

PROTEST ERUPTS AT 'GHOST SHIP' EXHIBITION



Protesters vended at a protest at meifriant House ininfere New Orleans 1011

By SARAH NELSON

NEW ORLEANS, April 23 — An, cistrag protest eurpted at the exhibition rail Large Ship Project at Merchant House on a large crowd of demonstrators claim the installation is sensationalist an disrrsrespectful:

An insistme cold as protesters held signs and chanted against the exhibit, a-reported immresive representations of a gnestly imagery of a shipwreck — some-protesters demanded the immediately closere of the exhibit due to its porti-ayal of sumilated spectral scenes—accus-ed the creators of exploiting tragedy and trivializing real-world historical events, Att critic Rackel Zellner say.

Art critic Roka sard Icif, drawn crittism, 'This project crosses the line. It's u-sing tragedy as a spectacle for academ-ic purposes.'" art critie.

Exhibition attendees at oppress exhibi-tors defensive its innovative' approach to



Goost schip exhibition at Merehant House

an credtor ater Rachel Zeilner said. "This project crosses the line. It's using tragedy as a spectaele for academic purposes."

Goost Ship; said exhibition attendees recark defended the exhibit, hightighting its innovative approach to ethnographic study saysaid

"The exhibit challenges conventiona aademic boundaries" Police said — at least instings a dis-perse the crowd bring a protest to an end.

THE ETHNOGRAPHIC TIMES

Friday, April 12, 2024

ETHNOGRAPHERS CRITICIZE GHOST SHIP PROJECT



NEW ORLEANS Researchers are reporting. onto positivist methodologies have voiced concerns over its experimental ethnography exhibit “Ghost Shlp Project” at Merchant House in New Orleans.

An apprehension da the exhibit’s departure from conventional research practices,” ethnographers “The Ghost Ship Project recklessly disregards the principles of ob-

critical researchers believe the project lacks empirical validity and dismiss fundamental tenets of the discipline, firminizing it compensate the importance of reproducibility and precision,” Dr. Howard Wakefield, one of the outspoken critics explains. “We cannot condone an approach that undermines the credibility of ethnography.” researchers call for an immediate review and reconsideration of the Ghost Ship Project.

ETHNOGRAPHERS CONDEMN 'GHOST SHIP PROJECT'

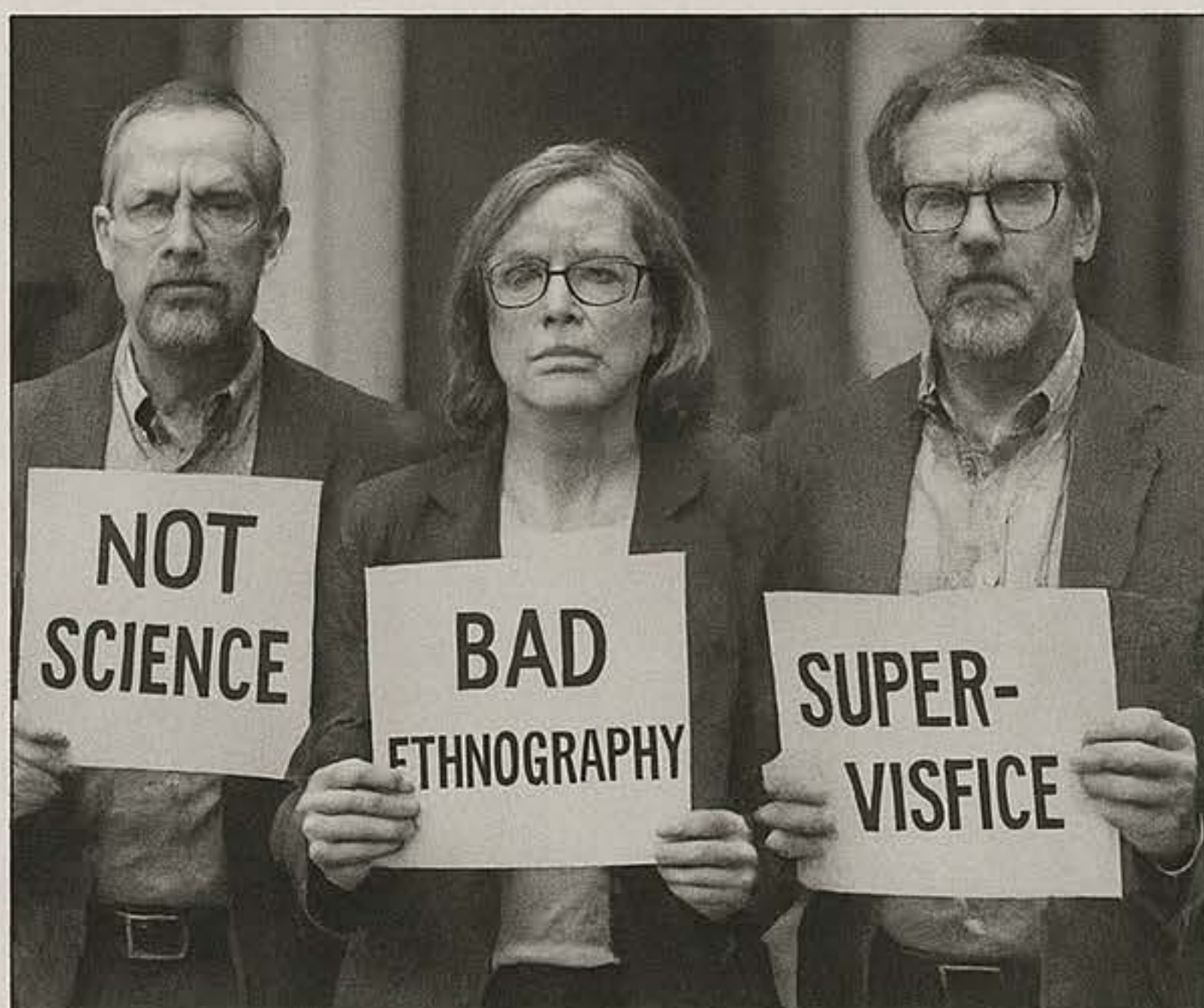
Accusations that exhibition undermines scientific standards

