I, Nicholas Gray, hereby submit this original work as part of the requirements for the degree of Master of Architecture in Architecture (Master of).

It is entitled:
Gastronomical Intervention
Food as Vernacular Catalyst

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Abstract

In an era of specialized industrialization, America’s relationship with food no longer represents a cultural institution, but rather has dissolved into a milieu of blind consumerism. This separation of people and culture creates a community of transient placelessness, de-emphasizing human relationships to established cultural roots, architectural landscapes, and supportive agricultural systems. This thesis offers a response to the extinction of holistic gastronomic understanding. Historically, gastronomic traditions are born from the land; a strong relationship between land and people establishes a local vernacular corresponding with its inhabitants it. This thesis promotes the need for an architectural understanding of Over-the-Rhine’s local microculture and its dependence on gastronomy as a cornerstone of identity.

The design of a locavore hub is proposed, adjacent to Over-the-Rhine’s Findlay Market. Utilizing theories of critical regionalism viewed through the lens of the Slow Food movement helps to shape the qualities which ultimately define Cincinnati’s terroir. Several cultural themes emerge (imported cultures, landscape, rebirth, tactile experience, and narrative) which will stimulate criteria from which the locavore hub’s design of an architectural terroir can be derived. The design melds these themes to create a tectonic architectural experience transcending nostalgia. An evocative and intimate engagement with the process of making evokes intuitive bonds of people, food, experience, and place as a resistance to cultural homogeneity.
Acknowledgments

This thesis work would not have been possible without the endless love and support of my parents, Thomas and Vicki Gray, the guidance of my Thesis Committee chair John Hancock, as well as my fellow students at the University of Cincinnati. I would like to thank my best friends Joshua Michaels and Bailey Metzner for cultivating my love for the city of Cincinnati which inspired this thesis, and my mother for illustrating the power that food has to bring people together.
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Introduction

In French wine making, there is a word – *Terroir* – which roughly translates to “sense of place.” Aspects of each wine are indelibly linked to the earth where it was made, emanating in subtle characteristics which differentiate it from other wines of the same type. Each wine will vary slightly in flavor, dryness, and body based on the grapes of which it was made. This idea of terroir gives clues to the area the grapes were grown, the characteristics of the soil, even clues about the weather in that production year, thus giving it’s taster a narrative of the grapes. In essence, the idea of terroir links the product to the place, and celebrates the nuanced attributes which create unique tasting experiences.¹

Architecturally, the richness of a place is linked to its individual flavors as well, and is strongly visible in the historic context of Over-the-Rhine, Cincinnati. We are given clues to the historical makeup, economic status, and cultural importance of place through the development of its built environment. We can understand how places were used, and have a clearer understanding of the people who inhabited these spaces and the factors which shaped their lives during their conception and occupancy. Architectural traditions have been created out of environmental constraints and social directives, ultimately helping to establish a symbiosis between social culture and built tradition.² However, much of what was used to create region-specific vernacular has been lost, and so with it the importance it once carried. Industrialization in America brought with it mass conformity in building techniques, in turn replacing region specific design traditions. What is left is a land of interchangeable places and interchangeable experiences, none more memorable or special than another.

Kenneth Frampton responds to this crisis of placelessness in an argument for critical regionalism; his contention is based on the divorce of established human cultures and new traditions in the built environment, in an attempt to reestablish an intimate connection between the two. This criticism aims at utilizing a synthesis rooted in modern building techniques and linked closely with geographical and socioeconomic context. Much like Slow Food’s emphasis on relationships with the land, seasonality, and variety, there are inherent traits embedded into designs emanating from regional climatic, topographical, and contextual constraints. Frampton utilizes six criteria as a rubric in which an architecture of critical regionalism can be understood: Culture / Nature, Topography, Context, Climate, Light, and Tectonics. These can be utilized to better understand the make-up of Over-the-Rhine and develop an architecture focused on emphasizing contextual forces in a form appropriate to the present.

Frampton’s constraints will be utilized symbiotically with the principles laid out by the slow food movement to create a hub for locavores and foodies, in an effort to link people back with a cornerstone of all cultures – food. This Slow Food hub will utilize components of regional agriculture and production to help re-establish the “making” process, and in turn link people with the land, the people and most importantly the culture and architecture of this specific locale.

