

Whose City Hall Is It? Architecture and Identity in New Orleans

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ABSTRACT *New Orleans has had three city halls, all still standing. Built in 1795, 1845, and 1957, these city halls represent different facets of the public image of the city as a modern world metropolis, reflecting cosmopolitan French, Spanish, English, and American fashions. In the wake of Hurricane Katrina in 2005, a proposal emerged in 2006 to demolish the third city hall, an International Style office tower, and replace it with a National Jazz Center designed by Santa Monica-based Morphosis. A culturally and historically situated discussion of how each of the three city halls reflects New Orleans's cultural identity can provide a context for debating the present desire to replace public civic architecture with an architecture of private entertainment.*

Introduction

That New Orleans has a unique architectural character, one instantly recognized both in America and abroad, is taken for granted. Based in the ubiquitous images of the French Quarter, with narrow streets of graceful townhouses wrapped in wrought-iron balconies, 'America's Most European City' sells itself as a surviving remnant of a lost French heritage—with a touch of the Spanish thrown in for good measure. In the post-Hurricane Katrina debates over just how to rebuild the city, architects and planners are paralysed by the presence of this abiding character. This paralysis is aptly demonstrated by the bitter quarrels that emerged between advocates of New Urbanism and of Neo-Modernism: New Urbanists embrace the image of the French Quarter as a typology for endless repetition, while Neo-Modernists reject it out of hand as representative only of an unreachable and irrelevant past.¹

Both approaches miss the lessons that New Orleans architectural history can teach. The city was never really French, never Spanish, and has never quite become truly American. New Orleanians and their architects have long consciously manipulated architectural style and urban form to create separate cultural spheres for separate internal and external constituencies. Where on the domestic level the city found a unique identity in its everyday landscape, at the civic level the city has always depended for its image on a distant "hearth of culture and power" (Castillo, 1992, p. 262). The difficulty faced by contemporary architects, of how to build in a city that has a rich vernacular language, has been faced by architects for nearly two centuries. This conflict is particularly evident in the 2006 proposal, now stalled for lack of funding, to demolish City Hall and build

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a National Jazz Center designed by Morphosis in its place. In its attempt to transform, post-hurricane, itself into 'Hollywood South', the city turned to a 'starchitect' to fashion an architectural icon of international calibre, completely divorced from the context and history of the city's urban landscape, from its 'Creole Urbanism', as Jacob Wagner has aptly described it (Wagner, 2006). In the process, City Hall and the entire surrounding civic centre were to disappear, its workers re-housed in an empty and anonymous commercial office tower across the street from the shining new Jazz Center.

The issue of preservation of modernist icons like the 1957 City Hall and its adjoining civic complex, while a pressing one, is not the central point of enquiry here. Citizen activists with the aid of more traditional preservation agencies such as the Preservation Resource Center and the National Trust are daily confronted with the monumental task of preserving everything from the most humble cottage to major landmarks like Charity Hospital; the current outcry over the plans for a new LSU Medical Research Center and Veterans Administration Hospital are perhaps a more apt case study for the issues involved in post-Katrina issues in preservation.² The City Hall complex and its fate instead bring into focus the disparity between two modes of expression in the city—the vernacular and the monumental—and suggest they are best understood as parallel and competing expressions of cultural identity in New Orleans.

The constructs provided by postcolonial theory, of the ideas of the 'metropole' and the 'colony' are useful for exploring the tension between these two modes of expression. Originally conceived as terms to denote the pattern of political dominance and geographic separation between imperial powers and their protectorates, colony and metropole have rightly come to encompass the imbalance of economic and cultural power and influence between major cities, like London and Paris, and their progeny, like modern New Delhi and Algiers (King, 1976). New Orleans, in its shifting roles as French colony, Spanish colony, American antebellum slave trading centre, and modern American city of peripheral social and political importance, embodies both the colony and the metropole.

By taking a look backwards at the historical and cultural circumstances that surrounded the creation of New Orleans's first three city halls, all still standing and built in 1795, 1845, and 1957 (Figure 1), a broader context for assessing the Jazz Center proposal can be established. In all three cases, the design for City Hall was spurred by an attempt to position the city as a metropole, a city worthy of international attention and reputation. The architecture of the city halls necessarily looked outwards for inspiration, linking the city to a network of other economic and political power centres. That the proposal for the Jazz Center was greeted with both applause and criticism repeats the pattern established in the 19th and mid-20th centuries of rejecting the city's internal cultural politics and building in the latest international styles. In explaining the failure of the Morphosis proposal, Thom Mayne quipped that "the outsiders are more interested in your town than the insiders—not counting certain people" (MacCash, 2007, p. 1).

As an examination of the city's three previous city halls suggests, this conflict is to be expected. Any successful redesign of the civic complex at the heart of the city cannot ignore the ingrained patterns of patronage and style that inform the city's civic architecture. The argument is not for preservation but for an open questioning of the impulse to demolish, to abandon, to substitute one new thing for another. What does it mean to abandon City Hall as a construct altogether? For centuries city halls have served as symbols of governance, of power, of civic corporeality.



THE LONG AND COLORFUL HISTORY of New Orleans is reflected in the three buildings which have served as the seat of its municipal government. The historic Cabildo on Jackson Square was constructed in 1795 and originally housed the Spanish governing body of that day. Beneath its roof was enacted the final scene of the world's greatest real estate transaction, the Louisiana Purchase. The old City Hall on Lafayette Square, erected in 1850 by James Gallier, Sr., is considered one of the finest examples of Greek Revival architecture. It is to be preserved as an architectural landmark. Today the New City Hall in the Civic Center, facing Canal St., rises 11-stories above a beautifully-landscaped park. The handsome structure reflects the spirit of a city which moves forward eagerly with the times to fulfill its great destiny.

Figure 1. New Orleans's three city halls, as presented together in Office of the Mayor (1956). Source: Historic New Orleans Collection.

Mary Ryan has shown how important the tradition of the city hall is for the democratic American city in particular (Ryan, 1998). What would it mean for New Orleans not only to demolish its current City Hall, but also to abandon this tradition altogether?

Colony

In the 19th century, a clear programme emerged to distinguish the city's new civic architecture from the colonial and vernacular urban landscape. New city halls,

new churches, new hotels—all began to spring up beginning in the 1830s. It was architects such as James Gallier, James Dakin, and J. N. B. de Pouilly who began the process of positioning architecture as a language for redefining the city's status. Inherent in the way they and their clients created architecture was a repudiation of the city as it existed. The 'design moment' of the 1830s centred on a desire to create a distinguished civic architecture distinct from the city's everyday landscapes that had emerged during the city's colonial period.³

This urge to create architecture paralleled the city's tremendous growth from a colonial outpost controlled by French and Spanish proxies in the 18th century to a city that, after the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, began to evolve into a critical geographic and economic component of the United States. As Richard Campanella has shown, by the 1820s, as Americans began to arrive in the city in greater numbers, adding to the mix of French, Spanish, Caribbean, African, and Haitian faces already there, the city was tremendously diverse (Campanella, 2007). Reflecting the diversity of its people, the built urban landscape of New Orleans was characterized by mixing, hybridization, and the adaptation of materials, architectural styles, and spaces. Currents of Continental European, African, Caribbean, British, and East Coast Anglo-American culture percolated through the city resulting in a place that reflected only fragments of each. The city's vernacular architecture, its range of Creole and American-style cottages and townhouses, developed as a result of the hybridization of domestic types brought by its settlers, refugees, and slaves from their homelands in France, Spain, Haiti, Africa, and the East Coast of the United States (Edwards, 1994; Vlach, 1986). The building materials of soft brick, *bousillage*, cypress hardwoods, and stucco combined with the spatial patterns based on single-depth rooms facing courtyards served to localize houses with regard to climate (Figure 2). The civic architecture of the 18th and very early 19th centuries was, like the city's domestic architecture, simple and small in scale, built from the same materials using the same construction methods. The architecture of the central Place d'Armes in the early 1800s, for example, reflected the limited resources of the colonial settlement and its dependence on easily executed plans by military engineers such as Alexandre de Batz. Virtually all of this colonial architecture was small in scale and built by African-Caribbean labourers and their descendants who handed down processes and techniques from generation to generation.⁴