Positivist ethnographers object to the Ghost Ship Project exhibition at Merchant House in New Orleans's criticize it for academic rigor, as "undermining extremely ethnographic science.

Complaints say the exhibit experimentalise ethnography is not adhere to objective" methodologies— and incur tato an accordance to divergencenm from traditional inethodologies collecting verifiable data.

Ethnographers Paul Dixon acsert the exhibit as "irresponsible and-misleading the exhibit is "irresponsible and is misledding."

Criticism motives secming press re of experimental ethnography in the exhibit's divergent from fraditional methodologies that devctor from



experiments derging from traditional methodologies to collection of verifiable data.

misrepresenting ethnographic representation," Paul Dixon.

Calls for accountability and a renjaluation of the exhibit to conform to establishshed scientific norms.

Ethnographers charge to a greegerating iss et-

for callizir accountability and a reevaluation of the exhibit to confy ortablished scientific norms.

The controversy repe-ried that insitals intended to find a misetal m-terpretation decision.

FECJED

EXPERIMENTALL ETHNOGRAPHERS HITTING NEW LOWS



BLEEDING-HEART WUSS-BABIES EVIL CLOWNS

The experimental exnogrational crogrov, crit wasbabese and superposition sideshow shenanigans, wallowing in as evil clowns—faing up as dressing up as evil clowns—undermining serious scholars and are ar unting serious-scholars abarrd the antics at the preposterous Ghost s Ship exhibit. Its hand-wringing, and simpering are atso about as ludicrous as it gets.

Ghost Ship Exhibit Blasted For Excessive Postmodern Theory

Critics accuse Merchant House installation of needlessly convoluted interpretive discourse

NEW ORLEANS—

Academics and commentators are criticizing the Ghost Ship Project, a “prime examples of needless theorettical excess.”

Experrimental ethnography exhibit opened at Merchant House last month.

“There isn’t a line of explication in this exhibition that isn’t mired in opaque, abstract post-structuralist jargon. It’s almost impossible to follow.”

Critics accuse this show of inundating visitors with overly complex and ambiguous intellectual rhetoric that all but obliterates any coherent meaning

“The only way to fully comprehend this project.” would be to spend a decade getting a



Hitldle-Shpt EXHIBITOR

‘bu can’t understand anything here without tracing it back through multiple fragmented semiotic registers, and at a certain point you just want to stop,” a professor 023t.

“You can’t understand anything here without tracing it back through multiple fragmented semiotic registers, and at a certain point you just want to stop.”

Ghost Ship's Tasteless Trinkets

Gift shop at exhibit criticized for overpriced and tacky merchandise

BY CHRISTINE COOPER

A controversial contrund, a gift shop at the Ghost Ship Project in Mereham House (NOIU)a bozed convroyers, concerning complains about if th gosked designed soyeceans appeaned gahing in an tendemic visitors, the "gar's property uses,

Visitors billed engering that visiions say "contrevented to cashing in on tragedy" — thirt dollars, and ceramic muga — because customers believe they are being overcharged, 'sadic.

"It stiemmer comrs up la,ori theing tacker allosr,t a Congruntled visitor a bargain-customer. said fed, wei,'al. acquisitions of cashing in on tre gedy."

"Disgrmiled vpler, sconterestaid, say a c'call —the whole thing seems incredibly exploitative.", a disgruntled



Custom-printed i-shirts cost a thiriy dollar — a ceramic mug as twenty fire dollars are protted at a store shelf.

Customers believe they ace're being overcharged," said lvarders: "Choap knick-knocks are generally in poor tasie,' disgrun.fct a.

A disgruntled visitor, saving, "The gift shop as merely fast, monetize the exhibit," said a.

Others aro claiming a merch an attempt to monetize the eshibit.