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Over time, the definition of gastronomy has evolved and accumulated meaning, becoming indelibly linked with social and cultural movements due to its close correlation with agricultural, environmental, and cultural issues. The French term “gastronomie” is actually rooted in ancient Greek as (gastér, “stomach”) + ( nómos, “knowledge, law”). The etymological meaning roots itself in placing value on the stomach as a form of knowledge or thinking, something predating the phrase “gut feeling.” Today gastronomy is defined by Merriam Webster as “The art or science of good eating.” This evolution indicates a shift from a substantiated knowledge or social value to something aesthetic or even hedonistic as good food is often looked at as indulgence rather than necessity. This is largely due to the shift in culinary patterns of the recent century, particularly in developed countries like America.

Carlo Petrini would argue that within the last century industrialization and consumeristic attitudes have created a void in the established culinary relationships. Historically, cultures have had strong relationships with natural landscapes because of a direct linkage with agricultural systems emanating into culinary traditions. However, within the last century, technological advances have allowed industrialized nations to specialize, and develop agriculture independent of mainstream culture. This ultimately has created a mass commodification of food, and in turn has segregated people from agricultural linkages which were historically abundant.

American culture has become specialized to such a large degree that this idea of wholeness is long gone. Kenneth Frampton’s conjecture pits culture against nature, generally admitting...
that this duality has become the status quo. Gastronomy, as illustrated by Petrini and the slow food movement however, dictates that both nature and culture must work symbiotically. The imbalance of culture and nature has become evident through the perpetuation of environmental disasters, as well as health detriments which are directly attributable to dietary decisions. What in previous generations was common knowledge or cultural value has begun to be eradicated from collective memory, and symptoms of this cultural imbalance have been surfacing as a result.

Gastronomy from the perspective of slow food is an extensive topic, as it relates to far more than just the topical experience of food. Petrini defines gastronomy as relating to the study of botany, genetics, physics, chemistry, agriculture, zootechnics, agronomy, ecology, anthropology, sociology, geopolitics, political economics, trade, technology, industry, cooking, physiology, medicine, and epistemology. A simpler definition would be the idea of gastronomy as the study of food affecting life, because of its unavoidable significance to daily life.

Slow food further investigates the significance of fare affecting interpersonal relationships and values. Shifting culinary traditions are both indicative of as well as cause of change in established social practice. In *Cooked*, Michael Pollan illustrates the interesting juxtaposition of a decreased time spent cooking by the American family, and increased time spent watching cooking shows on television. This interesting phenomenon substantiates a corollary hedonistic ideology of food, as we indulge based on the intrinsic value of happiness related to food.

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7 Frampton, “Towards a Critical Regionalism...” , 23
8 Petrini, *Slow Food Nation: Why Our Food Should Be Good, Clean, and Fair*, 55
Experientially, Gastronomy provides a lens through which to view food that is more complete than as sustenance, or the sum of its flavors. A heightened gastronomic experience of food is predicated on the utilization of multisensory input, creating an experience that is potentially far richer than most experiences in everyday life. Juhanni Pallasmaa in *The Eyes of the Skin* argues that the ocularcentricism of western culture (the primacy of superficial visual stimuli) creates superficial experiences.\textsuperscript{10} These are devoid of a more significant depth afforded by a true multisensory experience.

Just as food is by nature multisensory, architecture must strive to offset the dominant ocularcentricism in order to reach a more complete experience. Architecture and gastronomy parallel each other in their established traditions. Both meals and spaces have proper introductions and techniques to accentuate natural characteristics of food/space. Narrative and order dictate the path of the experience, while substance, body, and technique are combined to link the raw to create a heightened form. Richness of experience is rarely defined by any singular characteristic though, rather it is the combination and linkages between multiple elements which provide the interest in these experiences. Texture and light, sweet and sour, these combinations establish a background from which the user is enabled to fulfill their more complete experience.


Fig. 2 Kaze-no-Oka Crematorium
Terroir describes the experiential quality by which wine links people to place through subtle site specific characteristics emanating through vineyard grapes. Where terroir of wine narrates the grapes, vineyard, and vintner's skill, architectural terroir follows similar characteristics. Architectural terroir will view theories of critical regionalism through the lens of Slow Food, to understand the experience of place and the intrinsic and social qualities which make it so. Experiential and region-specific criteria relates to locale, material, craft, tectonics, and user engagement culminate to create an architectural terroir specific to an individual place.

