

05

PRECEDENTS

EVERYDAY ARCHITECTURE.
THE STREET
FACTORY SPACE ON DISPLAY
PUBLIC STEPS PUBLIC SEATS
ORDINARY DETAILS

Everyday Architecture

African Identity in Post-Apartheid Public Architecture, White Skin, Black Masks by Jonathan Noble, is a book that analyses five civic buildings commissioned by The Department of Public Works post 1994.

These five projects were meant to encapsulate a new free democratic South African spatial identity, and whether this is an achievable task or not, the architects of the winning projects have definitely tried to produce a “new” space, stirring a debate about transforming public space in South Africa. Using Nobles(2011) analyses to critique these five buildings, can be understood Identity of Place in a Post-Apartheid, Post-Colonial and democratic South Africa.

The Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature (fig. 161) and Northern Cape Legislature (fig. 162) are two vital institutional buildings. They represent the new democratic country and the creation of the new provinces. These buildings are meant to represent the various cultures, communities and the newly formed municipalities of the regions. They do so by creating a grand iconic aesthetic, but cannot convey the daily activities of the people.

The Constitutional Court (fig. 163) is a project that needed to tell a multi-faceted and layered narrative of the past, the present and the future, a South African narrative, as well as needing to create space that is a hybrid of public, civic, ordinary and constitutional space. In this issue lies the challenge, as there are far too many informants for one project to encompass. These narratives were reduced to pastiche and icons rather than a place which represents the journey.

Walter Sisulu Memorial Square (fig. 164) and Freedom Park (fig. 165) are two public spaces that fail at the core design intention. Both are public space that do not take into consideration the idea of what public should mean. Freedom Park creates a space that presents place instead of being an icon like its neighbour, the Voortrekker Monument, but it fails at being accessible for the public. Walter Sisulu square imposes form and structure that is not of place, creating space that is foreign and alienates the potential users, with scale, proportion, and functionality which do not resemble any of the traits present in Kliptown.

These buildings have tried to encapsulate African identity or African space on a monumental level and yet each has forgotten about the *everyday* user. The ambition behind each project is commendable but it seems that the idea of the *everyday* that constitute identity on a fundamental level has been forgotten, hence becoming ‘white elephants’ in the South African landscape.

This has created spaces that users cannot relate to; they are uninhabitable and unusable by the public on an everyday level. Could these buildings be failures for those who wish to occupy them on an everyday platform? Are these civic spaces for the people they represent?

This chapter investigates precedents that have taken the concept of the ordinary and of the *everyday* and tried to incorporate it into built form. The buildings do not impose a grand narrative but rather tell simple detailed stories of the user and their occupation of space.



Fig.161. Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature Complex.



Fig.162. Northern Cape Legislature Complex.

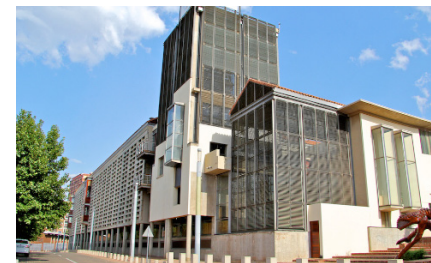


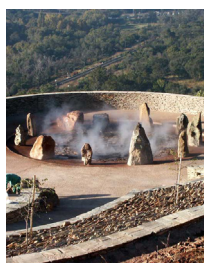
Fig.163. Constitutional Court Precinct.



Fig.164. Walter Sisulu Memorial Square.



Fig.165. Freedom Park.



The Street

Watershed by Wolff Architects, 2014

The aim of this project was to increase the interactions between user and the city. The programme of the Watershed is an educational institution and a business incubator with various support functions such as a market space, an exhibition venue, rentable office space, rentable retail space, and green space (Wolff, n-d).

The site was an abandoned shed along the harbour and the architects decided not to locate the business incubator in the shed as required by the brief, but rather to create a “new street” that runs through the entire length of the shed which connects the building to a larger urban pedestrian network which connects this precinct to a larger area of popular areas in the district. According to the architects, the street reclaims public space which is of a bigger order than the business incubator. The street becomes a device by which economic opportunity is created for small businesses (Wolff, n-d).

Since the new street created in the shed connects to an existing pedestrian network, a high volume of foot traffic passes through the space allowing for commercial opportunities for the businesses on ground level to grow and develop. The main programme of the Watershed precinct is to become a business incubator, and it was decided to support multiple emerging entrepreneurs

rather than one or two well known established tenants (Wolff, n-d).

