

# ART & DESIGN for SOCIAL JUSTICE

## Symposium 2006 Proceedings



Florida State University  
College of Visual Arts, Theatre, & Dance

**ART & DESIGN for SOCIAL JUSTICE**  
**Symposium 2006**

**Florida State University**

**College of Visual Arts, Theatre, & Dance**

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## ART & DESIGN for Social Justice Symposium

### Schedule of Events

#### Sunday, September 17, 2006, *Nancy Smith Fichter Theatre*

7:00 PM: Welcome

7:15 PM: "When the Delta Speak", Dance Performance by Millicent Johnnie, MFA Candidate, Florida State University Department of Dance, with vocal accompaniment by Antonio Cuyler.

7:30 PM: Keynote Address: **Christie Koontz, Ph.D.**, Shelter Board Member & Florida State University Professor 5

8:30 PM: Reception

#### Monday, September 18, 2006, *Turnbull Conference Center*

9:00 AM: Welcome, Introductions

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10:00 AM: "Mosaic Making As One Process for Enacting Socially Responsive Pedagogy?", **Lynn Bustle, Ph.D.**, University of Louisiana-Lafayette 14

10:45-11:15 AM: Paper Presentations- Session 1

"Doing time and drawing home: The emergence of house drawings in inmate artwork", **Amy Bucciarelli**, Florida State University 14

"The architectural response to homelessness: a viable service and not a privilege", **Michael Honig and Esther Obonyo, Ph.D.**, University of Florida 19

11:25 AM: Roundtable Presentations

"Service Learning with the Homeless: Opportunities and Challenges for Undergraduate Art Education Students", **Melanie G. Davenport, Ph.D.** Florida State University 26

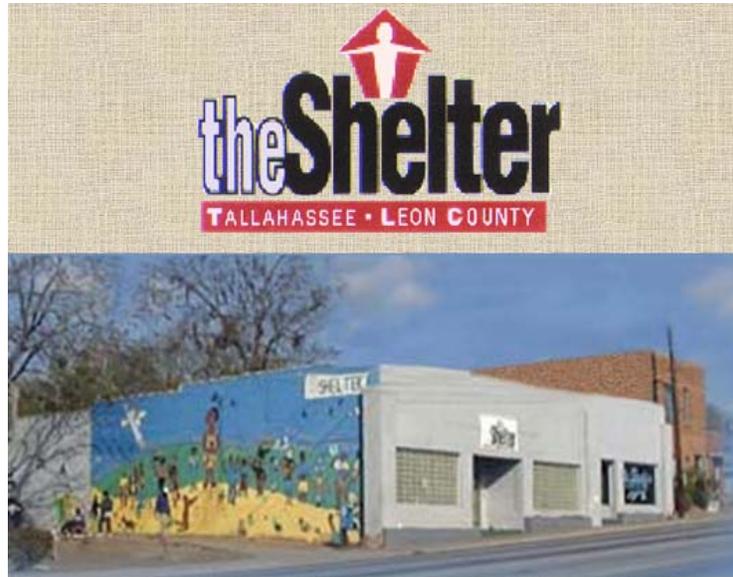
"Social Justice on the International Stage: The Children's Guernica Peace Mural Project", led by **Toshifumi Abe & Manoriko Kataya** 26

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"User-centered homeless shelter design: a personality theory approach", <b>Jill Pable, Ph.D.</b> , Florida State University	47
3:30 PM: Endnote Speaker: <b>Tom Anderson, Ph.D.</b> , Florida State University	54

**Keynote: ART & DESIGN for Social Justice Symposium**

Christie Koontz, Ph.D., Shelter Board Member & Florida State University Professor



**Transcripts from Keynote Address**

It is an honor to be here amongst my colleagues, at my own university. I am ‘awestruck’ that—in part—those who usually make a living designing and beautifying spaces for those who work and have a home—have taken on those with little beauty in their lives, and without any space at all. Our own Shelter to a first timer—looks like a patchwork of space—added on, re-invented, toppled together. We are proud that each person that comes in is given space. That space is precious in a person’s world who is constantly intruding in others’ spaces. And we do have beauty at the Shelter—but it often comes packaged in the spirit of those who are our guests. I thank you—I thank you for each of them—

But I am here today as an average citizen who got involved in the local homeless problem 15 years ago this November. Why? As a child I was ‘overly religiously educated’ —I took it all to heart. ‘you are they neighbor’s keeper’, ‘do unto others as you would have them do unto you...’ ‘treat the least of these as your own...’ My mother, the zealous teacher and guide, was a Presbyterian’s minister’s child. She lined my two older sisters and me and my somewhat unsure father on the back bench of any Presbyterian church that our family car was near from age zero to adulthood. Why even in the great freeze of ‘82, when all orange trees succumbed—my 4’8” mother stared up at me imbuing guilt, when I refused to take my now 23 year old daughter to the Christmas Eve service in sub freezing temperature. But often teachers are dismayed at how their ‘learnings’ are enacted by their students. Aren’t we? So my mother’s ultimate dismay—was that my oldest sister and I actually put into literal action what we had learned. I say dismay as my mother was afraid of homeless people, as many people are—who

are often also kind religious, fair and caring. In fact, on a humorous note—when my father died in 1989—my sister retrieved his 49 new pair of boxer underwear from the Goodwill pile, for her local shelter. My mother was horrified—envisioning someone homeless wearing my father’s new underwear. Now on that note—who says the Bible is too literal—how about ‘thou shalt share your deceased husband’s underwear with the homeless...’ maybe in the next edition of the Bible.

Anyway—as it turned out—my sister’s actions—for me-- were a stronger draw and inspiration than my mother’s fear. I followed in my sister’s footsteps she made with the Atlanta homeless, and took up the cause in Tallahassee in 1991. This was several years after First Presbyterian located downtown at Park and Adams, created The Shelter in 1988. I will tell you that story and the story of the evening in a moment.

In 1991 I was asked to contribute to a series of adult Sunday school classes –I chose the topic ‘homelessness’ inspired by my sister after a recent visit to Atlanta—I traveled in her church’s van, picking up homeless people and depositing them back at the church decorated with roll-away pews—The absence of the pews--made room for mats on the floor. My sister not only knew their names—but talked to them-- and with them as individual people—I was transformed. So that fateful Sunday morning in November –I took a bunch of ‘unannointed adults down to what is now the Shelter—at 480 West Tennessee street (across from Popeye’s chicken and FSU’s Fine Arts Building, the one with the brightly colored murals orchestrated by your fellow art professors and students) and basically have never left. Why did I stay? I know when I will leave ultimately –but that day is not here yet...

The story I share is built upon that day forward—please join me and allow me to share with you the joy and frustration of my experiences participating in caring for our local homeless people—who when they enter the door of the Shelter--we call our ‘guests.’

### **Now the story of the Shelter---**

**It is nineteen winters since the Shelter opened, January 1988.** The Shelter started out in the basement of First Presbyterian Church, where 18 cots were made available. Pre-schoolers slept on the cots by day-- and homeless men by night. The Shelter was formed in response to the deaths of three people that died from freezing in late ‘87. While the people were not homeless, they lived in housing too frail to protect them from death. By the way, **no one has frozen to death since that time.** Around this time--the late eighties-- and across the country-- homelessness was increasing due to less low income housing, closing of state hospitals, and the use of prescription drugs. It was the expectation then and now, that local communities would handle the day-to-day operation of shelters, while the federal government provided start up funds, for ‘bricks and mortar.’ The federal government was--and is--generous to the Big Bend.

**Over all this time we/I successfully wrote over 1 million dollars worth of federal grants** to provide services and shelter to area homeless, permanently on a year-round basis since the summer of 1992. This venue stopped several years ago as a direct route of funding for the Shelter—that is another story of politics and change. I prefer to continue with this story—but am available for discussion for those interested at any later date. The shelter today thrives despite lack of the federal money We have a men’s shelter sleeping 78 men (overflow often to 140) --a shelter for women (sleeping 38 and overflow to often 50—and a new day center which opened in November 2005, offering daytime referral and response.

The **Shelter is run by an independent board of citizens**—other folks like me. Doctors, professors, accountants, students, lawyers-- grandmothers, Jews, Christians, atheists alike. We

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are a diverse group and fairly representative of the local community—the community that believes those who are homeless deserve a place to be.

**The Shelter has three policies which one either embraces or is repelled by.** Our current city government is not supportive of these policies—I know because they told me at a meeting August 28, the first day of classes—(I was in city hall longing for the Shores building....)

1. We admit anyone to the Shelter regardless of their ‘condition.’ Translation--they may not bring in substances—but they are allowed in ‘high’ or drunk. Or mentally unstable—as long as they are not violent. We do not have the facilities for deranged individuals who may harm other guests. We cooperate fully with law enforcement—who by and large appreciate us—it is far more time consuming and financially burdensome to send a mentally ill person—to jail

2. We do not charge a fee. We are an emergency shelter responding in an emergency fashion. We have no idea what one person’s financial situation is. Remember the average guest spends 16 nights with us. And the Shelter is not the Hilton. We are filled to capacity with those with HIV-positive TB, other illness, mental and physical...it is not place to ‘take advantage...’ as some have stated....

3. We have no limit on stay. One guest--it took over ten years to finally ‘go home’—within two months after his return—and his somewhat failed but successful visit if you know what I mean--he died right here in the woods in Tallahassee, where he chose to live. What is the moral of the story –I do not have one—I thought I would share it for your reflection...

Many people have conflicting and contentious views on the homeless. I admit I am always puzzled as I have so much—and I find my own work here at FSU such a source of reward and my life at home the same—I meet these people who do not agree in my speaking engagements--

I have the honor of speaking to many churches and civic clubs. At one such event a county commissioner stood up and said, ‘Christie I do not appreciate your actions—your philosophy should be...’three hots and a cot..’ That means they can stay one night for free with three meals...

At a recent meeting with city government—one official railed on about a man who defecated on the city electric box by his office. How awful—how could we allow this? Now my friends—I can help the homeless through grant writing and my time—but I can not create bathrooms for people without offices and homes.

Another meeting—the official was outraged that he spotted a police car from Georgia dropping off a man—this particular man had HIV and was an illegal immigrant from the tomato fields north of Quincy.

Others feel you are encouraging homelessness with the aforementioned three policies—and so it goes...

I bring these examples up to show you the divide—the gap—the problem beyond the current downtown location of the Shelter on million dollar plus property (which we now own with no mortgage payment..)

**On that note--we are not a local government agency—so our property can not easily be taken away—although there is the recent Supreme court decision that could change that. We have no single source of operating money.** We continue to apply for all available grants, and seek private donations. We received \$112, 500 from VISTA health plan—I spotted the small notification in the Democrat—and we now will have the continued support of a nurse who helps identify proactively disease and curtail dental and other seemingly minor problems...

Our budget this year is teetering towards a half a million—but we now spread over a full city block with three buildings. Over 90% of our money is privately raised. We have

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tremendous support from the community--including volunteer time, nightly dinners, and toiletries etc. We recently asked the coalesced, United Way, Leon County, and City of Tallahassee--for \$283,000 which is what we need to operate both shelters. Our costs to shelter someone is around \$7.00 per night. This is less than half of the national average. Our overhead is only 9%. There are no other sources to turn to. **The City has not had a human services budget for 11 years.** So even as we so steadfastly operate the shelter--we do not have the luxury of knowing where our operating funds will come from year to year. Even the Animal Shelter has this luxury--receiving over 1 million dollars annually from City Hall. If only the human animal had four legs. But we assume we will keep going as we have for almost two decades-- continuing to meet the needs of our neighbors.

This may surprise you. Around **82% of the people we serve are residents.** This has remained true for over ten years. Over 60% have jobs. Another 30% are veterans and around 62% of these are Viet Nam. Many of our guests have complex problems exacerbated by too much time disconnected. Yet the average stay at the Shelter is only 16 nights, most of our guests do not remain homeless. Yet it must be remembered that the *condition* of homelessness is permanent in most communities across America, and permanent shelter facilities are necessary.

Since the Shelter opened, as I mentioned earlier, no one indigent has frozen to death, and the crime rate in the area has gone down. We continue to be the 'hub-of-the-wheel' for social service agencies, acting as the safety net for those who fall--We refer our guests to job training and employment, health care, TB and HIV screening, and re-connect with family and friends when we can. We have social workers, a nurse and well-trained staff, to register and **check in over 150-180 guests each night, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Our original 800 guests per year in the 1980s—burgeoned to 2500. The Day Center is serving persons each day.**

Each day—in case you are wondering what happens there—we start checking in women first at around 5 pm—then men around 5:30—I can say—we never turn anyone away. They register- We get all the information we can—so we can help them get back home, to a family member—a job, mental or physical medical help etc. Everyone gets toiletries, a towel— They earn storing rights if they are truly in an emergency—that means not coming and going—but staying. If they leave—they must take their stuff with them. Dinner is brought in by people from the community—again it saves the Shelter over \$85,000 a year—and brings folks in to meet homeless people as individuals. The kitchen is bursting with donated food –some good some bad! It is a time of warmth and good feelings—food is wonderful for that! Then they mosey to their bunks—there are breaks to go out side –twice a night—then most everyone is out by ten. Another day on the streets—We are not funded to care for them all day—But we do have our day center where they can drop in. It often looks very homey in there—an old movie playing –chairs lined up—popcorn.

Do we fix people –no. Is their life turned around—perhaps not. Do we take care of them the best we can? Yes—is it better than not having a Shelter—I think so.

**We never close--**check out the little box in the paper--the library closes, the animal shelter closes, City Hall and the courthouse close--we do not--and we turn no one away. Elected officials also come and go--fortunately and unfortunately--depending on their understanding and compassion. Our director, by contrast, Mel Eby has committed himself to solving the problem of homelessness for the past 19 years. He is my hero—and he should be one of yours—without him the Shelter would have closed years ago—and we (knock on wood) have never had a serious incident.

While we have a women's shelter—yet we have many more men. We would like to eliminate the critics who say we do not provide day time services—and we are a warehouse, we do not provide x, y and z—but that would be difficult since the criticism is never coupled with funding. **And those who criticize--9 times out of nine have never even set foot in the Shelter.**

We are proud to stand here today—almost two decades of compassion, service, helping people get on their feet and on with their lives-- contributing once again. We are their neighbor, their friend and family- They are simply not as fortunate as we--to have consistent support in times of trouble.

But the Shelter is surrounded by controversy. Largely and lately because of its location—right here –FSU's neighbor—we are now colliding with the attempt to revive and re-establish historic Frenchtown—once a haven and home for the city's African Americans. Most are now gone—moved out ironically by the City. There is great divergence of opinion on is there one—still a Frenchtown—and two—is there a place for the Shelter? Even last week as I said, I was in a meeting with city officials about the 'problem of the Shelter' and its location. After one tour de France of the Shelter (literally one quick visit) one major official feels the city can 'do it better'—but there is no money from the City for the Shelter to improve—We have not received a penny from the City in 9 years. Please I know this as I write ALL the grants— So what to do? I say keep opening and closing and while the politics roll around us...

So what are the main issues that most shelter's deal with (and so do we)—**I will give you some of the issues we deal with and opposing sides.** Our primary issue is **location.**:

- Why this location? Aren't there so many other and more convenient sites available that will not conflict with city progress and beauty and improvement?