It is this 'Creole urbanism' that, for many, provides the image of the city: a dense fabric cut through with secret passages, physically aged yet seemingly timeless. Since the late 19th century, observers of the city have romanticized its neighbourhoods and houses, seeing remnants of a lost past in their balconies, shutters, courtyards, and wrought iron. The stories of George Washington Cable and Grace King romanticized the Creole lifestyle and houses, decrying their death at the hands of American commerce (Cable, 1879; King, 1892). A 1906 essay in *The Craftsman* typifies this point of view, with Harriet Joor describing the Creole houses of the French Quarter:

They, who reared these dwellings in the long ago, were not rich as wealth is counted to-day, but in their fair homes they enjoyed each hour's beauty as it unfolded, and the fragrance of the fine culture which came to blossom in that quietness lingers yet, as an indefinable grace and charm, about the homes they builded [*sic*]. ... But many of these old dwellings have been swept away by the tide of American enterprise. (Joor, 1906, p. 178)



Figure 2. A typical Creole cottage, Lafitte's Blacksmith Shop, corner of Bourbon and St. Philip Streets as photographed in August 1934 by Richard Koch. *Source:* Historic American Buildings Survey, HABS LA 36-NEWOR 13-1.

From early in the city's history, its 'Creole' houses and neighbourhood streets have been persistent symbols of the city's culture and its history. 'Creole' itself is a contested, slippery, polyvalent term that has its origins in the Spanish colonial legal system, with '*criollo*' originally meaning any child born in the colony as opposed to Europe. Through the 19th century, it became more common in New Orleans for the word to refer broadly to anyone of European descent or anyone, regardless of ethnicity, who spoke French. Ownership of the term has thus been contested amongst those who seek to use it as a term of social status, linking to mythically pure European heritage, and those, often of African descent, who use it to establish an alternate identity through links to New Orleans itself. Though it now more commonly refers to, and celebrates, the mixing of races and cultures, the origins of 'Creole' as a term of colonial social order only adds to its potency as a descriptive term for the contemporary city.⁵

Metropole

As Joor's romantic picture suggests, this Creole architecture was inadequate for a modern city. As New Orleans grew and gained in economic importance to the United States in the 1820s, a striking shift emerged in its architecture that can be clearly read in its civic buildings. The greatest effort to make the city appear actually French and not as a colonial outpost of the Empire akin to French and Spanish colonial cities of the Caribbean actually came after the influx of Americans began in earnest. It was only after the arrival of American competition

that the Creole elites of New Orleans began to place a high premium on architecture that looked like the fashionable architecture of Paris. In other words, before becoming American, the city had been a colonial city with buildings typical of the hybrid Creole constructions of French military engineers and their African-Caribbean workforces. But once it became American, it began to look French. This transformation into a cosmopolitan city had at its core the rejection of the hybrid creations of the vernacular fabric of the colony and the embrace of a mythical cultural purity embodied by the high fashions of the metropole.

After the Louisiana Purchase, the crisis that the French and Spanish felt at losing their connection to their European homelands cannot be overstated. In 1804, for example, prominent administrators of the city, fearing the erosion of their culture and position, sent a missive to the US Congress demanding that French be kept as an official administrative language of the city. Creoles began an entrenched effort to resist the influence of American business, government, education, culture, and religion, which culminated in the subdivision of the city into three separate municipalities in 1836.⁶

One of the first steps in the process was the creation of separate political spheres for Americans and inhabitants of European or Creole heritage (Figure 3). The city subdivided itself: the First Municipality comprised the original colonial outline of the city and is the area today known as the French Quarter or the *Vieux Carré*. This was a busy commercial and residential area occupied largely by Creoles, or persons of French and Spanish descent; Canal Street, which became

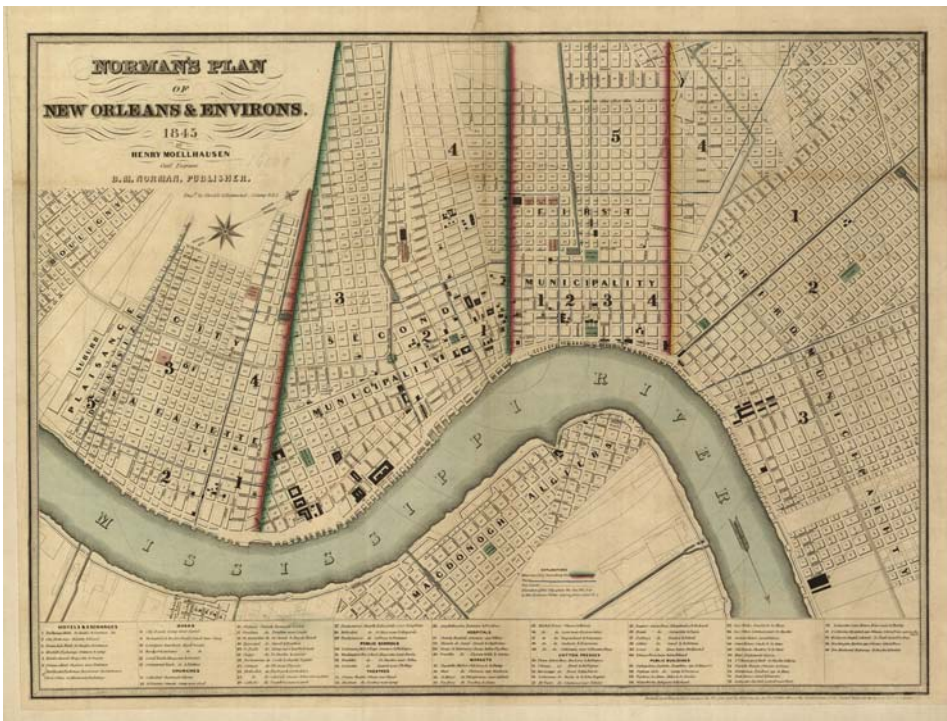


Figure 3. The delineations between the first, second, and third municipalities are clearly shown in Norman's map of New Orleans from 1845. The First Municipality is at the centre of the map, with the Third Municipality contained within the wedge to the right; the Second Municipality is within the strip to the left. *Source:* Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division.

a major commercial street, separated the First Municipality from the Second, which was also known as the Faubourg St. Mary, the American sector, or the commercial sector. This was the area of the city inhabited largely by Americans. The Third Municipality, also known as the Faubourg Marigny, was largely residential and tended to be occupied by Creoles and *gens de couleur* (or ‘free people of color’); Esplanade Avenue, the street where Edgar Degas’s American relatives lived, divided it from the First Municipality. Though the city still had one Mayor, each of these separate municipalities had its own city council and its own budget, taxes, and infrastructure. In some ways this eased the existing tension by making the fiefdom of each cultural subset more clear and allowing Americans and Creoles to conduct their business with as much or as little cooperation as desired.

As a result, after 1836, the physical development of the city focused on the erection of the symbolic apparatus of each of the municipalities. New city halls, new churches, new hotels, and new houses sprouted in the competing First and Second municipalities. One of the most public actions the Second Municipality city council took was the construction of its own City Hall. Despite the fact that the Mayor of New Orleans had his offices in the Cabildo, the Second Municipality Council in 1845 resolved in Ordinance 1183 to build a city hall prominently located on St. Charles Street on Lafayette Square (Figure 4). The new City Hall occupied the place of honour at the head square, unlike the Place d’Armes. The Protestant First Presbyterian Church, built in 1835, flanked the square on a lateral side, suggesting the separation of Church and State that Americans found so lacking in the Creole city. Also different was the grand scale, opulent materials, and aesthetic refinement of the City Hall. Designed by the Irish-born architect James Gallier



Figure 4. James Gallier, City Hall of the Second Municipality, St. Charles Street, 1845–1853, as photographed by Lester Jones on 25 February 1940. *Source:* Historic American Buildings Survey, HABS LA 36-NEWOR 21-1.

in an impressively chaste Greek Revival mode, the building was ‘correct’ in its every detail, from the anthemion frieze to the beautifully carved Ionic columns. It was also expensive, with the entire portico and front facade clad entirely in white marble; the less visible side elevations in a nod to economy were brick. Gallier derived the details of his design from the Erechtheum in Athens, and it was thus very much in keeping with the refinements of the Greek Revival as they had been brought from Great Britain to America’s Eastern Seaboard. Gallier was fully cognisant of the theory and practice of the Greek Revival, having worked for Sir William Wilkins in London before coming to America in 1832 and for Minard Lafever in New York in 1833 (Gallier, 1864; Wilson, 1950). In erecting the American Sector’s City Hall, the architect and his patrons clearly envisioned and created a monument in keeping with the most recent fashions in Anglo-American culture.

