

ACSA Creative Achievement Award

2016-2017 Winner Submission Materials

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Art of Space



ACSA Creative Achievement Award Supporting Documentation
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Introduction

Art of Space is a hybrid practice that institutes temporary, participatory architecture installations as a vehicle for community development on the Drury University campus, in the Center City districts of Springfield, MO—a regional center of 162,191 inhabitants spread over 81.72 square miles—and elsewhere upon invitation. A student organization at its core, Art of Space collaborates closely with individuals, groups, institutions and city agencies, engaging local artists and residents in a consistent program of “space-as-event” in and around Center City, the historic commercial and civic core of Springfield. Within Springfield, participation in Art of Space projects, at all levels and stages, is strictly extracurricular, pro bono and voluntary.

Since the fall of 2010, sixty-two Hammons School of Architecture students have collaborated with an even larger number of Drury faculty, staff, alumni, students outside of the department, and residents of Springfield, to plan and construct installations that engage a broad range of community members who live, work, and play in Center City Springfield and on the Drury campus. Beginning in the Spring of 2011, Art of Space has constructed anywhere from 2 to 4 installations a year. Anyone who participates in any aspect of an Art of Space installation is considered a member of the group.

The methodology used by the participants promotes “space as event,” meaning that the communal work of creating space—understood as an event—and the temporal, sensuous nature of the work, are as important as the formal, visual qualities of the finished space and object. “Space as event” also suggests the ludic aspect of the work (work as action and the thing installed) and the elimination of distinctions between work and play, denoting occasion as the ephemeral delineation of place within urban space. Through space as event we understand “structures of enchantment” (Lefebvre 1996) as a pattern of social relations that occur in and obtain appropriated time and space, a pattern occasioning a form of spatial and signifying social practice, creating space as “meaning and pleasure.” (Lefebvre 1991)

“Whatever space and time mean, place and occasion mean more.” --Also van Eyck, 1966

Pedagogy

The pedagogy of Art of Space is fundamentally “learning by doing” by “doing with and for others.” The primary goals of the project are not directed towards learning outcomes, but instead concentrate on inclusiveness, impact on the community, and promoting the “right to the city.” Because projects are both situational—creating opportunities for collaborative social interactions—and representational—signifying those collaborative interactions as a built spatial objects that often invite further engagement—tectonic considerations are given high priority in developing or selecting projects. The process of creating the installations is as important to the work as the completed structure, although the ideal project is always in process, unfolding over time through some form of direct experience with the structure or with others who encounter or seek out the work.

3. Goals

Conceived in the context of efforts by the City of Springfield to redevelop and “revitalize” the partially abandoned, decrepit historical, commercial and industrial center of the City, Art of Space proposed a means of direct participation in this process—of civic agency—as alternative to and critique of a framework that emphasized economic rather than social development, that structured apparent relationships and interactions between community members as economic exchange, through retail sales and services, and commercial or residential leases. Increased consumerism focusing on the fine arts, crafts, live music and non-franchised food—in short, local creative culture—was seen and promoted through strategic and action plans as the way to attract economic activity to downtown, and to provide an alternative to the dominant “mall culture” of Springfield. By creating large scale, participatory installations that were not objects, spaces or experiences to be bought and sold, and welcoming and encouraging the efforts of anyone interested in contributing to the work, Art of Space sought a role for architecture students in the realization of vital downtown urban space as a space of civic engagement through tectonic means. Inherent to this approach is the belief that a restoration of “the right to the city” is crucial to the long term social and economic resilience of Center City and greater Springfield. The implementation of the “right to the city” contrasts with the other forms of social practice instituted at the HSA, such as the Center of Community Studies, which provides comprehensive planning, urban design, and development documents to Missouri communities as a curricular requirement, and Drury Design-Build, which employs conventional design-build project delivery methods to deliver a range of constructed projects for “charities or communities in need” as a curricular and extracurricular activity. Art of Space seeks to increase student and public awareness of the possibilities of public space and architecture’s role in the community. The project calls attention to the innovative use of materials, form and underutilized space in the creation of beautiful, occupiable spaces with the expressed social purpose of benefits to the entire community.

Background

The genesis of Art of Space is rooted in contingencies—and pedagogy in an extracurricular sense—where thought and action occur for the joy of making, a pure expression of mutual teaching and learning by example. Art of Space originates in an almost categorical way, adhering unconsciously to the outline given by Andres Lepik in his introductory essay “Building on Society” in *Small Scale Big Change*, the publication of which coincided with the founding of Art of Space in the fall of 2010:

“These undertakings...are not intended to solve large, systemic problem

by applying preconceived political theories or utopian concepts. Instead each has identified a specific need and set out to meet it, whether in conjunction with a local nongovernmental organization or larger city initiative. The active participation of the community lends these endeavors additional value. Each project is the result of a dialogue in which the architect cedes parts of his or her authority to others, marking an important departure from the modernist ideal of the architect as a mastermind who designs everything from teapots to entire metropolises. By reevaluating the role they play, these architects are signaling their conviction that good design is not a privilege of the few and the powerful.” (Lepik 2010)

There was something in the air in 2010, and it has been a great pleasure of Gerard’s academic career to give students at the Hammons School of Architecture the opportunity to locate aspirations typically reserved for thesis studio—or expressed every few years in a more or less prosaic design-build project—within the community itself, their community, on a systematic and transformative basis. On the surface, the Art of Space undertaking is very straitforward, direct, and project specific, although without addressing the needs characteristic of projects in *Small Scale, Big Change*. The aspiration to address “large, systemic problems” is rhizomatic, apparent only in the accumulation, over time, of successive pavilions popping into view from the fertile territory of Springfield, a series of unusual structures in Center City that contribute, incrementally, to an altered perception of the city and to the role of art and design in the evolution of place.

