NEW YORK STATE HAUNTED ROAD TRIP
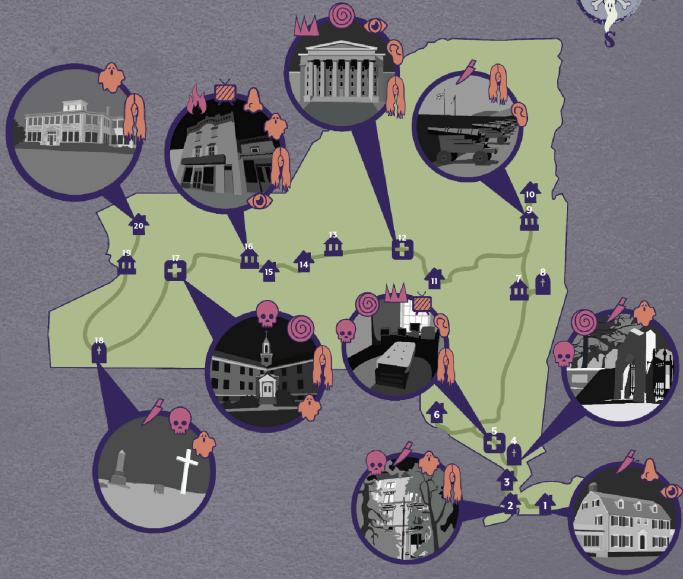
Legend

Locations:
- Residential
- Public building
- Cemetery
- Hospital

Events:
- Murder
- Insanity
- General death
- Fire
- Torture

Haunting Experiences:
- Scents
- Spirits
- Poltergeist
- Visions
- Voices/Sounds
- Apparitions

MAP DESIGN PROJECT

Emma Waller

ewaller@pratt.edu

Typography and Information Design

PrattMWP College of Art and Design

Class #3

Prof. Cindy Koren

Creative Brief

What inspired me to create a haunted state map was a combination of two different things. I had just finished a project for another class where I researched North Carolina myths and legends, and I was curious about the same sorts of stories about an even older state, New York. I was also inspired by the weird and strange things that have happened to me since living here, and the rumors of my very own dorm being haunted.

I decided I wanted to highlight only the best of all the haunted places in the state. What inspired me was the stories behind the hauntings, so I wanted the focus of the map to be on the history and aesthetic instead of the actual functionality. The idea of the map wasn't the actual directions, but more the general idea of where the places are and what happens there. A map of an entire state has to be huge and overly detailed to be functional, and I wanted mine to be more streamlined, with some information about every location explaining the history behind it and the hauntings experienced there.

Objectives

> A traditional state map is too complicated, simplify it
> Different locations need to be highlighted
> It needs to be apparent what happened and what kind of haunting takes place at each location
> The colors need to reflect a spooky mood without being too reminiscent of Halloween
> The map should pique interest, this is the kind of thing that someone would pick up in a hotel lobby.

Inspiration

I began by creating a Pinterest board to see what kind of maps I think look good, and what elements of these maps I wanted to incorporate into my own. The "New York City's Most Popular Museums" map to the right intrigued me, because you could clearly see all the landmarks and what they looked like in addition to just where they were. The concept of this map was also not dissimilar to mine, so I took inspiration from this design through the execution of the concept. The map in the bottom right corner caught my eye because of the color. I knew that these weren't necessarily the right colors to use for my map, but I liked the saturation of them and the continuation of the same colors throughout the entire design. I also liked the illustrative quality of this map and how it was more about the locations on it than it was the accuracy. The National Parks map in the bottom left corner inspired me because I liked how the icons are very clear against the rest of the map, and even though it was depicting a very large area, you could easily read it and get the general idea about where things were in relation to each other.