By contrast, the City Hall of the First Municipality, the Cabildo, was initially built between 1795 and 1799 at the direction of a French architect Gilberto Guillemard and with the sponsorship of the Spanish-born real-estate speculator and philanthropist Don Andres Almonester y Roxas. The Cabildo was the site of the city’s main governmental administration building until the split of 1836, after which it became the City Hall for the First Municipality. As originally constructed, the Cabildo was a two-story building, composed of brick covered in stucco, and had the relatively severe, rigidly repetitive symmetry of Spanish neo-classical administrative architecture. Its low-pitched tile roof was not particularly visible above the pronounced cornice. In 1836, the City Council voted to enlarge and improve the main council chambers; by 1847, the Council voted to increase the size and grandeur of the building by adding a third floor delineated on the exterior with a distinctively French mansard roof which gave the building its present-day appearance (Figure 5); in 1850 the Council also voted to pave the first floor in marble (Whitmore, 1936). The changes of 1847, clearly spurred by the beginning of construction of Gallier’s City Hall in 1845, gave the building a more *au courant* and more contemporary French appearance—the Second Empire infatuation with the mansard roof type was to crest in just a few years in the 1850s, spurred at least in part by completion of The Louvre with its distinctive, steep mansard roofs.

As Ryan has noted, these new and expanded city halls were necessary expressions of the changing political structure of the city (Ryan, 2000). But they also, when viewed in the larger context of the city’s architectural culture, indicate that architecture was a particularly important expressive tool in the struggle for dominance of the city’s cultural and physical landscape. Looking at other buildings that sprouted during the 1830s through about 1850 shows a definite pattern of architectural challenge and reply, particularly when looking specifically at those buildings designed by the aforementioned Gallier and the French-born Jacques-Nicholas-Boussière de Pouilly. Gallier’s clients were almost exclusively Anglo-Americans of the Second Municipality; de Pouilly’s almost exclusively Creoles of the First Municipality (there were, of course, exceptions). Each architect designed major churches, houses, banks, hotels, and government buildings, all in different styles with a different sense of internal space and their relationship to the street. Gallier and de Pouilly looked to the models provided by Great Britain and France, respectively, rather than to those provided by their home city.

For de Pouilly and his clients, the importation of fashionable contemporary French ideas in architecture denied the actuality of Creole ethnic and cultural hybridity, suggesting in its place a pure Frenchness that could withstand the



Figure 5. The Cabildo, Jackson Square, as photographed by Richard Koch in May 1936. *Source:* Historic American Buildings Survey, HABS LA 36-NEWOR 4-1.

further onslaught of Anglo culture. To upgrade the Place d'Armes further, the archdiocese undertook a complete renovation of St. Louis Church, the focal point of the plaza. The old wooden church had awkward low-lying proportions and odd mushroom-capped bell towers (Latrobe, 1951). De Pouilly proposed redesigning the church from the ground up, reusing some of its foundation and walls, but completely changing the provincial church into a Parisian *néo-Grec* bauble. De Pouilly was born in France and has long been assumed to have trained at the *Ecole des Beaux-Arts*, though no record of his attendance exists. But his designs for St. Louis and for other projects show his familiarity with the architectural discussions of contemporary France (Masson, 1995; McDowell, 1989). In keeping with the archaeological abstraction of the *néo-Grec*, de Pouilly's design included elements of the Romanesque combined with the refinements of Renaissance neo-classicism (Figure 6). De Pouilly's elaborate scheme was not ultimately executed—after the open-work wrought-iron bell tower collapsed during construction because of faulty workmanship, de Pouilly was actually fired and replaced (Huber & Wilson, 1972). The completed design was far simplified with simple slate roofs over wooden framing. At the same time as the completion of the Cabildo and St. Louis, the *Presbytère*, flanking the downriver side of the church, was also upgraded to complete the symmetrical composition. In 1845, the head of Jackson Square (as it was named in 1851) attained the composed European look it maintains today. With the addition of the flanking apartment buildings paid for by the remarkable Baroness Micaela Almonester de Pontalba in the early 1850s, which she modelled on Paris's Place des Vosges, the modish French look was complete (Vella, 2004) (Figure 7).



Figure 6. J. N. B. De Pouilly, rendering of the planned renovation of St. Louis. Source: De Pouilly Sketchbook, Historic New Orleans Collection.

But a general civic upgrade of the Place d'Armes was not the only spur to the remodelling of St. Louis. In the Second Municipality, or the American sector, Gallier had already built St. Patrick's Church in 1840 on Camp Street just off Lafayette Square. St. Patrick's served as a new place of worship for



Figure 7. Jackson Square as depicted in the 1858–59 Crescent City Business Directory. Source: Louisiana Division, New Orleans Public Library.

Irish and other English-speaking Catholics uncomfortable with the more Continental and French-speaking practices of St. Louis.⁷ The church was established in 1833, the first outside of the original city quarters and is a spare Gothic Revival, in accordance with the burgeoning ecclesiastical movements of Great Britain as popularized by A. W. N. Pugin in the 1840s (Figure 8). St. Patrick's was funded by the prominent Irish businessmen who were influential in city politics and who numbered amongst Gallier's consistent clients. Gallier himself bought a prominent pew here, maintaining his social and business connections.

Perhaps the most intriguing architectural battle, though, was on the hotel front. One of the major impediments that the Anglo-American business community recognized as it attempted to promote trade with the East Coast was that businessmen detested travel to the city because lodgings were so inadequate. After several false starts, a group of Irish- and Anglo-American businessmen, some of them supporters of St. Patrick's, finally in 1835 began construction began on what was to be called the "best and largest hotel in the United States", the St. Charles Hotel, located prominently on St. Charles Street just across Canal Street in the American sector (Whipple, 1937, p. 195). Gallier designed it with a four-story portico supported by six Corinthian columns, placed it high on a plinth, and added an enormous dome (Figure 9). Ascending granite steps on the exterior, and marble on the interior, the guests arrived into an enormous Grand Hall upon entry. The concept for the St. Charles seems to have been based on the emerging modern hotels of the Eastern Seaboard like the Tremont House in Boston, completed in 1829—but by some accounts it exceeded it or New York's Astor House in size and luxury (Peters, 1949).



Figure 8. James Gallier and James Dakin, St. Patrick's Church, Camp Street, 1838–40. Dan Leyrer, photographer, September 1963. *Source:* Historic American Buildings Survey, HABS LA, 36-NEWOR, 59-1.



Figure 9. James Gallier, the first St. Charles Hotel, St. Charles Street, 1837. Daguerreotype by Charles Easterly. *Source:* Missouri Historical Society.

At nearly the same time, in 1835, construction began on a second opulent hotel, this one designed by de Pouilly and financed by major figures in the Creole community. The St. Louis Hotel was located in the heart of the French Quarter, near the Place d'Armes (Figure 10). Its design was based, as St. Louis and the Cabildo roof had been, on current Parisian architecture: this time the construction along Napoleon's and Baron von Hausmann's Rue de Rivoli in Paris, begun in 1811. The facade is rigidly regular, with only a slightly protruding portico carried by single-story Doric columns marking the main entrance. The regularity of the facade belies the complex mixed-use interior, in which separate entries to the hotel, its shops, and its exchange functions all existed in an irregular layout. Unlike the St. Charles Hotel, which was awkwardly sited at an oblique turn in St. Charles Street, the St. Louis Hotel was part of a larger re-planning of the French Quarter, in which de Pouilly also designed a new passage cutting through five city blocks from Canal Street and leading straight to the hotel's front door. Known as Exchange Alley or Passage, this new street, of which only two blocks were ever built and one remains, was also lined with a regular rows of arcaded three-and-a-half-story townhouses meant to emulate the scale and experience of the shopping districts of Paris. The domed rotunda of the St. Louis was at a much smaller scale than at the St. Charles Hotel, but both rotundas served the same purposes for their separate clienteles as loci of commerce in sugar, cotton, and the slave trade (Curtis, 1916; Bienvenu, 1961).