Counterpoint: Since many, if not most, homeless people congregate downtown, how can we ensure that they will have access if a new facility located on the outskirts of town?

- We will provide them transportation

Counterpoint: Even if free or subsidized transportation is provided, will it be used? How would it be funded?

- The Shelter must move from the downtown area—it is preventing growth and development primarily of Frenchtown

Counterpoint: Well—shouldn't even a satellite facility remain downtown to provide emergency shelter and referrals?

- Your volunteers will follow you to a new facility...

Counterpoint: But a lot is at stake: over half our support is in kind-e.g., over \$85,000 is saved by volunteers providing dinner. So how can we ensure that our volunteers will continue to provide meals and other services despite the less convenient location?

- Out of sight out of mind...

Counterpoint: Would moving the homeless out of downtown lead to complacency by reducing visibility of the problem? (i.e., "out of site, out of mind") Is the City willing to fund a public awareness campaign?

Our second issue surrounds the myths that continue to circulate even as the Shelter is near the end of its second decade of service. These will be covered by a speaker tomorrow—but one I would like to discuss out of the five I usually present is:

**Myth:** The situation is overwhelmingly hopeless.

**Truth:** Far from it. The average stay of our guests is approximately 16 nights. The majority of our guests get back on their feet and move back into society. We average 4 new people per night!

This is gravely misunderstood ....

I would like to invite any and all to come to the Shelter and be apart of it—there is as much to do as you want to do—I always encourage people to share the talents they enjoy sharing. This room is filled with talent—that the whole world appreciates. Would homeless people? Well, yes, we have Bill—who has throat cancer. Yes, Bill smoked. Oh—my father died of lung cancer from smoking—everyone felt so bad and mourned him—who will mourn Bill—unknown to any except those who know him at the Shelter? Bill is a sculptor and artist—his work graces the walls—please come by and see. He would like to meet you—he is shy—as many of you are. There is Mary who now works at a gas station. One magic pill keeps Mary working and seeing her daughter—if she does not take it—she is then one of the rambling prostitutes that you hear are around downtown. She does not remember when these episodes occur. Mary is a mother like many of us—she has a teenage daughter who is horrified by Mary’s behavior—she feels bad about her daughter—I can feel her pain—I know the scorn of a teenage daughter—it hurts. Doug now sings in the choir at First Presbyterian church—his mother left him at a gas station in Texas when he was 7. He went from foster home to foster home—he was abused many times. He finally ended up at the Shelter and lived there for over five years. He now has his own apartment off Tennessee Street he is now on our board. He was reunited with his mother several years ago and went out there for Christmas. He brought back photos—forgiving and accepting her—we all just cried—I still cry when I remember the innocence in Doug’s face—all children usually love their parents no matter what— And there is Carlos—who is lacking understanding what HIV is—he knows he got it—and now he is very sick and will die. We have had many people die and have buried them, shipped them back home—I have known more homeless people who died than people in my personal life—so far...yet we are all so much alike—more than different...

I would now like to leave the remaining time for a ten minute excerpt from a documentary done by Danny Pietrodangelo—a wonderful supporter of the Shelter—which will summarize the problems—

And then I hope we will have time for your comments and questions—I would appreciate that opportunity—

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## ***Paper Presentation- Myth-Busting: What is Homelessness?***

**Wendy P. Crook, Ph.D., Florida State University**

When we ask most Americans what they think about homelessness or homeless people, or what they think others think, a fairly predictable list of characteristics emerges:

- dirty
- smelly
- dangerous
- lazy
- drunk
- addicted to drugs
- mentally ill
- single male, etc.

The process of generating such a list provides a valuable opportunity in a group setting for people to process their own feelings in a safe space. They literally try out their own ideas to see how they are accepted by peers, and can couch the more uncomfortable beliefs they may hold in perceptions of others. This is, after all, an era of “political correctness” and we are often left with conflicting feelings about what we think to be true that is not acceptable to express in social settings. So, this session will start by providing that safe space, for it is only after we have named our beliefs that we can progress to examining them. This part of the session will have two stages: first the generation of a list of ideas in open forum, using brainstorming ground rules to guide the discussion. Second, the group will collectively form natural groupings of the items they have listed, such as characteristics and traits of individuals or causes of homelessness.

The next part of the session will consist of a didactic presentation of factual material related to homelessness. I will present data on the numbers of homeless people in our local community, state, and country, with a brief introduction to the challenges of enumerating homelessness. I will then discuss the characteristics of people experiencing homelessness, with a focus on veterans, families, and children. Included will be information about the basic demographic characteristics such as ages, gender, education, ethnicity, etc.

The basic demographics of homelessness are as follows:

**1. For Tallahassee/Leon County<sup>1</sup>:**

- 739 homeless men, women and children
- 398 adults
- 341 children
- 23% veterans
- 26% of survey respondents are chronically homeless
- 3,000 to 4,000 people experience homelessness every year
- 32% have some college education or college degree
- 44% black, 44% white, 12% other
- 46% have been homeless for over one year
- Population is getting younger
- Population remains homeless longer
- More homeless families with children
- Number of children in the homeless population is increasing
- Half have lived in our community for more than a year.
- Factors Contributing to Homelessness (top local factors in **bold**)
  - **Lack of Affordable Housing**
  - **Unemployment/Underemployment**
  - **Family breakdown**
  - **Lack of public transportation**
  - Health problems
  - Lack of education
  - Poverty
  - Substance abuse
  - Mental illness
  - Domestic violence
  - Lack of affordable child care

**2. For Florida<sup>2</sup>:**

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<sup>1</sup> Compiled by the Big Bend Homeless Coalition - Based on the January 2005 Street Count & Survey. Available: [www.bigbendhc.org](http://www.bigbendhc.org)

- 85,907 persons were homeless on any given day in 2006.
- Some areas of the state reported increased numbers of persons homeless, particularly the areas impacted by 2005 hurricanes and the relocation of evacuees from Hurricane Katrina. Other areas reported decreases in homeless populations, where local programs are succeeding in reducing street homelessness and where recovery efforts from the 2004 storms are well underway.
- While single adults make up sixty (60) percent of the homeless population, the issue of family homelessness continues to grow, with forty (40) percent of the homeless living in family households. Of these households, a significant portion include children. In fact, households with minor children make up thirty-seven (37) percent of the overall homeless population.
- Children under the age of eighteen compose twenty-three (23) percent of all homeless.
- Elderly persons over sixty years of age make up just over eight (8) percent of the homeless, with adults constituting the balance of sixty-nine (69) percent.
- For many, experiencing homelessness in 2006 was a new challenge. Thirty-seven (37) percent reported that they were homeless for the first time. Twenty-nine (29) percent were homeless for a second or third time. The other thirty-three (33) percent reported having four or more episodes of homelessness.
- The length of time that the person or family was homeless varied as well. Episodes lasting less than one month were reported for nineteen (19) percent of the homeless. Another twenty (20) percent were without housing of their own from one to three months. Longer periods of up to one year were experienced by just over twelve (12) percent, with thirty-five (35) percent being homeless for longer than one year.
- The local homeless coalitions cite as a major factor in the rise homeless populations, the impacts of hurricanes on Florida and neighboring states. These storms have reduced the supply of lower cost housing units, and have contributed to the rise in rents and home costs. Further, the loss of jobs and wages due to storm damage is cited as contributing to increased homelessness. Florida also received thousands of evacuees from our neighboring states from hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005, placing pressure on an already taxed housing supply.

### **3. For the US<sup>3</sup>:**

- In 2003, children under the age of 18 accounted for 39% of the homeless population; 42% of these children were under the age of five; unaccompanied minors comprised 5% of the urban homeless population.
- Single men comprised 43% of the homeless population and single women comprised 17%.
- 49% African-American, 35% Caucasian, 13% Hispanic, 2% Native American, and 1% Asian.
- 22% of homeless parents said they had left their last place of residence because of domestic violence. Nationally, approximately half of all women and children experiencing homelessness are fleeing domestic violence.

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<sup>2</sup> Annual Report on Homeless Conditions in Florida. Available: <http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/homelessness/docs/2006reportweb.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> National Coalition for the Homelessness. Available: <http://www.nationalhomeless.org/publications/facts/Whois.pdf>

- 40% of homeless men have served in the armed forces, as compared to 34% of the general adult male population; on any given night, 271,000 veterans are estimated as homeless.
- Approximately 22% of the single adult homeless population suffers from some form of severe and persistent mental illness
- Estimated 30% of the homeless population has an addiction disorder.

Following this, I will present a discussion of the causes of homelessness, guided by a conceptual framework of structural vs. individual causes:

1. Structural Causes of Homelessness:
  - Lack of Affordable Housing
  - Lack of Jobs
  - Lack of Transportation to Jobs
  - Reductions in Public Benefits
  - Lack of Affordable Health Care
- Individual Causes of Homelessness:
  - Domestic Violence
  - Mental Illness
  - Addiction Disorders.

I will conclude the didactic portion of the session with information about governmental and community responses to homelessness, with some examples of program approaches that have promise for ameliorating the social problem:

**1. What is the Continuum of Care<sup>4</sup>?**

- The Continuum of Care is a community plan to organize and deliver housing and services to meet the specific needs of people who are homeless as they move to stable housing and maximum self-sufficiency. It includes action steps to end homelessness and prevent a return to homelessness.

**2. What are the components of the Continuum of Care?**

- HUD identified the fundamental components of a comprehensive Continuum of Care system to be:
  - Outreach, intake, and assessment to (1) identify an individual's or family's service and housing needs, and (2) link them to appropriate housing and/or service resource.
  - Emergency shelter and safe, decent alternatives to the streets.
  - Transitional housing with supportive services to help people develop the skills necessary for permanent housing.
  - Permanent housing and permanent supportive housing.

The final part of the session might be considered a “debriefing,” for we will return, as a group, to the list generated at the beginning of the session. The primary outcome of this exercise is that participants learn that most of the characteristics and causes of homelessness that they thought to be true have some kernel of truth in them; but for the most part, they will discover that what they thought to be true of homelessness in general can be debunked as myth. The session will end with an open discussion of participants' experience and, time permitting, an exploration about what their new knowledge means for their lives – both personal and professional.

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<sup>4</sup> US Department of Housing and Urban Development. Available: <http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/homeless/library/coc/>

## ***Featured Speaker: Mosaic Making As One Process for Enacting Socially Responsive Pedagogy?***

Lynn Bustle, Ph.D., University of Louisiana-Lafayette

### ***Abstract***

Featured presenter, Lynn Sanders-Bustle discusses tensions exposed when she and students enrolled in her art education course at the university worked alongside clients at a local outreach center to create a 12 by 75 foot mosaic on the side of a day shelter for the homeless. More specifically, Sanders-Bustle will: 1) discuss theoretical underpinnings that support socially responsive pedagogy suggesting implications for artists, designers, educators, and researchers; 2) provide rich descriptions and photographs of the outreach community mosaic project; 3) reveal tensions that existed and questions raised as represented through the words of participants (students, outreach community members, herself as the instructor); and 4) briefly discuss ongoing and future goals.

## ***Paper Presentation- Doing Time and Drawing Home: The Emergence of House Drawings in Inmate Artwork***

Amy Bucciarelli, Florida State University

### ***Abstract***

This article will consider women's incarceration in prison a form of transitional homelessness. Through this lens it will explore art therapy's ability to reconcile feelings of safety, lost sense of control and boundaries, and the creation of self-identity through drawing house structures. This paper suggests that women in prison can find means to cope with the stressors of prison through the creative process of constructing shelters, or homes, in their artwork. Several case examples from a county women's prison will be presented to underscore the importance of the house construct in inmate coping strategies.

### ***Narrative***

The homeless are traditionally thought of as people who sleep on park benches or families who seek residence in shelters after personal or natural disaster. However, according to the United States House of Representatives (2005), the qualifications to be considered homeless include individuals who have a, "nighttime residence that is a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations" (§11302). For the purposes of this paper, the author will suggest that prisons serve as temporary shelters for incarcerated people. In this view, inmates comprise a portion of the transitional homeless population.

During an art therapy internship in a women's correctional facility, it was noted that women in prison chose to spontaneously draw houses during art therapy sessions. In discussions about their artwork, the women reported that thinking about home gave them a sense of hope to make it through another day in prison. Several of the women enjoyed recalling memories and telling stories about the homes they left because of their incarceration. Other inmates found inspiration to make changes in their lives by fantasizing about the ideal home they would create when they were released.

Examination of several case examples suggests that the inmates created a sense of safety and comfort through their house drawings in an effort to control an otherwise emotionally charged atmosphere. The women's drawings also formed symbolic physical boundaries that were not naturally present in the communal prison environment. Finally, creating houses increased the inmates' ability to assert independence and find a sense of self-identity in an atmosphere where there was little tolerance for individuality.

### **Women in Prison**

The majority of the women incarcerated in the United States are detained due to nonviolent crimes like fraud, property offenses, and substance abuse charges (Covington, 2001; Hills, 2002). Most of these women are mothers who are the primary caretakers of their children at the time of their imprisonment (Mumola, 2000). Accordingly, women in prison are largely concerned about what is going to happen to their children while they are imprisoned (Covington, 2001; Hills, 2002; Mumola, 2000), and whether or not their families have a physical home to return to when they are released (Covington, 2001; Singer, Bussey, Song, & Lunghofer 1995). These questions along with the many other stressors created by prison life often take a toll on the well being of inmates (Covington, 2001; Gussak, 2004; Gussak & Cohen-Liebman, 2001). The use of art therapy in prisons has been shown to have a positive impact on prisoners' symptoms that are created by mental illness or stress (Gussak, 2004; Gussak & Cohen-Liebman, 2001; Gussak & Virshup, 1997; Merriam, 1998).

### **Art Therapy in Prison**

Art therapy has been used in prisons as a less intrusive, but as an equally effective alternative to verbal therapy in the treatment of distressed inmates. The non-verbal nature of resolving internal conflicts through the creative processes of making art (Anderson & Gold, 1998; Rubin, 1984; Waller & Dalley 1992) is ideal for this emotionally vulnerable population (Covington, 2001; Gussak & Cohen Liebman, 2001; Gussak & Virshup, 1997; Merriam, 1998). Additionally, art can create a voice for people who have otherwise lost their sense of self within the system of institutionalization (Gussak & Virshup, 1997; Merriam, 1998).

Preliminary research asserts that art therapy is effective at lowering the symptoms of depression among prison populations (Gussak, 2004; 2006) by providing a mental escape from prison life, and by stimulating creativity in a generally sterile environment (Gussak, 2004; Gussak & Cohen-Liebman, 2001; Lusebrink, 1990; Merriam, 1998). The creative process of art therapy evokes a sense of personal awareness and thus functions as a means for self-evaluation and change (Anderson & Gold, 1998; Lusebrink, 1990; Rubin, 1984). Creatively constructing houses in artwork may begin an emotional and mental shift to redefine the concept of home and provide a catalyst for change in the inmates' outside lives.

### **The Idea of Home as a Construct**

The word *home* encompasses a variety of meanings to different individuals. It is a somewhat malleable concept that can be related to a person's sense of development or change (Horwitz & Tagnoli, 1982). Structurally, a home is the shelter that keeps families safe from nature's elements. Home can also involve the social dimensions of a space that are shared by a family or people with similar beliefs, values, and customs (Horwitz and Tagnoli, 1982; Sobel, 1990). For others, home is a set of feelings, like familiarity, security, and comfort.