Research

Since my map didn't already exist, my research consisted of organizing what would be my top twenty locations along the route of the map, and where those locations actually are. I looked into evidence of haunted experiences on websites like the ones below, and wedded through to find the more interesting locations. Next, I went onto Mapquest and put in the addresses (or towns for the locations that didn't have actual street addresses, such as old cemeteries and abandoned hospitals). This allowed me to view all of the locations on one map together, and this was when I decided to make it a haunted road trip map instead of a highlights map. I ordered the locations in the way that made the most sense for a road trip, printed the results from MapQuest, and traced over the print-out.
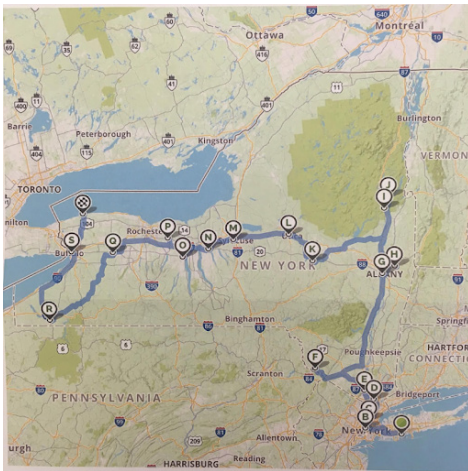
The next part of my research that I looked into was the imagery for the illustrations I wanted to include as highlights. One of the things that I didn't like about some of the maps I saw during my research was the cluttered mess they became when there were too many highlighted illustrations. To remedy that issue, I decided to focus only on what I thought were the top ten most interesting locations of the twenty I was including. I took into account both the stories behind the locations and their locations on the map. I wanted the illustrations to be well spaced out throughout the map, so nothing would become too overcrowded and messy. I also wanted to be able to make them big enough so that you could still see the detail of the illustration. In addition, I was thinking about how to incorporate the icons that would indicate the history and hauntings at the different locations, and decided it might be nice to put them around the edge of the spot illustrations, so making them bigger would make sense. I found images on Google and from the websites I did my research on so that I could bring them into Illustrator and vectorize them.

It was also during this stage of research that I thought thinking about potential color schemes. I knew my map needed to look spooky, but I didn't want it to just be orange and black like Halloween, as that would look kind of campy and expected. I decided to focus more on a purple and green color scheme, with pops of brighter colors like pink and orange. I combined the different colors present in these three color schemes. I thought keeping most of the colors more muted would help to give the map a creepy feel without making it too over-the-top.
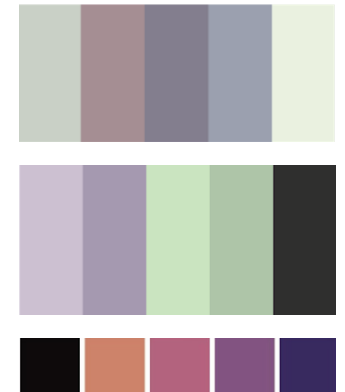
Sketching

The first sketch that I did was a tracing of the MapQuest map that I printed out. This allowed me to better visualize which locations would benefit from being blown up, and where I could potentially position them on the final map. I was also able to see how much negative space I might have around the map for placing other things such as a legend or compass rose.

The next sketches that I did were the ones on the left. I began brainstorming about what kinds of symbols I could use on the map to indicate the different types of locations, the events that took place there, and the "symptoms" of the hauntings that people experience there now.
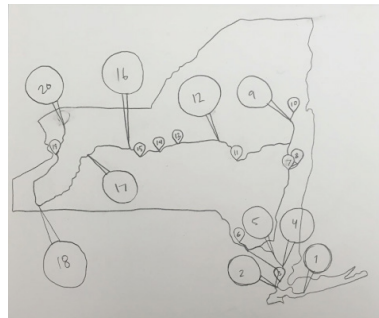
For the location symbols, I first had to categorize all twenty spots into a small number of categories. I didn't want to have too many different symbols, so I ended up combining the museums and other public building like the theater and capitol building into one category: public buildings. The other symbols were more self-explanatory, and all of the sketches came easily.

The event and haunting symbols were a little bit more involved than the location ones. This was simply because it became more difficult to visualize an abstract or broad concept such as torture or apparitions, or just general spirits. There was also some crossover in what I thought the different symbols should look like, especially for the different haunting experiences. Especially when it came to general "visions" vs. orbs, vs. floating objects; or hearing voices vs. other general noises and sounds. I had to combine certain different experiences in order to decrease the amount of symbols I would be using. I had to think abstractly for some of the symbol designs as well, in order to convey something like insanity or torture.

