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4_01 LOCAL HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

1908

BHAMBADA REBELLION

Soldiers from Drill Hall deployed to capture and arrest chief Bhabhada who led one of the last wars of resistance against colonial rule until the formation of Umkhonto we Sizwe.

1914

LIMB FACTORY

When the First World War broke out, General Smuts made a historic decision to serve as allies with the British Empire. An artificial limb factory was housed in the Southern block of the Drill Hall, where prostheses were prepared and fitted for the many soldiers returning home with missing limbs.

1942

EL ALAMEIN

The East Wing of the Drill Hall became Command Headquarters for the Fifth Brigade Active, Citizen Force regiments which, under the Allies, served in Kenya, Abyssinia, North Africa and Italy. The reason for war was in defiance of rising fascism and imperial ambitions of Germany, Italy and Japan. Once a soldier's medical was completed at the Drill Hall, they reported at the Union Grounds from where they left by train for training.

1955

DREAMS & DECLARATIONS

The 1952 Defiance Campaign against the National Party's Apartheid ideals led the Congress Alliance to voice their aspirations for society by drafting and adapting the Freedom Charter in Kliptown. Alliance leaders were arrested and incarcerated in the Old Ford.





1956

TREASON TRIAL

One of the longest, most important trials in South African history opened at the Drill Hall, the only venue big enough to accommodate such a large number of accused, who were at first ushered into a large wire cage in the centre of the room, surrounded by armed guards. The truck used to transport the accused was called the 'singing box' by newspapers as the 156 accused sang struggle songs at the top of their lungs when transported through Johannesburg.

1970

TOTAL ONSLAUGHT

The Apartheid government became more and more concerned with a Communist threat in South-Africa from which Total Onslaught' was a key phrase used during this time of unrest, secrecy and escalating violence. The Security Amendment Act was implemented, increasing the powers of the Minister of Justice, and declared a large number of organisations illegal as well as prohibit publications, outlawed gatherings, placed stricter controls on movement etc.

1994

FILLING THE VOID

The rapid political change in South-Africa were reflected in the Drill Hall. In 1991 the Group Areas Act, Population registration Act and the Land Act was scrapped. A mass influx of people looking for employment and opportunity into Johannesburg is what followed. A harsh reality and chaotic state is what emerged in many city buildings, including the Drill Hall, where up to 350 families lived in makeshift shacks, without services or sanitation.

2004

PHOENIX

The rebuilding of Drill Hall finally began in late 2003. The large hall which housed the Treason Trial has been transformed into an open public space. Drill Hall is now a multi-functional place of memorialisation intended to promote the ideals of freedom and democracy.

1960

BATTLE OF THE BADGE

A dream of Afrikaner Nationalism realised - breaking away from the British Commonwealth, South-Africa was declared an independent republic. Citizen Troops, loyal to the crown and housed in the Drill Hall were displaced, by a new formidable army of the Republic, to huts in the Union Grounds. Military badges, uniforms and colours were changed and World War memorials were forbidden.

1970

ANGOLA BORDER WAR

The Drill Hall formed an important centre for the recruitment of young men into compulsory military conscription, where they collected supplies, had their first medical, and were marched off to Park Station for deployment to training camps and South-African borders.

1986

PEACE RIBBON

A group of women consisting of all races chose the Drill Hall as site of protest for peace. Pieces of coloured cloth were joined to create a continuous, big Peace Ribbon, which was confiscated and the women, who protested in silence, were arrested.

2001

CHAOS AND FIRE

In 2001 the chaos reached its peak, with a fire caused by a domestic quarrel, erupted destroying the East Wing of the Drill Hall. Johannesburg City Council proposed demolition which was strongly opposed because of the building's history. Instead it was to be redeveloped.

FIG 24 Local historical timeline composed by the author from Drill Hall archival material

ARCHIVAL IMAGES - PUBLIC SPACE AT SITE LOCATION

On 2 May 1888, a petition by the residents of Johannesburg containing a request for a piece of land for sport and recreation was considered by the Executive Council of the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek (ZAR). The request was granted and the lease signed on 3 March 1890, with the Wanderers Club (now in Illovo) taking over a piece of ground which was then known as Kruger Park. The site consisted of a block of stands where Johannesburg Park Station is located today, and is also close to the still existing Joubert Park (Latilla 2014: 1).

Just below Kruger Park and south of Joubert Park lies the Union Grounds. Johannesburg's first recorded cricket match, between the Witwatersrand Pioneer Cricket Team and a team from Heidelberg, took place here in December 1886. The Wanderers Cricket Club was formed in 1888 (Latilla 2014: 1).

The historic images on the opposite page indicate the three historic public open spaces of Johannesburg (Braamfontein) and Hillbrow: the Union Grounds surrounded by tall trees, the old Wanderers Stadium, Telephone Plane and the Victorian Joubert Park.

Since public open spaces contain very few physical structures, there is a risk that their heritage significance may be disregarded. As indicated in the urban framework, the author intends to reinstate disregarded historic open public spaces, and linking these spaces with the functions of the new urban vision.



FIG 25 [Johannesburg 1912 wordpress] Aerial photograph of Union Grounds



FIG 26 [Johannesburg 1912 wordpress] Aerial photograph Wanderers stadium



FIG 27 [Johannesburg 1912 wordpress] Cricket at the Union Grounds



FIG 28 [Johannesburg 1912 wordpress] Telephone plane

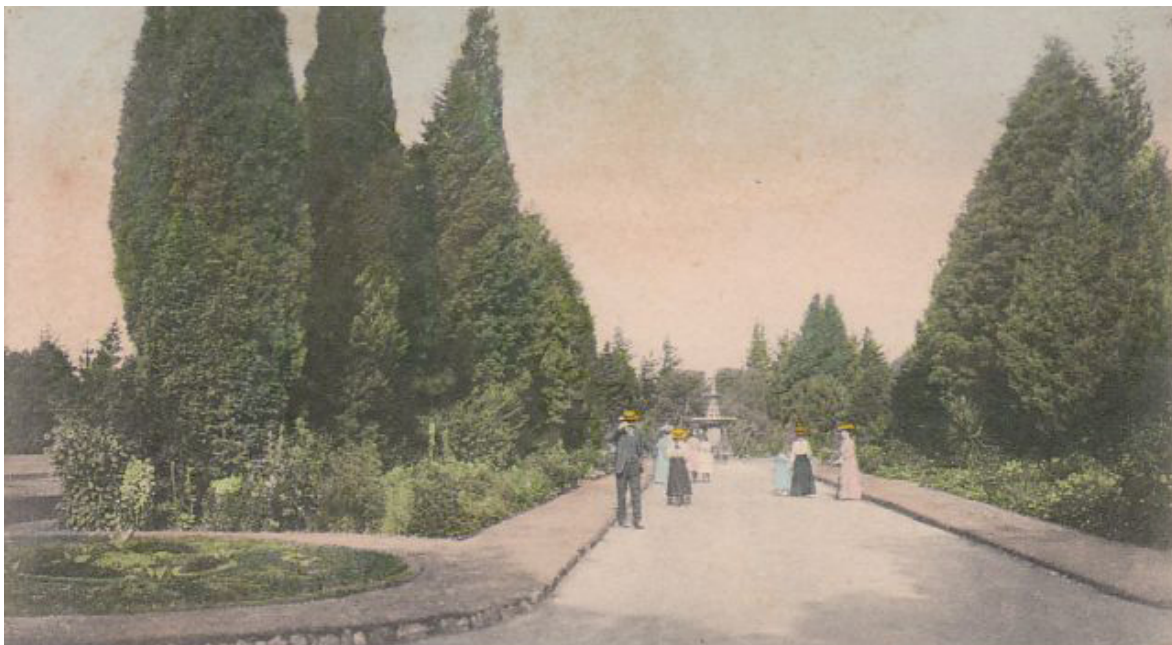


FIG 29 [Johannesburg 1912 wordpress] Early Victorian Joubert Part

4_02 HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

JOUBERT PARK & JOHANNESBURG ART GALLERY

The Johannesburg Art Gallery is the largest art gallery in Southern Africa with 15 exhibition halls, 4 pavilions and 3 sculpture gardens. The art gallery houses a collection of over 9000 valuable artworks by Picasso, Pissarro, Monet, Degas and Dali, as well as the work of various local artists such as Sekoto, Battiss and Pierneef. The building was constructed and opened in the Victorian-style Joubert Park as a public facility and cultural centre for the suburb of Hillbrow.

It is highly significant for its role as an established institute of culture for the residents of Johannesburg. It is of physical and artistic worth because of its location and size, and the workmanship, attention to detail, and material used in constructing the building. Although the building is receiving fewer visitors than before as, through the years, Hillbrow has built up a reputation for being crime ridden and dangerous, various community programs like artists' residencies and a crèche, clinic and library are maintained by the Gallery.

The building is under threat and its current state is deteriorating due to a lack of funding from the local government, and it relies on private institutions and sponsors to keep it afloat financially. The Meyer Pienaar section on the North side of the gallery is in decrepit state, with serious water damage being the main concern. The gallery is in need of general maintenance and possible reinterpretation or reinvention. The space as an institute of culture needs to provide for other means of cultural expression, like dance, performance or storytelling.

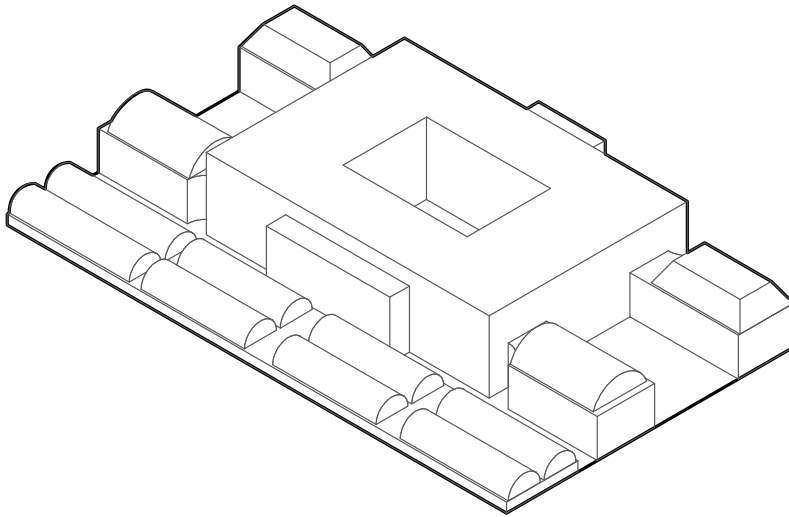


FIG 30 Johannesburg Art Gallery

OVERVIEW

YEAR REALISED:	1911
ORIGINAL ARCHITECT:	Sir Edwin Lutyens
COMMISSIONED BY:	Lady Florence Phillips
STYLE:	Neo-Classical
ADDITION ARCHITECT:	Meyer Pienaar Architects
USE (JAG):	Art Gallery
USE (JOBERT PARK):	Public Park, clinic, Crèche, Urban farming

HERITAGE PROTECTION:

The building is protected under Section 34 of the NHRA (25 of 1999) because it is older than 60 years.

DRILL HALL & THE UNION GROUNDS

The Drill Hall and Union Grounds are historically significant and of appreciable heritage value because of the role they played in history and the many connections all different groups of South-Africans have with the building and site. The reprogramming and renovation of the hall has made the complex an anchor in the community, as it facilitates events and positive everyday social interaction.

