M.ARCH.2 THESIS PROPOSAL

COMMUNITY NARRATIVES FOR ARCHITECTURE SPACES

Byronae' Lewis

VOICING MULTIPLE NARRATIVES

THE OBJECTIVE:

I want to investigate the relationship between social narratives, the role of an architect, and creating community spaces. My thesis will use an audio ethnographic research approach to further understand communities. I hope to broaden the existing design process to be more inclusive for BIPOC and non-designers. Storytelling, dialogue, methodical questions, and videos will be combined to tell different stories.

I question how do BIPOC define community spaces? How do designers use an interactive approach to create spaces? When will the practice of architecture be redefined to represent the needs of BIPOC versus the assumptions from outside communities?

My Thesis semester will be defined by three blocks; narratives, research, and design. These blocks will have overlapping timelines and clear objectives for the research approach defined at the beginning of the process. A social based thesis can be described as "never ending". However, the objectives will follow distinct checkpoints for the project to be completed by the final submission.

CURRENT QUESTION AT THE TABLE?

1 What is a community space?

2 What communities are and aren't designed for?

3 How do different cultural communities perceive the idea of "design and development"?

4 How would a community space be designed if the community designed it?

5 What social spaces are existing and what is needed?

NARRATIVES, RESEARCH, AND DESIGN

NARRATIVES

August and September will focus primarily on narratives. The initial goal is to complete 100 narratives. This benchmark may be adjusted at the end of September based on current progress and accessibility to interviewees.

- 20 BIPOC Designers
- 80 Community Members
  - Minimally 4 different areas represented (DC area, New River Valley, two others not defined yet.
  - Participants should vary in age
- Each participant will need to answer the same 3-5 initial question for analytical purposes that were approved by my Thesis committee. Additional conversations may be added after. Each conversation will need to be recorded in some audio form and a brief survey.

Prior to research, further investigation on the following topics will need to be addressed.

What platform?
  Rentable audio equipment on campus.
  Anchor, free platform for podcast.
  Pricing for microphones.
  Verify access to zoom for research purposes.
  Storage for audio and virtual platforms.

Reach out to following individuals for advisement in August.
  – Pascale Sablan
  – Architecture is Political Podcast
  – Design Voice Podcast
  – Professor Melissa Aleman, JMU Cultutal Communication Faculty
  – Dori Tunstall, Faculty of Design SCAD
  – Jordan Knox, Technical Specialist

We shoudn't create a single narrative, but redefine the perspective with multiple narratives

NARRATIVES, RESEARCH, AND DESIGN

RESEARCH

A combination of statistical research, novels, and newsletters to support research topic. The goal is to find 1 main novel to support research approach. Each supporting material will need to be documented.
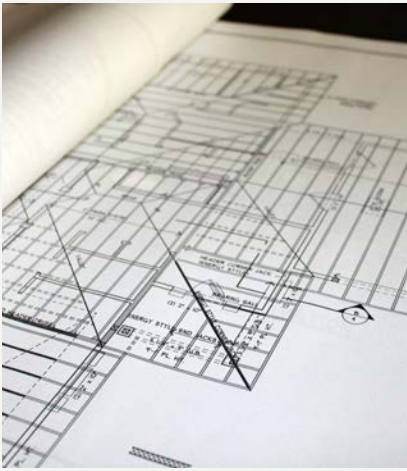
Prior to research, further investigation on the following topics will need to be addressed.

What platform?
- Determine platform to document resources
- Determine survey platform.

Reach out to following individuals for advisement in August.
- Sharon Egretta Sutton, Educator and Activist

NARRATIVES, RESEARCH, AND DESIGN

DESIGN

I want to focus my time on designing a community space. I will use research and audio ethnographies to influence my conceptual design strategies. I plan to dedicate September and October to schematic design. This will help me understand where I am and where I want to go. What scale do i want to design at? Is this a building or installation space? Solely architecture? Or landscape and urban planning collaborated? What is realistic within the time constraints of one academic year?

October and November will include a time dedicated to model making and investigation. By December, I will have concluded what type of space I want to move forward with for design and re-evaluate a timeline for the upcoming semester.

A plan to finish a site plan, a set of drawings for the building, a form of building model, rendering of space. During this period, research and the collection of narratives will continue. After a design committee is determined, a projected timeline for the year will be created.

Can the community collaborate with the architect to define the space that is needed for them?

Prior to research, further investigation on the following topics will need to be addressed.

Who will be on the thesis committee?

What faculty and educational support is available? Does this vary in COVID conditions?

Design objectives.

Schedule routine meets with faculty.

What design process do I want to use?
- Model Making?
- Hand Drawings?
- Digital Drawings?
- Renderings?
- Sketchbook?