



THE GAFFNEY HOUSE

LOCATION:

4515 RIVER ROAD

LOUISVILLE, KY 40222

CLIENT: GAFFNEY HISTORIC RIVER, LLC

This 20th-century house was built between 1910 and 1928 by Louisville architect James J. Gaffney, who also had a major hand in designing the ever-recognizable St. James Church and Waverly Hills Sanatorium. 4515 River Road was James Gaffney's primary residence until 1939 when he sold it and has since gone through residential phases that range from summer weekend home, a single-family home, and a stacked duplex-style residence. The house was brimming with family life up until 1979, when the last residents moved out and the property sat, empty and deteriorating.

In October 2020, the house's fate changed for the better when the current owner purchased the property and began the task of restoring this beautiful piece of historic architecture to its former glory. The house combines elements from many architectural styles, including Classic, Arts + Crafts, Prairie School, and Mayan motifs. Three stories of restored balconies at the back of the house provide panoramic views of Downtown Louisville and the Ohio River. Inside, the varied design elements were restored - all with the help of local artisans - including original tile and painted concrete floors, glazed brick walls, stained glass windows, decorative plaster moldings, murals, and more. Immense care was taken to ensure that the restoration brought these elements back to their original allure, as the team battled deteriorating conditions during construction. The new decor and lighting aims to provide a unique yet comfortable space for guests without distracting from the original collective architecture. The Gaffney House is on the National Park Service historic registry and is in the process of obtaining local landmark designation.









THE GAFFNEY HOUSE TODAY (ABOVE); THE REAR OF THE HOUSE WHEN THE PROJECT BEGAN (LEFT)



THE KITCHEN AND DINING ROOM'S FLOORS WERE UNEARTHED FROM THE RUBBLE (PREVIOUS PAGE)



THE UPSTAIRS BEDROOM SUITES WERE HISTORICALLY DEFINED AS SEPARATE MENS AND WOMENS LIVING QUARTERS BY THEIR DECORATIVE PLASTER TRIMWORK - A FLORAL MOTIF IN THE ROADSIDE BEDROOM AND A HUNTING SCENE IN THE RIVERSIDE BEDROOM. THE MOLD TO RESTORE MISSING PIECES IS SHOWN AT LEFT.



THE DECORATIVE PLASTER TRIMWORK WAS HAND-RESTORED LOCALLY, AS WELL AS THE PAINTED FLOORS AND MISSING STAINED GLASS.



THE RESTORATION OF THE MAIN LEVEL PATIO INCLUDED PAINTING THE FLOORS IN HISTORIC COLORS INSPIRED BY THEIR ORIGINAL DESIGN (LEFT); NATURE HAD TAKEN A TOLL ON THE HOME OVER THE YEARS (ABOVE).



