

THIRD WARD QUILT

by Nicola Springer & Jamar Simien
with Ernesto Alfaro

The Third Ward Quilt project began with bicycle tours of the Third Ward led by Nicola Springer, an architect and graduate of Princeton and Rice universities, and Vice President at Kirksey Architecture. Over the past five years, and with the invaluable assistance of Third Ward resident and historian Carroll Parrott Blue, Ms. Springer has systematically documented the architectural history of Third Ward through archival research, photographs, oral history, and observation.

This project attempts to recover an intricate tapestry of buildings, people and events, here and gone in Houston's Third Ward. Springer and visual artist Jamar Simien created physical maps of the Third Ward on 36-inch-by-48-inch acrylic sheets, reproduced here. One panel shows the current building lexicon outlined in black. In a second layer, based on a 1943 aerial photograph, the buildings that no longer remain are shown in white, a kind of “ghost” layer. A third layer shows how the construction of the 288 highway cut through the neighborhood, displacing a large portion of the Third Ward and fragmenting

Legend

Building

People

Still here

No longer here

Public Park

1
San Jacinto Memorial Building
1914, 1928, 1936;
Layton & Smith, Hedrick & Gottlieb, Joseph Finger;
City Beautiful Movement

2
Temple Beth Israel
1925; Joseph Finger;
Late Art Deco

3
Richardson House
1903; J. Perkins Richardson;
Colonial Revival

4
Elizabeth Baldwin Park
Dedicated 1910

5
St John Baptist Church
1946; James M Thomas;
African American Designer and Builder;
Gothic Revival

6
Wesley Chapel AME Church
1926; William Sidney Pittman

6
W. Sidney Pittman
First African American Architect in Texas;
1875–1958

6a
Dr Ben Covington Home

6a
Booker T Washington
Stayed with the Covingtons

6b
Richard Randolph Grovey
Barber and Civic Leader,
1934 sued for the right to vote in primary ballot

7
Douglass Elementary / Now Yellowstone Academy
1927

8
YWCA Blue Triangle
1951; Birdsall Briscoe; First African American YWCA charter in Texas

9
Grand Court of Calanthe Building
1948; Art Deco

9
Mary McLeod Bethune
Founder of Bethune Cookman University speaks at Grand Court of Calanthe Building

10
Wolf's Pawn Shop / Originally Wellworths Dry Goods
1950; Art Deco / Moderne

11
St John's Missionary Baptist Church
1948; Neo Classical;
2701 Emancipation Ave

11a
Carl Hampton
Black Panther killed 1970

11a
Black Panther Headquarters
2800 Block Dowling / Now Emancipation Blvd

12
Emancipation Park
Founded 1872;
3018 Emancipation Blvd.

12
New Recreation Building
2017; Philip Freelon

Existing Tree Canopy

Existing Buildings

Lost Structures (ghost layer)

the community. The base layer is a color negative of the city grid and a fifth the current canopy of trees. The final panel shows as icons the architecture and influencers of the neighborhood.


The goal of the project is to reveal the palimpsest of history that is the Third Ward, the conflicted and collective cultural construct of the neighborhood, shaped by forces of capital, institutional racism, the sheer will of a community to thrive, and the lives of the many figures who have dwelled here. The ultimate intention of this project is to educate community residents and visitors alike, young

and old, people of all backgrounds. Springer and Simien want to connect the community to the rich tapestry of hidden history that lies latently in the Third Ward. In this sense, we can refer to the map as a quilt, because of the special meaning that these fiber objects hold in the context of black America.

During the 19th century, when enslaved people escaped from their bondage, they used quilts as maps. Designed and hand sewn by the enslaved, each piece creatively referenced a different step along the way to freedom. The quilt, for the African-American community, is a symbol of collective dignity


and cultural identity. The intent of this project is to show an entire quilt of the space with imperfections and irregularities, resonant pieces that through time were relegated to useless history or, at best, a history out of step. The quilt is a means by which visitors and residents alike can recover this history and make it come alive for a new generation. With funding from a Rice Design Alliance Initiatives for Houston grant, the next iteration of the Quilt will be a physical installation that will be deployed in a nomadic manner across the various community entities of the Third Ward, accessible to all members of the community.

