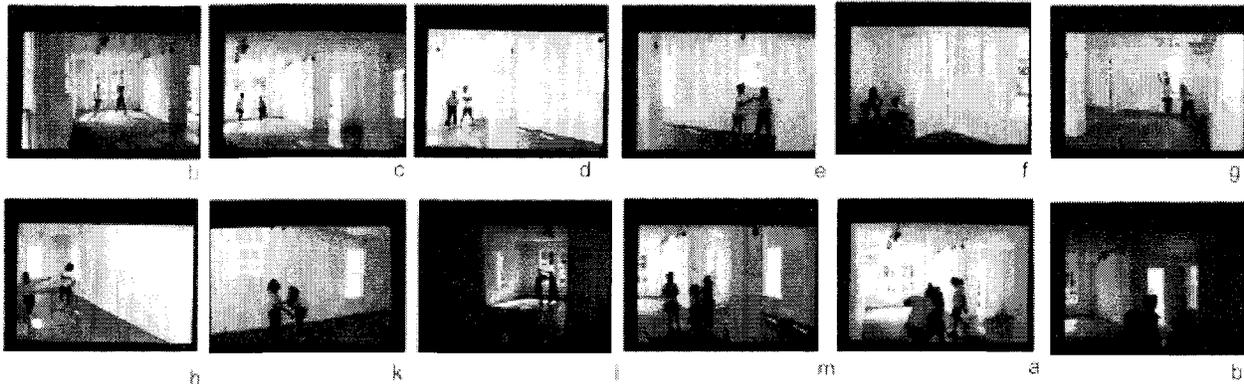


## THE PLACES OF MEMORY

One Week, Eight Hours

Felecia Davis

Cornell University

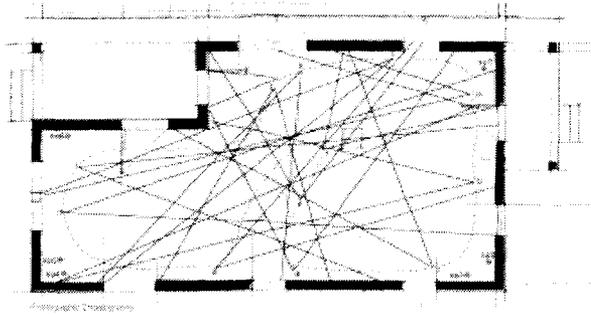


Panorama Projector 2 3:40p.m. October 11 2001

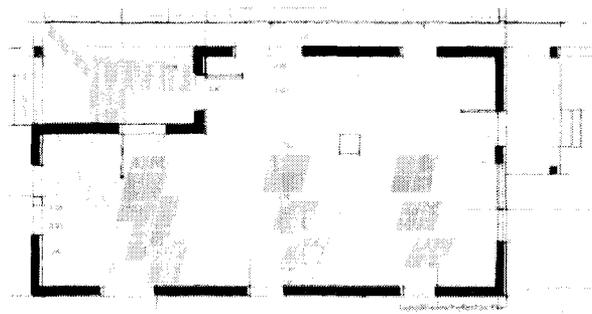
Located within Houston's Third Ward the Project Rowhouses are 22 identical shotgun type houses that combine both sustainable community revitalization and preservation. Situated as two parallel rows of houses, the houses form an intimate campus at the domestic scale and are occupied with a number of activities including; an after school youth education program, a single mothers residential program and artistic installations. The following project was done as Round 15 of the artistic installations titled "Shotguns 2001" where each of 7 artists were asked to consider the Shotgun house type as a cultural artifact as well as consider its significance in memory. Each installer was also asked to develop the relationship of the shotgun type at Project Rowhouses to the work of John Biggars. Before the installation began artists were introduced to the Director, Rick Lowe and his vision to transform the way in which art is considered. His art is the creation of Project Rowhouses as a memorial to John Biggars, but also a catalytic and sustainable community development that benefits the primarily African American residents of the Third Ward.