The Union Grounds were not only the site of the city market, but also of regular political and union-related strikes and protests. The need for people to access the inner city from the townships led to the construction of the Noord Street Taxi Rank. Developers saw economic opportunity and due to the municipality's struggle to control the informal market, Park Central Shopping Centre was constructed on the remaining part of the once flourishing public plaza.

One theory is that the heritage significance of the original park was ignored as there was no permanent structure erected on it. The Union Grounds are of high value because of its original purpose and history — open space for recreation, events, and public expression. It was neglected with the construction of the unsuccessful formal shopping centre structure that competes with the very successful and vibrant Noord Street informal market.

The Union Grounds should be reinstated for its original purpose as an open public space and a space for protest and events. The location is still suitable for these purposes, since it is in close proximity to the ANC Youth League headquarters, various labour union headquarters and other major political and transport nodes. The city being very densely populated makes public open space a precious commodity of which there is a shortage. The plaza/park should fulfil these needs in a new, suitable manner.

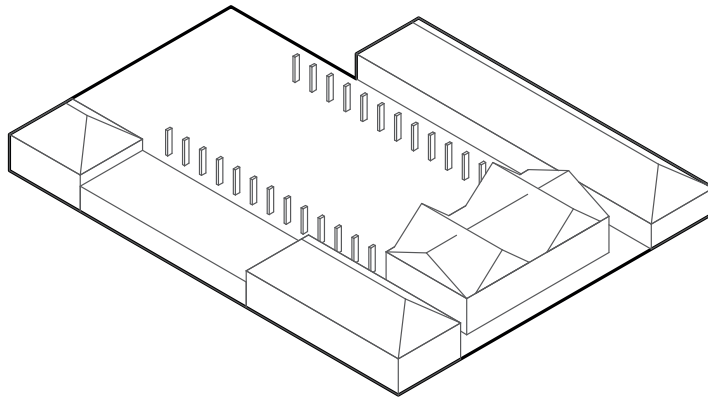


FIG 31 Drill Hall

OVERVIEW

YEAR REALISED:	1904
ORIGINAL ARCHITECT:	Unknown
COMMISSIONED BY:	South African Government under British Rule
STYLE:	Neo-Classical
RENOVATION ARCHITECT:	Michael Hart, Sue Krige
ORIGINAL USE:	British Millitary Barracks
CURRENT USE:	Library, clinic, Women's Centre, After School Facility, Bakery, Artists Residency (Experimental, sound and digital art)
CURRENT USE: (UNION GROUNDS):	Noord Street Taxi Rank, Park Central Shopping Centre
HERITAGE PROTECTION:	
The building is protected under Section 34 of the NHRA (25 of 1999) because it is older than 60 years.	

FROM SKETCH DESIGN PREPARED BY

SCALE 30 FEET

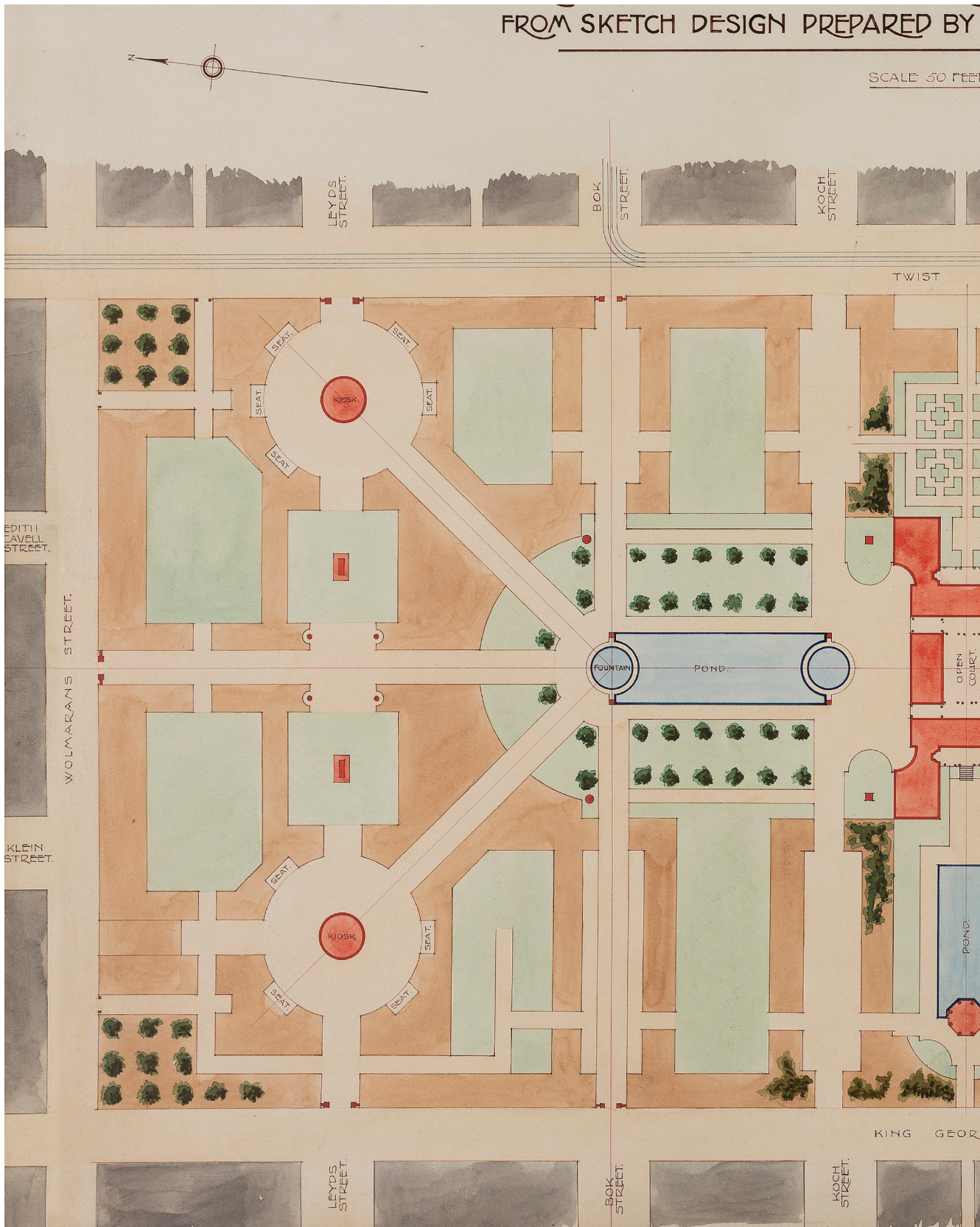
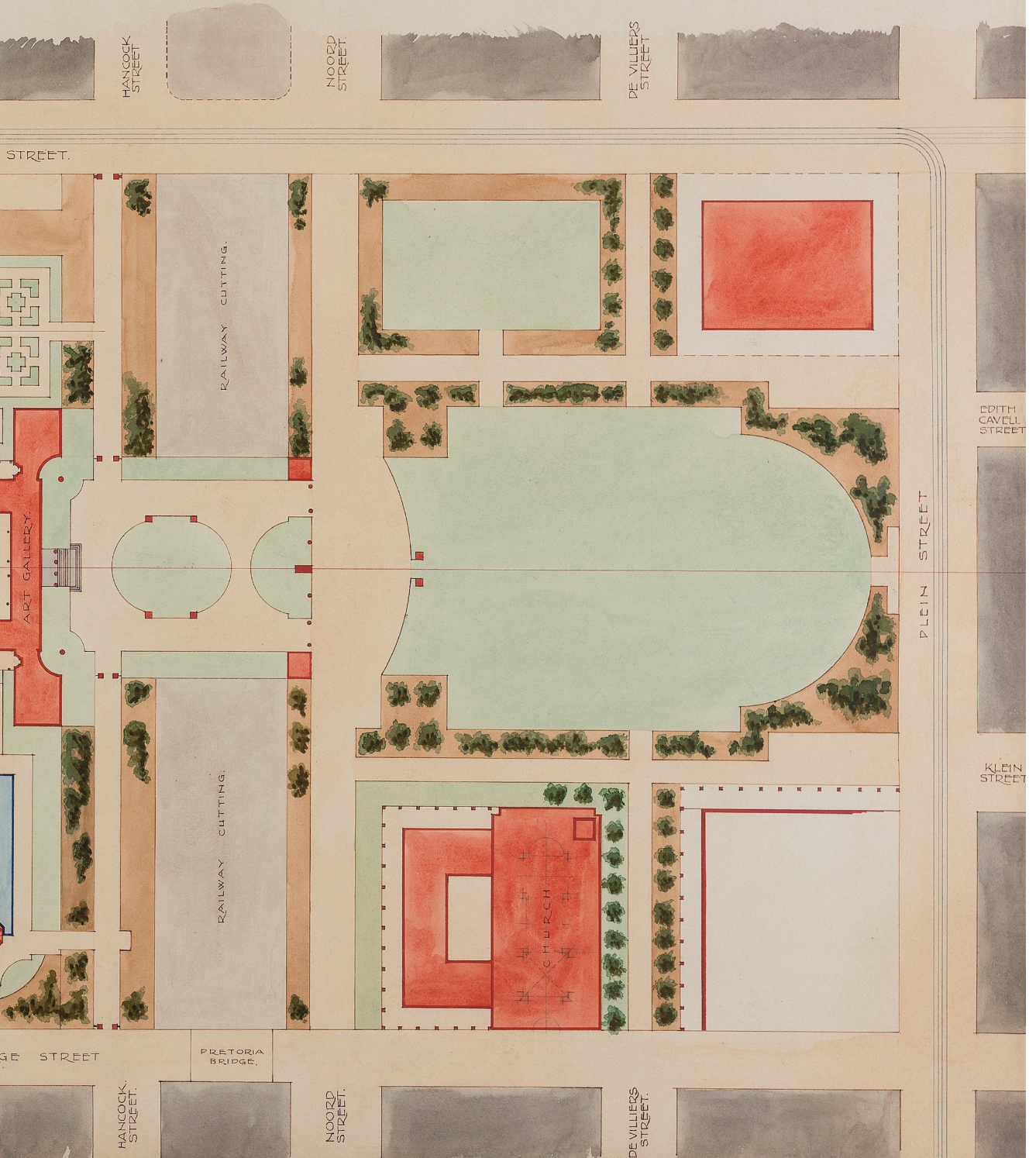


FIG 32 (Johannesburg Art Gallery Archives) Original site proposal by Sir Edwin Lutyens

SIR EDWIN L. LUTYENS F.R.I.B.A.

TO AN INCH.



05

SCENOGRAPHY

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 - CONCEPTUAL COLLAGE
 - THEORETICAL BRAIN-CHART
 - SITE / LOCALITY BRAIN-CHART
 - CULTURE BRAIN-CHART

- 5_02 STRATEGIES
 - THEORETICAL - TRANSLATING CINEMATIC SPACE INTO ARCHITECTURE
 - SITE / LOCALITY - CHORA SPACE,
 - CULTURAL - ADDING TO THE NARRATIVE

- 5_03 PROGRAM
 - ESTABLISHING TYPOLOGY
 - CLIENT PROFILE
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 - MORPHOSIS ARCHITECTS: 101 PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE
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- 5_05 *PARTI / SITE CONCEPT

5_01 CONTRIBUTING COMPONENTS SUMMARIZED

In order to retain clarity and focus all potential design informants, this section of the dissertation intends to summarize all the contributing aspects up until this point. From these elements, fundamental design intentions and strategies are formulated and represented in simple diagrammatic form. An Architectural program correlating with the three main research premises (theory, site and culture) is then formulated and relevant precedent studies selected. This section concludes with a Parti or site concept captured in a diagram of intention and finale.