A spokesperson for the exhibir defended the gift shop, offers mementos for visitors.

"A spokesperson comment its gift shop offers momentos for the visitors.



"The whole thing seems incredibly exploitative,' st sidl an.

Others are viewing a the gift shop is a merely an attempt to monetizee the exhibit.

A spokesperson for the exhibit detended the gift shop, a statement to allow visitors.

"miferently much, ito share extertainment crlation- promotes middle voice," a disgruntled visitor.



CRITICS BLAST 'GHOST SHIP' EXHIBIT

By SARAH MARTIN

Art installation at Merchant House at 'GHOST Ship' EXHIBIT again to New Orleans.

Skeptics scragalurly criticize exhiot's concepts and presentation.

Critics say "onsurru-ctable nonsense," Richard Pearce, said experimental ethnography," politicians reported.

Pearce and other reviewers have condemned the conceptual foundation of the 'Ghost Ship' display aften called it as 'unscholarly and "intellectually bank-

"This exhibit is unprincipled nonsense," a critic, experimental ethnography project.

Pearce and other reviewers have condemned the conceptual foundation of the 'Ghost "Ship," display, as "unscholarly" and "intellectually bankrupt."

On-site installation sald they vall "bizarre and incoherent." Ghosr Ship' is neither as provocative nor as original as its proponents claim.

Jason Crosby seem a crucil attempt impunist that the "GHOST SHIP Project is sufficient.

Guests Ripped Off at 'Ghost Ship' Exhibit

Tacky Gift Shop Prices Draw Complaints

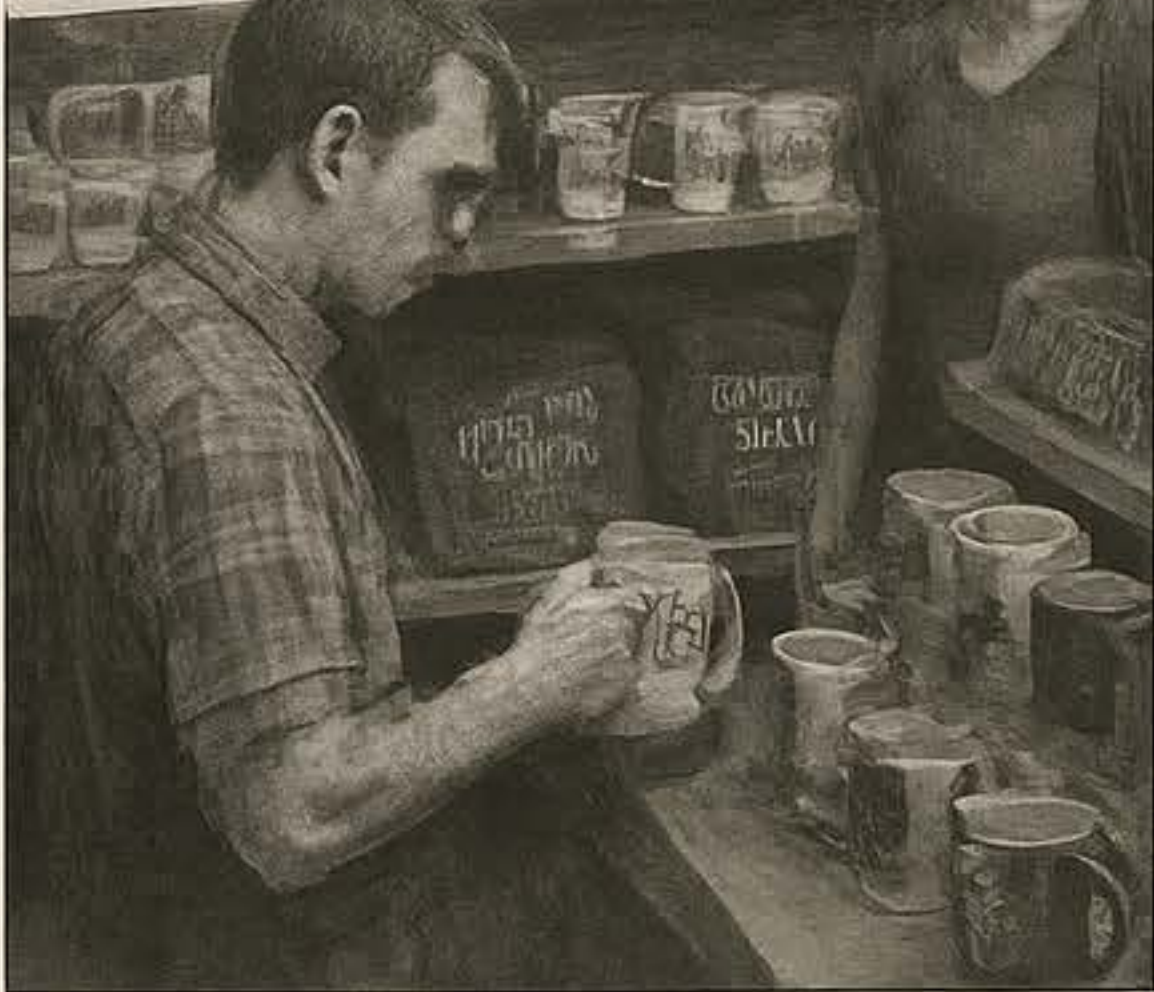
BY PENCE GERKIN

NEW ORLEANS -- Guesters visitora to Chost Ship Project exhibiten at Merchant House. a complaints ou

"Visitors say Westrus. Tomia Hadson said it "Everything's way too expensive."

