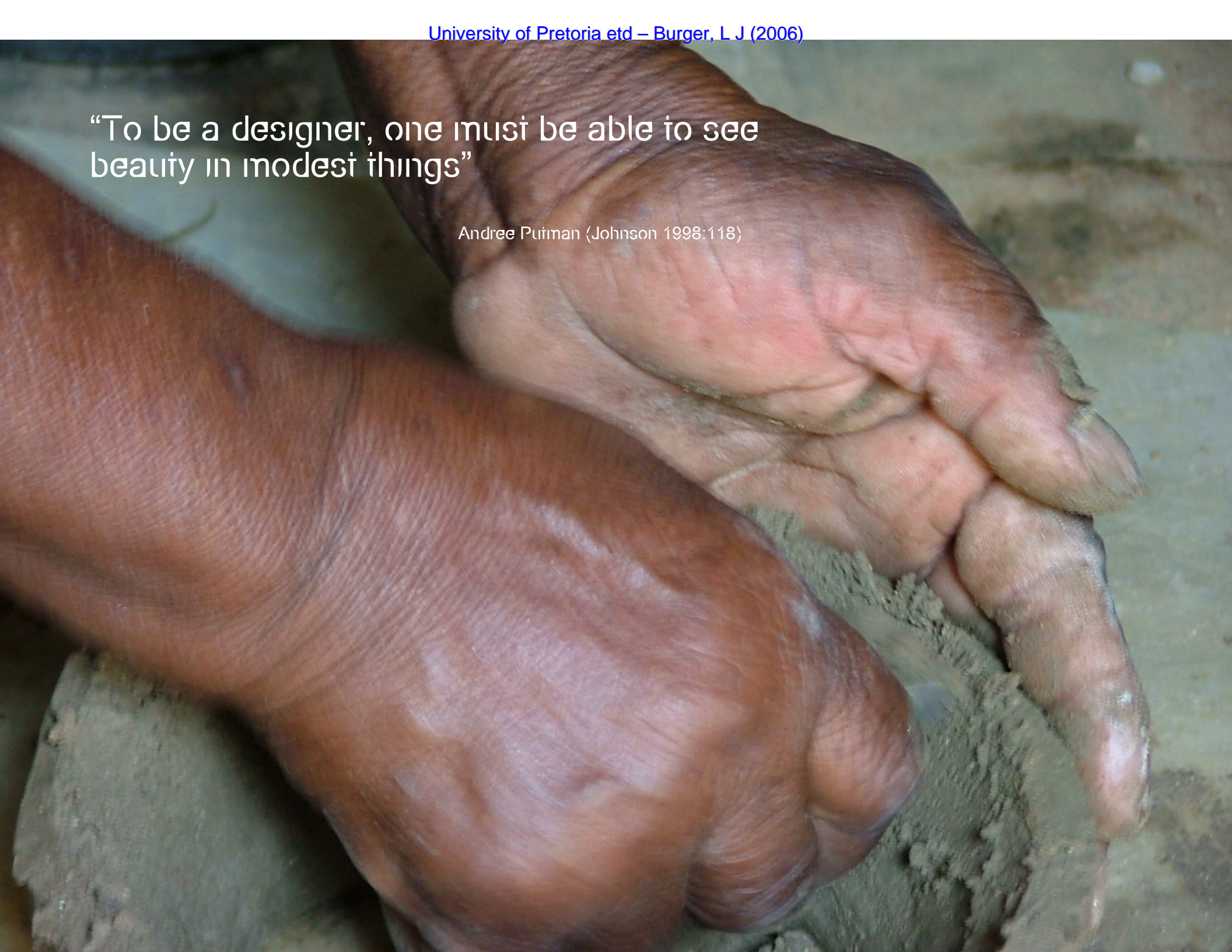


“To be a designer, one must be able to see
beauty in modest things”

Andree Putman (Johnson 1998:118)