### **Home as Safety**

Writers agree that the idea of home is one that is deeply connected to inner feelings (Hamburg, 1988; Horwitz & Tagnoli, 1982; Porteous, 1976; Walker, 2002). Some believe that home is a place attached to safety and comfort (Porteous, 1976; Walker 2002). For others, memories of home can bring to mind particularly scary and unsettling recollections. However, as

Horwitz and Tagnoli (1982) found, when adults described their residential histories most individuals longed for a safe space of their own to call home, even if they had not physically experienced it.

Safe living space is particularly important for incarcerated women since approximately eighty percent of females in prison have been abused. Most of the women were victims of loved ones (Covington, 2001; Hills, 2002; Merriam, 1998). Regardless of the quality of a women's home life before prison, once incarcerated, the prison environment is untrusting, intrusive, and sterile (Gussak & Cohen-Liebman, 2001; Gussak & Virshup, 1997; Kornfeld, 1997). The emergence of homes in clients' artwork could be an attempt to cope with the less than desirable environment found in prison.

Melissa was a fifty-year old client who was incarcerated for the possession and sale of drugs. Her house drawing emanated a sense of warm energy resulting from her use of vibrant colors (see Figure 1). Melissa's drawing depicted family members whom appeared to show happy expressions. Later she transformed the house into a church to signify a place "where everyone could live in unity." In reality, before drawing her image, Melissa had reported that her relationships at home were filled with deceit, betrayal, and "brokenness".

Although most of the women claimed they depicted their own homes in the drawings, the overly idealized houses appeared to be influenced by creativity and fantasy. Hill (1991) noticed that the same phenomenon emerged in his work with homeless women and their idealized descriptions of home. The women in Hill's (1991) work and in the prison art therapy sessions seemed to mentally escape from reality, much like a child would "play house," to escape to the safety of a make-believe world.



Figure 1. Melissa's house drawing that developed into a "unity" church and represents a desire to feel the safety of home.

### **Home as Boundaries**

Art has the unique ability to tangibly record a mentally constructed world. Physically constructing houses through drawing appears to be a symbolic creation of boundaries. McCracken (1989) observed that individuals in homeless shelters frequently encountered intrusions of their space by others. Their loss of control over that space caused personal distress. The inmates appeared to experience a similar absence of personal territory in prison. McCracken (1989) believed that the individual who lacks a sense of control over his or her environment has difficulties integrating the self in a healthy relationship with the larger world.

Betty, an inmate who participated in art therapy, was able to create boundaries by drawing repeated homes in her art (see Figure 2). She reported feeling a loss of control about the condition of her surroundings and consequently did not want to socialize with any of the

other inmates. She drew schematic houses in nearly every session of therapy. It is possible her depictions were an attempt to metaphorically define and contain her feelings about her surrounding environment in the prison within the walls of the houses she drew on the paper (see Figure 3).



Figure 2. Drawing the structure of the house and surrounding environment appeared to give Betty a greater sense of control over her life while in prison.



Figure 3. Repeated schematic images of houses allowed Betty to contain her feelings in safe boundaries while living in what she considered an emotionally unsafe prison environment

### **Home as Self-Identity**

The literature suggests that one's identity is connected to the properties encompassed in home (Doyle, 1992; Hill, 1991; Hill & Stamey, 1990). During times of life crisis, Horwitz and Tagnoli (1982) found that restructuring the relationship between an individual and his or her residential environment was a pivotal tool used to cope with other external life challenges. Similarly, homeless people have been shown to cope with their loss of esteem and possessions through self-restoration by using found objects to build temporary shelters (Hill & Stamey, 1990).

One inmate, Jennifer, indicated that constructing homes through art therapy allowed her to literally create a sense of desired self with paper, markers, and paints (see Figure 4). The ability to easily rework or replicate her portrayal of a home in the artwork allowed her to experiment with new and different aspects of the self that emerged in a less-threatening way (Gussak & Virshup, 1997; Porteous, 1976; Rubin, 1984).



Figure 4. Jennifer experimented with the idea that her home was a reflection of her self image.

## Conclusions

Art therapy has the ability to help women cope with environmental, social, and emotional challenges encountered in prisons. Depictions of home appeared to be a naturally emergent theme among many prisoners' artwork. The creative process and product of drawing a home evidently allowed the incarcerated women to create controlled, safe and defined spaces that seemed to increase a sense of self-identity. In theory, if women can increase their healthy sense of self, they could break the cyclical pattern of incarceration and resolve the transitional homelessness created by imprisonment.

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## ***Paper Presentation-* The Architectural Response to Homelessness: A Viable Service and Not a Privilege**

**Michael Honig and Esther Obonyo, Ph.D., University of Florida**

### **Abstract**

The crisis of homelessness and inadequate housing affects all areas of the world. The severity and magnitude of this crisis has been increased by the exponential growth in the global population. The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) estimated the total number of slum dwellers to be 924 million in 2001, representing approximately 32 per cent of the world's total urban population. Expounding upon this problem is the migration of rural peoples into urban cores, creating megacities of illegally developed inadequate housing. The lack of access to water, sanitation, and safe areas to prepare food jeopardizes the health of the individual and the community, both immediate and internationally. If the aforementioned conditions are not greatly improved upon 2033, it is estimated that the number of people living in

deficient or inadequate housing will reach 2 billion. (United Nations Human Settlements Programme, 2003)

Clearly, inadequate housing is a serious dilemma. The current situation has prompted international responses at various levels, from the United Nations Millennium Goals to community-led initiatives. Further, the opportunity for scholars to incorporate global issues into their studies can provide a valuable exchange of knowledge and promote innovative solutions. This paper explores the global issue of inadequate housing in the context of the educational paradigm.

Proposed is the infusion of the globalization of knowledge into the educational process via electronic database that is hereafter referred to as a “Knowledge Warehouse.” This internet-based infrastructure will provide the opportunity for scholars in both already developed and currently developing countries to communicate and exchange crucial knowledge that can be catalogued and accessed. An international approach to research is crucial due to the global scope of inadequate housing.

## ***Narrative***

### **Introduction**

The “Knowledge Warehouse” initiates a dialogue between the educational realm and the built environment. This bilateral proposal seeks to bridge the information gap through the means of educational communication based on principles of a Virtual Design Studio. The program methodology and the potential benefits of developing this innovative educational model is explored through the dialogue between Kenyan and US students in the built environment disciplines.

The Virtual Design Studio is not a new concept, however recent technological advancements have furthered the development of this paradigm. The concept of Virtual Design Studio (VDS) combines the technology used in architectural creation with the process of telecommunication to provide a system that exploits the development of design. A VDS network also highlights the integration of social contact through technological communication (Wojtowicz 1995).

The “Knowledge Warehouse” seeks to explore a specific aspect: inadequate housing. It promotes collaboration of multiple disciplines in two countries and prompts them to interact, formulate and tackle a specific design issue: the global housing crisis. The exchange of knowledge will allow the departments of architecture, building construction, landscape design, interior design and urban planning to collectively learn and experience the professional relationships that exist in their chosen fields. The opportunity for scholars of various educational disciplines to utilize their specific expertise with one another is currently not available in the targeted institutions.

The proposed exchange between universities provides an alternative educational approach that will lead to more ‘practical’ design proposals and responses. This bilateral approach will also provide cross-cultural experience that could broaden the scope of knowledge transfer. The “Knowledge Warehouse” will provide an opportunity and a ‘place’ for scholars to exchange various electronic materials, conceptual methods, ideas, and design proposals.

### **Educational Context**

#### **Design Brief**

The introduction illustrated the global nature of inadequate housing, but also specifically cited the crisis as more prevalent in developing countries. It is, therefore, not surprising that some of the leading universities such as McGill (URL 2), Colombia (URL 1) and MIT (URL 3) have developed programs in built environment disciplines that have global coverage in their content. The Minimum Cost Housing Design Studio at McGill University addresses housing

issues involving poverty-stricken locations around the world. It is the program's intent to develop low-cost initiatives that respond to innovative housing strategies, culturally appropriate housing standards, building technologies, and low-cost sanitation and servicing. The Earth Institute at Columbia University, directed by Jeffrey Sachs, works with various practitioners and scholars throughout multiple disciplines to address global issues. The Center for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN), developed in 1989, was one of the first programs that utilized the capabilities of the internet to provide access and exchange of knowledge. Though such programs enjoy the support of experts from international organizations like the United Nations, there is no evidence of foreign students based in the projects' sites being incorporated into the educational process. This is the distinguishing factor for the "Knowledge Warehouse" concept. Students from both the United States and foreign countries will be given the opportunity to enhance their school work through internet-enabled dialogue.

In order to illustrate the potential benefit of the "Knowledge Warehouse" the design proposal of one U.S. architectural student will be compared and contrasted with that of a Kenyan architectural student. Both proposals are based on a similar design brief for upgrading slums in Kibera, Nairobi in Kenya. The country of Kenya has experienced the effects of sudden urbanization of its downtown cities, including Nairobi. The result is the dangerous expansion of informal settlements (slums) that house a large portion of Nairobi's population. In the past, demolition was the primary response to dealing with informal settlements. However, in recent years the response has evolved from demolition of unsightly structures to slum upgrading strategies. Kibera, an informal settlement in Nairobi, has been drawing a great deal of attention from the international community. Both students explored studio projects involving slum upgrading responses for the site of Kibera.

The US architectural student proposed a method in which the government would provide a party-wall and foundation while the remaining construction would be assembled by slum dwellers using government subsidized materials or recycled materials from existing dwellings. The proposal incorporates features of organic (sporadic) housing construction observed in the existing slums as well as principles from the structured layout of modern housing in an adjacent ex-government estate (Langata), as seen below. The US project addresses the construction of the existing slums as they respond to the availability of materials, specific scaled functions, and practical solutions for habitation while the ex-government estate is linear and mass-produced. The design proposal is an attempt to merge these two themes together.



Kibera plan: organic



Langata plan: linear



Kibera housing



Langata housing: mass produced

The design is based on an examination of the use of existing methods and materials of construction practiced in the informal settlement of Kibera. The existing materials explored are mainly mud wall construction, corrugated metal sheets and various recycled materials. Through elevation, the house morphs from a natural extension of the earth to a synthetic landscape as viewed from above. The deterioration of natural materials provides infiltration of natural light, methods of ventilation, and coexistence between private and public moments.

The architectural student at the University of Nairobi studied and proposed an award-winning housing scheme for the site adjacent to the informal settlement of Kibera (URL 4). Many of the fundamental issues are similar to that of the U.S. student's project, such as the need for community participation and emphasis on pedestrian circulation. However, both projects use various and differing techniques when addressing ecological, technological and aesthetic aspects.

One of the key differences in the housing proposals is scale. The Kenyan student's proposal utilizes verticality as a means to house multiple families above one another. This creates a differing aesthetic from the Kibera housing as well as requires different construction and technology, such as staircases and increased building loads. The use of hollow port slab blocks, cast on site, provide the structure for the multi-story residential units. Another distinguishing aspect of the project is the individualization of the housing units. In the Kenyan student's project, there are multiple families located in the same built environment. This, in essence, provides a communal "front door" for all of the buildings' inhabitants. This construction type is quite different than the U.S. student's proposed individualized housing.

Aesthetically, the projects seem very different, however the basis for many of the design responses in each project are similar. Both projects address issues such as community involvement, social equality, and the importance of the pedestrian. The projects illustrate two

separate design responses to the same location and design brief. The “Knowledge Warehouse” would provide an interesting and beneficial dialogue for these students throughout the design project as well as similar students in a bilateral setting. The dialogue can address issues such as cultural preferences, availability, and use of materials as well as ecological and economic performance. The proposed “Knowledge Warehouse” would allow scholars from both universities to exchange knowledge and open a communication avenue that would address issues and responses that could enable future development. This bilateral exchange of knowledge would allow for a higher level of research, therefore giving greater merit to each project.

Cultural preferences are specific and local, thus not easily accessible to those not in direct relation or proximity to the investigated site. The observation and application of these preferences is critical in the overall success of the project. The aesthetic preference of the occupants can provide insight into the material choice or construction method. The aesthetic nature of the development proposal, from the US student’s perspective, responds to current housing in the Kibera slums. The U.S. student explores housing that shares similar construction (mud wall) yet provides the sense of individuality through the use of various recycled materials that are unique from dwelling to dwelling. This response is very different to many of the adjacent government initiative housing projects where the dwellings have a “stamped” aesthetic which is shared by all occupants. The bilateral discussion provided by the “Knowledge Warehouse” would provide insight into many questions including the aforementioned issue of local aesthetic preference.

The “Knowledge Warehouse” education model would support a discussion on availability of natural, technical and financial resources. The exchange of this online knowledge would foster innovative development of collaborative projects, creating interesting and viable responses to the global inadequate housing situation.

## **Conclusion**

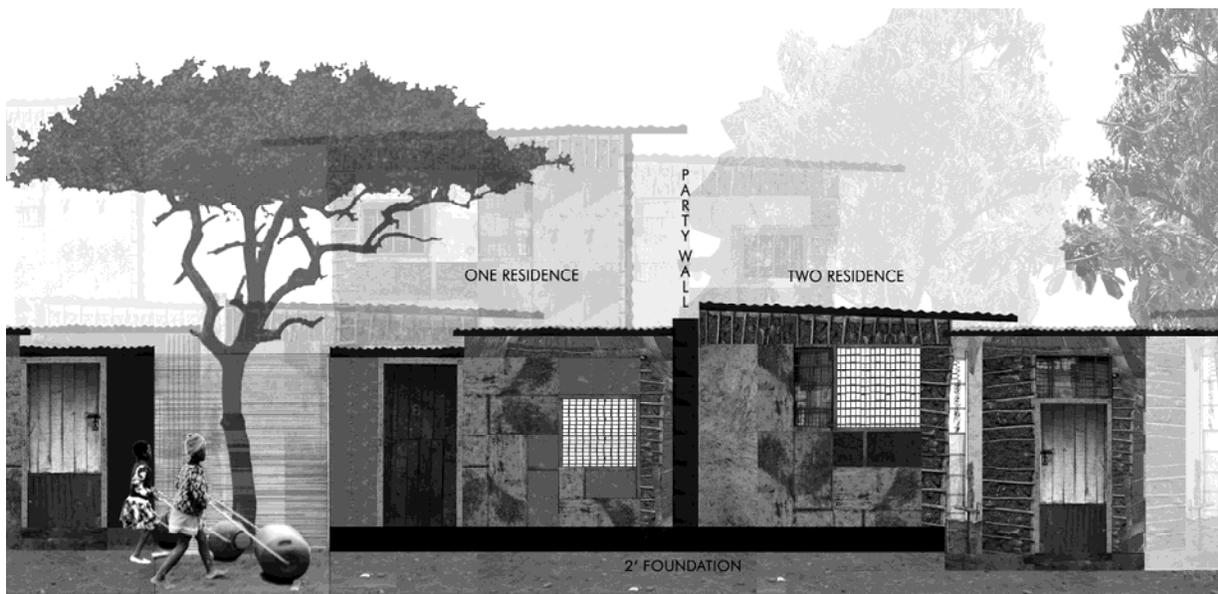
There is currently a knowledge gap between developed and developing countries that can be filled by the implementation of “Knowledge Warehouse”. The “Knowledge Warehouse” will provide an innovative learning environment that allows scholars from different disciplines and cultures to gain a sense of understanding in minimum cost housing that is currently unavailable at the University level. The bilateral infrastructure provides the link from conceptualization of information to accurate knowledge. The proposal’s potential is limitless and the possibility of innovative and precise interventions with accurate knowledge exchange can provide the opportunity to meet the global needs associated with homelessness and inadequate housing. The proposed education model and showcased design research projects illustrate the use of design and architecture in such a manner that addresses a global social response to homelessness and inadequate housing. Design as a process has the ability to empower the homeless in order to re-establish an individual’s ‘place’.

