Charleston Reconstructed

— AN AUGMENTED REALITY EXPERIENCE —

CHARLESTON RECONSTRUCTED IS AN IMMERSIVE DOCUMENTARY THAT BRINGS MONUMENTS TO LIFE THROUGH AUGMENTED REALITY.

IT SEEKS TO DEMOCRATIZE PUBLIC SPACE, SUBVERT CENTURIES-OLD POWER STRUCTURES, AND CONFRONT THE LEGACY OF AMERICAN WHITE SUPREMACY.
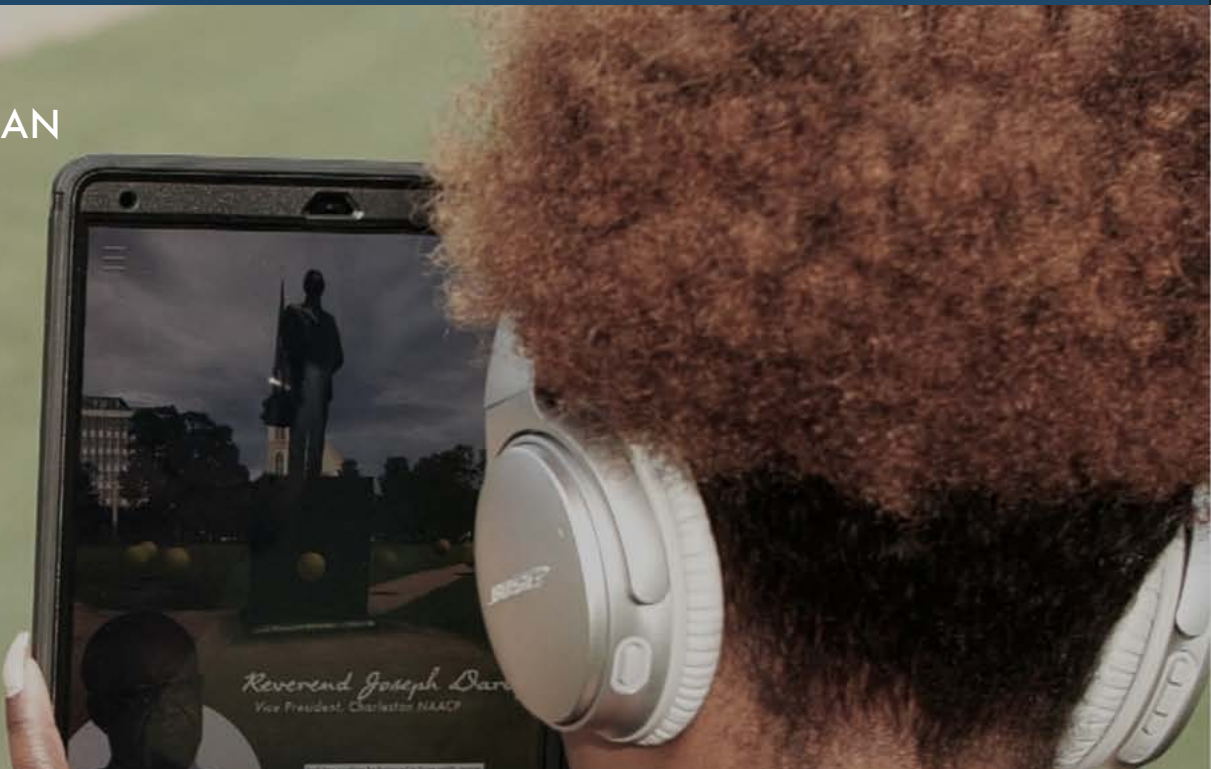
PUBLIC SPACES SHOULD BELONG TO EVERYONE

...BUT IN CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA, THEY'RE AN IDEOLOGICAL BATTLEGROUND

John C. Calhoun, who described slavery as "a positive good," stands immortalized 115 ft. above Charleston's Marion Square, a stone's throw from Mother Emanuel Church, where nine worshippers were killed in a racially motivated shooting.

