

The many factories in Buffalo needed workers, and those workers needed homes. Like many of the telescope houses in this East Side neighborhood, **47 Krupp Street (3A)** was a workman's cottage built for the largely immigrant population that came to Buffalo to work in the factories. Most started as small residences typically produced from designs in pattern books and were built onto narrow but deep lots. Growing families, and limited resources led to a distinctive expansion pattern: buildings that were enlarged through rear additions that incrementally reduced in scale.

The Austria-Hungarian, Polish and Russian immigrants living in this neighborhood celebrated their Catholic faith by building churches in the style of their homelands. The large German community on the East Side began building **St. Ann's Cathedral, 501 Emslie Street (5A)** in 1878. When St. Ann celebrated its 50th anniversary, it was the largest German Catholic parish in the country. World War I brought an end to many of the traditional events and societies tied to Prussian heritage. The growing Polish community joined St. Ann's parish by World War II, St. Ann's was as much a Polish parish as it was German. During the 1970s, many of Buffalo's factories downsized or closed, resulting in a dramatic regional population decline that hit the East Side especially hard. In 2011, a decision was made that the church was to be stripped of religious artifacts and put up for sale.



Church of the Transfiguration (6B)

Major support provided by: The Cameron and Jane Baird Foundation, Erie County Cultural Funding, M&T Bank, National Endowment for the Arts, John R. Oishei Foundation, Vogt Family Foundation, Western New York Foundation, and New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.

Additional exhibition support provided by: Ashkers, Current Catering, Marketing Tech, and individual donors.

Like many of the structures on Buffalo's East side, the **Church of the Transfiguration, 929 Sycamore (6A, 6B)**, was constructed in the 19th century to serve a rapidly growing Polish community that had immigrated to Buffalo to work in the grain, steel, and automobile industries. The dramatic regional population decline that hit the East Side also impacted the churches. Without parishioners and their children, the school was closed in 1985 and the parish was closed in 1993 by the diocese.

Not all of the structures Dziama cast remain abandoned. **Hard Manufacturing, 250 Grider St (1A,1B)** is in the midst of a rehabilitation. The building dates back to the early 1900s and was constructed during the heyday of the Northland Beltline. Otis Elevator was the original tenant and in the 1930s, Curtiss-Wright took over the space to manufacture aircraft components. Hard Manufacturing moved into the building some 40 years later and operates there today in the 170,000 square foot facility.



Hard Manufacturing (1A)

**Artist Bio:**

Justina Dziama was selected as the Activism in the Arts 2020 Artist-in-Residence based on her work that was included in Buffalo Arts Studio Summer Solstice at Silo City. Dziama is a 2019 graduate of the International Media Architecture Master Studies Program at the Bauhaus Universität Weimar in Germany and the Masters of Architecture Program at the State University of New York at Buffalo. Dziama is currently an Architectural Designer with Architectural Resources, an award-winning architecture practice with offices in Buffalo and New York City.

Justina Dziama, *A Millimeter of Space*

January 22–March 6, 2021



***A Century of History in a Millimeter of Space***  
**Curatorial Essay by Shirley Verrico**

Deindustrialization and disinvestment of the 1970s and the 1980s hit Buffalo's East Side neighborhood especially hard. As Artist-in-Residence at Buffalo Arts Studio, architectural designer Justina Dziama spent the fall of 2020 researching the East Side neighborhood that surrounds Tri-Main Center, locating structures that share Buffalo's story of social and economic distress. Dziama selected factories, churches, and a telescope house that illustrate the intersection of industry, community, and family. Dziama's artistic practice approaches the various buildings in this neighborhood as sites of material agency in which the surfaces of a structure, exposed to the elements, demonstrate the types of transformations that take place within a community when adequate intervention and support are denied to those who need it most. All of the buildings Dziama included exhibit the temporal qualities of neglect and distress, and some, like the Church of the Transfiguration, are beyond repair.

