

LOOKING FOR

Exhibit Dates:

Tuesday, January 21 - Friday, April 11, 2014

Heftler Visiting Artist Gallery

Walter J. Manninen Center for the Arts

Endicott College

Beverly, Massachusetts

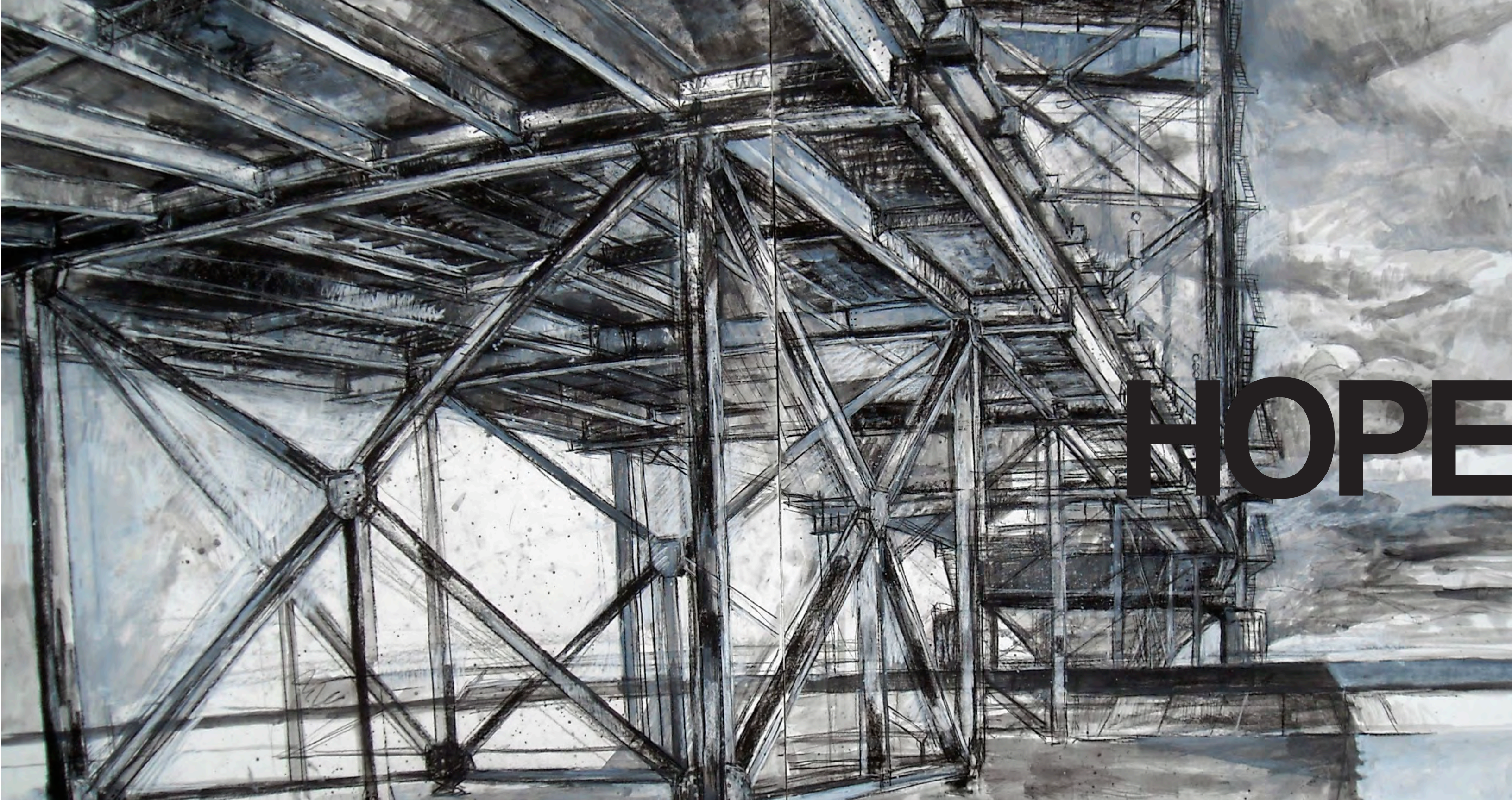
www.endicott.edu/centerforthearts

kmoore@endicott.edu | 978-232-2655

THE NEW ORLEANS
DRAWING PROJECT

2006 - 2013

JEFFREY MARSHALL



HOPE



*1750 Reynes St., New Orleans (not my house),
30 x 44 in., 2006*

This exhibition is dedicated to my dad, Steven Marshall, who introduced me to museums, the Soup Burg, and tangerine Life Savers among many other things. I miss you.