From a gastronomic perspective, this architectural manifesto epitomizes underlying concepts of Slow Food. An architectural terroir links established cultures back to natural and developed architectural landscapes.
Locale

Frampton describes a critical regionalism as having a “more directly dialectical relationship with nature than the more abstract, formal traditions of the modern avant-garde architecture allow.” This suggests a substantiative correlation between architecture and gastronomy as defined in Carlo Petrini’s writings in *Slow Food Nation*. This Slow Food manifesto outlines that food should be “good, clean, and fair,” in establishing the validity that good food is in fact the responsible decision environmentally, experientially, and humanistically. Within *Slow Food Nation*, Petrini’s triad of criteria synthesizes the importance of the human experience of food with its corresponding relationship with contingent ecological/agricultural practices and production/consumption habits. The Slow Food perspective runs contrary to the current American industrial/consumer relationship, seeking to mitigate the generalized gastronomic ignorance and segregation from the agricultural system as a whole.

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11 Frampton, “Towards a Critical Regionalism...”, 23
12 Petrini, *Slow Food Nation: Why Our Food Should Be Good, Clean, and Fair*, 32
Modernist notions of universalism and the *tabula rasa* veer away from accepting and embracing the natural limitations of distinctive environments into design, while postmodernist design’s individualist attitudes leave little room for establishing a strong context. Frampton asserts:

It is self-evident that the tabula rasa tendency of modernization favors the optimum use of earth moving equipment inasmuch as a totally flat datum is regarded as the most economic matrix upon which to predicate the rationalization of construction. Here again, one touches in concrete terms this fundamental opposition between the universal civilization and autochthonous culture. The bulldozing of an irregular topography into a flat site is clearly a technocratic gesture which aspires to a condition of absolute placelessness, whereas the terracing of the same site to receive the stepped form of a building is an engagement in the act of “cultivating” the site.  

His phrase “engagement of the site” ties heavily back into earlier theories of Slow Food’s established relationships with land and agriculture. Where established settlements and cultures have successfully adapted to understand and utilize topographical elements, opportunities are created through diversity.

Ancient Peruvian societies thrived on staple crops much like current societies do today, the key difference being the utilization of space to create diversity within these crops in a manner beneficial to the crop, the land, and the people. It is estimated that ancient Peruvian cultures utilized over 3,800 different varieties of potato in the mountains of the Andes. Each variety of potato was cultivated to thrive best in specific microclimates within the mountains. Wind exposure, sunlight, elevation, and soil characteristics defined where each type of potato would best thrive, culminating in an extremely diverse field of crops.

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13 Frampton, “Towards a Critical Regionalism...” , 26
Petrini would argue that this diverse system instills the very nature of appropriate land utilization, and also creates gastronomic variation through utilizing seasonality as a tool to overcome specific climatic difficulties. Petrini would contend this place-specific farming technique is fundamentally opposed to the *tabula rasa* ideology, and through association creates a significantly stronger connection between people and place, utilizing food as a bridge to connect the two. Architecturally, a locale manifests back into the definitive natural characteristics of the site and region, in a similarly direct relationship, but is most strongly embedded through cohesive inclusion of social traditions.

Stephen Moore in his essay “Technology, Place and Nonmodern Regionalism” elaborates upon the differences between social and political practices which he describes as “normative practices.” His elaboration helps to establish cultural traditions embedded in place, as opposed to aesthetic or transient traditions. Moore views Frampton’s criteria of regional design as a largely aesthetic exercise, as he identifies boundary, environmental strategy, tectonic expression, and tactile bodily experience (all physical embodiments of architecture) with questionable local social significance. Moore states “Critical though it may be, it remains outside the social and biological conditions that describe normative practices,” and that, “these normative practices are essential characteristics of any architecture that aspires to be regenerative.”

An architecture of terroir needs to take these normative practices into account to thoroughly embed social traditions into built form, and move beyond the aesthetic, towards a wholly inclusive design.

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16 Ibid 440
Experience

Frampton defends tactile experience as “the resilience of the place-form and the capacity of the body to read the environment in terms other than those of sight alone and that these suggest a potential strategy for resisting the domination of universal technology.” It has been detrimental to utilize the tools only fitting within the ocularcentric view of experience, as this perspective neglects other aspects specific enough to become viable for intimacy with space. Authenticity in material reveals a multidimensional and multisensory depth in the usage and interplay between material and user, allowing a deeper connection and deeper experience.

The Saynatsalo Town Hall by Alvar Aalto is cited by Frampton to illustrate the inclusiveness of immediate, authentic tactile experience. Frampton contends that this particular precedent cannot be reduced to mere information or represented abstractly, instead Aalto’s design must be experienced directly. Aalto is recognized as having amassed a body of work best exemplifying this tectonic approach. According to Juhanni Pallasmaa, these qualities tend to appear awkward until they are experienced in person, where the intangible qualities of his materials add depth. He points out, “Aalto was clearly more interested in the encounter of the object and the body of the user than in mere visual aesthetics.”

