

ODD FELLOWS CEMETERY RECLAMATION INITIATIVE

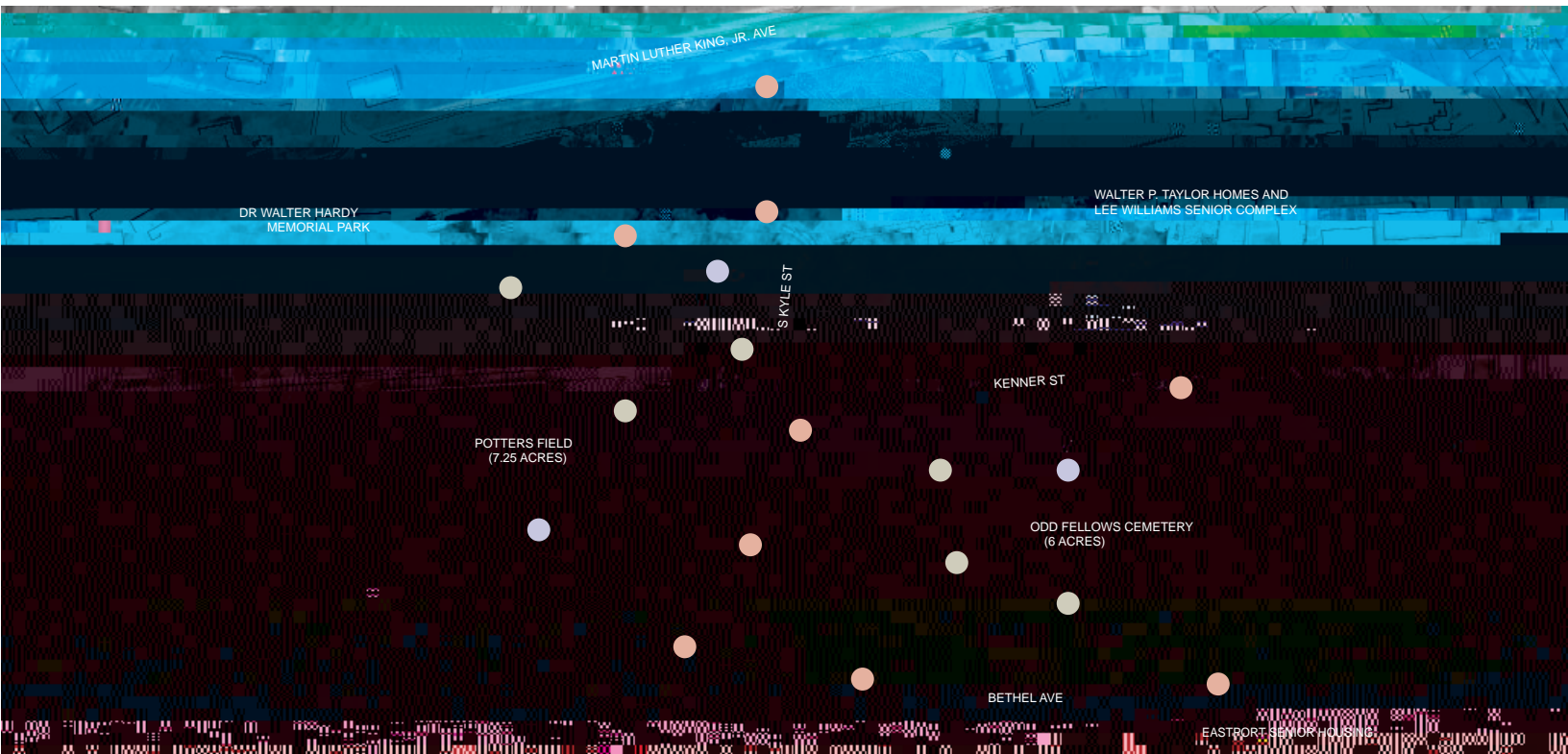
KATHERINE BAMBRICK AMBROZIAK

The Odd Fellows Cemetery Reclamation Initiative (2009-present) is a long-term research, design, and engagement program that addresses the potential for cultural landscape to be rehabilitated and reintegrated into the social lives of the communities that surround it. It is a collaboration between the University of Tennessee, the City of Knoxville, and the communities of East Knoxville.

