A Heritage Center for the Mississippi Gulf Coast:
Linking the Community and Tourism Through Culture

by

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Dedication

Jes, this is for you.

Your support made this journey through graduate school possible. I am so very lucky to have you in my life. There seems like no other possibility in the world, besides you and I as a team. Thank you so very much for understanding what this journey means to me and pushing me through the bumps in the road along the way. The knowledge that you were supporting me during these past years meant more to me than I can say. You are a continual inspiration, and you remind me to question everything in order to discover a newness in design. Thank you and I love you.
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ABSTRACT

A powerful dimension of culture is revealed through art; and when presented by the artist to the observer discloses and connects human emotions. The artist's expression is recorded as an integral part of a collective heritage while continually inspiring the viewer towards a creative future.

For the Mississippi Coast, this is an imperative time to develop the link between community and tourism. Over forty public establishments are without buildings that enable them to come together. Prior to August 2005, the development pattern of the coast was northward, because the historic coast line was occupied. Now the entire beach front is vacant leaving opportunities for developers of casinos, condominiums, and resorts.

While the Gulf Coast benefits economically from tourism, the community needs to integrate this commerce into the historic heritage center of the region. Conserving the spirit of the Gulf Coast can be accomplished through the delicate balancing of tourism and cultural preservation. The diverse visitors tourism brings to the coast blend with the local population to induce a unified appreciation of the culture. The coast has a strong history of converging groups of people. This has
led to multifaceted merging of backgrounds which generate new customs and experiences. These convergences make the coast a unique location. They define the culture of the past and they also develop the makeup of the future.

The social integration of visitors and hosts will require a place for conversation, and the manifestation of heritage. By creating a public arts complex which houses spaces for visual, and performance arts; the community will have a place to showcase their culture while producing integral opportunities for visitors to experience the Gulf Coast's heritage. This center will also provide local artists with work and display spaces.

Determining the specific spaces the community needs will require investigation of existing public use buildings. Historic research, inquires and observations help place the project within the current influences of time, place, and people. The establishment of this arts center provides local residents and tourists with a place to assemble while reiterating the social, ethnic, and cultural community that is the Gulf Coast.
Chapter 1
Initial Project Research and Intent

Introduction

“Architecture is all three things at once; site, event and sign. It is the structure in the historical sense as well as the way the structure is deployed.” - Aldo Rossi

Culture is able to transmit the special ways of a people by the unique customs and events of a region. Through the layering of past influences with the current development demands, places of heritage are able to cling to the essence of what provides their individualism (Harris 105). This “sense of place” that comes from each location's individual situation is a vital component to the longevity, strength, and community identity while also appealing to visitors as a distinct setting. A location's identity is not just based on the constructed environment and historical spaces but the active culture of its people and their lives (Nasser 1-2).

The prospect of universal commercialization is leading to common changes within a variety of regionalized cultures (Nasser 1). While many locations are able to balance the influence of global commerce with their existing fabric, the total demolition of the Mississippi Coast's beach front leaves this community without the historical area that provides a reference point of the region's heritage. In addition to the fact that many of buildings used as indicators
of the coast's history are gone, the legalization of building casino resorts on land within 500 feet of the beach line adds a threat of rapid building construction. These developments throughout the area elevate the opportunity for globalizing forces to transform the area into a commodity for tourist consumption without regard for the local identity. With the prospect of "the strip" of casinos, real estate investors have a history of acquiring and developing the large vacant sites of the beach front without any sensitivity to local heritage. The Mississippi Heritage Trust sites that "The chaotic economic state of the Coast since Katrina has also brought stress, and those owners who have repaired their historic houses now face the possibility of living next-door to a high-rise condominium development." (Mississippi Heritage Trust).

The Needs of the Mississippi Coast

The main road of the Mississippi coast, Beach Boulevard (US-90) along with the cross-country railroad tracks run parallel to the gulf's shore line, they define the datum along which the commercial and historical elements of the community were organized (Mississippi Gulf Coast Local Area Information). Every structure along this route was either severely damaged or destroyed on August 29, 2005. The loss of schools, colleges, galleries, and religious establishments was drastically high. This means that the community not only faces rebuilding their homes, but they have also lost the venues that provided a source of entertainment, recreation, and escape. The beach and boardwalks
were also affected by Katrina, much of the sand washed onto the mainland, which in turn shrunk the beach. Many of the piers, docks, and visitor stops are completely damaged, and now the mutilated beach is a constant reminder of the tremendous loss a hurricane can bring (Mississippi Heritage Trust).

Suzi Parker states “More people are coming to Mississippi - to see a state steeped in Spanish moss and storytelling, to visit one of the casinos, or to play golf along the Gulf - and many residents say that's a mark that Mississippi is State No. 50 no longer.” (1). Since 1992 the casinos of the Mississippi Coast have provided a great amount of employment opportunities, state funding, and scholarships. Although gambling is the major attraction for visitors to the area, sea sports, beach activities, golf courses, spas, and art galleries are also a considerable draw for visitors. Tourism is always welcomed in the area, partly because it allows the locals to showcase their hospitality (Salomon 1). The union of visitor and guest is a powerful force of social interaction that is threatened due to the current situation on the Gulf Coast. With so many of the local businesses and beach front amenities closed or rebuilding, the visitors that do come to the coast mainly stay within the confines of the casino resort properties. A major threat is posed to understanding the regional heritage without the interaction between host and visitor (Brush 1).

Unique Characteristics To Unify

The word culture is defined by Sir Edward Burnett Tylor as “... that
complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society” (Harris 104). In order to provide an aspect of culture that is inviting to both the locals and the guests of an area this project will use the artistic dimension as a unifying and common interest. Art holds a communicative quality, and the artist is able to relay information through the work without literally spelling out the message. This connection through art allows for human emotions and thoughts to be recorded as an integral component of the collective heritage while invoking new deductions in the observer (Harris 412).

Culture is the art, thought, politics, and trends of a people during a specific time, but the heritage is more than that; it is the interaction and social knowledge of that time, place, and populace. The culture of people can be represented in paintings, food, or buildings, but the heritage depends on human interaction to define the specific methods, or manners in which the end product is developed. A homely example of this comes from the biscuit which is definitely part of Southern culinary culture. Understanding the heritage of biscuits would require more involvement in its mixing, baking, or consumption. The heritage could involve the oral recipe that was passed down from mother to child over the generations, or the fact that one must use cast iron for baking. These nuances of the heritage are taken for granted by main locals, because it is the way it has always been. They don't see these methods as anything other than the way it should be. Then comes the visitor, who wonders why on earth someone would
use an old iron pan to bake with, not knowing they have just questioned a source of family pride, as cast iron skillets are family heirlooms past down from generation to generation. Without the guest vocalizing that question, the Southerner would never know they had a unique way of preparing biscuits. This is part of why the visitor and guest interaction is so important. Without an observing eye, the local would not know the everyday situations that distinctly characterize their heritage (Metcalf 164).

One of the constants of social interaction is its ever changing nature and frequent juxtapositional quality (Pearce 5). There is a possibility of excitement in forming relationships and meeting new people, but humans also find comfort in participating in known activities and visiting recognizable places especially in times of grief and loss (Guntzelman 18). The need for interaction and new conditions are vital to the developmental growth of communities (Pearce 5-6).

The integration of people has played an important role in the diversity of the Gulf Coast over the past 300 years. Louis XIV’s orders to Pierre LeMoyne Sieur D'Iberville in 1697 to locate the mouth of the Mississippi River led to the friendly meeting of the Biloxi Indians and the French explorers (McDowell 13-14). The melding of people during the Civil War era also contributed to the diverse influx to the region. Slavery and its abolition did lead to new ways of life, and definitely aided in forming a new southern culture. Now the current situation on the Coast leads to another moment in history where change has proven to be a constant challenge to everyone. From all the volunteers who came to help clean,
rebuild, and reestablish after Katrina, to the tourists who came just to get away, to off-shore work crews and Air Force soldiers; this influx of people helps establish the identity of the Gulf Coast. These guests provide a reason for Mississippians to say “Yes, this is how we do things here, and let me tell you why”. While fueling the local sense of pride, the guests will notice the special ways in which this area operates and come to hold its heritage as unique (Price).

The Gulf Coast's opportunity for integrated relations comes not only in the unique culture, the redevelopment efforts, and the intrinsic hospitality, but also in the form of expression. With the trials all local residents have faced over the past 3 years, comes a need to share stories, journeys, and experiences that have shaped their lives (Rosensteel). The void of assembly buildings provides an exciting chance to develop a place for the residents of the Coast to gather, express, and escape. With the destruction along the beach front, there is also a need to reclaim some of the beach property in order for a public space to reestablish a connection to the ocean front. By reinterpreting the cultural, formal, and spatial qualities that were present along the Beach Boulevard, a new development can establish a destination for both residents and visitors at the beach front. The program of an arts center also respects the view, which many locals share, they will move back to Mississippi's coast but they do not want to live directly on the water. Having a public use building on the coast line still offers everyone access to the beach, and since this site will contain a civic purpose, it will not need to be used as a shelter when the weather is dangerous.
The Purpose of an Arts Center

An arts center that houses a playhouse, a gallery, auditorium, studios, cafe, and recreational spaces would be able to provide the Gulf Coast with a space for social interaction. The coast has over 20 small galleries of local artists, many of which were damaged by Katrina. The gallery would be available to all the local artists to showcase some of their works. This could serve as a focal hub for visitors, so they would be able to view an art sampling from all the nearby artists. Any artists that are currently without work spaces will be able to use the work studios on the site. The playhouses could be used by the troupes of the two theaters that are no longer able to be occupied as well as school, youth, and other social groups from the region. In addition to the classical role of the cafe as a bistro carrying local fare, there could be cooking classes to teach others about southern food. The recreation space throughout the site is important not only to claim land as a place of relaxation, but the relationship with the scale of openness from the beach across US-90. All of these programmed function specific spaces will be woven into gathering spaces that serve to invoke social interaction. “In Mississippi you ease into a topic....to southerners, there's crassness in getting right to the point.... this is the nature of manners in the Deep South” (Karam-Read 19). Meetings, either formal or informal are typically social, three or four topics are covered prior to the main point of the meeting, if there was a preconceived point to the conversation at all. The charm of southern interaction is to be reflected in the gathering spaces of the art center by
developing spaces for enjoyable connections. In *Architecture and Tourism* it is stated “...think of tourism as an art of performance and a cultural practice of movement” this theme fits well within the realm of southern hospitality (Lasansky 53).

In determining an exact location for the site of this art complex there is a challenge due to the lack of existing context. Many of the casinos are now open, although their former grandeur is diminished, which means that tourists are already returning to the coast. The accessibility of the proposed site is an extremely important factor since visitors will need to find it easily, and visibility along the main route will help create interest in the site. Katrina did pull up some of the main roads, but the local municipalities have worked hard to repair the infrastructure of the region. Mapping the existing traffic, land uses, populations, and amenities can provide structured data that will aid in determining locations that are logical for accessibility by the community and guests. By using the routes, proximities, and the relation of the site to the beach front a plot of land will be chosen to represent a common point for both residents and tourists to interact (Lasansky 208).

The Community and Tourists Thoughts on an Arts Center

The vital aspect of an arts center is the ability to present heritage in a respectful and entertaining manner to both the local community and tourists. Interviewing the residents will help develop an understanding of traditions and
current emotions toward the coast at this time. Once the community's views
towards an arts center are established, the views of the tourist industry will also
be analyzed to determine the combined views of both groups. Phillip Pearce et al
in *Tourism Community Relationships* give three key criteria for understanding the
complex interaction of the community and tourism that is developed through
social framework. The first criteria is the level of common beliefs among the
residents toward tourism, second is the strength of the link between tourism and
the local region, and finally that there is a “core of images serving to portray the
social representations” (Pearce 62). The variables of these three factors can be
gathered through observations, written documentation, inquiries, and field
studies. By interpreting these results, a more developed understanding of the
dynamic interaction of tourism and community can be comprehended, and thus
opportunities for the art center to further develop a situation for interactivity and
conversations could be revealed.

