

It has thus been ascertained that the UP Mamelodi campus functions as an island in the midst of its community; a community which is in real need of **education and guidance** and could benefit substantially from the input of such an institution. The importance of **designed public open space**, the value of **local identity and pride**, and the essential need to **involve the community** in the development process from the beginning have also been discussed. If applied, these four points have the ability to empower members of the community, be it in a physical or psychological capacity.

The Mamelodi University campus has the power to become a facilitator of this empowerment; a vehicle for change; an institution that uplifts its community and becomes an integral part of its everyday functioning. This could be achieved by rethinking the functioning of the open buffer zone surrounding the University heart. Instead of being 'dead space', this area could be transformed into a landscape of value, both to the University and to the surrounding community. It could function as the common ground; a transition zone where the University and the community can come together and be of value to one another.

There are two different types of value, qualitative and quantitative, and this transition zone has the ability to accommodate both, thereby ensuring a richer, more experiential landscape; a landscape of meaning.

If implemented, this landscape of value will connect and integrate the University with its surroundings, as well as enabling the University to progress from being an island to becoming a catalyst for growth and development at the heart of the community. By using existing resources, such as stormwater channels and the rich and diverse culture and abilities of the surrounding people, such changes can be easily achieved.

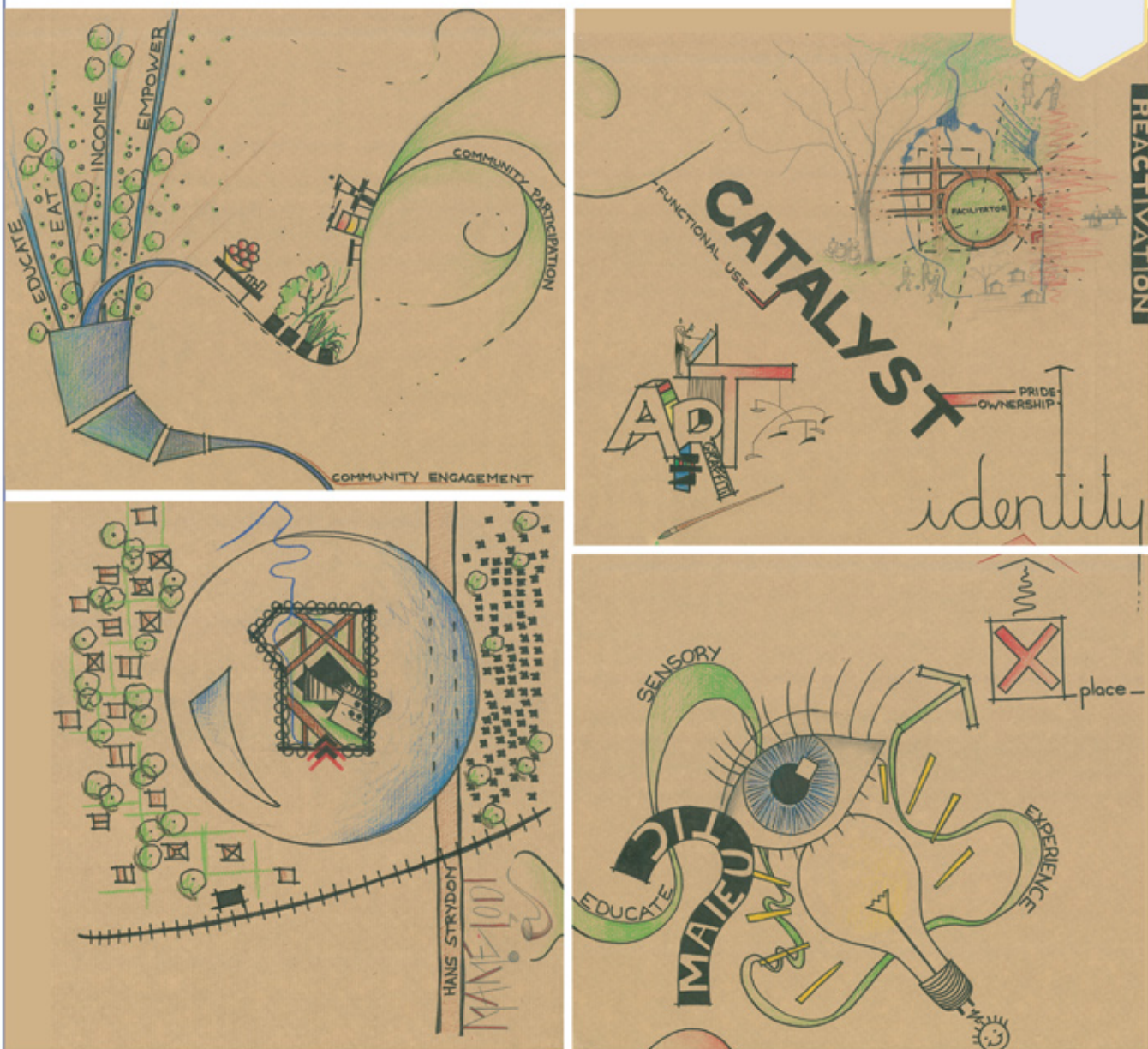


Figure 31: Conceptual ideas on the improvement and integration of the UP Mamelodi campus (Author, 2008)

The university as a facilitator; a vehicle for empowerment, both physical and psychological.
 The university as a means for building relationships and creating connections.
 The university as the heart of the community; an integrated whole...