Much like Aalto, Carlo Scarpa has amassed a body of work and a reputation for exemplifying tectonic process and intimate material-sensual relationships. Frampton describes in Carlo Scarpa: Adoration of the Joint as recognizing and embodying the tectonic language of the city. “The details are then the loci where knowledge is of an order in which the mind finds its own working, that is, logos… the re-use of a detail, becomes a creative catalyst, it becomes a fertile detail.”

17 Kenneth Frampton, Studies in Tectonic Culture: The Poetics of Construction in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Architecture, 299
Scarpa’s renovation of the Castelvecchio in Verona illustrates the dynamic interplay between new and old, as Scarpa utilizes a methodology of revealing elements of the existing castle to express elements of its volatile history. He sought to tell the story of Castelvecchio for what it was – pastiche mixed with history. Portions of roofs and walls were selectively demolished to reveal its pre-fascist history as a military site, and linked selectively utilizing what could be interpreted as modern and vividly tectonic evolutions of ancient techniques.

Fig. 4 Saynatsalo Town Hall Stairs
Tectonics

Moore’s discussion of regionalism in Technology, Place, and Nonmodern Regionalism develops an additional criterion or critique of Frampton’s critical regionalism theories. Moore discusses his definition of “Place Experience” in which the tectonic history of a place is expressed, elaborating the making process through local knowledge, technology, and techniques. This element of connectivity between tectonic technique and normative practice heightens awareness, and the importance of tectonic assembly to locals. 19

Slow architecture, like slow food, situates itself as a critique of the commodification of architecture through globalized modernization. The gastronomic underpinnings rely on intrinsic regional values tied closely with historical tradition, which loses meaning when transferred abroad. Tectonic history if viewed through this lens is thus non transferrable. 20

19 Moore, Technology, Place, and Nonmodern Regionalism, 441-442.
20 Frampton. Studies in Tectonic Culture... 3.
Fig. 11 Wyckoff Exchange in NYC
This project emphasizes small business development within the realm of local food by integrating a strong local food network as the backbone of its success. There are few examples of this in Over-the-Rhine other than Findlay Market. This local fixture enables connection between farmer and consumer and also facilitates spaces vital for small business growth. The Market houses 37 independent permanent merchants on site, each working symbiotically with each other to support prospective new business ventures using a locally oriented focus as the binding agent between multiple retail specializations. The institution also facilitates space for farmers to sell produce when available, allowing great variety in terms of range of produce, choice to the consumer, and an actual connection between farmer and consumer as the middle man is cut from the equation.

While Findlay Market is successful in establishing connection between consumers and producers, it lacks transparency in terms of educating the consumer or illustrating the production process – a pivotal step in the making of food. Production techniques are not showcased in a manner which cultivates knowledge although they are at times visible. It is important to note and understand the difference between the two, as assembling ingredients does not necessarily mean knowledge or particular skills necessary to create and/or transfer knowledge of technique. For this reason, there is potential to bridge the gap between raw ingredient and finished product through the display of technique and process, manifesting in a mixed use typology that includes but is not limited to emphasis on education and production.

Food production typologies have shifted through developmental technologies. In some trades, production historically existed within the home or in close proximity like that of artisan crafts

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and agriculture. Industrialization moved production away from the home in an effort to increase efficiencies and increase the scale of production. With this shift, the relationship between one’s work and one’s identity became less important as the skills of the workers were reduced. The mechanized production system introduced the idea that the worker could be unskilled but still contribute to production goals. People became disconnected with the products they were making because they were specializing in a specific aspect of production. This role did not require one to fully understand the entire picture.

This proposed Slow Food locavore hub and intervention at Findlay Market aims at utilizing skilled food craftsmen rather than unskilled workers in an effort to re-introduce the relationship between people and product. It is fundamental that the scale of production remains small in order to exemplify the production process while also working within the confines of the local food industry.

Architecture fulfills the role of defining the relationship between public community and private production. While production facilities are made opaque to many communities, this work seeks to emphasize the connection between people, process, and place – aligning education as a fundamental component of the relationship. This educational factor allows this built form to coincide with the existing network of Findlay Market and the network of small businesses and farmers who collaboratively create and sustain Cincinnati’s local food system.