Initiated as a conversation with local business entrepreneur and Drury University alumnus, Chantal Chase, to create opportunities to promote the accomplishments of Drury architecture students within the framework of downtown First Friday Art Walks, Art of Space sprang directly from Gerard’s experience leading collaborative and participatory installations in Boston and New York, and an ephemeral “Guerilla Space” exercise in the Drury foundation studio curriculum. In the fall of 2010, public participation in the First Friday Artwalk was phenomenal, with thousands of Springfield residents across the social and economic spectrum taking to the streets of the relatively compact downtown, even as merchants complained that “no one buys anything” and blocks of storefronts and highrise commercial office space remained empty or boarded, a legacy of commercial and retail flight to less dense areas of the city, compounded by the ongoing recession. The proposal to exhibit student studio work quickly transformed into a program of tactical interventions, facilitated in the first instance by the reputation of Drury University and Chantal’s connections with the Springfield’s Urban Districts Alliance, the Downtown Community Improvement District, and Drury alumni who were invested financially and socially in the “revitalization” of downtown. Set on a course by its entrepreneurial origins to manifest Ole Bauman’s elaboration of “unsolicited architecture,” over the years Art of Space has offered dedicated students a unique engaged learning opportunity that redefined flows of ideas & perception across the boundary separating the academy from the city in Springfield.

