THE WAITING PLACE

CREATING SOCIAL GATHERING SPACE

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PROLOGUE
"Oh, The Places You’ll Go!" by Dr. Seuss, 1990
You can get so confused
that you’ll start in to race
down long wiggled roads at a break-necking pace
and going on for miles across weirdish wild space,
headed, I fear, toward a most useless place.
The waiting place...
... for people just waiting.
Waiting for a train to go
or a bus to come, or a plane to go
or the mail to come, or the rain to go
or the phone to ring, or the snow to snow
or waiting around for a Yes or No
or waiting around for their hair to grow.
Everyone is just waiting.
Waiting for the fish to bite
or waiting for wind to fly a kite
or waiting around for Friday night
or waiting, perhaps, for their Uncle Jake
or a pot to boil, or a Better Break
or a string of pearls, or a pair of pants
or a wig with curls, or Another Chance.
Everyone is just waiting.
Oh, the Places You’ll Go!

In this poem the essence of waiting and its ignored status is captured as an activity that ‘just is’. This thesis pursues an analysis of the act of waiting (seen by many as an ordinary everyday ritual) and creates scope for a new intervention. The aim is for design to become more sensitive to the waiting place as an area of importance. The intermediate nature of waiting perhaps allows for it to be overlooked, especially in architecture. Seeing that much of our day is being spent waiting, it is worth negotiating the possibility of making the experience enchanting.

"Obscured by its ordinariness as much as by its alleged uselessness, waiting seems to be universally denigrated" (Schweizer, 1998:1).
Hierdie verhandeling bestudeer ‘n bestaande gebou wat opgegradeer moet word om by die veranderende omgewing aan te pas. Die voorgestelde projek is in die stadskonteks van Pretoria gesetel en poog om die verbygaande aard van argitektuur aan te spreek. Die hooffokus van die studie omskryf die konsep van ‘wag’, waar die stedeling tyd in die allerdaagse bou-omgewing moet spandeer.

Die doel van hierdie studie is om die wagarea te ondersoek en die belangrikheid daarvan binne die allerdaagse omgewing te regverdig om sodoende vas te stel watter fisiese faktore wagendes beïnvloed. Hierdie faktore onderlê wat daarop gemik is om die faciliteite van ‘n informele vervoerstelsel, in reaksie op nuwe funksies wat bedoel is vir mense wat publieke vervoerareas gebruik. Die beginsel van ‘wag’ word ondersoek om ‘n omgewing te skep waar die gebou die bron is van nuwe ‘invul’ elemente wat die gebruiker bedien. Die projek stel ‘n nuwe benadering tot die wagarea, om sodoende argitektonies sosiale ruimtes te skep. Die projek fokus daarop om die wagarea as ‘n ruimte te skep waar reisigers hulself kan oriënteer en verfris van daaglikse uitputtende aktiviteite.

Die voorgestelde projek spreek die behoeftes van die gebruiker aan deur die bestaande gebou aan te pas om in hul behoeftes te voorsien en sodoende groei aan te wakker.
This dissertation takes the opportunity to explore an existing building in need of change owing to changing environments. The proposed project is situated within the city context of Pretoria and aims to address the unavoidable nature of architecture, which involves the degradation of buildings over time. The main focus of this study is the concept of waiting, where the city dweller has to endure spending time in everyday surroundings in a built environment. The study attempts to understand the deeper psychological meaning of waiting better in order to provide places that are sympathetic to the waiting person.

The aim of this dissertation is to justify the importance of the waiting place and to investigate waiting places in everyday environments, in order to determine physical factors that influence the experience of people while waiting. These factors inform decisions to provide improved facilities within an informal transport system, while generating new functions in response to the behaviour of people in a transit environment. The principles of waiting are exploited to create an environment where the building acts as generator for new infill parts to serve the user. The project envisages a fresh approach to reunite the waiting place and architecture to create a social gathering space. The project’s main goal is to consider the waiting space as one that serves as a transition place for travellers, providing the commuter with the opportunity to orientate and recover from tiring daily activities.

The proposed project addresses the needs of the city dweller by means of a renewed building intervention. The changing context required a site related function that serves the user and acts as a support system in the city, facilitating future growth.
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