



THE MLK WAY

Building on Black America's Main Street

Final Review

**Harvard Graduate School of Design
Option Studio, Fall 2015**

**Course Instructor: Dan D'Oca
Teaching Assistant: Dana McKinney**

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Review Schedule

- 9:00** Introductory remarks
Daniel D'Oca, Instructor
Courtney Snowden, Deputy Mayor for Greater Economic Opportunity, DC
Eric Shaw, Director, DC Office of Planning
Melvin White, President, Beloved Streets of America
- 9:15** Gallery view
- 9:30** Review session 1
- 11:30** Group discussion
- 12:30** Lunch
- 1:30** Introductory remarks
Daniel D'Oca, Instructor
Courtney Snowden, Deputy Mayor for Greater Economic Opportunity, DC
Eric Shaw, Director, DC Office of Planning
Melvin White, President, Beloved Streets of America
- 1:45** Introductions to student projects
- 2:00** Review session 2
- 4:00** Group discussion
- 5:00** End of review
- 6:00** Party at Doebele House (48 Trowbridge St, Cambridge)

Critics

Jasmin Aber

Jasmin is an urbanist and co-founder/director of the Creative Exchange Lab in St. Louis. She works to catalyze community-, sustainable-, and economic development through architecture and urbanism.

Dan Adams

Dan is an assistant professor at Northeastern University. He founded Landing Studio in 2005, a design and planning practice that develops tactics for integrating active global industries into their local contexts.

Baye Adofo-Wilson

Baye is the Deputy Mayor for Economic and Housing Development City of Newark. He was a Loeb Fellow at Harvard in 2013, and co-taught an urban planning studio in the Spring of 2015.

Neha Bhatt

Neha is a founding director of the Local Leaders Council of Smart Growth America in Washington, DC, and specializes in supporting local decision makers who stand up for inclusive, livable communities.

Shantel Blakely

Shantel is the Public Programs Manager at the GSD, and has organized conferences and events such as “Ethics of the Urban” and “Putting Public Space in its Place.”

Eve Blau

Eve is Adjunct Professor in the Department of Urban Planning and Design at Harvard. Her research engages issues in the history and theory of modern architecture, urbanism, and modes of representation.

Sekou Cooke

Sekou is an Assistant Professor at Syracuse University's School of Architecture. He is founder of sekou cooke STUDIO, which has completed projects in New York, San Francisco, Jamaica, and Liberia.

Diane Davis

Diane is Chair of the Department of Urban Planning at Harvard. Her work examines the relations between urbanization and national development, the politics of urban development policy, and conflict cities.

Jill Desimini

Jill is Assistant Professor of Landscape Architecture at Harvard. Her research focuses on landscape strategies to address the conditions of shrinking cities.

Kim Driggins

Kim has been the associate director for citywide planning in the District of Columbia's Office of Planning for the past 7 years. She has been a key advisor on creative place-making projects locally and nationally.

Ann Forsyth

Ann is Professor of Urban Planning at Harvard. She works mainly on the social aspects of physical planning and urban development, focusing on how to make more sustainable and healthy cities.

Nabeel Hamdi

Nabeel is a Visiting Professor in Urban Planning and Design at Harvard. He has consulted on housing, participatory action planning, and upgrading of slums to development agencies, charities, and NGOs.

Lashawn Hoffman

Lashawn is CEO of Pittsburgh Community Improvement Association and board chair for the Atlanta Housing Association of Neighborhood-based Developers, leading programs of community improvement.

Jane Hutton

Jane is Assistant Professor in Landscape Architecture at Harvard. Her research looks at the linkages between the spatial and social forms of the sites of production and consumption.

Rob Lane

Rob is an architect, urban designer, and a senior fellow for urban design at RPA. He directs the regional design program, which focuses on research and place-based planning and design interventions.

Tim Love

Tim is Associate Professor at the Northeastern University, and the founding principal of Utile, which specializes in the unique regulatory, political, and design challenges of complex urban projects.

Jennifer Molinsky

Jennifer is a Senior Research Associate at the Joint Center for Housing Studies at Harvard. She manages the Center's research on urban planning and land use policy as it relates to housing.

Mark Mulligan

Mark is Associate Professor in Practice of Architecture and Interim Curator of the Loeb Fellowship Program. His research explores the relationship between constructive detail and meaning in architecture.

Marc Norman

Marc is the director of UPSTATE, a Center for Design Research and Real Estate at Syracuse University School of Architecture. He works to expand access to housing, education, employment, and health.

