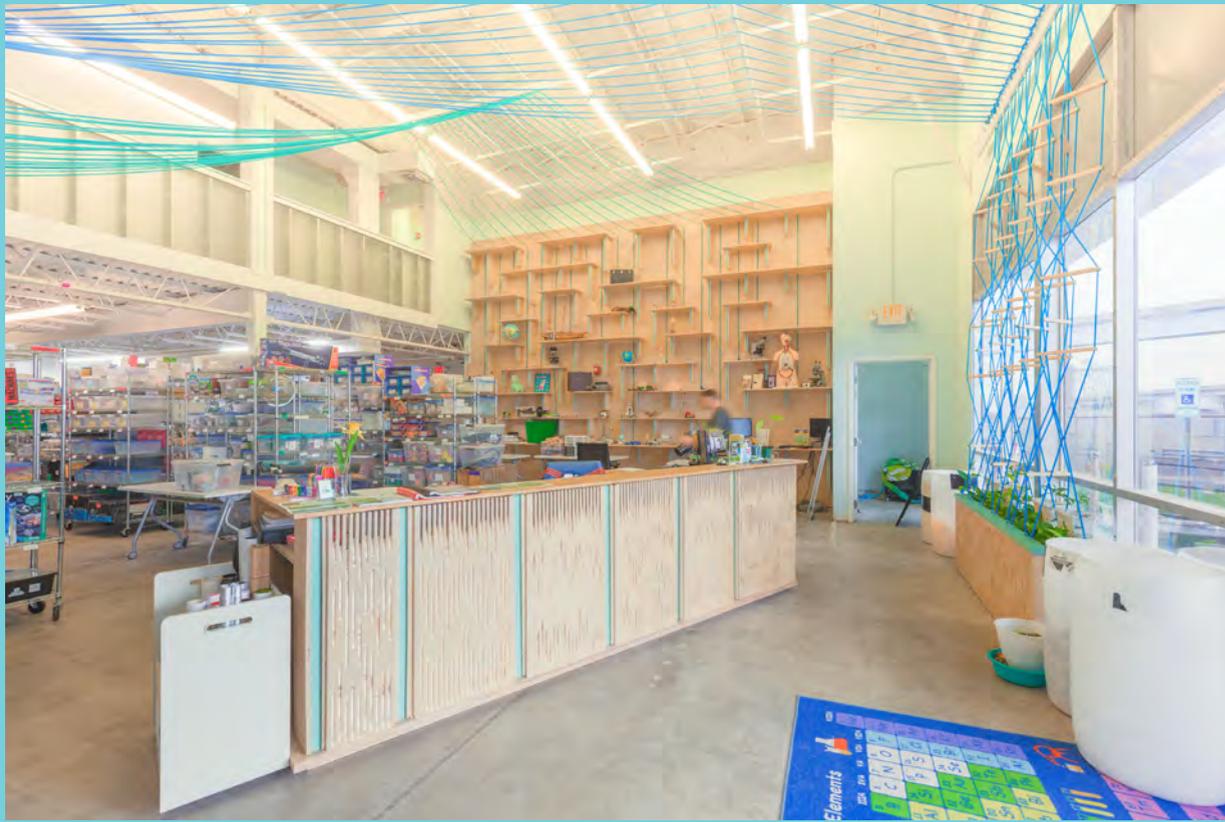


VISION FUTURES

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?**



Engagement with STEM staff and their client teachers led to the interior transformation of the Library Lab.

STEM LIBRARY LAB

Serving schools across Metro New Orleans, STEM Library Lab (SLL) fosters high-quality active learning by providing teachers and students with access to equipment and support that drive academic success. Since 2017, SLL has grown from a closet into a classroom, and most recently, into a 12,000 square foot facility.

SLL asked Small Center to provide organizational clarity, functional programming for individual use and events, and to create a welcoming and inspiring space for the teachers it serves. Accessibility and ease-of-use for all teachers interested in bolstering their STEM teaching through the use of new equipment and through fellowship with other teachers was a priority.

