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THE NATURE OF FISSURE

Asa Houston
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In our studio we approached the design of a community co-op and performance center for the historic riverfront Market area of Kansas City, MO through focusing on IDENTITY. Recognizing local phenomena from the proposed design site as a catalyst for our semester.

Based upon engagement with the site I understood Kansas City to be made of a layer of the human condition within the landscape. A layer or “skin,” once part of a collective body, is now fragmented, cracked and warped by the human development imposed upon it. Transportation infrastructure and declining industrial areas further disconnect this structural layer that is the living city. Voids are formed and manipulated by societal changes through time further fragmenting the city and its inhabitants, a peeling of the urban skin.

Intervening and exploring I worked through the notion of fissure as a product of time and pressure. Understanding how time is always constant with variable pressures and forces, and referring to models to better understand how time and forces manipulated its condition. Looking at the community center I started with a series of planes that were warped and changed, to create a sense of force through convex and concave spaces. Creating passages and spaces that expanded and contracted along a central datum. My intentions were for the building to communicate force, showing influence upon an object and producing change or shape to how we ordinarily understand space.