John Peterson

John is the current curator of the Loeb Fellowship at Harvard. He was president of Public Architecture since he founded the organization in 2002, intended to bring design services to under-served communities.

Damon Rich

Damon serves as the Planning Director and Chief Urban Designer for the City of Newark, where he leads design and planning efforts with public and private actors to improve the city's shared spaces.

Euneika Rogers-Sipp

Euneika is director of Sustainable Rural Regenerative Enterprises for Families and Sustainable Enterprise Development at the Black Belt Community Based Tourism Network.

Fallon Samuels

Fallon, a PhD student in the GSD, is a historian of urban industrialization and post-industrial urbanism whose research concerns the resiliency and revitalization of America's Rustbelt.

Eric Shaw

Eric is the Director of the Washington, D.C. Office of Planning. He was formerly the Director of Community and Economic Development for Salt Lake City, and has experience in equitable planning.

Courtney Snowden

Courtney is the D.C. Deputy Mayor for Greater Economic Opportunity, a newly-created position focused on expanding access to employment. She has formerly worked as a lobbyist and public policy strategist.

Wendi Thomas

Wendi is a Neiman Fellow for journalism at Harvard, studying how to deepen the public conversation on economic justice using a multimedia news website and civic engagement campaign.

Melvin White

Melvin is president of Beloved Streets of America, a St. Louis non-profit that works to restore the valor and dignity of Martin Luther King, Jr. to MLK streets across the country.

Sarah Williams

Sarah is Assistant Professor of Urban Planning and the Director of the Civic Data Design Lab at MIT. She works with data, maps, and mobile technologies to bring urban policy issues to broader audiences.

Sara Zewde

Sara is the 2014 graduate level National Olmsted Scholar, which has enabled her to promote the culturally- and ecologically-relevant design of urban landscapes in cities such as Rio de Janeiro and New Orleans.

Studio Introduction

The MLK Way: Building on Black America's Main Street

Harvard Graduate School of Design
Option Studio, Fall 2015
Course Instructor: Dan D'Oca
Teaching Assistant: Dana McKinney
Booklet Text and Design: Katherine Prater

Martin Luther King, Jr. is one of America's most revered historical figures. According to a recent Gallup Poll, King is viewed in a positive light by 94 percent of Americans. Over 100 schools are named for King, countless monuments and memorials have been built to his memory, and, perhaps most impressively, 893 communities in the US have named a street for him.

Despite their ubiquity, MLK streets are not revered in the same way as King himself. Segregated, unsafe, and plagued by disinvestment, MLK streets seem unworthy of King's legacy. But while data tells one story, experience sometimes tells another. MLK streets are also vibrant, thriving centers of African-American identity and community. As one author put it, it's sometimes important to move beyond the negative images "and see what concrete lives and realities are living on those streets."

This interdisciplinary studio invites students from all departments to help shape the future of MLK streets and the neighborhoods

that flank them in a way that neither ignores the structural racism that has led to segregation, poverty, and the socioeconomic decay of African American neighborhoods, nor overlooks the positive characteristics that led one author to call MLK streets King's "greatest living memorial." Our premise is that initiatives aimed at making MLK streets into environments that reflect King's values could be a means of empowering African American communities that, owing to King's stratospheric approval ratings, could have broad public appeal.

In the first weeks of the studio, students worked together to create an "MLK Street Atlas" that mapped, analyzed, and profiled MLK streets in the US. Concurrent with this—and for the duration of the semester—we have zoomed in on two MLK streets that have been targeted for improvements: Martin Luther King Jr. Drive in St. Louis, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue in Washington, D.C. There, students have worked with local residents, community organizations, elected officials, and others in city government to help remake the two streets and the neighborhoods surrounding them into environments of which King himself would be proud.



Arnehl Lyon,
Anacostia resident

Street Revitalization

“The dispossessed of this nation—the poor, both white and Negro—live in a cruelly unjust society. They must organize a revolution against that injustice, not against the lives of the persons who are their fellow citizens, but against the structures through which the society is refusing to take means which have been called for, and which are at hand, to lift the load of poverty.”

-Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Building The Ville’s Main Street

Sourav Kumar Biswas (MLA | AP ‘16)

Vacancy is an issue affecting retail corridors such as MLK Drive in St. Louis; however, the idea of “vacancy” is not representative of the active communities in many neighborhoods along this street. By way of small interventions within and near vacant lots, these spaces may be transformed into physical and cultural “bridges” between existing retail and social institutions along main roads such as MLK Drive.