12




Jack Yates
One of the civic fathers of Houston's black community; 1872; Founder Emancipation Park

12



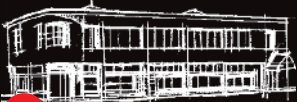
Community Center Building
1939; Architect; William Ward Watkin; WPA Moderne

12



Theola Petteway and Judge Zinetta Burney
Co-Founders of Emancipation Park Conservancy 2011

13




El Dorado Ball Room
1939; Lenard Gabert; Art Moderne

14




Sixth Church of Christ Scientist
1941; One of only three congregations in the US; Art Deco

13a



Flowerman House
2305 Francis Street

13b



Lightnin' Hopkins
Blues Guitarist
bus stop @ Dowling Street / Now Emancipation

13b




Lightnin' Sam Hopkins
Blues Guitarist

13a




Cleveland Turner
"Flowerman" Folk artist
1935-2013

15




Project Row Houses
Community Artist Collective 1994
Row houses built 1939

15




Rick Lowe
Co-Founder of Project Row Houses, 1994

16




Yates High School / Baylor College of Medicine Ryan Middle School
1928; William Ward Watkin

17




Houston Negro Hospital / Now Riverside General
1926; 3204 Ennis Street; Maurice J Sullivan

17




Dr. Rupert Roett and Dr. Ben Covington
Founders of Houston Negro Hospital

18




Nursing School at Houston Negro Hospital / Now Riverside General
1926

19



Cuney Homes
1940, 1942, 1993; John F. Staub, MacKie and Kamrath, Landscape Hare and Hare; 3201 Cleburne Ave

20




Thurgood Marshall College of Law
Texas Southern University; 1976, John S. Chase

21




Mack Hannah Hall and Granville Sawyer Auditorium: TSU Campus
1947; Lamar Qato

21




Heman Sweat
His lawsuit against the state challenged the segregation of the University of Texas

21




John Biggers
Artist and Muralist; Founder TSU Art Department

21



John S Chase
Architect; 1925-2012; First African American enrolled in UT architecture

21



Barbara Jordan
Graduate of TSU and First Black woman to represent Texas in the US House of Representatives

22




Ernest S Sterling Student Center
1976; TSU Campus; John S. Chase. Architect

23



Martin Luther King Humanities Center
1969; TSU Campus; John S. Chase Architect

24



Johnston's Middle School / Now YWCP
1925

25



Peggy Park
4101 Almeda Road

26



Weingarten's Supermarket
Location of Houston's first Sit-in

26

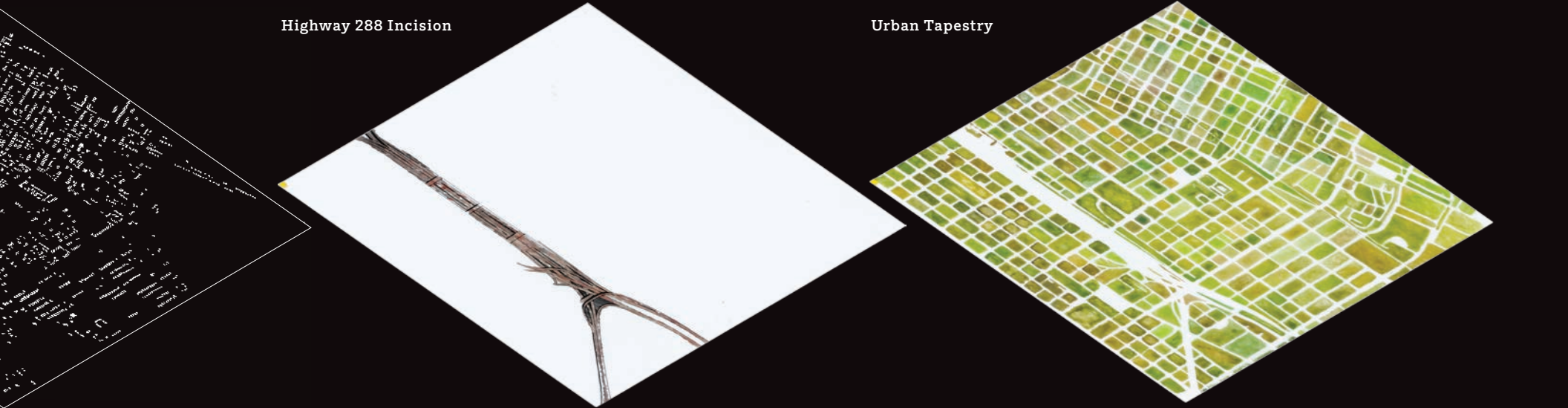


TSU Students
March 4, 1960; Sit-in at Weingarten's Supermarket Lunch Counter

27



Houston Light Guard Armory / Now Buffalo Soldier Museum
1925; Architect Alfred C Finn





5

6

6a

6a

17

9

11

10

11a

11a

12

12

14

13

13a

13b

15

3

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27

26

25

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24



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