The field inquires will take the form of short surveys to gain knowledge of
both the locals and the visitors views towards social and cultural patterns within
the Mississippi Gulf Coast (Grout 218-219). Both locals and visitors to the
casinos will be asked to complete the questionnaire, these two categories will be
subdivided into the two additional categories. The locals will be surveyed at the
Edgewater Mall which is located along US-90 and part of the immediate context
of this thesis, but also residents that live north toward I-10 will be asked to
complete the survey. By comparing the responses from both groups of people
I hope to determine if the coast sees itself as a unified community or if there is a difference between the people residing directly on the coast as opposed to the people living 2-5 miles in-land. The casinos will be divided into two groups also so both the corporate owned resort casinos and the small locally owned ones are represented. These surveys will focus on the how people use the beaches, the area covered in their weekly routines, the overall community interaction and sense of place. Since Katrina the economy, the built environment and the social influences have changed greatly by conducting simple surveys and just conversing with people along the coast a greater understanding of this place at the current time can be established.

In addition to the surveys at least two days will be spent visiting two local galleries that have reopened. The two museums were chosen because they both have display local artist's work and have outdoor courtyards and plazas. By visiting the Walter Anderson Museum and the Ohr- Okeefe Museum observations can be documented in regards to the number of visitors, how the people use the spaces, and the amount of time they spend at the museums (Groat 223-225). Both of these places house the works of Mississippi artists of the past. I also want to ask visitors to these museums about their knowledge of current local artists and their views towards other forms of art like performance, culinary and oratory.

Along with the noted observations of the museums I plan to talk to some of the patrons and ask more about their thoughts towards to role of arts, and the
future of the Gulf Coast. The frequency of visits to galleries, the purpose of art since Katrina, and the voids in the community due to lack of gathering spaces are all questions that will help inform the needs to be addressed through the program of this thesis (De Jong 466).

Conclusion

In 1999 Stephen Richer was given the task of bringing tourists back to a tourist area. "'We had to bring everyone together,' he says. 'Everyone was ready to work as a group to position the area as a destination.' The idea was to encourage non-gamblers to visit and convince gamblers to stay a little longer to enjoy some of the other attractions." (Salomon 1). From 1992-2005 the Mississippi Gulf Coast learned what the benefits of tourism are, and now that many of the roads are reconstructed and infrastructure is starting to be repaired it is time to think of the future. What will the Gulf Coast be years from now? Surely the history, pace of life, arts, and hospitality of the deep south will still be evident, and providing a node within the community can help invoke that preservation. An arts center can be communicative a catalyst between the Mississippi Coast and all who will visit, and re-establish the connection between this point of American heritage and the world.
Chapter 2

Site Analysis:

Sadler Beach Drive and Beach Boulevard Biloxi, Mississippi Gulf Coast

Determination

The site selection should be influenced by the locations proximity to existing heritage and activity centers. Another site consideration is safety, not only should the location be considered safe during the day time but patrons should also feel comfortable when leaving the facility after a night show (Brown 134).

Figure 1. Site Maps from large scale to small scale, satellite images from Google Earth.
History

The selected site was the location of the President Casino previous to Katrina. The dock area housed the casino barge within the interior area of the pier. The hotel and hospitality functions were located just north of Beach Boulevard. The old golf course can be seen to the north of the CSX tracks.

Figure 2. Site condition as of May, 2008.

Context

The site selected is located directly east of the Beauvoir which was Jefferson Davis’s presidential library. The Mississippi Convention Center is directly to the west of the Beauvoir, and then the Edgewater shopping mall is
even to the west of the convention facilities. This sequence of sites is of value since the both residents and visitors to the Coast will travel along Beach Boulevard to frequent these places.

Figure 3. Site plan showing context features in surrounding area.

Visibility

Visibility is an important character of the site, since many of the anticipated visitors will be tourists, they need to see the heritage center and find it easily (Brown 134). People being able to see the various functions of the site from the main road and are able to develop an understanding of the site. The views from the site are also important, people should enjoy the progression into the site, and once situated within the area be presented with views and connection to other
areas of the community (Brown 135).

Figure 4. View of US-90 and proposed site.

Access

Along the southern edge of the site US-90, Beach Boulevard is the main road from east to west transport in Biloxi. This road is not used on the daily route of the public bus system. The main road used in the daily bus routes for east to west transport is Pass Road which is located approximately 3500' north of the coast line. On the weekends there is a bus route, the Beachcomber, which runs along US-90. This Saturday and Sunday service is advantageous to site viability
as the proposed site is on both sides of this main route. The tourists to the area that use the bus to visit various casinos, the shopping mall, the convention center, the Beauvoir, or the beach would pass through the heritage and arts center's building site.

Figure 5, Permanent and Weekend Bus Routes, from www.biloxi.ms.us.

The site is bordered on the north by the CSX railroad tracks. The Governor's Commission report states that in the future the city plans to redirect the freight trains that currently use this track to the tracks that are north towards I-10. By redirecting the freight trains the southern CSX track that runs
approximately 1800' north of Beach Boulevard would be available for a public tram service. This service is in the future planning report of the Gulf Coast and would link the 11 communities of the Mississippi Coast.

The main road and method of transit across the Gulf Coast is US-90, currently there is only one road that runs perpendicular to this route, Sadler Beach Dr. This project will involve increasing the access points of vehicles from the Beach Boulevard. These points of access will need to be sized in order to accommodate the high points of traffic that will occur prior to and after performances.

Figure 6. Road Classifications, from www.biloxi.ms.gov.

Along the southern side of Beach Boulevard is a wooden boardwalk that extends
along the entire Mississippi beach front. Currently this walkway is segmented and broken, as future restoration progresses the continuity of the boardwalk will once again be established. The unshaded nature of this boardwalk at times makes a walk along this pedestrian route daunting. By proposing a covered section of the boardwalk, as it meets the abandoned pier and boating area of the site, a node is created. This node would give walkers a destination and resting point, while also bringing them into the contact with the heritage and arts center.

Figure 7. View from southern curb of US-90, sand covered and damaged boardwalk and attached to beach.
Environment

The climate is an integral part in defining the nature of the Mississippi Coast. The length of day light in Biloxi range from a max of 14 ½ hour during the summer to 11 ½ hour days during the winter. The summer sunrise can occur as early as 6:15 am and in the winter it is typically half an hour later at 6:am. Summer sun sets, 8:00 pm are much later than the 5:30 pm sunsets that occur during the winter (Gaisma). The wind speeds of the Coast typically decrease during the summer months, although the clearness of the skies stays approximately the same throughout the year.

Most of the Mississippi Coast is lined with hundreds of year old oak trees. Due to the past major hurricanes, (Camile in 1969 being the worst, and one of the three category 5 storms to hit the USA) destroying a built fabric of the Coast, these trees represent the history of the area since they have endured over so many years.

Figure 11. View of trees, the only remaining vertical elements on the site.
Figure 12. Diagrams of pre-existing site conditions.
Figure 13. Diagram of existing context.

Figure 14. Biloxi with one mile radius increments from site, map from biloxi.ms.us
Zoning

The proposed site is the area bordered by the CSX railroad tracks to the north, Brady Drive to the west, Beach Boulevard to the South, and eastern edge of the Southern Memorial Park. This area includes the following areas of zoning; B-3, WF, and SB. The B-3 category is defined as hospitality business district, the purpose of this zoning is that the land use is oriented toward tourist accommodation and supported commercial uses. Water Front areas (WF) are defined as such in order to protect the waterfront and also to promote visibility and interaction with marine activities. The final area is SB which represents Sand Beaches and these areas are not allowed to have buildings constructed on them due to the high possibility of flooding (Biloxi Land Ordinance Section 23, www.bioxi.ms.us).

Figure 15. Map of zoning areas of proposed site, from GIS site www.bioxi.ms.us
Topography

Since the flooding and devastation of Hurricane Katrina, the city of Biloxi has mapped the storm surge and then added advised elevations. The following maps from the City of Biloxi web site show these elevations.

Figure 16. Provisional topography elevations, from GIS map of www.biloxi.ms.us

Figure 17. Storm Surge of August 29, 2005, from GIS map of www.biloxi.ms.us
Figure 18. Site Map and Site Sections.
Chapter 3
Program Development

Building Type

The Heritage and Arts Complex will include main various building types. The main pieces to the center will be a theatre, an art gallery, an art studio space, a kitchen and lesson space along with a cafe, and then recreation areas. The recreation areas will be the grounds around the arts complex, and they will include both structured areas for specific activities like street hockey, skateboarding, and playground jungle gyms, and also open areas for picnics and just playing in green space. The recreation area will also reach across the main road of US-90 to the old boat dock that is currently abandoned, to develop an area that lets people reconnect with the beach front.

Building Codes, Zoning, and ADA

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina the Coast replaced the old Southern Building Code with the International Building Code (IBC). In addition to using the IBC the Mississippi Coast line is now considered part of Exposure C in terms of the wind speeds this area is likely to experience. Exposure C is defined as any land within 1500 feet of the beach shore line. The wind speeds that a building must withstand are defined in a map from the ASCE (referenced in Chapter 16 of
the IBC) and are based on winds measured at 33 feet above ground, and on intervals of 3 second gusts. The wind speeds for the Mississippi Coast are 140 and 150 mph, meaning that the components and cladding of the building must be able to withstand not just winds at those speeds but also the positive and negative forced pressures caused by those winds. The ADA handicap codes will also apply to the proposed structure.

The zoning and FEMA flood mapping were re-evaluated after Katrina. The entire Gulf Coast held a design and code charette in October 2005. From that charrette came the development of the Smart Code and the Governors Commission.

Figure 20. Zoning Map of Site. From City of Biloxi. GIS Mapping.

http://www.biloxi.ms.us/

Zoning Areas defined as per Sec. 23-9-1. Base districts established of the City of Biloxi Land Development Ordinances. (http://www.biloxi.ms.us/).

B-3 = Hospitality Business
S-B = Sand Beach
RS-10 = Multi-Family, Low Residential
RM-25 = Multi-Family, High Residential
WF = Water Front

Figure 21. Flood Map of Site. *From City of Biloxi. GIS Mapping.*
http://www.biloxi.ms.us/

SIGNIFICANCES TO AREA

The beach front of the Mississippi Coast is an important location.
Originally the beach front is the place where the settlers met the native Indians. This meeting of two differing types of people was a beginning of the melding that still happens on the coast today. The historical houses and buildings along this area are also what give meaning to this location. The Presidential library of Andrew Jackson, the winter home of Louis Sullivan (designed by Frank Lloyd Wright), and the many other 100 year old homes and cottages that are part of the fabric of this area. This places link people, maybe a mother remembers visiting the Beauvoir with her daughter and is now taking her granddaughter, or maybe a boy remembers seeing that large old house from the beach as his dad taught him how to fly a kite. Even if the official history of a place is not learned there can still be meaning in the sight and space of buildings. Most of these historical places were located along the datum of US-90. Now the casinos are able to build within 500 of the shore as prior to Katrina they were only permitted to be built as boats or barges. While many locations are able to balance the influence of global commerce with their existing fabric, the total demolition of the Mississippi Coast's beach front leaves this community without the historical area that provides a reference point of the region's heritage. In addition to the fact that many of buildings used as indicators of the coast's history are gone, the legalization of building casino resorts on land within 500 feet of the beach line adds a threat of rapid building construction. These developments throughout the area elevate the opportunity for globalizing forces to transform the area into a commodity for tourist consumption without regard for the local identity. With the prospect of “the
strip” of casinos, real estate investors have a history of acquiring and developing the large vacant sites of the beach front without any sensitivity to local heritage. The Mississippi Heritage Trust sites that “The chaotic economic state of the Coast since Katrina has also brought stress, and those owners who have repaired their historic houses now face the possibility of living next-door to a high-rise condominium development.” (Mississippi Heritage Trust).