In view of King’s legacy of driving out darkness through compassion and solidarity, vacant lots serve as an opportunity to build both the physical amenities necessary for a thriving community, as well as the skills for specialized trade labor that will long outlast any discrete project. Collaborative projects with local schools, community groups, and universities are both a way to outwardly project the aspirations and identity of the communities, and to improve the vibrancy of an ailing retail corridor.

“We need to give something to people staying in the community and fixing up what they do have.”

-Shavette Wayne-Jones, Executive Director, Hamilton Heights Neighborhood Organization, St. Louis

“I wanted to live in a community that’s mine.”

-Juanita Blackshear, Resident, St. Louis



Maurice,
Delmar Boulevard, St. Louis

Small Business Development

“Even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.”
-Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Beloved Businesses of MLK

Elena Chang (MUP '16)

Small-scale, local businesses are an important source of vitality for MLK streets across the United States. Communities undergoing population- and economic-based decline face unique challenges in forming Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), including issues such as low financial capital, information gaps, a high percentage of absentee property owners, and various spatial tensions.

The prosperity of local businesses such as those along MLK Drive in St. Louis can benefit significantly from catalytic processes involving self-organization, advocacy, marketing, and capital improvement. Drawing attention to the challenges facing businesses owners is an important first step toward outlining what local government can do to harness opportunities in the area. An analytical overview of revitalization strategies for small business owners is a pragmatic way of helping members of the business community become better advocates for themselves and their neighborhood.

“They talked about coming up with a logo, coming up with a name for our business community... The first thing I asked was, ‘How can you bring business to a community like ours, that’s been boarded up? Do you have experience working in a community like ours?’ He canceled the meeting, so I emailed him and I still haven’t heard back.”
-Karen Bryant, Owner of Bryant Alternations, St. Louis



Evelyn Kasango,
Washington, D.C. Office of Planning

Retail Vacancy

“Faith is taking the first step even when you can’t see the whole staircase.”
-Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Reactivating a Street Corridor, Attracting Businesses

Megan Echols (MUP ‘16)

The major constraints in the redevelopment of abandoned retail spaces arise from market forces. Creative reuse of buildings along declining retail corridors by non-traditional institutions such as education, small offices, churches, museums, and libraries can generate street life within currently empty spaces.

King’s faith in the people is foregrounded in such creative reoccupation along MLK Drive in St. Louis. Not only are existing businesses supported by increased street life, but community needs are also holistically fostered by making space for the establishment of amenities that might be excluded from such an environment at market-based rents. By reusing storefront spaces on neighborhood arteries for non-retail activities, the once-abandoned street can be reactivated and revitalized, thus readying the corridor for eventual reinvestment by traditional retail and other sectors.

“We will never significantly reduce the crime, the health disparities, the wealth disparities until we empower the people in those communities. We can’t gift them change, we can’t gift them development, we have to help them do it themselves and maintain and sustain it themselves.”
-Sylvester Brown, Reporter and Founder of The Sweet Potato Project, St. Louis



Bessie Halvert,
St. Louis

Gentrification

"I do not think of political power as an end. Neither do I think of economic power as an end. They are ingredients in the objective that we seek in life. And I think that end of that objective is a truly brotherly society, the creation of the beloved community."

-Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The Beloved Community Land Trust

Marco Gorini (MUP '16)

Community land trusts (CLTs) draw upon a variety of social and spatial traditions, ranging from the garden city movement in England to planned communities in India and across the world. Underlying each of these endeavors is an ethos of combating profit-driven alternatives with economic, programmatic, and cultural foundations of collective investment, management, and benefit.

In relation to the legacy of Martin Luther King, community land trusts inform a particular tradition of the empowerment of African American communities in the US through the provision of stable access to land. As such, contemporary struggles against gentrification may find their roots in historic battles for secure access to agricultural land during the civil rights movement, as was the case for the New Communities land trust founded by Robert Swann near Albany, Georgia in 1969. Certainly, the development of CLTs in urban areas such as Washington, D.C. are replete with different challenges than those developed in the agricultural South; however, each are framed by King's ideals of the beloved community.

"People have pride in MLK Avenue. If we're going to gentrify, let's gentrify in place."

-Courtney Snowden, Deputy Mayor for Greater Economic Opportunity, Washington, D.C.