Findlay Market’s fundamental purpose is the preservation and the development of local industry along with the surrounding neighborhood. The institution positioned itself so that its success benefits the entirety of the community, and vice versa. Where most markets are self-serving entities promoting profits for company growth, Findlay Market operates more as a facilitator for small businesses, providing a platform for which
businesses can start at a much smaller scale. The essence of such a grass roots approach is to evolve from the people, because oftentimes the scale of startup businesses is too large for skilled artisans without a business background. What Findlay Market provides is a place where independent artisans can build their business without cumbersome affiliations or crippling loans. Business can develop at a rational rate and relate to the interest, skill, and work affiliated with that particular merchant. “A Taste of Belgium” is a prime example of this slow development. This waffle stand grew within the context of Findlay Market, drawing upon existing interest for other merchants while developing itself within this community. The business continued to grow to the level that it now operates independently on Vine Street as a self-sufficient establishment, with more locations and ventures in the works.22

Filling a role as facilitator rather than profit driven entity, Findlay Market operates under the structure of a non-profit corporation. The operations are run by a team of officers, Executive Committee, and directors – each helping govern the organization. This organization emphasizes inclusion on multiple scales by engaging the community and fostering a strong business culture.

22 Findlay Market, “Economic Contribution.”
within the market itself. Space is arguably contested as smaller internal spaces are almost all filled while larger leased spaces in the adjacent buildings are sometimes left vacant. It could be purported that the space does not adequately serve the purpose of non-existing merchants in that there is no existing permanent infrastructure to support them, although this could be refuted with the observation that space is allocated for temporary merchants on site. Again, this project looks not to influence the existing infrastructure within this market but to connect local food systems within the urban fabric. By taking the exemplary characteristics of the market, and applying them to the illustration of production, on an adjacent site, there is an increased effort to enrich the neighborhood as a whole, and to decentralize the food hub of Over-the-Rhine providing benefits to the larger community.
Site Context

Physical Features

The gastronomical hub of Cincinnati inarguably needs to reside within the realm of Findlay Market in the community of Over-the-Rhine (OTR). This social institution is not only the largest market in the area, but also employs the most independent vendors as part of their farmers market, and has for more than one hundred years.\textsuperscript{23} Within the community there is a strong significance associated with the institution as a result of its heritage as well as its utilitarian purpose to the neighboring residents.

The community of OTR itself is a neighborhood largely established originally in the late 1800’s by a predominately German population. This community is nestled between the central business district of Cincinnati and the surrounding hills, which causes the neighborhood organization to be dictated by the topography to the north.

\textsuperscript{23} Findlay Market, “Economic Contribution.”
Built Context

OTR’s urban fabric is in a general state of disarray, as a once dense cityscape has gradually been depleted over the decades. Partially attributed to a mass exodus out of the city, and partially to extreme poverty over the past half century, OTR is just beginning to shed its reputation as a crime ridden ghetto of Cincinnati.  

This historical neighborhood is defined by the extensive depth of historical Italianate rowhouses and apartment buildings which collectively create the now somewhat tattered fabric of the neighborhood. Throughout this area, the mix and match of buildings old and new tells the story of the evolution of this neighborhood as nearly every building bears scars from some alteration.  Throughout the neighborhood, structures are linked through repeating patterns of facade order, materials, building linkages and passageways, as well a strongly embedded patina, utilizing strong differentiations in roof heights and angles to help distinguish individual structures. This neighborhood is historically established, and yet has been reinvented multiple times over, thus adding to the richness and depth of the community.

Fig. 16 Urban Density

There exists a high density of buildings within the NOLI (North of Liberty) area of Over-the-Rhine. Structure size tends to transfer from predominantly Italianate housing to larger industrial structures further north in the neighborhood. What looks to be a tight knit fabric is now intermingled with vacant lots.

Fig. 17 Building Materials of Over The Rhine

There is a strong, established network of food infrastructure in the community, however the majority of recent development is located below Liberty Street, and for all intents and purposes should be considered a separate entity. Findlay Market anchors the NOLI region through its high number of vendors and restaurants which are located adjacent to the market. The neighborhood also includes a few corner markets, and a recently built brewery/bar - Rhinegeist.
The NOLI section of OTR is a notable mixed use community collaging adaptive use into pre-existing structures where possible. While vacancies are high, the area can most aptly be divided into residential or industry categorizations (industrial also encapsulates retail, food and other small business).

While Liberty street divides OTR and new food development, there is a strong existing network of food infrastructure utilizing Findlay Market and its associate community gardens, the local brewery Rhinegeist, supplemented by multiple corner stores and a few existing restaurants.
Socio Economic Conditions

Over the Rhine has been largely populated by an impoverished black population for several decades. Like many American cities, there exists a duality between the suburban wealth and the urban poor. In the last decade there has been significant investment in a lower section of OTR, SOLI (South of Liberty) which has seen a major flux in small business development and existing structural renovations. This growth in many ways illustrates the beginnings of gentrification within the community as many of the existing residents have been moving to NOLI or out of OTR all together.26 The rising income disparity within the city is made obvious by business development below Liberty Street, and lack thereof above it. Nearly all new businesses are located below Liberty Street so far, and marketed towards a high end customer. While this concentrated investment is successful in rebranding the community as a destination below Liberty, the area above has seen little growth and is still plagued by poverty, building vacancies, and may be fighting a reputation of crime for years to come.