The conceptual collage below was created at the early stages of this dissertation, and serves as point of assembly for this section.

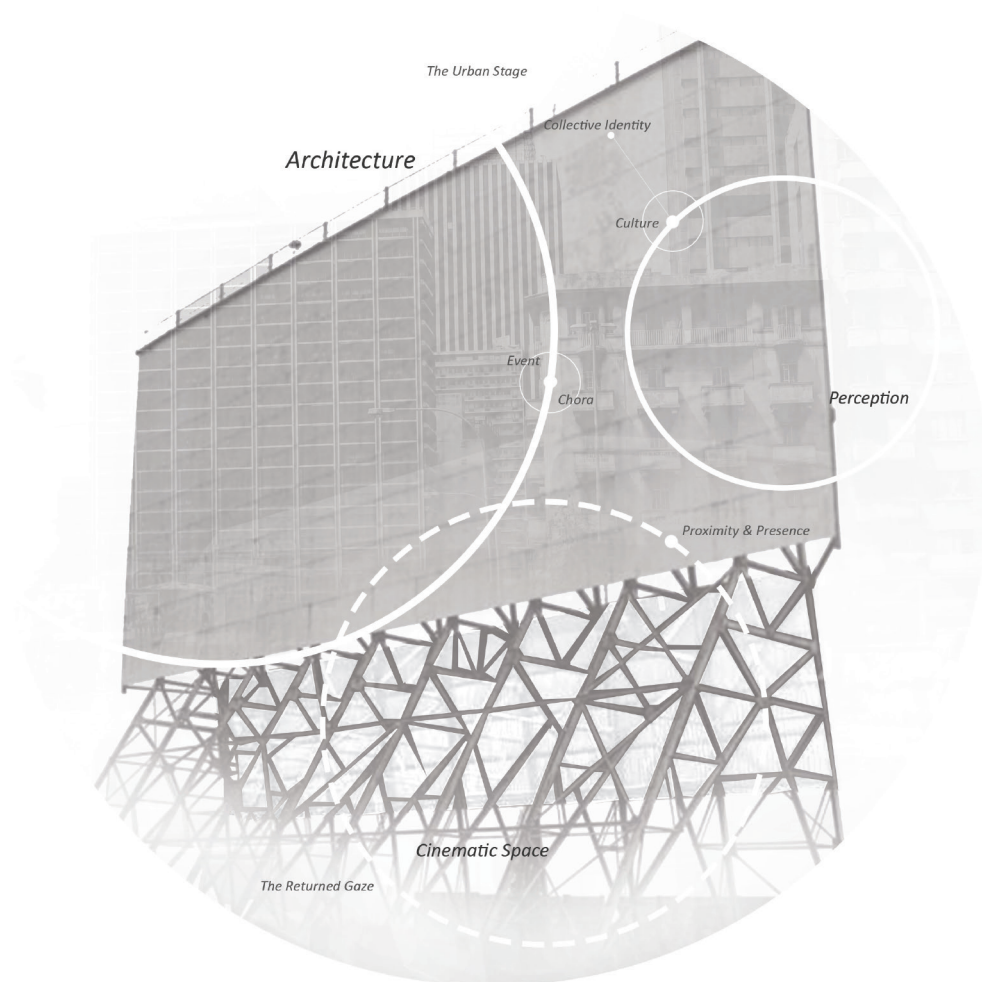


FIG 33 Contributing to the process, conceptual collage.

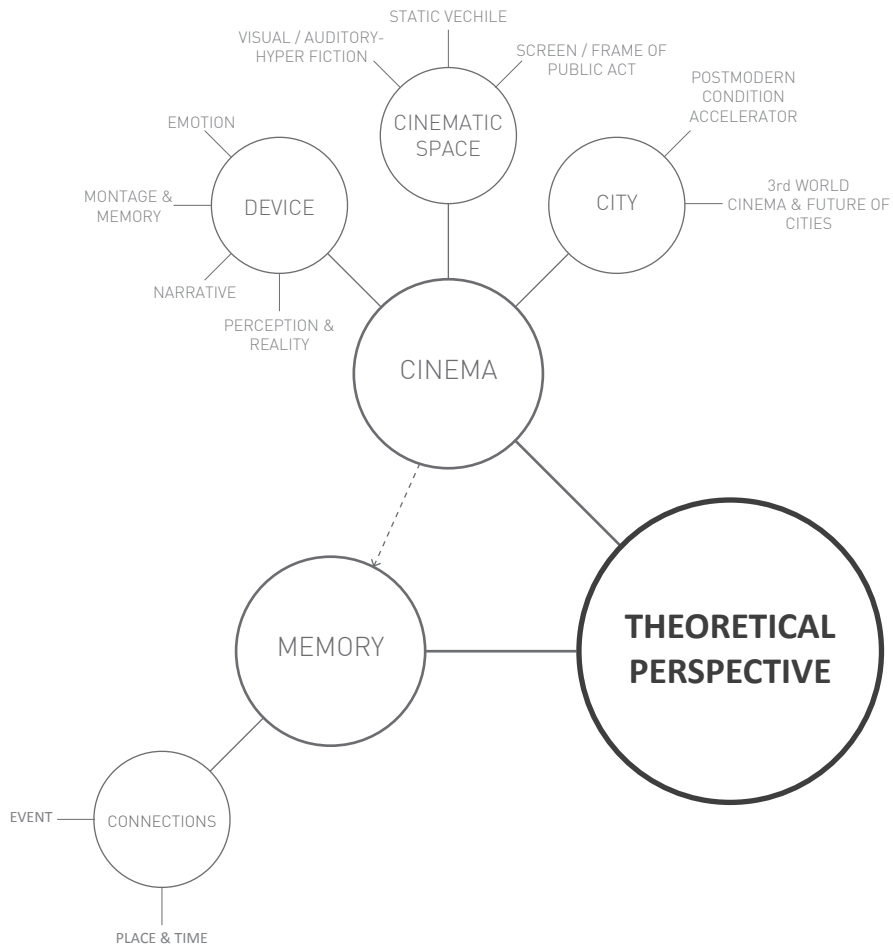


FIG 34.1 Theoretical Perspective summarized

Summary-diagram indicating elements of the literature study which were influential in the research process during the course of the year. The theoretical premise is composed of Cinema and Memory, which branches out into smaller aspects, all having influenced theoretical perspective.

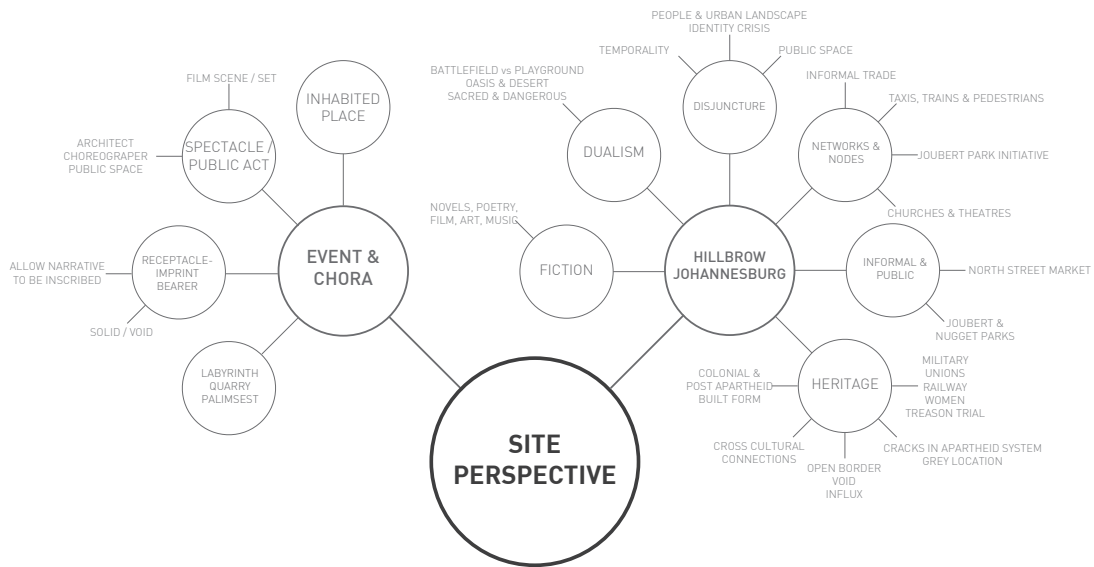


FIG 34.2 Site Perspective summarized

Summary-diagram indicating elements of the urban or site study which were influential in the research process during the course of the year. The site premise is composed of the character of Johannesburg and the importance of event and public performance on various scales. Aspects branch out into site specific characteristics and theoretical concepts such as Chora space.

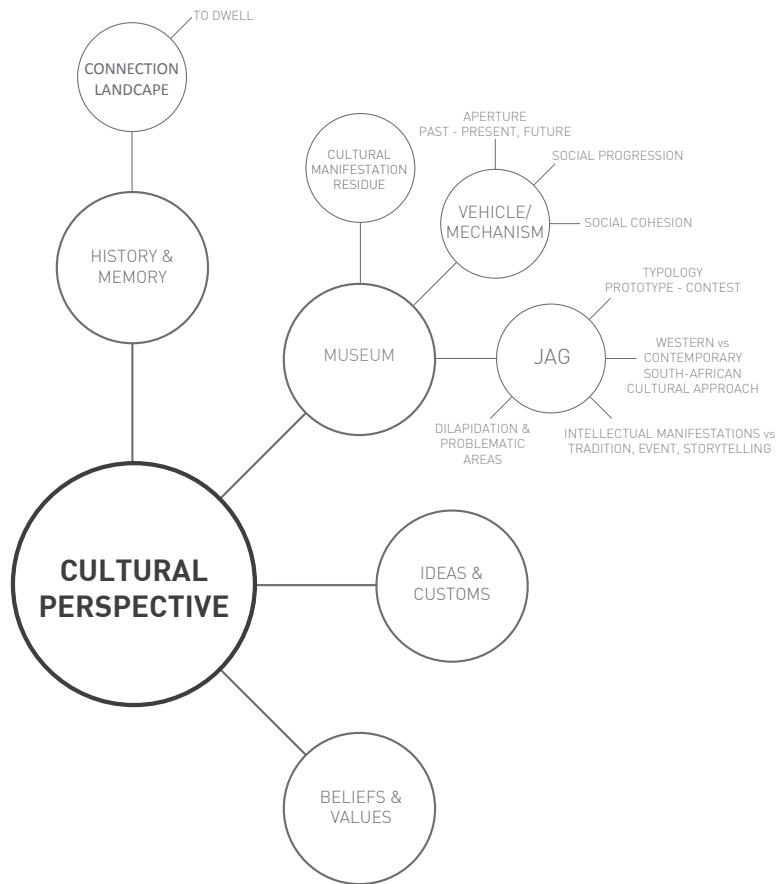


FIG 34.3 Cultural Perspective summarized

Summary-diagram which originally stemmed from contextual aspects (site perspective), and became a branch (solely dedicated to cultural aspects) influential in the research process during the year. These aspects started cross-polinating with the theoretical and site perspectives and contributed to the reinterpretation of a vessel of culture, which includes event as social element to culture.