The design team hosted a number of events and used digital surveys to allow future users to engage directly with proposed design ideas and to better understand the needs of teachers who regularly use the STEM Library Lab space. Early concepts and programmatic layouts were tested, reviewed, and honed using feedback from SLL leadership, staff, and teachers from a variety of area schools.

Full-scale material testing and mock-ups were created to ensure the novel and experimental aspects of the interior installation would be achievable, sustainable, and meet proposed project goals. The entry space is anchored by a circulation desk that provides additional flex workspace. A double height storage wall emphasizes the tall ceilings and showcases various STEM items that can be found throughout the lending library. The lounge consists of a kitchen area with a moveable island and a series of booths that provide individual and group meeting spaces. The CNC milling pattern found throughout the project was inspired by sound waves and DNA structures, drawing upon the science-based educational tools in the STEM-oriented space.



ENGAGED URBAN DESIGN

MONROE

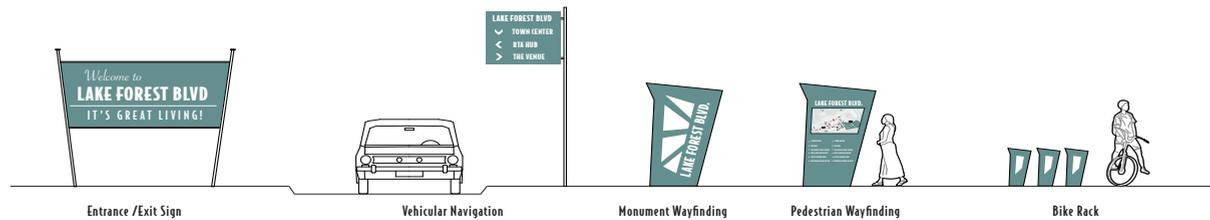
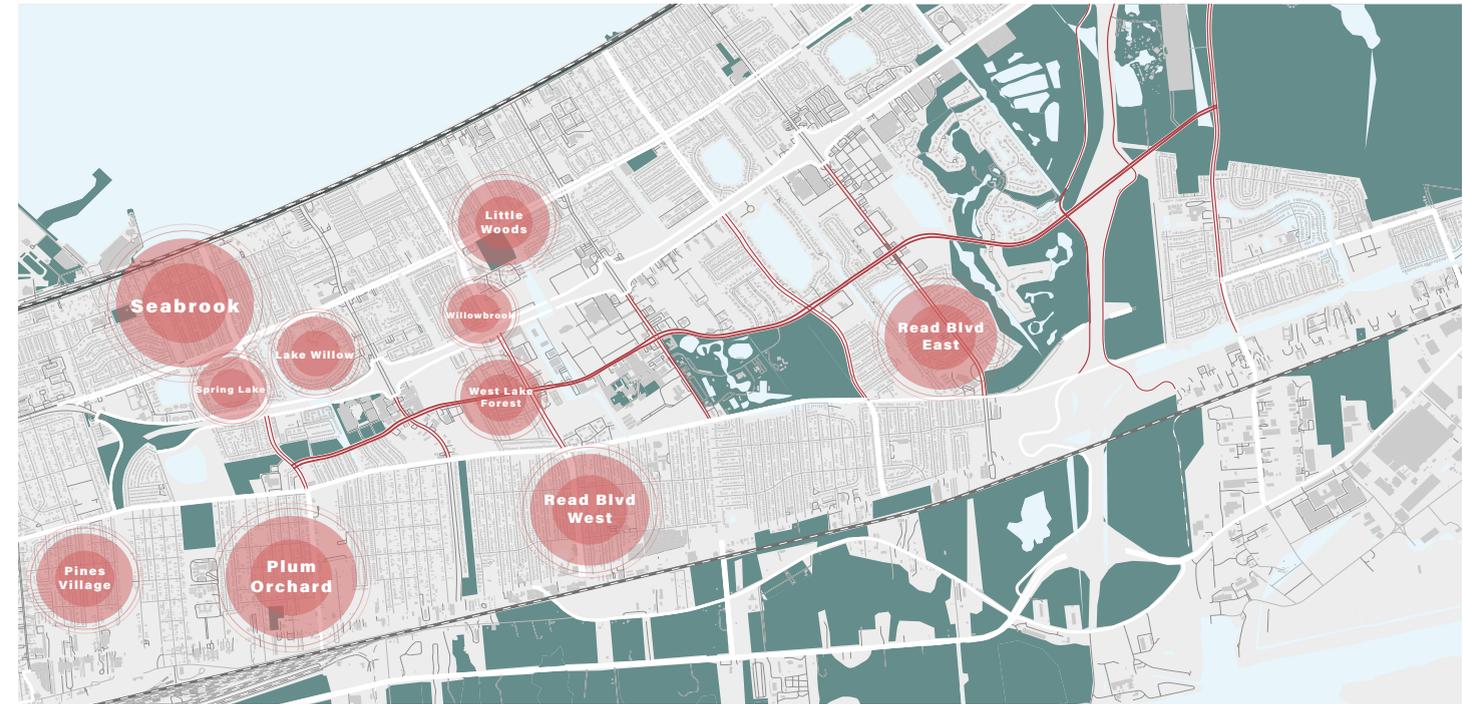
Small Center's Engaged Urban Design seminar worked with Mayor Friday Ellis and the City of Monroe, Louisiana to envision improvements to the Southside Business District. Design ideas focused on primary corridors with improvements for local residents and visitors alike. Bike, pedestrian, lighting, and landscape improvements are intended to improve residents' quality of life and connectivity and encourage low-carbon transport options. Suggested architectural and visual improvements aim to increase business visibility and patronage and provide access for all modes of transit.