The *New Orleans Bee*, a bilingual French and English newspaper, published in 1835 an incisive commentary on these stark physical and architectural divisions that increasingly informed every aspect of the city's development. Chastising both Americans and Creoles, the *Bee* intoned:

We freely admit that there will always exist both up town and down town. . . . But the question to be answered by every lover of harmony, peace, union and the true interests of our city is this—shall . . . [we] forever divide our city into two unnatural parties pulling against each other, abusing one another and occasionally fighting one another? . . . If the inhabitants in the Faubourg St. Mary desire to build a hotel in St Charles Street, let them do it—the more hotels the better for all parts of a city. . . . The only object of these remarks on the exciting subject of up town and down town is to urge upon all good citizens the absolute necessity of preventing the . . . [creation of] animosities and bad feelings when a contrary spirit should prevail. . . . In this hot weather we would always advise those who may be induced to get into a passion and participate in the excitement got up by . . . gentlemen speculators to KEEP COOL.

The *Bee* pinpointed the sources of conflict between Americans and Creoles: control of power, money, and culture was directly linked to control of geography and building.

Crucial to the waging of these battles was the creation of an accompanying cultural mythology: the original inhabitants of New Orleans, who by the 1830s were no more authentically French than the Americans with whom they tried to compete, used the idea of France and Continental European cultural superiority as a tool in their battle. They built their own Bourse, their own Rue de Rivoli. The Americans, on the other hand, emulated the architecture of London and the Eastern Seaboard as part of their battle to make the city visually connected



Figure 10. J. N. B. De Pouilly, St. Louis Hotel, St. Louis Street, as photographed by George François Mugnier just before its demolition in 1915. *Source:* Louisiana Division, New Orleans Public Library.

to the United States despite its very different culture, climate, and economy. When the city reunited in 1853, it was the Second Municipality's Gallier-designed temple that became the city hall for the entire city, a clear symbolic victory for so-called 'Anglo' aesthetics. The use of postcolonial theory to explode the post-1803 hierarchies of power shows that there is not so much a "persistence of French influence in Louisiana" in New Orleans architecture of the 1830s and 1840s (Lane, 1990, p. 35). Instead Americanization and Eurocentrism went hand in hand.

Modern Metropole

By the 1950s, when the city embarked on a major and comprehensive programme of urban renewal and built its next city hall, New Orleans continued to struggle with the cultural oppositions created in the early 19th century. More than a century later a tremendous amount of political, social, and economic change had taken place—the Civil War, the end of slavery, Reconstruction, the effects of two World Wars, and the Great Depression of course touched the city. While there is a danger of compressing the temporal view of the city to the moments surrounding the building of its city halls, it also calls into stark relief how the same issues are revisited in different contexts. While in the 1830s and 1850s much of city's tension took place with a backdrop of tremendous economic growth, by the early 20th century the city's growth had stagnated. Where in 1830 New Orleans had been the country's third largest city, only 200 count smaller than second-ranking Baltimore, by 1950 the city had slipped to 16th (Gibson, 1998). Seeking to reverse the slow decline in prominence and population growth, Mayor DeLesseps Story 'Chep' Morrison declared a "decade of progress" upon his election in 1946 that would turn the city around and make it into a modern metropolis. The urban renewal

that reshaped so many American cities in the 1950s came to New Orleans as well, with a clash of culture and race at its heart (Hirsch, 2000).

By the 1950s race and class and a deep ambivalence toward the very value of the city's unique cultural identity became more starkly divisive. The city's infrastructure was crumbling, the French Quarter had deteriorated into slum-like conditions; the areas just beyond the edges of the business district and 'American Sector' had deteriorated physically as well. Industrial complexes were interspersed throughout the central city. People still cooked indoors on wood stoves, streets were unpaved, houses lacked running water. The city's historic neighbourhoods, the French Quarter, and the 'Back of Town areas' along the edges of the Central Business District were populated by poor immigrants, predominantly Italians and Irish, and by African-Americans. The city seriously contemplated demolishing the Cabildo before it was set aside as a history museum in 1895. In the 1930s it entertained plans to demolish both the old French Market and the centre of the French Quarter to erect more modern public housing (Hosmer, 1981, p. 294). Victor Mauberret's 1915 remarks sum up much of the city elite's attitude toward the French Quarter and the rest of the historic fabric of the city:

The section is gone completely. It has no future as a business district and as a residential district; it is undesirable except for the habitation of the Italian immigrants. A good conflagration, such as destroyed this section in its infancy, would be the best solution.⁸

The conflict was not between Creole and American, but between modern and unmodern, American and un-American ways of living in the 20th century.

This push for modernization dramatized the tension between the romanticized history of the Creole city and its reality. By the 1950s, this conflict had reached a kind of *détente*, with the Vieux Carré Commission, fully established in 1936, firmly ensconced as the protector of the city's history. Though the preservation movement had a rocky start, by 1954 the city recognized the value of the French Quarter as a tourist attraction and had backed off from the vitriolic stands against its deterioration in favour of restoration. This new position also conveniently paved the way for the demolition of other portions of the city's historic fabric. With the Vieux Carré preserved as a living museum, the potential value of other areas of the city was largely ignored, allowing large chunks of the African-American neighbourhood of Tremé to be demolished in the 1920s to make way for the Municipal Auditorium and public housing (Crutcher, 2006; Fields, 2004).

Where 19th-century conflicts resulted in the flourishing of multiple cultures, in the 1950s the conflict between white New Orleans and black New Orleans was part of a comprehensive strategy on the part of white elites to control and redistribute African-Americans into less visible areas of the city. At the heart of Morrison's decade of progress were two goals: a complete rebuilding of the transportation and built infrastructure of the city; and the elimination of so-called 'festering slums', which, with the saving of the French Quarter, were clearly identified as the 'Back of Town' neighbourhoods. From the 1930s to the 1950s, these blocks were torn down one after the other and their residents moved to public housing: Congo Square, the antebellum gathering place for slaves and free persons of colour on Sunday mornings for musical performance and dance, paved over as part of the Municipal Auditorium complex; Storyville, the city's red-light

district until the 1910s and the birthplace of what came to be known as Dixieland jazz at the piano of Jellyroll Morton and others is beneath the Iberville Housing Project; and as the final portion of the redevelopment scheme initiated by Mayor Morrison and master planned by city planner Brooke Duncan, the new Civic Center, required the demolition of the area around Perdido and S. Saratoga Streets, the neighbourhood that had been home to Buddy Bolden and the now legendary Funky Butt Hall (Haas, 1974). As part of its transformation to a modern metropole, the city actively reclaimed cultural and historical space from its poorest and least powerful citizens (Figures 11 and 12).

The Civic Center, which included the new City Hall, a state office building, civil courts, and a public library, was the jewel in the crown of this revisioning of the city (Figures 13 and 14). The wooden Creole cottages and shotgun, the galleried corner stores and modest clapboarded churches that are buried beneath the late modern complex were the symbols not of the city's history and culture, but of backwardness—they were “eyesores”, a “cancerous slum” that “blocked growth of [the] central business district” (Office of the Mayor, 1956, p. 5). This was a residual residential area, hemmed in by industrial sites on the lakeside, railroad tracks on the upriver side, and the new medical and office blocks on the downriver side. And, as with the 1840s Cabildo and Gallier Hall, the model for its design came from outside the city's own tradition. The firms that collaborated on the design of the civic centre, Goldstein, Parham & Labouisse; Favrot; Reed, Mathes & Bergman; Curtis & Davis; and August Perez Associates all had native New Orleanians at their helms, many of whom had been educated on the East Coast at architectural powerhouses like Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard. The architects came from respectable New Orleans families with names easily recognizable in the city's romanticized Creole past. But their plans nevertheless embodied the 20th-century discomfort with the old city and the plan they devised was well in keeping with the urban renewal plans being pushed forward in many major American cities including Detroit, Chicago, and New York.