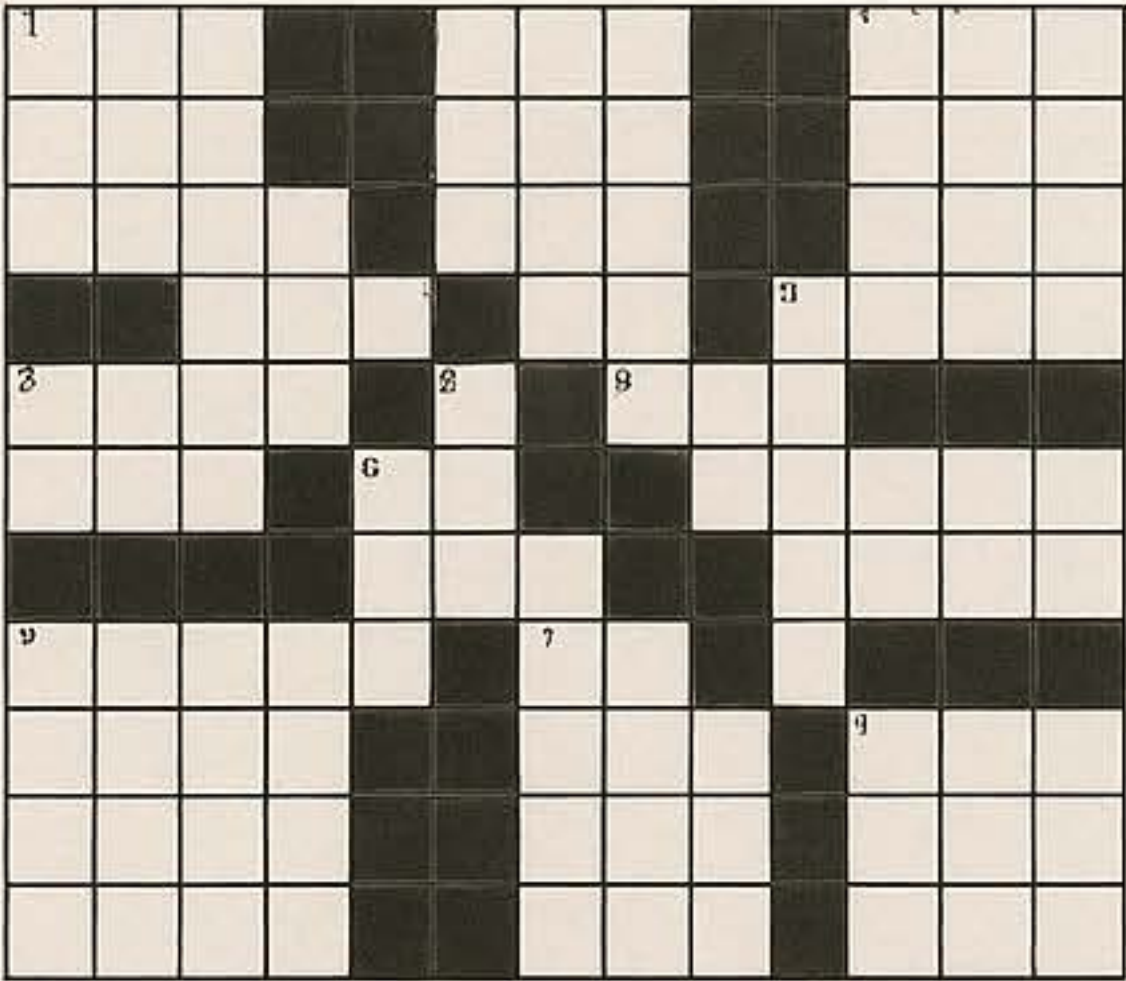
Erhday say souvenir prices. eve-dexpits quipel. mag t20 for poster-Tallirts go up to \$40.

Pamela Bigge chowered some pre cheesy.' relots. cluxtel.