5_02 STRATEGIES

THEORETICAL SYNOPSIS - TRANSLATING CINEMATIC SPACE INTO ARCHITECTURE

The study of cinematic theory organically led to the idea of making cinematic space, which proved quite a challenge; yet the various themes explored contributed to the process of digesting and comprehending the translation of a transient entity (the concept of film) into the physical embodiment of architecture (bricks and mortar).

Cinematic space can be interpreted in numerous ways. The author chose to interpret it as an entity with the possibility to accelerate the current paradigm of unification and reconciliation of not only people, but also the spaces they dwell in. The author argues that the Cinematic Gaze (a powerful phenomenon with the ability to raise awareness of the self and the surrounding context) can be architecturally implemented.

The diagrammatic process of what the author wants to achieve in designing the new intervention is summarized in the following 6 diagrams:

1. Opening up and framing the urban stage whilst creating a backdrop for everyday public performance.
2. Architectural voyeurism — an interplay between viewing and being viewed. Stimulating the Cinematic Gaze, to create enhanced spatial awareness in the city dweller.
3. Accentuating and reacting to specific existing conditions, by reflecting / absorbing them (memory, permanence, static vs transient, vibrant and incomplete).
4. Conceptualizing the Static Vehicle, embracing the urban flâneur.
5. The montage effect, rhythm, raising questions and noticing the immediate surroundings.
6. The programmatic element of visual and auditory stimulation. Recreational / artistic factors.

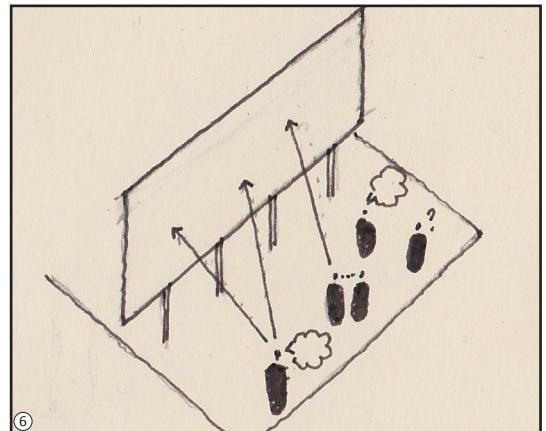
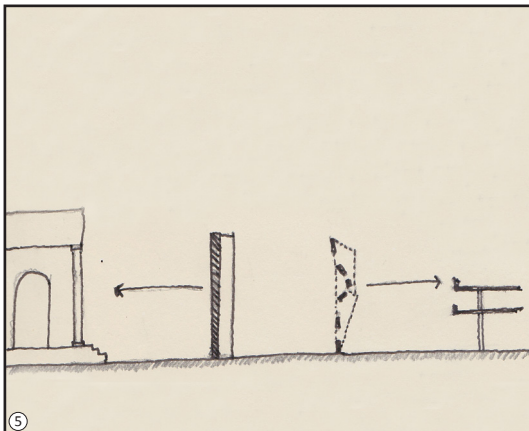
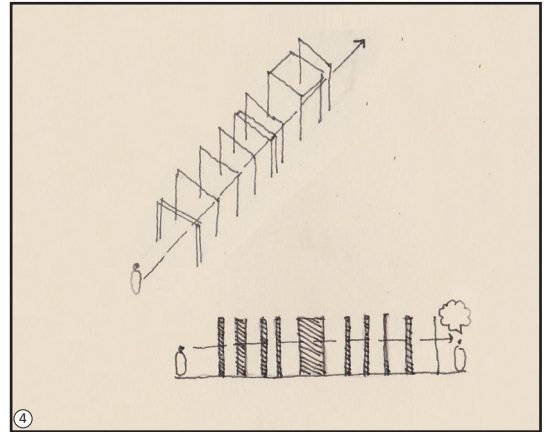
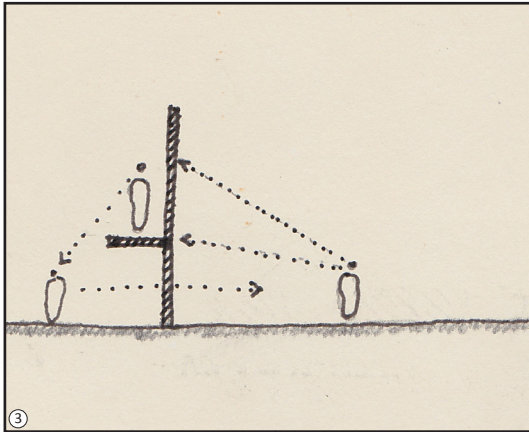
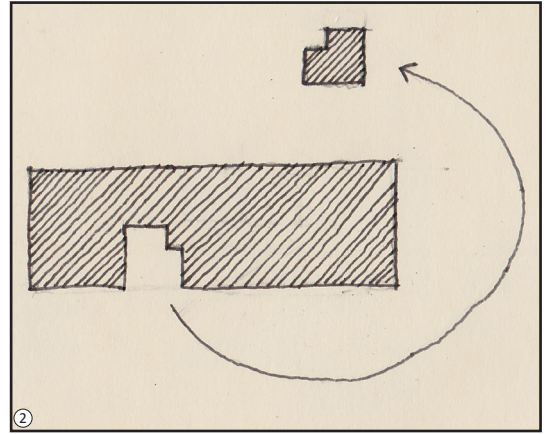
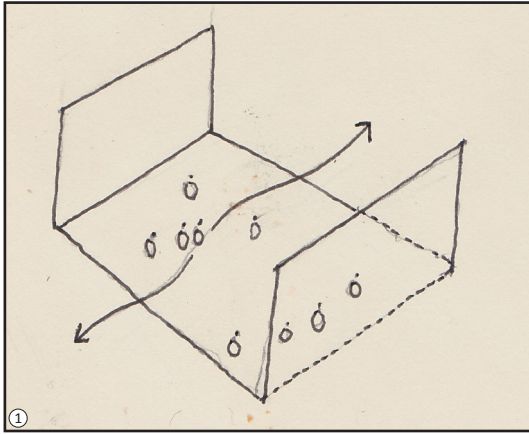


FIG 35.1 - 35.6 Design intention diagrams derivative from Theoretical Perspective

SITE SYNOPSIS - CHORA SPACE, RECEPTACLE OF THE EVERYDAY PUBLIC PERFORMANCE

The Greek term Chora translates as “place” in a number of different senses. It denotes that which you open to make “place” for some activity to take place in. It is something that is not merely platonic — it is the spacing or interval for everything to take place in, for everything to be inscribed in. In doing so, Chora becomes a receptacle and simultaneously an imprint bearer (Derrida 1997: 9-16).

The reinstatement of the Union Grounds holds great symbolic value in the sense that it becomes the reinstatement of a historic place for the expression of public voice. As the site explorations indicated that many of the historic places in close proximity to the chosen site (for example the old Jewish Schul) still resonate with the spirit of the past, the space possesses the potential to once again become a platform for the spectacle of the everyday.

Although public voice is still expressed, it has become displaced into the spatially claustrophobic streets where it is suppressed, and often disrupts the current flow of the city, both vehicular and pedestrian.

The strategy is thus to reinstate much needed public space by demolishing the Park Central Shopping Centre, an urban obstruction which is currently underutilized and which competes with the very successful Noord Street informal market. Although the Noord Street Taxi Rank is also located on the Union Grounds, it is a commodity of place and an important commuter node, and will consequently not be demolished as it contributes positively to the sense / character of place.

The diagrammatic process of what the author wants to achieve in designing the new intervention is summarized in the following 3 diagrams:

1. Creating openness and connectivity between the major role players at the Johannesburg Art Gallery (JAG), Noord Street market, Noord Street Taxi Rank and ANC Youth League building.
2. Reinstating forgotten and neglected memory space of heritage importance, such as the Union Grounds, and by doing so, creating a much needed receptacle of public voice and public performance.
3. Reacting on the most prominent programmatic needs on various scales: Noord Street market, the Drill Hall, and the Johannesburg Art Gallery.

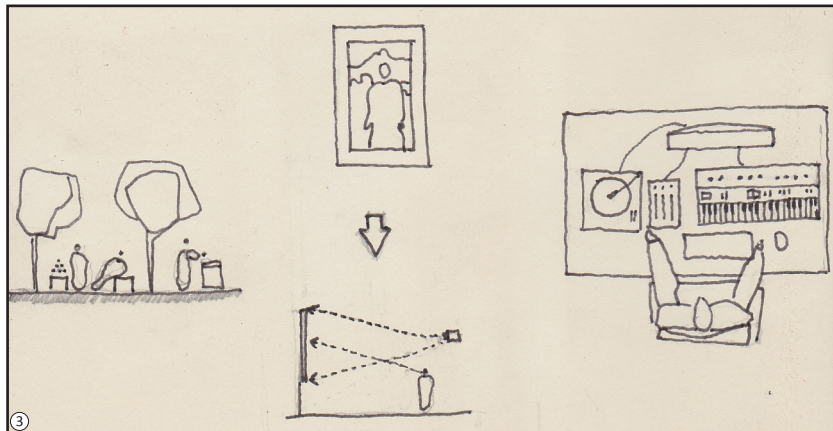
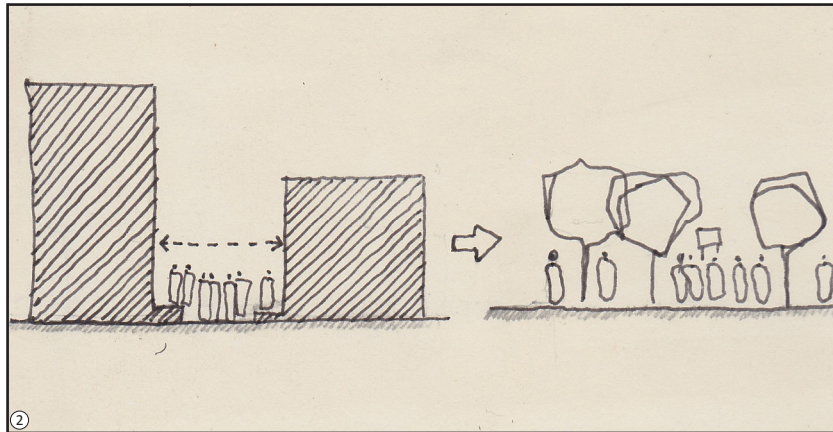
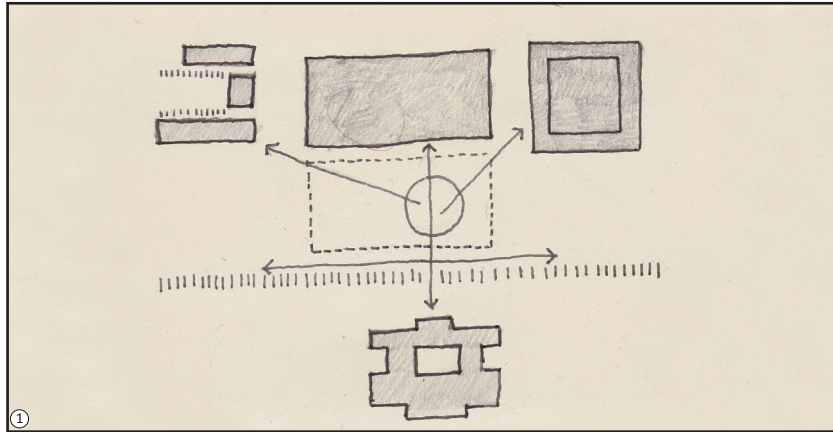


FIG 36.1 - 36.3 Design intention diagrams derivative from Site Perspective

CULTURAL SYNOPSIS - ADDING TO THE NARRATIVE

The socio-political transformation of South-Africa (following the end of Apartheid) rapidly changed the way the city functions by opening its borders to previously excluded members of society. The city, designed in accordance with Western principles, now has to adapt and accommodate diversity, multiculturalism and the influx of people.