The design intention of the Watershed was to concentrate on the pedestrian movement routes rather than detailing the retail spaces, and the stalls were designed to allow for flexibility. Each tenant has the opportunity to transform their space according to their requirements.

The street that runs through the shed mixed with the retail stalls resulted in various exchanges occurring between pedestrian, tenant and space. The market typology created a new form of public space that was also a thoroughfare between the ends of the building as shown in fig 166 and 167.

Through the layering of space and programme the Watershed allows for everyday exchanges to occur between user and space. The exchanges that occur are insignificant if analysed individually such as: walking by, buying coffee, or sitting on the public steps. But as a collection of experiences they start creating a certain kind of occupation of space. This project shows that the banality of pedestrian life has the potential in shaping urban environments.



Fig.166. Section of the Watershed.



Fig.167. The “Street” through the building.



Fig.168. Various trade stalls.

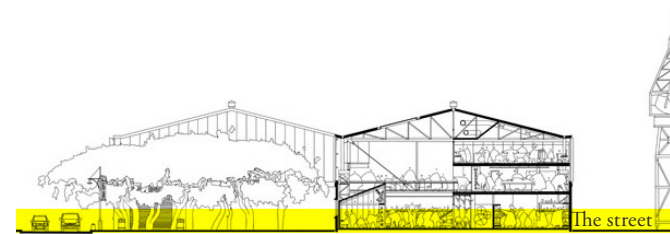


Fig.169. Section of the Watershed and the public street.

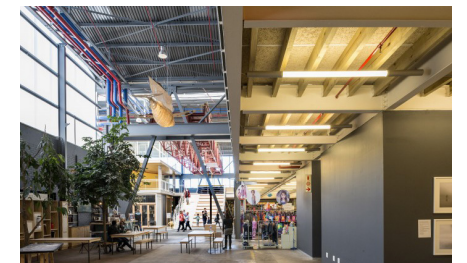


Fig.170. Pause space ground level.



Fig.171. Pause space



Fig.173. Retail boxes.

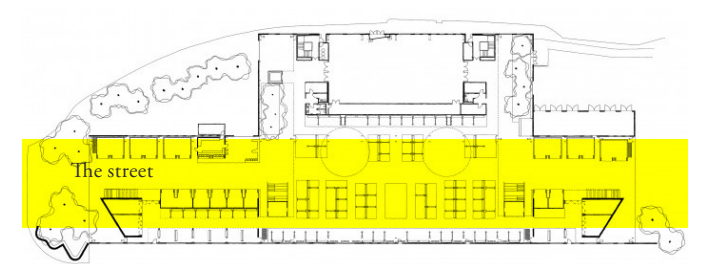


Fig.172. Ground floor plan indicating the “street”.

Factory space on display

Proud Heritage Clothing Campus by Don Albert & Partners, 2007

The Proud Heritage Clothing Campus is located in Durban's industrial precinct. The campus includes a design studio and a manufacturing and distribution centre for clothing.

The aim for this project was to create an industrial space that accommodates various aspects of the programme such as optimum production output, packaging and distribution, and to allow for large vehicles and machinery to move through the space. Above this the project was to take into account Durban's humid climate by providing adequate ventilation and allowing for maximum use of natural daylight (Saunders, 2009:412).

The main design intention that the architects had was to create a space where the skills of the factory staff would be celebrated. The production line requires various skilled labourers to perform certain tasks at certain points, which although mundane in nature, are vital to the production process. Therefore, the processes of manufacturing and distribution are combined at certain points in the building to allow for maximum exposure and become viewpoints into factory life (Saunders, 2009:412).

By highlighting the various tasks of the staff and factory workers, the building creates a "platform" for the staff members to showcase their skills.

The various components that make up the production line are monotonous in nature but the skill sets are necessary to fulfil each task, as illustrated in Fig 177 to fig. 179. The sections, fig. 180 and 181 show how the building structure allows for a large open floor plan. This was a vital requirement in the design so as to allow for various spaces to be adaptable and changeable to allow for machinery to be moved to optimise the production line.

This building showcases that a mundane programme of a warehouse typology has potential in highlighting everyday processes, as well as the value that production has in the South African context.

Creating space where individuals, not machinery, are seen as the assets where skill is celebrated and hierarchy is placed on the *everyday*.



Fig.174. Block brick facade.



Fig.175. Entrance.



Fig.176. Storage.



Fig.177. Views into the work space



Fig.178. Open work space.