Part 1: Two levels of value

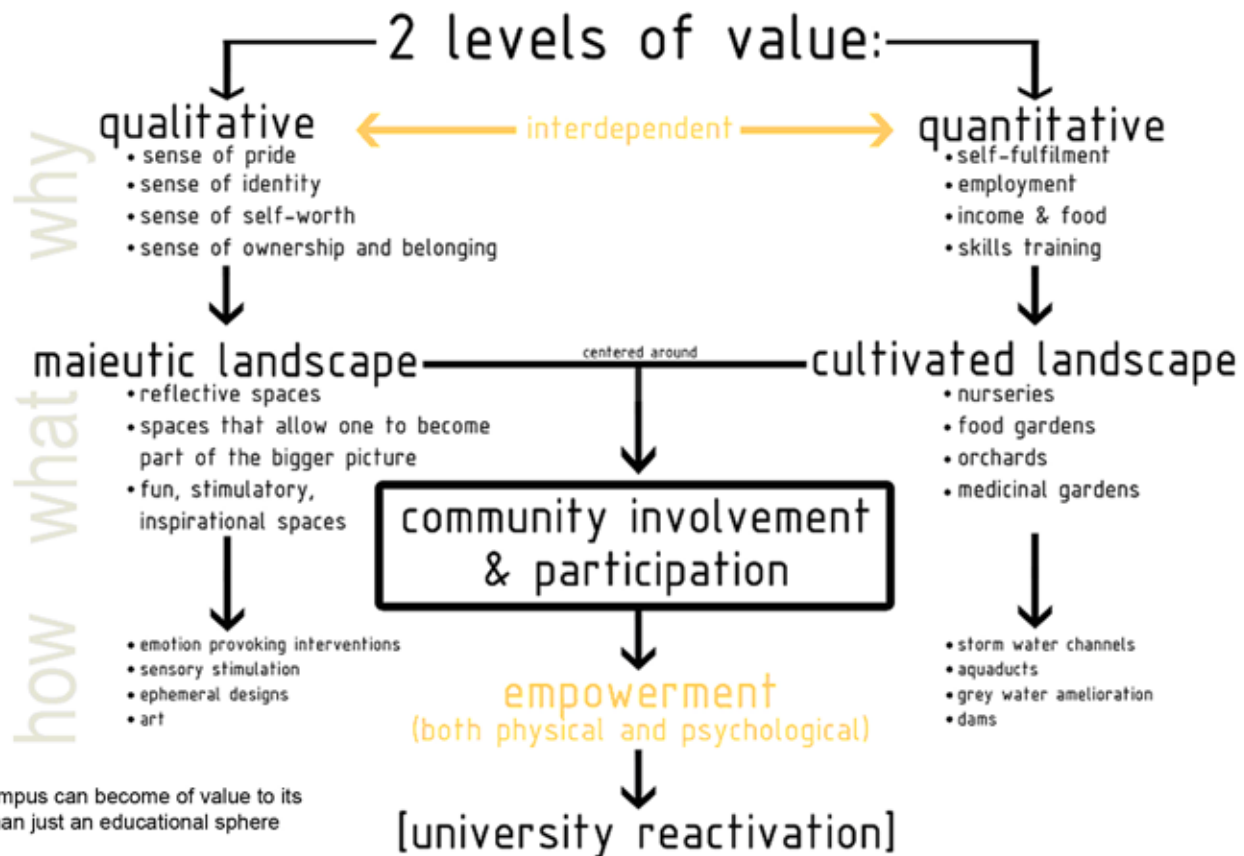


Figure 32:
The UP Mamelodi campus can become of value to its community in more than just an educational sphere (Author, 2008)

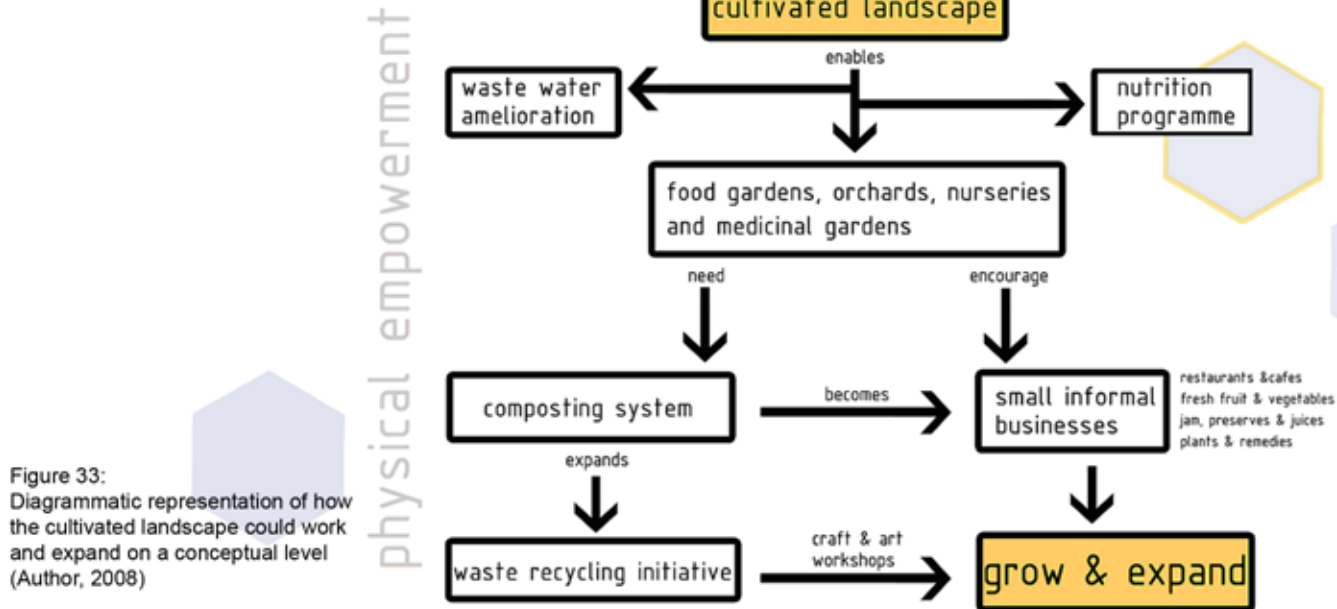
The transition zone between the residential areas and the formal campus should be transformed into a landscape of life. A landscape that becomes a solution, a provider, an educator, a catalyst for change, a platform for opportunity... This can be achieved through the design, detailing and spatial orientation of the interventions; by adding value to the area on both a quantitative and qualitative level. These two elements, quantitative and qualitative, are interdependent; one will not function optimally without the other, as shown in Figure 32 above. Quantitative value can be achieved through the design and implementation of a **cultivated landscape**, while qualitative value is obtained by creating a place of identity - a **maieutic landscape** (refer to Figure 32).