2011 Nest Connect(ions)

2011 Nest Connect(ions)

2012 Sunderland Field Nest

2013 Kellogg Green Rhizomatic Grotto

2014 Qi

2013 Woven Lignin/Pick-up Stick Pavilion

2013 Art Street Jam Nest

2012 Knitting Space

2011 Nest Connect(ions)

2011 Holland Building Tape Installation

2012 Artsfest Pillow

2013 Rhizomatic Grotto

2015 House of Art(S)

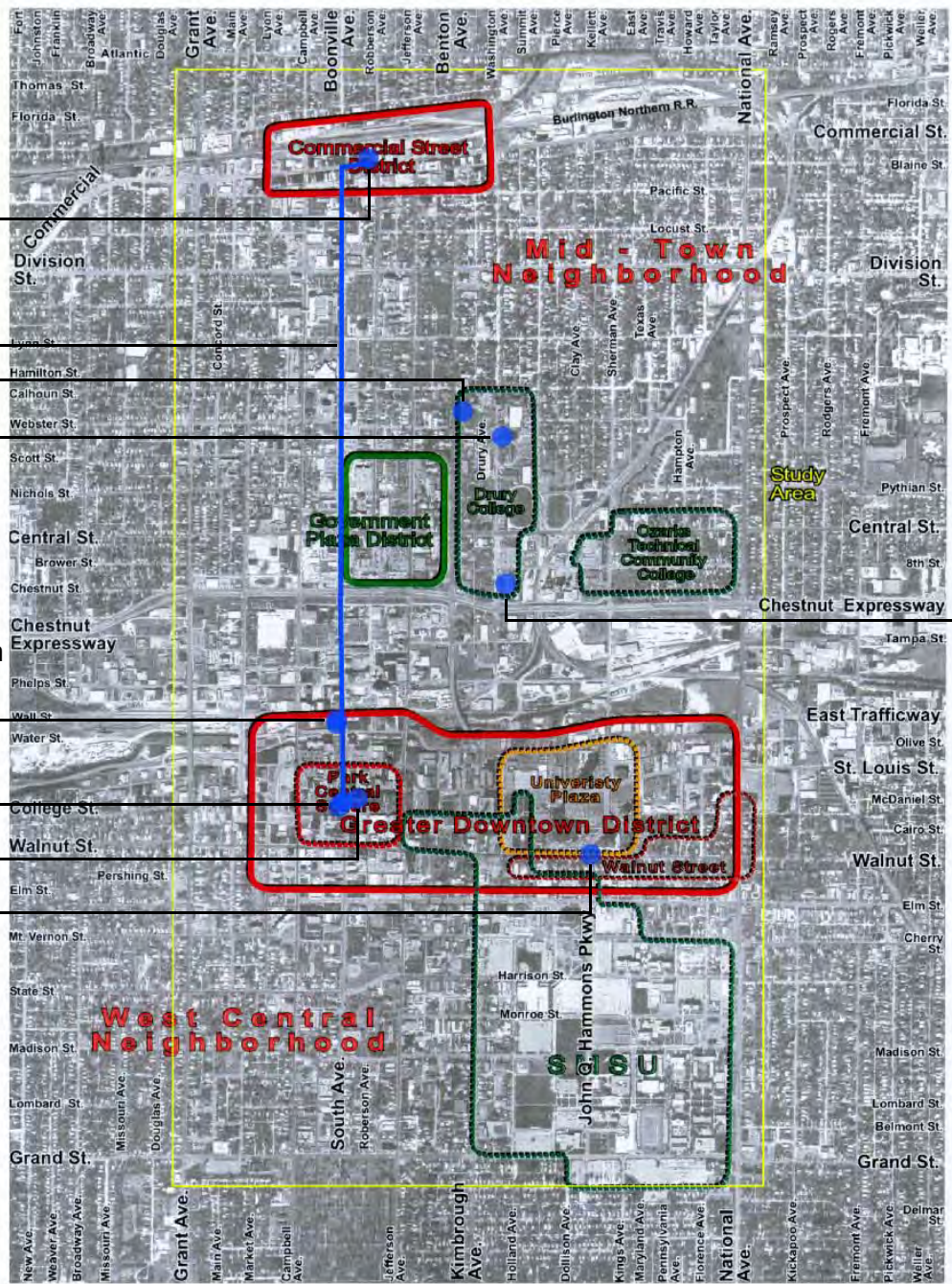


Figure 2
Districts
Center City Study Area

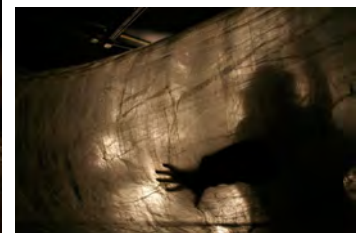
2015 HSA Stack of Cards
2013 HSA Woven Lignin
2012 HSA Knitting Space
2012 HSA Pillow
2011 HSA Tape Installation

5.



Holland Building Tape Installation

date: March 2011
material: Clear Packing Tape
structure: Membrane
technique: Weaving
program: Lounging, Sliding



Lasting only a single night after months of collaborative planning and execution, this first and most ephemeral public installation by Art of Space clearly announced the group's intentions. Located in an unleased basement space, on a prominent down-town block plagued by extensive commercial vacancies and long stretches of boarded-up storefronts, this packing tape installation introduced Springfield to architectural installation and its glowing civic potential.

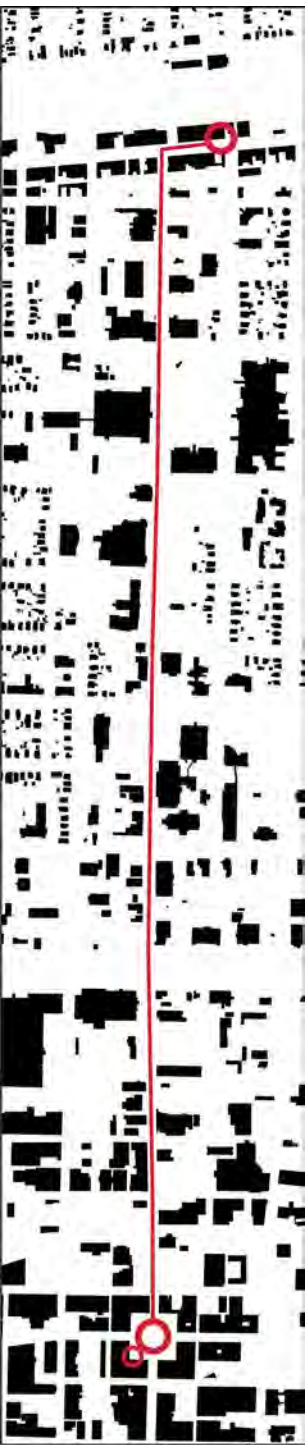


Tape Installation Build

date: March 2011
material: Clear Packing Tape
structure: Membrane
technique: Weaving
program: Space-as-Event



A metaphorical transformation of a common material and unleashed space into an incandescent, floating enclosure in this Numen / For Use inspired installation. The easily executed weaving technique requires team effort to shuttle rolls of tape through space, and is ideal for participatory space making. The structure relies on horizontal tension to hang from vertical columns and partitions. Membrane prestress occurs iteratively as a consequence of the weaving process, facilitated by the elasticity and self-adhesion of the tape fibers.

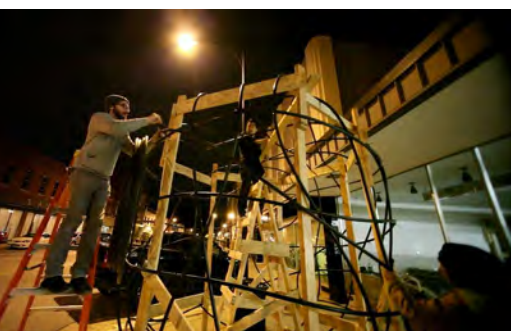
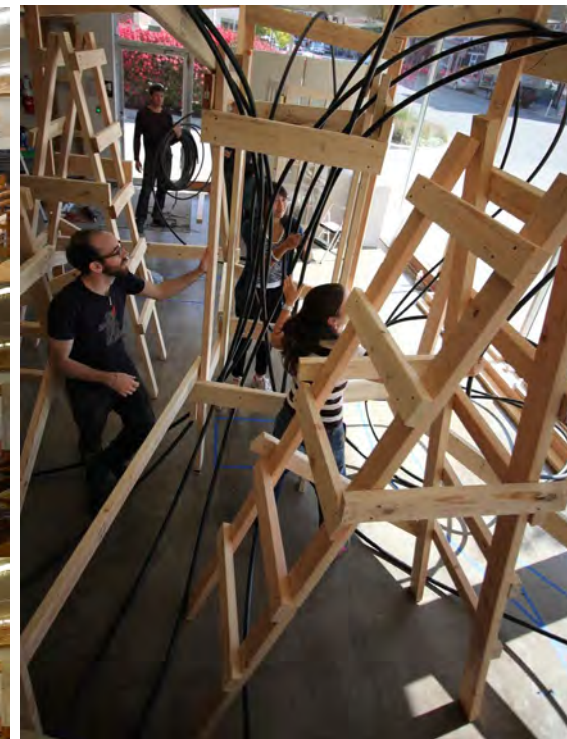


Nest Connect(ions)

date: October-
November 2011
material: Polyethylene Tubing,
Nylon Cable Ties
structure: Lattice Shell
technique: Weaving
program: Music Therapy
Sessions, Rolling,
Lounging, Napping



To resignify the civic connection between Commercial St. and Park Central Square, Art of Space created two Nests. The first, a torroidal space within a space, was well suited to naps, and music therapy sessions with special needs children. Volunteers rolled the second Nest 1.4 miles down N Booneville Ave.--the historic axis of Center City--during the premier night of the completed Park Central Square renovation. On the Square, homeless teenagers adopted the Nest as a daytime hang-out.