Context: Odd Fellows is a 6-acre cemetery in East Knoxville established in the 1880s by multiple fraternal community organizations, all of which disbanded in the 1930s. Over time vegetation became overgrown and approximately 90% of the estimated 6000 markers have been lost. Sporadic clean-up efforts have done little to halt ongoing deterioration. Currently without ownership, the cemetery reflects neglect and disenfranchisement of the community and visually exhibits a lack of pride.

In 2008 Katherine Ambroziak began working with the Knoxville ReAnimation Coalition. The KRC is an organization in East Knoxville that focuses on educating and creating social wealth among Knoxville's communities through projects that illuminate and personalize their environments. The KRC has been continuously involved with the reclamation program since its inception.

The program proposes a community-focused rehabilitation that addresses the negative physical and social in use of the area and offers the community a safe, respectful environment to rediscover its heritage. Through a series of public workshops, Ambroziak and the KRC identify objectives: to develop an interactive memorial landscape that promotes the unique cultural heritage embodied in the cemetery, to make the grounds easier to navigate, and easier to maintain, to continue to involve the community in the planning, design, and future activities to make the cemetery a place of pride for the community. Working with the KRC, the city, and student and community volunteers, 195 Tc .D .a(0-(t)18.6(od [(n)8.1(ie,v)-2rJv2ut)18.ut)0l()ceaying wuture activiD .0TJ -18.53c



A PUBLIC REALM

1. MLK Plaza (open parcel on Martin Luther King, Jr. Ave)
2. Caretaker's Plaza (open parcel on Bethel Ave)
3. "Kyle Street Corridor" (collection of spaces on Kyle Street between Kenner and Bethel)
4. Obelisk Plaza and Memorial Wall (location for list of names)
5. Kenner Street Plaza (at intersection of Kenner and S Kyle)
6. Bethel Avenue Seniors Plaza (Eastport entry adjacent to New Salem Baptist Church)
7. "Cemetery Wall" (demarcating all perimeter edges)

B MEMORIAL WALK & SECONDARY PASSAGES

1. Accessible pedestrian path links Eastport entry near senior housing to "Shade Garden" in Dr. Walter Hardy Memorial Park
2. Dry Creek Bed and Rain Gardens help direct path of water through the cemeteries
3. Additional routes crossing cemetery areas linking north and south neighborhoods

ILLUMINATION OF ODD FELLOWS CEMETERY: CONSTELLATION OF A COMMUNITY'S HISTORY

The Illumination of Odd Fellows Cemetery was a project that served to introduce the program and its objectives to the community. Staged by community members during the day, the clean-up and laying out of 1000 luminary bags were a curiosity for those who approached. As the lights began to modulate the space, bringing focus to the limits of the burial grounds and the environment. By nightfall, we were struck by the new landscape as the dilapidated ground had completely disappeared and in its stead was a new constellation of community's history.

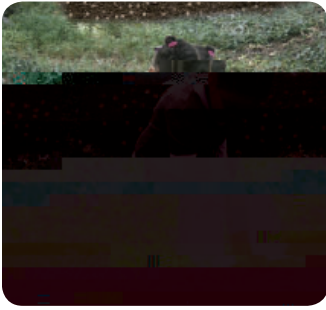
The Illumination served to demonstrate how simple interactive activities can profoundly affect the identity of public space.