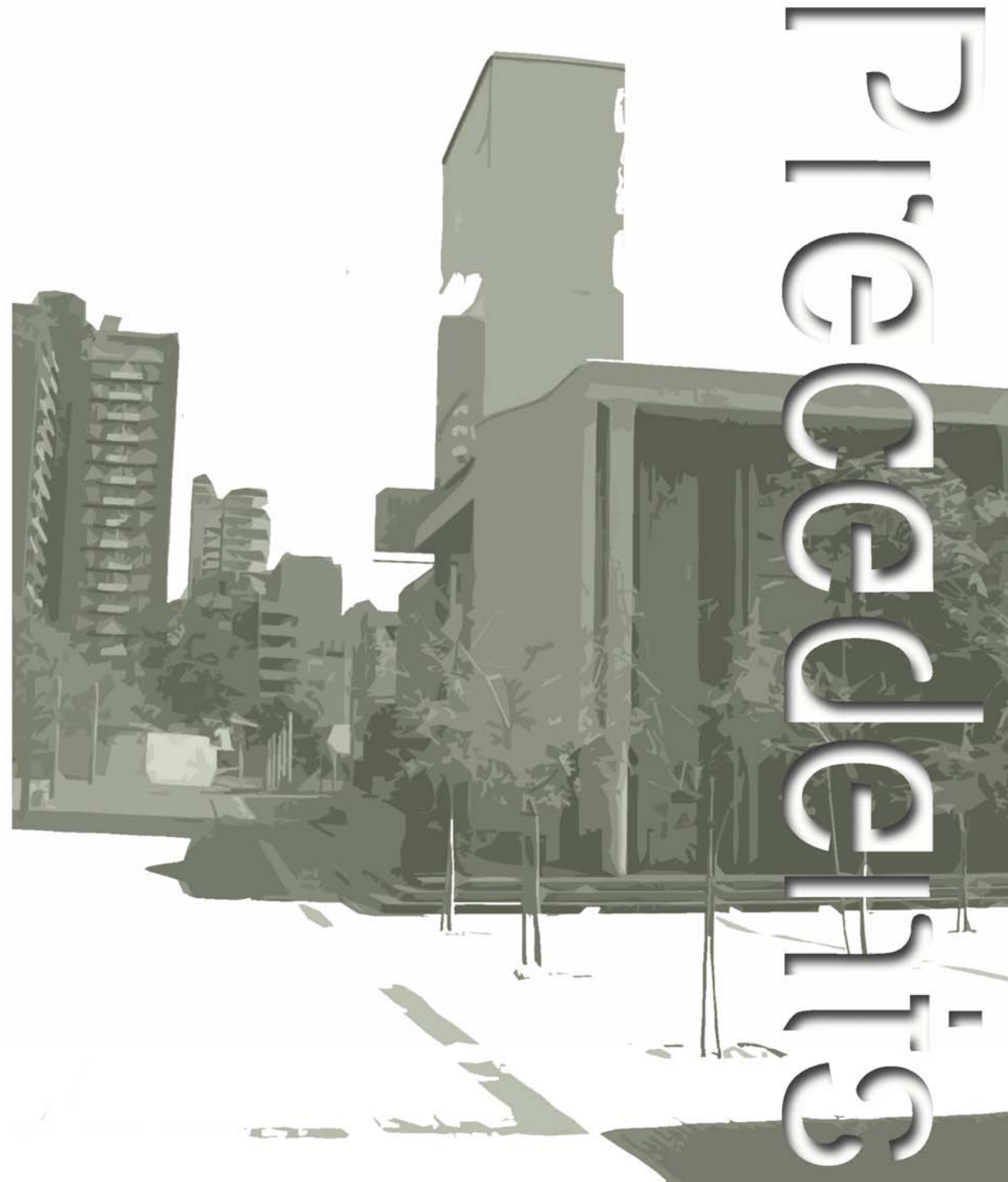
G

Precedent studies

Introduction

G. 1	Constitution Court and Constitution Hill	70
G. 2	Red Location Museum	71
G. 3	Metro Mall Transport Facility and Traders Market	71
G. 4	Baragwanath Public Transport Interchange and Traders market	73
G. 5	Phillipi Public Transport Interchange	74