LOOKING JEFFREY MARSHALL

FOR HOPE

THE NEW ORLEANS DRAWING PROJECT 2006 - 2013



Looking For Hope
42 x 49 in., 2007

When Hurricane Katrina hit Louisiana on August 29, 2005, and the levees around New Orleans began failing, I was in Gloucester, Massachusetts, looking for a way to help beyond sending money. I knew that my response to this tragedy would be through drawing, but the form was elusive, and I struggled with how to communicate so much from so far. For months after the storm, I used news reports to make drawings in my studio, trying to put into images what seemed to be so many layers of disaster. Missing from these studio drawings was genuine experience, a quality I value in my work, and the reason I work in the landscape. I decided to return to New Orleans, realizing that drawing the disaster meant being among the people and places that had drowned.

For the last eight years I have been traveling to New Orleans, for two to three weeks at a time, drawing around the city to get a sense of its recovery. I hope these pieces will provide an additional visual document for this critical era.

When I search for a place to paint or draw, I usually pick remote areas that make it difficult for someone to look over my shoulder, so that being alone is part of my process. Drawing the aftermath of Katrina has demanded that I act differently, that I make my drawings a public art project, not a personal one.

I choose drawing because the directness of the process bridges the gap between making and looking. Drawing in urban spaces is a social activity that invites the public into a private dialogue with the artist. In New Orleans I plant myself in the street, inviting people to stop and tell me their stories. Talking to people who share the experiences of Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath allows me to bring their pain, frustration, and hope into my drawings.

My experiences drawing in post-Katrina New Orleans have changed me, turning my practice of drawing on-site into a political activity. Representing a specific place, over time, reveals a breadth of reality that is hidden when an environment is only casually engaged. The question I find myself asking is who holds the information that allows true understanding of a place, and can drawing give me access to that truth?

These drawings are not being sold, with the goal of keeping them together as a collection that will find its way to a public art institution in Louisiana or elsewhere.