The first Illumination of Odd Fellows Cemetery introduced the Knoxville Reanimation Coalition to the community and celebrated our coming together. Participation by students in ARCH 372 joined the Illumination of the Community Passage celebrated the open .0wnrwThe

CULTURAL AND SITE-SPECIFIC ACTION:
THE NONCE RITUAL



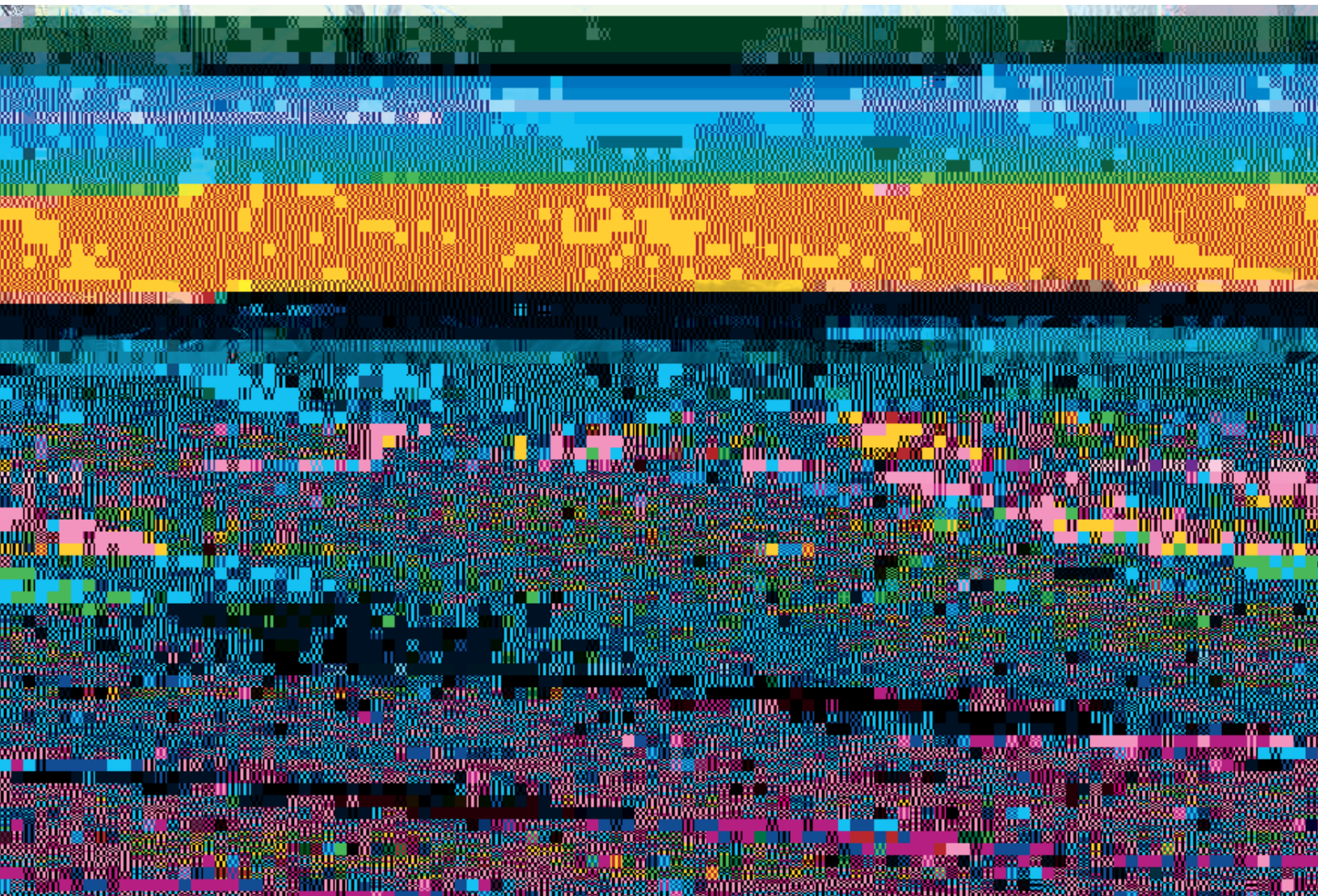
PLANTING CEREMONY: MEMORY CELEBRATION



As part of our mission to support contemporary commemoration in Odd Fellows Cemetery, university members of the Tate/Kemp family to participate in a ceremony designed to honor their Great-Aunt Mildred Tate who is buried in the cemetery but whose burial location is unknown. The ceremony combined two motives - one functional (leveling a sunken grave) and one memorial-based (using axiomatic symbolism), bringing together the secular and the sacred to heighten our understanding of the site.