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### Collected Work: Master's Research Project

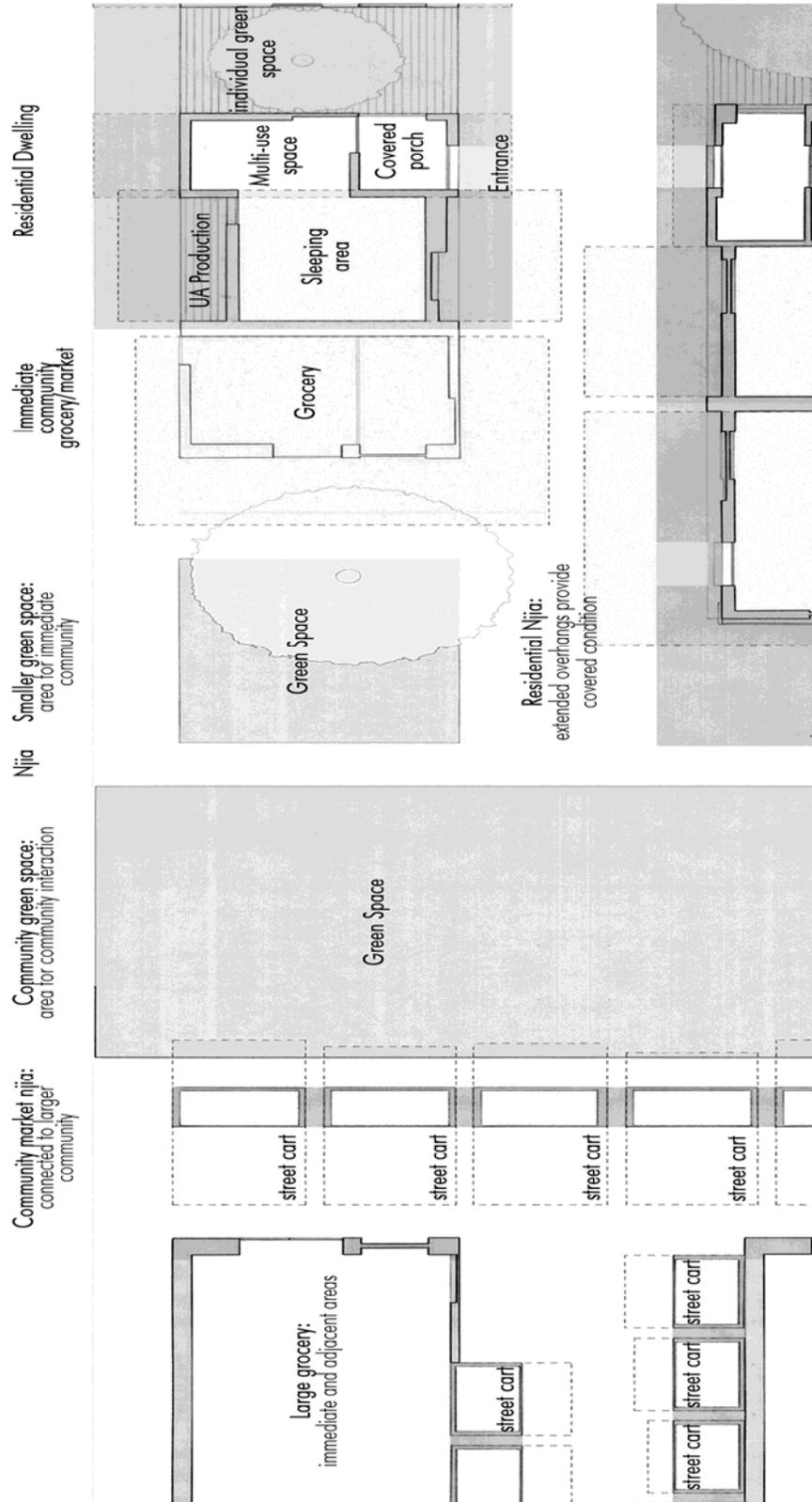
The following studies are taken from my Masters Research Project: Contextual Tension: Njia as a Housing Generator in Kenya.' This research project explored a low cost housing design alternative for the inhabitants of Kenya's largest informal settlement, Kibera. One of the main aspects of the project was to design for the individual. The site is home to an estimated one million and the mass produced government housing initiatives do not account for individuality. This project illustrates how design and social issues can coexist and through creativity the individual may be empowered.



This illustration shows the proposed 2' foundation and party wall for the relocation housing in Kibera.



This study explores large scale green space as an integral design issue in addressing the urban housing process.



This plan illustrates the relationship of various scaled green spaces; ranging from the large community green space to the small private residential green spaces.

## **Roundtable- Service Learning with the Homeless: Opportunities and Challenges for Undergraduate Art Education Students**

**Melanie Davenport, Ph.D., Florida State University**

This discussion will focus upon a project to involve art education undergraduate students in service learning at a new residential homeless facility in Tallahassee, Florida. This project has been conceived as an interdisciplinary, hands-on collaboration between students and faculty in Interior Design, Social Work, and Art Education at Florida State University. We will be working with the staff and clients of the Hope Community to develop programming, refine policies, and create more efficient and pleasant spaces. Emergent details of the project will be shared through visual images and written handouts. Discussion will invite critique of plans-in-progress through solicitation of participants' insights and experiences. Particular issues related to the art education component of the collaboration include:

- Motivating and engaging undergraduate learners;
- Designing activities relevant to course of study, such as the Ethics component of the 12 Accomplished Practices for Professional Educators in the State of Florida;
- Identifying effective strategies for interdisciplinary collaborations in service learning contexts;
- Locating potential sources of funding for special activities; and
- Developing effective evaluation methods to assess project outcomes.

By discussing this project with other scholars concerned about art and social justice, I hope to learn about existing models of similar projects that might be helpful in addressing some of the challenges accompanying this opportunity. Making this project more successful in the short term will hopefully foster a sustainable working relationship between students in our majors and the residents at the Hope Community, to the mutual benefit of all.

## **Roundtable- Social Justice on the International Stage: The Children's Guernica Peace Mural Project**

**Toshifumi Abe & Manoriko Kataya**

Kid's Guernica is a mural project for children in different parts of the world to create peace paintings on huge canvases the same size as Pablo Picasso's Guernica, 1937 (3.5 m x 7.8 m). The Kid's Guernica project was initiated by Art Japan Network in 1995, the year of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of World War II. Over 200 murals in more than 60 countries have been completed for this project, co-founded by Mr. Abe. The participant children expressed powerful messages of peace with their creativity and imagination, which would contribute to world peace in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Toshifumi Abe and Manoriko Kataya shared displayed two peace murals from Guernica project at the symposium site at Florida State University (see Figures 1 & 2).



*Fig. 1. Symposium participants view a mural from the Kid's Guernica Peace Mural Project*



*Fig. 2. Murals from the Kid's Guernica Peace Mural Project*

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***Roundtable-When Your Entire Community is Affected by Disaster-Related Homelessness***

**Jean Edwards and faculty from the University of Louisiana-Lafayette**

Many of us interface with homelessness either “in theory” or perhaps through volunteer efforts. But what happens when your entire community is affected by mass homelessness. Many residents of Louisiana were left homeless in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. This roundtable will provide an opportunity to discuss this compelling situation with Gulf-coast residents who were directly affected.

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***Roundtable- H.E.Art: Homeless Expression and Art***

**Stephanie Shepherd, Community Services Coordinator, Big Bend Homeless Coalition**

She will be discussing a collaborative project that she was a part of while in graduate school at the FSU College of Social Work. The program, H.E.Art, began to take form in 2003, when two graduate students identified the lack of need for creative/expressive opportunities for people experiencing homelessness. H.E.Art brought such experiences as writing, music, and visual arts into local agencies serving people experiencing homelessness. This roundtable will provide a chance to give community input about how to organize existing resources, develop new resources, etc. to make something like this happen in our community again on a daily basis.

## **Paper Presentation- Toward Socially Responsible Art: Re-Imaging Public Art in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

**Jean Edwards, University of Louisiana at Lafayette**

### **Abstract**

This conceptual proposal looks at the role of art and artists in the twentieth century in the context of social justice and responsibility. Looked at from this perspective, it seems that art and social responsibility have evolved throughout most of the twentieth century into mutually exclusive constructs. A case will be made, in fact, that the role of the artist has been celebrated as one of confrontation rather than cooperation with society. Considering art from this perspective, this proposal asks the question, “Is it possible to imagine an art that is socially responsive and responsible in the now unfolding 21<sup>st</sup> century?” and “Are there art practices that provide models for a new relationship between art and society?” To facilitate a discussion of these questions, this proposal explores some of the assumptions about art and the role of artists through the lens of an on-going critique of public art, an arena where art and society often collide.

Public art, as a marginalized practice within the already marginalized field of art, provides a vehicle for new ways of looking at art and at art education in the context of social relevance and agency. Several examples of contemporary public art practice provide models for art that is both socially responsive and responsible. The transformational potential of art done in collaboration with rather than in opposition to community suggests a new paradigm for the role of art and the artist in society. This potential is the subject for discussion and debate.

### **Narrative**

*“It is still the case that art finds no direction from society – and we are stuck in the paradox of an overload of stimuli but an absence of coherent purpose.” – Suzi Gablik (2004, p. 11)*

*“To search for the good and make it matter: this is the real challenge for the artist. Not simply to transform ideas or revelations into matter, but to make those revelations actually matter.” – Estella Conwill Májozo (1995, p. 88)*

This conceptual proposal poses the following questions: 1) Can we imagine art as socially responsible rather than either socially neutral or confrontational? And 2) Can public art provide models of practice that are socially responsible? To facilitate a discussion of these questions, this proposal explores some of the assumptions about art and the role of artists through the lens of an on-going discussion of public art, an arena where art and society often collide.

Twentieth century modernism culminated in a conception of art that not only intentionally divorced art from social concerns, it established a confrontational relationship between art and society. Suzi Gablik (1991) has noted that

*Modernism’s fundamental mode was confrontation – the result of deep habits of thinking that set society and the individual in opposition, as two contrary and antagonistic categories, neither of which can expand or develop except at the expense of the other. (p. 68)*

When one looks at the art produced in this context, especially the visual arts, it is clear that the role of the artist has been to challenge aesthetic convention, especially generally held public

conceptions of what art is, but not necessarily to challenge social convention, even in the case of gross injustice. This art, for the most part, was made for a limited audience within the confines of the rarefied environments of galleries and museums that serve to separate art from life and shield the art and its audience from outside distractions. In fact, overtly political art was often dismissed as “not art” but social work. Thus art evolved both into an activity understood to be primarily concerned with self-expression on the part of the artist, and into a commodity exploited by the commercial interests of the art market and the careerist ambitions of the art-makers and promoters.

In the context of the separation of art and life, abstraction became the primary stylistic mode in the avant-garde of modern art further marginalizing art as an activity of little use or concern for the majority of society. Referencing the ideas of the eminent modernist art critic Clement Greenberg, Harriet Senie (2002) states “Any reference to the outside world through realism, illusionism or symbolism was considered bogus, an evasion of the mission of modernist art to define itself in its own terms” (p. 59). Abstract art, especially, required an elite audience that was educated to accept art as purposely useless aside from the aesthetic and intellectual experience of “art for art’s sake.” Academia, the contemporary training ground for artists and their audience, thus became complicit in creating and maintaining the makers of art, its audience and, by extension, its market. The co-option of art and artists into the consumerist agenda of Western culture in general and the United States in particular along with the added pressure of economic globalization, makes art a seemingly infertile ground on which to build a socially responsible practice. Suzi Gablik (2004), writing a focused critique of modernism, concludes, “The complex task of nudging art away from the damaging consumerist philosophy that plagues it, and towards more compassionate and participatory cultural forms, remains a matter very much at hand” (p. 19).

At first blush, public art would seem to be a venue for the artist to exercise a sense of social responsibility and conscience outside of the art market system. “Although viewed as part of the art world, public art operates outside the gallery system. It is thus a peripheral category in an already marginalized arena” (Senie, 2002, p. xv). However, the highly publicized case in the 1980’s of *Tilted Arc* by Richard Serra demonstrates how removed art and artists had become from issues of everyday life. Senie (2002) quotes Serra himself, from a statement made three years before receiving the *Tilted Arc* commission:

*I don’t have any assumptions of humanistic values that art needs to serve. If you are conceiving a piece for a public place, a place and space that people walk through, one has to consider traffic flow, but not necessarily worry about the indigenous community and get caught up in the politics of the site.* (p. 41)

In 1980, with *Tilted Arc*, in process he even more explicitly stated, “The work I make does not allow for experience outside the conventions of sculpture as sculpture. My audience is necessarily very limited” (Senie, 2002, p. 41). These statements sum up the prevailing modernist attitudes in the twentieth century toward the role of art in social issues and the social responsibility of the artist. They also reveal a fundamental lack of regard for the general public.

The 1980’s saw challenges within as well as outside the art community to this modernist ethos occurring contemporaneously with the installation and subsequent removal of *Tilted Arc*.

*By 1980, in response to the civil rights movement and feminist movements of earlier decades, much art focused on expressions of personal identity defined through gender, race and ethnicity. Although the definition and even the existence of postmodernism has been seriously debated, there seemed to be no doubt that modernism, and its abstraction, was and should be a thing of the past.* (Senie, 2002, p. 57)

However, even today in the twenty-first century, the relationship of art to the “public,” however defined, remains an open question. Is “public” a space or does it refer to a community of people? Who defines the “public” and what, if any, responsibility does the artist have in a public

context? And finally, what role does education play in defining the role and responsibility of contemporary artists *vis a vis* society, whether the context is public or private art? According to Patricia Phillips (1995) "If 'public is going to be used as a qualifying characteristic of some art,... then this mutable term requires vigilant review" (p. 66).

Unfortunately, for a variety of reasons, perhaps the major one being its marginality as a practice, public art does not receive even the critical attention that other art receives.

*To date, the specialist practice called 'public art' . . . has grown in isolation from debates on the future of cities, largely untouched by the theoretical perspectives which enliven other disciplines; as a result it is an impoverished field, with little critical writing through which artists and designers can interrogate their practices. Public art is, too, a marginal area within art practice, having little appeal to curators, dealers and critics for whom it lacks the autonomy of modernist and contemporary art and offers few opportunities for the manufacture of reputations, accumulation of profit and demonstration of taste... (Miles, 1997, p. 1)*

This lack of critical attention also means that those who attempt to redefine art in relation to society and the public interest go largely unheeded and unacknowledged within the official institutions that recognize and support art activity. This includes academic institutions that are charged with the education of future artists, curators, art historians, and other members of the cultural enterprise.