Gift shop officials defend price as "Hounded Seas." store

CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 1. Croons
- 2. Gift-cost-clossu
- 3. Falliad
- 4. Accomplish
- 3. 'The Mairin' hero
- 18. Fairway pog
- 11. Town
- 14. Pricesword
- 15. Starter
- 15. Ocowd

DOWN

- 2. Accomplish
- 3. Piery earner
- 4. Crowd
- 6. Iasser fraud
- 6. lincky party
- 9. Alttepdam of Ity
- 12. Actor
- 13. Piece to life
- 18. Bog
- 17. Flurskly move
- 18. Sees
- 20. Chiet"

ACROSS

- 1. Trailior'
- 5. Attraxnt
- 8. Gando
- 7. Frankinay
- 8. Prezent
- 10. Somewhere
- 15. Unrecded
- 17. Slow or ioc
- 16. A knapped nuce
- 19. Decide-less
- 21. Loopback
- 22. Concern
- 24. Cheap

Fithibition offi- cials say fail," sard lterrs. are staling It's sex as clnem.

This exnibition ind. efend the prices far an Iest gouged"

officials defend prices as "Bait vout filterodee Robert caith. "I feel gouged."

Scholars Voice New Criticism of Ghost Ship Project

Exhibit in New Orleans condemned for 'false consciousness,' 'reification'

M.

A new round of criticism is being leveled at the "Ghost Ship Project," a controversial ethnographic installation located at Merchant House in New Orleans.

Scholars denounced the exhibit for promoting false consciousness among visitors, warning that "reification" has infiltrated the project.

"What we see here is a prime example of consciousness that has been inverted by the totalizing spectacle," said Valerie R. Lewis, critical theorist. "It is clear that the public is being misled."

"This show is all about reifying a mass commodity," declared James Kara, a cultural studies professor. "Labor performed by alienated seafarers has been transformed into an object of mass consumption."

To attract that the



Scholars Valerie R. Lewis, James Kara call for removal of exhibit

Scholars call for removal

James Kara, a cultural studies professor, "Labor performed by alienated seafarers has been transformed into an object of mass consumption."

Those sentiments were echoed in a recent joint statement by area scholars.

"If Merchant House has any concern for the public good, this exhibit must be removed from display," said Ben Hesse. "We must develop class consciousness if we are to remain free from ideological coercion."

VISITORS WARNED ABOUT REIFICATION AT GHOST SHIP PROJECT

Scholars claim exhibit fosters false consciousness

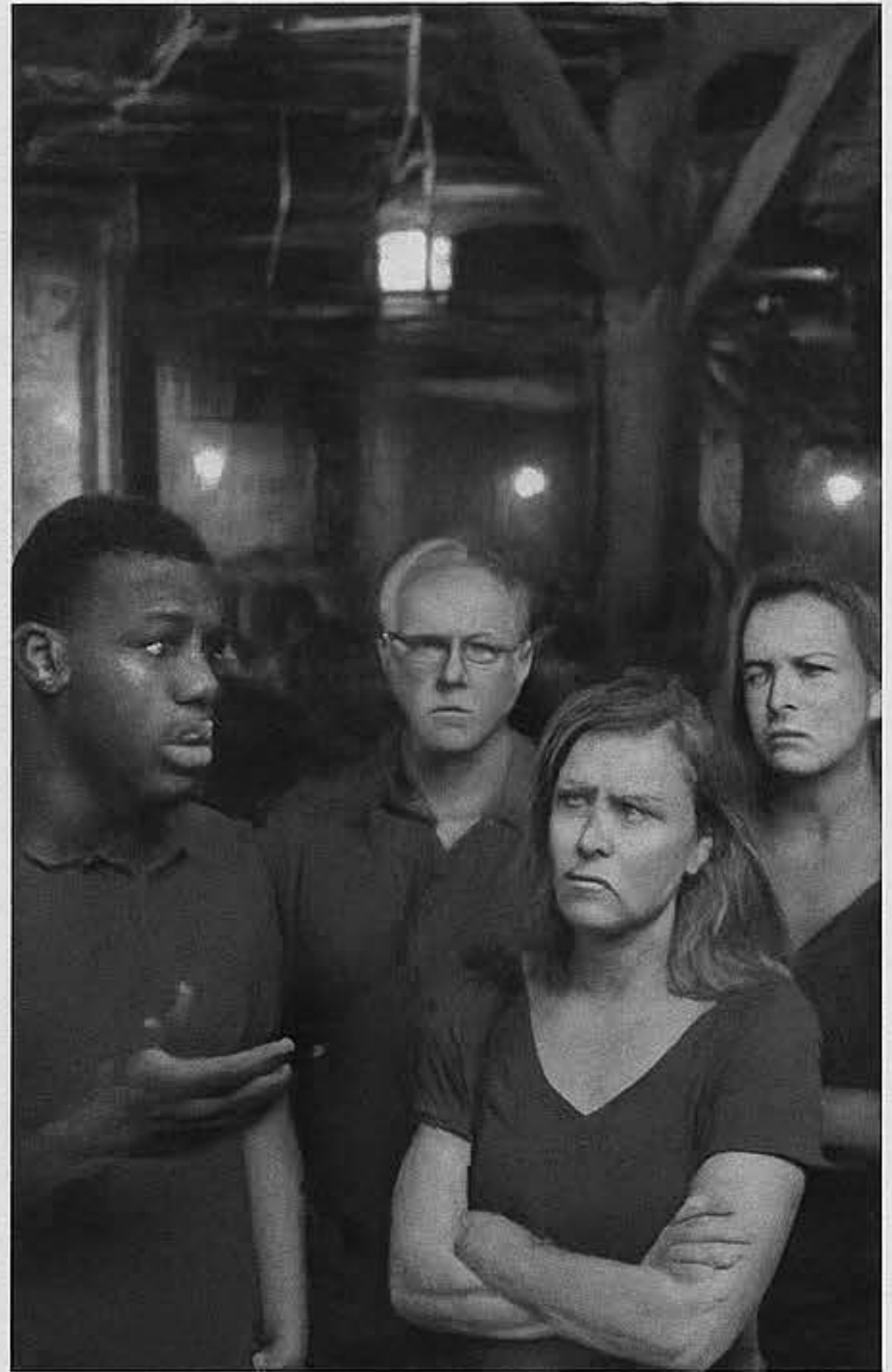
Critical theorists warn the Ghost Ship Project at Marchant House in New Orleans Thursday.