Conclusion



Introduction

The following precedents were considered for their ability to integrate with the surrounding environments' cultural, aesthetical and physical aspects. These precedents are South African examples of design that suits the individual needs of the specific surroundings. The final design proposal may not include the specific functions accommodated by the precedents, but they form the basis from which issues like circulation, character, milieu, symbolism, space, structure, operation, connection between design and community, heritage and culture can be resolved. The discussed transport interchanges can provide invaluable information on aspects of the chosen scenario, the development in Saulspoort, like the continuity of movement, assembly of people and the intense amount of interactions in a limited time period. The cell structure of Saulspoort (see Fig. B.11) inherits a very different quality of movement and gathering than the following precedents do, it is much slower and free, and the spaces are to some degree trapped within the circulation. This is where projects like the constitutional Court and Constitution Hill: Johannesburg, and Red Location Museum: Port Elizabeth, can aid in portraying the identity of a place and community.

Constitution Court and Constitution Hill

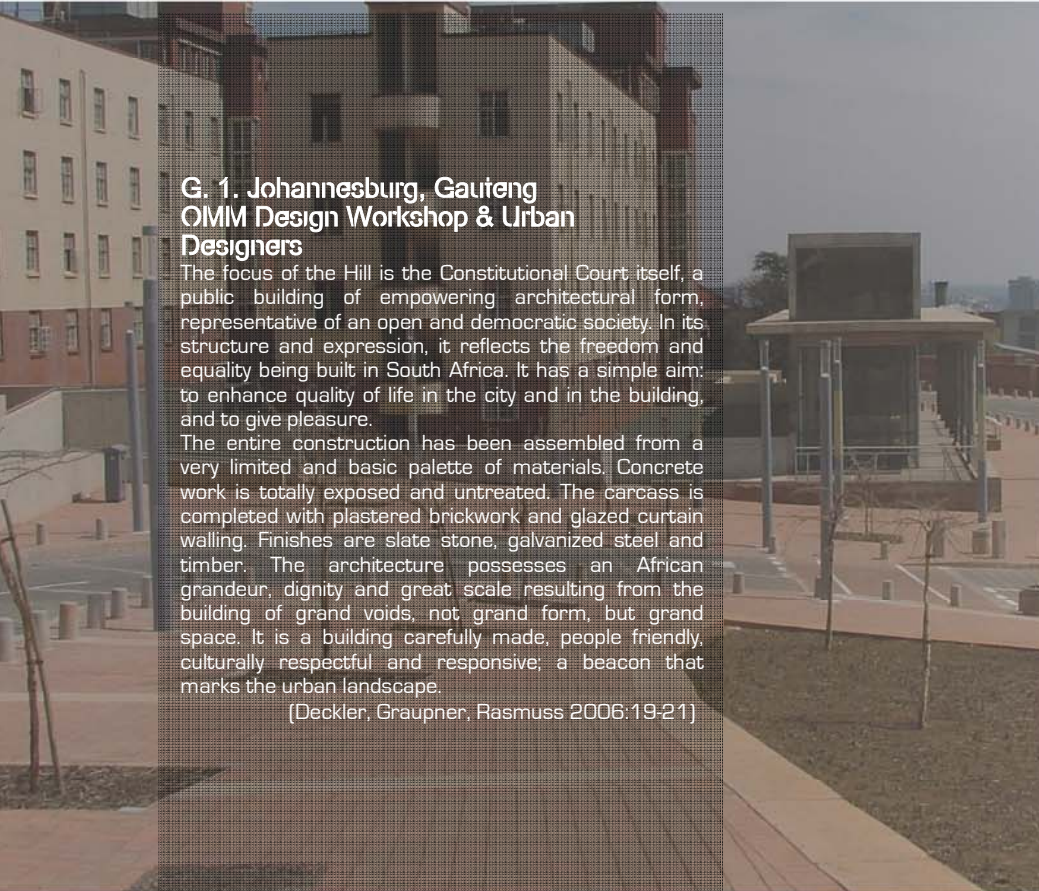
Figure G.1

G. 1. Johannesburg, Gauteng OMM Design Workshop & Urban Designers

The focus of the Hill is the Constitutional Court itself, a public building of empowering architectural form, representative of an open and democratic society. In its structure and expression, it reflects the freedom and equality being built in South Africa. It has a simple aim: to enhance quality of life in the city and in the building, and to give pleasure.

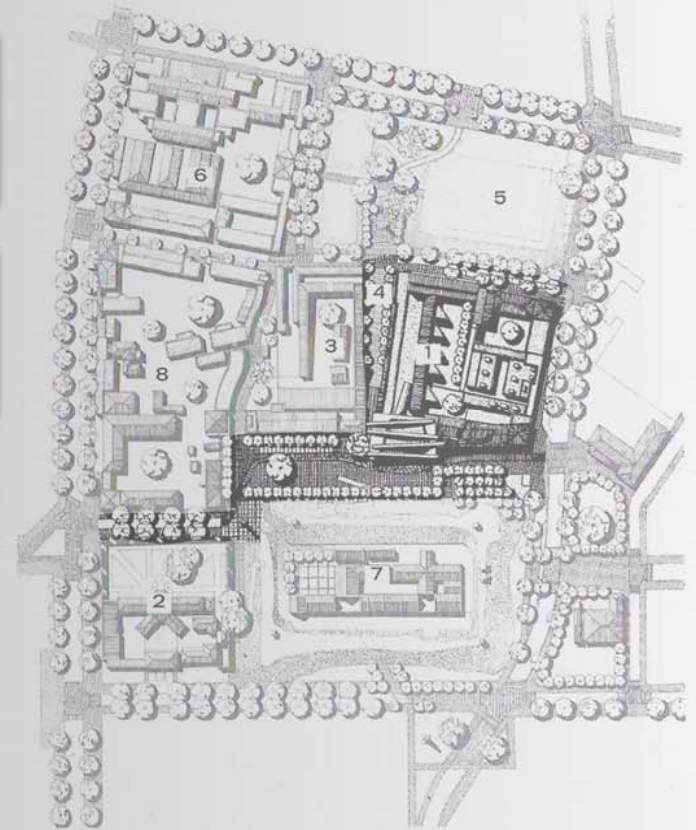
The entire construction has been assembled from a very limited and basic palette of materials. Concrete work is totally exposed and untreated. The carcass is completed with plastered brickwork and glazed curtain walling. Finishes are slate stone, galvanized steel and timber. The architecture possesses an African grandeur, dignity and great scale resulting from the building of grand voids, not grand form, but grand space. It is a building carefully made, people friendly, culturally respectful and responsive; a beacon that marks the urban landscape.

[Deckler, Graupner, Rasmuss 2006:19-21]