Nest Connect(ions) Build

date: October-
November 2011
material: Polyethylene Tubing,
Nylon Cable Ties
structure: Lattice Shell
technique: Weaving
program: Space-as-Event

Weaving polyethylene irrigation tubing into a Nest requires combined choreography and drawing in space, as volunteers pass strands and coiled fiber from one pair of hands to another. Placing and tightening zip-ties at tube intersections--tasks that can be accomplished by a broad range of helpers--create a stiff shell that is self supporting with the removal of the wood falsework.



Sunderland Field Nest

date: April 2012
material: Polyethylene Tubing,
Nylon Cable Ties
structure: Lattice Shell
technique: Weaving
program: Lounging, Day Dreaming

Invited to create an installation for Earth Day, AoS recycled lumber, tubing and toroidal form to create the largest Johnston & Hsiao inspired nest to date, anchoring the structure around a tree adjacent to a major pedestrian path accessing the main campus.



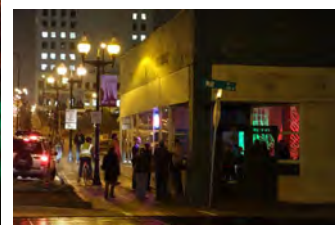
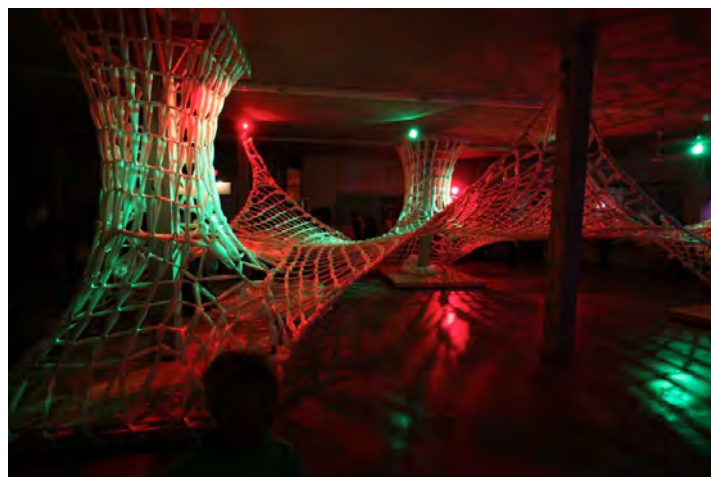
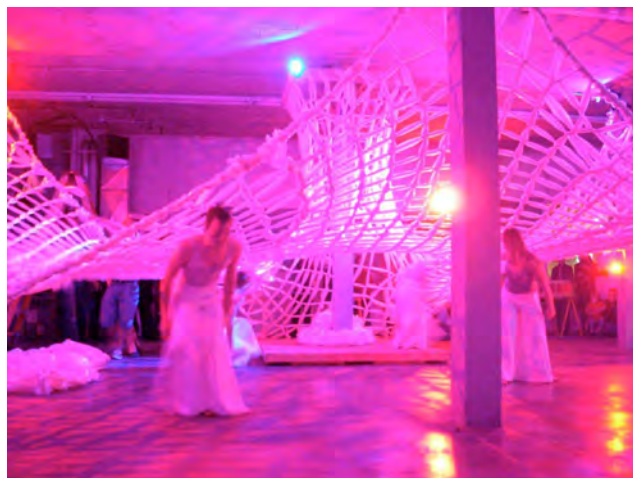
HSA Pillow

date: March 2012
material: Polyethylene Sheeting
structure: Air Supported Membrane
technique: Welding
program: Conversation

Artsfest Pillow

date: May 2012
material: Polyethylene Sheeting
structure: Air Supported Membrane
technique: Welding
program: Helium Beach Ball

Buoyancy provided the theme for this succession of Ant Farm inspired installations, when a group discussion to determine program took flight with a proposal for beach ball played with helium filled balls. Created in partnership with the Springfield Regional Arts Council and the Urban Districts Alliance, these spaces of ludic social interaction provided an engaging, unified aesthetic, and mild critique of the market-fair context of Artsfest.

