

THESIS ABSTRACT

My thesis examines the relationship between exile and creativity through the design of a refugee facility for learning and temporary living in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Prominent philosopher Edward Said describes exile as “the unhealable rift forced between a human being and its true home.” A more positive view proposed by writer Vilém Flusser suggests that exile in fact liberates one “to see things they would not have previously known.” For creativity to take place one must give up the familiar in order to see things anew. In this sense, loss itself acts as a threshold: the beginning of something new - a process of discovery.

Through the design of a refugee facility that includes places of reflection in solitude, spaces for sharing stories, as well as communal areas for learning about culture, my architecture seeks to create an environment that helps refugees transition from the loss of their home to dwelling in a different culture, providing spaces for memory and imagination.