The City is utilizing the design ideas to seek additional infrastructure funding, engage business owners to discuss the need for impactful yet achievable design guidelines, and consider additional branding and signage needs of the district.

NOLABA

Small Center was asked to collaborate with the New Orleans Business Alliance, the New Orleans East Business Alliance, and Lake Forest merchants to reenvision the Lake Forest Boulevard corridor. The assembled team worked to analyze the corridor's context, identify development opportunities, craft schematic design guidelines, address walkability and sustainability concerns, create a branding package, design corridor landscaping interventions, and envision new developments on currently vacant properties.

Business owners are using the resulting designs and documentation to seek state funding, attract new businesses to the corridor, and engage with neighborhood groups throughout the East to determine shared priorities. Student proposals were submitted to the C40 Reinventing Cities International Competition, which solicits and assembles working teams to implement corridor and urban redevelopment projects with a focus on climate resilience.





EXTRACTIVISM

Curated by filmmaker Jazmin Miller and writer Anya Groner, Small Center's Spring 2023 exhibit examined the effect of extractive economies through the lens of Jonesland, a 66-acre plot now owned by a family whose members were once enslaved upon it. The Jones and Geason families raised generations of children on Jonesland for over a century, finding joy and spirituality even as their very existence was threatened by chattel slavery, Jim Crow, the oil boom, the current onslaught of petrochemical refining and manufacturing, and impending threats from climate change.

Providing context, Miller and Groner also spent two years documenting the history of Cancer Alley, an 85-mile stretch of land along the Mississippi River between Baton Rouge and New Orleans which contains over 150 petrochemical plants and refineries. The exhibit featured documentary film, artifacts from the family, audio segments from Monument Lab's podcast Plot of Land, and events including an artists' talk, funder's network tour, and school visits.