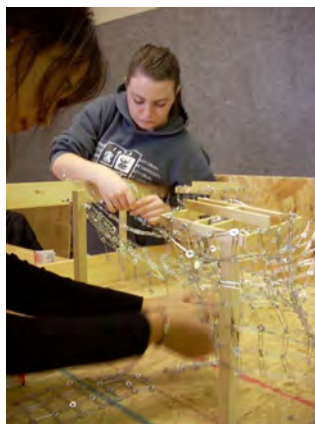
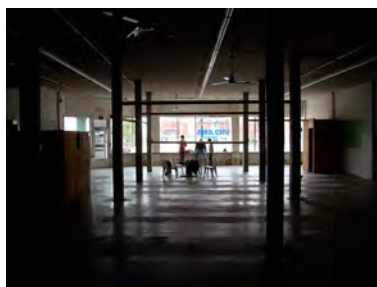
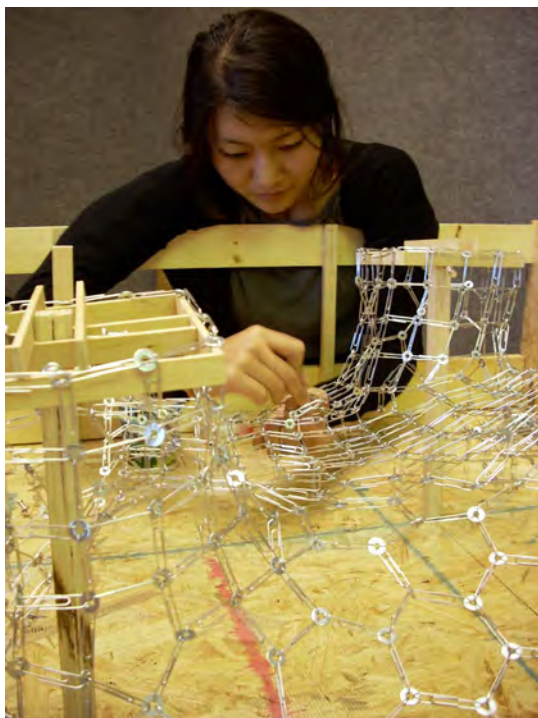
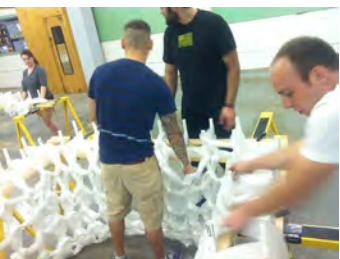
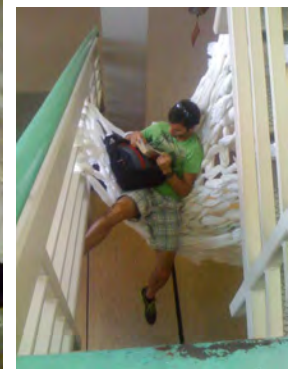


Knitting Space

date: December 2012-
January 2013
material: Shrink Wrap, Lumber
structure: Membrane
technique: Knitting
program: Dance Performance,
Climbing, Lounging



Experienced as hammock, trampoline and climbing net, this installation was also a playful spatial metaphor for community support, community shelter, and “knitting together” elements that are the basis of resilient community. Structural capacity and the deeply resonant social nature of the fabrication process combined to create a symbolically meaningful space. *Knitting Space* was the inaugural event for the ideaXfactory, a workshop exhibit space co-founded by Gerard Nadeau in a city owned building slated for eventual demolition.



HSA Knitting Space

date: October 2012
material: Polyethylene Sheeting
structure: Catenary
technique: Knitting
program: Climbing, Lounging

Knitting Space Build

date: November-December 2012
material: Shrink Wrap, Lumber, Fasteners
structure: Membrane
technique: Knitting
program: Space-as-Event

Social knitting--ie the tradition of the knitting circle--was the basis for a series of physically engaging, climbable stuctures and canopies knit on large fixed looms from long fibers of construction sheeting and shrink wrap during several group sessions. The stretched and draped webs were fitted onto exisiting structural buidling components, mediated by wood armatures as required.



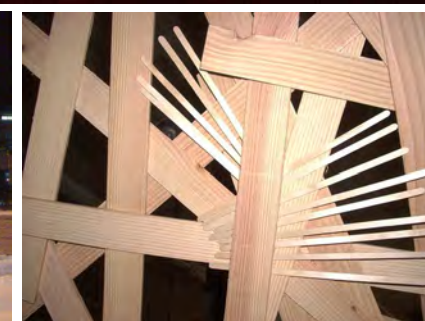
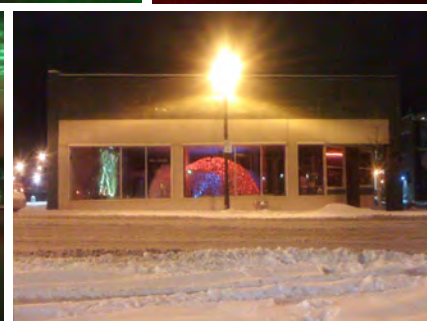
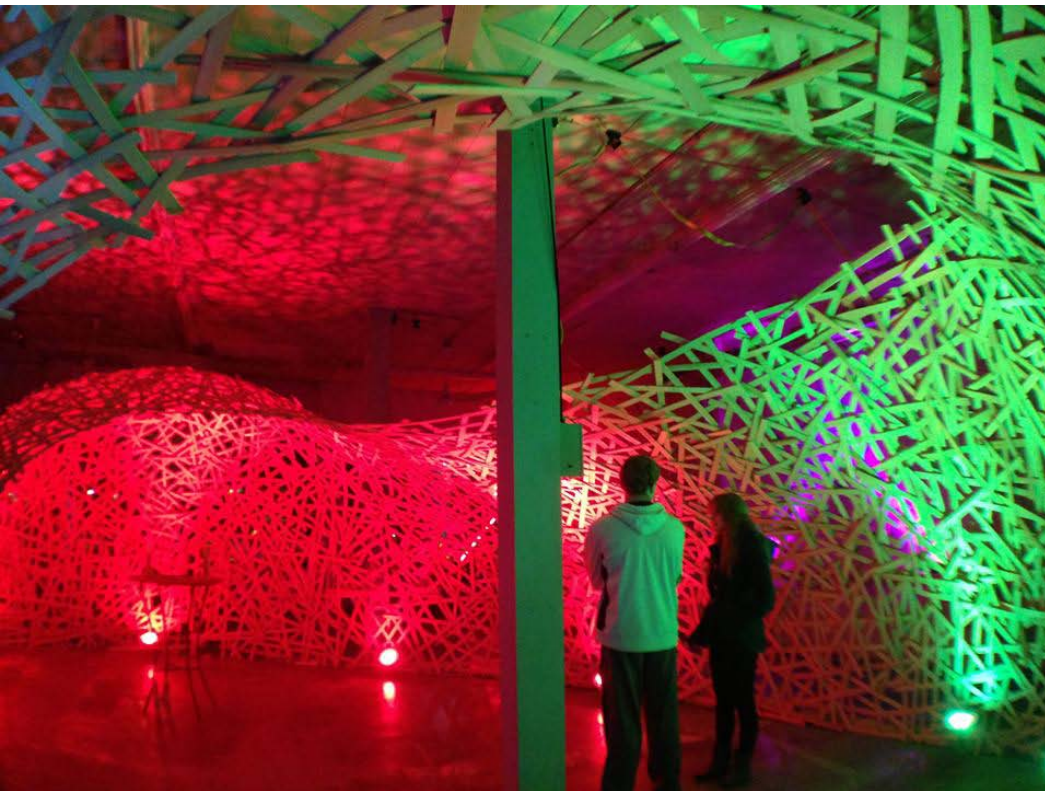
Rhizomatic Grotto

