4

ce

Pre
dents

Park(ing) Day

by REBAR» adaptability of public space

The projects aim was to provide temporary public open space in a privatized part of the city. "One of the more critical issues facing outdoor urban human habitat is the paucity of space for humans to rest, relax, or just do nothing. For example, more than 70% of San Francisco's downtown outdoor space is dedicated to the private vehicle, while only a fraction of that space is allocated to the public realm" (REBAR, 2005). Parking spaces in the city occupy precious real estate, whereby they are 'rented' out on an hourly basis by feeding the parking meter with coins. The parking spaces are then transformed into a positive form of public space (fig. 4.1). Park(ing) Day is an initiative that occupies metered parking within the city, turning them into a 'public park' for one day. It happens annually on the 16 September worldwide where in 2010 more than 800 PARKS where placed in 183 different Cities covering 30 Countries and 6 Continents. The project engages with the adaptability of space. The designed transformation of a 2,5x5,5m parking space is given back to the public realm, providing positive soft spaces within the city - demonstrating the potential of small scale 'everyday urbanisms' responding to the context of the city. The project also shows the adaptability and appropriation of the public realm in both function and space.

fig. 4.1 Park(ing) Day, REBAR adaptability of public space.

Casco-Land

by Sharp City» appropriation of public space

Cascoland is a project that takes artists, architects and designers, and concentrates their collective energy and creativity on public spaces (Cascoland, 2007). The aim of the project is to activate and animate public spaces within the city. In 2007 the project looked at the site of the Drill Hall in Johannesburg, where "... a structure that is not programmed in itself; but has the capacity to catalyze other programs, functions and other interventions, thus animating public space" was proposed for this site (Hofmeyr & kiratzidis, 2007: 32). The intervention design by A. Hofmeyr and D. Kiratzidis with SharpCity looked at the everyday activities of the site, while it proposed various possibilities of new activities that can be introduced (fig. 4.2).

The architecture responds to Crawford's concept of everyday urbanism (2008: 18), while considering the idea of Cruz and Gage's inhabitable interface (2009: 114). This intervention shows the manner in which local public space can be transformed through an unprogrammed architecture. Exposing how public space is appropriated to suit the needs of its users, function, events and activities accordingly.
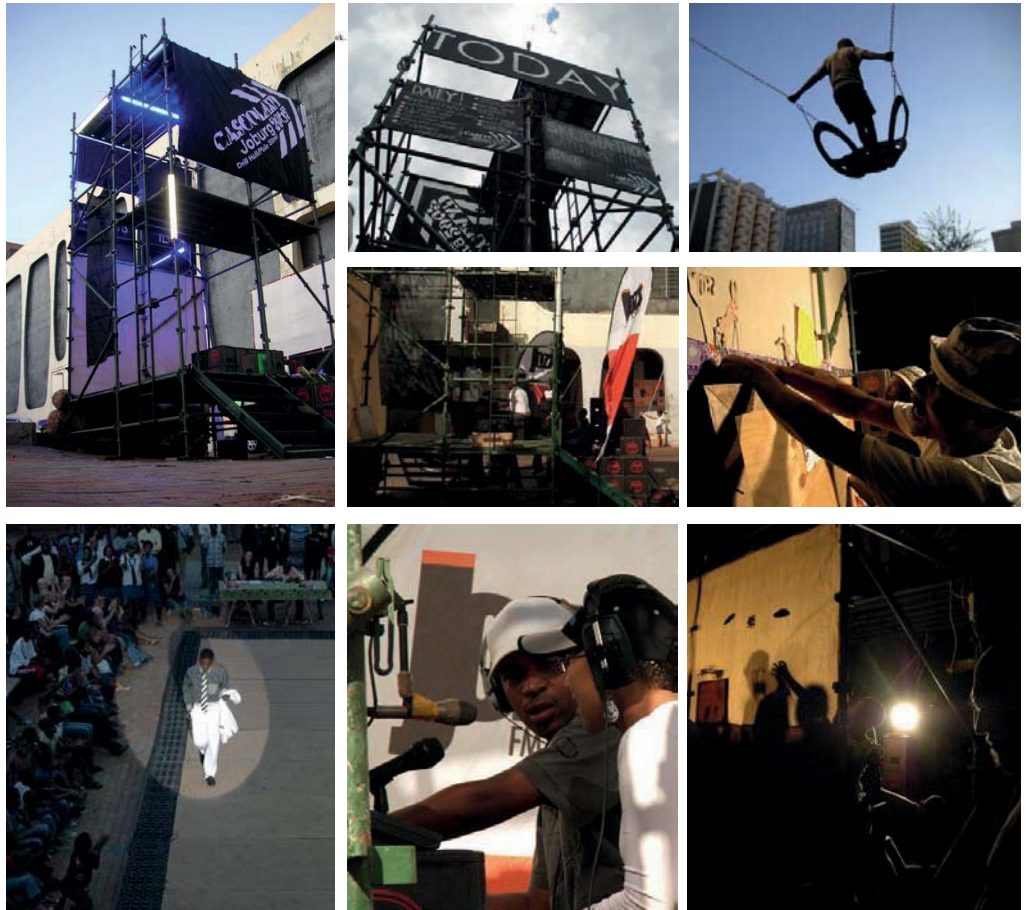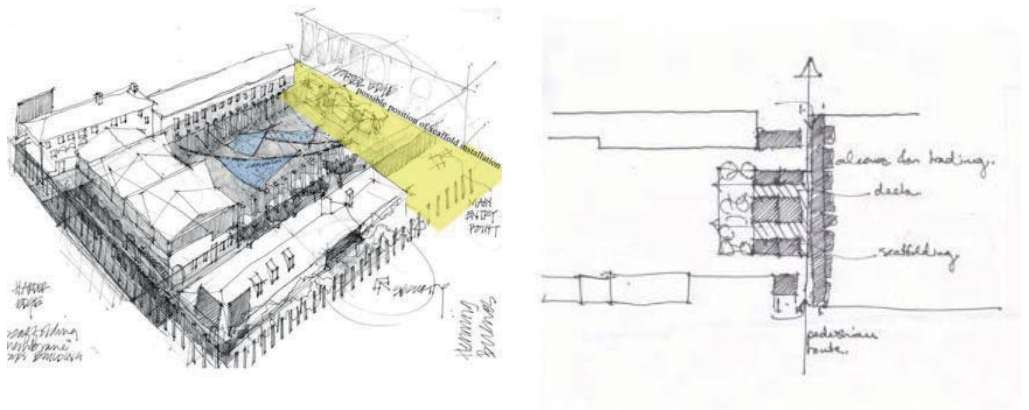
fig. 4.2 Casco-land, Sharp City appropriation of public space.