Figure 22. View of Front Porch of Local House.

Who Is This Place for and What Are Their Needs?

The purpose of this project is to develop a center that is for both the
residents and the tourists of the Mississippi Gulf Coast. The residents that use this facility are people who have lived on the Coast for years, and through that time have seen growth, loss, and modernization. Many of the people that live on the Coast have lived there for generations because their entire family is from the region. They remember Hurricane Camile in the 1960's and the devastation of that storm. They remember the 1970s and 1980s when the seafood and oil industry were the main economic drivers of the area. Residents from the 1990s remember the discussions and the land acquisitions that led to the development of the large gaming industry. Also there are residents that have moved to the Gulf Coast since the devastation of Katrina, they are helping to rebuild a community that they might not have known in its former state. All these people are battling with the rebuilding efforts, the voids that were help within the community. The fact that many everyday buildings, places of gathering, and services are gone or are not running at full strength complicate the lifestyle and ease of living.

The tourists of the Mississippi Gulf Coast are also seen as people that will use the proposed arts and heritage center. Although many people come to the Coast for the variety of gambling casinos, they do want other activities and events to keep them entertained while they are on holiday. The center would be a place to see shows, take part in cooking and pottery classes, or maybe just admire some local art. Many of the people that come to the casinos now are couples that have grow children, they are able to leave their children at home and just use the casinos as a weekend getaway. Prior to Katrina the casinos has
events and activities for the children. This meant that the adults had a choice, if they wanted to enter the casinos they could leave the children in a supervised area. The children's activities ranged from water parks, lazy rivers, movie theaters, fair rides, and arcades, all of these places were located within or next to major casinos so the parents were still close at hand. Now many of the casinos that have rebuilt did not include the children's areas in their primary rebuilding efforts.

Not only do the residents need a park as a recreation place, they need a location where they can start to regain a sense of the normal life. A place that is grounded in the areas, and setting that they know, while not having to worry about rebuilding their home, church, or school. They also need a place that shows the region that they are so proud of, the culture and heritage, of the South. They are people that find a great amount of identity in the passing along of traditions and ways of life. During my process of interviewing people on the Gulf Coast, I talked to a security guard at the Hard Rock Casino, Julie, and her main concern was the teenagers of the area. Many of the weekend hangouts for the young people were places that no longer exist. While talking to Julie I started to realize the amount of time that this proposed center could be active.
What Happens at the Heritage Center and When Does it Happen?

The goal of this center is to serve and unite people. Through serving the people of the area situations of gathering and uniting will occur. The main functional areas of the heritage center will be the theatre, the gallery, the art studio, the kitchen, and the recreational areas. The theatre area could be used by many various groups of people, from local schools, church groups, children's camps or clubs, and touring groups as an assembly space. In addition to being a theatre for schools, and other local groups to use for acting, singing, instrumental, dancing or recital productions. This theatre would be the main hub
of the arts complex and serve as a unit of continued use. During the week days the schools could use the theater for classes, assemblies, and performances. During the evening the theater could have acting and dance classes during the week nights and performances on the weekends. From a children's puppet show on Saturday afternoon, to an improvisational skit by the local high school on Saturday night, to Sunday school assembly on Sunday morning, and a dance recitals on Sunday evening the theatre would have a daily cycle of 8 am until about 9 pm.

The art studio and gallery spaces will be used throughout the day and evening hours. Many of the local artists lost studio spaces after Katrina, and some of the artists could only afford to rebuild their homes and not their studio spaces. When I talked with Makayla Brown, the Educational Director at the Walter Anderson Museum in Ocean Springs, she said that many of the local artists that paint and draw are doing well because they do not need a large amount of room for their art. The artists that are having a hard time are the potters. They need a large space to work with the clay, roll it out, space of the wheels and desks, and along glazing and kiln space. Pottery is also very messy process so many people can not do this type of art in their home. The idea of a pottery porch as the main outdoor space that links the various buildings of the arts complex is not only helpful to the local pottery artists, but also for children of the area to be able to learn about the heritage of the Gulf Coast. There are very large potting populations in Ocean Springs and in Bay St. Louis, along with the
Biloxi Indians pottery is an activity that has been constant in the routine of Mississippi's residents over hundreds of years. Even now, Mrs. Brown told me that pottery is the most popular art form in Mississippi. The popularity of pottery is in part of history, but I think that this is linking to the fact that Mississippi is full of clay. Any one can dig and find all medium they need. The clay is free and has always been present in the life of Mississippi. I emailed five potters in Mississippi to ask about the popularity of pottery and the history of it in the state. Only three responded, two said that they did not really know anything about the history or about pottery, and the final responses was summed up to basically we have always worked with pottery and that's the way it should be. From those responses plus my own perceptions of the area, I believe that the role of pottery is incredibly important. It continues the historical role, it provides a connection to the land, and it is a past time that allows relation and release at the same time. While main people in Mississippi know that pottery is important not many know why, this makes me believe that gut led intuition is why people enjoy making pottery. Everyone is entitled to this experience, not just the official artists, but children with their mums and dads, grandmas and granddads, tourists with their friends, and teenagers with their classmates.
Table 1. Possible Activities Throughout Daily Schedule.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time of Day</th>
<th>young children 0-4 year</th>
<th>children 5-12 year</th>
<th>teenagers 13-18 year</th>
<th>young adults 19-25 year</th>
<th>adults 26+ year</th>
<th>retirees 55+ year</th>
<th>families weekends</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:00-10:00 am</td>
<td>recreation</td>
<td>school trip</td>
<td>recreation</td>
<td>music classes</td>
<td>art studios</td>
<td>cooking lessons</td>
<td>recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00 – 12:00 pm</td>
<td>puppets shows</td>
<td>pottery lessons</td>
<td>art tours</td>
<td>cooking lessons</td>
<td>gallery tour</td>
<td>pottery lessons</td>
<td>theatre show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 – 2:00 pm</td>
<td>music time</td>
<td>art class</td>
<td>dance lessons</td>
<td>gallery tour</td>
<td>recreation</td>
<td>pottery lessons</td>
<td>picnics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00 – 4:00 pm</td>
<td>art class</td>
<td>puppets shows</td>
<td>gallery tour</td>
<td>pottery lessons</td>
<td>cooking lessons</td>
<td>mentor time</td>
<td>art classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:00 – 6:00 pm</td>
<td>pottery lessons</td>
<td>recreation</td>
<td>skateboarding</td>
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<td>pottery lessons</td>
<td>book readings</td>
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<td>recitals</td>
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<td>school play</td>
<td>theatre show</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Goals and Objectives

The primary goal of the arts complex is to bring people together. By uniting
the residents of the Gulf Coast with each other the community's social fabric is increased.

One of the constants of social interaction is its ever changing nature and frequent juxtapositional quality (Pearce 5). There is a possibility of excitement in forming relationships and meeting new people, but humans also find comfort in participating in known activities and visiting recognizable places especially in times of grief and loss (Guntzelman 18). The need for interaction and new conditions are vital to the developmental growth of communities (Pearce 5-6).

The integration of people has played an important role in the diversity of the Gulf Coast over the past 300 years. Louis XIV's orders to Pierre LeMoyne Sieur D'Iberville in 1697 to locate the mouth of the Mississippi River led to the friendly meeting of the Biloxi Indians and the French explorers (McDowell 13-14). The melding of people during the Civil War era also contributed to the diverse influx to the region. Slavery and its abolition did lead to new ways of life, and definitely aided in forming a new southern culture. Now the current situation on the Coast leads to another moment in history where change has proven to be a constant challenge to everyone. From all the volunteers who came to help clean, rebuild, and reestablish after Katrina, to the tourists who came just to get away, to off-shore work crews and Air Force soldiers; this influx of people helps establish the identity of the Gulf Coast. These guests provide a reason for Mississippian to say “Yes, this is how we do things here, and let me tell you why”. While fueling the local sense of pride, the guests will notice the special
ways in which this area operates and come to hold its heritage as unique (Price).

The Gulf Coast's opportunity for integrated relations comes not only in the unique culture, the redevelopment efforts, and the intrinsic hospitality, but also in the form of expression. With the trials all local residents have faced over the past 3 years, comes a need to share stories, journeys, and experiences that have shaped their lives (Rosensteel 1). The void of assembly buildings provides an exciting chance to develop a place for the residents of the Coast to gather, express, and escape. With the destruction along the beach front, there is also a need to reclaim some of the beach property in order for a public space to reestablish a connection to the ocean front. By reinterpreting the cultural, formal, and spatial qualities that were present along the Beach Boulevard, a new development can establish a destination for both residents and visitors at the beach front. The program of an arts center also respects the view, which many locals share, they will move back to Mississippi's coast but they do not want to live directly on the water. Having a public use building on the coast line still offers everyone access to the beach, and since this site will contain a civic purpose, it will not need to be used as a shelter when the weather is dangerous.

Strategies for the Goals

The main goal of bringing people together will be addressed through the functions of the building. By building assembly structures that by their nature are for large groups of people to come together the goals is starting to have a
Bringing people together in large groups does not mean that there will be interaction and communication. One could go to the movie cinema today and not interact with a single person, even the ticket could be bought electronically. The goal of interaction will further addressed through the types of spaces within and around the art center's buildings. Places of rest, seating, views and action will help involve people with each other and start the process of communication. The charm of southern interaction is to be reflected in the gathering spaces of the art center by developing spaces for enjoyable connections. In Architecture and Tourism it is stated “...think of tourism as an art of performance and a cultural practice of movement” this theme fits well within the realm of southern hospitality (Lasansky 53).

Figure 25. Diagram Showing Goals of Unifying Tourists and Residents
### Areas, Spaces, and Relations

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<td>Performance Stage</td>
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350 Seat theatre = 2625 sq. ft. of seating and auditorium space. Each person's space requires 24" in width and 38" in depth. Each aisle is 42" wide and 38" in depth. The amount of seats per row is directly proportional to the efficiency of the theatre. 10 – 12 seats per row is in the middle of the spectrum, while 14 is highly efficient and 8 is not efficient at all.

\[
\text{Sq. Ft. per Person} = \frac{\text{WD}}{144} + \frac{\text{AD}}{144} \times \frac{1}{10}
\]

\[
= \frac{24(38)}{144} + \frac{42(38)}{144} \times \frac{1}{10}
\]

\[
= 7'6''
\]
Required Space for 350 seats = 7.5 * 350 = 2625 sq. ft.