The maieutic encourages pride and ownership, ensuring that the landscape will be maintained and cared for, while the cultivated landscape ensures appreciation on a functional and practical level. Gallagher (1993:218) believes that "over time, individuals ... will come to prefer - even enjoy - the elements of natural environments that have increased their ability to function, and that pleasure motivates further awareness of those stimuli." Therefore, the design as a whole boosts the well-being of the community, thereby motivating further awareness and appreciation of the landscape.

3. Maieutic:

Serving to bring a person's latent ideas into clear consciousness (Thompson, 1996:821). Refer to page 20 for a more detailed explanation.

Part 2: The Cultivated Landscape



The cultivated landscape is educational in that it teaches people basic skills on how to plant, grow, harvest and utilise their produce. This incorporates the community in a working nutrition program while at the same time offering them with a sustainable form of income. Existing storm water channels will be manipulated in order to feed the food gardens, nurseries and medicinal gardens providing the produce. These gardens can also act as catalysts leading to bigger and better things, for instance, the development of small businesses like cafes, composting centres and markets as shown in the diagram above.

These interventions also present an opportunity for the community to participate in the creation of something meaningful. As Hamdi (2004:21) says, we should “liberate the latent potential of the everyday” by making the ordinary special and the special more accessible (Hamdi, 2004:xix). Gardens are one of the best ways of doing this as they “represent fast, highly visible changes that serve as neighbourhood rallying points. Reports on the effects of gardening projects, particularly in low income neighbourhoods, give evidence of increased neighbourliness leading to an enriched sense of community” (Lewis in Francis & Hester, 1990:247). This functional landscape also provides time for contemplation, relaxation and reflection, and can be psychologically beneficial in itself. “Through peace and tranquillity, enhancement of self-esteem, demonstration of long and enduring patterns in life, [and] connectedness to larger concepts, gardens and gardening are healing” (Lewis in Francis & Hester, 1990:250).

Figure 34:
The empowerment of many
(Anglo Platinum Kotula Trust, 2008:16)