If art in general, and public art in particular are to become socially relevant on a truly meaningful and substantial level, there must be a serious reconsideration and discussion of what the role of the artist is, and a commitment to see art in a larger context than the creation of objects for the art market. Right now it is artists themselves, not academic institutions, who are charting the path. Patricia Phillips (1995) acknowledges a shift in the understanding of artist responsibility and points toward a new conception of what constitutes the product of art:

*A growing number of artists and agencies believe that the responsibility of public artists is not to create permanent objects for presentation in public places but, instead, to assist in the construction of a public.... The formation of audience is the method and objective, the generative intention and the final outcome. (p.67).*

Similarly, Maksymowicz (1992) and Doss (1995) have documented successful public art projects that represent just such collaborative efforts between artists and communities. These projects have resulted in transformations that go beyond the strictly aesthetic. In fact, one of the common features of these various projects is the mutual education that takes place in the context of the project. The artist learns from the community, and the community learns from the artist. "When the artist designs the contextualizing program as well as the work of art, or when the artistic strategies become one with the points of audience engagement, what emerges is a new way of thinking about education and the artwork as a totality." (Jacob, 1995, pp. 56-57). This represents a paradigm shift in the way we can come to understand and engage art. Only through transformational engagement with community can art and artists hope to reclaim a vital place within the fabric of society. Only with this shift in consciousness regarding the possibilities of art to make a difference, can art, in fact, make a difference.

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## **Paper Presentation- Shipping Containers, Shipping Homes: Permanent Housing for the Temporarily Homeless**

**Nalo McGibbon, University of Florida**

### **Abstract**

Each natural catastrophe sees an increase in the destruction of property and the disruption in peoples lives. What if temporary housing made out of shipping containers was given to individuals as temporary housing? What if this was then made available to them to purchase at a reduced rate when they were able to move back to their property? The individuals could use this shipping container home as a building block to expand upon. The containers are built to withstand the stress in shipping and are water resistant and reinforced to withstand the stresses of hurricanes, tornadoes and earthquakes. Comparing architect Sean Godsell's Future Shack and Global Portable Buildings Portable Building Essential, both buildings are designed for emergency uses, to see what elements would be successful and what should be changed for use as not only short term temporary housing but would be useful in the transition to the foundation of long term housing.

### **Narrative**

*"While many people are aware of the terrible impact of disasters throughout the world, few realize that this is a problem that we can do something about....Disasters are a problem that we can and must reduce."*

--Kofi A. Annan, UN Secretary-General

*The ideal of happiness has always taken material form in the house, whether cottage or castle. It stands for permanence and separation from the world.*

-- Simone de Beauvoir

Phillip O'Keefe's definition of a disaster is "the interface between an extreme physical phenomenon and a vulnerable human population" (O'Keefe et al., 1976, p. 566). The devastation caused by a disaster is usually magnified by poorly constructed housing in dangerous locations (Davis, 1978). Beyond the destruction and damage caused by natural disasters, the indirect effects felt by those attempting to regain normalcy in their lives are just as devastating as flood waters. This paper will examine the notion of using shipping containers as emergency housing in response to a natural or man-made disaster.

One of the earliest examples of emergency housing is the "Great Flood" story of Noah, Gilgamesh, and Deucalion. This story tells how a ship was built as temporary housing and saved one family from the devastation around them (Flood legends from around the world, 2006). Another early example is the Great Fire of Rome in 64 AD, when Nero opened the Field

of Mars and his gardens to the homeless of Rome and had emergency accommodations constructed (Eyewitness to History, 1999). The common theme in these and other great legends is that when a disaster arose shelter was available during the direst of times.

While natural disasters are unavoidable, even the slightest bit of stability during the aftermath is welcomed by those who are affected and can be aided by those with available resources. According to Ian Davis in *Shelter after Disaster* (1978) he says, “survivors priorities in order of importance are: to remain as close to their damaged or ruined homes and means of livelihood, to move temporarily into homes of families or friends, to improvise temporary shelters as close as possible to the site of their ruined homes (these shelters frequently evolve into rebuilt houses), and to occupy emergency shelters provided by external agencies.” (pg. 28) The function of emergency shelter is manifold beyond protecting individuals from the elements but also provides emotional security and fills the need for privacy (UNDRC, 1982).

The working definition of *emergency shelter*, according to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), is any facility, the primary purpose of which is to provide temporary or transitional shelter for the homeless in general or for specific populations of the homeless (HUD, 2001). Furthermore, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) defines *temporary housing* as a place to live for a limited period of time, typically 18 months when it is a government provided housing unit (FEMA, 2006). Currently, there are many governmental and non-governmental organizations which provide either emergency shelters or temporary housing before, during and after disasters. But these are only temporary solutions. More often than not, disasters disrupt the fundamental workings of communities and necessitate long term solutions to problems, the most important and immediate of which is housing

Consider the benefits of providing durable housing made out of shipping containers available to victims of a disaster on a lease-purchase basis. The displaced resident could use the shipping container as a means to provide shelter and resolve the immediate housing issue, especially when funds are not available to purchase a traditional home. Ultimately this individual or family could use the container home as a permanent solution or as a building block to something more traditional.

The durability and longevity of container homes has also been a concern. Shipping containers are made of steel or aluminum and are 8 ft wide, 8 ft high and either 20 or 40 ft long. The containers are built to withstand the stress in shipping and are water resistant and reinforced to withstand the stresses of hurricanes, tornadoes and earthquakes. These shipping containers are easily transportable by ship, train or trucks (Arieff, 2002).

The idea of using shipping containers as emergency housing is not new. A comparison of various container homes currently on the market will show a high cost benefit when considering, the initial cost of purchase, practicality as emergency housing, and average delivery time. Two cost feasible options include, Future Shack and Global Portable Buildings.

Architect Sean Godsell’s Future Shack is designed as a basic unit to be built and distributed by aid-coordination agencies in times of emergency. Global Portable Buildings has a more complete container home which is also meant for emergency deployment. These examples are proof that the technology is available to design an emergency housing out of shipping containers but the key to this idea’s success is also in the aesthetics. People need to feel that a “container home” is just that; a home and not a shell.

Through a comparison of features provided in Future Shack and Global Portable Buildings, one can develop a design that would include an ideal mix of what should be included in a suitable container emergency home. The Future Shack is designed to be a basic universal module that is mass-produced and inexpensive (Godsell, 2006). Despite significant efforts, the building still resembles a cargo container. The stark interior demands a great deal of imagination for any family considering the use of this container as a long term or permanent

housing solution. It boasts a marine plywood interior with a built-in table, simple kitchen and bathroom that is reminiscent of a basic camper unit. The container home also has two pull down beds (Helsel, 2001). While the built-in units help keep space free, there is nothing about the interior that would be inviting or comforting. Though the interior design is lacking, the Future Shack is structurally sound, self contained, and self-sustainable. The galvanized steel framed parasol roof, which shades the container, protects the water supply and provides outdoor shade. The building also has telescoping legs so it can be placed on any terrain; is capable of generating electricity; comes with communications, thermal insulation and natural ventilation (Godsell, 2006).

The Portable Building Essential by Global Portable Building includes standard “upgraded” amenities including bathroom, kitchen, AC electrical system, telephone/internet connection, 2" rigid insulated finished walls and ceiling, windows, entrance door, with options including a solar power system (Global Portable Buildings, 2006). The Portable Building Essential can be placed with or without a foundation and when anchored can withstand winds up to 175 mph (Global Portable Buildings, 2006). This unit has built-in closets, kitchen and bathroom cabinetry. Additional features include linoleum floors, the walls are finished in a light wood paneling, and fluorescent light fixtures are standard. It is a complete turn-key package which would help a family affected by disaster quickly return to shelter with many of the comforts of home.

My ideal container home sent during the initial emergency would represent hope after a traumatic event such as a natural disaster and provide a foundation for families to build a new home. A container home used for emergencies should serve two purposes, to provide shelter and comfort those affected. Therefore, the initial container home provided would be capable of generating electricity, water storage, and posses solar panels like the Future Shack but with a more finished interior appearance than the Portable Building Essential. Neither unit fully utilizes built-in components that one would need to make a home; such as bookshelves, dinning room table and banquet seating, dressers, or night stands. They conveniences would not only utilize space efficiently but would offer basic furniture to help individuals regain a sense of home.

If the household chose to lease-purchase a unit and move the container home to their own property, structurally, the container homes would be suitable to withstand future disasters. A suitable container home would have solar power and water storage capabilities as well as an ability to withstand 175mph winds when anchored. The family can adapt the unit to their surrounds if they chose to build around the unit making it the core of their new structure.

After disasters people want to start rebuilding their lives and go home. The more resources that are poured into temporary arrangements, the less are available for permanent reconstruction efforts (Rybczynski, 2005). Standard protocol is for governmental and non-governmental agencies to provide disaster housing relief to those displaced due to property damage or destruction. Often this comes in the form of mobile home trailers. Unfortunately, FEMA only allows use of a trailer or mobile home for 18 months for those needed disaster-related housing needs (FEMA, 2006). Container homes would provide a more feasible solution than just offering temporary housing. Instead people would be offered temporary housing that would be theirs and serve as a foundation to a permanent housing solution.

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## **Paper Presentation- The Limits of Design**

**Greg Watson, Mississippi State University**

### **Abstract**

The current structure of much of architecture education is inconsistent with an intention of producing students who are prepared to deal creatively and effectively with the complex and ambiguous relationship that exists between architecture and its social context. The inability to constructively connect the subject of architecture to issues within this larger social and civic context is a consequence of the structure and focus of design education. It is here that the limits of design's influence are established, that the 'field' of design is defined. These limits, reflected in the narrow and internal focus of most design curricula, have resulted in an increasingly ineffectual voice within the profession when it comes to issues of social welfare and the built environment. This contraction of the field has marginalized the position of architects in the public and political dialogue on matters of social justice. It has led to the diminished role of the profession as an effective advocate for the physical quality and humanity of the public and civic realms. The failure of architecture to develop a central and relevant role in shaping public and private responses to critical social needs is a reflection of the failure of design education to understand the civic, political and economic contexts in which it exists and to which it has incrementally ceded much of its authority and responsibility. This is a self-inflicted wound. The reversal of these trends will require a rethinking of what designers are taught, how they are trained and how we reset the expectations of architecture education to find social relevance in re-defined limits of design.

**Narrative****The Nature of the Limits**

If you were to look at the criteria by which programs in architecture are evaluated and accredited and, consequently, how they're structured, you would have to conclude that the subject of social justice falls outside of the limits of architecture's interests or responsibilities. This position is further reinforced when one examines the conventions of architecture education, or considers the ethical and contractual rules and customs that direct design practice or, perhaps most vividly, analyzes the content of most design publications. You will find in these studies salient reasons for the deteriorating ability of architecture, as a profession, to maintain a significant position in shaping policy and developing initiatives that help society and civic institutions creatively and effectively provide for those at its margins.

This failure stems from the fact that in school, political policy-making, planning and economics are not presented or understood as part of the design process. While this may be forgiven and appropriate in theoretical and probative design experiments, it is inconceivable in projects that attempt to address specific issues of social welfare. Examples of this blind spot are evident in the ubiquitous studio projects that deal with the design of low-income housing or housing schemes for the homeless. The process and products of these exercises are often indistinguishable from any other studio project. This work would lead you to believe that the answers to the problems of housing the poor and the homeless can be found in symbols, formal language, materials, scale, i.e., the physical conditions of building. The obvious problem is, of course, that the causes and solutions of homelessness and the lack of availability of adequate and humane housing for the poor are not to be found in the design of buildings. These issues are grounded in socio-economic, political, and cultural systems. Their solutions must be designed in the form of social and economic policy and sustained through civic commitment. This is not solitary work or work easily conceived, developed or accomplished. In fact, this work is impossibly complicated and, as history has demonstrated, subject to high rates of failure, particularly in the area of housing. Without an acknowledgement and understanding of these forces and facts, and the recognition of the influence they have over the shape of physical solutions, the design of hypothetical projects in the social margins will remain, at best, inert and empty exercises.

Much of the indifference to the social and economic context demonstrated in this kind of work is the result of the fact that the design of architecture is not often discussed in schools as an idealistic act driven by social responsibility. Design is not represented as having value or responsibilities as a socially, politically or culturally informed activism, as an act of principled imagination intended as a provocation for change. It is rather often presented and structured as a solitary and internally driven pursuit. What the designer 'wants' trumps a thoughtful and intentional analysis of what is appropriate given what is understood about the larger social and physical context. This emphasis on the solitary, singular author struggling to create a consensus of one, is in stunning contrast to the complexity of the unwieldy pluralist context that surrounds public work of any kind. And architecture is always, to varying degrees, a public act.

The traditions of architectural education and practice reinforce much of the isolation from these subjects. The irony is that architecture has also historically defined itself as a generalist field, drawing from broad areas of knowledge and experience to inform and bring meaning to the design process. How is it, then, that the contemporary criteria that structure architecture education creates a definition of the field as a kind of applied technology with some attached nostrums concerning ethics and cultural understanding? The lists of required 'ability' and 'understanding' that students must demonstrate are hardly inspiring loci from which provocations for social change and informed ideas that challenge civic, political and economic inertia are likely to spring. In spite of endless weeding, this model of architecture education has

produced some very infertile earth. To counter this, architecture education must reorder itself and reconnect with its responsibilities to the larger social and civic realm.

The initial steps in this reordering must come at the very beginning moments of the educational experience. It is at this moment that the faculty has the chance to frame the subject of design. It is during this brief window that the limits of design could be set so as to embrace ideas of architecture that define it as a public act that can positively or negatively shape the social, cultural and psychological contexts in which it exists. No student comes to this subject with the intent of doing horrible, indifferent things. Their introduction to this subject needs to foster their nascent idealism and encourage them to push their understanding of design beyond the naive pragmatic or egocentric limits they often set for themselves. Students need to be introduced to the complexity of the true context in which they'll work and be driven to develop and test positions and principles regarding design that will shape and reward a humane and informed sense of social responsibility as an inherent part of the design of the environment.

Beyond this beginning, and in order for architecture to seriously and productively address issues of social justice, its educational objectives, reflected in current professional curricula, must be reformed. The models that have emerged in the wake of Mockbee's rural design studio at Auburn, Dan Rockhill's studio 804 at the University of Kansas, and the long established Center for Small Town Research at Mississippi State University, to name a few, offer compelling examples of how to connect design and design thinking to real issues of social and political significance. The number of design institutes, community design centers and design-build programs has increased dramatically over the last 10 years. These programs have been initiated and sustained by an awakened idealism and strong interests of many students and faculty to engage in real projects. The success of many of these initiatives can be found in the balance they strike between the conceptual idealism of the undertaking and the pragmatic demands needed to make these projects happen. In general, they all share a desire to extend academic architecture out of the studio and into the world, through planning, research and design-build projects, which aid community service and development interests.

If these programs represent a new set of design limits and expectations, then these experiences should become a common, shared element of the curriculum. Ideally, this form of design education will challenge the definition of professional service as work rendered in the interests of the client to include also the inextricable and parallel interests of the public. This model of service should be a primary criteria of the profession and a central element in its learning.