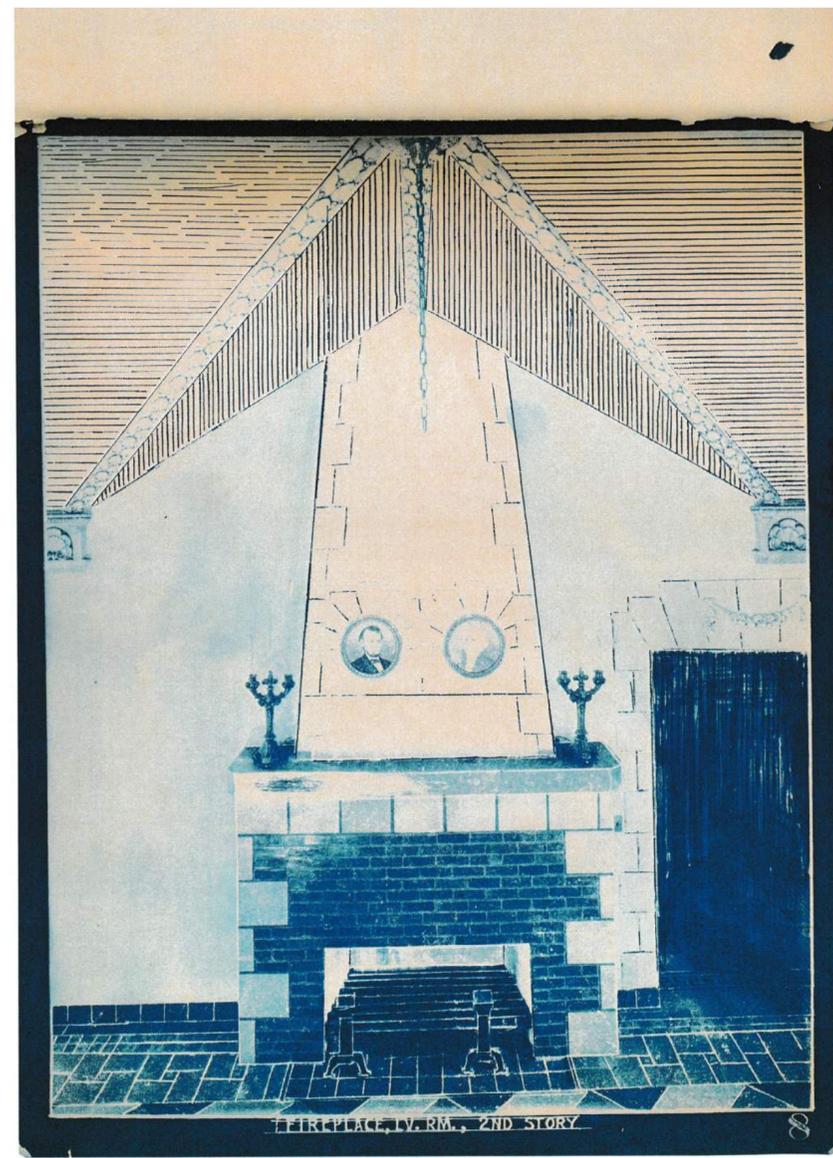
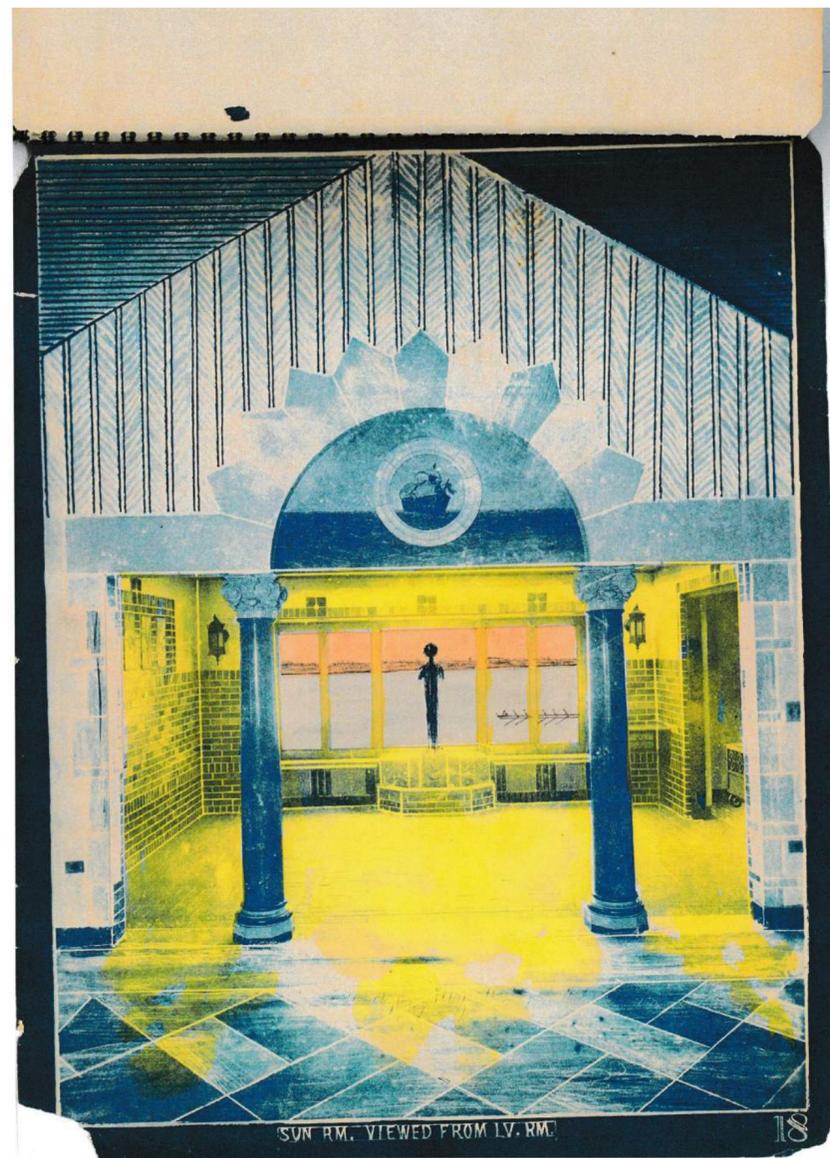
CUSTOM TILES WERE SOURCED THROUGHOUT, INCLUDING THE HANDPAINTED ROOKWOOD TILES AT THE FIREPLACE MANTEL.