Process

I pulled the photos I had collected into Adobe Illustrator to begin creating vector illustrations for the ten highlighted locations. I traced the images in a simplified way, since I knew that the icons were going to be pretty small. I didn't want to get too detailed on any of the icons in fear of them getting muddled when shrunk down. I chose to make these icons grayscale in order to avoid having too many colors on the map, which was another issue I saw on the maps I pulled inspiration from during preliminary research. The process of making these was pretty easy, but was time consuming. I had originally planned on creating these icons for all twenty locations and creating a website to go along with the printed map, but that just wasn't feasible for me within the timeframe of the project.
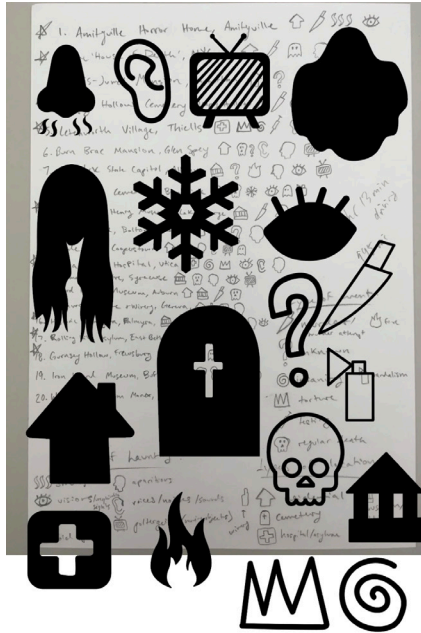

After creating the top ten icons for the highlighted locations, I had to create the smaller symbols. I started by tracing the sketches in Illustrator that I had done on my original paper with research and brainstorming. I used a variety of different methods to create the symbols, which ended up creating some issues for me later, since some of the symbols had outlines and others did not. I had to figure out ways to create original and easy-to-read symbols that were all similar enough in style but would still read as separate categories of icons. I ended up making each category a different color, but all of them had thick outlines and a very graphic quality. I have to change the design of multiple symbols along the way. The first ones to change from my original sketches were the apparitions, smells, and spirits symbols. The smells symbol was originally just some squiggled lines to indicate the scent

itself, but I figured that a simple nose would read quicker and easier than some mere lines. The apparitions and spirits symbols were the hardest ones I had to make, since these are such abstract ideas and not something that everyone thinks about the same way. Fr the apparitions symbol, I decided to model it after the iconic movie, *The Ring*. I thought that this would be a good way to depict an apparition because the little girl in the movie is an image that most people, especially those who would be interested in taking a haunted road trip, would recognize. Her long scraggly hair is pretty iconic, and it also worked well because it looked very different than my other symbols. For the spirits symbol I adjusted the ghost to be less generic-looking, and ave a generally more spooky feel instead of looking childish. I also adjusted the skull symbol later to have purple eyes and nose, in the same style as the eye and the ghost.

Assembly
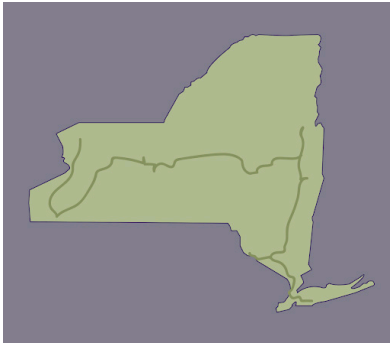
The first step to assembling my map was to trace the sketch I did of the MapQuest map in Illustrator. I used both the original map from the website and my traced version to make sure the path was accurate enough.

The next thing I did was place the location symbols on the digital map. I was able to take a bit of artistic liberties by slightly moving some of the icons from their true location in order to read the symbols. It was not super important to be completely accurate, that was no the intent.