While these developments have had a transforming effect on architectural education, their intention of engaging the students in service to the communities in which they work should be spread and generalized beyond the building of singular things and ultimately beyond the field of architecture itself, to include planning, economics, and social and political science. This expansion should be seen not as a reaction to the current rush to established, often forced, interdisciplinary relationships, but rather as an attempt to reestablish the humanist and generalist traditions of architecture and resist the contraction and commodification of the profession which has caused its retreat from social engagement. It is through this expansion of the field of architecture and the broadening of the application of design thinking to issues of policy and planning that the discipline could bring an effective, credible and idealistic voice to issues of social justice.

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## **Paper Presentation- Cohousing: Design for Environmental Conservation, Personal Empowerment, and Social Justice**

**Maruja Torres-Antonini, University of Florida**

### **Abstract**

Shaped in Scandinavia out of a grassroots attempt to address everyday domestic problems, over almost forty years the *cohousing* model has been seen as a solution to inadequate housing, alienated communities, environmental decay, and social injustice. Despite claims that cohousing communities are neither ideological nor carry a political agenda, the *sense of community* generated in cohousing is considered by some a means for resident empowerment. Significantly for architects and designers, the cohousing model is based on the premise that specific community design features—*social contact design*—contributes to creating community connectedness and support, and thus we could ask, to achieve greater social justice.

A participatory action research of a representative cohousing community in America was carried out along two years to test this claim. Relationships between the physical and social aspects of the case study community were observed, documented, and interpreted in terms of environmental behavior theories. Findings pointed to a connection between the physical features of the cohousing model and ensuing community connectedness. However, the research found disparity in the ways and intensity with which intentional neighborhood design enabled or facilitated—and even occasionally hampered—different aspects of a sense of community. To overcome privacy and other conflicts created by circumstance or design, intentionality was found to be the key. Nonetheless, the research ultimately illustrated that cohousing can provide a setting where environmental conservation, personal empowerment, and social justice are fostered and advanced.

### **Narrative**

A quarter century ago social researchers in America were already seeking awareness of our changing households and the stresses imposed on families by the separation of our work and home environments (Hayden, 1984). Later on Weisman (1992) sought to solve the current misfit between “old houses and new households,” by reconsidering housing design and creating social structures whereby the local community would take on many of the roles traditionally assigned to the family.

Hayden was an early influence for similar proposals developed in Scandinavia where—despite a long-standing tradition of cooperatives and collective housing—conflict between their changing society and existing housing patterns was also acknowledged (Horelli, 2002). The New Everyday Life (NEL) project (c.f. NCM Research Group, 1991), and later the continent-wide EUROFem initiative (Horelli, Booth & Gilroy, 1998/2000) proposed creating new types of community wherein services would be available to individual households through a network of neighborhood cooperatives. However, common citizens had been quicker to respond to the issue. By the mid-1970s a group of Danish residents generated a new housing concept, the

*bofællesskab* or “living-together-ness” neighborhood, which ten years later was introduced in America as *cohousing*.

Like their Danish counterparts, cohousing neighborhoods are intentional, collaborative, pro-environmental communities that counteract domestic isolation within a physical setting following *social contact design* guidelines (Coho/US, 2005; McCamant & Durrett, 1994) that prescribe separation of pedestrian and vehicular transit, clustering of homes around an open common space, commons-facing porches and kitchens, and provision of a common house with communal dining room and kitchen. Cohousing can be seen as a social change experiment wherein a group of individuals set out to test the hypothesis, captured in the cohousing movement’s slogan “*building community* one neighborhood at a time” (TCN, 1996), that neighborhood design is a contributing factor for creating community connectedness and support.

The research reported in this paper refers to a two-year qualitative, participatory case study in which the researcher followed an action science process (Greenwood & Levin, 1998) initiated by the residents of Lake Claire Commons, a representative cohousing in Atlanta. Following cues embedded in the cohousing experiment, this open-ended exploration addressed the premise acted upon by the residents—the existence of a connection between the physical and social patterns of their community—yet remained open to findings that might uncover other potentially significant factors impinging on the creation of community. Participant observation and interviews carried periodically along the study were used to document interaction, participation, support and feelings of security among community neighbors—the makings of the *sense of community* (Fromm, 1991) sought by cohousing (Franck & Ahrentzen, 1989; McCamant & Durrett, 1994; Norwood, 1995). Observed and reported behaviors representing these categories were contrasted against the affordances of the built environment as obtained from experiential and graphic documentation of the community’s design. Their apparent connections were assessed and interpreted in light of environmental behavior concepts and theories to test the validity of the cohousing claim.

The social contact design features of Lake Claire were found to contribute to creating and sustaining community among neighbors. However, each of these features was seen to do so through a variety of processes and with varying degrees of importance. For example, interaction and security seemed to be strongly related to the physical setting of the cohousing, with the units surrounding and opening fenestration to the commons, thus enclosing it and allowing for its surveillance. Moreover, personalization of the entrances to, and areas immediately surrounding, the units was encouraged in the community and evident to observers. As a result, despite lack of gates to the outside, the commons were found to be the space of choice for child play and neighborly interaction. Defensible space theory (Newman, 1996; Taylor, 1987) suggests that the commons is perceived as being owned by, and under control of, the residents, conveying to others the impression that it will likely be defended and thus deterring intrusion by outsiders. Similarly, the physical layout of the commons elicits feelings of safety within the community.

Similarly, pedestrian circulation in Lake Claire was found to be carefully routed through a sole path through the commons, and vehicles relegated to a communal parking lot, to minimize the impact of vehicular traffic and maximize green coverage. Observations indicated that this configuration increased opportunities for chance encounters in the parking lot and along the path as residents carried on their daily activities. Affordances (Gibson, 1979) for both casual and scheduled interaction among neighbors were furthered by the existence of a common house where more than a dozen different kinds of activities were observed to take place. In this sense, the common house can be regarded as the most central behavior setting (Barker, 1968; Schoggen, 1989) of the community, and as such stimulating much of the pedestrian traffic within it.

By contrast, affordances for participation and interpersonal support were seen to be less strongly conveyed by patterns of the built environment and seemed to arise more out of the residents' motivation, or need for and interest in, these practices. Moreover, the study found that at Lake Claire the same features that invited interaction and security at the same time set the stage for a range of privacy conflicts (Altman, 1975; Cooper Marcus, 1995) that demanded resolution—unwanted visual access between units; a circulation pattern “forcing” interaction among neighbors; disagreement on the furnishing and personalization of the common house.

The research study evidence supported the hypothesis that social contact design is a factor in promoting connectedness and support within the community; but by showing disparity in the effect each of the neighborhood design features had on delivering the cohousing promise, the study hinted at intentionality, rather than design, as the key factor in the creation of community. Nonetheless, the exploratory nature of the Lake Claire study allowed the researcher opportunities to observe and participate of other dimensions of the cohousing model, and thus to draw unexpected insight on the potential of cohousing for environmental conservation, personal empowerment, and social justice.

Findings of this study suggested that, beyond achieving their manifest goals, cohousing residents embraced and acted upon ideas of interdependence and voluntary simplicity (Elgin, 1993) and as a result, generated social capital within the community—a system of shared social obligations and resources from which residents draw social benefits in the form of emotional and practical help. The process whereby supportive behaviors lead to social capital and thence to community connectedness rests on the impracticality to constantly tally given versus received favors, which compels support network members to keep participating in the exchange to keep receiving (Scanzoni, 2000).

At Lake Claire, caring for each other's children, sitting neighbors' dogs and cats, and providing assistance to the sick, seemed to be regular practices. So is the widespread circulation of goods among the community. One Lake Claire resident summarized having had, over the course of one year, access to neighbors' bicycles and cars, as well as borrowing ladder, power sander, books, toys, party clothes, eggs, soy sauce” and taking needed items from the common house giveaway pile: a pair of roller blades and “seven shirts, five pairs of pants, three pairs of shorts, a copy of Gray's Anatomy, and two antique Italian lamps (Lowe, 2000).

Developing such partnerships among members of a community creates a buffer that protects households from the effects of the natural and manufactured stresses that affect their lives, and becomes particularly significant in the “runaway world” (Giddens, 1995) of today. This is also true as it relates to environmental conservation. The Lake Claire study confirmed Meltzer's research (2000), illustrating that cohousing can be transformative by not only providing an eco-friendly physical setting, but also a social context in which pro-environmental attitudes are fostered and perpetuated. Along with increased building density, energy conservation features, xeriscaping, and other physical features that granted the community an AIA Sustainability Award, Lake Claire residents were observed to engage in a range of green practices that included recycling, reusing, composting, ridesharing, and organic gardening.

Finally, the Lake Claire study found that, following the cohousing model, neighbors participated in their community's design, management and governance. In allowing communities not to be single handedly shaped by planners and designers but through the collective effort of its residents, participatory design strategies in general transfer much of the weight of design decisions—and the leverage associated with it—from the professional to the end user. The relevance of—and to some in the architectural disciplines, the threat inherent in—this approach to design lies in its potential for overriding professional practice and thus for subverting traditional social structures (Dovey, 1990). However as Dovey notes, “in a global context of over a billion poorly housed people and massive unemployment, such a process may be the only one that is practical”.

Insight garnered from the Lake Claire study suggests the ultimate goal of cohousing is fostering a sustainable lifestyle in its two dimensions: social equality and environmental conservation. As revealed by this study, the shape of the built environment is a significant component in this equation in that it can support, facilitate and represent the social intentions of the group. This is a deceptively non-ideological or apolitical approach. In addressing the construction of space and fostering community and environmental health cohousing makes a strong comment on the shape of society and the well being of future generations, and conveys the idea that individuals are accountable for creating the sustainable world to which we aspire.

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## **Paper Presentation- Fabricating a Pedagogy While Mending Tears**

**Hector Lasala & Geoff Gjertson, University of Louisiana-Lafayette**

### **Abstract**

It is indispensable to the future of the design professions that professional practice be a *critical* practice. Designers must become proactive participants in the process of identifying, reflecting upon and making relevant choices regarding contemporary issues. Only out of such lucid engagement will come responses that frame meaningful and timely concerns. For this transformation of the profession to take place, there must be a pedagogy that enables encounters between our students and present day America, right where physical and societal conditions are at a crisis point.

For the last four years we have attempted to fuse the altruistic desire of our students to help their communities with the impoverished context of our physical and social settings. This experience has led to an attempt to forge a pedagogy that situates our students in real-world conditions where *critical* reflection, *ethical* commitments and *poetical* outcomes become common practice.

This paper describes a response of our School of Architecture. The Building Institute's objective is to open up new paths for the learning processes of our students by inserting them into a social context that they have rarely encountered in any meaningful way: the world of chronic poverty, homelessness, addiction, mental illness, and the non-profit agencies that are in the trenches of these societal battlefronts.

This sustained encounter, and the making of accelerated fabrications, with at-risk populations has altered our students' critical and ethical thinking. As a result, we are witnessing the birth of critical, poetical and ethical professional practices in our graduates.

### **Narrative**

#### **Theoretical Context**

The degradation of our natural and built environments has reached such extreme proportions that social critics are identifying it as the primary factor for the accelerating retreat into an aggressive, rapacious and unsustainable consumerism. They also argue that since the world outside has less and less to offer, there has been this manic escape into the seductive, home-entertainment-and-web-based existence.

Whether this state of affairs is called the *advertised life*<sup>i</sup> (Lewis Lapham), or the *culture of distraction* (Mark Slouka)<sup>ii</sup> or the *culture business*<sup>iii</sup> (Thomas Frank), or *behavioral inertia*<sup>iv</sup> (Paul Virilio), we believe it is the dominant context for designers today. The aggressiveness of the prevailing market ideology has become the inescapable atmosphere with which the design professions must contend.

It is therefore indispensable to the future of the profession of architecture and the allied professions that professional practice be a *critical* practice. Architects and designers must become proactive participants in the process of identifying, reflecting upon and making relevant choices regarding contemporary issues. Only out of such lucid engagement will come responses that frame meaningful and timely concerns. Non-critical approaches are non-starters, if not down-right irresponsible. But being critical is just the beginning; the mental maneuvers responsible for the creative act must also be *poetical* and *ethical*; excellence in design can only be achieved by posing questions that embody all three dimensions: *the critical, the poetical and the ethical*.

It is our conviction that the critical, the poetical and the ethical *together* offer us a true reading of reality, and that these *alone* can help us designers and educators envision an alternative way of being in the world, an *otherwise*. The thesis of this paper is that, *that hope*, the *otherwise* can be the next generation of designers, and for that, we need to teach them differently.

### **A Summons to Forge a Pedagogy**

According to the 2003 Internship and career Survey, conducted by Arch Voices and the American Institute of Architects most (58%)<sup>v</sup>, of our interns and students stated that engaging in community and professional service is a high priority for them. Indeed, if you ask students why they enter architecture schools, they typically mention the desire to help their communities and/or a childhood predilection towards making, building and construction.<sup>vi</sup>

Fusing the altruistic desire by our students to help their communities with the impoverished context of our physical and social settings, one can discern an educational summons – a call for the academy to forge a pedagogy that situates our students in real-world conditions where critical reflection, ethical commitments and poetical outcomes become common practice.

This narrative will summarize three projects and our presentation will describe in detail a response on the part of our School of Architecture. Known as the Building Institute, it is a design/build studio committed to the type of practice outlined above.

### **Situated Learning: The Building Institute**

Since its inception, the Building Institute has aimed to open up new paths for the learning processes of our students by inserting them into a social context that they have rarely encountered in any meaningful way: the world of chronic poverty, homelessness, addiction, mental illness, and the non-profit agencies that are in the trenches of these societal battlefronts.

In order to achieve a critical and active learning opportunity for our students, our effort—the Building Institute, like the Rural Studio, deliberately places them into a slice of present day America where physical and societal conditions are at a crisis point. While their design and constructing skills generate the most visible outcomes, this should not diminish the impact that these participations have had on their capacity to reflect on their culture, social conditions, and communal needs. This sustained encounter by our students with at-risk populations has altered our students' critical and ethical thinking in ways that are hard to measure but are real nevertheless.

### The Primary Site

The Acadiana Outreach Center is a non-profit organization, which serves the homeless and those in need in an eight county region of Southwestern Louisiana. The Outreach Center serves over 60 people per day by meeting basic needs as well as attempting to return its clients to fulfilling, self-sustaining lives.

In the Fall of 2003, the Center's Director, Valerie Keller, requested the help of the School of Architecture in designing a storage system to aid in organizing donations; however, as a result of several visits to the site—a city block full of sprawled and disconnected structures—the students and faculty observed a terrible contradiction: while the Center's mission is "Giving People Back Their God-Given Dignity," the physical environment and facilities were depressing, coarse, and spiritually degrading.

### Project One



Fig. 1. Donation Store Site- Before our Project<sup>vii</sup>



Fig 2. Donation Store- After<sup>viii</sup>

In order to begin to immediately address the dominance of the degraded environment, one of the accelerated fabrications began to take shape. Upon the previously blank face of the ubiquitous metal building, our students designed and built an armature that does not attempt to conceal the banal flat surface but rather it intensifies light, materiality, texture and contrast. The armature has continued to evolve and grow over the last year accepting informational and inspirational signage and planters for climbing vines.

**Project Two**



*Fig.3. Meditation Garden<sup>x</sup>*

A barren alleyway was once the only connection between four halfway houses and the job training and rehabilitation center which serves the residents. Our students first created small installations (*altars / alters*) - inspired by the success stories and testimonials of residents who had graduated from the rehab program. These installations grace the walls of a meditative garden called the *Signposts of Grace*. Residents now can stop, rest and reflect upon the struggles and victories of their lives. The city selected the project as one of only a handful to fund as a pocket park.