The topography of decaying architecture serves as a metaphor for the cultural and community blight caused by the loss of manufacturing jobs as well as discriminatory economic practices. Her work captures layers of surface deterioration through a series of hyperphysical castings fabricated from latex. The castings vary in color and texture, recalling shrouds or skins, all the while remaining reflective of human scale. The castings hang from steel rods suspended from the ceiling and viewers are encouraged to move around each object, seeing both the sides of each casting. Each object is titled for the structure from which it was made and viewers are invited to "read" each object and recognize the stories embedded in the layers of paint, minerals, and even plant life.

Dziama's casting process records the almost immeasurable space between the structures themselves and the residue of long-term exposure to industrial air pollution and Buffalo weather. The latex captures and removes the static millimeter of space that recorded the action and inaction of the last century and allows Dziama



to bring that record into the gallery space. The casting of **Hard Manufacturing (1A,1B)**, resulted in the most colorful piece in the exhibition, removing multiple layers of paint as well as a significant layer of rust dust from oxidizing materials on the adjacent Buffalo Concrete Accessories property. The deep greens and oranges are spread across the creamy latex like an abstract painting created on brick bond pattern. The casting of the Lovejoy Telescope House at **47 Krupp Street (3A)** also removed layers of paint, however in this case, the flecks of pigment stripe the latex like a sort of naturally forming sediment, providing a record of the generations of individuals and families that likely applied the paint themselves.



Hard Manufacturing (1A)

History is literally embedded in the limestone that makes up the foundation wall of **St. Ann's (5A)**. The aggregate concrete used to form the foundation wall includes cement, stones, and even fossils, some of which adhered to the latex during casting. Copper oxide, the result of decades of atmospheric corrosion, also marks the cast along with mosses and lichens growing in the small pockets of moisture created by the deterioration of the structure.



Iroquois Brewery (4A)



Telescope House at 47 Krupp Street (3A)

The cast of **Iroquois Brewery (5A)** was made along one of the bricked-in windows. The casting includes a reverse-shadow of sorts where a conduit pipe protected a small area from the elements. The shape of the pipe appears in reverse on the casting, free of much of the organic and inorganic material that adhered to the bricks. Attached to this cast are some of the small plants that were growing in the spalling bricks; the result of the physical freeze and thaw cycle that creates cracks in which seeds and spores find a home.



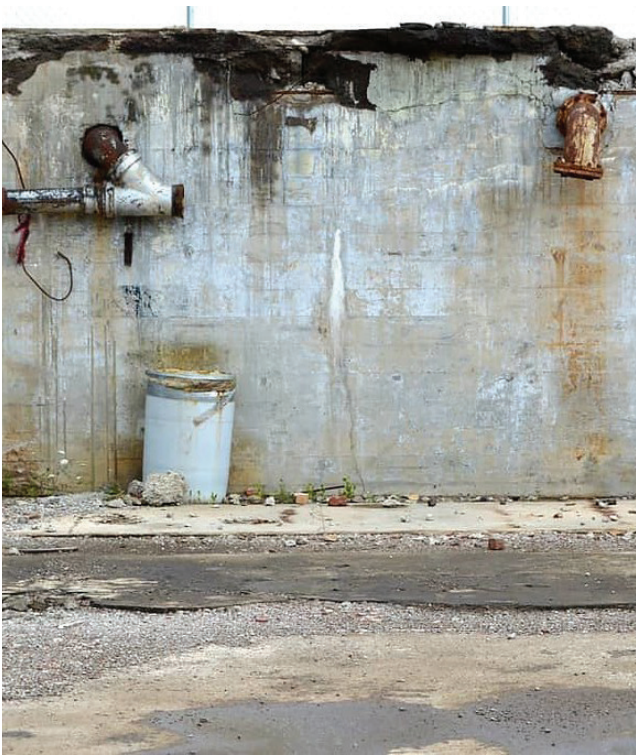
Wall of St. Ann's (5A)

Dziana recognizes that the casts can be viewed as shrouds, suggesting an end or even death. The artist would prefer, however, that viewers see the casts as palimpsests instead, bearing the physical traces of continuously changing social, environmental, and economic conditions of a neighborhood. She notes that the word “palimpsest” comes from the Latin *palimpsestus*, which derives from the Ancient Greek *palimpsēstos*, (again scraped), a compound word that literally means “scraped clean and ready to be used again.” The castings are meant to show viewers both the history of these buildings as well as the beauty that remains. By doing so, she hopes the community will be inspired to reimagine this neighborhood and see that it, too, is beautiful and that it is time for the East Side to share in the story of Buffalo's re-birth.