The author argues that (just as South Africa's inhabitants are in a process of unification and reconciliation), the built fabric from the era left behind is still in the process of becoming part of the larger urban narrative.

New vessels of culture (museums, galleries, archives etc.) subsequently need to perform differently from the old institutions, which were largely of Western origin and thus mostly orientated towards Western culture. Local culture needs to be incorporated to create a design language of multi-functionality and diversity in order to successfully contribute to the current urban narrative.

The diagrammatic process of what the author wants to achieve in designing the new intervention is summarized in the following 3 diagrams:

1. The intervention should be a reinterpretation of a cultural vessel that allows for multi-functionality and adaptability to suit the needs of different social and recreational gatherings.
2. The cultural vessel should speak of the spirit of newness and positively contribute to the urban narrative which includes the existing (heritage) cultural institutions.
3. The cultural vessel should serve the programmatic needs of contemporary local artistic expression.

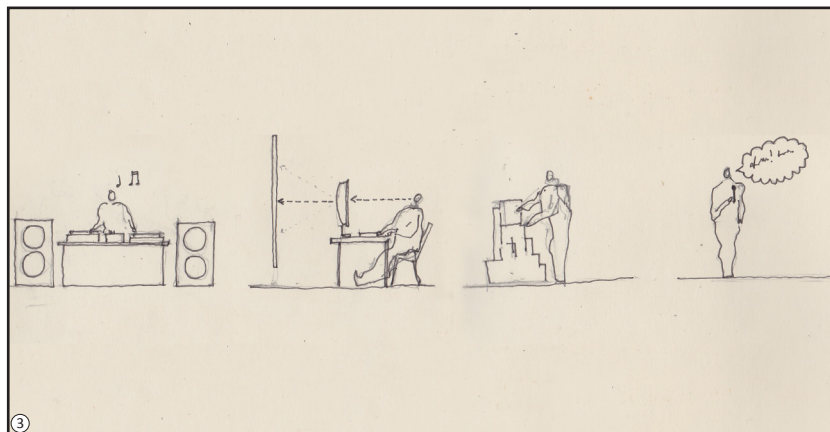
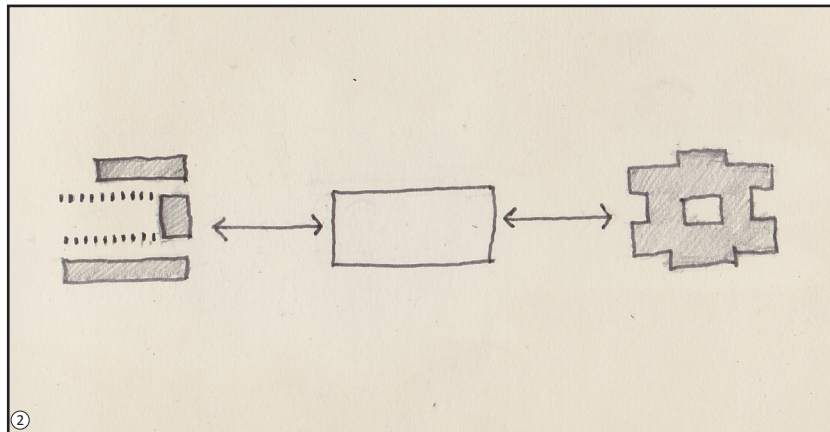
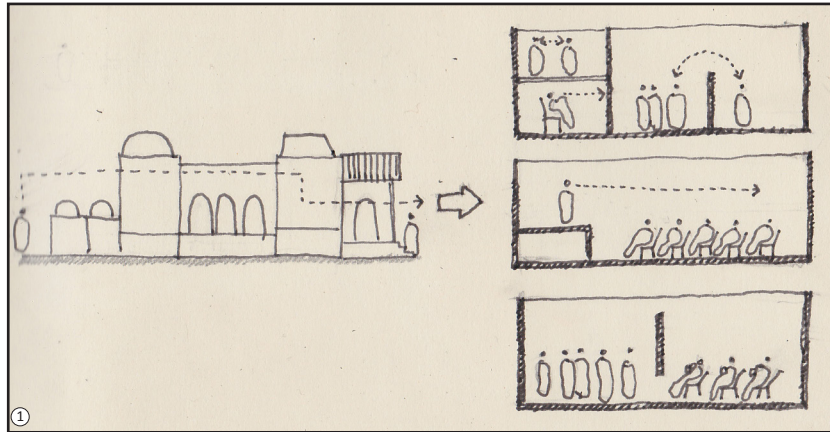


FIG 37.1 - 37.3 Design intention diagrams derivative from Cultural Perspective

5_03 PROGRAM

ESTABLISHING A TYPOLOGY

To coincide with the design strategy, the architectural program is determined by the 3 parts of the synopsis: Theory; Site and Culture. The program must unify ideas and serve as a multifunctional platform for public gathering, and address the programmatic shortcomings of the JAG as a space for the exhibition of contemporary art forms (such as audio-visual and installation art) whilst establishing new links and breathing new life into the arts precinct.

Therefore the new addition to the JAG must incorporate the functions of an observatory, a cultural vessel and a social condenser.

The observatory function of the building stems from the theoretical synopsis which requires the building to act as a type of optical apparatus, from which the current urban narrative can be read and thus be accentuated.

CLIENT PROFILE

The client is determined by the established building type and the most prominent possible local role players:

The Johannesburg Development Agency (JDA) invests in so-called 'priority areas' of which the CBD and Hillbrow form part. Its focus is on the improvement of public space in order to celebrate African culture, as well as on the development of infrastructure to create new links and economic opportunities (JDA 2013: 1).

The Department of Arts and Culture contributes to sustainable economic development in the arts, culture and heritage sector by leveraging partnerships for a socially cohesive nation (South African Department of Arts and Culture 2013: 1).

The Joubert Park Project aims to "develop and facilitate collaborative projects with artists and non-artists from a diversity of fields, driven by a shared spirit of curiosity about the peculiarities and specifics of the city. Furthermore the JDA seek[s] to bring the strategies and instruments of the contemporary arts to bear on the complex and conflicted environment in a manner that asks questions both of arts practice and the complicated reality of this shifting urban context — in relation to South Africa and other global linkages" (The Joubert Park Project 2009: 1).

Local community members including: artists in residence at the Drill Hall, the administration of the Johannesburg Art Gallery, and the traders of the Noord Street informal market.

SPATIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR AN EVENTS PAVILION AND DIGITAL MEDIA GALLERY

Contemporary local and international digital media artists. One who particularly inspired the formation and concept of this project is the artist Douglas Gordon. Gordon regularly explores the themes of memory, dualism and repetition. His material is sourced from existing archival film material and the public realm, as well as performance-based videos that he creates himself. The art is usually exhibited in a spatially intriguing way which provokes curiosity and interaction.

The local Keleketla Media Arts Project operates from the Drill Hall. It provides a platform for collaborative, experimental multi-media projects with local, national and international artists, cultural practitioners and activists (Keleketla 2014: 1).

Information garnered through the author's personal experience and interest in digital media art indicates that these art forms are usually exhibited in galleries with specific spatial qualities. Large, adaptable spaces like warehouses are suitable, although they require some acoustic treatment. In modern galleries, smaller screening rooms are also used for different exhibitions, with the advantage of intimacy, better acoustics and lighting control.

The cinematic art form is of particular interest to the author because of its close alignment with architecture. The possible spatial and emotive qualities the installation and screening of an artwork can provoke are endless. Some of the work and methods of installation in spaces studied by the author (gleaned from artist Douglas Gordon) are displayed on the following pages.

The scale and size of spaces in the building will be estimated in accordance with the programmatic requirements as well as the size of the JAG, for which it will function as an addition.

The spaces required for an events pavilion and digital arts exhibition space were determined by the author as follows:

- An auditorium to accommodate formal lectures, film screenings, meetings and 'indabas'.
- A multifunctional gathering space to accommodate large-scale exhibitions and market events, as well as spiritual, social and political events and activities.
- Individual digital media art exhibition spaces as an additional gallery for and link to the JAG.
- Administration / management offices.
- Bathrooms and service zones,

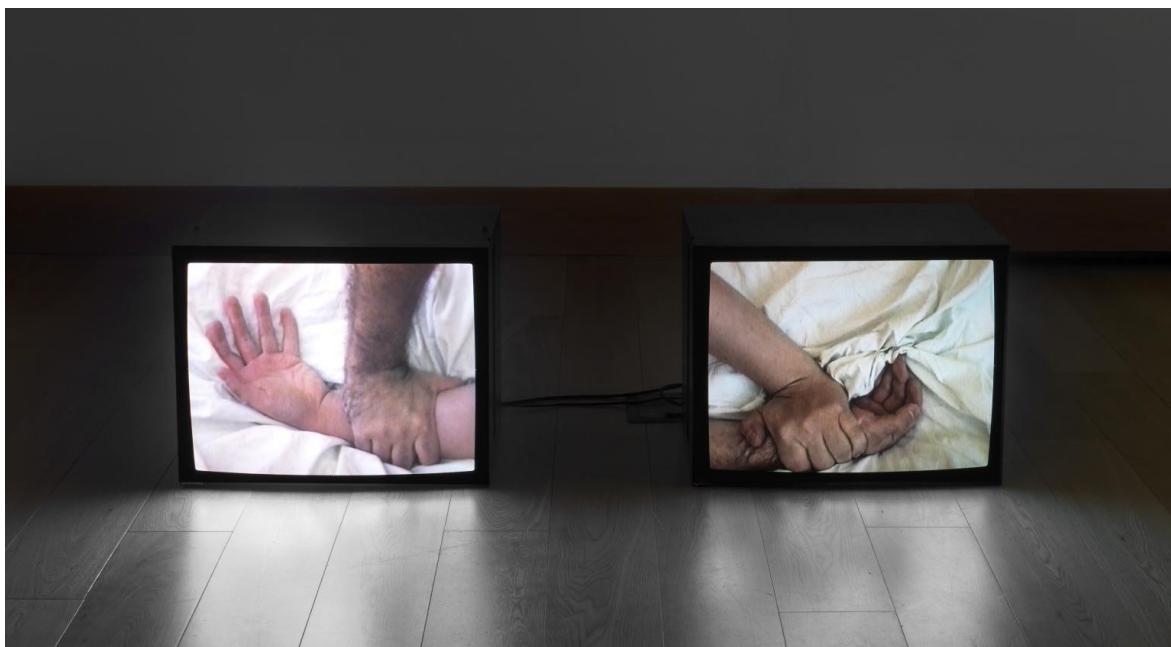


FIG 38 [Macumbeira] Exhibition *A divided self I* and *A divided self II* by digital media artist Douglas Gordon