Denmark Vesey, who was executed for plotting what would have been the largest slave insurrection in American history, is memorialized in a small section of a park that tourists seldom visit. It is the only statue of an African American in Charleston.
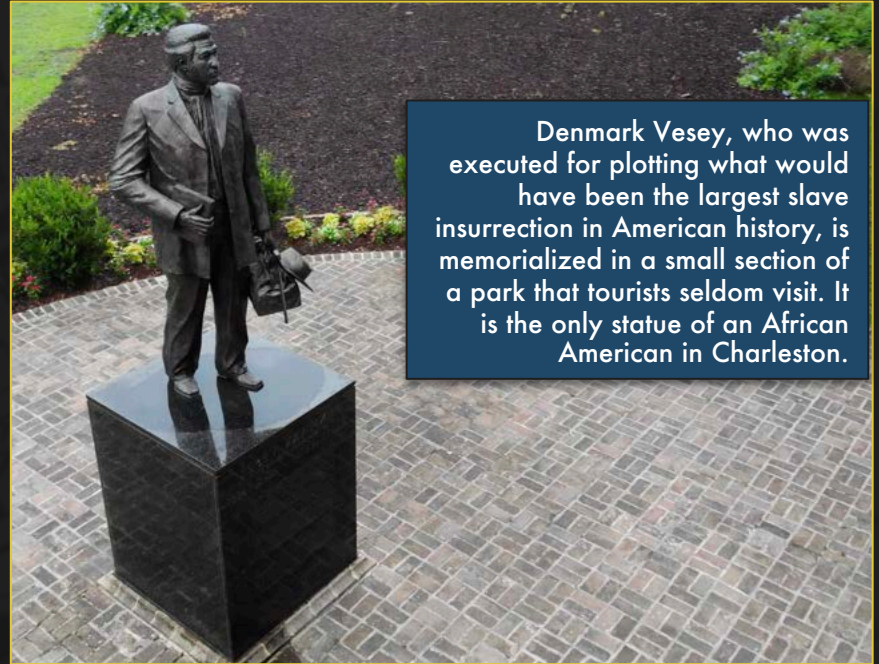
CHARLESTON RECONSTRUCTED USES MOBILE AUGMENTED REALITY TO CONTEXTUALIZE AND REIMAGINE MONUMENTS IN MARION SQUARE.
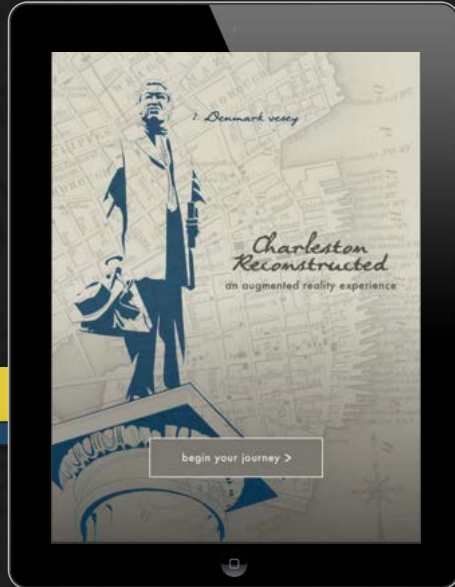
JOHN C. CALHOUN

"LOST CAUSE" STATUES AND WHITE SUPREMACY TODAY.

- A digital plaque displays language the city considered adding to the statue to contextualize Calhoun's role in slavery and the Civil War but ultimately tabled.
- Graffiti added to the monument after the 2015 shooting at Mother Emanuel AME Church is reproduced.
- Historians discuss the statue's role as a symbol of "Lost Cause" ideology, and descendants of Calhoun and of those he enslaved talk about how he should be remembered.
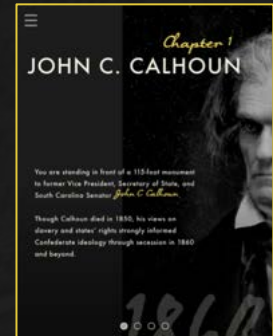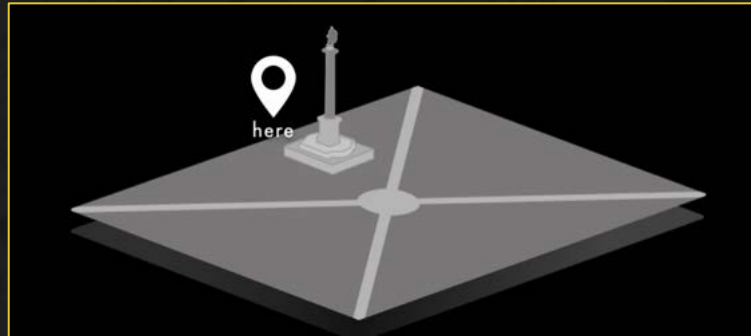
DENMARK VESEY

STATUARY REPRESENTATION AS A COUNTER-NARRATIVE.