TKTS building

by P. Eastman» contextual public architecture

Situated in one of the busiest public spaces in the world, Times Square, the TKTS building serves the mundane function of selling discounted Broadway tickets. However the architecture forms more than just a ticket booth. Viemeister (2008) says that, "It goes beyond meeting the criteria [of the competition] and is even poetic, which is really hard considering the Times Square environment. It will become a landmark." The design philosophy behind the architecture stemmed from the fact that the original booth was one of New York's great gathering points, and a focal point for urban theatre, yet there was nowhere for people to sit and soak in the ambience.

Thus the architecture responds to the context by providing a space to sit and observe the everyday activities within Times Square, where the roof of the booth is terraced to create seating. Also the building frames the statue of Father Duffy, and provides and urban edge to the space. In a sense the buildings form a type of public infrastructure supporting the public space of Times Square (fig. 4.3).
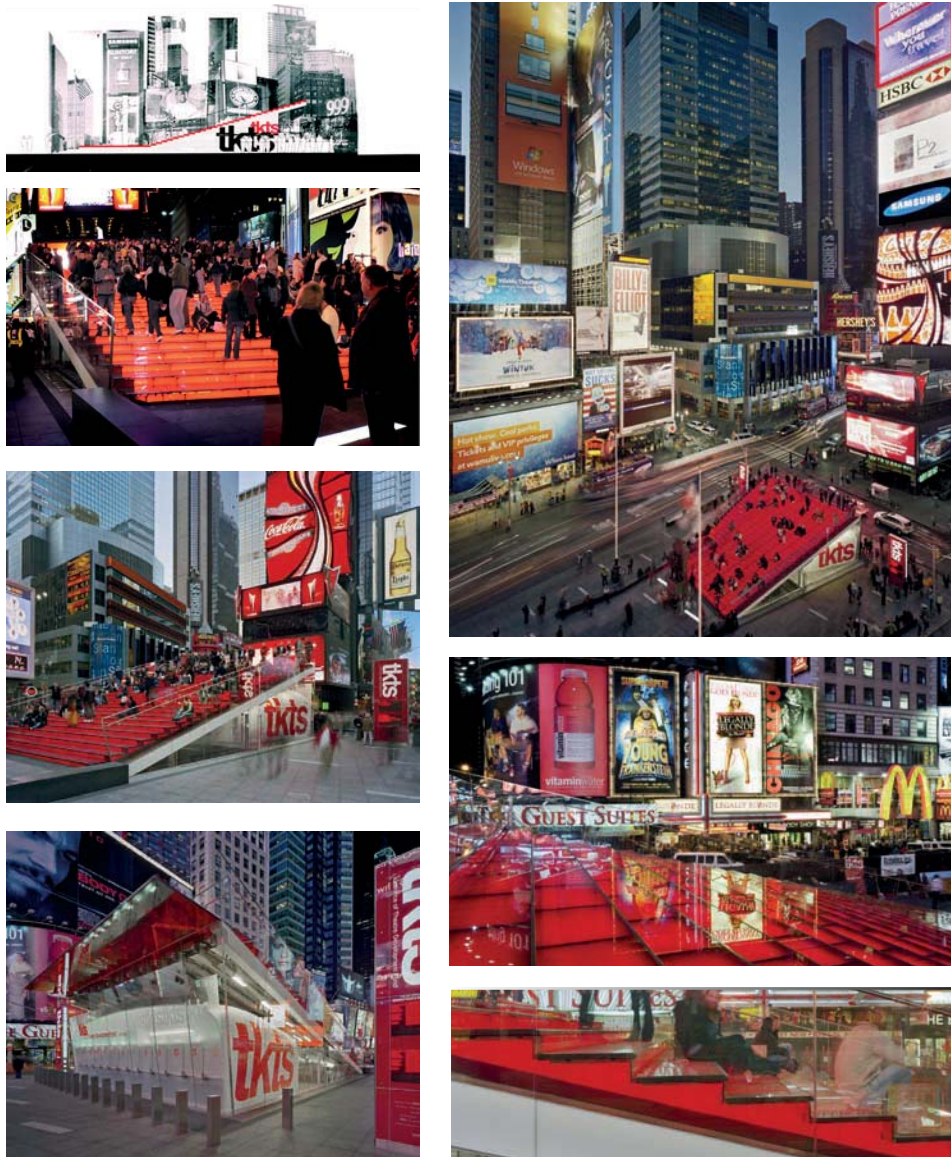
fig. 4.3 TKTS building, P. Eastman contextual public architecture

----

Parc de la Villette / Magnets

by B. Tschumi / C. Price» public infrastructure and planning

Parc de la Villette» B. Tschumi

Designed on the principle of point, line and surface Parc de la Villette challenges the idea of urban planning and architecture. These points are deconstructed follies, which are planned along a grid that is superimposed on the site and the urban context. The design of the follies allows for multiple programming of the site, almost becoming infrastructural. Here Tschumi introduces the ideas of "cross-programming, trans-programming and dis-programming, which challenge conventional building typologies.

