Urban Cuts Schedule:

4:00 PM

memories to share with society. By building on this notion and applying it to the banal or old advertisements of St. Louis city I hope to historicize the writing on the wall.

Liviu Gajora, Wake Forest University:

ABSTRACT:

This paper focuses on the analysis of the work of British graffiti artist Banksy as a form of visual rhetoric and as a particular illustration of a rhetoric of dissent. Graffiti has always been at a cross between vandalism and art, between social exclusion and social recognition. This has taken new heights with the arrival of Banksy, as many of his pieces have received artistic recognition and been sold for hundreds of thousands of dollars in the past few years, while he still maintains his actions are a protest against consumerist society. Although he mainly operates in Britain, graffiti pieces by him have been reported in other countries too, including the United States. One of the distinctive features of his work is the use and appropriation of iconic images and photographs, from Mona Lisa to Accidental Napalm or The Simpsons.

Picturing the Community: The McRee Town Neighborhood in Saint Louis, Missouri

In 2003, the Garden District Commission demolished more than two hundred buildings on the eastern half of the McRee Town neighborhood in Saint Louis. Missouri. The Commission, a private coalition headed by officials from the nearby Missouri Botanical Garden, demolished six blocks of historic brick homes and apartment buildings that housed primarily low-income renters and homeowners, relocated hundreds of residents, erected twenty-five acres of market-rate, singlefamily, suburban-style housing on the cleared land, and ceremoniously renamed the area Botanical Heights. This paper explores how visual representations of McRee Town between 1998-2003 helped legitimize this urban renewal project and the dislocations it caused in the lives of McRee Town residents. It engages viewers with the photographs of burned-out, boarded-up buildings that populated newspaper reports and public relations documents during these five years, and juxtaposes these images with photographs taken by Genevelyn Peters, a McRee Town resident prior to the neighborhood's destruction. I argue that the second set of photographs of family, homelife, and play complicate and challenge the dominant understanding of McRee Town and its residents as criminal and atomized by suggesting a vibrant neighborhood community. In considering both sets of photographs through the visual genealogies of slum housing and family snapshot photography from which they emerged, this paper denaturalizes viewers' affective reactions to the photographs and describes how each set constructs a distinct, divergent representation of the former McRee Town neighborhood.

ABSTRACT:

Christopher Clesielski, School of the Art Institute of Chicago

ABSTRACT:

The Madison Park neighborhood of Baltimore, Maryland is comprised of mostly stately Italianate row houses and Queen Anne Victorian mansions. The problem with Madison Park is that they are mostly burned out and abandoned as a result of urban decay. In the spring of 2003, I was given a project for my senior thesis class word that starts with

the streets of Madison Park early in the morning. As I had been warned, these were dangerous streets. In the process of photographing street after street of abandoned

id

that from their estimate one in every six buildings are abandoned in Baltimore Oty and as she said those are only the ones we know about. I requested the addresses of abandoned properties in the zip code of 21217, which included Madison Park. The spreadsheet that I received from here contained over 2,000 addresses. I was stunned. For the project, I incorporated a photograph of one of the stately Italianate

row homes as a background, overlaid with the addresses supplied Baltimore City Department of Housing. This project led to further documentation of other structures throughout Madison Park including partially demolished structures and abandoned public buildings. As of December 2009, the property still remains abandoned and the neighborhood has seen very little gentrification.

2:30 PM 3:30 PM

Jesse Draper, Michigan State University:

ABSTRACT:

On May 6th, 1903, Emma Lazarus' famous poem was permanently affixed to the base of Othat mighty womanOthe statue of Liberty, a symbolically infused icon representing the United States as the Oiberator of the tired, [the] poor, [the] huddled masses yearning to be free.OOne woman's vision forever connected to the image of another woman, standing as a symbolic monument to the promise of liberty and opportunity in America, a woman whose Obeacon hand glows worldwide welcome... and her name Mother of Exiles. The meaning ascribed to that symbol was not shared by the white male elite who controlled not only the public spheres of government and commerce, but also the material conditions located American

cities understood the awesome symbolic power of the skyscrapers which supplied both the space, and the symbolic presence (as corporate logos) desired by growing industrial-age corporations. A cultural reading of the great physical monuments through which men and women symbolically represented their disparate visions of urban America at the turn of the twentieth century suggests that men had sought to conquer, to dominate, and exploit for individual commercial gain, while women sought to liberate, to heal, and to unite the masses of immigrant exiles. The contestations in public spaces over social, political and economic power, and better health conditions (both at home and in the workplace), arose as a result of the agency of many different groups and individuals. This paper suggests that, acting on behalf of their own interests, men and women developed competing interpretations of the symbolic meaning generated within the late nineteenth-early twentieth American city.

Aaron Johnson-Ortiz, University of Michigan:

ABSTRACT:

In 1906, the Mexican exiled journalist Ricardo Flores Magon published a manifesto that would catalyze the Mexican Revolution of 1910 and serve as the template for the Mexican Constitution of 1917. Uncannily, the manifesto was first drafted at 107 N. Channing Ave in Saint Louis, on the grounds of what is now SLU's Baseball Field. As an artist/activist/scholar, I retraced Magon exilic journey through Laredo, El

Paso and San Antonio, Texas, Saint Louis, Missouri, and Toronto and Montreal,