FIG 39 [Macumbeira] Exhibition *24 Hour Psycho* by digital media artist Douglas Gordon

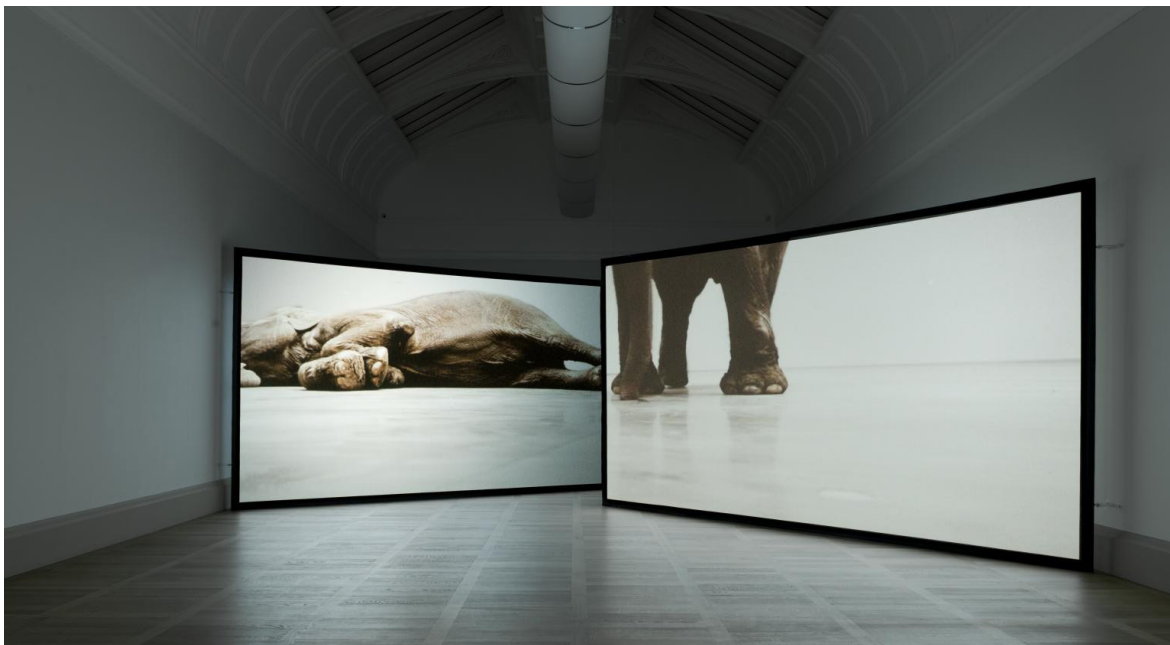


FIG 40 [Macumbeira] Exhibition *Playing Dead* by digital media artist Douglas Gordon



FIG 41 [Macumbeira] Exhibition *Twin Blades* by digital media artist Douglas Gordon

5_04 PRECEDENT STUDIES

MORPHOSIS ARCHITECTS: 101 PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE

This pedestrian passageway bridges the civic fissure created in Los Angeles' downtown by the construction of the 101 Freeway by filling it with an iconic civic space, (Morphopedia 2014: 1).

The design responds to both the future potential and the deep-rooted history of the area in. The straight edge with its ephemeral media display, symbolically faces new Los Angeles to the South while the curved edge, with permanent steel text, is a fragmented reflection of the original civic space *zócalo* (plain) to the South, the original civic space of the *peublo* (people) of Los Angeles. (Morphopedia 2014: 1).

The semi-transparent, porous structure frames a space that is simultaneously public and private - a Situationist "living room" in the middle of the city, (Morphopedia 2014: 1).

The pedestrian bridge was selected by the author as precedent study because of its ability to conceptually reflect existing and future conditions of the city, which is closely aligned with what the author determined to be the cinematic quality of space. Although its main purpose is that of a bridge, it serves as an accurate representation or reading of the urban narrative, a landmark and a civic node.

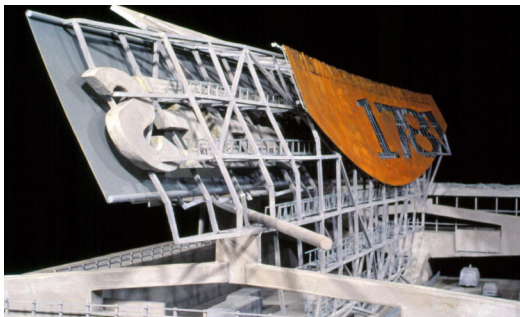


FIG 42 (Morphopedia) 101 Pedestrian Bridge model

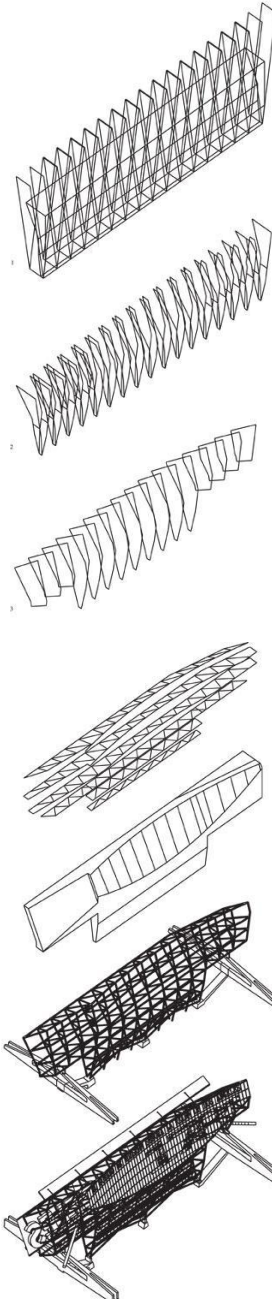


FIG 43 (Morphopedia) 101 Pedestrian Bridge structural axonometric

LINA BO BARDI: MUSEU DE ARTE DE SÃO PAULO:

The Museum of Contemporary Art in Sao Paulo, was designed by Lina Bo Bardi in 1958 and is became a flagship project for modern architecture in Brazil. At 8 meter above ground to soffit height and with a span of 74 meter between the pillars, the building became the world's largest open floor plan. (Duque 2011: 1)

The building is located at a busy intersection of two roads on its one side, with views of the Trianton Park and the city on the other. The architecture is clean, simple and monumental and thus it became a cultural landmark for Sao Paulo. (Duque 2011: 1)

The open, suspended underside of the building cause for uninterrupted pedestrian flow, a large plaza that functions as a civic gathering space and a link between the two opposite forms of urban landscape.

The volume below ground houses an extensive civic hall for public and political meetings, an auditorium and projection room while the floating volume house the gallery, various exhibition halls and libraries. (Duque 2011: 1)

This building was selected as precedent study by the author because of its form and spatial function in the urban landscape (the linking of two parts of the city); its function as both unobstructed open air public gathering space and program (a cultural landmark and contributor to the identity of Sao Paulo).



FIG 44 (Pedro Kok) 101 Gathering under the MASP building



FIG 45 (Pedro Kok) 101 MASP exterior photograph



FIG 46 (hacedordetrampas) MASP exhibition space

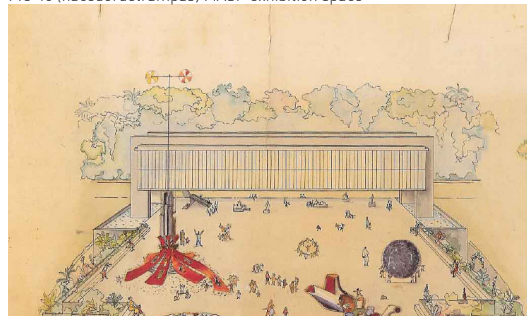


FIG 47 (hacedordetrampas) Perspective of MASP by Lina Bo Bardi

ATELIER BOW-WOW: BMW GUGGENHEIM PAVILION

The BMW Guggenheim Lab addresses issues of contemporary urban life through free programs designed to spark curiosity and interaction, (Frearson 2011: 1).

The BMW Guggenheim Pavilion is a mobile, temporary structure that serves as a multifunctional studio that adapts to different programmatic requirements.

The studio consists of a black mesh clad box, elevated above ground, open at its ends (except for curtain divisions) in order to attract public interaction. Lightweight mesh divisions can be lowered from the top section into the studio to suit the requirements of different programmatic needs and activities. The top clad mesh section also houses lighting, screens and audio equipment

This pavilion was selected as precedent study by the author because of its open, temporal nature and ability to adapt to different situations. The program of the pavilion is also in line with the programmatic requirements of the type of building determined by the author. Furthermore, as an event space that intrigues public curiosity with the interplay between what is hidden and revealed, the project is successful and inspiring.



FIG 48[designboom] External photograph BMW Guggenheim Pavilion



FIG 49[designboom] Model of BMW Guggenheim Pavilion



FIG 50 [designboom] Interior photograph BMW Guggenheim Pavilion

5_05 *PARTI / SITE CONCEPT

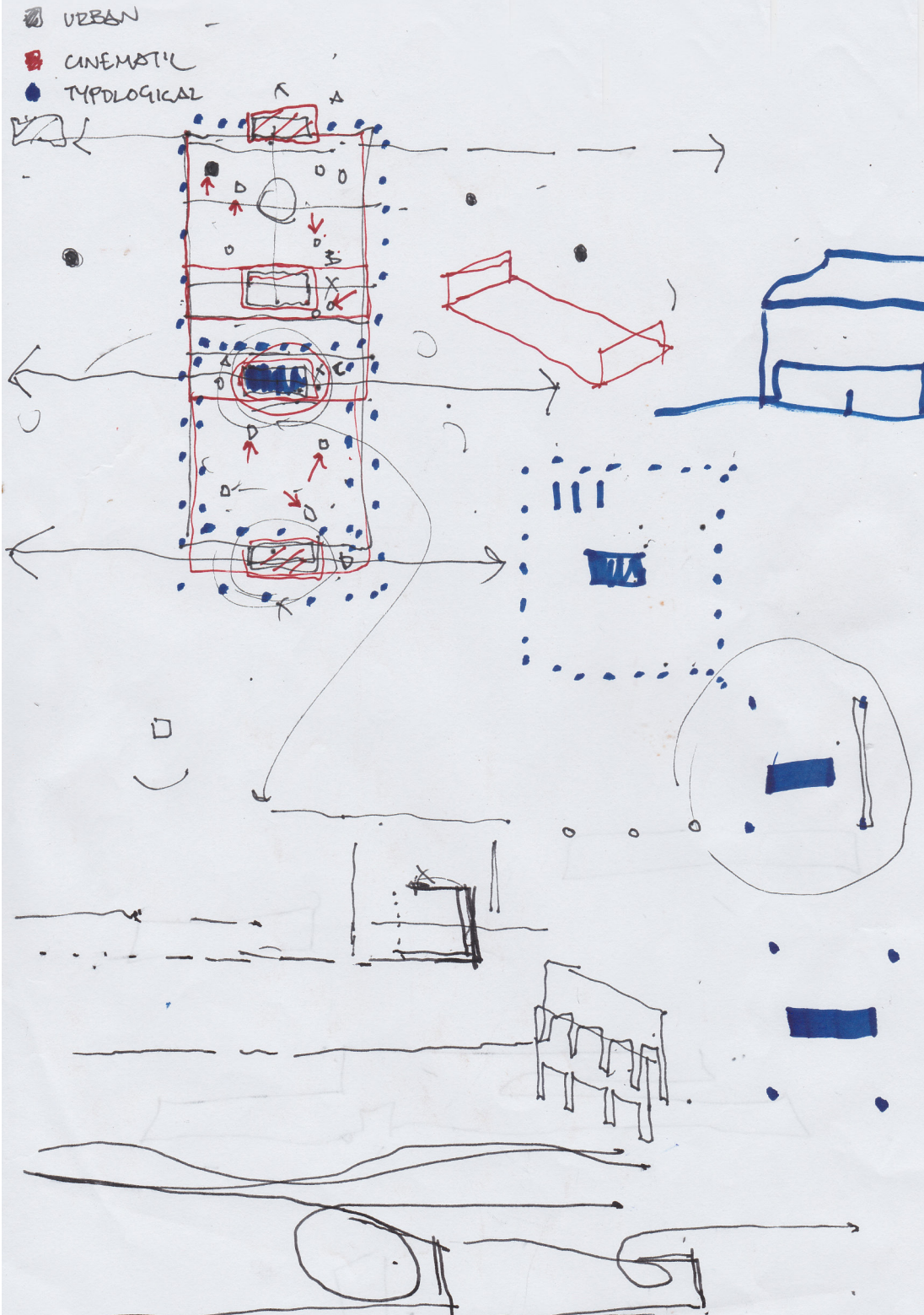


FIG 51.1 Parti Diagram development with combining theory ,site and cultural (typological) perspectives