Tschumi's design for Parc de la Villette allows various elements outside the realm of architecture to influence the design. The "park" also follows a deconstructive approach, were the boundaries between architecture, philosophy and literature are blurred. This allowed an approach which is heavily entrenched in meaning. Events were designed instead of defining a form or structure, in that sense Tschumi challenges the idea of a park, and develops the concept of an 'urban park'. Instead of creating a formal language for the 'function' of a park, events and experience of space were the design for the park, which questions the idea of a park typology (fig. 4.4). This approach opens the design to criticism of its validity, because the theory followed may not be accepted by all. However the theory also gives the design meaning and justification, it also makes the space more than just architecture.
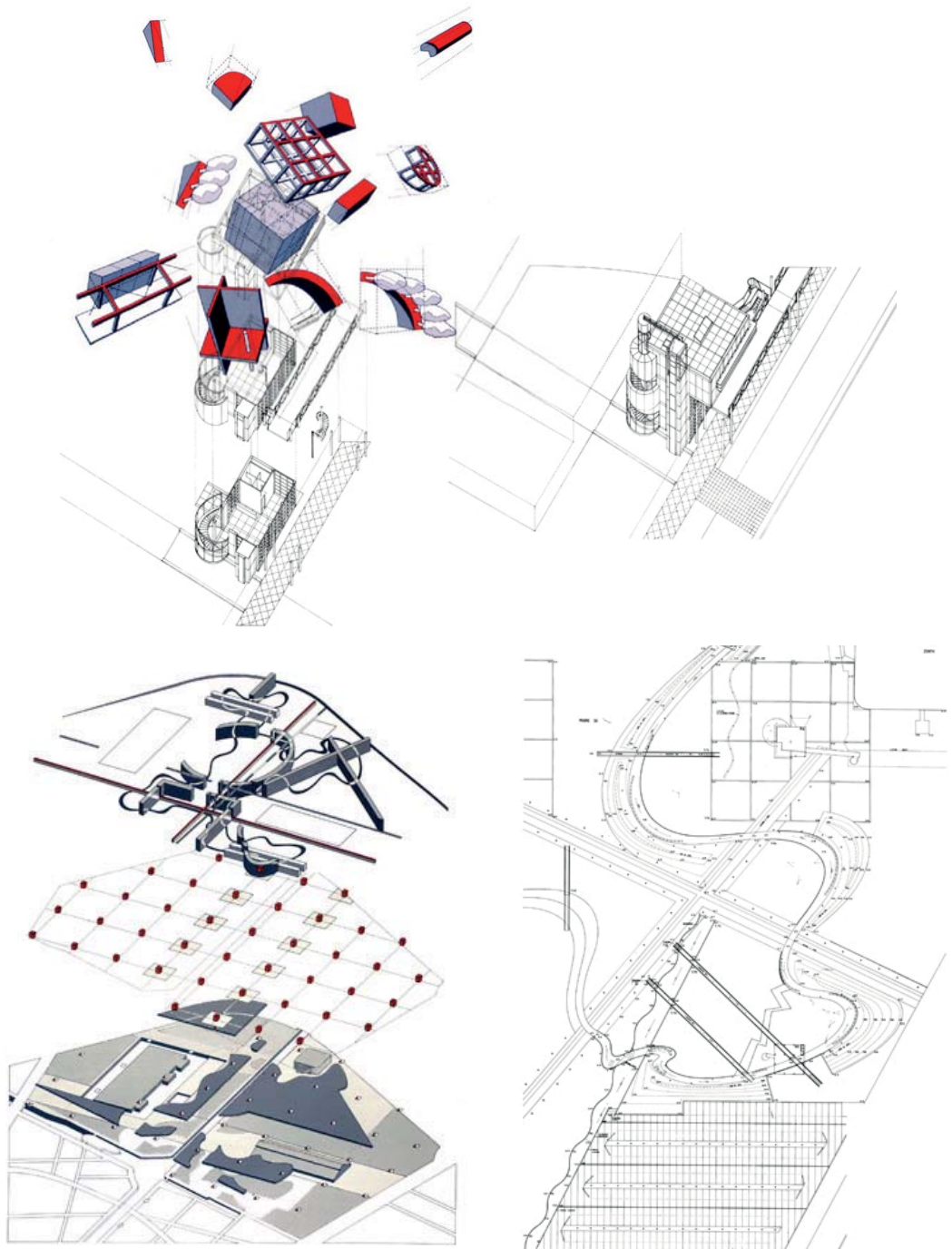
fig. 4.4 Parc de la Vilette, B. Tschumi public infrastructure and planning

----

Magnets» C. Price

'Magnets' by Cedric Price gives insight into an alternative approach. Magnets proposes a series of short life structures, to be funded by local authorities, which would be used to set up new kinds of public amenity and public movement. According to Price (Hardingham, 2003 :89) these structures would occupy space not usually seen as sites available to the public such as air space above roads, streets, parks, lakes and railways. They are designed to generate new kinds of access, views, sanctuary, safety and delight. They are designed to "overload" underused or misused sites, to make them more delightful and playful (Hardingham, 2003: 89) (fig.4.5).

This concept opens up the possibilities of architecture, where the building allows itself to do more, better rooted to its context and simultaneously light-hearted. These two projects show a varying approach, one which is deeply rooted to its site, and another to its theoretical argument. Both these projects can provide lessons in a planning approach for the project, where the site chosen contains the need to be flexible as well as contextual.

fig. 4.5 Magnets, C. Price public infrastructure and planning

----

Yokohama International Port Terminal

by FOA» public architecture and policy

"Our proposal for the project starts by declaring the site as an open public space and proposes to have the roof of the building as an open plaza, continuous with the surface of Yamashita Park as well as Akaranega Park. The project is then generated from a circulation diagram that aspires to eliminate the linear structure characteristic of piers, and the directionality of the circulation"(FOA, 2005). The project investigates an uninterrupted and multi-directional architecture, rather than a gateway to flows of fixed orientation. Rather than developing the building as an object on the pier, the project is produced as an extension of the urban surface, constructed as a systematic transformation of the lines of the circulation diagram into a folded and bifurcated surface. These folds produce covered surfaces where the different parts of the program can be hosted (fig. 4.6).

The policy of planning and architecture thus become critical in the Yokohama International Port Terminal. The architecture is viewed as something fluid and responsive to the context rather than opposing it. The articulation of surface through its folded organization produces two distinct spatial qualities; the continuity of the exterior and the interior spaces and the continuity between the different levels of the building. In a similar manner this continuity of urban surface is critical at the site on the 'urban cavity' at Munitoria.

fig. 4.6 Yokohama International Port Terminal, FOA public architecture and policy