New Orleans’ cultural landscape as expressed in architecture, music, food, rituals and public celebrations is identified as much a part of the Caribbean as the American South. This is a time of perilous passage for one of the world’s great cities of arts. How then do we go about restoring the intangible symbolic life of a place that is so tangibly in ruins?

If New Orleans is to again be a ‘monument’ to living cultural creativity of global significance, local musicians and building artisans and their cultural expressions must be paramount in plans for the city’s restoration, re-inhabitation, and rebirth.

Nick Spitzer (’72), Ph.D., is the creator and producer of Public Radio International’s weekly program American Routes, based in New Orleans and heard locally on WHYY-FM. He is also Professor of Folklore and Cultural Conservation at the University of New Orleans and co-authored with Prof. Roger D. Abrahams the recently released Blues for New Orleans: Mardi Gras and America’s Creole Soul.

Refreshments will be served.

Book signing of Blues for New Orleans, 7 p.m. at the Penn Bookstore, 3601 Walnut Street.