Dinesh K. Sharma,
Washington Business Group

Re-population / Economic Development

“Our slogan must not be ‘Burn, baby, burn.’ It must be, ‘Build, baby, build.’ ‘Organize, baby, organize.’ Yes, our slogan must be ‘Learn, baby, learn,’ so that we can earn, baby, earn.”
-Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Vital Signs and the Path to Recovery

Jeffrey Knapke (MAUD '16)

Despite the perception that several North St. Louis neighborhoods have completely died off, there exist many “signs of life” within. Recent housing developments, preservation efforts, and local initiatives have already transformed small pockets of the community into much better places to live. As re-population is intrinsic to the promotion of economic growth along MLK Street, perhaps these signs of life can be leveraged as a starting point for other new developments, to be strategically located at logical nodes along MLK Street. Such new developments also provide an opportunity to study the means through which growth beyond the residential sector can be accomplished, thus further incentivizing the repopulation of the area.

Ultimately, residential development and increased opportunity for livelihood are concomitant with one another; King’s message of building up through simultaneous attention to concerns of social justice, education, and economic justice must pervade efforts to develop and rejuvenate the built spaces within these areas.

“Think about logical nodes, how to capitalize on the passion of existing people.”
-Daffney Moore, Urban Planner, Department of
Planning and Urban Design, St. Louis



Jeffrey Boyd,
Alderman, St. Louis

Job Training

“There is nothing more dangerous than to build a society with a large segment of people in that society who feel that they have no stake in it; who feel that they have nothing to lose. People who have stake in their society, protect that society, but when they don't have it, they unconsciously want to destroy it.”

-Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Construction Cooperative and Vocational School

Liza Langer (MLA AP '16)

In neighborhoods such as those around MLK Drive in St. Louis, dual needs for rebuilding and job training could inspire creative collaboration among community members and local institutions. The establishment of a vocational school linked to a construction cooperative would promote linkages between the development of talent and relationships with existing businesses to renovate and rebuild at the local level. Furthermore, fueling neighborhood beautification through job training would help to keep jobs and money earned within the neighborhood.

Cooperation and symbiosis are fundamental to the resilient and supportive communities that King envisioned. The exploration of non-traditional models of business and education strengthen communities from within, and connect skills with demand in the proximal area. Ultimately, the cultivation of inter-community ties and local collaboration is intended to help foster pride and ownership of the neighborhood by residents.



Tanya “Redd” Pope,
Washington, D.C.

Asset Development

“We must all learn to live together as brothers – or we will all perish together as fools. This is the great issue facing us today. No individual can live alone; no nation can live alone. We are tied together.”

-Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The Community Corridor: Building Ties to MLK

Andrew Nahmias (M.Arch II ‘16)

A stark divide often emerges between the physical improvements of private and public spaces and the needs and assets of existing communities. While new development can bring long-desired amenities, it also brings the fear of rising housing costs, high-income commercial development, and displacement.

Conceiving of urban improvement as a process that affects the community as a whole is a significant continuation of King’s teachings and practice. As such, ensuring housing affordability and the development of new mixed use retail and office spaces is only a partial solution. It is essential to ensure that development of community spaces not only makes the neighborhood more beautiful and functional, but also remains accessible to the community it is intended to serve, embedded in the variety of assets and community groups already in place. Martin Luther King Ave. in Washington, D.C. can be envisioned as a community corridor—tying together policy, physical development, and mixed-use community services to bring the benefits of new growth to existing residents.

“Newness breeds fear. Is it built for us or is it just gentrification?”

-Arnehl Lyon, Anacostia Resident, Washington, D.C.



Israel,
St. Louis

Affordable Housing and Desegregation

“American Negroes are caught in the struggle to be at last at home in our homeland of the United States.”
-Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Equal Opportunity Housing

Andy Rauchut (M.Arch II '16)

In many metropolitan cities—St. Louis included—the dispersal of voucher-subsidized and affordable housing is restricted to areas of low opportunity, poor-performing schools, high crime rates, sub-standard healthcare facilities, and limited access to jobs with salaries above the poverty line. As such, children residing in subsidized and affordable housing have distinct disadvantages from birth in terms of access to amenities and improvement of socioeconomic outlook.

The use of opportunity mapping to decouple affordable housing from low-opportunity areas advances King’s activism against not only racial inequality, but inequality arising from economic, class, and geospatial injustices as well. As such, an equitable approach to housing in St. Louis is urgent and necessary for the realization of a city wherein access to opportunity is fully integrated into the lives of everyone.