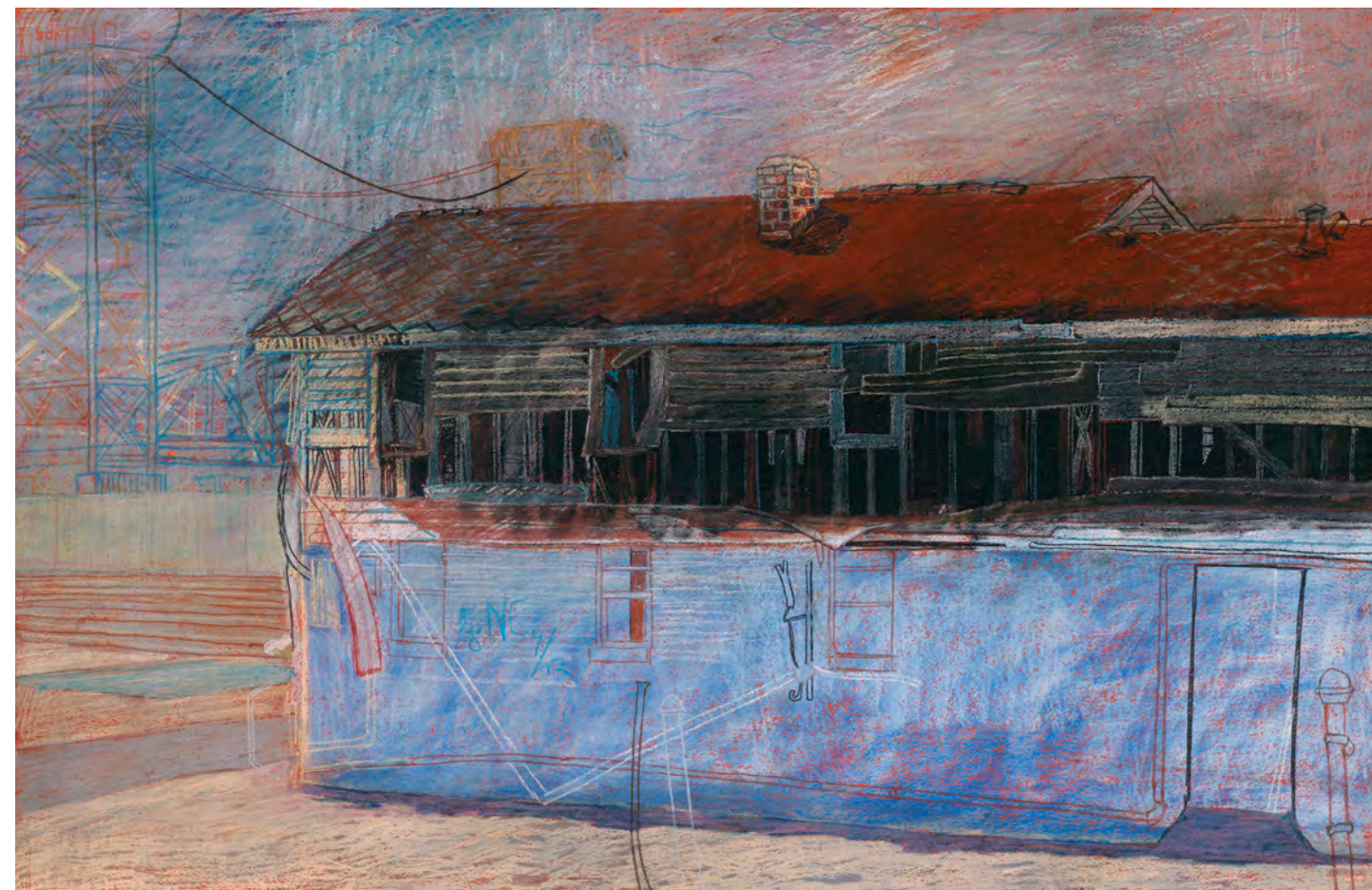
JEFFREY MARSHALL
ARTIST STATEMENT



Help
7 x 12 in., 2007



Ceiling Fan
7 x 12 in., 2007



Blue Levee
26 x 40 in., 2007

JEFFREY MARSHALL INTERVIEW

Artist Jeffrey Marshall, Interviewed by Dr. Charlotte Gordon, Associate Professor of English at Endicott College. September 22, 2013.

Charlotte Gordon: *Can you give us a brief overview of your show at Endicott College, "Looking for Hope: The New Orleans Drawing Project 2006-2013"?*

Jeff Marshall: This work represents my experience of post-Katrina New Orleans, my attempt to bear witness to what I saw and heard while I was there. All of the images were done on site over a span of seven years and include various material approaches and subject matters. There are many issues—race, economics, the environment, and politics—that can be part of the post-Katrina discussion, but this is only one perspective. I'm not trying to make an authoritative commentary on New Orleans. I think only those who lived through this period have that perspective. I plan on completing the project in 2015.

C.G. *What drew you to this project in the first place?*

J.M. I had a personal connection to New Orleans that began long before Katrina. When I was getting ready to graduate from Cornell in 1991, I was an art major, but I wondered what I could do that would have meaning, that would have value, because I didn't yet understand the inherent value of being an artist in our society. Then, one day, I saw a poster in front of me that said "Teach for America." So I went down to New Orleans and started teaching first grade.

C.G. *Why New Orleans?*

J.M. Somehow, I didn't want to go anywhere else. New Orleans seemed as much a foreign country as you can find in America. Looking back, I wonder who I was. Who was this person who decided to pick up and move to a new place and into a new job, sight unseen? But it was magic.

C.G. *Were you in New Orleans when Katrina struck?*

J.M. The hurricane happened on August 29, 2005. I was in Massachusetts, and I felt helpless, looking at what was going on, watching it on the news. I didn't know what to do. People were sending money, donating to the Red Cross. But I had an emotional connection to the city. It was a place where I felt I had grown up, where I became the person I am today. I owed it to the city to do something beyond giving money. Finally, I realized I could offer my time in the form of making art and bearing witness in some way not only to what was going on in the moment but what was going to be a decade of recovery.

C.G. *How soon after the hurricane did you go? How did you prepare?*

J.M. My first trip was in May 2006. Before each trip I spend some months experimenting. I knew I would only be able to be there for two and a half

weeks and that I needed to decide on a number of variables before I went. I couldn't know what I was going to draw, but I could figure out how, the size, the materials, and the physical set up so when I arrived I would not be overwhelmed with all the possibilities.