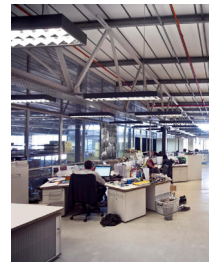


Fig.179. Office.

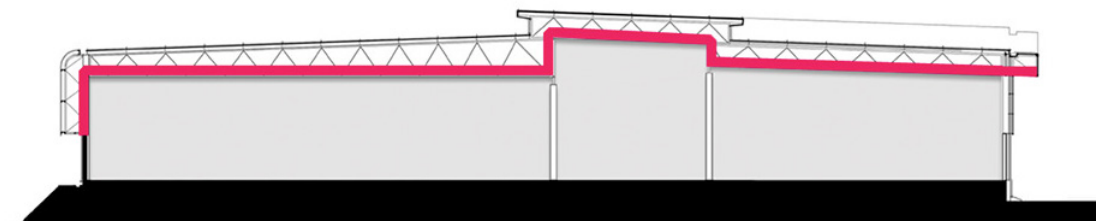


Fig.180. Section through the factory space and the open floor plan.

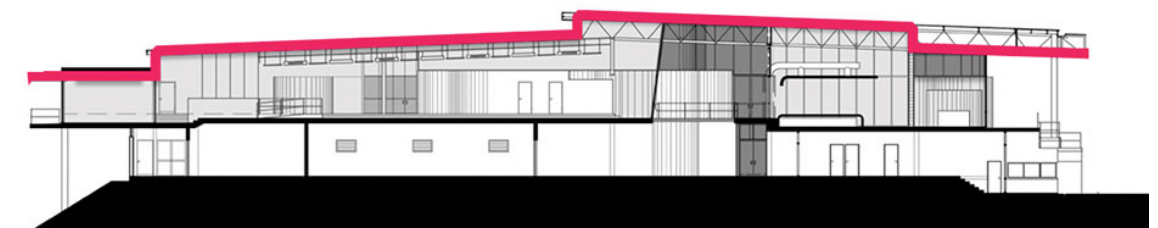


Fig.181. Section showing the levels and volumes of the factory and admin building.

Public Steps Public Seats.

Jawahar Kala Kendra Arts Centre by Charles Correa. 1986-1991

The Jawahar Kala Kendra (J.K.K) Arts Centre located in Jaipur, India, is a government funded project aimed at promoting India's identity through its rich history of art, culture, daily life and spiritual practices (Duriseti, 2003:13).

B.V Doshi, a contemporary Indian architects, writes that the J.K.K Arts Centre showcases the *"centuries of traditional vernacular wisdom are reinforced by high cultural ambition and a strong intellectual structure. The streets work in a hierarchy; broad avenues down to courtyards reached through gates and there is a harmonious relationship between built form and open space. The result is a city memorable for its clarity of form"*.

The J.K.K Arts Centre is a building that is made of place, by place. The architect drew inspiration from Jaipur and its residents to inform design decision making. The red stone used to construct the building was quarried from the same mines that were used to build the city of old. The programme was inspired to showcase that Jaipur is the capital of India's literature and arts scene. Charles Correa studied the way residents of the city would use public space. The way one would walk, where they would stop and sit or meet up with one another. He

observed the behaviour of the pedestrian, to help inform the way one would move through the J.K.K Arts Centre (Duriseti, 2003:13).

The centre square on the plan as shown in fig. 182, is a public amphitheatre. The adjacent squares open up onto the square so how ever one would chose to move through the arts centre and one would always end up in the amphitheatre (fig. 184). This public square becomes the heart of the cultural precinct since drama productions to music soirée's or community meetings all take place within these four walls. The space allows for adaptability and change depending on the needs of the programme. The stepped seating that defines the square is designed in such a way that they may either accommodate for large crowd watching a performance or become intimate pockets of space to allow for smaller groups of people or individuals to populate (fig. 185).

The success of this specific public space can be credited to the architects understanding of how residents of Jaipur use their public realms. The legibility of the indoor/outdoor spaces and passages and corridors represents essential elements familiar to the user. He builds on the existing occupation of space that occurs within Jaipur's alleys, markets and streets and creates a space which allows for those activities to live on in the building.



Fig.182. Public courtyard seating.



Fig.183. Entrance to the building.



Fig.184. Entrance to the courtyard.



Fig.185. Courtyard as performance space.