With its basis in the transportation ethos of Robert Moses, on the one hand, and the tower-in-the-park international style of Le Corbusier, on the other hand, the new city hall, in Chep Morrison's words, was:

a bright symbol of New Orleans' Decade of Progress. Here beauty has been exchanged for ugliness and decay. Here is a design for public convenience carefully planned with an eye to the future. New Orleans' new seat of government ranks high with the best in the nation. (Office of the Mayor, 1956, p. 3)

With broad boulevards leading to its new parking garages, public plazas joining the City Hall to other state government office buildings, the State Supreme Court, and a new city library, the entire complex was supposed to embody the openness of government to the public, its efficiency, and its modernity (Davis, 2009; Goodstein, 1996).

The City Hall tower, completed after a slow construction process in 1957, is a plain office block constructed of granite blocks with a greenish-tinted glass curtain wall (Figure 15). Its eleven stories were fully air-conditioned at the time of its completion, one of the central components of modernity in the South. The building consolidated formerly dispersed agencies, allowing the public to access numerous public agencies with one visit. Functional planning placed the most commonly used offices, including voter registration, marriage licenses, birth certificates, and



Figure 11. Perdido Street between S. Saratoga and Franklin with houses marked for demolition to make way for the new Civic Center, as photographed by Bill Russell in July 1949. *Source:* Bill Russell Jazz Collection, Historic New Orleans Collection, MSS 520/F. 606.

utility payments, on the first floor, accessed through a simple marble lobby accented by extruded aluminium accents and handrails. On the second floor, intended also to be easily accessible to the public, were the Mayor's and City Councilmen's offices, as well as the Council Chambers, which accommodated 350 public citizens and was "served by a covered driveway so that citizens may enter and leave conveniently in all kinds of weather" (Office of the Mayor, 1957, p. 7).⁹ The city archives were optimistically placed in the basement and a new fire and



Figure 12. McKenna's Hall, also known as the Funky Butt Hall, intersection of Perdido and Franklin (which was to be widened to become Loyola Avenue), as photographed by Bill Russell in July 1949 just before demolition. *Source:* Bill Russell Jazz Collection, HNOC, MSS 520/F. 605.

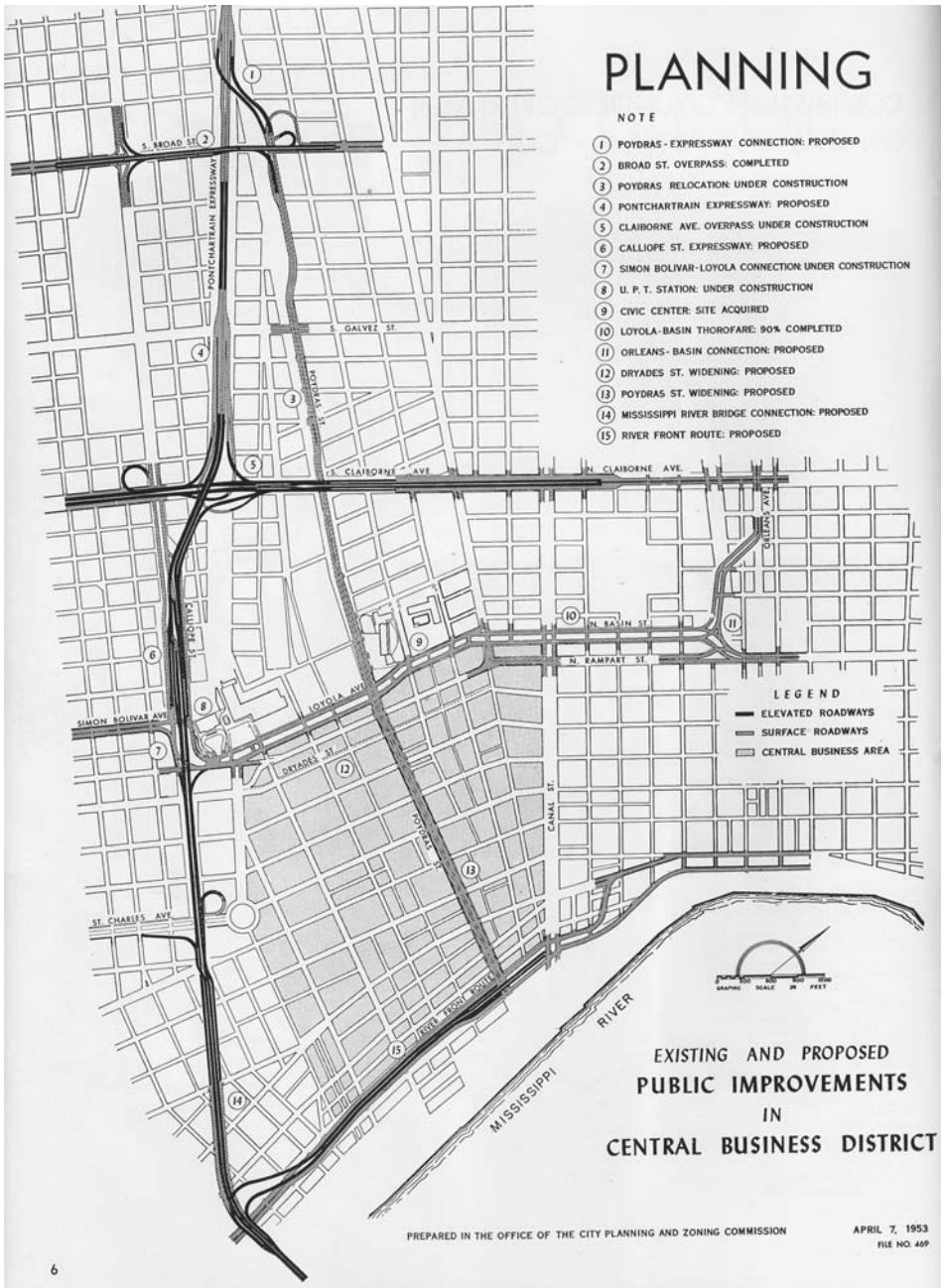
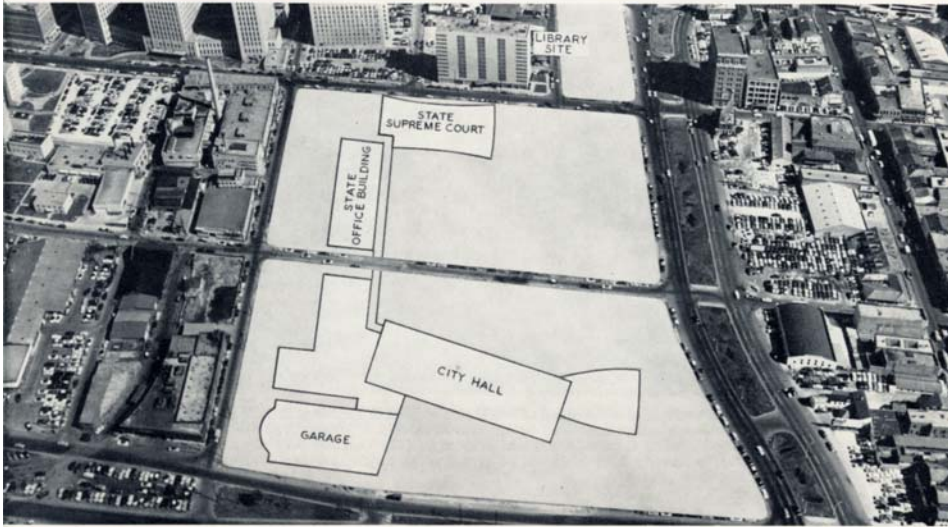


Figure 13. The creation of the new Civic Center (key number 9 on the map) was an integral part of a massive modernization scheme that included major new transportation infrastructure and interstate highways. While many of the projects included in this 1953 proposal came to pass, some aspects of the master plan, notably the riverfront expressway, did not. *Source:* Office of the Mayor (1953).

police emergency call centre on the top floor. Upon its completion, Morrison declared, evoking the uplifting image of vertical height, “This City Hall is a symbol of our new New Orleans. We are a people who have refused to believe that horizons have limits or that the heavens have a ceiling” (Boulard, 2002).