The third step in assembling the final map was placing the highlighted location illustrations on the map in a way that made sense. I connected lines from the location symbols to the illustrations, to appear as if they are being blow up.
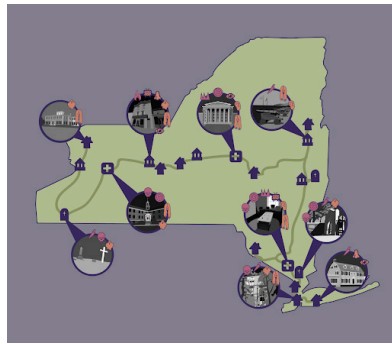
Finally, I added the smaller symbols for the history of the locations and the circumstances of the hauntings. I added these along the borders of the illustrated highlights so that it was very easy to read and understand what went with what.

I created a legend to go next to the map using the symbols I made and original hand-drawn text. I decided to hand draw the text because after searching for creepy fonts that I thought might work, none of them were quite what I was looking for. Plus, I have always liked the look of text that is not the same from one letter to the next, even if it is the same letter, especially for the situation. I decided to make the background of the legend be lighter than the rest of the map because I did not want it to blend into the background. I enjoy maps where the legend is clearly visible and not tucked away in a corner or camouflaged into the background. I think that a visible legend means a legible map.
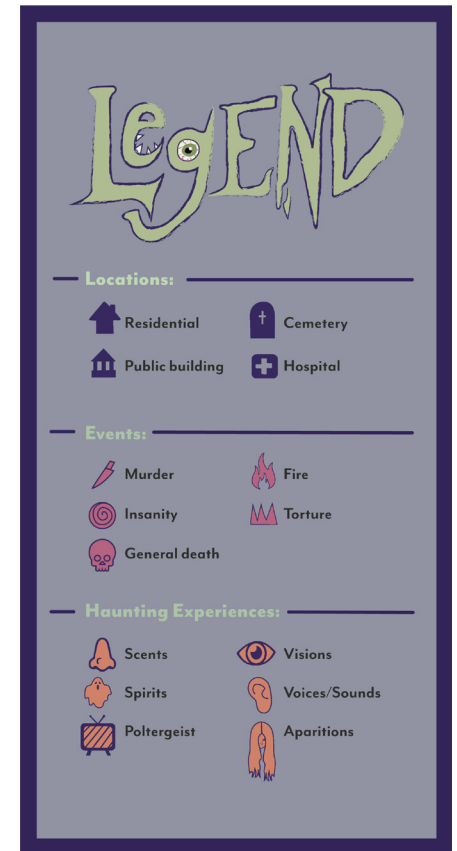
In addition to the legend, one of the project requirements was to have a compass rose on our map. I decided to draw this creepy and thematic compass rose to go alongside mine. I did not want to include a simple and basic compass because my map was not a simple or basic map. I originally hand drew this image and then brought it into Illustrator to trace and color. I used the same text from the title of the map that I designed, which can be seen on the cover and the next page.

Assembly

I knew that I wanted my map to be the kind of thing that you would pick up in a hotel lobby, and the format of all of those pamphlets in brochure. When I thought about that, I realized I needed to create another spread to go on the cover, back and inside panels of the brochure. I sketched out an idea on paper and got to work in Illustrator. I used the same color palette as on the inside of th map in order to maintain the visual appeal of the design as a whole. I illustrated hand-drawn text after experimenting with different Google Fonts with no success. I was unhappy with the ghosts on the inside panel of the spread, but knew that all the typed information i wanted to include about the locations and the hauntings was too much to put on just one panel without it being too small to read. To remedy this, I created a panel of information that could be slipped inside the folded brochure (pictured right). This panel held an overview of every location on the map in order, including what they're called today, where it is, what happened there the past, and what kinds of paranormal experiences people have had there.

NEW YORK STATE HAUNTED ROAD TRIP

Top 20 Haunted Places in New York State

1. Amityville Horror House, Amityville
Whether or not you believe the "seed'iction" book or the franchise of horror films it inspired, there's no doubt that some scary, real-life stuff happened in this otherwise charming looking abode. In the early '70s, a young man murdered his parents and four siblings in the house. When another family bought the house after the murders, they reported witnessing all sorts of creepy smells and feelings and had unexplainable, ominous visions. It's still a private residence, so don't be that guy that takes a photo in front of the abode.