### The History

The flourishing of industrial manufacturing in Buffalo during the early 20th century was spurred by the proximity to the Great Lakes waterways, and abundance of paved roads, water canals, and railroads. This region became a magnet for immigrants from Austria-Hungary, Poland, and Russia who provided the industrial facilities with inexpensive labor. By 1950, the major cities along the Great Lakes, now known as the Rust Belt, became an economic powerhouse, accounting for more than half of all manufacturing jobs and about 43 percent of all U.S. jobs. Between 1947 and 1973, the region prospered, rich and poor advanced together, working class standard-of-living nearly doubled, and unemployment continually fell. In the '60s and '70s, however, manufacturing firms sought to lower labor costs by automating, downsizing, and relocating to areas with “business friendly” policies such as low tax rates, anti-union “right-to-work” laws, and low wages. Some went overseas in the wake of new trade treaties to exploit low-wage foreign workers, but others turned to the anti-union states in the South and West stretching from Virginia to Texas to southern California.

The story of Tri-Main Center, which houses Buffalo Arts Studio, is in many ways the story of Buffalo. Built in 1915, it was originally a Ford Motor Plant. The Beltway railroad, which runs between Main Street and Tri-Main Center, allowed Ford to move the automobiles from the Buffalo plant to customers across the North East. The plant changed hands in 1931, 1942, and again in 1947 when it was purchased by Trico, which became the largest employer in the city of Buffalo. In response to the demand to cut costs by the automotive industry, Trico began phasing out its Buffalo operations in the mid-1980s, when much of its manufacturing was shifted to plants along the Texas-Mexico border.



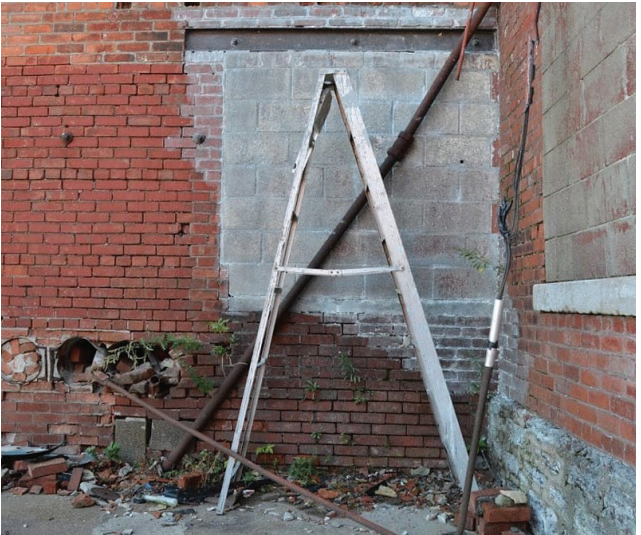
Houdaille Industries/ Houde Corp.

**Houdaille Industries/ Houde Engineering Corp.**, located on Winchester Avenue (**2A, 2B, 2C**) was a two story brick building that was part of a large, 300,00 square foot complex. It was founded in 1925 by Maurice Houdaille (pronounced Hoo-Die), inventor of the double-action rotary shock absorber. The company went on to manufacture shock absorbers, auto parts, machine tools, and other steel products. By the late 1970s the company was struggling and became a takeover target. In 1977, Houdaille company moved to Ft. Lauderdale and all that remains of the original structure is the foundation floor and portions of the foundation walls.



Houdaille Industries/ Houde Corp. (2C)

**The Iroquois Brewery, 230 Pratt (4A)** was originally home to the Roos Brewery, which opened in 1830 and was the first lager-beer brewery in Buffalo. In the 1890s, Iroquois bought the property, tore down the Roos site and built its own brewery in Roos' place. There, it manufactured “healthy and nutritious lager beer, considered to be the equal in point of quality of any beer brewed.” As corporate competition grew in the '50s and '60s, Iroquois Brewery was unable to compete with mega-brewers such as Pabst and Schlitz and went out of business in 1971.



Iroquois Brewery