

# 4

## PRECEDENTS

4.1 Paimo Sanatorium

4.2 Castelveccio Museum

4.3 Krzysztof Wodiczko

4.4 Japanese Rock Garden

4.5 Africa Centre for Health

4.6 Pietermaritzburg City Hall

4.7 KZNSA Gallery

4.8 Margaret Roberts

## 4.1 PAIMIO SANATORIUM

— *Healing: Building*

Location: Paimio, Finland

Architect: Alvar Aalto

Source: [www.wikipedia.co.za](http://www.wikipedia.co.za)

The Paimio Sanatorium, a former tuberculosis sanatorium, was built in 1929. The building is widely regarded as one of his most important early designs and made him an internationally recognised architect. Aalto's starting point for the design of the sanatorium was to make the building itself a contributor to the healing process ([www.wikipedia.co.za](http://www.wikipedia.co.za)).

Aalto always paid special attention to the human side of designs. He designed lighting, heating, furniture and even new noiseless taps for the sanatorium. Aalto liked to call the building a “medical instrument”. For instance, particular attention was paid to the design of the patient bedrooms: these generally held two patients, each with his/her own cupboard and washbasin. He designed special non-splash basins, so that the patient would not disturb the other patient while washing. Patients spend many hours lying down, therefore Aalto placed the lamps in the room out of the patient's line of vision and painted the ceiling a relaxing dark green so as to avoid glare (Figure 35). The site of the building was considered a healthy location (Göran Schildt, Alvar Aalto. *The Early Years*. Rizzoli, New York, 1984).

The cautious approach and care for the building's users is admirable. “This architect's task is to restore a correct order of values...it is still the architect's duty to attempt to humanise the age of machines,” comments Aalto (Alvar

Aalto: 1955).

Special care will be taken in carrying the theme of ‘Healing Activities’ through to every detail of the building. In doing so, the building itself will also contribute to and stimulate healing. Colour has a certain psychological effect on the viewer and will be further investigated for the purpose of the project.



Figure 35: Green painted ceiling to prevent glare



Figure 36: Walkway along perimeter of building



Figure 37: Auditorium interior



Figure 38: Colour treatment of staircase



Figure 39: Detail of walls revealing different time layers through different use of materials



Figure 40: The position of the Equestrian Statue of Congrande



Figure 41: Old and new time layers

## 4.2 CASTELVECCIO

— *Heritage: Time Layers*

Location: Verona, Italy  
Architect: Carlo Scarpa  
Source: The Complete Works

Scarpa tackled the renovation of the Castelvecchio Museum as a radical restoration of the castle right from the start. The project developed into an exemplary lesson in restoration of the city's urban fabric.

As the building had suffered from mistreatment, Scarpa explored all age layers prior to restoration. He undertook the problem of enabling ancient and modern to coexist. By keeping the old and adding the new, time layers are joined, filling in the gap without concealing the wounds of time, suturing the links and revealing the joints (Figure 39). Scarpa implements renewal by restoring unity and life. By also revealing the materials that make up its corporeal essence, medieval Verona comes to life in the restoration through Scarpa's utterly creative and yet consistent genuinely modern training. The extreme freedom with which he transplants within the castle walls works in harmony with traditional Veronese materials. The solution adopted provides a fortunate and contextual solution to a complex of problems of environmental- and museum restoration. It concludes in a quiet, unprecedented architectural intervention, in which the modern concept of space becomes the dominant and unifying act.

Careful analysis and understanding of the building's layers is essential before any intervention can be made. Different time layers have been added to the old ZAR museum over a period of 108 years, which need to be evaluated and dealt with accordingly. The intervention should be via a style and materials that resemble South African culture, whereby the old and the new time layers are celebrated through a building which already survived for so many years.

### 4.3 TIJUANA PROJECT

—*Technology: Invisible Layer*

Location: flexible

Artist: Krzysztof Wodiczko

Source: <http://web.mit.edu/idg/cecut.html>

Wodiczko was the director of the Centre for Advanced Visual Studies from 1995 to 1996. He received an MFA from the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw, Poland, in 1968 and was awarded the Hiroshima Prize for his contribution as an artist to world peace in 1998 (<http://web.mit.edu/idg/cecut.html>).

The artist creates art by projecting images (holographs) upon the monumental architecture found in large cities (Figure 47). His passing projection pieces only last a day or two, but they reclaim the city streets as places for discussion and heated debate. He has labelled his style of art as 'Interrogative Design'.

Through his projection, Wodiczko tries to make it as organic as possible, as the boundaries between architecture and projected body are blurred. The skin of the building and the skin of the person would be background and foreground at the same time. One of the objectives behind his project is to bring to light all of those voices and experiences, and to animate public space with them in a kind of inspiring and provocative way – maybe in a way of protest. The participants are becoming artists, monument animators and truth tellers (Wodiczko: interview).