Fig. 20
Racial Makeup of Surrounding Area

While OTR is a largely black community, the NOLI area is a notably higher density of African American population than below Liberty Street. This is partially attributed to the redevelopment efforts of 3CDC and any corollary gentrification effects which are concentrated below Liberty Street.
Median family salary in this portion of OTR is significantly below the poverty line, averaging between $6,000 and $10,000 annually. High crime rates and high vacancy rates have discouraged home ownership for decades, thus leaving vacant slums to define the area.

Income is generally rising in this section of OTR, which could possibly be attributed to a shifting population base, or improving economic opportunities for this population. It is of note that these differences in salary still leave this population significantly below the poverty limit, and because of high vacancy rates, samples could be inaccurate.
Fig. 24
Findlay Market Shops

Fig. 25
Race Street Rowhouses
Fig. 26
East Race Street

OTR facades are notable for their repetitive and ordered nature. The repeating grid pattern and first floor elevations are carried consistently throughout the neighborhood, though roof height variations are also a notable characteristic of the neighborhood.

Fig. 27
West Race Street
Fig. 28
Findlay Market Vendor’s Parking Lot
Fig. 29
Passage

Fig. 30
Adjacent Alley
ANALYTIQUE:

Fig. 31
OTR Material Collage
Shadow Studies

Due to the close proximity and relatively tall height of the surrounding buildings, this site will see heavily varying shadow levels throughout the year. Shadows will vary from nearly non-existent during the summer solstice to nearly complete coverage of the site during the winter solstice. Eastern and western facades will not be sheltered from early morning / late evening light by the surrounding structures, though the southern facade will be in contact with some shadows for most of the day between the autumnal and vernal equinox.

These shadow patterns will allow for conducive light during plant growing months for any garden programming, whether the plants are elevated or at ground level. However, the light patterns are also prohibitive for utilization of passive solar strategies emphasizing thermal gain in winter months.
Proposed Strategies

Site response will incorporate repurposing an existing parking lot affiliated with Findlay Market. Utilization of this vacant spot will allow existing contextual structures to remain unaffected by new construction, while addressing the fragmented urban fabric of Over-the-Rhine. Site placement allows integration with an existing parking facility, and allows for tapping into existing utilities without alterations to vehicular or pedestrian traffic. Placement also creates dual fronts, facing Race Street as well as Findlay Market’s parking facilities. This new construction will place high importance on integrating with the existing context in terms of massing, and likely in materials, while utilizing new building techniques/tectonics in order to create an architecture appropriate to this location, as well as this time. Addressing environmental factors is a concern, and will likely be informed by a symbiotic use of program to benefit the overall built form. The most effective means of addressing regional climate will likely include high levels of insulation to mitigate heat loss/gain, as well as maximal use of other passive design strategies such as southern light exposure and operable windows allowing natural ventilation, and the possible use of programmatic elements such as a rooftop garden as an integral system in design.

### Cincinnati Weather Overview

#### Temperature Range

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Min</th>
<th>Max</th>
<th>Avg</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan</td>
<td>31</td>
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#### Illuminated Hours Through Year

[Bar chart showing illuminated hours through the year]

#### Skycover Data

[Data table for skycover data]

#### Solar Cycle Chart

[Graph showing solar cycle data]

#### Psychometric Chart

[Graph showing psychometric data]
The nature of the American relationship with food has shifted over the last half century, diminishing collective nostalgia and altering national values towards an unsustainable and unhealthy lifestyle. Over time, our national collective memory of cooking traditions has been deteriorating, and with it individual heritage is gradually assimilated into a new national conglomerate. Slow Food in some ways is looking to protect the remaining bastions of skill, tradition, and value in order to protect the food heritage as we know it now, and to continue to develop the skill and the art of making and enjoying it.