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<tr>
<td>Food Preparation</td>
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<td>Food Cooking</td>
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<td>Counter</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dry Storage</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooler</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dish Washing</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receiving</td>
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<tr>
<td>Office</td>
<td>50</td>
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<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Square Feet</td>
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<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Front Bathrooms</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back Bathrooms</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooking Classroom</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storage</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mechanical</td>
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<tr>
<td>Electrical</td>
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<td>Circulation @32%</td>
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**Recreation**

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<tr>
<td>Seating</td>
<td>3000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street Hockey &amp; Basketball</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skate Ramps</td>
<td>17000</td>
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<td>Lawn Bowling</td>
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**Parking**

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<td>Public at Recreation (50)</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<table>
<thead>
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<tr>
<td>Custodial Receiving and Storage</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service Closets (3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flammable Storage</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment Storage</td>
<td>200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Custodial Office</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>615</strong></td>
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AC Total 21,940
Figure 26. Suggestions for Improving Social Stimulation in an Area

Figure 27. Space Relation Diagram for the Theatre
Figure 28. Space Relation Diagram for the Gallery

Figure 29. Space Relation Diagram for the Studio
Figure 30. Space Relation Diagram for the Cafe

Chapter 4

Case Study 1: Interviewing Local Residents and Tourists of the Mississippi Gulf Coast

Abstract

The vital aspect of an arts center is the ability to present heritage in a respectful and entertaining manner to both the local community and tourists. Interviewing the residents will help develop an understanding of traditions and current emotions toward the coast at this time. Once the community's views towards an arts center are established, the views of the tourist industry will also be analyzed to determine the combined views of both groups. Phillip Pearce et al in *Tourism Community Relationships* give three key criteria for understanding the complex interaction of the community and tourism that is developed through social framework. The first criteria is the level of common beliefs among the residents toward tourism, second is the strength of the link between tourism and the local region, and finally that there is a “core of images serving to portray the social representations”. (Pearce 62) The variables of these three factors can be gathered through observations, written documentation, inquiries, and field studies. By interpreting these results, a more developed understanding of the dynamic interaction of tourism and community can be comprehended, and thus opportunities for the art center to further develop a situation for interactional
conversations could be revealed.

Hypothesis

Although the Mississippi Gulf Coast has focused a huge amount of energy on rebuilding, the time line of these efforts are much greater than the two and a half years that have passed since Hurricane Katrina. The main focus of the local government and the residents have been re-establishing the infrastructure of the community, rebuilding and rehousing family members, neighbors, and friends. These primary efforts are still in full swing and will take many more months even years to complete. While housing and infrastructure are undeniably important, the community; health, recreation, pride, and economic status must be addressed at the same time. Waiting until the primary goals are accomplished to start working on these other issues would create a void in the community fabric of the Gulf Coast.

This case study was conducted to determine the validity of my own beliefs about the people, culture, and situation of the Gulf Coast community at this time. I believe that the residents of Biloxi and Gulfport are extremely proud and honored to call Mississippi their home. Given the chance to share their culture, heritage, and ways of life with visitors would excite the residents of the Coast, and it would also help recreate the image of what the area was prior to August 29, 2005. Via this recollection of the past images of the Coast, a new hope toward the possibilities of the future can begin to develop.
The organizational structure of the Coast is simply explained that the oldest historical building were localed along the beach front of US-90 (Beach Boulevard) and that the local residential development occurs inland along the northward bound US-49. The hub of this residential expansion occurs at the intersection of US-49 and I-10 about 4 miles due north of downtown Gulfport. Since Katrina demolished the entire coast line I believe that many of the locals focus their daily activities around this intersection and that visits to the beach are few.

These theories were the basis for two surveys that captured the attitudes of both the local residents and the tourists. The surveys were kept short, six questions for the residents and seven questions for the visitors, in order to not over whelm the respondents. The field inquires helped to gain knowledge of both the locals and the visitors views towards social and cultural patterns within the Mississippi Gulf Coast (Grout 218-219). Both locals and visitors to the casinos will be asked to complete the questionnaire, these two categories will be subdivided into the two additional categories. The locals will be surveyed at the Edgewater Mall which is located along US-90 and part of the immediate context of this thesis, but also residents that live north toward I-10 will be asked to complete the survey. By comparing the responses from both groups of people I hope to determine if the coast sees itself as a unified community or if there is a difference between the people residing directly on the coast as opposed to the people living 2-5 miles in-land. These surveys will focus on the how frequently
people use the beaches, the area covered in their weekly routines, the overall community interaction and sense of place. Since Katrina the economy, the built environment and the social influences have changed greatly, by conducting simple surveys and just conversing with people along the coast a greater understanding of this place at the current time can be established.

Figure 31. Image from US-90 of the Edgewater Mall

Figure 32. Image of the Hard Rock and Beau Rivage Casinos
Methods of Investigation and Analysis

The surveys of locals and visitors helped to gain an understanding of the time, place, and situations that people are dealing with on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. The survey given to the residents consisted of six questions, each of which will be described here with the anticipated hypothesis, results, and the interpreted conclusion.

The Gulf Coast Benefits From the Tourism Industry

The first question of the residents survey was “The Gulf Coast benefits from the tourism industry.” This question was asked in order to determine if the residents view the influx of tourists as vital income for employment and economic reasons, or if residents would prefer that the Coast is given the chance to fully recover before tourists start visiting again. Prior to conducting the survey I thought that the residents would be appreciative of the tourism industry. In 2004 $1.9 billion was spent in by tourists on the Coast, this accounted for as vast majority of the employment opportunities within the area. The results of the 30 residents surveyed is that the majority of them strongly believe that the Coast benefits from the tourism industry while the remainder of them also believe that tourism is good for the Coast.
A Cultural and Community Center With a Park Would Help the Locals to Inform Tourists of Mississippi’s Heritage

The second question asked to the residents was “A cultural and community center with a park would help the locals to inform tourists of Mississippi’s heritage.” The purpose of this question is to determine if culture is
viewed as a way of life that the residents of the Coast would want to present to visitors or if they thought visitors only experience southern hospitality through the interaction with people. My initial thoughts on the matter are that Southerns are extremely proud of their heritage and would enjoy a place that would enable them to inform visitors of their culture. Given the opportunity of the proposed facility residents will have a place of recreation located along the beach that also allows the community image of the Coast to be seen at this time if rebuilding.

Figure 35. Survey Results: A Cultural / Community Center Would Help Locals and Inform Tourists

An overwhelming 24 of the 30 respondents strongly agreed that a cultural and community center would be worth visiting and it would also help the locals present their regional heritage. This center would be able to give a place of escape and stress relief to the residents while providing the visitors a new and interesting activity.

How Often Do You Visit the Beach

In order to determine how the residents interact with the beach and the coast line the third question asked was “How often do you visit the beach?”. The reason this question was asked to the residents was to gage the amount of visits residents have to the beach. I thought that the majority of the people living in the northern part of the Coast would visit the beach occasionally and that people
living closer to the beach would visit more frequently.

Figure 35. Survey Results: A Cultural / Community Center Would Help Locals and Inform Tourists

16 of the 30 people interviewed visited to beach about once a month, and the other 14 responses were distributed among the remaining groups somewhat evenly. Many of the residents interviewed are working full time, and still rebuilding their community, so visits to the beach are less than they would like.
Figure 36. Survey Results: Frequency of Visits to the Beach

![Frequency Of Visits To The Beach](image)

Figure 37. View of the Beach From US-90

![View of the Beach From US-90](image)
Also many of the beaches are still closed so the beach that might be readily accessible to a residents home is not open, and therefore they would have to travel greater distances to visit a beach that is clean and safe. Three of the respondents stated that they prefer to visit the Alabama and Florida beaches because they are cleaner, and that saving their visits to the beach for holidays makes the beach something special to look forward to visiting.

Average Daily Distance Traveled

Determining the distance that residents travel during their normal routines, enables the development of a zone. This zone would reflect the chosen site as its center and use the respondents daily travel distances mean as the radius as too how many residential house holds would to likely to use the facility. I believed prior to conducting the surveys that many of the residents drive for over 15 minutes a day, traveling between home, work, schools, or other activities. Due to the current destruction on the coast many residents travel greater distances since destinations located close to their homes were demolished by Katrina.
The majority of residents surveyed (13 of the 30) travel between 16-20 miles per day. These people only average lived in north Gulfport or on the extreme west and east districts of the Gulf Coast. The second highest group of respondents only have a few miles in which they travel per week, these people are the residents that have returned to the beach and coast front areas since Katrina. The results of this question allow an understanding that people who live on the coast are able to travel less, while the people that chose to live in-land are accepting of the 15-20 minute drives within their routines.

How Often Do You Participate in Community Activities

The fifth question on the survey was “How often do you participate in community activities?” This question was asked in order to determine the amount of interaction within the community. My initial thought was that the people of the
Coast would interact multiple times per week between rebuilding, church, school, and recreational activities.

Figure 39. Survey Results: Frequency of Community Activities

![Frequency of Community Activities Graph]

Two-thirds of the residents interviewed only participate in one community activity per week, while six of the 30 are involved in four or more activities per week. The remaining four respondents participate in two community activities per week. Comparing the responses to the anticipated results I noticed that the residents do not participate in as many community activities as thought. This small amount of community activities could be due to the fact that many of the structures used of churches, schools, and recreation were destroyed. Another thought as to why there is lack of community activity is that many people are working on rebuilding their homes, and work places and this does not leave much time for extra community activities.
What Represents a Common Link Between Locals and Tourists

The final question of the residents survey was “Do any of the following represent a common link between locals and tourists? The beach, the casinos, the climate, or Southern culture” The respondents were not limited to one answer, if they thought that all of the four answers were equal in value towards a bond between the visitors and locals they would circle all four. This question was asked in order to gain an understanding of the strength to the layers of common threads linking tourists and locals. The four options, the beach, the climate, the casinos, and Southern culture represent social outlets that bring people together. I initially though that the two responses with the most votes would be the casinos and Southern Culture.

Figure 40. Survey Results: What Currently Represents A Link Between Locals and Tourists
The majority of people responded that the casinos serve as a connection between the visitors and tourists, but the second response was the beach, then the climate and finally southern culture. The fact that southern culture was chosen as the least likely to link tourists and visitors at this time, but that the responses to the second question were so strong, leads to the following conclusion. The locals want to be able to show their culture and heritage to the visitors but at the present time they do not have the means to present their culture and have ways for visitors to interact with the ways of southern living. One example that is starting to bring this meeting of visitors and locals together would be the addition of the famous restaurant Emeril's to the Island View casino in Gulfport. The typically southern cooking of the New Orleans chef is very much a source of pride to the Mississippi residents as well. This wonderful restaurant coming to the coast really shows an investment in rebuilding not just Gulfport, nor just the Mississippi Coast, and not New Orleans as the major city, it shows what all residents know, we will rebuild the Gulf Coast. New Orleans has always been a place of escape and major for Mississippi residents and Emeril is showing that New Orleans is committed to helping restore the coast of Mississippi too.
Many of the visitors to the coast that were interviewed came from Louisiana, this also shows that interaction between residents from the areas that were damaged by Katrina, and that the entire Gulf Coast will come together to rebuild. The second survey given was to visitors to the coast consisted of seven questions.

The Gulf Coast Community Displays Hospitality Toward Visiting Tourists

The first question was “The Gulf Coast community displays hospitality toward visiting tourists.” This question was asked in order to determine if the idea of southern hospitality really shows in the interaction between visitors and locals. Growing up in Mississippi I understood that there are curtsies paid to people
during normal every day activities. From addressing men and women as mister and ma’am to asking someone how their day is and actually listening to their response every day events are intertwined with fundamental manners. What I wanted to learn from this question was if southern hospitality stood out in the minds of visitors, or if they were used to these same courteous instances where they are from.