date: August 2013
 material: Wood Pallets, Fasteners
 structure: Mass
 technique: Stacking
 program: Sitting
 (Climbing, Love Making)*

* not officially sanctioned



An embodiment of community engagement as emergent form, this work temporarily transformed emblems of exchange value into use value as public art. After establishing a curve of necessary length on the ground, participants stacked and corbelled the pallets following a pre-determined set of rules. This collaborative, temporal installation was the first large scale work on the museum grounds in over four decades.



Woven Lignin/ Pick-up Stick Pavilion

date: November-
January 2014
material: Wood Slats,
Sand Bags
structure: Lattice Shell
technique: Weaving
program: Weaving
Pick-up Sticks



During First Friday Art Walk and First Night events, visitors to this installation were invited to add additional layers of articulation to the structural lattice by weaving mats of coffee stir sticks onto/into the surface of the pavilion. This constructive and challenging programmatic activity proved much more popular than games of pick-up sticks, as entire families spent quite hours together elaborating the basic concept of the installation.

15.



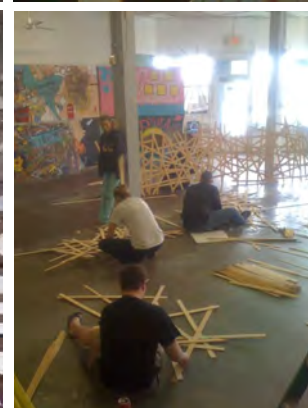
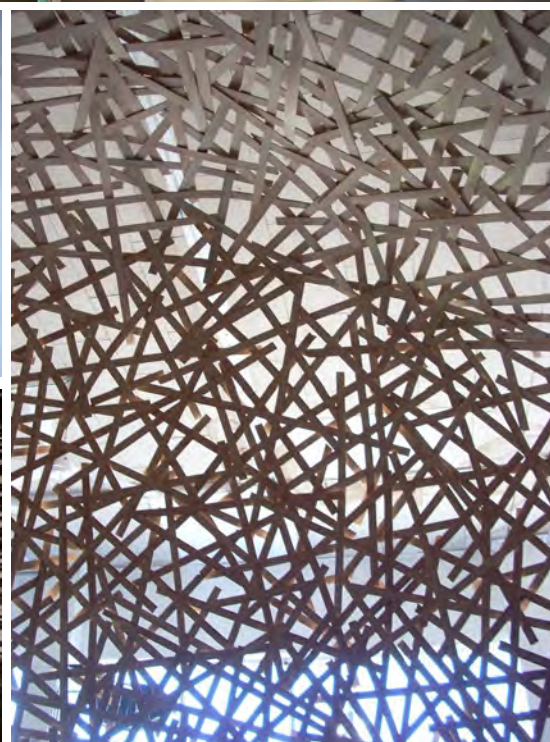
HSA Woven Lignin

date: October 2013-
August 2014
material: Wood Slats,
Sand Bags
structure: Lattice Shell
technique: Weaving
program: Lounging, Napping

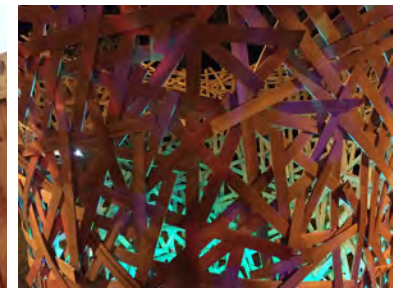


Woven Lignin Build

date: November-
December 2013
material: Wood Slats,
Sand Bags
structure: Lattice Shell
technique: Weaving
program: Space-as-Event



The versatile & accessible technique of weaving wood slats derived from coffee stir stick sculptures, and was developed at a larger scale during brain-storming sessions and workshops to promote space making involving a broad range of participants. Free of fasteners or adhesives, the semi-rigid lattice shell relies on friction induced by the spring-back of the slats and from gravity for stiffness and support. Where friction with the floor isn't great enough, linear sandbags counter lateral thrust developed in the domed and arched surfaces.