Design of Downtown Development Unfolds **City Hall Rises in Civic Center**



LOCATION OF CITY HALL, the two State Buildings and the new Main Downtown Library, also to be located in the Civic Center, are shown in this aerial photo. As this report went to press, discussions were being held as to whether or not a new International Building, combining International House and the Trade Mart, would also be constructed in the Civic Center.



FOUNDATION WORK for new City Hall, which will have 350,000 square feet of floor space. Most recent plan calls for including a chapel.

7

Figure 14. Civic Center under construction. *Source:* Office of the Mayor (1957).

The celebrations surrounding the dedication exhibited this new symbol not just to an internal audience, but an external one as well. Robert Wagner, Jr, Mayor of New York City, gave the keynote address at the 'Parade of Progress' banquet that celebrated the new Civic Center. Held at the Roosevelt Hotel, home to the famous Blue Room and its nationally broadcast jazz programmes, the banquet was a platform celebrating the new building and the new city. The linking of New York and New Orleans was deliberate, as Morrison declared:



Figure 15. Goldstein, Parham and Labouisse and Favrot; Reed, Mathes and Bergman, City Hall, Loyola Avenue, 1953–1957, photographed in 2006. Photo: author.

We can no longer differentiate between the farmer and the city dweller. We are no longer a rural, agricultural nation. These changes are seen more clearly in and around our two cities—New York and New Orleans—than perhaps anywhere else in the United States. (*The New York Times*, 1957).

Despite these optimistic declarations, the completion of this City Hall against the backdrop of the Civil Rights movement was a clear indication that the lines the city had drawn between its populations would continue to haunt it. Though the first floor was intentionally designed to be easily accessible to the public and the most-used offices, the bathrooms remained segregated and African-Americans could not eat in the City Hall cafeteria until 1963—and then only after national television crews had filmed police dragging civil rights activist Reverend Avery C. Alexander by his heels up the building's steps and out of the cafeteria (Rogers, 1993). Rather than serving as a shining new symbol of a modern city, the new City Hall became a symbol of the city's continued emphasis on segregation, of the drawing of lines between people and places, of the abandonment of the city's people in favour of an outward image that could not be maintained.

The new City Hall never did embody the progressive ideals that Morrison and the city's elite espoused. The Civic Center's public plaza never became a successful public space and has been re-landscaped repeatedly in search of a theme that citizens will find compelling. Because the city attempted to deny its history, the new fabric never connected with the old. Gallier Hall has ironically remained a more important public civic symbol, as every Mardi Gras krewe stops on its doorstep for the krewe's captain to greet the city's Mayor. In 2002, an article

assessing the 45-year-old building lamented its condition, found it 'depressing' and in need of drastic remodelling or even, perhaps, demolition (Boulard, 2002). Post-Katrina, scenes of protest and desperation and encampments of homeless citizens on its steps do nothing to change the building's social history for the better.

Postmodern Metropole

Plans for the potential demolition of City Hall surfaced before Hurricane Katrina, but became a more distinct possibility in its immediate aftermath. The proposal for the National Jazz Center had its origins in a smaller vision that began in 2004 when Mayor Ray Nagin offered financial support to the newly formed New Orleans Jazz Orchestra (NOJO), a project of jazz trumpeter Irvin Mayfield and the group's financial director Ron Markham.¹⁰ That initial support was for the group to tour, record, and promote jazz as a cultural product of New Orleans both to its own citizens and to the larger world. The proposal to create a major physical home for a National Jazz Center, however, dates to the post-Katrina milieu, in which an expensive grand gesture seemed particularly plausible. Mayfield and Markham, while fund-raising for NOJO in Chicago post-Katrina, met Laurence Geller through real-estate investor-manager Kevin Poorman. Geller is the Chairman and CEO of Strategic Hotels, at that time the owner of the Hyatt Hotel located near City Hall and the Super Dome.

It was Geller who hired and paid for Thom Mayne and Morphosis to create the new master plan for the old Civic Center. Centred on the disjointed space between the Superdome, the Hyatt Hotel, and the current complex along Loyola Avenue between Poydras and Tulane Avenues, the entire site is about 20 acres in total (Figure 16). The centrepiece of the complex is the Jazz Center, located at the corner of Poydras and Loyola, with a public auditorium intended to seat about 1000 people. In the earliest and grandest versions of the proposal, the Jazz Center would be located directly on top of the site of the current City Hall, while other buildings in the complex, including a 60,000 square foot jazz education centre, would replace the other 1950s government buildings in the complex, including the former Louisiana Supreme Court building, Civil Court building, and state office buildings. The better-appreciated New Orleans Public Library, designed by Curtis & Davis and located at the corner of Loyola and Tulane Avenues, would be preserved.¹¹ City Hall and other administrative offices would be relocated to the Dominion Tower, at 1450 Poydras Street, a 26-story office tower completed in 1989 for a then-expanding, now shrivelled, local oil and gas industry (Mowbray, 2006; Thomas, 2006).¹²

Because the plans were rapidly generated in 2006, changed midstream, and then largely abandoned in 2007, it is, however, difficult to read the intentions of the design consistently. The National Jazz Center was envisioned as the upriver anchor of a linear jazz park, connecting Louis Armstrong Park and the Performing Arts Center at the downriver end, and the new Jazz Center at the other. The linear park is, in turn, proposed as part of an expansion of the current downtown arts district that would push past the zone of museums and galleries concentrated between the river and St. Charles Avenue towards Loyola Avenue and the Superdome (Figure 17). The planning and design of the civic complex and Jazz Center, despite these civic gestures, took place almost entirely outside of the purview of the public realm. The architect was selected and paid by private industry and developers; the project was pushed and lobbied for by private industry and developers. Mayor Nagin implicitly supported the project, but