LEGACY OF CENTRAL CITY

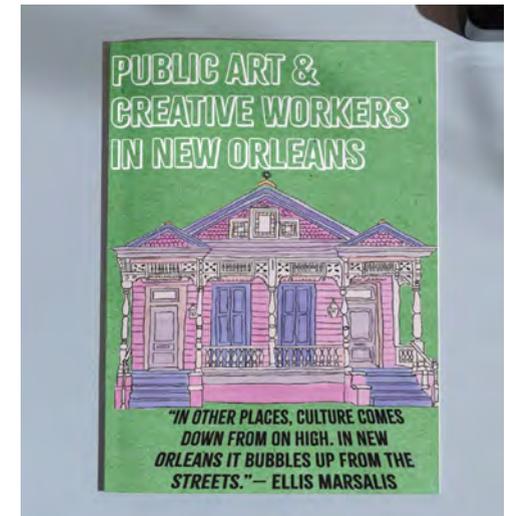
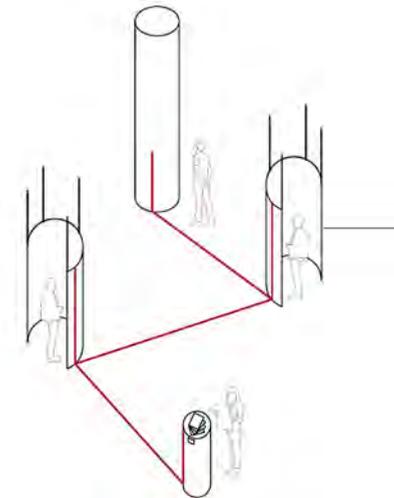
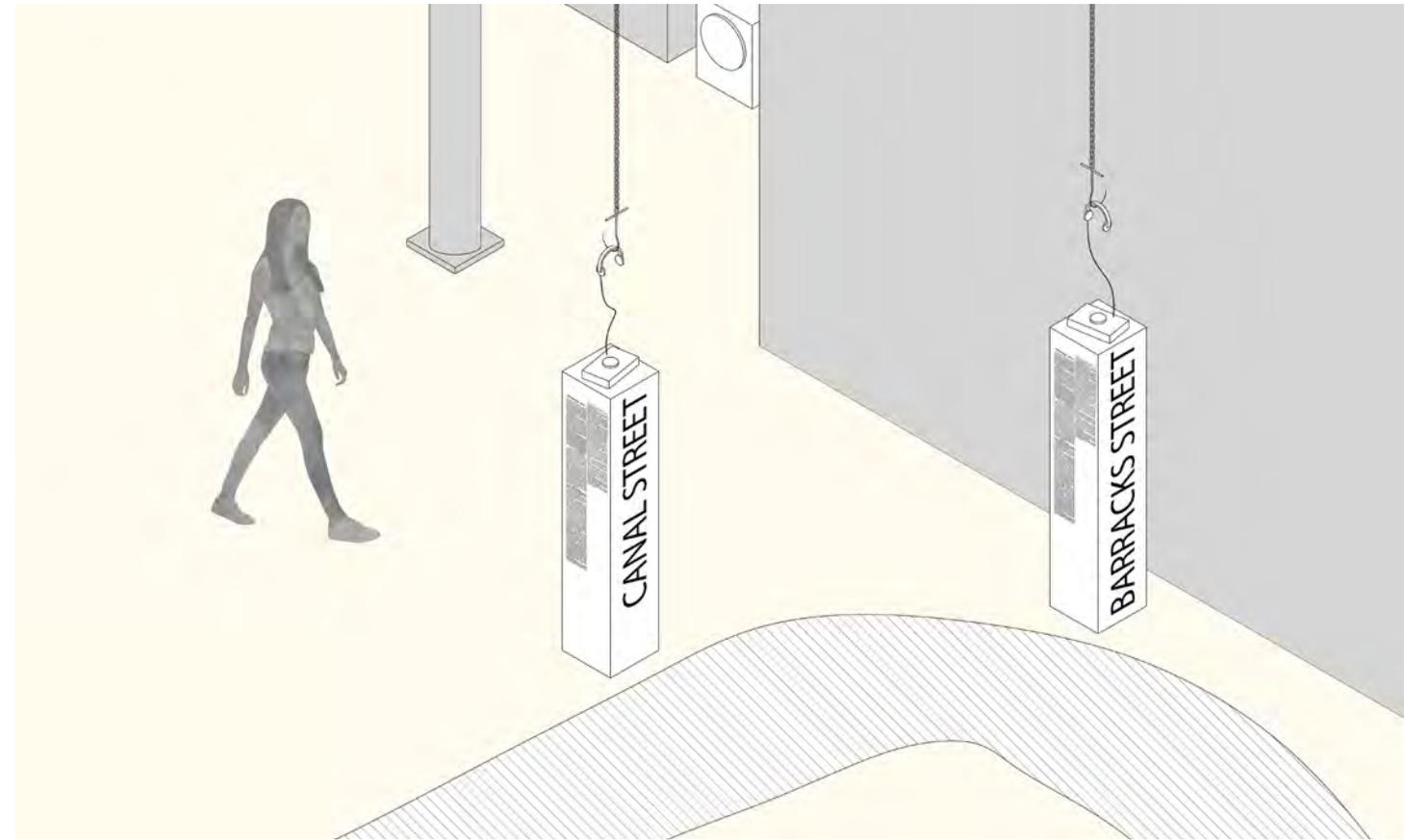
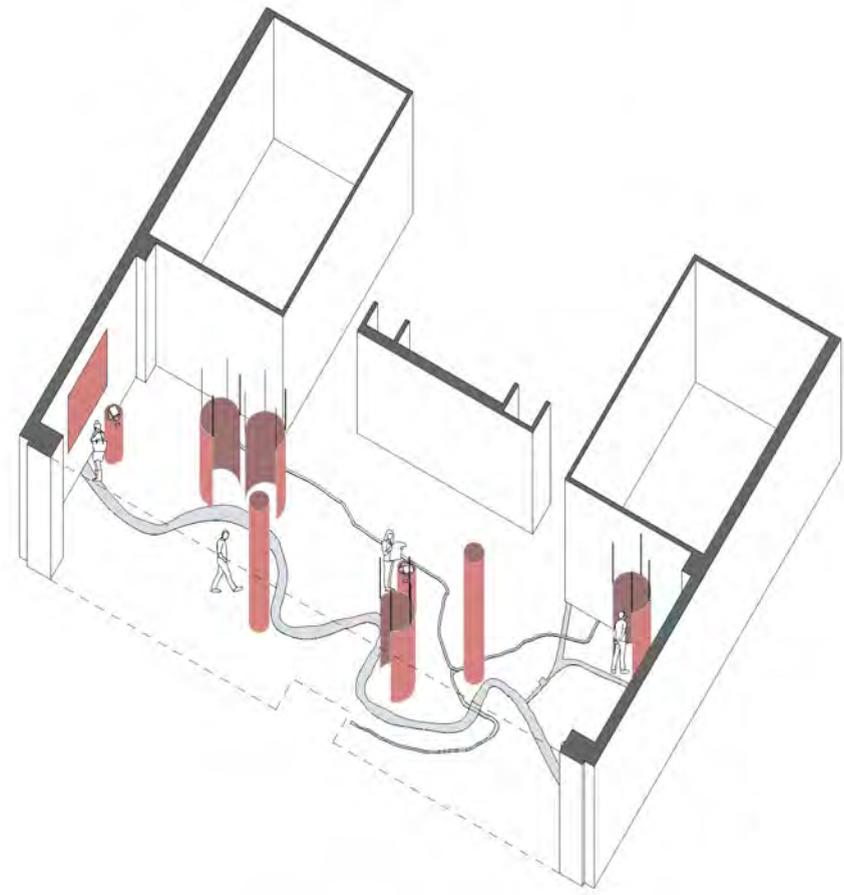
Small Center partnered with Civic Studio to create an exhibition and program series entitled 'Legacy of Central City' that honored and celebrated the social, cultural, and environmental histories of the neighborhood — from its days as a swamp in a land known as Bulbancha to the present day. The exhibition included mapping and analysis of Central City's rich visual character, culture, and history. Large wall-sized drawings, collages, and a mural spoke to different eras in the neighborhood's development. Research and analytical diagramming revealed the important role of churches as neighborhood centers, and both their preservation and loss over time.