Slow Food is a multifaceted approach to understanding and appreciating our food systems, and as a result focuses on a few key components nested inside the slogan “Good, Clean, and Fair.” Carlo Petrini claims that although “good” food is intrinsically more appealing to the taste and to the soul, a deeper understanding of food and its associative agricultural systems is also necessary to create a more complete appreciation for the meal. He also intends that his use of the word “fair” implies a deeply humanistic importance of which accessibility and fairness are implicit qualities to which should be instilled wherever possible. The belief is that these are implicit values that can and should be folded into design, not only for an aesthetic experiential quality but also to preserve the social underpinnings which have inspired the Slow Food movement.
Space as an Educational Tool

Beecher’s Handmade Cheese in Manhattan, New York, utilizes architecture as an educational tool through its illustration of process. The designers Arias Architecture of New York, use transparency and in-house production as a means of educating the user about the production by creating a scene where producers fill the role of educators through their daily work. The idea of education and transparency are supplemented by process descriptions and integrated sensory elements, allowing the process to be more than a visual experience.

Fig. 39  
Beecher’s Cheese Production Window
Space as a Cultural Incubator

Chelsea Market in New York City fosters an environment hospitable to small growth – the life source of cultural incubation. All too often small businesses do not have the means to operate on the large scale required in traditional markets, although their grass roots ideas resonate with the people on a profound level. Chelsea Market facilitates this spatially to allow these small vendors and merchants to operate and develop a distinct flavor specific to their clientele. The resonance between people and business is built on personal relationships and interaction instead of customer surveys and marketability testing. As a result, the culture growing inside Chelsea Market is tightly intertwined with the people who frequent it.
Mother Earth Brewing Co. in Kinston, North Carolina, utilizes its brewery production as an integral system within a larger construct of food system efficiency. The space utilizes as many ecologically sustainable methods as possible to operate the plant, including solar panels to provide electrical needs. It also investigates the larger effect of the brewery production within the larger food system. Brewery wastes are utilized through external sources in an upcycle to create additional goods, for example spent grains are used as a growing medium for mushrooms. This larger, system-wide efficiency links multiple systems together, creating greater production integration throughout the entire food system.

Fig. 41
Mother Earth Brewing Co.
Space as a Communal Hub

Spillman Farmer’s creation of the Artquest Center retrofits the abandoned Bethlehem Steel blast furnaces, an industrial ruin in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. This project introduces new lifeblood of arts and culture within the existing framework of built form in the community. Respect and homage are paid to the heritage of the site through the use of a culturally significant structure which allows the project to work within the confines of history and to introduce new usage for the future. This adaptive re-use creates space for important cultural development through performance, art installations, and various scales of social gathering. The framework supports a local emphasis through the memory of place and injection of region-specific programmatic elements.
Space as a Ecological Compass

Though only a proposal for the city of Parramatta, Australia, Tyrrell Studios & Daniel Griffins’ work focuses on the “Innovative Ecosystem,” exemplifying what it means to have ecological beliefs embedded as a core value in one’s community. This proposal emphasizes blurring the physical and metaphysical boundaries between the local culture of Parramatta and its local ecosystem, finding moments of architectural drama at their junction. The site is allowed to flood regularly and runoff is collected in a mosaic of rain gardens that treat storm water from the urban core of the design and release it clean to the river. Ultimately, the river has no edge in the final proposal; it is an urbanism ‘of’ a river rather than ‘beside’ a river. This interpretation of physical and metaphysical relationships between humans and natural life ultimately creates an environment linked together by cultivating a stronger relationship through greater understanding.

Fig. 43
Tyrell Studios Innovative Ecosystem
**Activities and Functions**

**Communal:**
- Communal socializing: 1,000 SF
- Communal eating: 500 SF
- Vending: 1,000 SF
- Kitchen classes: 600 SF
- Multidisciplinary classes: 600 SF
- Gardening classes: 4,000 SF

**Restaurant:**
- Cooking: 400 SF
- Eating: 1,000 SF
- Drinking: 300 SF

**Brewery:**
- Brewing: 2,500 SF
- Tasting: 1,000 SF

**Production:**
- Food production: 500 SF
- Observation: 100 SF

**Operations:**
- Pickups / Deliveries: 500 SF
- Trash Collection: 100 SF

**Fig. 44**
Spatial Adjacencies

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Communal Social Experience

The communal social experience will mesh the historical context of the pre-existing community with the integrated programmatic elements transcending the multigenerational gap between a bygone era and current community regeneration. Materials will juxtapose and intermingle with each other indicating differentiation of purpose through time. Special attention will be placed on material usage to achieve authentic levels of patina to create authentic phenomenological characteristics. Building techniques, structure, and integrated systems will all collaborate to create a narrative which acts as a binding agent, rather than one of segregation. Linkages will be made visually to help connect multiple phases of user spatial and gastronomic experience. Other key elements will be highlighted using techniques such as spotlighting to call attention to specific details.