C.G. *The images are all drawn from observation. How did you decide on this approach?*

J.M. I want to create an alternate document of post-Katrina New Orleans, separate from the photographic and video based imagery that dominated the airwaves during these years. Drawing has a directness that is both attractive to my aesthetic sensibilities, and practical for these trips to New Orleans. One of my unexpected discoveries is that drawing creates a space for dialogue between the artist and the viewer.

C.G. *Do you mean the viewer in a gallery, or the viewers who walk by when you are actually working?*

J.M. While I am drawing in the streets, people come up to me and start talking about my drawings, and often reveal that they draw or paint as well. I think drawing is such a fundamental activity that people connect to it more easily than painting. They go on to share all kinds of stories about themselves. These dialogues were unexpected, and have become a critical component of this project.

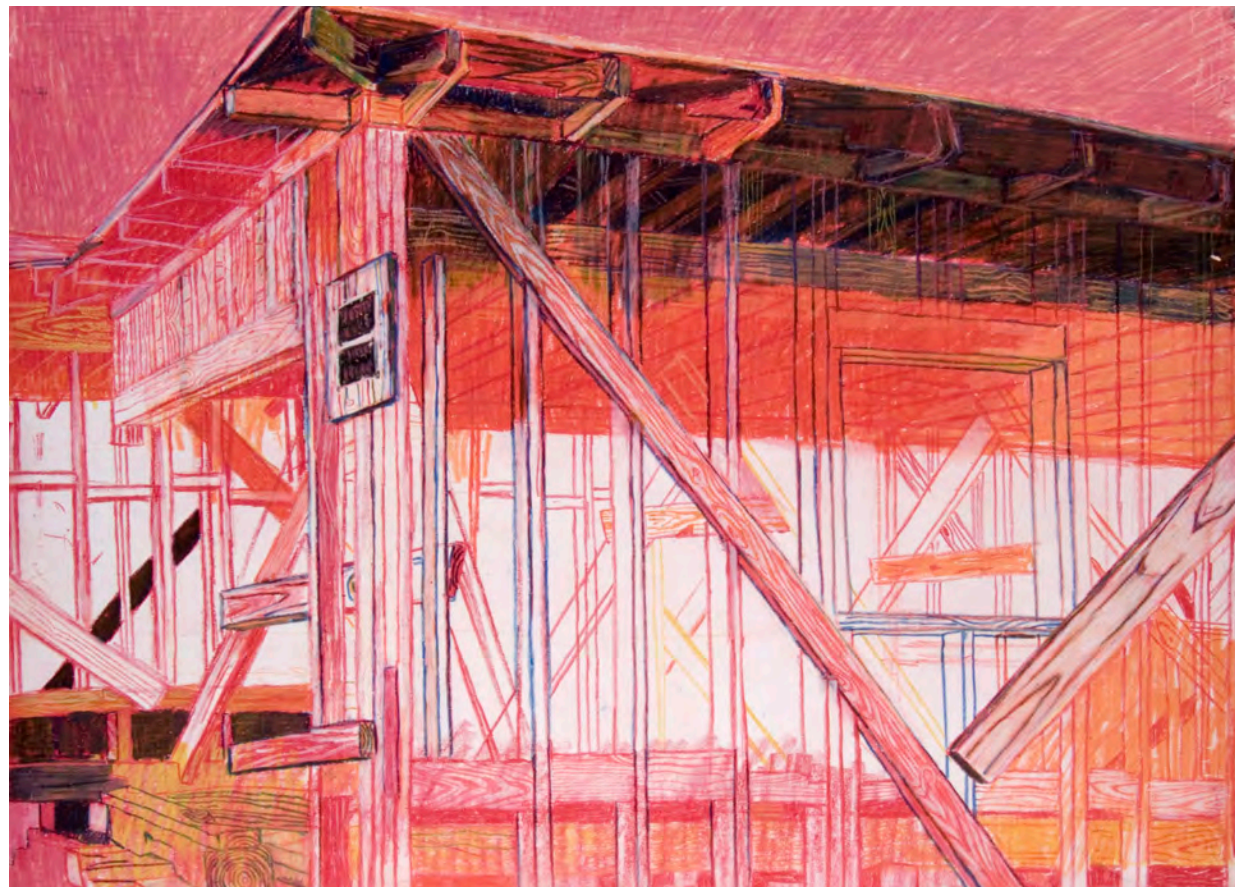


2015 Lizardi St., New Orleans (ghosts)
30 x 44 in., 2006

C.G. *Are there some conversations that stick in your mind?*

J.M. Many, but one I often reference was from my first drawing trip to New Orleans in May 2006. I was in the Lower Ninth Ward, which had become the face of Hurricane Katrina. As I was drawing, an old man came up to me, and we talked about my drawing. He had lived in the area and told me the building I was drawing, now a pile of bricks and timber, used to be a daycare center. I thought he had walked away, but he stayed a few feet behind me. A few minutes later he said, "You know if you come back at night you can hear the ghosts." Moments like that stay with me, and remind me of the broad reality I am trying to represent.

“ IF YOU COME BACK AT NIGHT YOU CAN
HEAR THE GHOSTS ”



*Red House
(Getting Sick)*
10 x 15 in., 2010

C.G. When looking at your work from Gloucester, there seems to be a consistent approach of layering images and materials. Is this the same approach you used with the *New Orleans Drawings*, or did you feel this situation required something different?

J.M. It's been a difficult balance between my personal aesthetic and the demands of this project. I think when I experienced the frustration in the city during those first post-Katrina years, I told myself that I needed to get this right, because nothing else was working for the people of New Orleans. This means that much of the New Orleans work is in many ways more representational than my work at home. At the same time, if I'm not interested in what I'm drawing, then what's the point? So while a pile of debris is representative of post-Katrina, it also satisfies my attraction to complication.

C.G. Is most of the work in the Lower Ninth Ward?

J.M. I started there because it had become the iconic neighborhood for post-Katrina New Orleans. I was aware of the hypocrisy of being there. When I lived in New Orleans, the Lower Ninth Ward had the reputation of being the South Bronx of the city, even though many of the people I taught with lived there. So, I rarely went to that neighborhood, but now I was basing my work there.

I was concerned that I would be seen as exploiting the situation. I did not live there at the time. I was an outsider. What helped was being in the street and talking to people, letting people see me work. The overwhelming reaction I got from residents was one of urgency. They wanted me to make

sure people outside the city would see this work. They felt completely abandoned. That isolation was evident as tour buses went by with flashbulbs going off behind the windows. There was a risk that New Orleans would become Disaster Disneyland. One of the oddest things I saw were buildings that had been completely crumpled, with "Do Not Demolish" signs hanging on them, because someone wanted to use the area as a movie set. That sort of says it all.

C.G. When did you return to New Orleans?

J.M. For my second trip, in 2007, my friends in New Orleans had told me that the Lower Ninth had been cleaned up, so I thought I would simply revisit that area and go draw somewhere else. But as I drove over the Claiborne Avenue Bridge, I could see that almost nothing had been done. I realized I needed to stay in that area and find out what was going on.

C.G. How do you explain the difference between your friends' view and what you saw?

J.M. I think that eighteen months after the hurricane, many residents wanted to focus on resuming their lives and moving forward. If they acknowledged how badly the city was failing on the recovery front, they would question the sanity of staying in New Orleans. So, I think there was a lot of necessary denial.

C.G. What about the politics of the recovery effort? Was this political on your part?

J.M. I think it's political to stand in the street drawing for ten hours and talking to people instead of taking a photo and leaving. The act of being there is political.

C.G. Has this project changed you as an artist?

J.M. None of this matters if it doesn't push me as an artist. I was terrified of having people watch me work. I was a private artist painting on the rocks in Gloucester, as far from humanity as possible. This project demanded I put myself in the middle.

C.G. What is New Orleans like now?

J.M. I'm speaking as an outsider now, but it seems that New Orleans has had a tremendous recovery. Some would argue that it is better than before Katrina. But I also know there are still many people who are fighting insurance companies to help them rebuild, or who are too poor to come back from where they were relocated after the storm. The education system is in disarray, and the criminal justice system is as dysfunctional as ever. The hurricane exacerbated many of the problems that were already there, and they are still there.

C.G. You have said that you do not consider this project finished. What more do you still want to do? When will you call this project done?

J.M. This project has given me a reason to be in New Orleans. Of course I will always go back, but I doubt I can ever really be a tourist there. I put a ten-year deadline on this work because I feel that at that point I will have said what I want to say. That deadline also puts pressure on me to finally draw all the portraits I've been thinking about. I've done a few, but the logistics and emotions involved in working right across from someone, where I am responsible for how they are viewed—it's one of those creative challenges I'm leaving till the end. Because you can't document post-Katrina New Orleans without the people.

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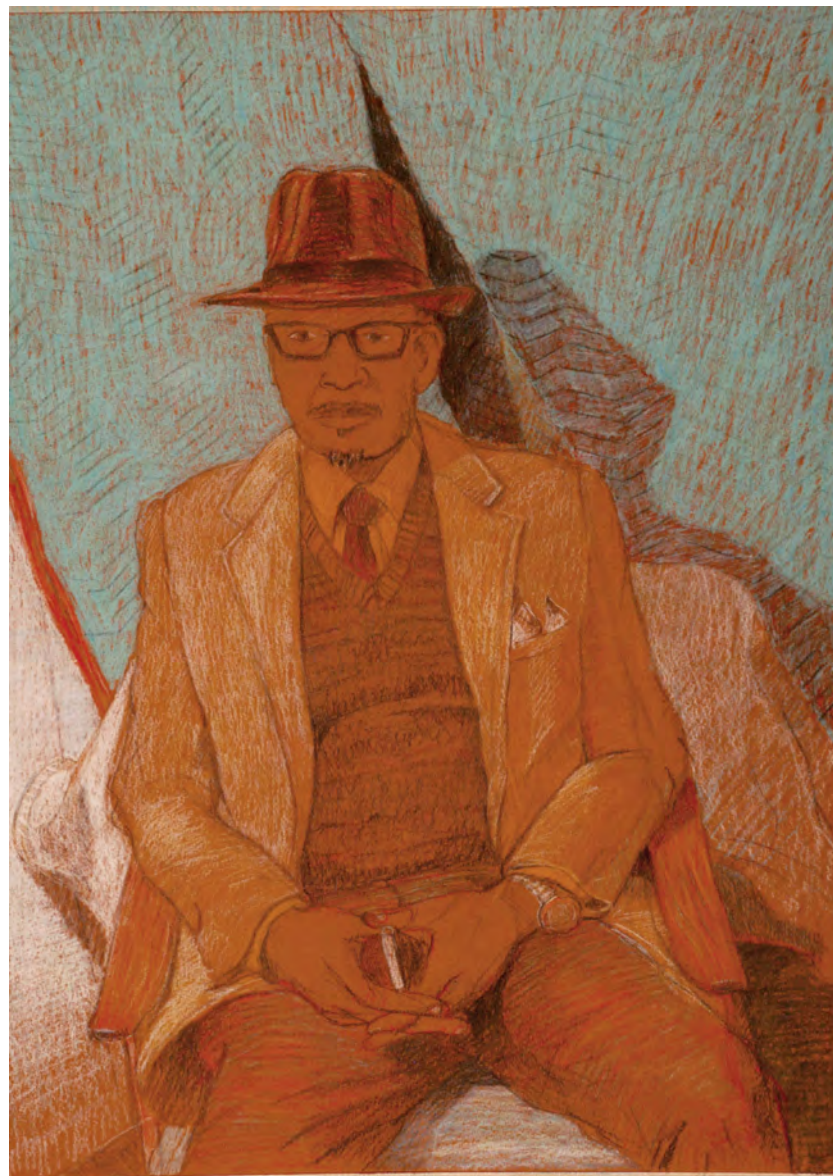
YOU CAN'T DOCUMENT
POST - KATRINA NEW ORLEANS

WITHOUT

THE
PEOPLE.”



Kiersta
15 x 10 in., 2010



Henri Smith
18 x 24 in., 2010



Adam & Eve
10 x 15 in., 2010



BOLLINGER SHIPYARDS
ALGIERS, LA
© JEFF MARSHALL, 2013

Algiers Point #1
13 x 32 in., 2013

“ ‘5017 Prieur, Mamie Narcisse’s House,’ 30 x 44 inches, conte crayon, pulls one directly into a compaction of twisted wreckage.

SLASHING BOLD LINES
FORM HORIZONTAL
MOVEMENTS,
DELINEATING ODDLY
FAMILIAR, VAGUELY
ORGANIC FORMS.

...Marshall recounted while working on this drawing, a gentle tap on his shoulder and a voice from a woman hailing him from behind. The woman pointed to the upper left portion of his drawing, and said that was where her room had been in her grandmother Mamie’s house; she told Marshall that she was glad he was preserving that memory of her childhood. ”

- “Jeffrey Marshall, Re-Covering New Orleans” by Franklin Liu. © 2007 by Boston Publishing House LLC. First published in *Artscope Magazine*. Reprinted by permission of *Artscope Magazine*.