Figure 42. Survey Results: The Coast Displays Hospitality Toward Visitors

Many of the tourists that were interviewed strongly felt that the Coast does display hospitality to visitors. Four of the thirty individuals questioned gave the answer of neutral. This leads to the theory that those persons were from the South and therefore the hospitality of their hometown was equal to that of the Coast so it did not stand out as anything different.
A Cultural Arts Center and Recreation Park That Lets the Locals Inform Tourists of Mississippi’s Heritage Would Be Worth Visiting

The second question asked of visitors was “A cultural arts center and recreation park that let the locals inform tourists of Mississippi’s heritage would be worth visiting.”. I thought that many of the visitors of the area come to the Gulf Coast as a quiet getaway location. Since I was raised in Mississippi I have always known that the heritage of the area is rich but I often wondered if the people from outside of the Mississippi understood the dynamics of the region, although I hoped people would want to learn about the culture and history at has shaped Mississippi I was not sure what responses to expect from this question.

Figure 43. Survey Results: Cultural / Recreation Center Would be Worth Visiting to Learn About Mississippi’s Heritage

Over two thirds of the answers to this question confirmed that people felt a
cultural arts center would be an educational experience worth visiting. Four of the respondents agreed, and another four were neutral to the idea of learning about the heritage of the area. Only one respondent disagreed with the idea of visiting a cultural art center and park area. I believe that these responses reflect the intentions of tourists to the area. Many people come to the Coast for gaming activities, and maybe the few neutral and negative responses show that some visitors make gambling their main priority. The other agreeable responses show that most people come to the Coast as a get away and maybe they end up at the casinos for the majority of their time because there is a lack of varied activities in the Coast at this time.

How Often Do You Visit the Beach During Your Stay

As the entire Coast area is aligned along the datum of the beach front I wanted to determine how the guest of the Gulf use the beach front, especially now that many of the beaches are closed for cleaning. By asking “How often do you visit the beach during your stay?” I wanted to see if the coastal location had any merit to the Gulf Coast being a holiday destination. I thought that the beach would develop as a popular activity amount tourists to the Gulf Coast. Although the fact that many of the beaches are still not fit for visitors does present the prospect that the beach will not be frequented by many of the Coast’s tourists.

The responses to this question were more evenly divided than many of the previous questions. The two answers with the largest number of answers were at
the extreme ends of the spectrum. Eight respondents answered that they visit the beach five or more time per stay but another eight people responded that they only visit the beach once per stay. Some of this variance in visits could also directly correlate to the next question on the survey which was about the length of people's visits to the Gulf Coast.

Figure 44. Survey Results: Frequency of Visits to the Beach

Many of the tourists to the Mississippi Coast responded that their visits were just for a few days. This would coincide with the results from the question about the number of visits to the beach. If people are only staying on the Coast for a couple of days then they might only visit the beach once or twice, while the visitors that are staying for a greater amount of time would frequent the beach numerous times per stay on the beach. The main piece of data that I was able to determine from all 30 visitor surveys was that everyone coming the Mississippi
Gulf Coast did visit the beach at least once per visit. This would concur with the residents responses that people want to visit the beach while they are on holiday.

**Figure 45. Survey Results: How Long of a Stay on the Coast do to Visitors Take**

### How Long Of A Stay On The Coast

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Gulf Coast Visitors</th>
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<td>0-3</td>
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<td>4-10</td>
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**Distances Traveled In Order To Visit the Coast**

The following question on the tourists survey related to how far people had traveled to visit the coast. This question was asked in order to determine the area range from which people travel to visit the Coast. My hypothesis on this matter was that the majority of people surveyed would be from close by, I thought that the average distance traveled would consist of a two or three hour drive.
11 of the 30 respondents matched my initial predictions of traveling from close by to the Coast. I was surprised by the fact that the distances of 121 – 360 miles traveled was the least chosen response. The second and third most chosen responses were that people traveled 361- 600 miles or over 1200 miles to get to the Coast. From these two response groups there was a total of a dozen respondents. Although they were all guests on the Coast, they all were located in Mississippi for work related purposes. Eight of the respondents were sailors visiting the Air Force base and the remaining long distance travelers were from Scotland, and had come to help rebuild the oil drilling platforms in the Gulf.

What Method of Transport Did You Use To Get To the Gulf Coast

The next question on the survey was "What method of transport did you use to get to the Gulf Coast?" I initially thought that this question might not even
be worth asking, but considered that I needed to know the answer even if all the respondents said they drive to the Coast like I anticipated. I am glad that I did ask the question, because I did not think one third of visitors to the Mississippi Coast flew in to the local airport. Also the few responses that listed a tour bus as their method of travel were surprising. The majority of responses were that people traveled by car and that was expected, even those that flew to the Coast then rented a car. This is important to the thesis project of an arts center because of choosing a site. I believe that the location of this site needs to be on a road that everyone uses, so that the visibility is increased and from that people will be curious and want to investigate the center. Along with the need for the site to be situated on a major road, is the proposed light rail/ tram line of the Coast that will follow the old CSX tracks. The site selection will also include the prominence to these tracks in order to be accessible to people along the light rail.

Figure 47. Survey Results: Method of Transport in Getting to the Coast
In What Types of Activities Do You Participate, Outside of the Casinos

The final question on the visitors survey was "In what types of activities do you participate, outside of the casinos?" This question was asked to compare the responses to that of the last question asked of the residents from the Gulf Coast which was “Do any of the following represent a common link between locals and tourists? The beach, the casinos, the climate, or Southern culture”. I initially thought that the casinos would be the primary responses that both groups responded to as a common link. The secondary link that could bring the two types of people together would be the southern culture. Which was proven in the fact that most of the visitors to the Coast did come because of the casinos, and then that the secondary and forth most popular responses were dining and visiting galleries. I also wanted to gauge how many visitors do visit the art galleries of the area since they are mostly located out of the way.

Figure 48. Survey Results: Activities Participated in – Excluding Casinos

Activities Participated In - Excluding Casinos

Gulf Coast Visitors

Not Limited To One Response Per Survey
Conclusion

After surveying 30 residents of the Coast area main of the respondents lived north of the back bay which means that they do not live on the water anymore. Only four of the total residents lived within three to four blocks of the beach. Although the Coast does view it’s self as one large community, there are points of separation. Ocean Springs definitely has a sense of being the small artistic town, which is separated by a large bay of water that is the mouth of the Back Bay. Gulfport and Biloxi are so close to each other that there is a seamless transition from one to the other when driving along the main roads. Many of the Gulfport residents travel to Biloxi in recent years because of geography, Katrina hit west of Gulfport so the damage was more extensive there, so the closest shops and places of work are to the east in Biloxi.

The following paragraphs are my conclusions about the overall results from the surveys. The residents of this area do believe that tourism is beneficial to the community. I concluded that this is mainly do to the economic impact of the casinos and resorts. From the surveys it is clear that the people of the Coast would like to inform the tourists to the area about southern culture and would also enjoy having a recreational park. Currently the Gulfport and Biloxi beach front only has one playground located on along Beach Boulevard. This one playground is a type of jungle gym and is fenced in since it is directly next to the main road. Many of the locals that I interviewed stressed that there is a need for a park and activities center for the children of the area, especially the teenagers.
By creating a place of interaction and activity along the beach front it would encourage residents to start visited the beach again. Since the distance from the beach to the main hub of the residential area is only four to five miles, and most of the residents commute further distances than that per day, it is feasible that people could add visits to the proposed center without having the venture out of their way. This center could also help increase the opportunities for community activities and give a location to the residents that allows them to elevate southern culture from currently being viewed as the weakest link in uniting visitors and locals together.

Figure 49. View of the Only Playground Along US-90

The conclusion of the visitors survey is that many people come to the Coast because of the casinos and the amenities they offer. Once people arrive they see the remnants of structures that housed other activities or they see the few places that are open again and they start to explore these other sources of
entertainment. Since the visitors already sense the Coast's hospitality and southern culture is known for that same hospitality I believe tourists understand that the South's culture is an area of interest. From that intrigue about the Gulf's heritage comes the validity of the strong responses that a cultural arts center and recreational park would not only be worth visiting but that visitors would could with an open mind to learn about the ways and history of Mississippi's coast.

There are two groups of visitors to the Coast, those that stay for a long weekend and those that stay for a few months. Both groups are interested in learning about the culture, I believe that the groups of people that are on the Coast for a few months would really benefit from a park and heritage center located on the beach front. For the weeks that they lived on the Coast, they could sample the life style of beach front living. A public parks area would be frequented but also the heritage center would allow them to participate in the culture of the South.

From the survey results recreation, fishing and boating were the least popular activities for visitors. I think this is due to the beach conditions, the lack of recreational areas, and the destruction of the boating facilities all caused by Katrina. By incorporating these functions into the proposed project an accessibility would be created that would permit visitors to experience the area as a water front destination not just a gaming center.

The responses that received higher votes validate the programs for this project, most people want to dine out, shop, and visit galleries while on holiday.
The proposed arts center would have a cafe that contains an area for cooking classes so tourists are not just eating the local fare but they are learning how to create it once they go home, so a memory and a connection are made. The program will also have a gallery which can house a selected few items from each of the local artists, this will expose the tourists to a broader selection of the regional art.
Chapter 5

Case Study 2: Analysis of Center Stage at The Manhattan Theatre Company

Abstract

Historically the theatre is a place of interaction and involvement, due to this participation the theatre becomes a place that is “affected by the texture of society.” (Mielziner 23). The range of people attending the performances, the expression of the playwright, the interpretation of the actors, and the issues addressed within the show all speak of the cultural need to communicate. This communication occurs between the stage and the auditorium but also among the people in the lobby areas.

The architecture of the theatre influences the ability of people to communicate in auditorium as well as the outside of the theatre. The issue of space and relation is core to the relationships that are invoked by attending theatrical performances. This interaction occurs at main levels, and in a variety of settings, but how can the architect play an involved role in aiding in quality experiences for all persons involved?

During the course of theatrical history varied groups of people were united through the participation in performances. Drama unifies cities, nations, and classes round the ideas of community, religion, and entertainment (Mielziner 23).
As a groups come together to enjoy the art of the theatre, the continuous human search for purpose, meaning, and living life fully are also addressed. This three elements are something that all people can relate to, and therefore help to unify people.

This case study will consist of visits to a theatre in Manhattan, New York to determine qualities of the theatre that aid in the communication and relational qualities of the playhouse. By determining how the proved space, for pre-performance and post performance meetings help or limit the inter action of people qualities of goals, scale, and spaces can be explored.

Hypothesis

The activity of attending a performance at the theatre is not only a source of entertainment but it also brings commonality to the set of people, that might not other wise have anything in common. There are fundamental architectural features that have evolved over the course of history as quintessential elements of theatre. These elements along with the theatre as a total entity need to focus on brings people together and establishing a place of communication and community. The activities and interaction brought forth by attending a theatre performance will occur but how can these activities be catered to in order to encourage various people to interact? Providing welcoming places for meeting, sitting, and discussing can help develop community communication.
Methods of Investigation

Three visits were made to the Manhattan Theatre Company's Center Stage theatre. The first visit consisted of a tour of the theatre when there was not a performance. This allowed for all the back stage areas of the theatre to be viewed in addition to the auditorium space. The second visit to the theatre was to attend an afternoon matinée, this allowed for usage and interaction observations to be made. The third visit was made during an evening performance, this consisted of sitting in the lobby and observing the interaction of people as they left the theatre space, the bar area and the lobby.

Analysis

The front entry of the Manhattan Theatre Company is a fabric awning over the city sidewalk of 54th St. There are three sets of double doors that lead directly into the lobby space. The entry is presented of the patron as a space of movement, the setting is not established in a manor that invites people to stay put for a long amount of time. The canvas awning over the front doors does provide a small amount of shelter. Prior to the show it serves as a meeting point, to wait for other visitors before picking up the tickets from the ticket booth. After the show a covered amount of sidewalk gives a place for people to say good-byes, and also provides a place for tourists to orient themselves and then proceed on their journey.