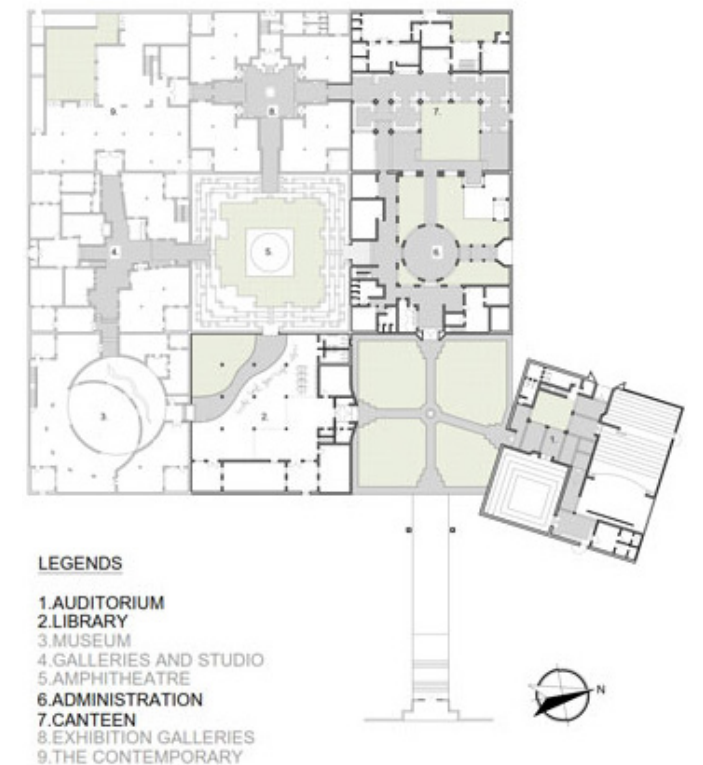


Fig.186. Plan of Jawahar Kala Kendra arts centre.

Ordinary details.

Residential buildings by Studio Mumbai, 2007-2010.

Studio Mumbai is a design practice whose principal architect, Bijoy Jain, studied abroad in the United States using western and eastern influences in design and space making.

What sets Bijoy Jain's approach apart is a brilliant combination of tradition and modernity, in which local resources and traditional Indian craft skills form the basis for strongly contemporary buildings, nourished by reality and distinct from increasingly widespread international architectural output (Domus, 2016).

The three buildings that will be analysed are Copper House, House Tara and House Palmyra. These three homes were designed and built at different stages of the practice's career, yet they all share the same core principles of site, climate, materiality and using local craftsman to construct the building.

The design of Copper House celebrates the rainy season through articulation of the roof, openings, and the veranda spaces all working together to accentuate the monsoon. The copper roofs echo the rain drops, the verandas provide shelter whilst the paving allows for natural drainage of the site. Copper House celebrates the rain, rather than concealing the home owner from the experience (Archdaily, 2010).

House Tara's main feature is the natural well that the home is built on. As shown in the section the well becomes a sacred place for the home owners to use. During the rainy months the well fills up and the water is used throughout the year.

The articulation between indoor and outdoor is blurred and the temperate climate is ideal to allow for this so that the rain is the only element that the house protects the owners from. The joinery and timber details are constructed by Studio Mumbai's in house workshop (Archdaily, 2012).

House Palmyra is a home that has a modernist form but is regional in construction and materiality. Situated on a Palmyra Planation the use of timber was the only option for the palette (Archdaily, 2010). Most of the details designed are developed with craftsmen in the workshop. The details for House Palmyra can be seen in fig5.19. These details highlight the various junctions of the buildings, the connections and the art of making. These details relate back to the everyday use of the building.

The details and joints for each of the homes articulate how space is used and how it will be used. There is no coincidence but rather a deep understanding between architect, client and place.

The lessons learnt from Studio Mumbai is that the ordinary is found everywhere. Western notion of space making can be made richer regional aspects are taken into consideration. Form is revealed to be universal when it grows out of the understanding of the aspects of the individual, the collective and the place.



Fig.187. Images of Copper House.