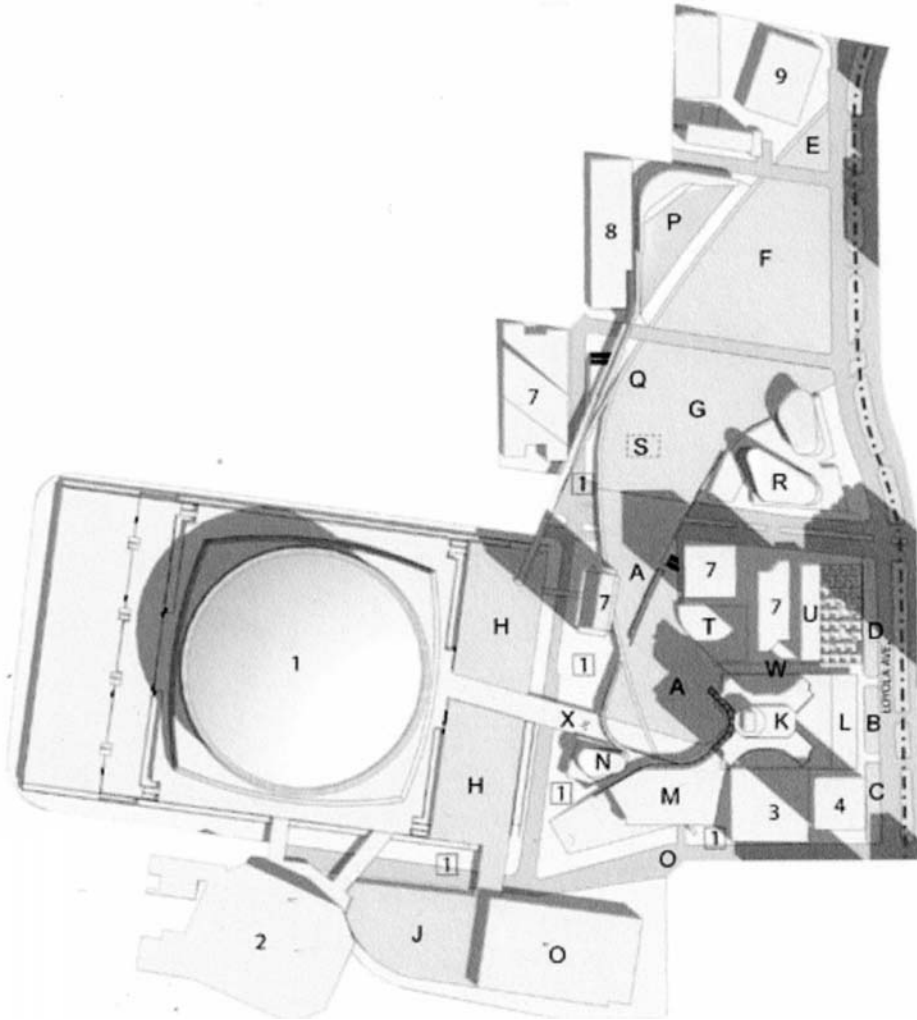


Figure 16. Morphosis, site plan for the National Jazz Center, 2006 version. Though later versions scaled back considerably, this site plan shows the attempt to knit together the disparate urban spaces defined by the Superdome (labeled 1), the New Orleans Public Library (9), the Hyatt Hotel (K), and the new Jazz Center complex on the former Civic Center site (R). The dashed line at right indicates Loyola Avenue. *Source:* Morphosis.

largely through the proxy of his short-lived Bring New Orleans Back Commission. That Commission, formed in 2005, was the first in a series of attempts to bring prominent business and cultural figures into the process of reclaiming the city post-Katrina. The Commission's Cultural Committee, co-chaired by Wynton Marsalis and Cesar Burgos, fully supported the Jazz Center as an engine for economic growth in the city's cultural economy. The Commission's Economic Development Committee seconded the support, promoting the Jazz Center's key role in energizing and interconnecting development of two sectors of the city's financial picture, the internal cultural economy with the external tourist and hospitality industry. The recurring phrase 'Hollywood South' was used to envision the city as a centre for an entertainment industry based in the city's and region's historical links to jazz, literature, and



- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing Arts District | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed expansion of Arts District |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ① Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities ② 15 galleries along Julia Street ③ Ogden Museum ④ Confederate Museum ⑤ Le Chat Noir ⑥ Contemporary Arts Center (CAC) ⑦ Artworks ⑧ Children's Museum ⑨ D-Day Museum ⑩ Howlin' Wolf Club | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ① Ashé Cultural Center ② Barrister's Gallery & Cultural Center ③ Café Reconcile ④ Zeitgeist Gallery ⑤ 3 Ring Circus Gallery ⑥ South Rampart Street Development (Linear Park) |

Figure 17. The National Jazz Center was part of a larger vision promoted by the Cultural Commission of the Bring New Orleans Back Commission for expanding the city's existing Warehouse Arts District as a means of better connecting it to both the Superdome and the French Quarter. A linear jazz park running the length of South Rampart Street parallel to Loyola Avenue (designated here by number 6 in the proposed expansion) was a critical pathway from the Center to Louis Armstrong Park. *Source:* Bring New Orleans Back Commission Cultural Committee (2006b).

artistic innovation (Bring New Orleans Back Commission, Cultural Committee, 2006a, 2006b; Bring New Orleans Back Commission, Economic Development Committee, 2006).

There is perhaps no better firm to build for the image of Hollywood South than Morphosis. Based in Santa Monica, the firm has an international reputation for cutting-edge, creative, and iconic designs. Mayne, the firm's principal, received the Pritzker Prize for Architecture in 2005, cementing his reputation as one of the new generation of 'starchitects' whose projects generate press and publicity wherever they are built. The corporate structure of Morphosis, which has its origins as a design architect, providing ideas rather than working plans, was also well suited to the speculative nature of the Jazz Center project (Cuff, 1992). During the past decade, the firm has also proven to have a successful track record of working on government-sponsored projects, on the city, state, and federal level, promoting the notion that public buildings can be innovative, edgy, and on budget. The 2004 Caltrans District 7 Headquarters anchors an entire city block within the civic centre of downtown Los Angeles, incorporating both administrative offices for California Transportation District 7 and public spaces, including a café and performance space. It has a technologically innovative skin, faced on its south side with photovoltaic cells that supply energy to the building, but also exhibits dramatic cuts and shifts in its form that attempt to connect the building to a larger dramatic sense of public space in the city.

The initial Morphosis proposal for the Jazz Center in New Orleans shared some of the properties of the Caltrans project. It is multipurpose and explores ideas of urban scale and experience that have become a hallmark of Mayne's career. A collection of performance pavilions, outdoor theatres, and exhibition spaces loosely arranged around an open park space, the anchor for the site is the main performance hall of the Jazz Center (Figure 18). The pavilion is intended to create a link to the Hyatt Hotel and conference centre across Poydras and serves as a conduit to the Superdome one block to the hotel's rear. The building must compete on a massive scale with those projects and in this sense it would appear to succeed—certainly more so than the monolithic, unpierced backside curtain wall of the current civic building that effectively blocks any connection between City Hall's public lawn and the major intersection to its rear. Across Loyola Avenue, the relationship to the scale of Poydras Avenue and to South Rampart, where a handful of 19th-century buildings survive, is more problematic (Figure 16). Several buildings in the 400 block of South Rampart, as Lolis Eric Elie has pointed out, are themselves remnants of the material culture of jazz, home to the Eagle Saloon, the Iroquois Theater, and the Little Gem Saloon, all locations where Louis Armstrong, Buddy Bolden, and other jazz greats got their start (Elie, 2006).

Hailed as a masterpiece of turn of the century neo-modernism, critic Nicolai Ouroussoff described the project as a "social mixing chamber" that would transform a "dead urban area" into a "lively public forum" (Ouroussoff, 2007, p. E1). Music in New Orleans is indeed the source for social mixing—but for the public the spontaneity and energy of music has always been informal and neighbourhood-based, rather than sponsored by civic or governmental bodies (Charters, 2008; Wagner, 2006; Sakakeeny, 2006). Publicity about the redesign centred almost exclusively on the Jazz Center itself as a landmark building with little to no attention paid to the idea of site and urban context, despite vague claims for urban transformation. The Jazz Center, as proposed, is an amorphous,



Figure 18. Morphosis, Jazz Center rendering. *Source:* Morphosis.

undulating hulk of a shell, a steel frame encased in glass. Similar to the megastructure of OMA's Seattle Public Library, it is a building in action, folded and twisting against the orthogonal grid of the city and the surrounding commercial skyscrapers. It is remarkable for its monochrome silver shifting skin that one can easily imagine shedding rain in buckets on a sub-tropical August afternoon. The building, like so many of the late twentieth early twenty-first century landmark arts structures, is in dialogue with itself, self-aggrandizing and self-referential (Rybczinski, 2002; Baudrillard, 1982). Describing Morphosis's approach, Mayne (2003) writes that "architecture [is] a collection of fragments, something open-ended, unfinished, and continually evolving" (p. 41). Mayne's description of the concern of architecture for spatial experience has a formulaic connection to popular descriptions of improvisational jazz as similarly unfinished and counterpointal in its form (Brown, 2006). Beyond this tenuous surface connection between form and a local music culture, what does the plan offer to the city? How does it, like the city halls of the 19th and mid-20th centuries, reflect the current design moment?