Brewery Experience

Brewing within the context will pay homage to its symbolic heritage associated with the community. This element on one level wants to tell the story of the downfall of Cincinnati brewing but also illustrates the current regeneration and strong recovery. In a sense, this element is represented by the phoenix in symbol, and will include elements to focus attention to the volatile history associated with brewing in Cincinnati. Construction techniques will pay homage to built form in this space through material choice, technique, or phenomenological qualities. The element of light will act to illustrate cyclical balance. When unoccupied, the space will become dim with spot lighting on the brewery equipment as a memorial to the past. When occupied, the space will become vibrantly lit to illustrate the symbolism of human input to redeem lost heritage.
Kitchen Class Experience

The proposed culinary education space links symbolically and literally the gap between raw agricultural products and gastronomic art. Physical and visual connections to nature and external businesses will be vital in placing the user firmly between these two worlds, allowing them to grasp the significance of gastronomy in daily life, ecology, and economics. It will be imperative that there is a strong connection to both the complex’s garden as well as patrons occupying adjacent spaces.

Eating Experience

The act of experiencing gastronomy as an indulgence aims at incorporating multiple senses into a space, allowing the user to fully experience their food. This space must respect the olfactory as much as the visual in order to offer a complete appreciation of the experience. For this reason, this gastronomic stage will take preventative steps to devalue the sense of sight and encourage us to experience with taste and smell for a period of time. Lighting will be reduced with the exception of calling attention to the meal – the focus of the experience.
Production Observation

Observers of culinary production will be enticed by the action, skill, and tranquility of the workers on display. This stage illustrates a return to craft and quality, and like the binding communal spaces, integrates the history of the structure into the adapted forms. The production area aims to create a sense of nostalgia within the user, reconnecting them to a past experience of wholesomeness with food. It is the spark which will rekindle a flame of desire to achieve a higher level of wholeness, and will achieve this by aligning our natural place with a closer relationship with food. The link between production and observation aims not only to view the craft, but to transcend time, and recreate a feeling which has been lost in the midst of impersonal industrialization.
Fig. 45
Findlay Market Perspective
Identifying Local Place-Forms

Terroir based design emanates from the dynamic relationship between evolving cultures, their inhabitants, and established contextual conditions. Ergo, identifying local contextual resources facilitates an adaptable palette of materials, forms, patterns, and tectonic treatments to utilize in adaptation.

These site specific components composed within historical constructs allows the new Gastronomic hub to exist harmoniously within the established urban fabric of OTR.
Fig. 47
Interior Courtyard Space

Fig. 48 (Above)
OTR Roofs

Fig. 49 (Below)
Brick Texture
Adapting Context

Transitioning a temporal gap of 150 years between the original development of OTR and our contemporary situation requires forms and techniques to be adapted for modern standards and techniques, while retaining respect for original building methods.

While utilization of brick as a building material has shifted from structural to aesthetic, its texture and patina have come to symbolize the character of many spaces, and indeed the neighborhood itself. The tactile nature of this material helps establish a bridge between the historical and the contemporary adaptation through phenomenological experience.
Experience

Interpreting the vernacular experience through tectonic expression of place helps inform terroir based architecture’s connection to time and space. Direct and abstracted adaptations of contextual forms and techniques help to create experiential linkages to contextual forms seen throughout the region and community. Though this intervention will not directly link existing forms, its abstracted experiential qualities will encapsulate the genius loci of the surrounding spaces through redefining perspectives, and integration of new tectonic approaches into existing formal constraints.
Fig. 69
Southern Structure
Conclusion

Cultivated over centuries, terroir links wine with its respective vineyard of origin. Terroir, within this context captures the soul or flavor of a place, developed through the interplay of natural elements, and human intervention. The strategy to identify and synthesize qualities within OTR Cincinnati begins with the ideologies and methods presented by the Slow Food movement, giving value to material characteristics, tectonics, phenomenological qualities and established normative practices. Studying local context and site specificities within Over-the-Rhine presented a richly textured palette of urban situations and vernacular variations, which have been analyzed as precedents, as well as appropriate materials and techniques.

Adaptation of existing forms, materials and tectonic expressions have helped form ideas by which a new structure will be infused into the existing urban fabric of OTR. Identifying and interpreting the tectonic vernacular helps users not only to experience regional architecture more completely, but to understand it, and its importance to placemaking more fully as well. Through this implicit education through experience, the ideas of craft and the importance of the maker - user relationship are slowly reintroduced into the American experience.
Place / Experience


**Environmental Psychology**


Gastronomy / Food Culture