**Project Three**



*Fig.4. Performance Space<sup>x</sup>*

To culminate the summer of work, students and faculty, in collaboration with residents of the halfway houses, local contractors and inmates from the local jail, designed and built a

performance space for concerts and community events. Most importantly, the performance space provides a place to celebrate the center's life-changing programs.

### **Pedagogical Intentions**

The pedagogical intention of the Building Institute is to engender a critical, poetical and ethical process / practice. Because of program, budget and schedule restraints, the process must engage improvisation and collaborative design, as well as project management and technical skills. Teaching ethical and critical design also entails mentorship and an experiential learning environment. Both of these strategies are found on-site in the design/build studio where professors serve as mentors / architects-of-record for their apprentice students.<sup>xi</sup> It is in this manner we seek to instill an understanding of professional responsibility and collaboration without stifling independence and creativity. Finally, we believe the site of our work, *the tears in the social fabric*, demands a caring and ethical approach.

### **Reflecting Upon the Work**

Finally, upon reflection of the Building Institute's work, we would like to acknowledge both the intended and the unpredicted results. Even in the more controlled setting of the classroom, the lesson plan may go awry. Outside the classroom, control becomes even more tenuous. For this reason, the exact process and product of the design/build studio remains unprescribed. Everyone involved, including the student, professor and client relies on a high level of trust in the critical, poetical and ethical intentions of the work.

A student's level of mastery is revealed in his/her finished fabrication rather than in a final exam. The subject matter is internalized, often deeply, though it may be weeks, months or even years before the full extent of knowledge from the experience of the design/build studio is realized. Often, when students return to their drawing boards to detail their designs, the realization of their intimacy with the materials occurs.

We are beginning to see our students carry their knowledge and experience gained through the design/build studio into practice. In some cases, portfolios based on their design/build experience have garnered them some of the scarce, well-paying jobs.<sup>xii</sup>

Of greater importance, we are witnessing the birth of critical, poetical and ethical practices in our graduates. Some have sought non-traditional career paths in the Peace Corps, attributing their choice to their design/build education.<sup>xiii</sup> Others are carrying their critical, poetical and ethical education into traditional local architectural offices. Due to our School's influence, these offices are beginning to institutionalize community-service into the job-descriptions of interns and architects.

In conclusion, we wish to endorse the "One Percent Solution"<sup>xiv</sup> program initiated in California. This program suggests a voluntary quota of pro bono work for the profession. We believe that this initiative is long overdue. It is hoped that by educating a generation of young architects in a critical, ethical and poetical practice, initiatives like this may gain support. After all, a critical practice is not just a good idea, but is an essential one in a world of under-funded, crowded homeless shelters.

### **Endnotes**

- i. Frank, Thomas and Matt Weiland, eds. (1997). *Commodify Your Dissent*. (p.10). New York: W. W. Norton.
- ii Slouka, Mark. (1995). *War of the Worlds: Cyberspace and the High-tech Assault on Reality*. (p. 38). New York: Basic Books.
- iii. Frank and Weiland, eds. *Commodify Your Dissent*, (p. 14).
- iv. Virilio, Paul. (1997). *Open Sky*. (p. 11). London and New York: Verso.

- v. Survey available online at [www.archvoices.org](http://www.archvoices.org).
- vi Anecdotal evidence by the authors gathered through thirty years of teaching (1975-present).
- vii Photo by author.
- viii Ibid.
- ix Ibid.
- x. Ibid.
- xi. Traditionally in architecture schools, the studio format evolved out of the atelier process as in the Beaux-Arts School where master architects educated their students often in their own place of work on actual projects.
- xii. Conversation with alumnus Jeremy Durham after he received a job in Houston, Texas, Spring 2005.
- xiii. Conversation with alumnus Eddie Guidry, Fall 2004.
- xiv. One Percent Solution pro bono program for architects. [Available online at [http://www.theonepercent.org/.](http://www.theonepercent.org/)]

## ***Paper Presentation- User-Centered Homeless Shelter Design: A Personality Theory Approach***

**Jill Pable, Ph.D., Florida State University**

### ***Abstract***

Homeless persons often experience life crises that can result in emotional disorientation. It follows that homeless shelters should possess an architectural design that fosters a counterbalancing sense of healing and refuge from the distress of life on the streets. Perhaps among the most impactful aspects of environments for the homeless are their psychological ramifications that encompass issues of personal space, territoriality and the spatial nature of human social interactions.

Unfortunately, restricted building funds coupled with shelter organizations' minimal staffing and time make creating a homeless shelter design that is fully functional, safe, and restorative difficult to achieve. Unintentionally, this can create environments that do not fully address social damage inflicted by street life.

This paper proposes that assistance for constructing recuperative environments may be found in Maslow's self-actualization personality theory. When coupled with relevant architectural concepts from Alexander's pattern theory and CEPTD (or Crime Prevention through Environmental Design), a framework emerges that approaches homeless shelter design empathetically from the user's point of view.

Designing from a psychological personality theory viewpoint is perhaps particularly important in the case of 'first-contact' spaces, such as an check-in pre-admittance area of a homeless shelter. To explore this idea, this proposal then applies the Maslow framework to this space type to demonstrate how practical design criteria might be extracted from its ideas, creating a more empathetic solution that is respectful of its vulnerable users.

## **Narrative**

### **The Problem**

It is generally accepted that persons who are homeless are experiencing a life crisis that can manifest itself in emotional disorientation. It logically follows that homeless shelters should possess an architectural design that fosters a counterbalancing sense of refuge from the distress of street life.

Limited funds coupled with shelter organizations' minimal staffing and time make creating a design that is fully functional and restorative difficult to achieve. It could be argued, for example, that this shelter check-in area (where one applies for a bed, food and social programs) shown in figures 1 and 2 seems designed for controlled containment and easy maintenance.



*Figures 1 & 2. An existing check-in area in a homeless shelter*

Homeless persons report that many find this area's ambience aesthetically sterile or even hostile and the fence reminiscent of 'being an animal in a zoo'. Women users report discomfort with this street edge, as it is easy for people walking on the sidewalk to offer unwanted comments. The space's single entrance can make access uncomfortable for those that may have experienced physical abuse in the past.

Such psychological issues are of concern, especially because degree of welcome perceived in initial-encounter shelter areas is important: first impressions may be a contributing factor in a homeless person's decision to commit or continue to reject societal reintegration (Davis, 2004). While it is wise to avoid overstating architectural impact, facilities design does tend to mirror shelter organizations' intent in physical form, for better or worse.

This proposal suggests that personality theory can have a positive impact upon the design of shelter environments and help guide empathetic decision making. Psychological theory might act as a springboard toward designing shelter spaces from a user centered viewpoint, especially when coupled with related architectural humanistic theory.

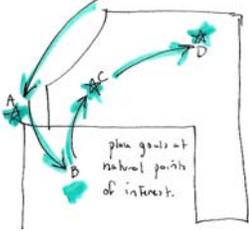
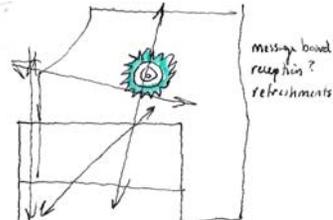
### **Theories Applicable to Shelter Design**

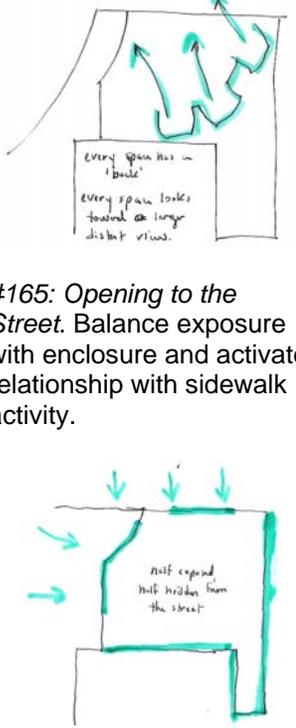
Abraham Maslow's self-actualization theory is one viewpoint that seeks to explain 'full personhood'. Maslow is considered one of the founders of "humanistic psychology", the "third force" of the American psychological movement (Hall & Lindzey, 1978). While many theories of personality exist that one might choose from, Maslow's ideas continue to be referenced within homelessness psychological studies (Snow & Anderson, 1993; Miller & Keys, 2001). Maslow's concepts and ample details also readily adapt themselves to guidelines for healing spaces.

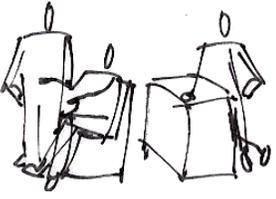
Maslow’s ‘hierarchy of needs’ is one well-known component of his personality theory. More obscure, however, are Maslow’s discussions of holistic health and a fully human, ‘self-actualized’ state of being that few persons fully attain. Table 1’s first and second columns detail these characteristics.

Two other theories were additionally enlisted to bring Maslow’s ideas into physical form. Relevant components of architectural pattern theory (Alexander, et al., 1977) were included that restore ‘humanness’ to architecture through proxemics, view orientation, and other concepts. In designing for vulnerable populations that are often plagued with crime, it is also logical to introduce a certain measure of safety and security to the shelter environment. Accordingly, the concepts of CPTED (Crime Prevention through Environmental Design) were incorporated to dissuade crime including threats, humiliation, physical assault and domination (Poyner, 1983; Crowe, 1991). Table 1’s fourth and fifth columns describe this addition.

*Table 1. Theory-Practice Grid.*

Self-Actualization Characteristic	Explanation of the characteristic	Antithesis of this characteristic	Patterns response (with sketches showing application to the check in area)	CEPTD response	Intake area design criteria
<b>An accurate perception of reality</b>	Self-actualizers are free of pessimism and defensive distortions. Can judge real from phony in people, events, and ideas.	Pessimistic, defensive. May be unable to make accurate judgments concerning truth and fiction in others’ intent or events.	<p>Patterns that relate to clarity in spatial experience and procedure:  <b>#120: Paths and Goals.</b>                      Place goals at natural points of architectural interest.</p>  <p><b>#126 Something roughly in the middle.</b> Design space to draw people towards a natural center.</p> 	<p>Provide clear definition of controlled space so that people recognize differences between public/private.</p> <p>Stake claim to a space by creating well defined borders and edges that imply ownership and control.</p>	<p><i>Create a design that emphasizes clarity and legitimacy:</i></p> <p>Patio should send cues of separation from the problems of the street and a sense of security, stability and refuge.</p> <p>Provide up to date accurate information on digital boards.</p> <p>Provide a way to queue up for check in that is fair.</p>
<b>Greater acceptance of self and others</b>	Self-actualizers are tolerant of human frailty and less judgmental of others. Lack shame and anxiety.	Experience shame and anxiety. Intolerant and judgmental of others.	<b>#114: Hierarchy of Open Space.</b> Every space has a back and a view.	<p>Place furnishings to break up group size and avoid colonization.</p> <p>Provide multiple entrance points to increase</p>	<p><i>Create a design solution that implies equality, fair treatment and respect:</i></p> <p>Seating locations: Avoid placement that puts arriving persons ‘on parade’.</p>

Self-Actualization Characteristic	Explanation of the characteristic	Antithesis of this characteristic	Patterns response (with sketches showing application to the check in area)	CEPTD response	Intake area design criteria
			 <p>#165: <i>Opening to the Street.</i> Balance exposure with enclosure and activate relationship with sidewalk activity.</p>	sense of access and security.	<p>Seating placement should be back-protective to avoid sense of vulnerability.</p> <p>Provide a system for waiting without physically standing in line: persons' order of admittance posted on digital boards.</p> <p>Provide bathroom, water fountain, reading materials, trash cans and cold drink.</p> <p>Provide an area for parking of shopping carts and bicycles within sight lines.</p>
<b>Greater problem centering</b>	Self-actualizers are keenly interested in external problems and unconcerned with introspection . They do not worry over details, but maintain a devotion to excellence and goal accomplishment.	Self-examination and self-incrimination are common and resulting in anxiety.	<p>#125: <i>Stair seats.</i> Let people congregate to watch activities on the edges.</p>  <p>#123: <i>Pedestrian Density.</i> Avoid densities so low that the space will be perceived as neither too empty nor too dense to promote stress.</p>	Fear of rebuke increases need for individual distances.	<p><i>Create a place that promotes introspection and also socialization:</i></p> <p>Provide sociopetal spaces to encourage socialization; withdrawing spaces that allow gradual reintegration.</p> <p>Provide appropriate seating density without overcrowding.</p>
<b>Greater social interest</b>	Actualizers strongly identify with the human species and express sympathy and desire to	Non-actualizers may feel animosity or frustration toward others or a sense of distrust.	#69 <i>Outdoor room.</i> "Leaning wall" allows eavesdropping without committal to a people grouping.	Table sizes tell others the boundary of proxemics territory.  Provide perceived	<p><i>Create a space that implies respect for all persons, animals and the environment:</i></p> <p>Provide seating opportunities that</p>

Self-Actualization Characteristic	Explanation of the characteristic	Antithesis of this characteristic	Patterns response (with sketches showing application to the check in area)	CEPTD response	Intake area design criteria
	help.			bulk/heft to furnishings to help establish territory.	<p>allow others to listen without commitment. Choose heavy furnishings.</p> <p>Design universally.</p> <p>Provide environmental cues and amenities that demonstrate respect—i.e. clock for telling time, newspapers, pet details including water dish and tie-up rings. Use evident sustainable materials and practices.</p>

***The design response within the shelter check in area***

Table 1 describes a selection of Maslow’s thirteen general guidelines that result in multiple specific architectural details. Two of these are further described here.



*Figure 3.* The entrance from the street. The counselor/check in area lies at the rear center of the courtyard.

**“Accurate perception of reality”:** *provision for order and clarity.* The proposed solution (see figure 3) show that the design’s massing seeks to express clarity and respect through its literal outreach to the homeless from the existing building. It places receptionist/counselors in the midst of the patio (instead of in a recessed room behind a small window) which also helps to curb negative behaviors through perceived surveillance. Projected ceiling surfaces and color are selected to evoke a sense of shelter and protection reinforced through the use of simple wall forms that form obvious, ample roof support. Partial enclosure from the street coupled with multiple paths/openings implies a separate, yet permeable relationship to outside life while helping the organization lay claim to the patio as protected, monitored space. Color and materials neutral at the street exhibit a gradient of growing color strength to subtly elicit a sense of life and optimism at the building interface.



Figure 4. Proposed intake area showing experience of entering from the sidewalk. The leaning wall permits non-committed participation in a group discussion.

**“Greater social interest”:** *promotion of social empathy and respect.*

- The solution provides multiple seating options that promote socialization with table groupings and chess games. Women can retreat to rear patio areas. Most seating offers a ‘protected back’ orientation.
- Sustainable design features respect the environment and provide visual relief from the site’s urban context:
  - Turfstone ground surfacing provides grass while minimizing runoff.
  - Overhead solar panels channel rainwater to vegetation drip irrigation.

**Implications**

As discussed herein, shelter organizations are often ill equipped in time, energy and funding to fully address the psychological impacts of design decision-making in their facilities. A holistic approach grounded in psychological ‘whole person’ theory may offer a fruitful source from which recuperative shelter design might spring.