2. The 'House of Death,' Manhattan
This unassuming home is one of the most haunted places in New York, with up to twenty-two different spirits dwelling inside. Mark Twain lived in the property between 1900 and 1901 and documented a number of supernatural experiences that he had. Throughout the twentieth century there have been some horrifying events, the most famous of which include a murder suicide and a six year old girl who was beaten to death by her adoptive father in 1987. There have been all manner of paranormal incidents reported in the house and there have even been sightings of Mark Twain himself on a couple of occasions.

3. Morris-Jumel Mansion, Manhattan
This spot happens to be one of the most haunted mansions in New York. In 1810, Stephen Jumel and his wife Eliza purchased the property. Stephen died in suspicious circumstances and she married again in 1832, this time to Aaron Burr. Rumours of paranormal activity in the mansion first surfaces in the 1960s when a visiting group of schoolchildren claimed to have seen the ghost of Eliza Jumel, who appeared and told them to quiet down. There have also been reports of a disembodied voice coming from inside a old grandfather clock and a Hessian soldier who emerges from painting on the wall.

4. Sleepy Hollow Cemetary, Sleepy Hollow
During weekend tours of this iconic location, kerosene lamps light the way as you're guided through town tales of it under-suicide, corruption, extortion and insanity that are so terrifying, they will leave you shaking among the tombstones. A few famous bodies lie beneath the soil, including "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" writer himself, Washington Irving.

5. Letchworth Village, Thiells
Though beautiful to look at Letchworth Village gained a reputation for mistreatment. Reports of patients covered in filth and living without clothes, inadequate bedding or food plagued the institution. This is also the place where the very first polio vaccines were tested on young children. Today, the buildings on the boys' side remain abandoned and off-limits to the public, but trespassers with no regard for the law have come out spooked by weird sounds, moving objects and other ghostly activity.

6. Burn Brae Mansion, Glen Spey
This Victorian bed-and-breakfast has frightened more than a few guest-hosts. Private ghost hunters and guests alike have sworn to seeing a woman pacing the halls and to hearing unexplained noises, footsteps and music from an unseen piano. Can't bear the thought of an overnight stay? The mansion's fall BYOB murder-mystery dinners serve suspense without as many spooks.

7. New York State Capitol, Albany
Ghoulish reports describe flickering lights and shadowy figures, clocks mysteriously rewinding by eight minutes and a dutiful night watchman who still makes his rounds well after expiring in the structure's 1911 fire. During a great is tour, see if you can spot the hidden a devil carved into the wall by a disgruntled stonecutter.

8. Forest Park Cemetary, Brunswick
For people living in Brunswick and nearby Troy, the abandoned Forest Park Cemetery—known locally as the Pinewoods Cemetery—is a place only to be traversed by the bravest of souls. If you explore this wooded area, you will likely feel chills running down your spine from inexplicable cold spots. Decapitated angel statues have been known to bleed from their stone necks, and should you peer inside one of the vandalized mausoleums, the coffin might just be missing.

9. Fort William Henry Musuem, Lake George
Back in 1757, Fort William Henry was lost when thousands of French soldier attacked and destroyed the military stronghold during the French and Indian War. Today, you can take a ghost tour, and guests have reported hearing whisperings like "Hurry up," and shadow people appear in visitors' photos.

10. The Sagamore, Bolton Landing
You can rent a room at this grandoise hotel overlooking Lake George for around $280 to $600, but you might not be alone. At the gorgeous 19th century Victorian resort, stories of ghost sightings are mainly confined to the elegant restaurants, but the Sagamore's most notorious ghost is more likely to be found playing outdoors. About 70 years ago, a small boy who would often sell lost golf balls back to pro shop customers was hit by a car during his search. If you listen very closely, you can still hear him giggling.

11. Hyde Hall, Cooperstown
In 1817, George Clarke began the process of building what was then the largest private residence in the U.S.—but he died within a year of its completion. Some believe that even death hasn't kept Clarke from enjoying his dream house. More than 150 years of paranormal experiences have been documented, including apparitions, footsteps and sheets being pulled off beds. The property also features a detached family crypt, which you can experience for yourself during candlelit tours of the grounds on Friday and Saturday nights.

