

# RAY KING

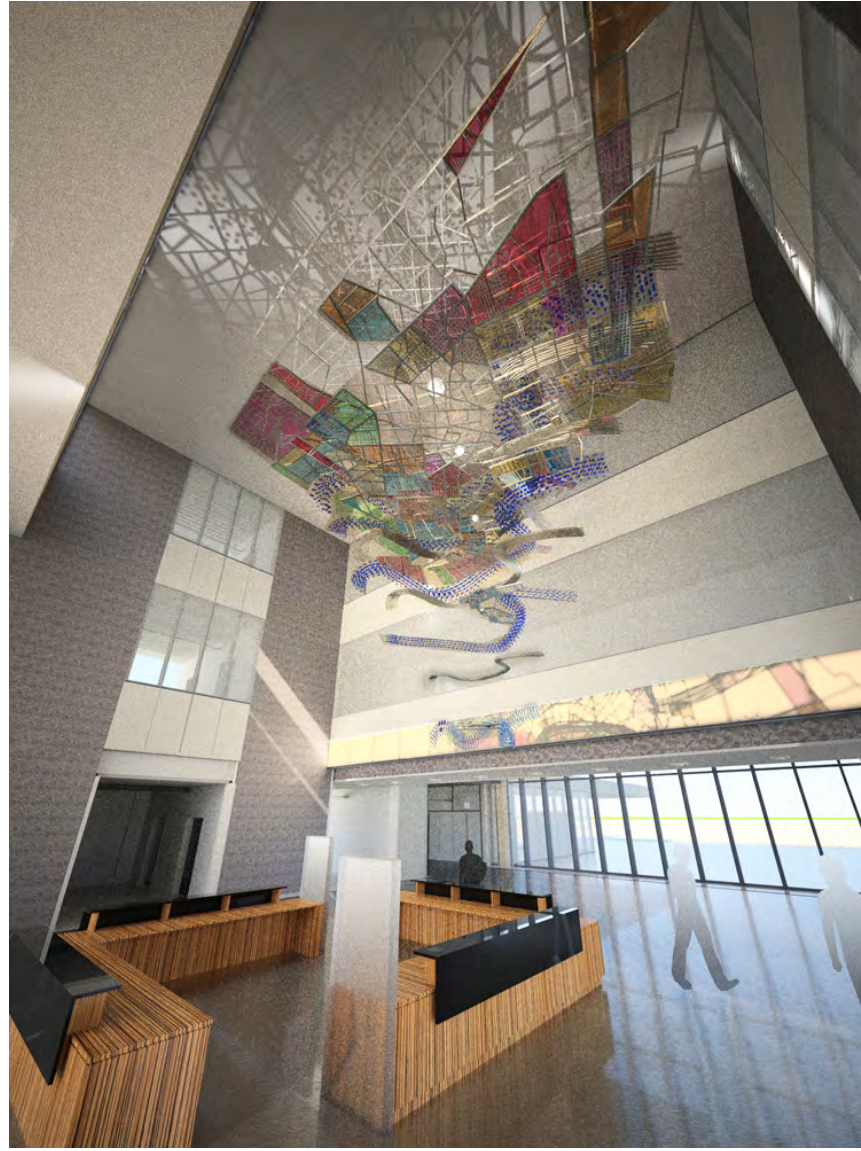
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RIVER SPIRIT



**Iconic Artwork to Create a Spectacle of Luminosity and Vibrancy  
To The University Medical Center  
New Orleans, Louisiana**

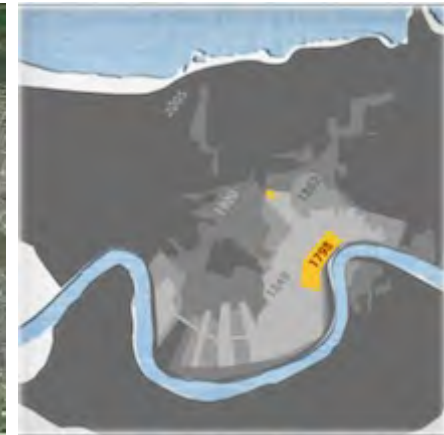




## THE CONCEPT

“River Spirit,” artwork designed, fabricated and installed by artist Ray King for the University Medical Center respects the architecture, the scale and proportion of the lobby space, the mission and history of the center as well as the multi-cultural flavors of New Orleans. The design is inspired by the evolution of the city itself and the Mississippi River that runs through it.

The artwork consists of five layers of New Orleans city topography that reference historical maps dating from the 1700s to present – 1718, 1840, 1880, 1920 and 2014. The layers reflect the city’s relationship with the river and its expansion through the past centuries, with the earliest and smallest settlement at the bottom to the more recent, larger plans as the higher levels. A polished stainless steel sphere will mark the various locations of Charity Hospital through history. The resulting inverted asymmetrical conical shape shows the explosive organic growth of New Orleans and how the river shapes its geometry.



The spectacular light refraction of the multi-tiered suspension appears like a contemporary abstracted chandelier, but instead of ring or crown designs, is based on the city's grid giving it a unique sense of place and originality that reflects the spirit and eccentricities of New Orleans itself. It is a work of art that embraces the community, the city and the region.



In designing “River Spirit,” Ray King Studio researched the city’s history, evolution and early maps to understand the geometry of its growth patterns on the physical shape of the city and its population fluctuations. Each of the five tiers has two layers of structure: 1) A tubular stainless steel armature that define the major intersections and wards of the city. 2). Within each geographic section is a laser-cut stainless steel grid of smaller streets and roads that further define the areas, and within each grid, laminated colored glass elements are inset into the grid to represent buildings. Flowing through the five tiered cityscapes is the Mississippi River, represented by a floating horizontal wave of dichroic glass elements that catch and reflect light, dynamically changing color, sparkling like water reflecting sunlight, and giving the impression of fluidity and movement.



## Exploded Axonometric View of the Construct



## The Maps



2014

1970

1880s

1840

1718



Each of New Orleans' 40-some neighborhoods are represented by a different color, with major identified.

The multi-tiered design incorporates foreshortening so that from one specific vantage point (the "sweet spot" right in front of the Information Desk), the view looking up from below aligns all of the layers together in a forced perspective view to clearly reveal the sculpture as a representational map.



The effect of creating a forced perspective view is to narrow the sculpture into a more conical shape.

