
CONCLUSION

CHAPTER 11

This thesis set out to investigate meaning and life in architecture through the design of a Hospice which facilitated the process of dying. The juxtaposition of such elemental forces as life and death helped throw the concepts into stronger contrast, creating a rich research field to draw from. After investigating the area it became evident that although meaning and life was discussed frequently and expounded as a good design principle it was never quite pinned down, nor defined. When such definition was given it became to the architectural style, or was so broad it could apply to anything one could dream up.

The thesis then endeavoured to find its own principles by which life could be achieved and it was argued that through the embodiment of movement, visual interest, meaning, memory, choice and integration, life could be brought to the architectural form. And that this would not only create a dynamic architectural aesthetic that responded to its surroundings, but would also support the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of the Hospice's patients, their family and community members. The design then attempted to embody these principles while providing a facility that not only embodied life, but could indeed function efficiently and correctly for its needs. The concept was applied right down to the detailed connections and woven spaces of the dying.

Mamelodi proved to be an exciting and dynamic area within which to work, with many opportunities and design informants, which greatly affected the design process and development of the concept - for community involvement was of great importance to allow the building to achieve life. For if the building - through lack of social sustainability - became shunned, it would impact negatively on the surround area, making the space a place of only death.

The research and conclusions drawn through the process of completing this thesis are far from exhaustive and defining. But one opinion amongst many on the subject matter, tailored for the specific site and circumstances surrounding the design and functions of a hospice within the context of Mamelodi.

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