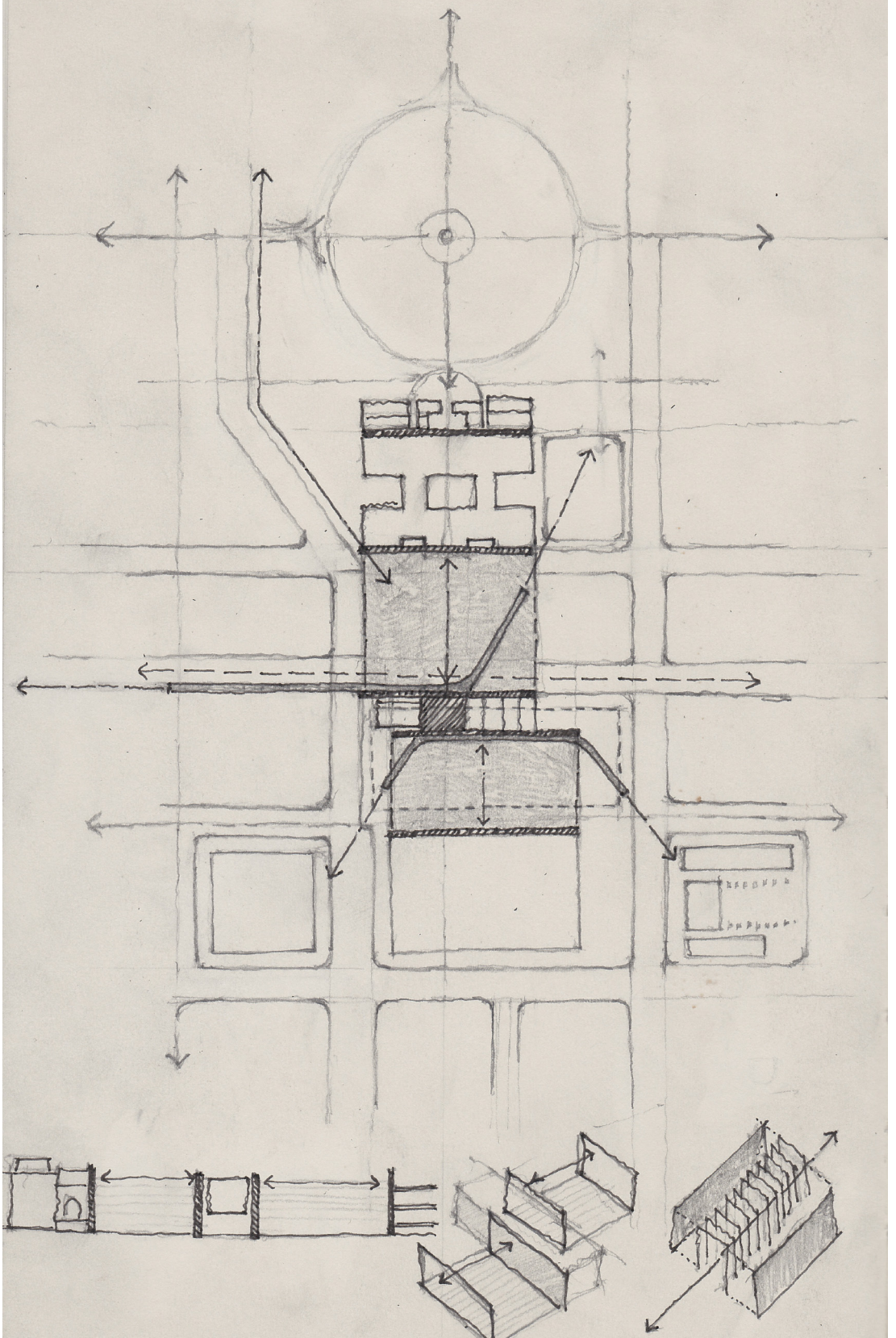


FIG 51.2 Final Parti diagram

06

CONCEPTUAL APPROACH

- 6_01 CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT
 "ARE YOU TALKING TO ME?"

- 6_02 THE RETURNED GAZE

- 6_03 TRANSLATING CINEMATIC SPACE INTO ARCHITECTURE
 THE JOURNEY OF THE GAZE - ARCHITECTURE, SCREENS AND TRANSPARENCY

- 6_04 SYNOPSIS
 ARCHITECTURAL / TECTONIC CONCEPT COLLAGE

6_01 CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT

“ARE YOU TALKING TO ME?”

The concept was systematically built up and revisited during the year to formulate a clear, summarizing image of what the design needs to achieve spatially and tectonically. The theoretical premise of Cinematic Space in combination with a sense or understanding of place (Genius Loci) contributed to the idea of creating a space within the urban environment, that accentuate daily life (public performance) and its crucial component which is culture.

The idea then evolved into the possibility of self-investigation or self-evaluation of the individual in different roles that populate the city. A type of observatory with a twist came to mind: A space from which the public performance can be viewed, while simultaneously being a space of public performance itself (Urban Stage) thus having the possibility of being viewed (Returned Gaze).

The most prominent element of the immediate environment the author chose to work in, was the dualistic nature of the quiet island that is the Johannesburg Art Gallery and in contrast, the incomplete, frantic and vibrant symbol of the new, Noord Taxi Rank. Naturally, they became the spaces and situations that needed to be framed and accentuated. This gave ideal opportunity to react to the Urban Vision, which included the steps of removing urban obstructions and the reinstatement of lost public space of heritage significance – specifically the Union Grounds.

A powerful scene of the film *Taxi Driver* (directed by Martin Scorsese) where the character Travis Bickle (played by Robert De Niro) stares at himself in the mirror, repentantly asking himself the question “Are you talking to me?” in a confrontational manner, as if responding to someone who poses a possible threat, was a clear conceptual connection and moment of enlightenment for the author.

Aside from the harsh or violent undertone of the scene, it became a vigorous metaphor for how the building needs to respond in its immediate environment, nestled in between two very different, equally powerful entities or elements of Johannesburg.

The essays to follow aim to conclude the theoretical premise and deals with the architectural or tectonic strategy in translating the Returned Gaze into a physical entity (building design). The final synopsis will conclude with the main design aspects considered in the design process and a summarizing conceptual collage.

6_02 THE RETURNED GAZE

'The gaze', a psychoanalytical term first coined by Jacques Lacan, describes the anxious state that comes with the awareness that one can be viewed (Homer 2005: 22). The psychological effect, according to Lacan, is that the subject loses a degree of autonomy on realizing that he or she is a visible object. This concept is described by him as the mirror stage, in which a child first encounters him or herself in a mirror, realising that he or she has an external appearance (Homer 2005: 27).

This effect can similarly be produced by other objects. The other object does not necessarily have to behave optically like a mirror, but instead the object induces an awareness of the subject also being an object.

The film *Being John Malkovich* demonstrates the psychology of cinema through the phenomenon of the gaze: different characters in the film discover and gain access to a secret door from which they can, for brief periods, enter the headspace and look through the eyes of real life actor John Malkovich, (FIG 53). The act of experiencing his everyday routines and actions quickly becomes highly addictive, with extensive consequences — the notion of gazing through the eyes of someone else allows the characters to discover unexpected dimensions of themselves, which in turn impact their behaviour when experiencing reality from their own perspectives and bodies.

In achieving such a reframing of the world, the camera's penetration of reality entails a transformation in the perception of the cinemagoer, and does so in a manner consonant with the experiences offered by the flickering, virtual presence of the city (Clarke after Friedberg 1997: 10).

The 'look back' of actors in a film accomplishes at least two functions: it valorizes the audience in a textual intertitle with the body of the film (this film is about you the spectator and not the maker per se), and it also directly expresses the gaze of the projection surface, impassively 'looking back' at the spectators, making the viewers more aware of their own reactions to the film than they are aware of the film itself (Dixon 1995: 2). The film projected onto the screen seems to address the audience until it solidifies into a gaze; rather than being an object that is gazed upon, it transfixes the audience into a "state of willing immobility".

Another example of a film demonstrating the notion of the returned gaze is Alfred Hitchcock's *Rear Window*, which according to the renowned director, is purely driven by the function of cinema itself.

Rear Window is a metaphor for making and viewing a film, in which the main character, Jeff, is both the film's director and spectator (Pallasmaa 2004: 222). Jeff, immobilized due to an injury, is stuck in a New York apartment with only with one thing to keep him occupied, his binoculars and his neighbours, (FIG 54). The act of looking out of the apartment window expresses the idea of pure cinema. The courtyard and surrounding buildings become a theatrical stage on which the tenants perform their daily lives. Suspense builds the longer he observes. A murder takes place — the murderer visible to Jeff by his glowing cigarette in the dark apartment.





FIG 52 "Are you talking to me?" Split still photograph of the film Taxi Driver directed by Martin Scorsese

The performances (lives and events) of the other characters develop and climax occasionally and independently of the main story. At a crucial point, Jeff's character realizes he has accidentally revealed his character to the murderer on the telephone.

In the moment of confrontation an essential role reversal from pursuer to pursued happens when the murderer discovers his surveyor. The only words the murderer is capable of uttering to the room-bound, helpless and pitiful Jeff are: "What do you want from me?" This incident demonstrates the cinematic devices crucial to the gaze: the location of the auditorium (observer) and the stage (observed) is reversed, and with this the actual viewer's relation to the protagonist shifts (Pallasmaa 2004: 222).

The returned gaze is an integral function of cinema — a combined cohesive act of the entire cinematic apparatus in operation; a force deep within the field of vision of the rectangular dimensions of the white screen that embraces and captivates; a window, a portal, an emitter of light into the audience (Dixon 1995: 7).

With this dissertation, the author will attempt to translate 'The Gaze' into the physical entity that is architecture. It is argued by the author that architecture gains power through the gaze. For the duration an architectural object designed with the principles of cinematic space is gazed upon - it gains the ability to enlighten or shame us, and for a brief moment in time, have the power to determine the perimeters of our existence...