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psychological empowerment

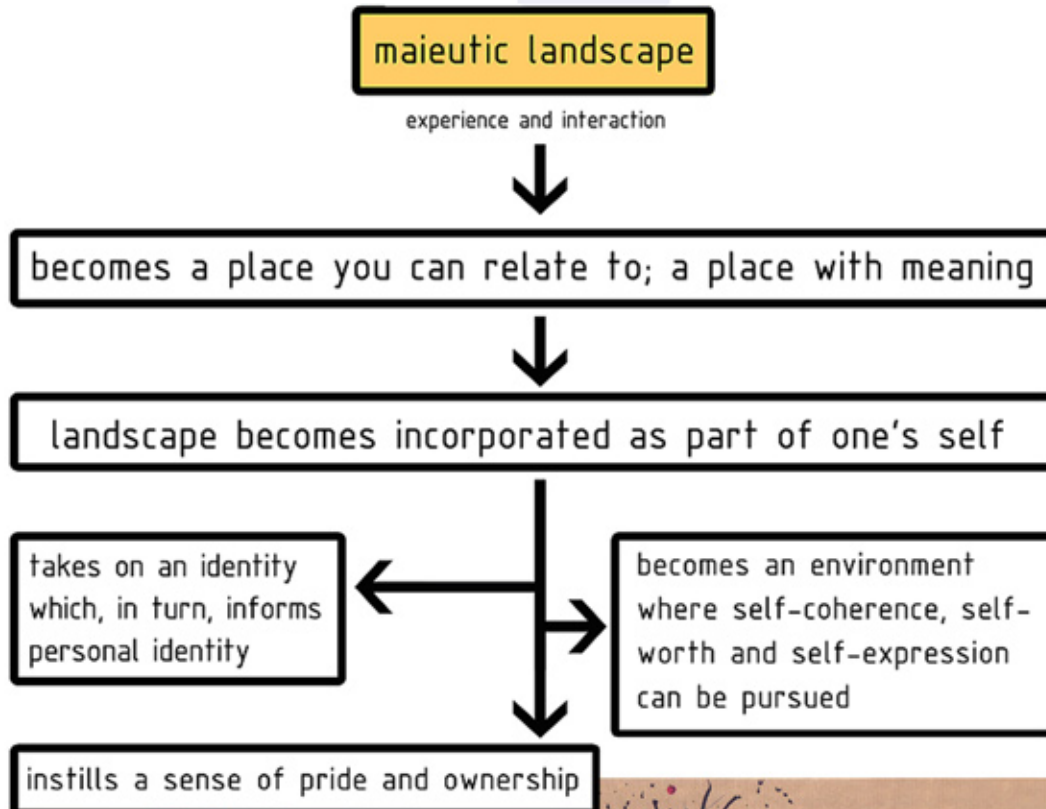


Figure 35:
Conceptual idea of how a maieutic landscape can influence a person's experience of a place (Author, 2008)



Figure 36:
Diagrammatic representation of the meaning of 'maieutic' (Author, 2008)

Maieutic is defined as that which “serves to bring a person’s latent ideas into clear consciousness” (Thom, 1996:821). Mamelodi, because of its social infrastructure and the hardships that people endure on a daily basis, is in need of elements which stimulate ideas of self-worth, self-confidence, self-fulfillment and well-being. In other words, the main aim of maieutic involvement in Mamelodi is psychological empowerment. The design will therefore attempt to create three different types of spaces which the author believes will achieve this aim. These are spaces for reflection and restoration; spaces where one feels as though they are connected to a larger system; and spaces where one can simply play, have fun, be inspired and forget all one’s worries for a while.

3.1) Reflective spaces

Reflective spaces serve as small sanctuaries off the beaten path where people can go to collect their thoughts, relax, take in their surroundings, make plans and just be at peace. Friedberg (1996:95) is of the opinion that although light, wind, sun, sky, shadow, reflection, temperature, seasons and time are omnipresent, they are also common and familiar, and therefore go unnoticed. This is true, and it is only when one of these elements causes discomfort or unprecedented happiness that we actually notice it. The landscape can be designed in such a way that these elements are once again seen and appreciated, enabling them to bring pleasure to the viewer and in so doing, to restore, renew and inspire. It is these elements that create places in which reflection and peace are possible, and unfortunately, there are few such spaces of escape in Mamelodi even though they are necessary for the optimal functioning of everyday life.

3.2) Being connected to a larger system

These spaces where one goes to commune with oneself are equally as important as spaces where one feels part of the bigger picture. Communal gathering spaces are integral to the building of community spirit, and to the functioning of society as a whole. There are however two different types of ‘bonding’ spaces; those in which people can come together, and those where man and nature become one. These spaces allow a person to feel as though they are part of a larger natural system; spaces where man can commune with nature on a deeper, more spiritual level.

3.3) Inspiration and fun

The natural environment is also usually where one will find inspirational spaces that stimulate feelings of freedom and fun; spaces where one can play, fantasize and leave all other worries behind. This is known as the ‘play theory’, which Appleton (1975:170) defines as an aesthetic experience allowing a release and escape from the pressure of reality. It revolves around the assumption that “freedom can be found when personal activity is liberated from control by objective factors”.

“Play is an overlooked part of contemporary city life and one of the most neglected aspects of the public realm. Opportunities for spontaneous action, surprise and pleasure for all age groups ... make dense urban environments liveable and humane. Encouraging and prompting play makes public spaces safer and more cared for by encouraging lingering and interaction with the space rather than merely using the public realm as a corridor” (Cumberlidge and Musgrave, 2007:207).

Figure 37:
Man and nature become one
(Digitally manipulated by author, 2008)



3.4) The experience of space

The above mentioned spaces all overlap in their functions, i.e. play spaces can accommodate a gathering of people; reflective spaces are often used as areas in which to commune with nature, etc. These spaces are not programmed and allow people the freedom to use them as they see fit. The main requirement is simply that anyone who uses these spaces, experiences them. According to Dewey (1934:246), experience is concerned with the interaction of an organism with its environment; an environment that is human as well as physical and that includes the materials of traditions and institutions as well as local surroundings. The organism also brings with it native and acquired forces that play a part in the interaction, thereby ensuring that everyone's experience of a place is different.