The project below starts with the trigger capture of an image and its repetition as the primary mode of investigating the significance of Biggars' work as well looking at repetition as an act of sustainability for Project Rowhouses.

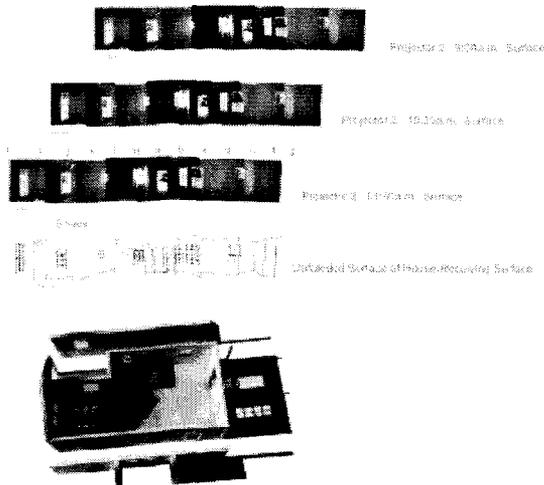
The installation develops an idea of memory through the act of repetition, similar to the act one performs to learn a new language. As a first time visitor to Houston and to this place, the focus was to try to inhabit this house and to understand the rhythms of this place and to investigate the installation as a space designed for use within an afterschool program where students would contribute their own photographs to the project. Designed as an open and improvisational system based on the photographic shot, the project documents the house as a full vessel, full of others and their pasts, presents and futures. During the course of a week the day was divided into 6 one hour and twenty minute intervals marking time at 9:00am, 10:20am, 11:40a.m., 1:00p.m., 2:20p.m., 3:40p.m. and 5:00p.m. to observe the play of light, shade, shadow and reflection on the shotgun's surfaces by drawing and photographing the house at each interval. The photographs were choreographed from six station points, now shown via slide projectors locked into the same six positions. At each station point a continuous surface panorama was created from photographic shots, creating a shifting, pulsing 5-second skin of projected light that lines the interior of the house. The artist had hoped to work with a teacher at Project Rowhouses to help students in the afterschool program there develop their own panoramic surfaces to be projected within the space.



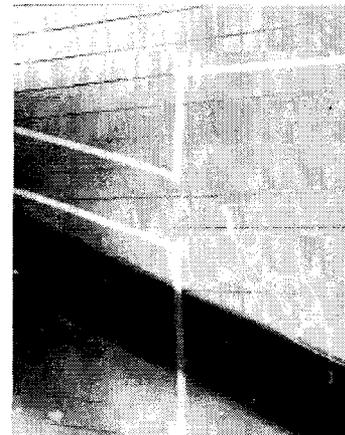
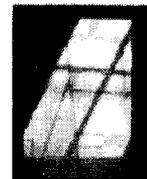
Choreographic Choreography



Light/Shadow Projection



Choreographic Unfolding of House/Five Second Shift



Drawing on the House to the Beat

Drawings were used to mark the surface of the house where the light penetrated, marked at the hour of the interval within the system. Not quick enough to actually capture and draw specific moments of clear outline on surface the light/shadow was always already someplace else leaving a careful systematic construction of intervals in shambles. Within this space set up between the drawing and the act of seeing one could speculate on whether the house was the same house or completely new, rapidly replacing itself at the speed of light? Reflections pivoted from the house windows complete with invisible axis about which point for point primary light was recast into its ghostly twin. In the act of drawing one also began to under-

stand or develop what a shadow could be in the interests of the future or time that had not gone through the house yet. Was a shadow simply a slave to objects that projected it? Sometimes the light was suffocating, raising water from the ground in a thick invisible vapor forcing refuge to the shadows cast inside the house. During the heat of the day shadows became a protective element and also a projective element in terms of opening the house up in a different space to the future. After one week the windows were covered in the house, cutting off the house from the continuity of light to create new imaginary surfaces of projection and places for future speculation.