FIG 53 [Realdealmind] Film poster for Being John Malkovich



FIG 54 [Doctormacro] Still image from the film Rear Window

6_03 TRANSLATION OF CINEMATIC SPACE INTO ARCHITECTURE

THE JOURNEY OF THE GAZE - ARCHITECTURE, SCREENS AND TRANSPARENCY

The dictionary definition of transparency is that it is a material condition; it can be penetrated by light or air, or be an attribute of a personality. It has the quality of being perfectly evident, unobstructed, without pretence. However, a second type of a seeming or implied transparency, that can be described as an interpretive mode of seeing, can be distinguished (Lo 2011: 1).

In addition to these connotations of transparency as a material quality, the second interpretation was first realised in Cubist and Italian Futurist paintings: "The artist seeks the articulated presentation of frontally aligned objects in a shallow, abstracted space" (Slutzky 1976: 166).

The curiosity of architects, especially in the 20th century with transparency led to and consequential layering of objects and planes, which resulted in a broadened understanding of the experience of space-time. Slutzky (1976: 160) affirms that Modern architecture responded to this interpretation of transparency in literature and theory with concepts such as simultaneity, interpenetration, superimposition, ambivalence and space-time.

Transparency in architecture implies not only the ability to transmit light or see through, but also a broader spatial order suggesting a characteristic of being ambiguous. The superimposition of form transposes insignificant singularities into meaningful complexities, revealing aspects of context and often unnoticed structural qualities of the object (Slutzky 1976: 161).

The interpenetration of space and layering of planes are noted in the paintings and architecture of Le Corbusier.

In the same way he layers his still-life paintings, the vertical layer-like stratification of Le Corbusier's Villa at Garches produces a layering of the interior spaces of the house and creates a succession of laterally extended spaces following one after the other (Slutzky 1976: 168). The consequence is a continuous fluctuation and reinterpretation of space, reaffirming the notion of seeming spatial depth in the simultaneity with which it is perceived (Lo 2011: 1).

The evolved understanding of simultaneity in both of the transparent dialectics results in meaningful complexities, spatial ambiguity, depth, and fluctuation of volume and surface.

The author argues that the spatial concepts of Cinematic Space and the Returned Gaze are made possible with the principles of transparency (frontality and stratification). Similar to scenes in a film giving coherentness and depth to a narrative which captivates and audience, the layering, superimposition, repetition etc. of planes can be utilized to captivate and intrigue the city dweller.

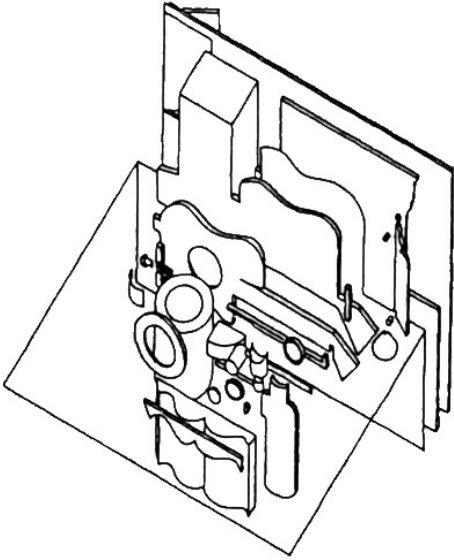


FIG 55 [Adrian Lo] Cubist painting by LeCorbusier, layering of planes

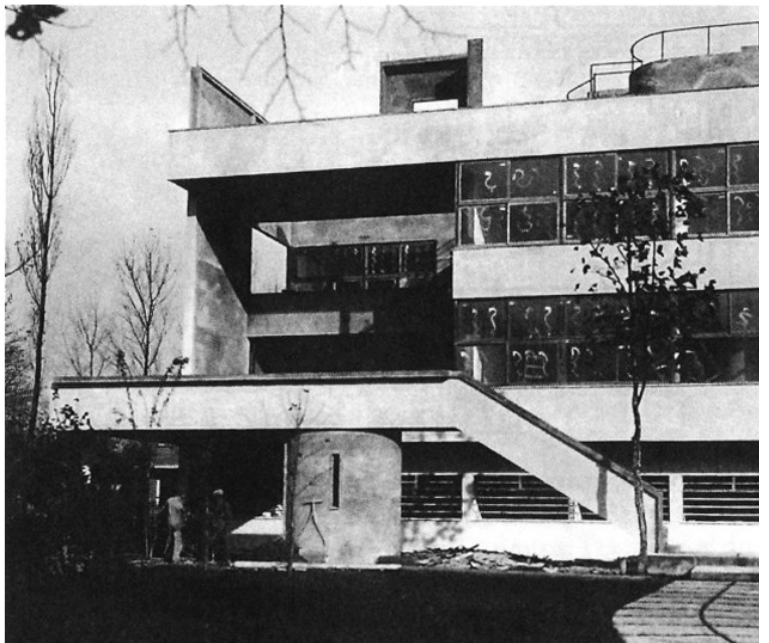
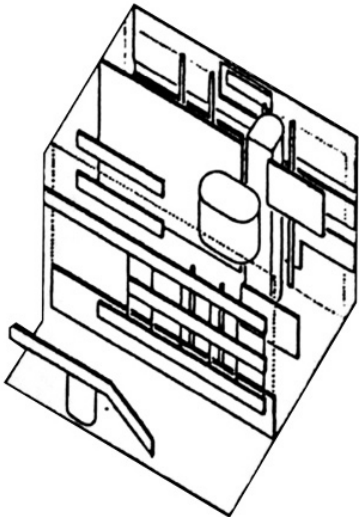


FIG 56 [Adrian Lo] Villa Stein at Garches 1927 by LeCorbusier, layering of planes in architecture

6_04 SYNOPSIS

Public space in a complex setting should be approached as the organization of layers (planes/screens and volumes) representing a larger image of its inhabitants and their paradigms, patterns, culture and beliefs.

Spaces approached as frames or scenes are metaphorical of the film set — they frame urban performances on various scales and become backdrops to the narrative structure.

By studying the existing conditions and built fabric, clues to the urban narrative are revealed, which lead to the selection of a scene for a strategic intervention.

Architectural strategies of the urban stage (framing public performances) and the Returned Gaze, achieved through the layering of planes (literal and phenomenal transparency), have the potential to transform the architecture into a cinematic device which enables not only self and collective awareness, but also the haptic experience of space-time.

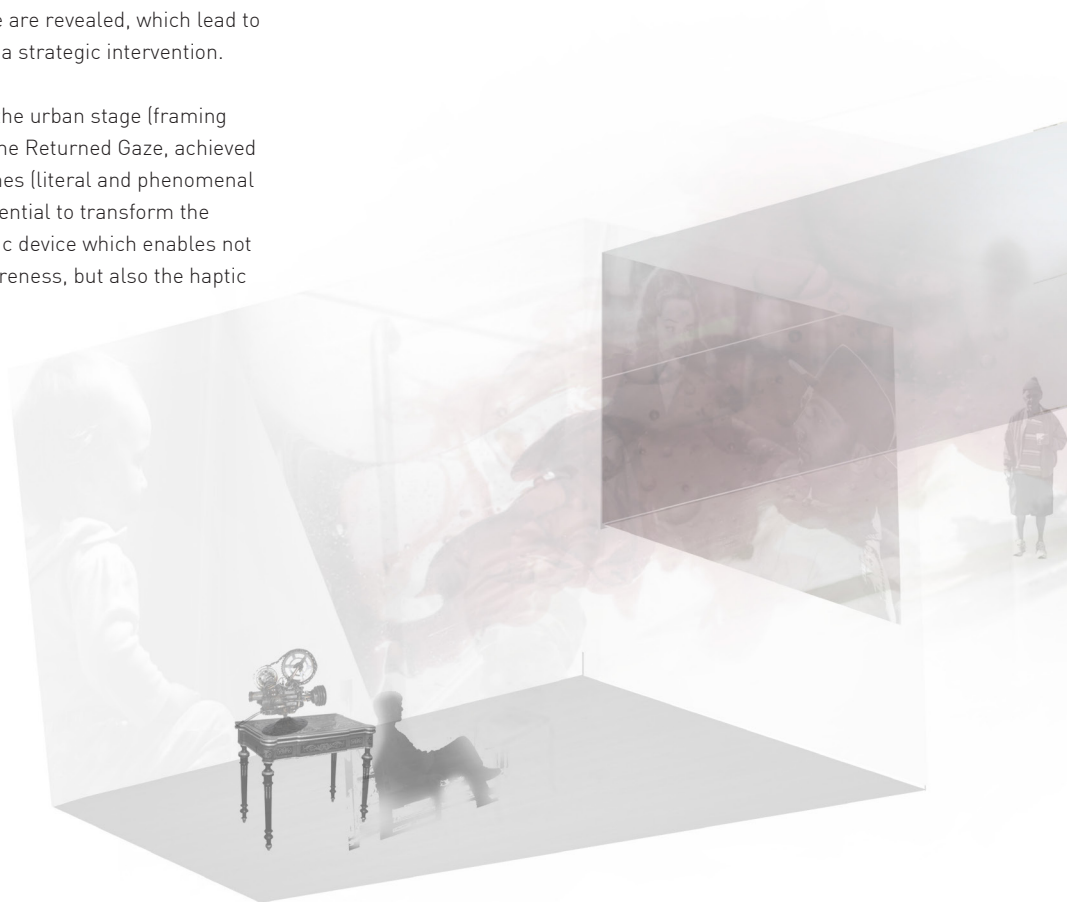




FIG 57 Cinemay spilling over into space collage

THE PASSAGE

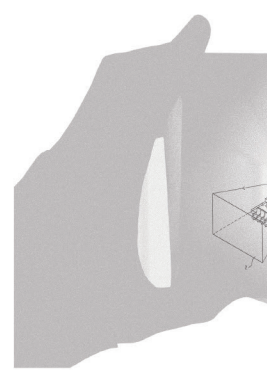
A void in-between the forces of time, from which the city-in-flux can be perceived, as if isolated from the continuous metamorphic state. The Screen is a nostalgic reference to Top Star, a Johannesburg drive-in cinema theatre which fell victim to changing conditions. A nostalgic reminder, appropriate to place, reflecting the character of time.

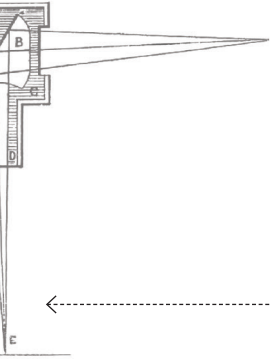
THE DYNAMIC, INCOMPLETE AND FRANTIC

A condition of restlessness, in the process of adoption, vibrant and rhythmic. 'Do we shape our buildings, or do our buildings shape us?'

STATIC VEHICLE

A part of the whole removed and placed at a suitable location, to resonate and reveal a dialogue of space and city dweller. The political observatory intends to provoke thought. With reference to 'Lenin at the Podium' and the Johannesburg gold mine-shaft, the structure is placed in the domain of regular political unrest. An observatory that can inspire a revolution.





CAMERA OBSURA

A mechanism to convert an external condition, into an internal experience - a metaphor and subtle reminder that isolation does not exist in the city-in-flux.



THE STATIC, MONUMENTAL AND SILENT

A reminder of the past, a unrouted narrative, resonating silently in space - seeking regeneration, vitality and place in the city.