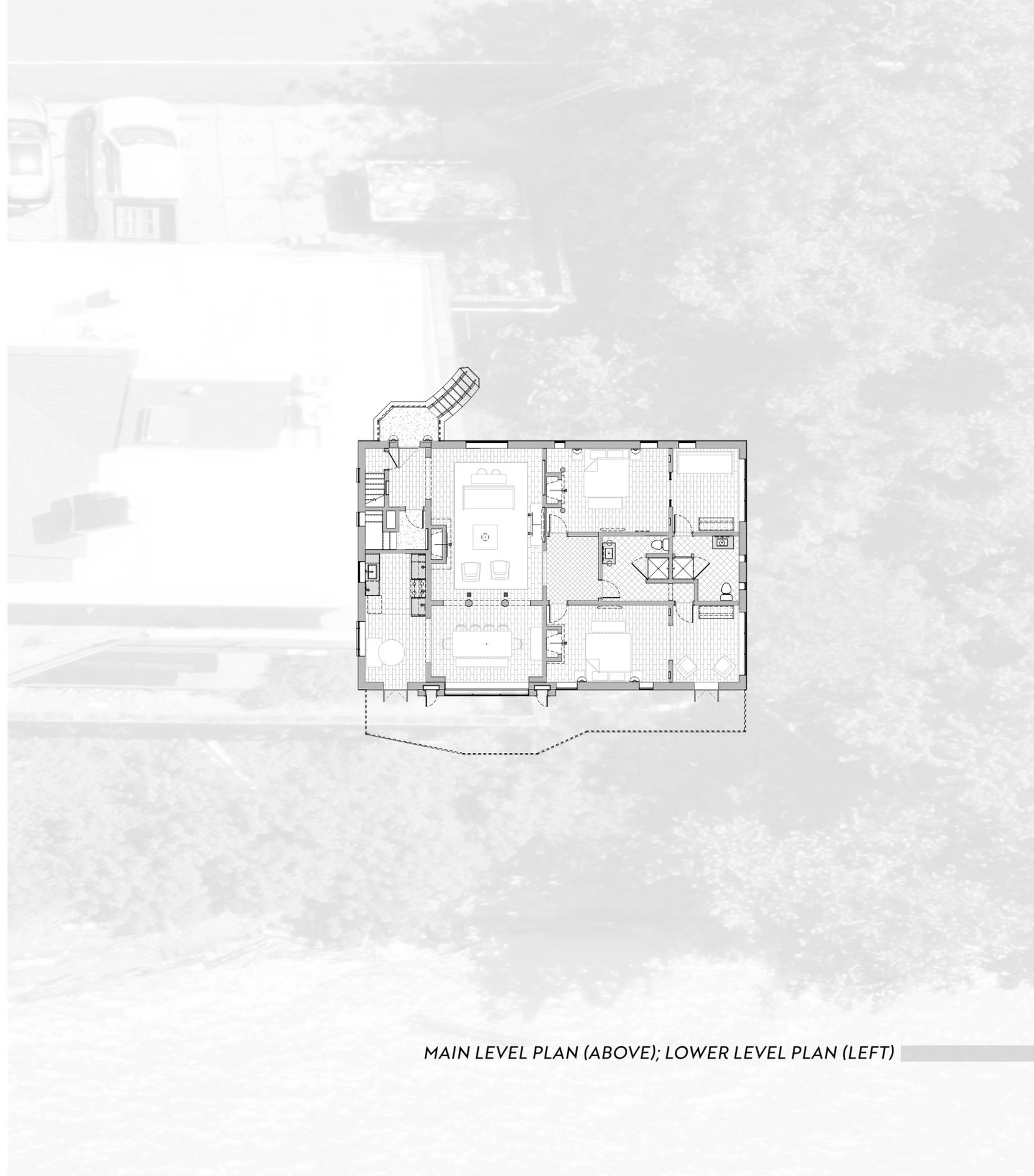
THE LOWER LEVEL RESTORATION INCLUDED A NEW BATHROOM AND BEDROOM ENTRY, BUT MAINTAINED THE EXISTING STAMPED CONCRETE FLOOR PATTERNING.



THIS LOWER LEVEL BEDROOM AND BATHROOM INCLUDED NEW TILE AND BOLD COLOR SCHEME.



HISTORIC COLORED PHOTOGRAPH SCANS WERE ENHANCED WITH DECORATIVE LINEWORK AND COLORS.



MAIN LEVEL PLAN (ABOVE); LOWER LEVEL PLAN (LEFT)