



Precedent & Case Studies



Illus 4 (Various)



4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will serve to elaborate on several design precedents and case studies (personally visited) which have influenced the design project. These studies have been chosen according to the criterion of heritage interventions, cultural production and community upliftment. Each study will be critically analysed and the applicability to the design project will be emphasised.

4.2 HERITAGE

4.2.1 Rehabilitation of Santa Caterina Market, Barcelona (2005), by Enric Miralles Benedetta Tagliabue Architects (EMBT)

This project is concerned with the intervention to a deteriorating 1845 neoclassical rectangular building by introducing the new programmes of a produce market and housing for the elderly (Cohn, 2006: [99]). The site is located within the slum area of Barcelona's Gothic quarter, within close proximity to the Barcelona Cathedral, Picasso Museum and Ramblas. Although intersecting vehicular routes tended to detach the site from these iconic centres, the introduction of a new urban framework within this precinct opened opportunity for public access (Cohn, 2006: [100]).

EMBT's predominant design goal was to approach the historical fabric with the intention of preservation as an alternative to demolition, which is prevalent in the precinct (Tagliabue, 2006 in Cohn, 2006: [99]).

The design action occurred as follows:

Public access to the pedestrian was improved through the continuation of the pavement floor material, granite, to the interior of the market (Tagliabue, 2006 in Cohn, 2006: [101]).

The existing narrow streets were extended through the creation of crevices for points of entry to the market (Cohn, 2006: [103]). This increase in street width would serve to establish difference in hierarchy by implying public function.

The introduction of mixed use programmes which combine shopping and housing (Cohn, 2006: [100]) increases facilities for local residents and introduces new permanent (living) and temporary (shopping) activity in a previously abandoned space.

The introduction of a new undulating roof structure (Illus 4.1) implies new energy through contrast with the existing. It has the potential to act as a branding element, while colours symbolise the Mediterranean produce (Cohn, 2006: [103]), thereby reflecting what is inside the building. The roof creates new volumetric spaces inside and allows clerestory lighting at certain points along the facade (Cohn, 2006: [102]). Hand crafted trusses lend a sense of appropriation of space to the current user within an envelope which is of a different time.



Illus 4.1 Santa Caterina Market's colourful roof (Cohn, 2006: [100])



Illus 4.2 Santa Caterina Market street view (Cohn, 2006: [101])



Illus 4.3 Santa Caterina Market interior (Cohn, 2006: [100])

Although EMBT's rehabilitation of Santa Caterina Market does serve to introduce new use to abandoned, and slum areas, the success of the design intervention is heavily dependent on the success of the urban framework as a means to improve safety and increase public access to this region. The undulating roof is visually dominant from the street view (Illus 4.2) and demands attention due to its colourful tiles. This treatment is isolated and unique to the building and could serve to diminish the success and recognition of other public spaces within the precinct. Although the use of colour symbolises that of Mediterranean produce found inside the building, this treatment, as a branding element, has unclear meaning without explanation.

This project finds relevance to the design since it is also concerned with intervention to historical fabric. The use of symbolism of colour in the design is of critical value and can be utilised in the individual project with subtlety or obvious interpretations through colour, pattern and texture. The roof structure, as a reflection of the new intervention is also significant in that old is distinguishable from new work, a principle consistent with the guidelines of the Burra Charter (Australia, 1999: 7).

The use of the undulating roof has given rise to interesting light and volumes within the building's interior (Illus 4.3); principles which are to be implemented in the individual design. The use of rounded shapes and curving spaces challenge the rectangular geometry of the historical fabric and is representative of new energy in a previously decaying space. This exploration in the individual design is worthwhile since the 1909 CEO has lost relevance to the 2011 POPUP and a change in spatial perception might assist in appropriation to current occupation (user, time, programme). EMBT's attitude towards working with historical architecture through preservation, adaptation and new work as opposed to demolition is noteworthy and consistent with the views of the individual design project.

4.2.2 Ogilvy Offices, Durban (2010), by Egg Design

This project involved an interior design intervention to an existing classic revival building within the Point harbour area of Durban city. This building is an example of adaptive reuse projects prevalent within the precinct which convert warehouse spaces to offices and residential apartments. Ogilvy is an advertising agency which decided to settle its offices within this changing precinct due to its proximity to the city and its harbour views (Schauffer, 2011: 25).

The office's entrance was treated with bold, painted red strip along the exterior facade as an attempt to establish hierarchy and branding (Illus 4.4). This was done as a means to highlight the entrance to Ogilvy's office space along a block-long facade of other offices and residences (Schauffer, 2011: 25).