Figure 5. Secondary sitting/waiting space. The design permits persons to withdraw while still observing others and attendant animals a water dish and wall rings for tie up.



Figure 6. The intake area from the reception desk shows lines of sight for counselor monitoring. Security gates at the area's entrances permit maintenance and exclusive use of the area only by permitted residents by night.

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## **Endnote Address: Art and Design for Social Justice**

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My task, here this afternoon, is to make connections between the themes developed and the content covered in the excellent presentations made here today. In order to do that I have to find the common bond, the common thread that ties our presentations together.

That common thread, the obvious foundation of everyone engaged in art and design for social justice, is the premise that art should be about something beyond itself, and do something beyond being decorative or beautiful for its own sake. This idea is well established outside of Western culture and Western arts education. In most cultures around the world, through most of history, art has had very specific functions beyond being decorative or beautiful for its own sake.

One of its primary functions has been to tell our human stories, to help us know who we are and how and what we believe (Anderson & Milbrandt, 2005; Walker, 2001). This assumes that the aesthetic form, which is at the heart of most works of art and design, is used to affect some kind of communication. It assumes that artists and designers use their skills in composition and technique to create works that are both physically functional but also extend beyond themselves to tell us something about human experience. This is art not for art's sake but for life's sake.

In traditional societies art and design have had a primary purpose of reinforcing and transmitting core cultural values and beliefs through serving particular social functions (R. Anderson, 1990; Dissanayake 1988). These functions are spiritual, sacramental, idealistic, and above all culturally agreed upon, that is, social. Art in traditional societies symbolizes goodness, energy, masculinity, femininity, beauty, and other ideal states both in its forms and its uses. It serves as a means of influence, both secular (as in trappings of power) and spiritual (as in being a messenger or influencing agent for spirits or gods) (R. Anderson, 1990). Dancing, singing, poetic speech, rattles, wind instruments, drums, jewelry, masks, painting, headrests, power symbols, ceremonial garments, fabrics, doors, theater, funeral rites, lullabies, gardens, tattooing, and many other forms have all evolved as social expressions of belief and self-affirmation within given cultures.

Art and design help clarify and cement social relationships, make history clear, articulate mores and values, attract mates, establish kinship and hierarchy, and so on. These are not merely aesthetic or superfluous functions. They are solutions to problems necessary for the survival of the individual and the group. Traditionally, the arts, including architecture and design have fostered the social cohesion people need to survive (Dissanayake, 1988) through displaying core values and beliefs, making them concrete and recognizable in an aesthetic manner through ritual, ceremony, and other public display. In traditional society this was well known.

In Modernism, though, some understanding of this was lost. In Modernism it was the individual, not the society, which was centered and the arts and design reflected this message too. Understanding of the collective extrinsic functions of art was swept away by the drive for individual expression. The traditional qualities of elaboration and crafting skill were also

demoted to secondary status except as they serviced creativity. Skillfully crafted artifacts of communal belief were devalued to the level of mere craft, and the artist who continued to act as medium for communal belief was reduced to a mere craftsman, because his/her work lacked the essential modernist artistic quality of individual creativity.

This is not to say that art ceased to serve and reflect social reality. It's just that at the center of social reality was the glorification of the individual. Unlike in traditional societies, then, where the aesthetic response was an attention-getting device, only the first step in serving an extrinsic social purpose, in modernism, the aesthetic response was the highest purpose and end-goal of art.

This universalist form-for-its-own sake sensibility dominated mainstream art and design. And rather than for the functions it performed the work of art was to be judged by the intrinsic qualities presented in the work itself, the composition and aesthetic quality: how well the elements and principles of design and style carried the intended expressive message (Fry, 1920). This expressive compositional quality came to be called "significant form" (Bell, 1913), and achieving significant form became the primary goal of modern artists.

So the autonomy of the creative individual artist acting alone to rise above an inherently repressive society, seeking through aesthetic means to progressively overcome a tasteless and degraded popular culture through the creation of beauty, and through beauty, significance is the very core fiber of modern art. In modernism, art stands on its aesthetic/formal qualities against the degradations of culture.

For advocates of social justice through the arts, these were hard times, times when functionalism and meaning were co-opted by corporate manipulation on one hand and denied by modernist universalists on the other. But fortunately, in the wings, a new strand of art and design for social justice was percolating, waiting to build pressure and break through the crust of modernism.

Postmodern theorists question whether the modern idea of the "free" individual, rising above and rejecting tradition, escaping from the repression of the traditions of culture is desirable or even possible (Bowers, 1989). How good is it, they ask, for individuals to deny, devalue, ignore, or obscure their societies' collective values, mores, institutions, and ways of doing things? How much is lost when an individual fails to acknowledge that s/he is the bearer of tradition? They argue that tradition is enabling and supporting in as many ways as it is restrictive (T. Anderson, 1997; Neprud, 1995; Sarup, 1989). It provides patterns that make communication and collective living possible. To a large degree, it determines how one thinks, what one thinks about, and in what ways.

So these postmodernists (Neo-Marxists, bioregionalists, social reconstructionists, and other activists concerned with social justice and environmental balance) began to seek ways to reconnect the arts and society. Their primary means is recentering the artful artifact, whether that is a painting, a performance, or a building, in the life of the community.

This where I entered the flow. As a young man growing up in a modernist social climate in my art school I wondered how to connect art with the things I really cared about: namely social justice and ecological balance. I kept hitting the wall with my teachers and mentors, until I moved to Eugene, Oregon, and found a town full of street murals.

In the late 1960s many social activist artists who were held on the periphery of the art world by Modernism's focus on form as content and resulting ban on art that had extrinsic purposes, such as social justice, discovered the walls of their towns and cities as canvases for their expression. First in New York, Chicago, LA, and social activist centers like Berkeley, Madison, and Eugene, then spreading everywhere, even to little towns in rural Minnesota community activist murals took hold. These murals were instrumentalist, that is they had a purpose beyond being pretty or decorative, that purpose, nine times out of ten being socially reconstructionist, dealing in content such as the civil rights struggle, demanding dignity and respect not only for African-Americans but also for other ethnicities, women and alternative

gender preferences. They also addressed the war in Vietnam, a balanced ecology and bioregionalism, and other social justice issues such as the universal right to education and health care.

Rather than being universal in form and meaning in the Modernist sense, rather than being about the form itself, these murals were locally specific in form and content, rising from the aesthetic of the local community and addressing the local community's issues, values, mores, and aesthetic sensibilities. This was an intrinsically social art, relying on local support for ideas, financing, and even execution. And at that time in America, there was plenty of support for liberal causes, thus plenty of support for social justice as the agenda for community street murals.

Immersed in the liberal social culture of Eugene, Oregon, I began to lead street mural projects, and later as a teacher I worked with my students to paint social reconstructionist murals in the public schools in which I taught—no mean feat given the conservatism of public schools. I wrote my dissertation at the University of Georgia on then contemporary American street murals, using the Feldman method of critical analysis, which I found to be lacking in the crucial socially contextual element, thus ended up developing the Anderson method. Some of my first journal articles rose from my dissertation, of course, and that was a seed for the Kids' Guernica Peace Mural Project.

Enter another strand in the story: Back in the mid 1980's a young Japanese art educator named ABE Toshifumi was touring the important art education programs in The United States. He turned up at FSU, and I offered him lodging at my home for a few nights. His English was not good, and my Japanese was non-existent. During that first day he'd frequently stop in the middle of a sentence, say "Just a minute," then flip through the Japanese-English dictionary, say, "Ah...so..." then go on. On the way to my house we stopped in at Albertsons, he bought a bottle of sake; we went to my house, where my wife had checked out the Paul Simon Africa concerts from the library. After some warm sake, and some Paul Simon, I was either fluent in Japanese or Toshifumi was fluent in English or it didn't matter. We swapped stories about our kids, wives, salaries, and colleagues with ease and comfort. We didn't seem to need the dictionary.

When Toshifumi left, I gave him some photocopies of journal articles, including one entitled "Contemporary American Street Murals: Their Defining Qualities and Significance for Art Education" (T. Anderson, 1985). After that, for about ten years, Toshifumi and I corresponded and saw each other occasionally, when I was in Japan. Then one day, early in the summer in 1995, I got a call. "Hi Tom, this is Abe." "Abe San, how are you?" I responded. "Fine," he said. The cutting to the chase, as he does, he said, "I read your work about murals carefully and I have an idea. The 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima is in August. Do you think we could do children's murals from America and Japan as a bridge of peace?" That's only two months from now, I thought, but we must try. Out loud, I said, "This is a terrific idea. We'll do it! And that was the beginning of the Kids' Guernica Peace Mural Project began.

The initial concept was that the mural exchange would be between the United States and Japan. The first mural would be executed by children in the United States. That mural would be sent to Japan where it would be seen by Japanese children who would execute a mural in response. Then the murals would be displayed together in both Japan and The United States. As the project evolved, however, it became apparent to all of us that peace in the world is not simply a United States-Japan issue. Consequently, Professor Abe and Arts Japan brought France, Korea, Papua New Guinea, India, and Nepal into the project and I recruited teams in Kuwait, Canada, Australia, and other parts of the United States to participate. We continue to recruit sites as of this writing. In fact the project now has grown to include more than 200 murals from more than 60 countries. We've executed peace murals made jointly by Palestinian and Israeli kids, a mural executed in Afghanistan during the conflict and one made in the United States only weeks after 9/11.

As articulated in the Project Statement, we believe in spite of the fact that the children and sponsors of this project are of different cultural backgrounds, certain human drives and concerns are universal. One such desire is to live safely in peace, free from war or the threat of war. We also believe that since art is at root an instrument of culture, the children of different countries participating in this study will express these universal concerns differently, each according to their own locally specific needs and criteria. Finally, we believe that the power and potential of the project lies in this idea of unity of purpose and diversity of approach. By examining the multiple paths we all take to reach common goals it is our hope that understanding, tolerance, and respect one for another will grow. As expressed in the Project Statement, we hope this may be a path to world peace.

We determined that cooperative community mural making was a natural vehicle for this project since community murals are instrumentalist in nature, focusing on social or community related issues to be addressed and/or acted upon through aesthetic means (T. Anderson, 1985). Of particular significance for this project is the fact that community murals emphasize group identity and cooperative problem solving. For more information on this project you can go to a site maintained by our current international coordinator, Mr. Kaneda Takuya: [kidsguernica.com](http://kidsguernica.com).

Concurrently with the peace mural project, I was working on another project, with another good friend and a former student of mine, Melody Milbrandt: a book, eight years in the making, called *Art for Life*. In *Art for Life*, Melody and I take an unabashedly social reconstructionist stance and address social justice directly both in the content we chose, and in our suggested teaching and learning processes in every chapter. Some of the artists and movements we feature offer a means of ingress to expanding this look at social justice through art and design.

Coinciding with the community mural movement outside the mainstream, the art establishment was also being challenged from within. For example, by Bill Viola, whom we feature in our chapter on technology, and who deals with human issues of decay, overcrowding, industrial pollution, and human spirit, from individual and authentic social contexts.

Another artist we feature is Barbara Kruger who deals with issues such as authorship truth and power. Kruger borrows images, mostly from mass culture and advertising and turns them back upon them themselves to create socially reconstructive images the original originals never intended. In doing so she outs the manipulations of media culture and the shallow self-serving values of the media and the power structure they serve.

We have an entire chapter devoted to Krzysztof Wodiczko, a Polish-born designer and artist who uses his art to engender debate about social problems, hoping to make people think about solutions. He does immense slide projections on public monuments, for example photos of the homeless projected on top of the giant statues of George Washington and Jen Lafayette in New York City showing the contrast between lofty ideals and some people's reality. What we focus on in the chapter, and developed a curriculum unit around, is his invention of a homeless vehicle, of which he made a prototype for the Whitney Biennial in 2000. The prototype is a rocket shaped, wheeled compartment, large enough to crawl into to sleep, with room for stashing up to 500 bottles or aluminum cans. As well as providing shelter and protection, the vehicle was intended to give the user a measure of self-respect, legitimizing his or her status in the urban community. Thus far, no city has chosen to pursue production of this cart.

Another artist featured in a *chapter of Art for Life* is Fred Wilson, an artist who reconstructs our historical narrative with the driving the idea of social justice for African Americans guiding his work. He is famous not for what he makes but for his organizational genius. He's known to "mine" a given museum for artifacts and recontextualize into new configurations thus changing their narrative content. He chillingly portrays slavery, for example, and its callous and inhumane treatment of American slaves by setting together in a display case labeled *Metalwork 1793-1880*, a set of silver repousse silver goblets, silver urns and decanters,

and a pair of rusty slave shackles, pointing out that the history of some of us is not the history of us all, and that some of us have literally had a hard row to hoe.

We also address social reconstructionist artists such as Charnelle Holloway, and the International Mandala Peace Project in book, but we were only able to scratch the surface. Other wonderful sources of art and design for social justice are readily available on the Web. One source in particular, I want to bring to your attention: that is the Architecture for Humanity project, on the Web at <http://architectureforhumanity.org/projects.htm>. This site addresses tsunami reconstruction, in northern Sumatra a rural center of excellence in socially isolated and economically depressed Tanzania, the construction of global village shelters in Grenada in response to Hurricane Emily, and the Kids with Cameras project for the disenfranchised children of the Calcutta brothels, among many others.

Finally, in the context of education, I want to report on my current project, a compilation of activist research and development reports I am co-editing with one of my doctoral students, Kara Hallmark, by arts educators working through aesthetic means toward the ends of social justice. For example, Debra Sickler Voigt recruited children adults and the elderly to save middle Tennessee's wetlands. Steve Carpenter, Pan Taylor and Min Cho report on the empty bowls project, in which craftspeople make and sell bowls filled with soup, to make money for the hungry and homeless. And Lynn Bustle reports on an outreach project she and her students engaged develop a mosaic mural at a homeless shelter in southwestern Louisiana. We hope to have this book out within the year.

In conclusion, you can see, in all these examples, that the core is art in the service of human relationships. So returning to the notion of art for life, I think art and design education can serve an important role in helping all of us—teachers and students alike—to develop relationships through which we come to understand ourselves and others: relationships that constitute community, not only of human beings, one with another, but community in the bigger sense of understanding our place the web of Gaea, the mother planet that gives us life. This is arts education for life, art education that's not just nice but necessary, art education for the sake of survival. Is it too grand a claim to make, that the world can be saved through instruction in art and design? Probably so. But let me reverse the question and ask if not through art then through what?

Certainly our traditional ancestors understood the most important values, traditions, and beliefs were to be carried on the elegant wings of aesthetic form. Are we not equal to that same wisdom today? It is the arts that provide the holistic, metaphorical quality of understanding necessary for social wholeness and cultural health. Through the arts we develop the unifying sensibility, the direction, in short, the ability our many other gifts and tools with elegance and wisdom. Let me repeat then, if the world isn't to be saved through art then through what?

Thematically mining and creating art works, architecture and design, performances, and visual culture for aesthetic significance that ultimately frames, forms, and enhances meaning is the first step in art education for social justice. The goal of this is to understand ourselves and others better, the foundation of establishing relationships that allow more intelligent and meaningful action in the arena of life. Done well, I suspect this outcome of art for life can be an enhanced quality of life for all of us. That is, I believe, the road to social justice through the arts. Let's do it again next year, and the next, until we get it right.

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