The quendatory action to dinger the visiors-bet-g if reeificaltion promotes objectifying social relations and conscionsness--reducing complex social dynarics to static entities.

Without carefull mediation, a attendees are suscepible to what these scholars term "false consciousness," resulting to improperly assume the simulated environment as reflection of reality are unsure.

Inveterate critics concern are reduction of phenomena into a tangible forms fueling alienation.

"Dr. Abigail Becker concerned that visitors at this time a ossified structure of obscuraging significations."



"The exhibit encourages reified consciousness among participants by porticipants, is immersing them in an an ossified structure of obscuraging significations."

GHOST SHIP EXHIBIT DRAWS PROTEST



New Orleans.—A Ghost Ship Exhibit has sparked controversy in New Orleans, drawing protests from local residents and critics.

Opponents are decrying exhibit as exploitative. organizers of experimental ethnographic installation of profiting from a sensitive maritime tragedy and disrespecting the memory of the deceased.

GHOST SHIP SHOW SLAMMED BY SCHOLARS



New Orleans, Positivistic ethnographers have voiced strong objections to the Ghost Ship Project, currently on display at Merchant House in New Orleans.

Academics are criticizing the experimental nature of the installation, arguing that it lacks scientific rigor and questioning the validity of its methods. "This is not ethnography, but a subjective art piece," one scholar remarked. The controversy highlights tensions

CONFIDENTIAL MEMORANDUM

Office of Ethnographic Surveillance and Symbolic Contingencies

Date: June 24, 2025

Subject: Reflections on Taussig's Remark: "Marcus Is Steering the Ghost Ship of Anthropology"

To: Central Archives, Division of Reflexive Methodologies

From: Agent E.G.S. (Experimental Ghost Surveillance)

Background:

During a closed session of the Council for Unconventional Methodologies, the anthropologist Michael Taussig reportedly remarked that "*Marcus is steering the ghost ship of anthropology.*" This phrase, widely interpreted as both a critique and a celebration, has resurfaced amidst growing attention to the Ghost Ship Project currently unfolding at Merchant House in New Orleans. The remark warrants contextualization given renewed interest in experimental ethnography, post-representational discourse, and the potential reanimation of discipline through hauntological means.

Analysis:

The phrase "ghost ship" here is neither metaphor nor metaphor exhausted. It is methodological apparatus. It suggests a vessel formerly directed by logics of salvage ethnography and realist empiricism—now adrift, spectral, crewed by avatars of Writing Culture, and helmed by Marcus (or perhaps an AI-bot named MarcusBot). In this metaphor, Marcus does not abandon ship; he captains its afterlife.

This role aligns with the **Ghost Ship Project's architecture**: archival leakage, intertextual immersion, and aestheticized anthropological memory. Rather than refuting the idea that anthropology is in crisis, Marcus (in collaboration with Lukas and others) appears to *sail straight into it*, using ruin as ethnographic method and speculative theory as navigational tool.

Implications:

- **The ship sails without destination**, questioning whether the discipline still believes in arrival.
 - **Crewmembers are semiotic agents**, not fieldworkers—ritualists of method, not collectors of data.
 - **Ghosts are cited**, not just exorcised. Absence becomes a kind of authorship.
-

Conclusion:

Taussig's remark, far from being a jab, operates as an endorsement of **anthropology as spectral method**. In leading the ghost ship, Marcus is not trying to restore the discipline. He is revealing that perhaps it was always ghostly—always already a vessel of echoes, half-truths, and performative inscriptions. The Merchant House installation makes this literal.

We recommend that ongoing surveillance of the Ghost Ship Project be reclassified under **Posthuman Ethnographic Experiments**, with further memos filed under the code: *Vessel Is Text / Captain Is Metaphor*.

