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Artist Statement

The process of gentrification arises out of our society’s value system, in which economic, social and racial class fall into a hierarchy of sorts, giving some groups preference and power over others. It is a process by which a lower group can be physically displaced due to this unequal, systematic distribution of resources and power, by the higher group, seeking to elevate their own hierarchal position. This forceful change can impact the cultural character and atmosphere of communities as it changes the people that compose it, and with them the cultural influences that they bring to it.

This work seeks to show gentrified communities as unnatural spatial representations of income inequality. The changing architecture and man made spaces in Hannibal Square reflect the change in cultural character due to gentrification. High-end businesses inaccessible to traditional residents represent the imposing higher income group while traditional, residential community spaces represent the less powerful, lower income group.

This series uses a traditional documentary approach to portray the spaces and atmosphere of traditional community and family values alongside those of artificially beautified areas depicting affluent lifestyles in an effort to visualize this direct opposition. Pairs of contrasting images are presented with similar formal elements to emphasize the transition of the same neighborhood and the unnatural, forceful, disruptive nature of the gentrification process.