The lobby of the MTC theatre is a small transition space, only 10' deep this space connects the front doors to the inner transitional spaces. Without
seating or even any vacant wall space, there is not any where to stay and visit with other people without being in the middle of the space and in the way of other people. The box office window is in the lobby area, this space is small only about 4’ wide

Progressing downstairs from the entry lobby is a transition space. This space actually has seating and also serves as a collector point of the restroom facilities and the VIP lounge. This landing is smaller than the main lobby but is used more since some of the secondary amenities of the theatre are linked to it. This area is also more welcoming for people to linger for a time due to the fact that there is seating along one wall and there are framed photos of previous performances and the famous actors and actresses. This transition space is one level above the lounge area and provides a direct view to the lounge area.

Figure 50. Diagram of MTC Main Spaces Layout
The final transition space that leads to the auditorium is the lounge. This space contains small tables with seating, a snack bar area, and a 15' x 25' open standing area. Many people gathered here while waiting of the theatre doors to open. After the performance this space was the main gathering space, many friends and family of people involved in the production waited here to meet their acquaintances.

The auditorium space of the MTC Center Stage is definitely the heart of the structure. Inside this space the seating is arranged with a small angle for the end seating sections to focus them inward. The flat fronted proscenium stage is elevated 2’ above the entry floor. With the seating capacity of 295 seats the audience and the performers are never distanced so much that visibility and
volume are hindered. The intimacy of this theatre is an important quality so that the audience feel as though they are all participating in the same experience.

Figure 52. The Seating Area of Center Stage at The Manhattan Theatre

The framed stage is usually presented as a separation of audience and performer but since the capacity of this theatre is less than 300 seats the proscenium does not create the barrier that it can in larger auditoriums.
From the proscenium stage that runs the entire length of the auditorium space, are the side wings which are used for prop storage. These side areas of the stage are organized precisely so all the props and scenery can be stored as required for ease of loading and unloading from the scene on stage. Various performances require differing props, backgrounds, and platforms which all need space to be stored and moved about.

The other back of the house areas that need to be accommodated are the
electrical, sound, lighting and office functions of the performance. These are all directly important to the interaction of audience and the performance. All these elements help convey the story of the performance, and relate to the viewers.

Figure 54. Back of Stage Lighting Grid

Conclusion

Intimacy will be important in the heritage and art center theatre since the players on stage are not professionals. They will not have the projection qualities needed to fill a large auditorium so the people in the rear of the theatre can
understand all that is happening on stage. The closeness of people to the stage will also help the community come together at this local venue to link with the performers as a unit of the Gulf Coast.

Brian Arnott states "Both socially and economically, the public areas of an arts facility are a market place." (Brown 91). Any place within the theatre that people can interact is an important place. This interaction will occur outside of the auditorium space on some level even if the space is not favorable to this interaction. The social interaction is important to the experience of theatrical presentations, not only in understanding the message of the performance but also the culture, people and time of the performance. As a market place is the heart of a community as much for the provisional qualities as the cultural interaction, so the theatre can be an area that provides this same need and experience.

Figure 55. Support Area of MTC, Costume Design and Repair Room
Chapter 6
Case Study 3: Analysis of The Franklin H. Williams Caribbean Cultural Center
African Diaspora Institute in Manhattan New York

Abstract

The connection people have with their culture is a common element between all people that even though each person and their heritage are unique. The ways and arts of a culture permit people to identify with their heritage if they still live in that region or have moved away. Learning about new cultures is also interesting for people explore the methods and varieties of regions throughout the world. The role of a cultural center can be to become a node for people from various heritages to meet. The node for people from far away regions to unite and talk of similarities of their heritage. Another function of the center is to educate those that are not familiar with a culture. A center could be located in the area whose culture is presented or it can be a small island of a culture from a distant place surrounded by a differing heritage. Either approach to the cultural center can allow connections to form between local people and those from other areas. The Franklin H. Williams Cultural Center in Manhattan New York was visited to determine the spacial uses and how those spaces play a role in the interactions that are key to the understandings of various cultures.
Hypothesis

Culture is able to link people, this connection can be enhanced through various spaces within the cultural center. The union of people and cultures allows for understandings and relationships to form. The spaces within the cultural centers permit people to meet the interact, although these spaces vary depending on the function. These relationships between people and a place, people and a method, people and art, people and people can be encouraged by the setting of the place and the spaces provided.

Methods of Investigation

Visits to the Franklin H. William Caribbean Cultural Center African Diaspora Institute allowed for the physical observations, experiences and documentation. The initial approach to visiting these centers is to enter them in the mindset of a normal visitor not an architectural student. I wanted to experience the space as a tourist. After circulating through the space, viewing, and interacting with the exhibits, I then start the role of architectural student and begin documenting the more concrete aspects of space, relationship, usage, and connections. The center was visited during the normal business hours of a weekday while no special events were being held. Not only was the building considered in this investigation but the surrounding streets, the context buildings, and the neighborhood also have an input on the type of cultural interaction. These outside influences have a connection to the vitality of the heritage center.

Diagramming and mapping the spaces, allowed for an understanding of
how spaces are related to one another and how this functions can flow from space to space with or without belonging to either place. This flow of space should occur in order for the individual to focus on the discovery of culture and people.

Analysis

On the west side of Manhattan located two blocks from Columbus Circle and Central Park, is the Franklin H. Williams Caribbean Cultural Center African Diaspora Institute. This theme of this center is “Making the Invisible Visible: Connecting Global Cultures.” The focus of work in this center is on education, artist residencies, cultural performances and exhibitions. Although the title of this center seems very specific they are clear in their mission to reach out to people of all cultures and walks of life.
The first floor of this cultural center is an open plan, one enters from the street through a depressed front porch area that is enclosed by a metal gate. This entry point is not welcoming but seems that one must know of this center to understand that it is open to the public, it does not seem that an average person walking the streets of New York would stumble upon this place and think that they are welcome to explore the contents of this structure.
In fact the welcome sign is located behind the fence and in the opposite corner from the entry gate making it harder to read. After entering through the front door one is in an open area with the walls covered in art and bookcases of art and jewelry that is for sale. There is also a desk where reservations, and space leases, purchases and inquires can be made about the building and the cultures represented. Behind the desk area is another open space that contains more art and also a dancers bar is attached to the wall.
Figure 58. View Through First Level to Rear of Cultural Center

From this space there are French doors that connect to the courtyard garden space in the rear of the building. The openness of this first floor encourage flow through the space, and the rear courtyard is not blocked at all, but rather is completely visible as soon as a person walks in the front door. This transparency allows for all the art, and merchandise to be visible and let one understand what the center has and what one can experience.
The second level of this cultural center is an open area that is used for meetings and assemblies. Above this level are another two levels of artist spaces.

Figure 60. Second Level Meeting Area, http://www.cccadi.org/node/505
This cultural center is located on the on 58th street just west of 10th Ave. The setting of this neighborhood has many buildings that are residences for locals. This setting matches the feeling of the space within the building. While I was there all of the people that came into the center knew each other and it was much more of a community center than an a structured environment.

This building is a simple organization of four levels. The openness of each floor plate allows for the narrow building to have different purposes within the same level. By having this space there is a versatility of uses and the ability of functions to change with the various activities of the center. Although each level is distanced from the next due to the small totally enclosed staircase the interaction within the 20' by 65' space has a personal feel due to the scale of the space.
Figure 61. Diagram of Space Relationships Within the Cultural Center
Conclusion

In visiting this cultural center, the amount of visitors seen over the length of a normal visit was low. The Franklin center had three people come in while I was there. Although my visits were during business hours I believe that if the location of this center had been more visible from the main routes closest to it the visitation traffic would have increased.

The Franklin center seemed to related to the built housing units in the surrounding neighborhood, a quiet place that had a community feeling. While each level is completely separated from the next, the first two levels do not have any interior walls except those around the stairwell. The functions of the universal space of the first and second floorplans prove a freedom by not having any limitations do to the permanent walls. These spaces encourage people to walk around and explore the entire area, displays, and to interact with other people visiting the cultural center.
Chapter 7

Case Study 4: Austrian Cultural Forum in Manhattan New York

Abstract

Although every culture is unique there is a uniting quality in the connection every person feeling toward their known heritage. This link between person and the place, art, and time of their home is a source of comfort and pride. Whether removed by distance from their culture or still within the region of that heritage people find identity in the habits and art of their known place. This understanding of culture is also fascinating to people from other places as it is new and interesting to learn about the methods and varieties of regions throughout the world. A cultural center can be geared toward becoming a hub for people of a various heritage to gather if they are residing in a place that differs from their original regions. The center can also fulfill the role of education, either located within the region who’s culture it showcases, or it can be like a satellite office far from a population but spreading knowledge about that distant heritage. Both approaches to the cultural center have the ability to form stronger bonds between people and cultural centers in Manhattan New York were visited to determine the spacial uses and how those spaces play a role in the type of center.
Hypothesis

There is a connection between people through culture, this link can be facilitated in various spaces depending on the intended interaction levels. Although spaces and intentions vary the common connection of people to culture allows for relationships to form. These relationships between people and a place, people and a method, people and art, people and people can be encouraged by the setting of the place and the spaces provided.

Methods of Investigation

Visiting the following the cultural center; the Austrian Cultural Forum allowed for the physical observations, experiences and documentation. The initial approach to visiting this center is to enter them in the mindset of a normal visitor not an architectural student. I wanted to experience the space as a tourist. After circulating through the space, viewing, and interacting with the exhibits, I then start the role of architectural student and begin documenting the more concrete aspects of space, relationship, usage, and connections. The center was visited during the normal business hours of a weekday while no special events were being held. Not only was the building considered in this investigation but the surrounding streets, the context buildings, and the neighborhood also have an input on the type of cultural interaction. These outside influences have a connection to the vitality of the heritage center.
Diagramming and mapping the spaces, allowed for an understanding of how spaces are related to one another and how this functions can flow from space to space with or without belonging to either place. This flow of space should occur in order for the individual to focus on the discovery of culture and people.

Analysis

Located in the middle Manhattan at 11 East 52nd St off of Fifth Avenue is the Austrian Cultural Forum. This modern new structure has a gallery, library, theatre, meeting and conference space as well as having residences located on the top floors. The AFC is dedicated to Austrian arts and sharing them with others. The center is free to all for admission, they are currently showing their second major exhibit, Bread and Soccer in the arena of art.
From the entry point off of 52\textsuperscript{nd} St. the floor was level with the sidewalk, and the front facade wall was entirely glass. This front allowed for visibility directly into the lobby space. The lobby space contained an information desk to the right and to the left the wall contained a few pieces of art from the current exhibit.
Looking directly back through the lobby one could see the next few levels of the building that are only half floor plates, which alternate and also provide views to the level below and above. The levels that are above the gallery spaces house the theatre and the meeting room. The next level contains the directors housing and above that are other residences, and then there is a roof deck on the top level.
The smooth concrete, glass, and metal interior of this cultural center aid in the formal presentation of the spaces that are connected to the lobby area. These spaces are the gallery spaces, there is exhibit space above and below the lobby so after entering from the lobby a person is encouraged to walk around and discover. This is evident in the fact that at some point a person will have to double back on the space they have already gone through to get to the other levels of the gallery spaces, since there is one main circulation path.

The Austrian Cultural Forum is located in a busy part of New York, and is surrounded by high end shops and businesses. This setting is highly accessible
and available to the variety of people that are on Fifth Avenue and Madison Ave.

Figure 65. Diagramatic Layout of ACF Organization
The half levels open the floor plates up, and allow increased interaction between people on the various plains of the building. The mezzanine level is suspended on the west and east walls but it does not touch the north wall. This feature allows for a three level wall to be continuous. This wall had a digital art piece that one sees the middle of when entering the building and walking toward the rear of the building. Then traveling to the lower and upper gallery spaces let people see the space where they were and also where they can travel to on another level.