For the Tijuana project, Wodiczko and his team designed a headset (Figure 46) which was worn by the participant, delivering a live testimony (Figure 42–45) (see *Therapy Types: Projection*).

Wodiczko's projection types sensitively turn the original building façade into something new. An extra layer is added to the building, which is visible, yet not tangible. The colonial, strict Old Museum building façade is humanised through the projection layer and brought down to a human scale, which everyone can relate to and take part in. Wodiczko's projection method is striking, yet sensitive. It is a great way to include society, to reach out so that all affected people can quietly find their own way into healing, emotionally, physically or socially.



Figure 42: Live projected face against the Omnimax Theatre building.



Figure 47: Holographs projected against an existing building



Figure 43: Projection effect reaching wide into the city



Figure 44: Participant in front of own projection



Figure 45: Live emotion visible, live conversation

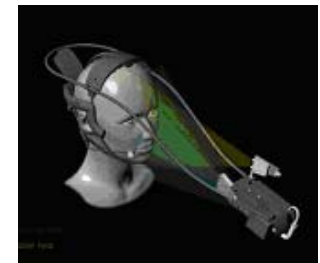


Figure 46: Head set model



Figure 48: Rock Garden of Zuiho-in Temple, Kyoto



Figure 49: Rock Garden of Ryogen-in, Kyoto

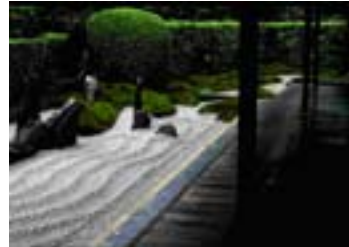


Figure 50: Zuiho-in Garden



Figure 51: Ryogen-in Garden

#### 4.4 JAPANESE ROCK GARDEN

— *Healing: Garden*

Location: Golden Gate Park, San Francisco

Architect: Unknown

Source: <http://www.educ.sfu.ca/kegan.Japangardenhome.html>

A Japanese rock garden, or Zen garden as it is known in the West, is an enclosed shallow sandbox containing sand, gravel, rocks, and occasionally grass or other natural elements. The main elements of the garden are rocks and sand, with the sea symbolised not by water, but by sand raked in patterns that suggest the rippling of water. (Figure 48, 49, 51) Plants are much less important (and sometimes nonexistent) in karesansui gardens. Zen gardens are often, but not always, meant to be viewed from a single, seated perspective, and the rocks are often associated with and named after various Chinese mountains.

Gardens typically have irregularly shaped rocks of varying sizes, some surrounded by moss, arranged in a bed of white gravel/sand (Figure 50). Large boulders are also included at shores of rock beds, enclosed by bordering shrubs (Figure 51) ([www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com)).

Not only will a Zen garden have an effect on the human psyche, but it will also stimulate the senses. Through interaction with the sand, the olfactory and visual senses, especially the tactile sense, will be triggered. The function of the sand refers back to sensory integration activities.



Figure 52: The karesansui garden in Ryōan-ji Temple, northwest Kiyoto, Japan.

## 4.5 AFRICA CENTRE FOR HEALTH

— *Humanitarian Design and Identity*

Location: Somkhele, KZN

Architect: East Coast Architects

Source: Design like you give a Damn, 2006

The Africa Centre for Health was built as a modern research facility focusing on reproductive and population issues. The objective was to unite African and international scientists in a rural setting to better understand the HIV/Aidsvirus and its effects.

The architects worked in close collaboration with the local talent, identifying artisans and craftspeople in the immediate vicinity of the planned centre. This guided many of the design decisions and resulted in a building that is both indigenous to the area and iconic (Figure 57). While sustainability is at the heart of the building, the real joy is in the spirit and openness of its space. A central courtyard situated under the landmark tower defines the interior, while its wood-slatted top captures prevailing winds which help to ventilate the building (Figure 53, 56). The entire building is filled with colour, bringing a sense of life and vitality (Architecture for Humanity 2006: 240).

The humanitarian approach to design – designing a building that addresses the inhabitant's needs – in my opinion, makes for a successfully operational building. It is important, to clothe the new intervention with its own local, or iconic style. The new needs to be distinguished from the old- the new having local, humanitarian character.

Holistic functioning of a building is vital for the smooth running of operations. This issue needs to be brought in to the Activities Centre.