The opportunity with the ceremonial planting is that the plants will have a long term seasonal presence in the cemetery, serving as a temporal cenotaph for visiting family.

Ceremony design grew from research published in "Surrogate Stones: The Development of Nonce Ritual in Odd Fellows Cemetery" in Works Archive, proceedings of the Third Annual Architecture, Culture and Spirituality Symposium. Participation by local family and students in advanced level Diploma Thematic Studio.



CIVIL WAR SESQUICENTENNIAL: VETERANS MEMORIAM

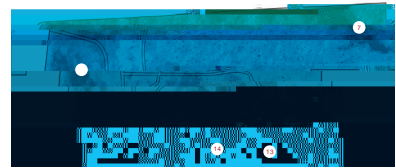
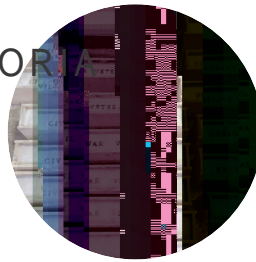
The Civil War Veterans Memorial demonstrates architecture's capacity to serve as an agent of community activism. The small scale interventions work in the (pre-ordained) field of social justice enacted in open public space.

The purpose of the memorial is to highlight and bring attention to the standing headstones of African-American Civil War veterans in the cemetery. The original headstones stand as a visible reminder of the sacrifice and hope of brave men, but many are worn and the information they bear is no longer legible. The interventions also provide a permanent sleeve to hold the American flag used to celebrate their service.



CIVIL WAR VETERANS MEMORIAL

Contemporary markers designed and fabricated to honor African American Civil War Veterans during the City's Sesquicentennial Celebration
- Odd Fellows Cemetery



CEMETERY WALL:
DEMARCATIION STUDIES



MEMORY WORKS_ ACADEMIC VENUE: CARDINAL POINTS

Cardinal Points serves as a commentary on contemporary and psychological responses to historical places of memory. The installation was conceptualized as a spatial gesture through interpretive material processes focused on reproduction and authenticity. Motivated by the landscape of an abandoned local cemetery, the installation translates the formal, repetitive structure of the burial grounds as a spiritual typology that fades and ultimately being discarded. Composed of white-on-white reproduced screen-prints and single shrine artifact, the primary goal of the installation was to create a crafted simile, an authentic experience that is comparable to the original but distinctive for its new contemporary place location.

The notion of mechanical reproduction first came about as a reference to the perceptual condition of themselves which, lining rows of the cemetery ground, already display the characteristic of repetitive repetition, burial stones lose their individual identity and society's inability to connect on a personal level. The reproductive processes practiced through the installation similarly relate, transforming lives into patterns of letters and numbers through physical acts of material transcription (rubbing, digitizing, processing, screen-printing, framing, hanging, editing) using white ink on white paper, the effect was not just to transform the original image of the headstone, but to bring it closer to the essence of the actual perceived condition of cemetery engagement. Sstize0Car0(dtuaPo8(in:he3s)7.Ae3s)7.gh



MEMORY WORKS_ ON-SITE ENGAGEMENT: CARDINAL POINTS

Cardinal Points (on-site) exhibition is a sister installation to an exhibit with the same name that was Art + Architecture Building in 2019. Original exhibit investigated issues of perceptual erasure and authenticity with a focus on the material culture of Odd Fellows Cemetery and the interpretive process of rubbing and screen printing. This second exhibition suggests another form of rediscovery by working and rubbing facsimiles on-site in order to raise awareness and celebrate the material culture generally, community's peripheral experience.

Cardinal Points (on-site) was collaborative project with Project C. During the service hours, the inner city high school students investigated the unscraped and identified fallen stones of interest. Over 400 fallen or fragmented stones in the 6-acre burial ground had two transcription tasks ... a traditional rubbing with Pellon fabric and charcoal via an aluminum foil encasement.

Design based on nonce ritual in Spaces of Memory special topics seminar engagement activity with Project the main length of the Community Passage.

CEMETERY SURVEY:
CEMETERY DATA MAPPING

ACCESSIBLE PATHWAYS:

