Nicholas Bozek
Artist Statement

When I first walked the streets of Hannibal Square, I saw a community that was going through change. There was a community that had evidence of different ranges on income, development, and comfort. I noticed upscale restaurants on the same block as Baptist churches, across the street from a vacant lot, only a stones throw from a mansion under construction. Hannibal Square in my eyes is undergoing a dramatic transformation that can only be described as uncomfortable. Gentrification is often used to describe the process of a neighborhood transforming to attract middle-class residents, but the cost of what some might call an improvement, is a fractured sense of community pride, history, and culture.

I believe that the photographs I took offer a sense of realism. I did not try and force any agenda through my art, nor did I focus on the somewhat “artificial” façade that the newly redesigned Hannibal Square seems to be aiming for. Instead, I took pictures that I believe capture the culture and true nature of Hannibal Square. A community that might seem tired and neglected but prides itself on its history and culture. When producing my prints, I selected, with care, images that tried to bridge a gap between levels of development, and subsequent levels of income. Attempting to capture the old and the new, the wealthy and the poor, and everything in between, I truly tried to document a community in the middle of a transition, welcomed by some, but felt by all.

I know that my photographs standing alone might not have a large impact on the Hannibal Square community, however, I hope that moving forward there will be more thought put into the development of the area, in an attempt to secure future prosperity. It would be a shame for the community to relapse in 50 years, with developed areas sitting right next to empty lots, all the while money is being poured into beautification efforts. Only time will tell if the city of Winter Park will be more careful with how it develops the Hannibal Square area, with respect to the allocation of funds, and the evident disruption of the community fabric.