Forest of Arden Annex

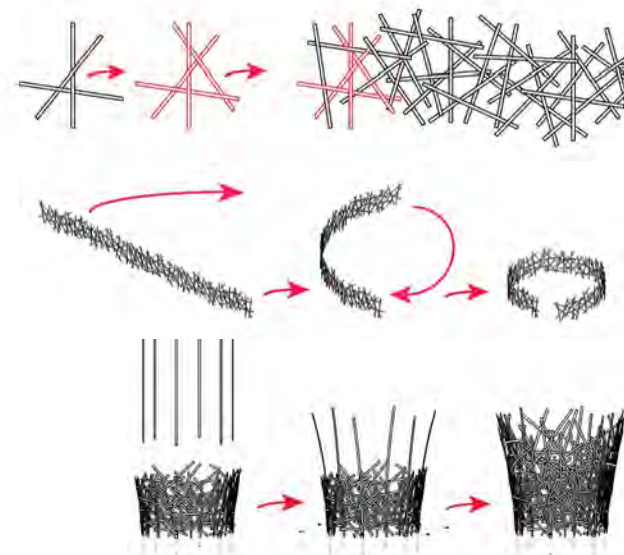
date: June 2015
material: Wood Slats
structure: Lattice Shell
technique: Weaving
program: Day Dreaming

Adjacency to an area on the Stetson campus named the "Forest of Arden," after the woodland setting of William Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, inspired the decision to create an organic parasol. Participants inscribed answers to the question "What is nature?" onto slats and wove them into the structure, a nod to Orlando's expressions of love for Rosalind, and to the complex nature of Shakespeare's pastoral comedy.

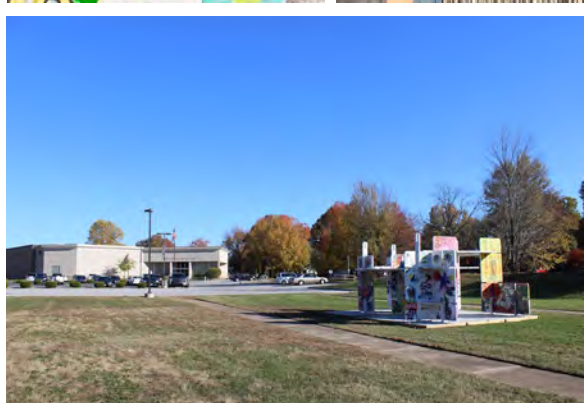
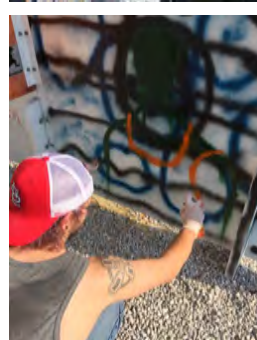


Forest of Arden Annex Build

date: June 2015
material: Wood Slats
structure: Lattice Shell
technique: Weaving
program: Space-as-Event



The Forest of Arden Annex was woven from over 10,000 linear feet of custom milled wood slats, held together by friction and the springback of the material—a technique developed in earlier installations to facilitate broad participation in space-as-event. Except for bolt connections to stakes driven into the ground, no fasteners or adhesives were used to create the woven, structural surface. Constrained by a ground plan of three six-foot diameter circles, set fifteen feet apart, the emergent form and space occurred as the result of combined method, material properties, and gravity.

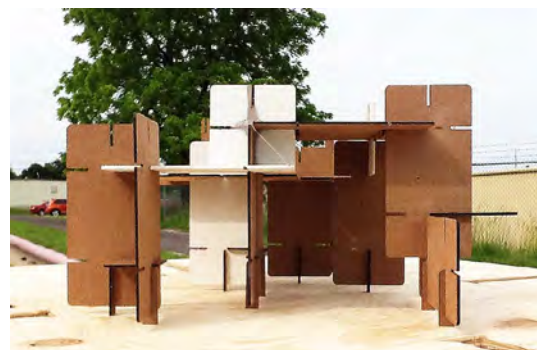
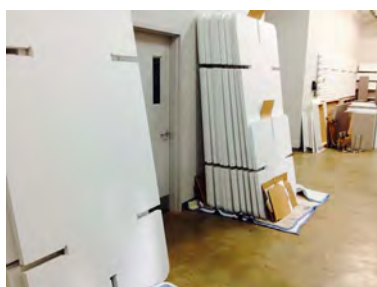
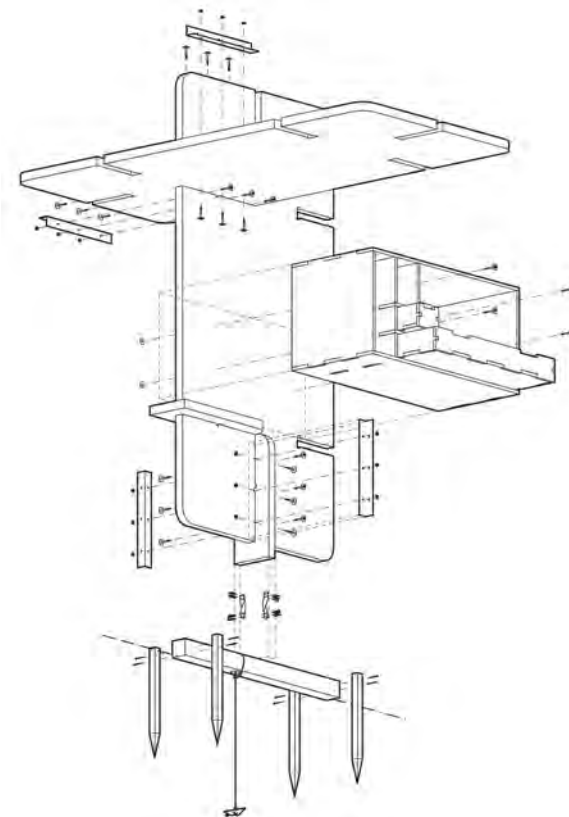