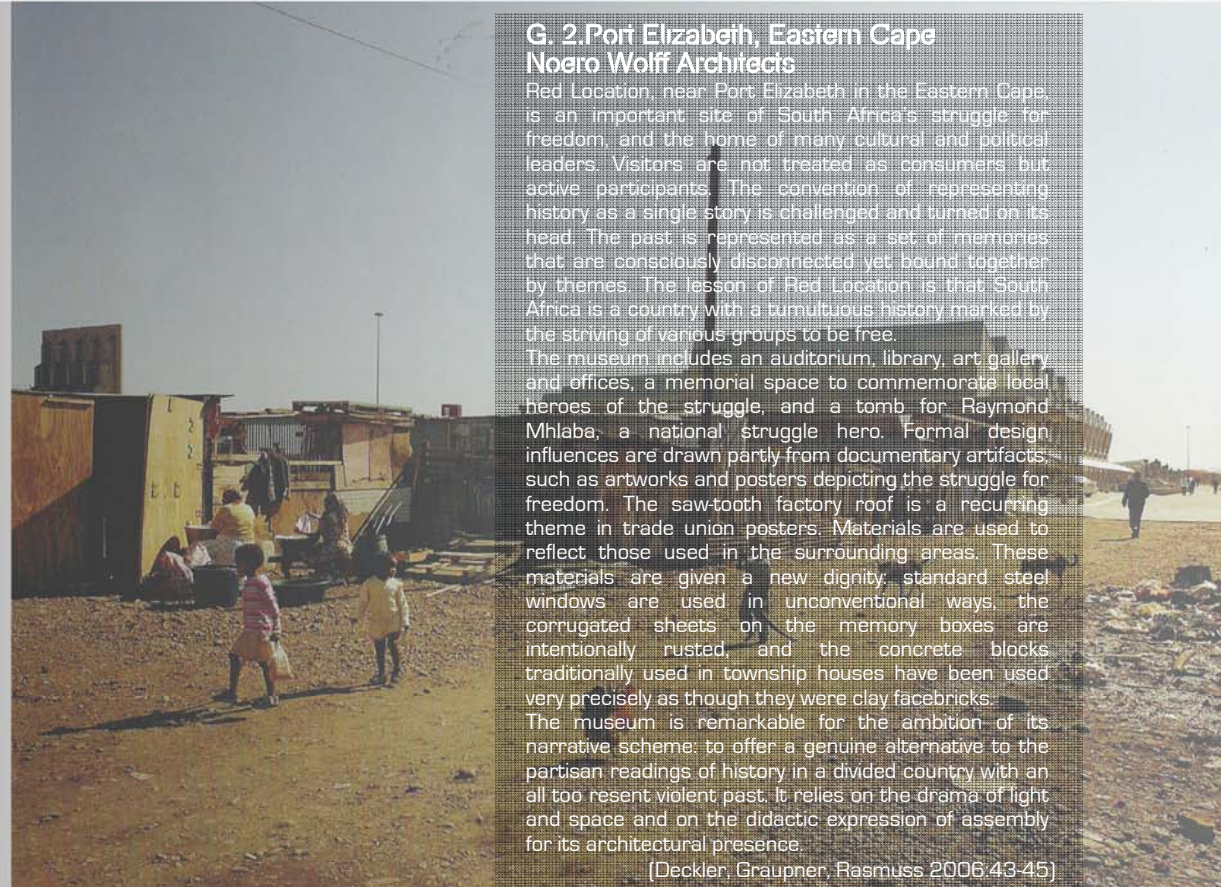
Site plan

1. New Constitutional Court
2. Women's Jail
3. Section 4 and 5 prisons
4. Great African Steps
5. Recreation ground
6. Queen Victoria Hospital
7. Old Fort
8. Proposed mixed-use development



Red Location Museum

Figure G.2



G. 2. Port Elizabeth, Eastern Cape Noero Wolf Architects

Red Location, near Port Elizabeth in the Eastern Cape, is an important site of South Africa's struggle for freedom, and the home of many cultural and political leaders. Visitors are not treated as consumers but active participants. The convention of representing history as a single story is challenged and turned on its head. The past is represented as a set of memories that are consciously disconnected yet bound together by themes. The lesson of Red Location is that South Africa is a country with a tumultuous history marked by the striving of various groups to be free.

The museum includes an auditorium, library, art gallery, and offices, a memorial space to commemorate local heroes of the struggle, and a tomb for Raymond Mhlaba, a national struggle hero. Formal design influences are drawn partly from documentary artifacts, such as artworks and posters depicting the struggle for freedom. The saw-tooth factory roof is a recurring theme in trade union posters. Materials are used to reflect those used in the surrounding areas. These materials are given a new dignity: standard steel windows are used in unconventional ways, the corrugated sheets on the memory boxes are intentionally rusted, and the concrete blocks traditionally used in township houses have been used very precisely as though they were clay facebricks.