“It’s easier to market single-family dwellings as opposed to townhouses; people want to purchase single-family style housing. . . In St. Louis we’re not a huge fan of attached housing.”

-Shavette Wayne-Jones, Executive Director, Hamilton Heights Neighborhood Organization, St. Louis



**Rev. Jonathan Davis,
St. Louis**

Social Services

*"If I cannot do great things, I can
do small things in a great way."*
-Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The Street as a Social Service

Antonia Rudnay (MLA II '16)

In cities such as St. Louis and Washington, D.C., the provision of social services may be understood as an integral element to the vitality of urban areas. However, with services operating only during the workday and with queues spilling out onto inadequately-equipped streets, a distinct opportunity arises to integrate the needs of non-residents into the design of the street.

Insofar as a fine line may be seen to exist between urban vitality and public disturbance, the unconventional question emerges of how to design the spaces surrounding social services, such that the presence of visitors to the area may contribute positively to the experience of the area, both for visitors and residents alike. The coupling of amenities to enable easier access, and attention to the design of overlooked and humble corners of the streetscape may facilitate the realization King's legacy of community-building in spaces of waiting, resting, eating, and socializing that characterize our daily lives.

*With regard to parks and other public amenities, "people have been
denied services for so long, they don't know what they need."*
-Courtney Snowden, Deputy Mayor for Greater
Economic Opportunity, Washington, D.C.



Jessica Eiland, President, Northside Community Housing, St. Louis

Monumentality

*“Hatred paralyzes life; love releases it.
Hatred confuses life, love harmonizes it.
Hatred darkens life; love illuminates it.”*
-Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Everyday Monuments: Experiencing King through Enacted Landscapes

Samantha Solano (MLA II '16)

Monumentality has been a concept of explicit architectural and urban fascination for centuries. Josep Lluís Sert, the final president of CIAM (International Congresses of Modern Architecture), dean of the Harvard Graduate School of Design from 1953 to 1969, and founder of the school’s urban design discipline, positioned monumentality as “a link between the past and the future” by way of their expression of human ideals, aims, and actions.

Expressions of monumentality are inherent in legacy of Martin Luther King today. One must ask whether the statues of his likeness and the plaques that bear his name, both of which are particularly concentrated in urban areas of political import, successfully engage with his own aspirations, teachings, and active contributions to the present social and political environment. Are there alternative forms of monumentality that reflect the journey toward justice and equality, both that of King in the past and of ourselves in the present?

“There aren’t enough spaces to dream.”
-Courtney Snowden, Deputy Mayor for Greater Economic Opportunity, Washington, D.C.



**Brea McAnally,
St. Louis**

Community Building

"I'm sure that each of us is painfully aware of the fact that there is another America... In this other America, thousands, yea, even millions, of young people are forced to attend inadequate, substandard, inferior, quality-less schools, and year after year thousands of young people in this other America finish our high schools reading at an eighth- and a ninth-grade level sometimes. Not because they are dumb, not because they don't have innate intelligence, but because the schools are so inadequate, so overcrowded, so devoid of quality, so segregated, if you will, that the best in these minds can never come out."

-Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The Facility Gap: Rethinking Learning's Position in the Community

Blair Storie-Johnson (M.Arch I '17)

More complicated than simple population decline is the decline of youth and young families in certain areas of St. Louis, particularly in the north of the city. The development of community centers in these areas could support the immediate learning resource needs of the existing community, who have been historically underserved by the often insular amenities available within schools. Furthermore, these centers may be used by schools in anticipation of future re-population of the area by young families. Improved access of the entire community to learning-focused facilities strengthens inter-generational networks, and serves as a central component in combating the pipeline of issues stemming from lack of access to holistic, inclusive, and continued processes of learning.

"After school programs, definitely are very important. Any kind of education piece where you are not just educating the children, but you're connecting with the parents as well... helping the parent stay in tune... Giving family-oriented things, not just kid things... you gotta bring the family together."

-Steve Boda, Pastor, Bridge of Hope St. Louis



**Dr. Nicole Evans, Principal,
City Garden Montessori, St. Louis**

Vacancy

“It really boils down to this: that all life is interrelated. We are all caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied into a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one destiny, affects all indirectly.”

-Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Occupied Vacancy: Re-framing the Wild Vegetation of Vacant Lots

Carly Troncale (MLA I '16)

The reality of the urban is that both “built” and “unbuilt” spaces are the product of specific perspectives of design and spatial control. Projects of both large and small scale often equally evince a complicated and disjunctive relationship between vegetated space and urban aspirations. Design of vegetated space for practices of “management” rather than “maintenance” embraces the presence of change in built space, rather than artificial conditions of stasis. Greenways, or series of relational pocket parks, emphasize integration and connectivity with the surrounding environment.

In keeping with King’s legacy of building holistic communities rather than isolated or ego-driven initiatives, the re-casting of vacant lots must be executed with the multiplicitous aim of promoting not only beauty, health, and respite from the urban environment, but equally to foster employment and community involvement in such initiatives.

“Things evolve based on conversations that happen.”

-Gina Martinez, Organizer for Rebuild Foundation and The Pink House, St. Louis



**Shavette Wayne, Hamilton Heights
Neighborhood Organization, St. Louis**

Street Vitality

“When evil men burn and bomb, good men must build and bind.”
-Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Façade Taxonomy

Ximena de Villafranca (M.Arch II '17)

Façade aesthetics, particularly for businesses in areas of lower economic investment, are often the product of a variety of factors, including security and pragmatism. However, fragments of local tradition, historical significance, ingenuity, and optimism may also be found on the façades of buildings that appear to be crumbling at first glance.

The revitalization of shop façades has long since been a tool of community regeneration, but such efforts often lack awareness of the particular processes of decline and the patterns of architectural rejuvenation that may inspire lasting vitality in the area. A taxonomic analysis of the factors contributing to both the decline and revitalization of locally-owned businesses is therefore necessary. To this end, the economic and social empowerment for which King advocated is not only made manifest in the entrepreneurial successes of a community, but also is realized through the expression of such vitality at the scale of the beautified and dignified urban block.

“When people see the unexpected, that really gives them hope.”
-Jeffery Boyd, Alderman, Ward 22, St. Louis

Also on Display

Assignment 1: MLK Atlas

MLK streets in the US have been written about, mapped, and photographed here and there, but not in any comprehensive way. Given the ubiquity of MLK streets and the volume of books, essays, exhibitions, documentaries, movies, etc. dedicated to King and his legacy, surprisingly little attention has been paid to the phenomenon of MLK streets, and surprisingly little documentation of them exists. They have never been the subject of an exhibition or major documentary, and only one book has been published on the topic.

For this short assignment, students were asked to create an “MLK Street Atlas” that identifies, maps, and profiles MLK Streets in the US. The hope is that this Atlas would be a poignant, visually arresting document that looks at the complex legacies of these monuments to King.





MLK Workshop with Fletcher-Maynard Elementary School

On Tuesday, November 17, 5th graders from Cambridge's Fletcher-Maynard Elementary stopped by to do a charrette with students of The MLK Way studio.

The 5th graders, who are enrolled in a nonprofit (Innovators for Purpose) dedicated to connecting Cambridge elementary school students to Cambridge's universities, museums, and tech industries, had just read about Martin Luther King, Jr., and were curious to see how The MLK Way students were incorporating his teachings into their designs. The 5th graders were also asked to draw their ideal MLK street. Their visions are exhibited here.



The MLK Way: Photography by Cameron Blaylock

By portraying streetscapes in 35mm black and white film, this selection of photos — part of an ongoing exploration of Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevards across the nation — evokes imagery from MLK's own lifetime while highlighting persistent inequality in the contemporary African American communities where these streets are often located. Captured in the impromptu style of such 1960s street photographers as Lee Friedlander and Gary Winogrand, *Martin Luther King Boulevards* takes the viewer to cities ranging from New Orleans to Newark, depicting both ruinous neglect and banal thoroughfares. The photographs express the spectrum of ambivalence and violence surrounding race in America 50 years after the height of the civil rights movement, negotiated daily by these neighborhoods' residents.

Cameron Blaylock is a Brooklyn-based photographer focusing on the built environment. Among his recent projects are a series for Van Alen Institute's *Elsewhere: Escape and the Urban Landscape* initiative; an exploration into the "towers in the park" housing typology commissioned by the Architectural League of New York and exhibited at the New Museum's *Ideas City* biennial; and documenting post-Hurricane Sandy communities for the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's *Rebuild by Design* program. Cameron's work has been published in *Abitare*, *Doggerel*, *Satellite*, *Surface* and elsewhere. cameronblaylock.com