House of Art(S)

date: August 2015
 material: SIPs*, Lumber, Steel Angles, Fasteners
 structure: Frame/Diaphragm
 technique: Stacking
 program: Displaying, Painting, Drawing, Looking

* 3/4" plywood exterior sheathing, 1" rigid foam insulation polyurethane adhesive

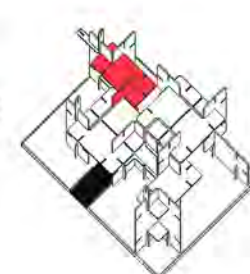
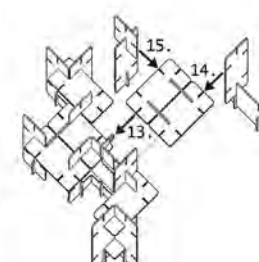
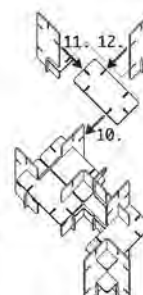
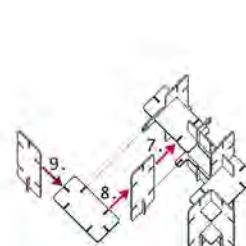
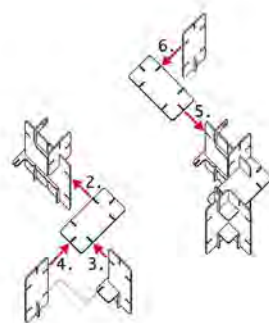
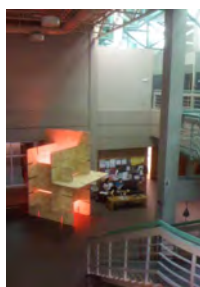
Erection of the mural panels by Art of Space volunteers occurred in under 2 hours. Invited by the museum to add 2D and 3D works to the project, Springfield residents gradually transgressed the white walls and roof of the House of Art(S)...and then each others' graffiti. The museum curatorial staff photographed daily changes as additions to the museum's digital archive and "permanent" collection.



House of Art(S) Build

date: February-August 2015
 material: SIPs*, Lumber, Steel Angles, Fasteners
 structure: Frame/Diaphragm
 technique: Stacking
 program: Displaying, Painting, Drawing, Looking

* 3/4" plywood exterior sheathing, 1" rigid foam insulation
 polyurethane adhesive



At the invitation of the curator of the Springfield Art Museum to develop a participatory installation relating to the museum collection, Art of Space determined that an archive, inspired by Ray and Charles Eames' *House of Cards*, and curated by the general public, would meet the goals of space-as-event. Influenced also by Brian O'Doherty's seminal essay "Inside the White Cube," the project sought to deconstruct and reconstitute museum gallery space outdoors.

20. Impacts

While there has never been an assessment of impacts of Art of Space on the education of student participants, for many students an awareness of the strategic value of their tactical efforts occurs with the perception and acknowledgment of change in Springfield, and with tangible, high profile accomplishments and recognition from within and outside of the community.

Some tangible, indirect outcomes:

- Emphasis on the social production of space and the reciprocal relationship of space to social reproduction (understood as the production of social activities and exchanges), internalized by student participants in Art of Space, was instrumental in the consecutive 2nd and 1st place finishes of HSA student design teams at the 2014 and 2015 Central States Region Student Design Competitions. Half of the student members of these two teams played major roles in Art of Space projects.
- Student participation in Art of Space led to a partnership with the City of Springfield's Public Works Department, the Springfield Arts Council, and Springfield art activists to create the ideaXfactory in a city owned building scheduled for demolition in the downtown mixed use post-industrial neighborhood of Jordan Valley. As a new model for community development through the arts in Springfield, Art of Space contributed heavily to the successful grant application by the City of Springfield for a \$200,000 Artplace America grant to benefit the ideaXfactory in 2013, one of only two Artplace America grants awarded in Missouri out of 226 nationally in the five years of 2011 through 2015. The contribution of Art of Space to the ideaXfactory continued to bring benefits with the award, in 2014, of a \$30,000 NEA Art Works Grant to the Springfield Regional Arts Council for the ideaXfactory, the first ever National Endowment for the Arts Grant to a Springfield, MO, institution.
- The unprecedented collaboration between the Springfield Art Museum, a tax-payer funded museum, and Art of Space has produced two large scale temporary architectural installations on the public space of the museum grounds. The first large scale work on the grounds in 40 years, Rhizomatic Grotto, in collaboration with sculptor Blaine Whisenhunt, was so successful that the Museum invited Art of Space back for an even more ambitious effort one year later in 2015.
- Both the 2013 and 2015 Community Focus Reports for Springfield & Greene County included Art of Space and the ideaXfactory in its Blue Ribbon section on Art and Culture, for contributions to creating an awareness "for arts and culture in addressing community issues in sectors such as education, economic development, quality of life, civic engagement, and poverty." There was no mention of public art in previous reports prior to activities by Art of Space.
- Videos recorded, edited and posted on You-Tube by Art of Space supporters in the Springfield community have, over time, received close to 6,000 views.