12. Utica State Hospital (Old Main), Utica
Opened in 1843 as the first state-run hospital for treating the mentally ill, the former New York State Lunatic Asylum was considered state of the art at the time of its completion. Within the massive Greek Revival hospital, facilitators regularly performed lobotomies and electro-shock therapy. It was here that doctors invented the Utica Crib, an inhuman, long, shallow cage where they kept agitated people to calm them down or to punish misbehaving residents. Some people claim they've seen faces looking out the window and heard screams coming from the abandoned building. Today, it's mostly off-limits to the public, but in the government has sponsored occasional ghost tours as recently as last summer.

13. Landmark Theater, Syracuse
It might seem like a treat to visit this grand former movie palace, but the century-old beauty comes with ghosts. Look out for Clarissa, an actress who supposedly died falling from the balcony, or Oscar, an old stagehand who might make the lights flicker.

14. Seward House Museum, Auburn
This pre-Victorian gem, home to four generations of the influential Seward family, is also the site of two attempted murders. True-crime aficionados can ogle the 153-year-old, bloodstained sheets of a brutal but failed assassination attempt on the house's own William Seward, while museum-led tours and talks will prove that not all horror stories need ghosts to be creepy.

15. Belhurst Castle & Winery, Geneva
At the late-1800s Romanesque Revival structure, which over the decades has been a casino, a supper club and a Prohibition-era speakeasy, patrons have claimed to glimpse a forlorn woman in white who stands silently on the front lawn. According to legend, she was an Italian opera singer named Isabella who decamped to the castle with her lover, only to meet her demise when one of its tunnels collapsed on top of her.

16. Palmyra Historic Musuem, Palmyra
In 1964, six children and a young mother perished in a fire at this former three-residence property. Over the years, museumgoers have reported a smell of ash lingering in the basement, toys flying off the shelves, the sensation of having one's clothes or hair tugged, and even a phantom feline.

17. Rolling Hills Asylum, East Bethany
Some 17,000 bodies are believed to be buried on the premises of this porhouse, almost all in unmarked graves. Opened in 1826 as the Genesee County Poor House, the large farmhouse would later be used as an infirmary, orphanage, tuberculosis hospital and nursing home. Paranormal activity has been seen in the psych ward, morgue, graveyard and the former bedroom of Roy, an inmate who now haunts visitors as a seven-foot-tall "shadow man."

18. Gurnsey Hollow, Frewsburg
Tucked away on an abandoned dirt road, this spot is not only the final resting grounds to many children, it was the place where a seven-year-old mentally handicapped girl was stoned to death by her own village. Many of the 19th century gravestones have been tipped over or destroyed, and the shadowy spirits are not happy about it.

19. Iron Island Museum, Buffalo
Once a church and a funeral home, this spot is now an institution dedicated to all things supernatural. According to staffers, paranormal investigators have captured voices, shadows, orbs of light and other evidence of lingering spirits, including military vet Edgar Zernicke, whose ashes went unclaimed in the basement for decades.

20. Winery at Marjim Manor, Appleton
Despite appearing on both Travel Channel's Most Terrifying Places in America and SyFy's Ghost Hunters, this spot's owner insists that the spirits here are more of a Casper variety than vicious supernatural beings. Don't be too alarmed if you feel something brushing up against your leg—that's likely the ghost dog who also runs with this otherworldly crew.