The design was predominantly influenced by connection to the harbour views through interior elements. The use of shipping containers as an envelope for the boardroom and the application of crate panels as a floor finish are among the visual elements utilised from the shipping environment (Schauffer, 2011: 26) (Illus 4.5).

Historical elements were interpreted through contemporary means to create furniture and finishes which are nostalgic but responsive to current trends. The use of floral carpets and laser cut Victorian profiles contrast the slick boardroom chair (Schauffer, 2011: 26) (Illus 4.6).

Although the building entrance is highlighted with a red strip, the impact to the exterior of the building is minimal. This branding element does establish hierarchy of entrance, but neglects in communicating the activities of the interior clearly and explicitly. Although Ogilvy's signage is placed along this facade, its role and function remains unexplained.

The use of shipping materials is regarded successful in establishing a low impact connection to the context using interior design.

This project finds relevance to the individual design since it is an interior design specific example of intervention to historical architecture within South Africa.

The 1909 CEO / 2011 POPUP can borrow the aspects of railway connection to the building through utilising discarded railway elements as material for finishes, product and furniture design. This can serve to re-establish the historical connection of the building to the railway development without imposing on the new programme of the building. The use of colour in hierarchy can be used to highlight circulation and distinguish between public and private spaces within the 1909 CEO / 2011 POPUP. The use of new processes, such as laser cutting, to imitate the intricacy and details of past design elements, such as the staircase cast iron infill will be considered as a tool for product and furniture design.



Illus 4.4 Entrance (Schauffer, 2011: 25)

Illus 4.5 Harbour Elements (Schauffer, 2011: 24)



Illus 4.6 Boardroom Materials (Schauffer, 2011: 26)

4.2.3 Cape Quarter, Cape Town (2007) by Archilab Architects

This design comprises of an adaptive reuse project which involved the conversion of an entire block of historical buildings into a new mixed use commercial centre (Cape Quarter, 2009) (Illus 4.7). The block was initially designed as rentable residential buildings for the poor in the early 1800's (Cape Quarter, 2009). In the 1850's, several buildings within the block adopted public and retail functions such as schools and stores (Cape Quarter, 2009). The building changed ownership two times which involved changes to other functions including breweries, apartments and brothels, until it eventually became Cape Quarter in 2007 (Cape Quarter, 2009).

The heritage approach to the block involved retaining and preserving the street facing facades and two structural walls of each of the block's buildings. The back walls have been removed to create outdoor shopping spaces which spill out to the back of the block seamlessly from the building interior. This interior exterior relationship (Illus 4.9) is considered successful since it opts to incorporate the courtyard space as a continuation of the shopping experience from entry to exit.

The treatment of the facade (Illus 4.8) was critical, since the design entailed the addition of a first floor within the existing space. The new facades, extended from the existing historical ones below, are predominantly glazed, contrasting the existing and allowing natural light into the building. The new facade design contrasts the existing facade to the extent that they are aesthetically isolated.



Illus 4.7 Historical Images of the block and users (Cape Quarter, 2009)

The historical fabric is preserved and unaltered, with poor transition to the contemporary new. The potential for a street front shop front along the historical facade is not exploited and seems to be a wasted opportunity.

The historical programme of the building is not considered. Most shops appear to be expensive and exclusive, ignoring the block's initial user group: the poor who were in need of accommodation close to the city. Although there is a craft workshop within the building, the target market for these products is the affluent. The Cape Quarter, in this way, rejects a sense of social responsibility to its user heritage.

This case study is of relevance since it is a contemporary intervention on historical architecture within the South African context. Although the facade treatment acts in isolation to the existing facade, the opportunity for using windows as opposed to hard fabric on upper levels allows the distinction between old and new, while changing the character of interior space by adding natural light. The opening of the back of the block to a protected courtyard introduces the opportunity for usable space which is a continuation of the interior. This principle may be utilised along the railway edge of the 1909 CEO / 2011 POPUP which is currently enclosed and introverted. The spilling of activity to the exterior may be a branding element, enhance user experience and provide opportunity for temporary interventions outside.



Illus 4.8 Cape Quarter facade (Author, 2011)



Illus 4.9 Interior Exterior Space (Cape Quarter, 2009)

4.2.4 TATE Modern, London (2000) by Herzog and De Mueron

This project entailed the alteration of an existing historical building previously used as the Bankside power station (Craig-Martin, 2000: 14). It was decided that the abandoned building be transformed into a new gallery for modern art (Craig-Martin, 2000: 15). Due to its central location, large scale, transport accessibility and position along the river bank, the site was perfectly suited to the new gallery.

