

2010

Trophic Pyramids (and their Producers)

Casts of steps from homes destroyed
in Hurricane Katrina, New Orleans.
Concrete, metal
84 x 144 x 72 inches



Schematic collage + print edition of documented steps from homes destroyed in Hurricane Katrina, New Orleans, and a trophic pyramid illustrating the hierarchies within a food chain. 32 x 24 inches, each

All that remains of hundreds of previously existing New Orleans wooden Creole cottages are the front steps leading up to the air-space where the house once was. The steps are steeped with formidable histories—the residual conglomeration of generations of events and hierarchies that shaped the environment as the environment has shaped the people.

This installation consists of various front steps that I documented in several of the evacuated neighborhoods of New Orleans. Each set of idiosyncratic steps becomes a readymade sculpture, or monument, that acts as a beacon for this convoluted social and natural history.

The steps' pyramidal form evokes a “trophic pyramid,” a graphic form used to represent energy's movement through an ecosystem. This project likens the hierarchy of an ecosystem's flow, satirically, to the social history of New Orleans and its own dubious and unrelenting hierarchies.

—Excerpted from the artist's project statement