The museum is remarkable for the ambition of its narrative scheme: to offer a genuine alternative to the partisan readings of history in a divided country with an all too resent violent past. It relies on the drama of light and space and on the didactic expression of assembly for its architectural presence.

[Deckler, Graupner, Rasmuss 2006:43-45]

Metro Mall Transport Facility and Traders Market

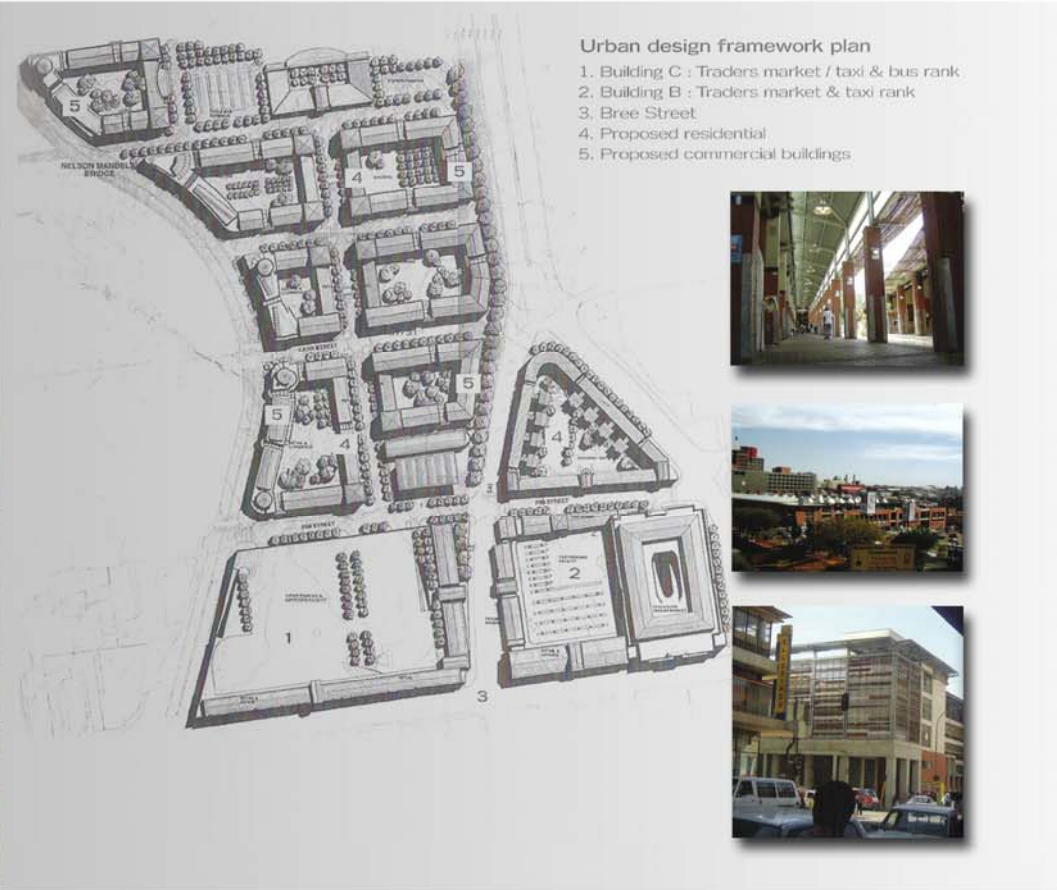
Figure G.3

G. 3. Johannesburg, Gauteng Urban Solutions Architects and Urban Designers

With the Metro Mall development, a new building type has been developed that takes cognizance of the needs of the taxi industry and the informal street traders who operate across the inner city. Metro Mall is designed to provide a rank for 25 buses serving 35 different routes, holding facilities for a total of 2000 taxi's and sufficient ranking and loading space. A further 800 trading stalls and retail shops have been provided for the estimated 150,000 commuters who use the facility daily.