Figure 53: Courtyard roof



Figure 54: Locally manufactured sun shaders



Figure 55: Entrance



Figure 56: Water tanks in tower



Figure 57: Front view of the Africa Centre fore Health



Figure 58: Side view onto glass-enclosed portal



Figure 59: Close-up view of glass partition



Figure 60: Portal seen in wider context

## 4.6 PIETERMARITZBURG CITY HALL

— *Heritage: Time Layers*

Location: Pietermaritzburg, KZN

Architect: Unknown

Source: Pietermaritzburg City Hall Tourist Leaflet

The Pietermaritzburg City Hall is one of the city's best loved landmarks. It stands on the corner of Commercial Road and Church Street in Victorian splendour, as a constant reminder to visitors and residents alike of a long-gone era. It is regarded as the largest all-brick building in the Southern Hemisphere.

What is interesting is that the Pietermaritzburg City Hall was completed at the same time as the museum in Boom Street, yet the two have completely different styles. The original entrance of the city hall is similar to the museum in that it has an open-air foyer (Figure 60). A glass partitioning system was delicately added to the city hall's foyer in order to ensure better security and access control (Figure 58, 59). A similar system will be

needed for the entrance point at the museum, in which the original material is respected and left unharmed. An additional glass partition is needed to privatise the foyer from the street activities.

## 4.7 KZNSA GALLERY — *Combining Art and Coffee*

Location: Glenwood, Durban

Architect: Unknown

Source: [www.kznsagallery.co.za](http://www.kznsagallery.co.za) and visit

The Kwa-Zulu-Natal Society of Art Gallery is dedicated to promoting contemporary artists and art groups, and hosts and initiates exhibitions of local, national and international stature and relevance. A building extension was added onto steps in an existing park, incorporating an outdoor, light feeling into the inside of the building (Figure 65). Good natural lighting furthermore adds to the success of the building. The two-storey art gallery is combined with a curio shop and an indoor/outdoor restaurant (Figure 63, 64). Thus, the restaurant visitors enjoy the art exhibition, while the art lovers enjoy the light atmosphere of the restaurant (Figure 61, 62). Art and food can be enjoyed at the same place, at the same time.

The art exhibition of the proposed Activities Centre is situated between the foyer and café. The combination of art and coffee will make it a unique experience, where both may be enjoyed at the same time. Normally, more time is spent in a coffee shop in comparison to a walk through an art exhibition. By combining the two in the café, with the art exhibition spilling over into the café, art is further promoted. Promotions, for example Christmas artefacts, could be on display, intriguing the coffee drinker to possibly buy an artefact.



Figure 63: The interior exhibition space links to the outside



Figure 64: High volume space



Figure 65: The former park stairs now form part of the restaurant



Figure 61: Street view onto gallery



Figure 62: Link between inside and outside, coffee and art



## 4.8 MARGARET ROBERTS

### — *Healing: Herbs*

Location: De Wildt, Pretoria

Source: Discovery Magazine

The queen of herbs currently resides on a plot in De Wildt, where she is enjoying great success with her Herbal Centre. The centre offers herbal retail, a tea garden, a chapel, a labyrinth, a sand garden and much more. Roberts also interacts with the public, where the audience listens carefully to advice from South Africa's First Lady of healing herbs and fragrances.

"We are so clever," she says, "but our bodies are not coping with our own cleverness. We are doing terrible things to ourselves today. We have never had so much cancer, so many short fuses, and so much road rage. And have you noticed how few children smile these days?" "It is absolutely unbelievable, the things these plants contain." (Roberts 2007: 86)

The joys and wonders of herbs include, amongst others:

Sage: excellent for the throat, brain and kidneys. (Figure 66)

Peppermint: effective tonic for the whole system. (Figure 67)

Rosemary: has a restorative and energising powers. (Figure 68)

Ginger: helps build resistance when grated into food or made into tea (Figure 69)

Pennywort: nourishes skin and boosts circulation (Figure 70)

Lavender: Robert's personal favourite, has exquisite smell and miraculous, medicinal properties. (Figure 71)

(Jenni O'Grady: Discovery Magazine, 37-9).

By using medicinal herbs, either in the forms of tea, crème or food, the emotional and/or physical is stimulated to heal. Herbal remedies trigger the olfactory, gustatory and tactile senses and are a natural way to find harmony. The menu of the coffee shop in the centre will revolve around herbal teas, herbal light meals and herbal delicatessen.



Figure 66: Sage

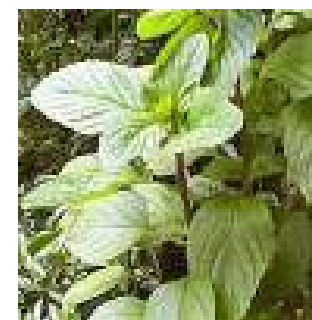


Figure 67: Peppermint



Figure 68: Rosemary



Figure 69: Ginger



Figure 70: Pennywort



Figure 71: Lavender