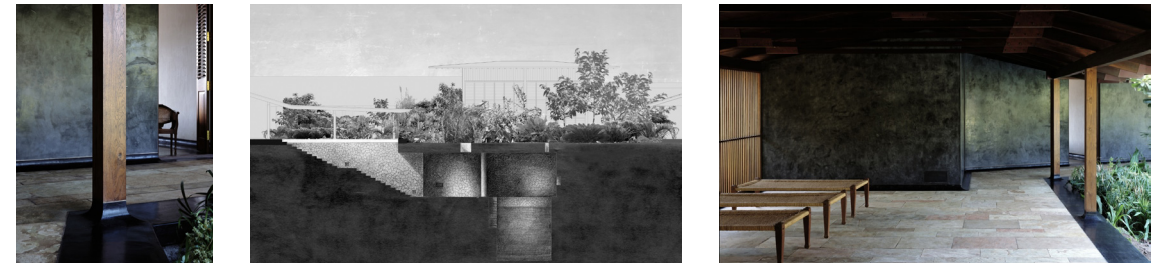


Fig.188. Images of House Tara.

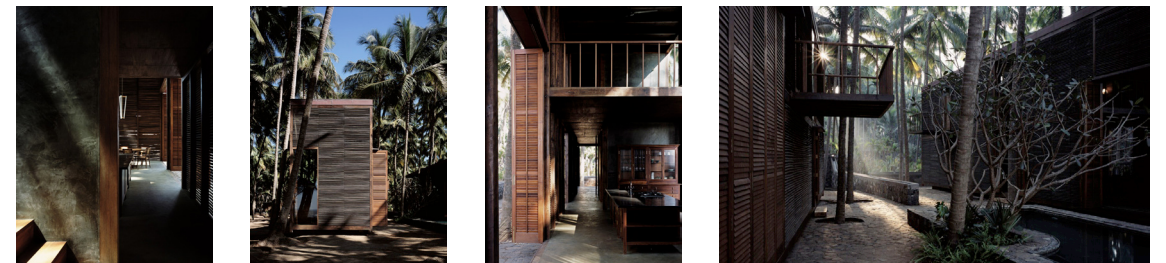


Fig.189. Images of House Palmyra.

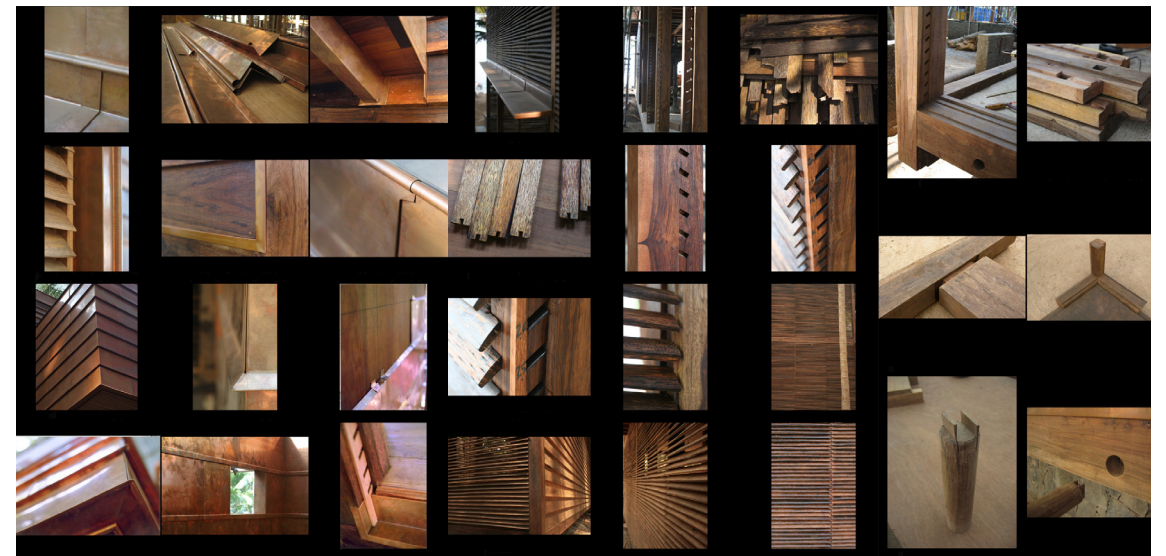


Fig.190. Various details of House Palmyra.

06

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

AN OCCUPATION OF SPACE
DESIGN INFORMANTS
INITIAL EXPLORATION
MAQUETTE EXPLORATION
PLAN & GRID DEVELOPMENT
DEVELOPMENT OF THE SECTIONS
TECTONIC SECTION DEVELOPMENT

TECHNÉ
MATERIAL PALETTE
STRUCTURE
PLANS & SECTIONS
FINAL PRESENTATION OF THE PLANS, SECTIONS & RENDERS
MODEL IMAGES
WATER CALCULATIONS
ENERGY REQUIREMENTS
SBAT ANALYSIS