The exhibition displayed one of Big Chief Beautiful's intricately crafted Black Masking Indian suits, along with beading instruction sessions. Work by photographer Polo Silk, writer Sharita Sims, and artists Brianna Brady, Aron Chang and others highlighted Central City's legacy of creative expression.

PUBLIC INTEREST DESIGN

SEMINAR

In Spring 2023, the Public Interest Design seminar focused on proposals for a Spring 2024 exhibition on New Orleans Black labor movements and organizing efforts. After spending the first month conducting research on key people, places, and events, students met with partners from the New Orleans Workers' Center for Racial Justice, the Tulane History Department, and the Midlo Center for New Orleans Studies at the University of New Orleans to understand the goals and needs of the group. The class also met with local artists and culture bearers, historians, and community leaders to learn about experiences of working and organizing in the Crescent City, both past and present. Students' work culminated in a range of design ideas covering branding, panel content, interactive elements, exhibition takeaways, and overall layouts and installation designs.

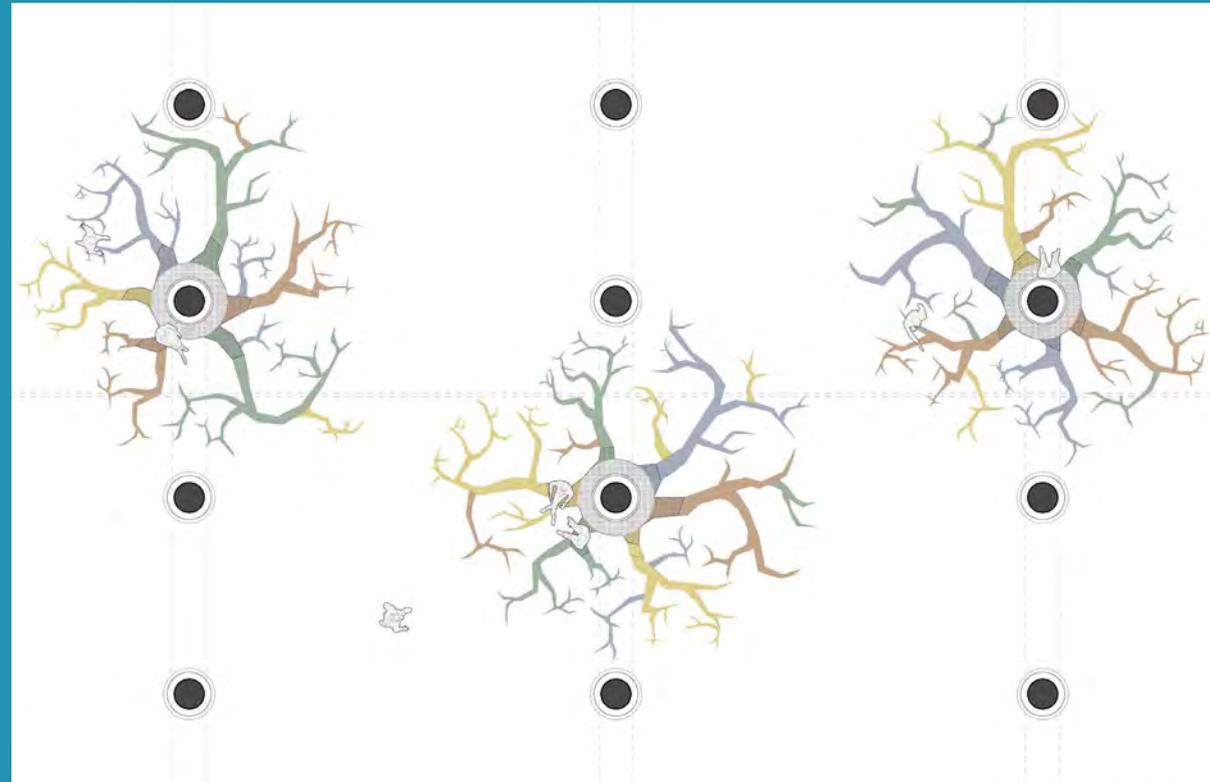


HOUSE ON CLAIBORNE

PAVILION

Small Center worked with the House on Claiborne to reconceive and construct a pavilion for gathering and events. The folded corten steel structure, previously destined for another site, was repurposed and reconfigured to create an “ancestors’ wall,” creating a sacred place in the large outdoor communal space at House of Claiborne, a local mutual aid organization providing housing and residencies for Black and LGBTQ artists.

Students in this special seminar also researched monuments, analyzed public space, and designed proposals for new memorials to public memory in New Orleans, from investigations into the carceral state in Louisiana to enhanced public amenities under the I-10 highway overpass.