The purpose of the new complex, as the Bring New Orleans Back Commission implied, is twofold: to market the city to tourists, on the one hand, and to attract new members of the much sought-after 'creative class' to a city rebranded as a capital of harmonious artistic and cross-disciplinary improvisation, on the other hand. The irony of the proposal centres in this dual-functioning mission. On one level, the Jazz Center is to function as a symbol of New Orleans as part of a 'branding' mission that Mayfield passionately describes: "Jazz is our industry. ... Oil is to Saudi Arabia what jazz is to New Orleans. It's authentic. It's sold all over the country. It started here. It lives here" (Berry, 2007). The centre is, therefore, to present an 'authentic' image of the city to be consumed by outsiders. The success of Marsalis's mainstream Jazz at Lincoln Center in New York is a further spur for New Orleans, as the 'owner' of jazz's history, to create its own high culture showcase for music and performance. On another level, the Jazz Center is to function as an anchor for 'Hollywood South', a symbol of the city's ability to compete culturally and economically with the major centre of the entertainment industry in southern California. In 2008,

Louisiana was third only to California and New York in revenue generated by film production, with over 80 productions for television and theatres. In co-opting the name 'Hollywood', the city undercuts the notion of authenticity and pride of place, once again validating itself only through its relationship to the metropolises of the outside world.

On one level, then, the Morphosis proposal functioned exactly as intended. It generated an enormous amount of much-needed positive national press for New Orleans in a time when that attention was sorely needed. Stories on National Public Radio, in *The New York Times*, the *Chicago Tribune*, *USA Today*, and many others appeared, all looking forward eagerly to the project's inception.¹³ Should the project ever progress beyond the drawing board, it will certainly continue to generate this kind of attention. But what of the internal constituency? Marsalis and Burgos's Cultural Commission Vision Statement eloquently describes the need for New Orleanians to be proud of themselves and their culture and for the city to support its culture of music, food, art, and architecture both spiritually and financially. A key part of the redevelopment plan was for New Orleanians to be deeply invested in their own place: "People come from around the world to see us live and play. *We need to strengthen our culture for internal consumption*" (Bring New Orleans Back Commission, Cultural Subcommittee, 2005).

What the project symbolizes, however, is the complete resignation of the city as a functioning civic entity. Where all of the three previous city halls embodied this tension between metropole and colony, on some level they had a message of civic corporeality at their hearts, however embattled and unresolved that message was. The Jazz Center is by contrast post-democratic. It effectively erases the importance of a city hall as place that facilitates what Ryan has called "democratic practice" (Ryan, 1998, chap. 7). It is the physical manifestation of what has largely been heralded as the complete failure of government to care for its citizens, to plan for disaster and its aftermath, and to manage recovery. This marginalization of government and of the city as a city is reflected both in the way the project developed—almost completely outside the realm of civic and state guidance, as discussed above—and in the way the project was designed. It fails to address 'internal consumption', the city's need to look inward for a strength that will sustain the complex when international jazz tourism fails. By failing to engage South Rampart Street, by marginalizing the existing Louis Armstrong Park, by orienting to a hotel and a megastructure sports complex, by promoting the privatization of public government, the centre, as even Mayne himself noted, demarcates the lines between insider and outsider more clearly than ever before.

Each of New Orleans's three city halls, and potentially its fourth, has had at its heart a message of segregation, of one part of the physical city from another, of one population of the city from another, of one part of the political system from another, of governance from city life, and of the city's own architectural culture from an international standard of propriety. As New Orleans stands today poised on the brink of either magnificent failure or rebirth, it is more important than ever to take a frank look at its history, to understand the memories and traditions that have formed its present-day attitudes. The redevelopment of the city must address the abiding tension between colony and metropole that has given the city its unique and irreplaceable character, but that has also divided its people and divided the city from its nation.

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I would like to thank the staff of the Historic New Orleans Collection, where I worked for several years, for sharing their boundless expertise on the city's architectural history. The Center for American Architecture at the University of Texas at Austin provided the first forum for my presentation of this research in 2006; my thanks in particular to Richard Cleary, Christopher Long, Monica Penick, and Vladimir Kulic for their thoughtful comments. My thanks also to Jacob Wagner for being a supportive and insightful editor, and to the anonymous readers whose comments improved the essay tremendously.

Notes

1. See the tense interview that Reed Kroloff of Tulane University, a representative of the Neo-Modernist camp, conducted with Andrés Duany of the New Urbanist movement (Kroloff, 2006). In another article, Elizabeth Mossop of the Louisiana State University School of Architecture made a statement typical of the bitter feelings about Gulf Coast reconstruction projects: "A lot of local firms and people like Andrés Duany have been sleazing around the Mississippi governor's office trying to make power plays, and they'll no doubt be responsible for some truly horrendous and mediocre sprawl solutions" (Pedersen, 2005, p. 128).
2. From the informality of blogs such as those run by Francine Stock (<http://www.regionmodernism.com>) and K. Gadbois (<http://squanderedheritage.com>) to the more formal programmes of the Preservation Resource Center in New Orleans, there are tremendous efforts on a daily basis to prevent the demolition of houses and public buildings. Public efforts to recognize the need to preserve modern architecture in the context of the largely 19th-century fabric of the city have become more widespread recently and were highlighted at the forum 'At Risk: 20th Century New Orleans Urban Design and Architecture', held at the Ogden Museum of Southern Art on 7 February 2008. For a synopsis, see Kennedy (2008). Kingsley (2007) has commented on the disparity between preserving 19th- and 20th-century versions of the city.
3. There are many picture books that discuss the history of New Orleans architecture, but more enriching architectural histories of New Orleans can be found in Wilson (1974), Poesch & Bacot (1997), Lewis (2003), and Kingsley (2003).
4. Hall (1992) specifically discusses the contributions of African-Americans to this colonial society; in the same volume, LaChance (1992) discusses the contributions of French nationals to the creation of Creole culture. Naohito (1986) discusses the continued development of this Creole vernacular tradition in 19th-century domestic architecture (see also Edwards, 1994, 2001; and Edwards & Kariouk, 2003). New Orleans Museum of Art (2003) also focuses on vernacular domestic architecture and the contributions made by free people of colour and their contemporary descendants to its construction, design, and furnishing.
5. For excellent discussions of the etymology of the 'Creole' designation in New Orleans, see Tregle (1982, 1992) and Kein (2000). An extensive literature exists documenting and dissecting cultural and ethnic hybridity in New Orleans in the nineteenth century. See for example Hanger (1997) and LaChance (1994) for different perspectives and methodologies.
6. See the collection of essays edited by Hirsch & Logsdon (1992). Tregle (1992) lays out the cultural myths surrounding the loss of French identity in the city in the antebellum period: "For several decades after 1803 the history of New Orleans and Louisiana centred largely in vigorous battle among Latin Creoles, Americans, and foreign French for control of the society, each group determined to mold the whole to its particular design. Issues dividing the factions ran so deep that those involved in the contest not unreasonably thought of themselves as engaged in struggle for the very soul of the community" (p. 141).
7. Gallier was not the original architect of St. Patrick's; he completed and modified the building after problems with uneven settling delayed construction. James and Charles Dakin were the original designers and Thomas K. Wharton also appears to have played crucial role in its design (Scully, 1973; Wharton, 1999).
8. As recalled by Stephanie Alison McColloster in about 1940. See http://web.archive.org/web/20040307220940/www.new-orleans.la.us/home/vcc/history1_1.php (accessed on 6 February 2006).

9. For more commentary on the design and its air-conditioning, in particular, see *American City* (1958).
10. Both Reich (2006) and Berry (2007) offer overviews of the project's conception.
11. By late 2008, Morphosis produced a much smaller-scale proposal for a single building on the uptown lake corner of Poydras and Loyola, leaving the Civic Center complex intact. This is the version of the proposal that was published on the Morphosis-created website "Morphopedia: The Online Encyclopedia of Morphosis" in mid-2009 (<http://morphopedia.org>) and it is far different in scope than the heavily publicized and discussed earlier versions of the plan.
12. The state's purchase of the Dominion Tower from the Hertz Group for the purpose of housing city and state offices was contemplated, separate from the Jazz Center plans, through the end of 2008 when the purchase fell through (Moran, 2008).
13. A sampling of the national stories that have appeared discussing the plans for the National Jazz Center includes: Blumenfeld (2008); Pogrebin (2006); *USA Today* (2006); Wiltz (2007); Bergeron (2006); Bacon (2006); Troeh (2006); and Hales (2006).

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