Figure 66. Mezzanine Level of ACF
Conclusion

The Austrian Forum’s location is accessible to both residents of New York, commuters to the city, and tourists. This building’s situation within a heavily traveled route increases the ability of discovery by passersby. Also the exhibits of the Austrian Forum were interactive while still being presented as a gallery space. They had videos, interactive movable art pieces, art that was visible from numerous levels, and games in addition to standard art pieces and written information. These elements of the cultural forum that encourage interaction provide an opportunity for lasting impressions to be left in the mind of the visitors to the center. In addition to the interactive elements the spaces within the building lend themselves to encouraging interaction. By allowing patrons to see other floors and spaces prior to by on that level an anticipation and curiosity about what is to come is created. Half levels that over look the levels above and below them, the interactive art, and the open floorplans all add to encouraging the visitors to interact and explore the contents of the cultural center.
Chapter 8

Case Study 5: Analysis of Hurricane Building Codes for the Mississippi Coast

Abstract

The need for hurricane resistant building codes along coastal areas prone to storms is evident due to the amount of destruction sustained during the past years along the Gulf of Mexico. Many houses are being rebuilt to withstand the forces of hurricanes but commercial and larger use buildings are without government enforced guidelines. By applying the preliminary codes of the residential hurricane guidelines the elements addressed in those guidelines can be applied to the larger structures to develop structures that will survive smaller hurricanes, and even when a large hurricane strikes the core of the building can be reused to start the rebuilding process. The regenerative process that is part of all coastal communities, is not only the destruction but also the recognition that change will occur. Understanding hurricanes as a strong and destructive forces also brings to light the need for a preservation process that can be included in the original plans for structures. Break-away walls and increasingly resistant building frames, and structural elements will leave a shell that can be the starting point of rebuilding after a hurricane instead of the current situation which in most cases means demolishing the ruins, purging the entire site and starting again.
from the ground up.

Hypothesis

Prior to Hurricane Katrina the Standard Building Code did not address the special needs for high velocity wind zones along the coast line. The need for the special construction guidelines in order for the fabric of the region to withstand hurricanes is evident in the amount of destruction that occurred due to the forces of Katrina. The adoption of the International Building Code makes provisions for the inclusion of the supplemental codes that are concerned with building in high velocity zones. By understanding these codes the principles can be applied in order to build stronger and safer buildings.
Methods of Investigation

Figure 67. Wind Speed Map Showing the Typical Wind Forces Throughout the State of Mississippi. Residential Wind Damage in Mississippi Potential Hurricane Damage Reduction Through Improved Building Codes and Construction Practices. [http://www.hurricane.lsu.edu/files/misscodefinal.pdf](http://www.hurricane.lsu.edu/files/misscodefinal.pdf)

Gathering information from the International Building Code will provide the basis for the interpretation of construction methods and materials. Observing the destruction from previous hurricanes is an informative method of understanding
how structures a stressed during a storm. From the data gathered about passed hurricanes the areas of failure can be addressed and reinforced to provide a stronger building envelope.

Analysis

The main structural elements of a building are the foundation, the walls, and the roof. When considering hurricane resistance the connections between these components become the critical points of strength in order for the structure to withstand the forces. The slab of a building is able to stay located within the ground because the wind and floodwaters of a hurricane can only travel across the top of the surface. The foundations and floor plates of elevated houses, provide a crawl space between the top of the ground and the underside of the first floor. It is this space, which is usually skirted with lattice work or light sheathing, that fails and allows the wind and water under the house. By permitted these elements of nature between the connection of building to ground, they are able in most causes to pry the house from its foundation. This connection is of vital importance, without a solid foundation that is grounded the building will not have a point to maintain in order to counter act the hurricane's forces. The walls must act as an extension of the foundation. Continuity is necessary from the foundation, floors through to the walls and then to the roof. All of the connections that are between these various components of the building must have the integrity and strength so that the building behaves as one element even though it
is composed of many pieces.

Figure 68. Diagram of the Main Elements Required for Maintaining the Structural Integrity of a Building
Figure 69. Recommended Types of Construction in Order to Withstand a Category 3 Hurricane


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF WALL CONSTRUCTION</th>
<th>BUILDING TYPE AND GEOMETRY</th>
<th>ROOF SLOPE PERMITTED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Concrete, Masonry, ICF</td>
<td>Enclosed Building</td>
<td>10 degrees (2:12) – 45 degrees (12:12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>Enclosed Building</td>
<td>10 degrees (2:12) – 30 degrees (12:12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concrete, Masonry, ICF</td>
<td>Unenclosed Portions of Building</td>
<td>10 degrees (2:12) – 45 degrees (12:12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>Unenclosed Portions of Building</td>
<td>10 degrees (2:12) – 30 degrees (7:12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concrete, Masonry, ICF</td>
<td>Unenclosed Portions of Building</td>
<td>0 degrees (flat) – 30 degrees (7:12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concrete, Masonry, ICF</td>
<td>Open Unattached Structures</td>
<td>0 degrees (flat) – 25 degrees (6:12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>Open Structures on Piles</td>
<td>5 degrees (1:12) – 25 degrees (6:12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>Unenclosed Structures</td>
<td>5 degrees (1:12) – 25 degrees (6:12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>Open Attached Structures</td>
<td>5 degrees (1:12) – 25 degrees (6:12)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 70. Reduction Through Improved Building Codes and Construction Practices http://www.hurricane.lsu.edu/files/misscodefinal.pdf
Conclusion

Protect openings within the walls, be able to cover the doors, windows and curtain walls if the contents of the building need to be preserved. The roof is a key element to the structure of the building as it supplies the rigidity to the envelope of the structure. Many buildings lose their roof during a hurricane because it is the prominent feature of the building increasing the strength of the roof and its attachment to the structural walls below the entire building will be more resilient. The importance of the roof's strength falls into three main elements of the construction, the ability of the entire roof deck to respond to storm's winds as one element will require reinforced attachments among its components. The attachments between the walls and the roof also need to be able to resist the winds efforts to lift the roof off the walls. The third elements of the roof that needs to be reinforced is the waterproofing by not allowing water to infiltrate the construction joints of the building the integrity of the structure will be more likely to survive (Potential Hurricane Damage Reduction Through Improved Building Codes and Construction Practices.)
Figure 71. Diagram of Concluded Rules to be Applied to Construction Within a Wind Borne Debris Region of the Mississippi Gulf Coast in Order to Strengthen the Building Envelope
Chapter 9
Conceptual Ideology - Horizon and Extended Thoughts

The purpose of this place, is to provide a setting for people to meet and learn about other cultures while exploring the arts and culture of the Mississippi Gulf Coast. People are able to gain knowledge though the experience of interacting with others, and this will reiterate that on one level we are all human and alike in that way, but also that everyone is different. Along with this unifying degree of difference is the knowledge that each person’s experiences are unique. A connection is made when a person thinks, thoughts are expanded when new revelations are made, through this extension of understandings is an expanded experience. This enlargement of intellect can be thought of as a person’s comprehension pushing beyond the horizon. A horizon is not a set point, but rather an interpretation, an imaginary line that is based on an individual perception of the world. This idea of horizon is not only linked to a person’s thought process but also to architecture. The place that one sees the horizon is defined by two points, the height a person is located off the ground and the distance to the point where the sky and land or sea meet. The vertical posture of a person defines this moment where the horizon is located, changed the plane one stands on as changes the perception of the topography in relation to the horizon line. This point of meeting represents a dialect between humans and the
environment of the world, it links a person with their surroundings. The horizon is not reachable as one approaches the apparent point of the horizon it moves further away, this it turn causes a continual movement forward. The horizon is a common linking element in the fact that all people can see a horizon but it is individualized by each set of eyes that views the meeting of ground plane to sky. At a time of destruction and rebuilding on the Mississippi Coast the idea of horizon being a link between people and the place, that expanded horizons leading to further understandings, and perpetual movement forward can become the concept not only of the thesis but also of the community as a whole.

Initial Design Considerations

The current situation of the Mississippi Coast is one of rebuilding. Loosing your home, workplace, school, or religious building is something devastating and means so many different things to all the people involved. The place and the people are changed by this void that Hurricane Katrina created. Part of living in this area of the United States means that people have to learn how to deal with the strength of hurricanes and life after one comes through. Many of the locals in the Gulfport and Biloxi area remembered Hurricane Camille or remember their parents talking about that storm, now they have the situation Katrina created cemented in their minds also. The threat that more hurricanes will hit the Gulf Coast is very real, and people know that this is a possibility. With that in mind, rebuilding and remembering will always be part of the makeup of residents to this
region. Parker J. Parker's quote “Wholeness does not mean perfection. It means embracing brokenness as an integral part of life. Knowing this gives me hope that human wholeness -mine, yours, ours- need not be a Utopian dream, if we can use devastation as a seedbed for new life.” embodies this fact since the destruction of hurricanes is not preventable.

With the opportunities of new life also come the need to remember the past. The main design elements of this thesis project use the disintegration of elements to reflect the idea of destruction and rebuilding. The progression of pieces that make up the lawn to the paved portion of the porch area also reflect the idea of these many pieces coming together to form a new place, much like the people of the Mississippi Coast and all the disaster relief volunteers coming together to make the coast a better place. The screen element of the theatre and the overhead shade structure that connects the circulation paths throughout the site are composed of many pieces of wood. These planks, boards, and construction remnants would vary in size and shape allowing for the built language to reflect the random pieces coming together to form a unified piece.

Fragmented elements coming together as a whole would also include reusing building materials from the damaged structures. Many of the houses that were destroyed left only their foundation slab, or the front stoop. In this new design proposal the steps the symbolized the entry into a home, and a transition point could be reused in the porch area of the arts center. The solidity of the concrete or brick steps of the demolished homes would serve as a anchoring
point for the connection of the wooden porch to the site. By reusing the elements left over from the destruction of Katrina in a new place, the memories of the past are still invoked in the new civic place. Now these reused building materials would not only be experienced by the community but they would also serve as a reminder to tourists that the trials this storm brought were not over once the national news channels stopped covering the story.

Interaction and Connection

The community of the south Mississippi coast needs to be able to identify their home as a place of importance. A place for locals to gather and continue in their daily activities will not only help solidify elements of the existing heritage but it will also allow visitors to experience these activities. The main connection space of the site will be a civic plaza at a scale for large gatherings for special events. The site will then step down in scale to accommodate medium sized groups of people, from visiting class field trips, gardening club groups, or book club meetings. Within this large site and the spread out nature an extremely important factor is that people do not feel over whelmed by the site, and that they would enjoy being in the places created by this site.

Preliminary Schematic Design Proposals
Figure 72. Preliminary Site Layout #1a

Figure 73. Preliminary Site Layout #1b
Development Issues

From the exploration of these three site ideas, the main elements that were determined are as follows: first, the tram station at the north of the site should be located toward the residential neighborhood, second, the built structures on the pier need to be light so they do not block the views from the main site out to the coast line and horizon, and third, that the theatre will be the main anchoring element of the architectural scale throughout the site. After the initial organization ideas for the site were presented, the main concern was the relation of scales, that of the site in comparison to the scale of the buildings. The next steps show the site plan with the program areas to the scale listed in the programming chapter of this document.
Second Schematic Design Proposals

Figure 75. Secondary Site Layout #2a
Figure 77. Secondary Site Layout #2c
Development Opportunities

The final determination was that the site would be organized to have the main circulation from the tram station to the very northeast corner of the site to the seafood market on the pier located to the southwest of the site. Next the circulation path of the site needs to define the placement and orientation of the buildings. The following diagrams are four of the proposed organization paths, where the main porch area of the site would link the buildings while still allowing each structure to be seen and related to individually.