RESEARCH STUDIO: ECUADOR

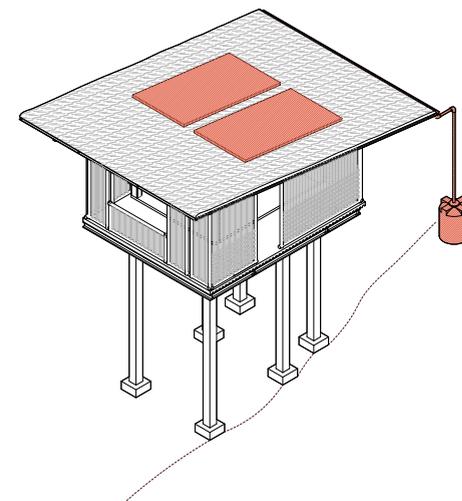
FCAT

In 2002, a group of Ecuadorians living in one of the most biologically diverse and threatened habitats on earth began to address the rapid destruction of their environment: they engaged fellow community members and built local capacity to research the drivers and effects of the alarming rate of deforestation in the region. In 2011, they established the Foundation for the Conservation of the Tropical Andes (FCAT) and partnered with Tulane University to expand opportunities in tropical ecology research and conservation. Small Center has worked with FCAT since 2022 on several design initiatives, which has led to the construction of two new housing cabins.

RESEARCH

Small Center is leading a 3-year architectural research and design studio focused on the FCAT ecological reserve and research station in the tropical Andes of Ecuador. The studio explores sustainability through the integration of three lenses: the formal/material, socioeconomic, and ecological. By investigating materiality and building function, community needs and desires, and the environmental importance of the region, the studio is creating a site-specific sustainable design framework and toolkit while offering insight into sustainability in the region.

Led by Professor Edson Cabalfin, year one of the studio provided master planning for FCAT's expanding campus, in addition to architectural designs for three new major structures that will provide permanent housing for staff, improve working conditions, and provide critical amenities for scientific research. Across the three-year endeavor, Small Center is also focused on critically engaging with public interest design in an international context.



2022 - 2023 HIGHLIGHTS

200+ STUDENTS ENGAGED

Courses led by our Small Center team include:

Design Build Studio Design in the Public Interest
Engaged Urban Design Design & Society
Public Spaces & Scrutiny

AWARDS

Architecture & Design Collection Awards, Silver Winner, 2023 Pop Ups and Temporary Built Architecture – Apothecarts
Architizer A+ Product Awards 2022, Finalist in Positive Impact Category – Apothecarts
Global Architecture and Design Awards, 2022 – Apothecarts
AIA New Orleans 2022 Design Awards, Small Projects Honor Award – Sugar Roots Kitchen

RESEARCH / PRESENTATIONS / LEADERSHIP

// AIA National Conference - Facilitator, Equity for Women in Architecture - Emilie Taylor Welty (ETW)
// Architectural Research Centers Consortium National Conference - ETW
// Gulf Coast Connections Symposium, “Block by Block” – ETW
// AIA New Orleans Tulane Representative – ETW
// “Engaged Design in a Post-Disaster Context,” UTS Sydney, Australia – ETW
// Artist in Residence, Joan Mitchell Center – Jose Cotto (JC)
// Artist in Residence, A Studio in the Woods – JC
// NEH Summer Institute for Higher Education: Towards a Peoples’ Landscape History – JC
// Board Co-Chair, Design Futures – JC
// National Planning Conference 2023, “Shifting the Lens Through a Planning Podcast” – Nick Jenisch (NJ)
// Speaker, APA New Orleans, Planning After Dark – NJ
// Co-creator, Plot of Land podcast, Monument Lab – NJ
// Workshop, AAO Design Matters Conference, Educators’ Working Group on Climate Action, NY, NY – Ann Yoachim (AY)
// Speaker, AIA Housing Knowledge Community, “Engaging and Empowering the Next Generation: Parasite Skatepark” – AY
// Panelist, Neighborhoods Now Learning Session. Neighborhoods Now, Van Alen Institute, Online – AY
// Speaker, Imagining America: Rituals of Repair, New Orleans LA, “Rethinking Practices of Community Engaged Design” – AY
// Speaker, ACSA 110th Annual Meeting, “Social Justice in the Built Environment at Tulane University,” (w Byron Mouton) – AY
// Speaker, ACSA Empower Online Conference, “The Business of Community Design” (w Cathi Ho Schar & Ceara O’Leary) – AY

PROJECT CREDITS

STEM LIBRARY LAB

Partner // Stem Library Lab

Students // Rachel Bennett, Belinda Chau, Charles Crawford, Katherine Dunn, Lauren Liroff, Riley Siltler, Delaney Smith, Sam Spencer, Frank Taylor, William Trotter, Maria Arrieta Vallarino, Jose Varela Castillo, Antonia Villafranca, Bryce Winter

Project Leads // Emilie Taylor Welty, Charles Jones, Jose Cotto

Staff // Nick Jenisch, Ann Yoachim

Support // Tulane Wavestarter Campaign Contributors

Special Thanks // Edson Cabalfin, Daisy Dodge, Nick Licausi, Caroline Farouki, Taylor Scott

DEPART-MENT

Partner // Civic Studio, Anya Groner, Jazmin Miller

Students // Claire Mulhollem, Kelsie Donovan, Tahlor Cleveland

Project Leads // Jose Cotto

Staff // Nick Jenisch, Emilie Taylor Welty, Ann Yoachim

Support // Trapolin Peer Architects

Special Thanks // The Geason, Jones, and Dennis families, Sharon Lavigne, Pastor Harry Joseph, Anne Rolfes, Sheila Tahir, Joy & Jo Banner, Imani Jacqueline Brown, Justin Hosbey, Justin Kray, Sue Mobley, Jordy Yager, Mark Nieto, Jameela Hammond, Monument Lab

ENGAGED URBAN DESIGN

Partner // City of Monroe, La; NOLABA, NOEBA

Students // Karan Sharma, Katherine Dunn, Esther Zulem, Brianna Baldwin, Chenbo Xing, Giuliana Vaccarino Gearty, Ben Brimer

Project Leads // Nick Jenisch, Dasjon Jordan

Staff // Jose Cotto, Emilie Taylor Welty, Ann Yoachim

Special Thanks // Mayor Friday Ellis, Kelsea McCrary

HOUSE ON CLAIBORNE

Partner // House on Claiborne

Students // Shanelle Brown, Terri Bullard, Katherine Dunn, Bobby Hess, Chase Isget, Seth Laskin, Lauren Liroff, Tom O’Brien, Riley Siltler, Eileen Tomczuk, William Trotter

Project Leads // Emilie Taylor Welty, Nick Jenisch, Jose Cotto

Staff // Ann Yoachim

RESEARCH STUDIO

Partner // FCAT (Fundación para la Conservación de los Andes Tropicales)

Students // Chelsea Kilgore, William Trotter, Anna Kathryn Becker, Naomi Smith, Amanda Bond, Sarie Keller, Olivia Vercruysse, Kaylan Mitchell, Lauren Liroff, Katherine Dunn, Simone Golder, Mario Das

Project Leads // Edson Cabalfin, Ann Yoachim, Nick Jenisch

Staff // Emilie Taylor Welty, Jose Cotto

Support // Saul A. Mintz Global Research Studio Fund

SMALL CENTER ENDOWMENT

Thanks to the generous support of Albert H. Small, Jr. and his wife, Tina, in 2017 we changed our name from Tulane City Center to the Albert and Tina Small Center for Collaborative Design at Tulane School of Architecture. This ongoing support ensures the sustainability of the center.

ESKEW+DUMEZ+RIPPLE ENDOWMENT

Eskew+Dumez+Ripple has been a long-standing supporter of the Small Center. The firm recently increased its financial commitment, providing an endowment that will assist in funding programming.

PUBLIC INTEREST DESIGN FELLOWS

Our Public Interest Design Summer Fellowship program would not be possible without funding from architecture firms. In 2022-23, Eskew+Dumez+Ripple supported fellows.

TRAPOLIN-PEER ARCHITECTS

A directed gift from Trapolin-Peer Architects ensures DEPART-MENT and connected public programming can continue.

ADDITIONAL FUNDING

Pledged unconditional gifts allow the Center the flexibility to address unmet financial needs and plan for the future. We thank Brad Hastings and JP Hymel for their ongoing support.



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