



College of THE ARTS

Engaging public spaces

IN 2018, USF STUDENTS DESIGNED AND BUILT installations that rethink the role of a public bench. They installed their work at the Museum of Fine Arts where the installations attracted hundreds of visitors.

The USF School of Architecture and Community Design continues to deepen its connection to the City of St. Petersburg.

Working closely with Mayor Rick Kriseman, Deputy Mayor Kanika Tomalin and the city council, the architecture program brings talented students and faculty to important projects that enrich the community and urban environment of St. Petersburg.

“We really value our relationship with the city,” says Bob MacLeod, director of the School of Architecture and Community Design. “And it’s a great city, it’s so walkable, it’s done so many things right in the last dozen or so years.”

With support from the city, architecture graduate assistants help with projects and conduct studies in conjunction with faculty members. Research faculty member Josué Robles, MArc '07, teaches architecture studio classes that empower students to apply their skills on research projects with the City of St. Petersburg.

For example, in a design-build studio class taught by Robles, students invited the public to interact with innovative installations that rethink how public spaces can

be activated. Students design, fabricate and observe their works in the public sphere to ultimately judge and learn from the effectiveness of their designs.

In an ongoing research project, students in an advanced graduate design studio class are working on a proposal that examines a pair of sites as the home of a future African American history museum in St. Petersburg.

Led by practicing architect and adjunct faculty member Tara Wood-Dozark, MArc '06, students will travel to the African American History Museum in Washington, D.C., and historic sites of Martin Luther King Jr. in Atlanta to inform their research. They will also visit the Montgomery Civil Rights Memorial and The National Memorial for Peace and Justice. This work will provide a vision for St. Petersburg to use in the planning and pursuit of the proposed African American History Museum.

Past USF architecture projects in the city have examined possible redevelopment options for the Tropicana Field site.

USF architecture alumna Sarah Jane Vatelot, MArc '19, examined the Tropicana Field site as a student. Delving into the African-American communities that once inhabited the site, she completed a thesis on the African-American residents and businesses displaced after the city acquired the land in 1978 for redevelopment.

Vatelot began her St. Petersburg research project by mapping the buildings of the current Tropicana Field area. She was struck by the void of the 86-acre site.

In January 2020, she released her findings as a book, “Where Have All The Mangoes Gone? Reactivating The Tropicana Field Site On The Threshold of St. Petersburg’s History, Culture and Memory.” She provides insight into

Above: In 2018, USF students designed and built installations that rethink the role of a public bench. They installed their work at the Museum of Fine Arts.

Opposite page, top: Gary Schmitt, Intervention, 2017 Site-specific installation

Bottom: Teachers in the InsideART program tour the USF Contemporary Art Museum with Curator of Education Leslie Elsasser, MFA '07.

the area formerly known as Cooper's Quarters and advocates for inclusive design that invites all people to be a part of future redevelopment.

"We're hoping her good work will impact the way the city thinks about that site," MacLeod says.

The School of Architecture and Community Design looks forward to expanding on this history of rich research projects and community collaboration. Right now, the school is in the process of securing its own studio space in St. Petersburg.

A proposed site on Mirror Lake near the historic St. Petersburg Shuffleboard Club will enable the school to establish a more profound, day-to-day presence for the city and its residents. The school will be able to hold studio classes in the space, and invite members of the community and government to create dialogue around urban design.

"It's a special city, and we're really honored to be a part of it," MacLeod says.

- CONNOR MURPHY '18 | College of The Arts



Photos: Courtesy of the College of The Arts

InsideART

IN A UNIQUE PARTNERSHIP, the USF Contemporary Art Museum, the USF College of Education and the School District of Hillsborough County collaborate to present InsideART, an innovative arts-based learning and visual literacy program that combines social studies with contemporary art. A new partner has recently joined this collaboration: the University of Alicante in Spain. The program is being introduced in Spain by program co-directors Bárbara Cruz of the College of Education and Noel Smith, MA '95, from the Contemporary Art Museum.

Cruz was awarded a spring 2020 Fulbright Fellowship at the University of Alicante and is working with faculty in the college of education there and with curators at the University of Alicante Museum to assist with the development of a program similar to InsideART for Spanish educators and students. Smith will be joining her for a week for key presentations to faculty and students.

Based on the USF Contemporary Art Museum temporary exhibition program of national and international art, InsideART provides a secondary school online curriculum (hosted on the museum's website and free to all) as well as professional development workshops for teachers in Hillsborough County. InsideART facilitates the appreciation of socially engaged contemporary art and helps develop creativity and critical thinking skills, allowing students to view their communities and the world in new and more sophisticated ways.

- NOEL SMITH | College of The Arts



4-way collaboration

THE 2020 VERSION OF THE "SKYWAY" EXHIBITION is a celebration of artistic practices in the Tampa Bay region, as it is a collaboration among four institutions: the Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg; The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota; the Tampa Museum of Art; and the USF Contemporary Art Museum on the Tampa campus.

Working together, curators from each institution will offer context for the diversity of art being created in Hillsborough, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas and Sarasota counties. Artworks and projects in the exhibition will be selected by museum curators and the guest juror, Claire Tancons, an independent curator and scholar whose practice takes a global focus on the conditions of cultural production. Tancons has curated biennials around the world, including Prospect.1, New Orleans; the 2008 Gwangju Biennial; and the 2019 Sharjah Biennial.

The Gobioff Foundation is supporting the exhibition with a contribution to each participating museum.

Exhibition dates and locations are:

May 30-Aug. 16 – Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg

June 21-Oct. 4 – The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota

June 25-Oct. 11 – Tampa Museum of Art

June 22-Sept. 5 – USF Contemporary Art Museum