5017 Prieur St., New Orleans (Mamie Narcisse's House)
30 x 44 in., 2006

THANK YOU



Calliope #3
12 x 16 in., 2008

Jeffrey would like to thank:

The Puffin Foundation
The New England Institute of Art
JetBlue Airways
Daniel Smith Art Supplies
Judsons Art Outfitters
ColArt America
Canson Paper
Markal

for helping support this project over the last eight years.

If you are interested in contributing, please consider:

KIDsmART
<http://www.kidsmart.org>



This exhibit catalog made possible by Endicott College, Professor Danielle Currier, and the students of her Sophomore Design Studio; final design by Meaghan Kane.



EXHIBITION
IMAGE
LIST

JEFFREY MARSHALL

LOOKING FOR HOPE

The New Orleans Drawing Project 2006-2013
Exhibition at Endicott College

1850 Lizardi St., New Orleans

Conte on paper
30 x 44 in., 2006

1750 Reynes St., New Orleans (not my house)

Conte & ink on paper
30 x 44 in., 2006

2015 Lizardi St., New Orleans (ghosts)

Conte & ink on paper
30 x 44 in., 2006

5010 Prieur St., New Orleans

Conte & ink on paper
30 x 44 in., 2006

5017 Prieur St., New Orleans (Mamie Narcisse's House)

Conte & ink on paper
30 x 44 in., 2006

#1816, New Orleans

Conte & pastel on paper
26 x 40 in., 2007

Blue Levee

Conte, ink, & pastel on paper
26 x 40 in., 2007

Looking for Hope

Conte, ink, & pastel on paper
42 x 49 in., 2007

Car

Ink on paper
7 x 12 in., 2007

Car #2

Ink on paper
7 x 12 in., 2007

Ceiling Fan

Ink on paper
7 x 12 in., 2007

Help

Ink on paper
7 x 12 in., 2007

Levee View

Ink on paper
7 x 12 in., 2007

New Pump #1

Colored pencil on paper
7 x 10 in., 2007

New Pump #2

Colored pencil on paper
6 x 9 in., 2007

Pump #1

Colored pencil on paper
6 x 9 in., 2007

Pump #2

Colored pencil on paper
7 x 10 in., 2007

Pump #4

Colored pencil on paper
7 x 10 in., 2007

Pump #5

Colored pencil on paper
6 x 9 in., 2007

Pump #6

Colored pencil on paper
7 x 10 in., 2007

Pump #7

Colored pencil on paper
6 x 9 in., 2007

Pump #9

Colored pencil on paper
7 x 10 in., 2007

Pump #10

Colored pencil on paper
7 x 10 in., 2007

Pump #11

Colored pencil on paper
7 x 10 in., 2007

Calliope #1 (couch)

Oil on panel
12 x 15 in., 2008

Calliope #2

Oil on panel
12 x 15 in., 2008

Calliope #3

Oil on panel
12 x 15 in., 2008

Carlo Vita

Oil on panel
12 x 15 in., 2008

Greater Bright Morningstar Baptist Church

Oil on panel
12 x 17 in., 2008

Stop

Oil on Panel
12 X 15 in., 2008

Power Station

Oil on panel
12 x 15 in., 2008

Green House (Make it Right 9)

Grease pencil on illustration board
10 x 15 in., 2010

Kiersta

Grease pencil on illustration board
15 x 10 in., 2010

Red House (Getting Sick)

Grease pencil on illustration board
10 x 15 in., 2010

Adam and Eve

Grease pencil on illustration board
10 x 15 in., 2010

Yellow House (Derrick)

Grease pencil on illustration board
10 x 15 in., 2010

Henri Smith

Colored pencil on treated paper
18 x 24 in., 2010

I Changed My Mind

Colored pencil on treated paper
18 x 24 in., 2010

Bridge

Conte on watercolor board
40 x 64 in., 2011

Algiers Point #1

Watercolor & watercolor pencil on Arches Hot Press
13 x 32 in., 2013

Algiers Point #2

Watercolor & watercolor pencil on Arches Hot Press
13 x 32 in., 2013

SKETCHBOOKS

Algiers Point Sketchbook
8 x 10 in., either ink, watercolor pencil, or both

New Orleans, March 1-17, 2007, 18 months after, Lower Ninth Ward
6 x 9 in., ink