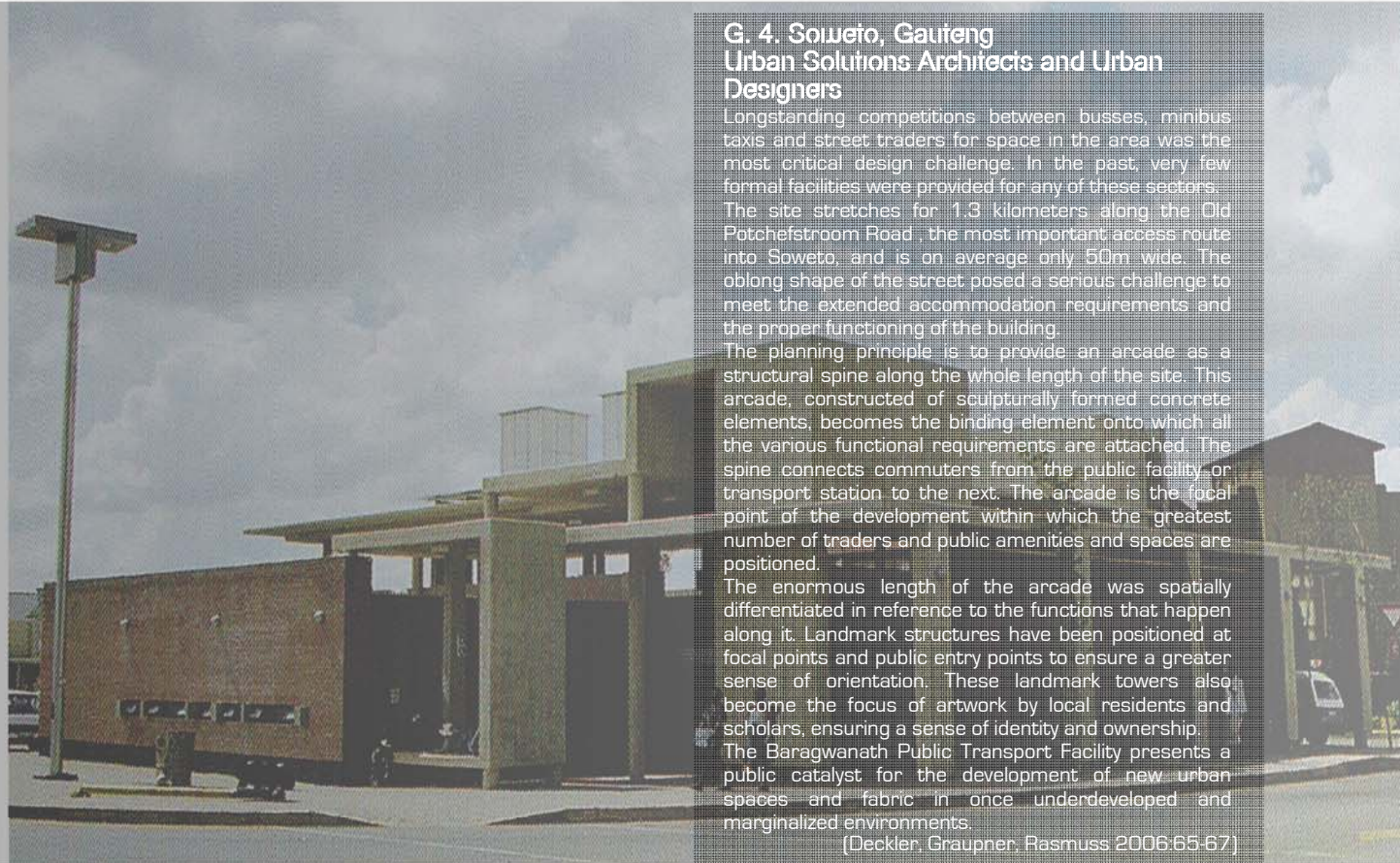
Beyond the specifics of accommodation and the logistics of vehicular and pedestrian movement within the buildings, Metro Mall is primarily designed around the urban principles that informed the original development framework: making connections with the surrounding city fabric; completing the street grid to enable continuity of movement; supporting public mobility via various transport modes; promoting mixed use and urban opportunities; acknowledging the street as a public space; and allowing equal opportunity of access and freedom of movement.