The building, previously intended for the industrial purpose of serving the district with power, was designed to house large machinery and plant equipment, resulting in free, high volume open spaces, creating suitable potential for re-inhabitation once the machinery was removed. (Craig-Martin, 2000: 15)

The intervention entailed the removal of machinery, the acceptance of the space within the Bankside building shell, and the introduction of a new five story structure of galleries, circulation and services. The intervention sought to accept the industrial character of the existing building and to incorporate this with the new design. A new skylight (light beam) was installed above the existing roof, and treated with glazing, but as a rectilinear form which communicates as new structure, while connects to the form of the old (Craig-Martin, 2000: 19) (Illus 4.10).

This project is relevant to the design project since it also involves intervention with new occupation on an historical, rectangular, solid building with a previous industrial relationship. Although the scale of the Tate Modern drastically exceeds that of the 2011 POPUP, its principles of interior re-purposing, maintenance of the facade, play with high volumes, installation of a sky light, and introduction of new structure are appropriate to the design project.

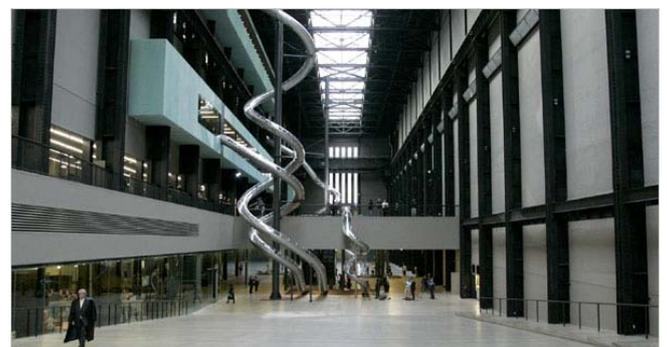
Although the Tate Modern is commendable in its sensitive approach to minimal impact on the historical fabric, the absence of apparent change to the building's exterior does not communicate the drastic change in the building's occupation.

The only visible transformation is apparent in the new skylight and through exterior signage. The design approach to the 2011 POPUP, will balance the act of new construction and conservation of the historical fabric such that the transformation in occupation would be visible through the built form.

The use of skylights and the treatment of atrium spaces (Illus 4.11) are noteworthy and will inform the design project in the consideration of material choice, volume and circulation.



Illus 4.10 Tate Modern (Perrin, 2002)



Illus 4.11 Tate Modern Volume, Skylight and Atrium (Smith, 2004)

4.2.4 Jolie Toujours, Tokyo (2008) by Ryoko Ando and MS4D



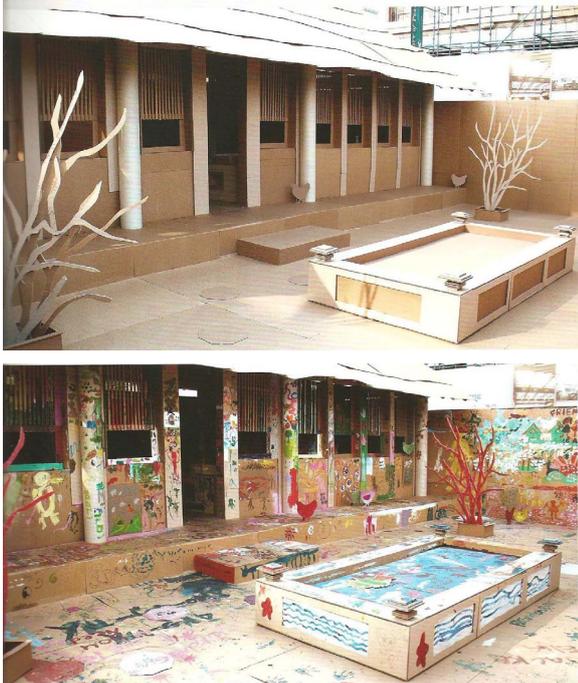
Illus 4.12 Jolie Toujours (Takahashi, 2008: 5)

Jolie Toujours is a knick knock store for women in their twenties and thirties. Ryoko decided to utilise classical historical elements as the basis for the design aesthetic. She abstracted defining elements of furniture and products of the classic age by drafting their profiles and using these as flat surfaces in display and product design (Illus 4.12). All elements were constructed using laser cut medium density fibre board finished with high gloss acrylic white paint. (Takahasi, 2008: 59).

Although the store is visually pleasing and interesting, the choice of the classical age does not originate from any meaning or interpretation. It is contrived and thereby seems superficial; an aspect which the designer strove to avoid (Takashi, 2008: 59). The use of abstraction of historical elements from a particular age and their reinterpretation in a contemporary manner, through materials, colour, texture and patterns can provide a meaningful part of the product and furniture design process with regards to the 1909 CEO and its connection to 2011 POPUP.