Figure 78. Circulation Site Layout #3a
Figure 79. Circulation Site Layout #3b

Figure 80. Circulation Site Layout #3c
Final Schematic Design Proposal

From the tram stop in the northeast corner of the site, the circulation path will continue directly south (along side the recreation fields) and once it reaches the area behind the art studios and gallery the path will make a forty five degree turn toward the opposite side of the site. This path will lead the visitor across the porch area of the site which interacts with the cafe and restaurant area, and then toward the theatre.
This is not the final version of the site plan, but the approximate placement of the buildings stay the same as this plan in the final scheme. The main changes from this plan are in the in between spaces and how the person would travel through those spaces. The direction given by the strong diagonal axis of the site will be decreased in order to encourage people to explore the elements of the site on their own and not to feel too directed. In the final building shapes the diagonal shaping was implied within the structure but not as direct and strong as draw in this process site plan.

Figure 83. Process Sketch, Starting to Define Shape and Placement of Buildings Within the Porch Area
Chapter 10
Master Site Planning

An arts and heritage center is a place for people, the visibility and accessibility of the site need to be structured so people who know about the place and those who stumble upon it, can both feel an ease of navigating the site. The setting of southern Mississippi also plays an important role in the configuration of the site, since this area is not a highly urban center. The distance and space between the buildings is an element that was given high priority while designing the site. Many of the existing historical buildings along US-90 are set back from the road in order to provide space for the development of the grand lawns, and the tree lined drives. By placing the theatre and the restaurant further back on the site, their volume is still visible from the beach and the street, but the land between the building and the street is still open in a manor that reflects the historical site organization of southern homes. The gallery and studio spaces were pulled closer to the main road as a point of acknowledgment. By giving the gallery the ability to connect with people passing by on Beach Boulevard, or the coast line, the activities that are anchored by the art gallery are more prominently visible to the passer-by.

The cultural arts center is a place for the community of the Gulf Coast to use on a daily basis. The uses that locals would visit frequently are located along
the major access points. The seafood market is located directly off Beach Boulevard, there is a slip road to allow for drop-offs. The other element of the site that locals would use on a daily basis would be the recreation fields and the walking path. The parking lot was configured so it would follow the outdoor activities back through the site so people could arrive close to their desired location.

The main boardwalk connects the tram stop to the porch area between the restaurant and the gallery. Through the journey south along the boardwalk connections are made to the existing neighborhoods and the future development of condominiums along the east side of the property. The west side of the site joins to the historic Beauvoir property, and maintaining the natural state of the flora at this point is important for the development to feel at home in this setting. The buildings of the arts center are divided into four buildings so that the site as destinations throughout. The rhythm of the existing houses versus the larger development of the casinos and condominium buildings shows the difference in scale from the historical smaller buildings that relate to the human scale opposed by the developer complexes that are structured to maximize profitable use of the land. By breaking the components of the arts center down into smaller buildings across the site the space created relates to the environment that locals of the south can relate to, and it shows visitors to the area about the difference of this communities spacial and built fabric.
Plans

Figure 84. Aerial View of Site From the Southeast
Figures 85. Site Plan
Figure 86. Main Plaza Plan
Sections and Elevation

Figure 87. Longitudinal Site Section

Figure 88. Lateral Site Section

Figure 89. South Site Elevation
Perspectives

Figure 90. View From the Main Lawn Toward the Restaurant and the Theatre

Figure 91. View From the Market Pier Toward the Lawn
Figure 92. View From Center of Porch Out Toward the Lawn
DIRECT RELATION
ADDRESS STREET FRONT BUT DOES NOT RELATE TO THE IDEAS OF EXTENSION (HORIZON), DISCOVERY AND THINKING.
CONCEPT RELATION
CONNECTED PATH VIA PLAZA AREA.
ORIENTATION OF BUILDINGS FOCUS ON AN
EXTENDED HORIZON RANGE. ALL IS NOT EXPOSED
SO INTERACTION AND DISCOVERY ARE INVOLVED.
Figure 95. Direction Diagram

DIRECTION
ACCESS TO ALL ELEMENTS OF SITE THROUGH THE MAIN GATHERING AREA. ALL BUILDINGS HELP TO FOCUS EXPENDED VIEW FROM SITE

Figure 96. Organization Diagram

ORGANIZATION
ALLOW A CLEAR PATH ACROSS THE SITE WHILE HAVING OTHER AREAS INTERACT WITH THE ROUTE.
Figure 97. Main Gathering Spaces Diagram

MAIN GATHERING SPACES
MAJOR GATHERING AREA OF LAWN FEEDS INTO THE MEDIUM SIZED AREAS OF THE PORCH AREA, WHICH INTERACT WITH THE PUBLIC FUNCTION OF THE BUILDINGS

Figure 98. Openings of Buildings to Connect Diagram

OPENINGS OF BUILDING TO CONNECT
THE AREAS OF THE STRUCTURES ON SITE THAT ARE OPERABLE IN ORDER TO ALLOW FUNCTIONS TO TRAVEL BETWEEN THE OUTDOORS AND INDOORS.
Chapter 11

Theater Design

Theatre is a place of expression and experience. Mississippi’s Gulf Coast community needs a place that allows an escape from the current situation. By building a theatre the need for an indoor place that can house large gatherings in addition to the traditional functions of a theatre are met. The theatre will have an adaptable seating plan, so that many different configurations of seating and stage placements will be available. Also the main curved wall dividing the lobby from the auditorium spaces will be operable, so that if need be the auditorium space can open and the lobby can become an extension of that space. The main entry wall of the theatre will have overhead operable doors that pivot two-thirds of the ways up, so that they create an progressive entry point over a distance of nine feet rather than a single four inch threshold. This feature will also allow for the functions of the theatre to spill out onto the porch and lawn, since the front glazed wall of the theatre will have these openings along its entire length, at both the first and second floor levels.
Floorplans

Figure 99. First Floor of Theatre

FIRST FLOOR PLAN
Figure 100. Second Floor of Theatre
Figure 101. Third Floor of Theatre
Figure 102. 3D Plan Cut-aways
Sections

Figure 103. Theatre and Restaurant Building Section

Figure 104. Longitudinal Theatre Section

Figure 105. 3D Building Section Cut-away
Perspectives
Figure 106. View From the Entry of the Theatre Towards the Lawn

Figure 107. View from Porch Toward Theatre Shade Wall
Figure 108. View From Second Floor Balcony
Chapter 12
Restaurant Design

A solid piece of Southern culture is expressed in the culinary heritage of the region. By providing a cafe, cooking classroom, and restaurant the traditions of Mississippi’s cooking can be expressed and shared. The classroom and the cafe are located on the first floor of the building while the main restaurant is located above. By placing the classroom on the first floor level, the students and teacher can allow the class to operate on the porch or under the middle covered portion of the terrace area. Also by being located on the first floor the opportunity for community cook-outs, barbecues, or crawfish boils as an extension of the space is possible. The cafe is on the ground floor also so that people visiting the site on a daily basis to get the morning paper and a coffee or tea have maximum accessibility. Also than the tables and chairs of the cafe can spill out onto the porch area and a connection can be made between the exterior and interior spaces of the cafe. The second floor restaurant spans the entire length of the classroom and the cafe, and over looks the entire porch, lawn and pier area. This central location and elevated position give people who are dining a view towards the action of the plaza as well as an extended view toward the Gulf of Mexico.
Figure 109. Restaurant, Cafe and Classroom Plans
Figure 110. 3D Plan Cut-aways
Sections

Figure 111. Rendered Restaurant Building Section

Figure 112. Restaurant Building Section

Figure 113. 3D Building Section Cut-Away
Perspectives

Figure 114. View from Main Porch at Entry to Restaurant
Figure 115. View From Restaurant Out Over Main Lawn and Porch

Figure 116. Seating Area on Central Porch Area Outside the Classroom Area
Chapter 13

Art Gallery and Studio Design

Much of the local art of the Mississippi Gulf Coast is based around pottery. Since the land of Mississippi is comprised of large amounts of clay the medium of pottery is readily available and free. Also the influence of Walter Anderson and George Ohr's pottery have tied the locals of the area to pottery. The development of the art gallery and studio needed to include a place for people to throw pottery. Since this is a process that is rather messy, the main space for working with the pottery will be a covered exterior area that people can work on and the is open so passers by can also view the activities. The studio spaces that are anchored within the pottery porch are comprised two art classrooms and two work studios for artists to work in.

Next to the studio spaces and toward the front of the site is the art gallery. The art gallery is located closest to the road in order to be visible for visitors and people passing by. The gallery's first floor plan is an open plan that could be expanded to the south into the lawn and then toward the west across the porch area. The second floor of the gallery is angled forty five degrees to the west so it points toward the southwest horizon, so the view is not obstructed by the solid structures that could be built on the pier.
Figure 117. First Floor of Studios and Gallery
Figure 118. Second Floor of Gallery
Figure 119. 3D Plan Cut-aways
Sections

Figure 120. Gallery and Studio Building Section

Figure 121. 3D Building Section Cut-Away
Figure 122. Section Through the Gallery, Studios and Porch

Perspectives

Figure 123. View from Main Porch Toward Art Gallery Entrance and Pier
Figure 124. View From Restaurant Out Over Main Lawn and Porch
Figure 125. View from Main Entry Point Along the Boardwalk

Figure 126. View from Balcony of Gallery
Figure 127. View from Lawn Toward the Art Gallery
Conclusion

Figure 128. Preliminary Model Showing Destination and Shading Nodes Along the Site
Figure 129. Preliminary Model Showing Circulation Idea of Site
Figure 130. Overall Model of Main Porch Area
Figure 131. Model of the Theatre Shade Wall and Porch Shade Structure Integration

Figure 132. Model of the Shade Structure and Restaurant Balcony Railing Transition
Figure 133. Overall Site Model
Figure 134. Closeup of Main Porch Area
Figure 135. Model View - Theatre Entry
Figure 136. Model View – Restaurant, Cafe, and Classroom
Do to the void of gathering spaces along the Mississippi Gulf Coast, there is a potential for a community that is linked by a common loss. At a time when everyone needs to come together and work along side each other, a place for remembering and healing is essential. Not only would this proposed arts and culture center provide a place for locals a meet but it would also serve as an amenity for tourists to the area. Currently many of the casinos and resorts along the beach front of Mississippi have rebuilt their gaming properties but the additional services for children and family actives have not been rebuilt. This
creates an additional need for a destination for these visitors that is welcoming to the entire family. Providing a place for people to leave the confines of the casino multiplex buildings and actually interact with the community and culture of the place will provide an opportunity for relationships and understandings.

Throughout the course of this project, the main challenge was to provide a place of people to interact and learn while respecting the land along the Mississippi Coast. The increasing development condominiums and casinos without regard to the community and scale of the beach front threaten to change the Biloxi/Gulfport coast line into a Las Vegas type strip from the historical oak lined drive it once was. Although the community needs to move forward, it is not without thought and care for the time, place, and people of the area. By working over the scale of my proposed buildings and their location on the site, I attempted to take the traditional scales and values for civic spaces, and mold them to the fit a place that is not a dense city, urban area, or looking to reinvent itself.

I hope that this document is able to achieve a bit of what the proposed arts and culture center would, and that is to create links through understanding. Mississippi is a wonderful place, with an increasingly rich heritage. This location, it's people, their pace of life, and hospitality will always be, and by others experiencing the arts, culinary elements, and heritage little pieces of Mississippi will travel to many other corners of the world.
References