<<Front

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Final Map

After assembly ad presentation, there were a few final changes I made to my map. I added a texture in the background to prevent it from looking too stark, I flipped the map and the legend so that the legend would be seen before the map when opening the brochure, and I adjusted the size of the legend and the symbols on the map. I also changed the inside panel from just some ghosts to be an introduction to the map and the experience of the road trip.
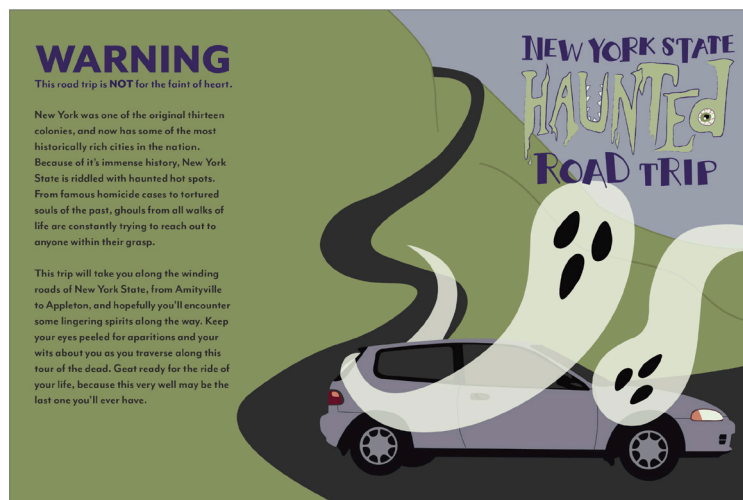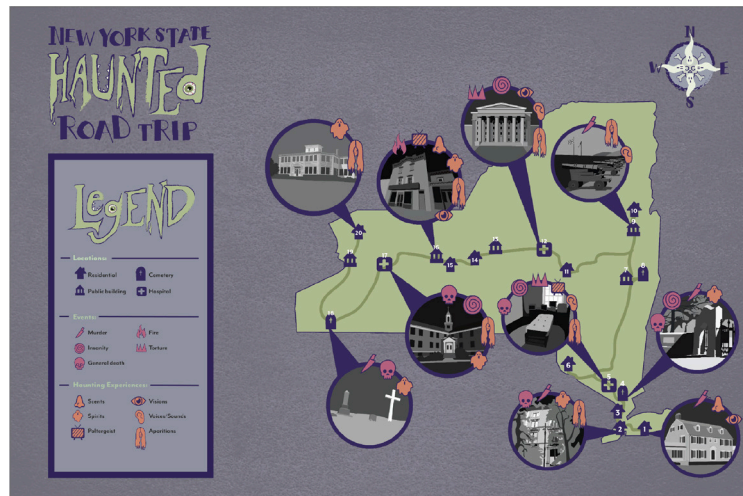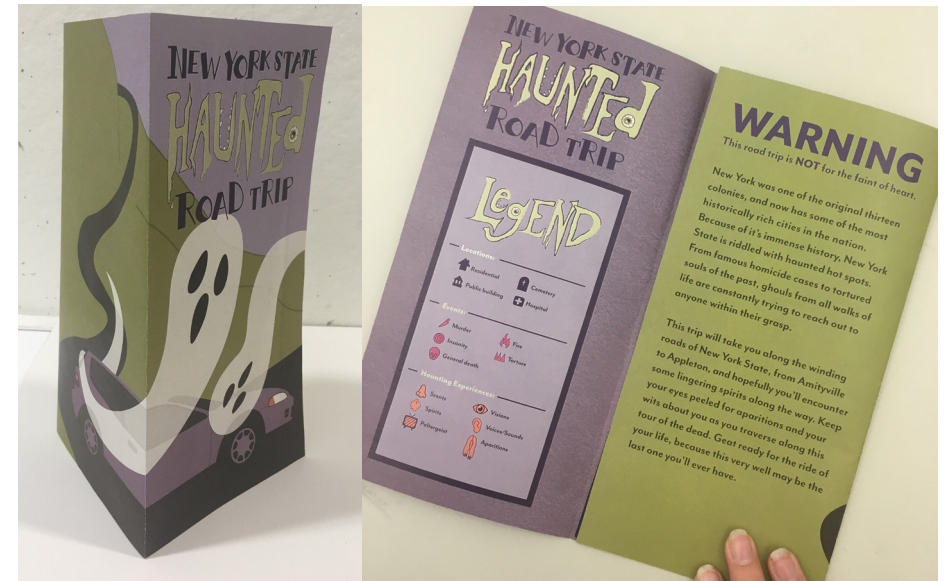
Artist Bio

Emma Waller is a sophomore at PrattMWP in Utica, New York. Originally from North Carolina, she plans on continuing on to Pratt Brooklyn next year, where she will graduate with a major in Communication Design- Illustration. She hopes to minor in either painting or printmaking while at Brooklyn as well. After graduation, she hopes to go into the industry as an illustrator for books, magazines and/or concept art.