4.3 CULTURAL PRODUCTION

4.3.1 Imagine life on the other side of the planet, Perth (2008), by March Studio in the Awesome Arts Festival



Illus 4.13 Imagine life on the other side of the planet (Kimme, 2008: 53)

This project involved the construction of a full scale Chinese courtyard house in cardboard by March Studio and then, the introduction of 750 children with art materials, given the instruction “Imagine life on the other side of the planet” (Kimme, 2008: 53). The result appears to be a vibrant and colourful space appropriated individually and collectively by the children (Illus 4.12, Illus 4.13).

This project provides a meaningful precedent for appropriation of the a-contextual by users. Since the 1909 CEO is of a past time, programme and user, its ideal state is not appropriate to its current user time and programme of 2011 POPUP. Through allowing personalisation of surfaces and spaces, the building may be appropriated by its current users who would be reflected in the space they inhabit. Murals, adjustable and modifiable work spaces, display surfaces and changing exhibitions can lend to this sense of appropriation.

4.3.2 Kasa Digitalia, Milan (2008), by Karim Rashid



Illus 4.14 Kasa Digitalia (De Wild2, 2008: 65)

The company, Abet Laminati required a design of a concept house stand to advertise their new plastic laminate (De Wild2, 2008: 65). Karim Rashid designed hexagonal shaped spaces adorned with strips of patterns, creating a space reminiscent of a kaleidoscope (De Wild2, 2008: 65) (Illus 4.14).

The patterns chosen for the space, although decorative and vibrant, were chosen at random and are therefore devoid of contextual meaning to the concept house and its users. According to Rashid, pattern is an opportunity for decoration which provides the potential for customisation and expression (De Wild2, 2008: 65).

Pattern in the 1909 CEO is recognised in the chequered tile floors. These tiles are to be preserved as an intrinsic quality of the building’s historic character. Pattern use for appropriation can provide an interesting design element in the treatment of surfaces and 3 dimensional objects. Patterns to be utilised should, however, originate from a point of meaning and significance to the built fabric and its current users. Potential inspiration for pattern includes textiles, the railway line, crafting techniques and materials and historical wallpapers.

4.4 COMMUNITY

4.4.1 Barking Skills Centre, London (due 2012) by Rick Mather Architects

Barking Skills Centre (Illus 4.15, Illus 4.16) is an educational facility for 14 to 19 year olds with training programmes in hospitality, hair and beauty, construction and information technology (Rick Mather Architects, 2009).

This training centre is unique in that it sees itself as a college type facility which operates during flexible hours and offers an environment which is more conducive to the working world when compared to schools (Rick Mather Architects, 2009).

The Barking Methodist Church is alongside the skills centre (Illus 4.17) and the educational and religious typologies share meeting rooms, a square and community functions (Rick Mather Architects, 2009). The centre is also partially accessible to the public for events, seminars and lectures (Rick Mather Architects, 2009).

Although the Barking Skills Centre is an exemplary precedent of an educational facility, its user group is not thoroughly explored or expressed in the design process. 14 to 19 year old children are of schooling age, and the replacement of school with a skills centre in the lives of these users requires responsibility towards life skills training, counselling and support structures.

Although the user profile differs between Barking skills centre and POPUP, both user groups are of a background that requires life guidance and direction. In the case of POPUP, these are provided by POPUP counsellors and the treatment of these spaces is crucial, considering the role of life skills on the user.

The potential for religious facilities and public facilities to share spaces with the educational is worth investigation, especially since POPUP is a charitable organisation with many other interests (health care, child care and donation). The provision of a shared and overlapped space that addresses the users of the clinic, crèche and skills centre can be a meaningful exploration.



Illus 4.15 Barking Skills Centre and square (Rick Mather Architects, 2009)



Illus 4.16 Barking Skills Centre and context (Rick Mather Architects, 2009)



Illus 4.17 Barking Skills Centre and the Barking Methodist Church (Rick Mather Architects, 2009)

4.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter has served to introduce various precedent and case studies pertinent to the design project. These were investigated to varying degrees, with relevance to their impact on the design process. The use of colour, light and pattern are to be utilised as design elements and the process of appropriation through customising is another significant outcome for cultural production. The study of the Barking skills centre has highlighted the role of 2011 POPUP as an educational facility, providing clarity for the design approach. The variety of heritage studies has provided a number of possibilities with regards to the architecture, interior design and product design processes.