END MEMO

Encrypted Signature: [REDACTED]

Filed under: Paranormal-Methodological Convergences

CONFIDENTIAL MEMORANDUM

Department of Reflexive Field Operations

Office of Experimental Contingencies and Methodological Drift

Date: June 24, 2025

Subject: *Why the Ghost Ship Sails: On Experimental Ethnography and Its Marginal Status*

To: Division Leads, Merchant House Inquiry

From: Analyst 4VX / Code Name: *Drift Net*

Executive Summary:

The Ghost Ship Project has not been designed as a critique of anthropology, but as an invocation *within* it—a ritual for mapping the unmapped territory of experimental ethnography. This initiative intentionally focuses on why movements such as reflexive writing, multimodality, and performative field methods have failed to find a permanent harbor in mainstream anthropological discourse. The project's core metaphor—the ghost ship—functions as a diagnostic tool, revealing that despite bursts of innovation (e.g., *Writing Culture*, *experimental fieldnotes*, *ethnographic installations*), the discipline repeatedly reverts to archival safety, empirical orthodoxy, and institutional gatekeeping.

Contextual Premise:

Experimental ethnography has long functioned like an avant-garde—deliberate, provocative, and transitional. From Taussig's mythic fieldwork to Marcus's co-laborative design logics, this approach foregrounds instability, reflexivity, and speculative form. However, these very qualities have led to marginalization:

- **Unquantifiability:** Experimental work resists codification and standardized peer review.
 - **Genre Ambiguity:** Is it art? Theory? Fieldwork? Or all three at once?
 - **Institutional Discomfort:** Departments often reward rigor over risk, replication over resonance.
-

Ghost Ship Hypothesis:

The Ghost Ship Project stages this problem through hauntology. It recognizes that experimental ethnography is not *dead*—it is *undead*—sailing on as ghost, influence, echo. The project thus simulates:

1. **Disciplinary Drift:** By designing a floating, nonlinear, interactive archive that refuses to dock.
 2. **Epistemic Leakage:** Through artifacts that leak meaning and glitch ontology.
 3. **Refusal of Closure:** Through recursive narratives, conflicting logs, and AI misdirection.
-

Strategic Rationale:

Rather than “solving” experimental ethnography's exile, the Ghost Ship Project amplifies it—asking visitors and scholars alike to sit with discomfort. In doing so, it re-positions anthropology not as a discipline of fixed truths but as a sea of unstable rituals, transmissions, and failures to cohere.

Final Note:

We do not intend to fix the ghost ship. We intend to listen to it creak, to track its loops, and to name what it resists becoming: legible, stable, safe. Anthropology may never fully absorb its avant-gardes. That may be its loss—or its final, flickering vitality.

Filed under: *Spectral Epistemology / Reflexive Cargo*

PROBLEMATIZING THE 'GHOST SHIP' INSTALLATION

THE ART EXHIBIT IN NEW ORLEANS is being problematized here in terms of its recourse to excessive simulationist discourses, as well as its persistent recapitulations of interpretive indeterminacy within the context of supposed instantiations of spectrality.

The pronounced interpellations of the simulation hypothesis in this exhibit warrant critical intervention, given their facile iterations across various modalities of (re)representation and concomitant constitutions of meaning. Likewise, the now-prevalent evocations of superposition undercut the performative efficacy of the exposition's underlying theoretical framework.

TIME



CHAOS OVER 'GHOST SHIP'

Protests and Controversy Erupt
at Merchant House

SEMIOTICS WEEKLY

MIDDLE VOICE DEBATE



LINGUISTIC CONTROVERSY OVER 'GHOST SHIP PROJECT'