- A full-scale digital recreation of a statue of Denmark Vesey that sits in Hampton Park is placed in its originally proposed location in Marion Square.
- Community members involved in the statue's construction talk about the city's resistance to allowing for visible monuments to African American historical figures.
- The Vesey statue grows as tall as the Calhoun statue as voices discuss the need for better representation in Charleston's statuary and the many African American figures from Charleston's past who deserve their own monuments.
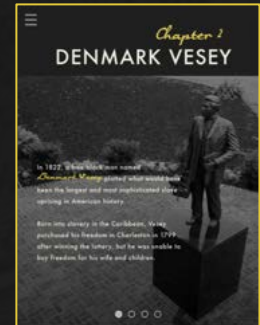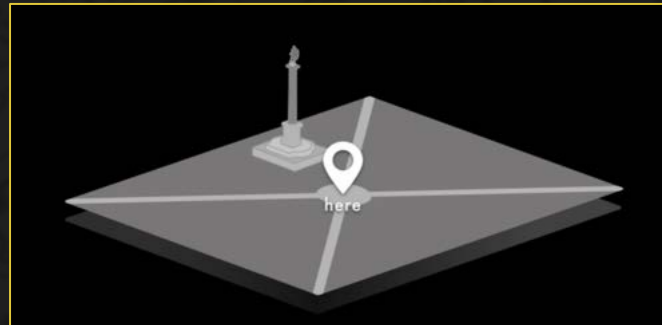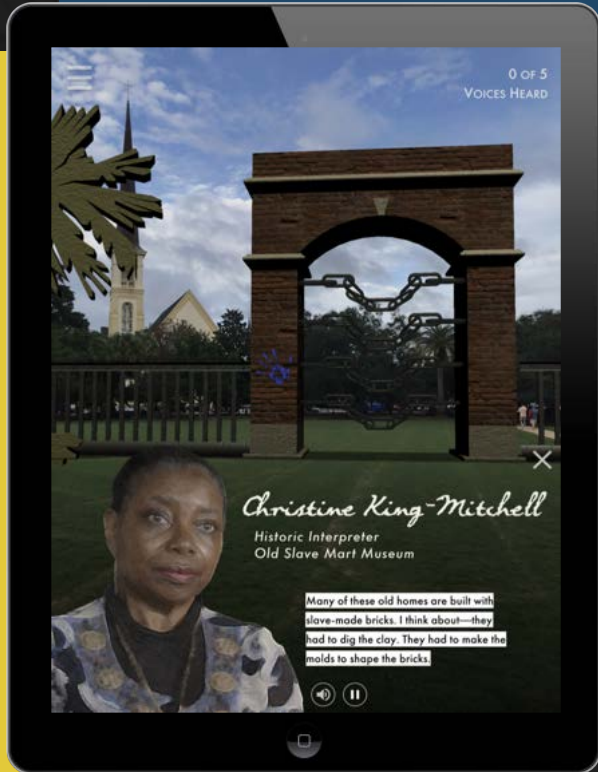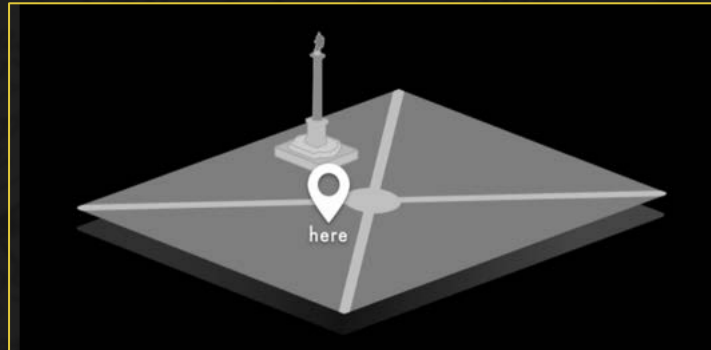
DOOR OF NO RETURN

ENVISIONING RECONCILIATION IN STATUARY AND SOCIETY.

- A conceptual monument designed by visual artist T'Leya Walker is placed in the park. The monument represents acknowledging the past as a way of moving into the future.
- Scholars and activists discuss the possibility of reconciling divergent historical narratives about race in Charleston and the need for restorative action to correct ongoing inequality.
- Users "break" chains across the monument as they listen to ways they can help create a more equitable future before walking through the archway to end the experience.

Christine King-Mitchell
Historic Interpreter
Old Slave Mart Museum

Many of these old homes are built with slave-made bricks. I think about—they had to dig the clay. They had to make the molds to shape the bricks.

0 OF 5
VOICES HEARD

here

— PROGRESS AND NEXT STEPS—

— THE TEAM —

HOPE SCHROEDER

Hope is an immersive storyteller specializing in narratives around public spaces. Her AR/VR work includes a VR documentary about art on conflict-ridden border walls, and an AR project about Confederate monuments in Charleston, South Carolina. She holds a BS from Stanford University in Symbolic Systems and is currently pursuing a MSc in Social Data Science at the Oxford Internet Institute.

KHOI LE

Khoi is an undergraduate at Stanford University majoring in IDEAs (Immersive Design and Engineering Applications). He co-created the world's first mobile AR short film, Snowbird, where the characters come to life on your coffee table. Khoi's recent VR art pieces explore embodiment and movement in a world where our existence has become almost completely reduced to digital data.

ROBERT TOKANEL

Rob Tokanel is a journalist and documentary filmmaker whose work has been published in The New York Times, The Atlantic, and Mic. He has previously produced films about the Holocaust and the post-Civil War Reconstruction Era and reported from Jordan, Turkey, and Zimbabwe. He is a graduate of the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism.

KYLE QIAN

Kyle is a graduate of Stanford's MS Computer Science program. The wide range of his previous work with immerse media includes conducting original research on mindfulness in VR, prototyping biometric AR visualizations, and shipping enterprise VR training products. Kyle is interested in how an understanding of AR/VR and human perception can give rise to technologies capable of augmenting how people communicate.