[Däckler, Graupner, Rasmuss 2006:61-63]



Baragwanath Public Transport Interchange and Traders market

Figure G.4



G. 4. Soweto, Gauteng Urban Solutions Architects and Urban Designers

Longstanding competitions between busses, minibus taxis and street traders for space in the area was the most critical design challenge. In the past, very few formal facilities were provided for any of these sectors.

The site stretches for 1.3 kilometers along the Old Potchefstroom Road, the most important access route into Soweto, and is on average only 50m wide. The oblong shape of the street posed a serious challenge to meet the extended accommodation requirements and the proper functioning of the building.

The planning principle is to provide an arcade as a structural spine along the whole length of the site. This arcade, constructed of sculpturally formed concrete elements, becomes the binding element onto which all the various functional requirements are attached. The spine connects commuters from the public facility or transport station to the next. The arcade is the focal point of the development within which the greatest number of traders and public amenities and spaces are positioned.

The enormous length of the arcade was spatially differentiated in reference to the functions that happen along it. Landmark structures have been positioned at focal points and public entry points to ensure a greater sense of orientation. These landmark towers also become the focus of artwork by local residents and scholars, ensuring a sense of identity and ownership.

The Baragwanath Public Transport Facility presents a public catalyst for the development of new urban spaces and fabric in once underdeveloped and marginalized environments.

(Deckler, Graupner, Rasmuss 2006:65-67)

Phillipi Public Transport Interchange

Figure G.5

Du Toit and Perrin in Association

The design of the Transport Interchange aims to establish an integrated public environment that can potentially release further public and private investment over time. It reinforces its urban nature by supporting a range of informal economies, existing traders, basic community needs and the needs of the urban commuter public.

The major public space is surrounded by an extensive verandah that supports different scales of trading activity. The elementary components of seats, taps, cooking platforms and trees have been made to form clusters of outdoor living rooms.

The buildings are conceived as straight forward urban building blocks, and the architecture is a neutral one of well proportioned and well detailed frames for the random infill of small businesses and their signage and service needs. It is a quite architecture made on a human scale and designed for amenity in a real and direct way. The buildings are driven by genuine 'usefulness' and yet have sufficient gravitas and delight to make them, by default almost, civic buildings in this desolate place.

(Deckler, Graupner, Rasmuss 2006:79-81)



Conclusion

It is evident that all the designs concerned with transportation must be made up out of robust materials to withstand harsh wear, but that the design does not have to be mundane as a result of the material choices. Another observation is that true magnificence lies in simplicity and links to the individual on other levels than merely what one can see and touch. Most spaces are significant because of the presence of other people, and the character of the design enhances or deters this experience. Design which is not connected to human feelings is somewhat fictitious. Complex ideas can be expressed in remarkably simple ways like the Constitution Courts' translucent building expressing our democracy and the use of monumental scale, light and space to communicate our struggle for freedom in the Red Location Museum. Even though the final design can not be a trade space due to the nature of the project, the type of craft and the culture, some form of trade space is necessary to enhance activity, tourist interest and provide an opportunity to the potters of the Pilanesberg to benefit from the development. It is apparent from the Phillipi Public Transport Interchange: Cape Town and the Metro Mall Transport Facility and Traders Market: Johannesburg, that this needn't be a jumbled add-on function that did not enjoy the attention it needed in the planning phases of the design. Thus even though there are limited craft opportunities other than pottery in the chosen scenario it is essential to provide an opportunity for trade in a space that does not impose a specific type operation.