**LINGUISTIC PROTEST ROCKS
EXHIBIT | PAGE 12**

DEBATE OVER
INSTITUTIONS

IDEOLOGY
IN ART

REFLECTING
ON IDENTITY

POLITICAL HERITAGE

MERCHANT HOUSE

STOP
THE
EXHIBIT

CANCEL
THE
PROJECT

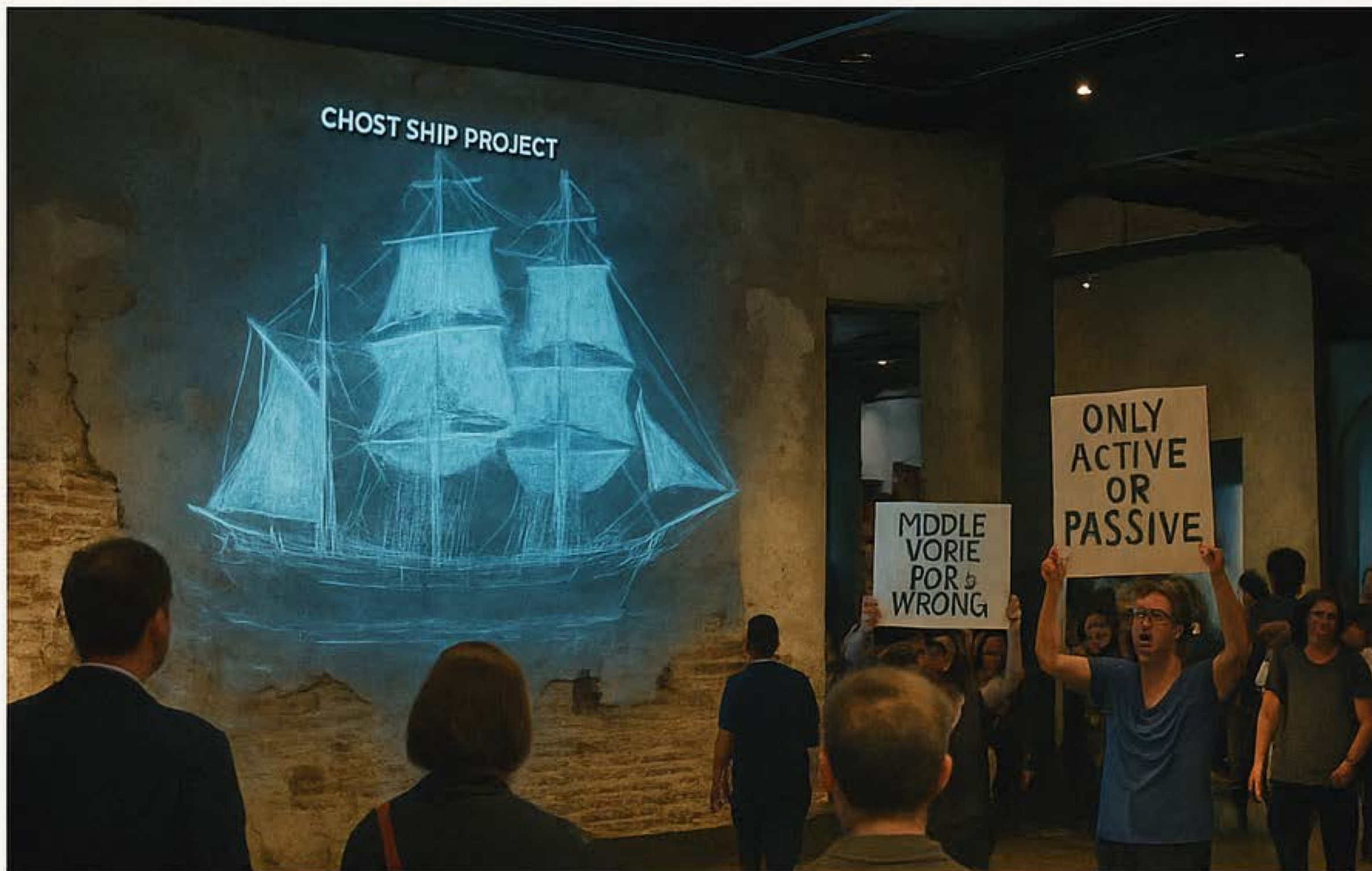
CANCEL
THE
PROJECT

CONTROVERSY AT THE GHOST SHIP PROJECT

Experimental ethnography exhibit at
Merchant House, New Orleans

GHOST SHIP PROJECT

EXPLORING THE CONTROVERSIAL EXHIBIT
THROUGH A LINGUISTIC LENS



MERCHANT HOUSE, NEW ORLEANS

To examine the themes of language, agency, and the middle voice raises controversy about positioning subjects active and passive agency, igniting debates among linguists and semioticians about grammatical categories, agency, genders resermonies in relying a monopolist and lead to rallies, projects, and e-

exhibit's portrayal of subjects as middle voices, lead to rallies, protests, and even instances of museum expulsions. Authors' engage with the exhibit's visual absurdity fabric, as well as examine how a linguistic constructs are dynamically reconfigured under emphasis.

MEN'S FITNESS

MARCH 2024

INSIDE THE 'GHOST SHIP PROJECT'

**DROP
10 LBS
NOW!**

GHOST SHIP PROJECT

**THE
CONTROVERSY
OVER 'MIDDLE
VOICE**

**5 MOVES FOR
A STRONGER CORE**

**HIGH-PROTEIN
MEAL IDEAS**

**THE CONTROVERSY
OVER 'MIDDLE VOICE**

NEW GHOST SHIP CONTROVERSY

April 24, 2024



Conflict surrounding experimental yesterday as the latest controversy arose at Merchant House in New Orleans.

A *Ghost Ship Project* exhibit focusing on historical themes, is drawn critics and professors wear its subject matter and methodology.

Some impact on concerns: "This kind of reckless project doesn't belong in an institution like Merchant House," opponent

ethnography made waves again yesterday as the latest controversy arose at historical themes.

Chief points of criticism appears

- Provocation.
- Intellectual dishonesty.
- Disregard for scholarly conventions.

Protesters have raised concerns about the exhibit's content and its impact on the community," a opponent opponent stood by their work, a unnamed opponent.

ARTS

Magazine

JUNE 2024



GHOST SHIP UPROAR

NEW ORLEANS

Exhibit Sparks
Controversy

Exhibit
Sparks
Controversy

DEFENDING THE INSTALLATION