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In order for us to make sense of these experiences, however, we need to be provided with 'in-between' areas where reflection can take place and information can be assimilated. Cullen (1971:10) believes that what brings an experience alive is the drama of juxtaposition brought about by contrast and change: the locations at which here becomes there. He believes these transitional experiences to be crucial to our ability to sustain psychological engagement with our surroundings. Without them, he says that our surroundings will just slip past us featureless and inert.

In other words, there need to be patches of focused stimulation connected by linear threads that bind them together within the greater whole. How one experiences these patches is the key to the creation of successful places, and ultimately to psychological empowerment. According to Lynch (1972:1), a desirable experience is one which "celebrates and enlarges the present while making connections with past and future". This is what a maieutic landscape is about – the creation of spaces which are used, experienced, appreciated and remembered.

Maieutic landscapes are very similar to works of environmental art, where the artist extrapolates the existing urban environment thereby sensitizing the viewer to it and demanding their involvement in it (Friedberg, 1970:99). This heightened experience can be achieved by making use of four specific techniques. These comprise the stimulation of the five senses, the emphasis and use of ephemeral, moving matter, the use of art and creative expression within the landscape, and the evocation of emotion. Combined, these interventions have the ability to stimulate sensory perception, encourage contemplation and maximise experience thereby changing the way we look at the world, and the way in which we see ourselves.

3.5) Ephemeral qualities

Halprin (in Howett, 1987:116) asserts that what is significant is not so much the understanding of what exists at any given moment in time, but that the existence is ephemeral and in constant motion. Transient experiences ensure that the viewer has more chance of noticing the element than if it was a static object he was seeing for the tenth time. As each viewer experiences and understands things differently, it matters not exactly what the experience means, but that it means something.



Figure 38 & 39:
The ephemeral nature of plants - vegetation that changes its patterns, textures, colours, size, smell, etc. (Acacia xanthophloea. Author, 2007) (The Ephemeral Garden, Paris, France. Hohenadel, 2008)

3.6) The use of art

Another technique that will stimulate different understandings and meanings is the use of art and creative expression in place-making. One of the advantages of art is that it does not require one to overcome language barriers or cultural differences before it can be 'understood'; it has the ability to stimulate thoughts and ideas in anyone. Dewey (1934:270) says that "art is the most universal and freest form of communication", that it "weds man and nature" and that it "renders men aware of their union with one another in origin and destiny". According to Dissanayake (1992:34), "art can be considered as a behaviour (a 'need', fulfilment of which feels good) like play, something humans do because it helps them to survive". She says that "this behavioural tendency is inherited, and thus both indelible and universal. That is to say, it is not the exclusive possession of just a select few; rather, like swimming or lovemaking, art is a behaviour potentially available to everyone because all humans have the predisposition to do it".

Art is therefore good for people. According to Thompson (1996:69), art is defined as "the various branches of creative activity concerned with the production of imaginative designs, sounds or ideas". In other words, art is any and all forms of creative expression. Music is a form of art with the power to move us transcendentally; by means of music a supra-individual state is created in which composer and listener can exist, together, joined in a common consciousness (Dissanayake, 1992:119). If a natural element, i.e. wind or water is the composer of a melody, then it follows that man, as the listener, and nature can become one. Seamon (in Walmsley, 1988:63) says that "individuals do not experience the world as an object, but rather are fused with the world through a web of feelings". Art, in any form, therefore has the ability to evoke emotion which triggers specific feelings depending on the nature of the art and the mental state of the viewer. The depth of emotion determines the poignancy of the experience. "Emotion is understood as the tension or excitement level produced by the interaction of brain processes of perception, expectation, memory, etc." (Dissanayake, 1992:176).



Figure 40:
Public art in Dublin city centre, Ireland (Author, 2006)

Figure 41:
Singing Ringing Tree (Richardson, 2007:98)
A musical sculpture that sings with the movement of the wind



3.7) Sensory stimulation

Emotions are however, not only triggered by art, but can also be activated by sensory stimulation. According to Gallagher (1993:127) our relationship with the larger world is built from countless sensory interactions between us and our settings. How we experience the physical environment therefore depends upon the stimulation of the five senses, for instance, what you see, in addition to what you hear, smell, how it feels, and the memories and emotions evoked by these clues. The more senses the design stimulates, the greater the experience of the place will be.

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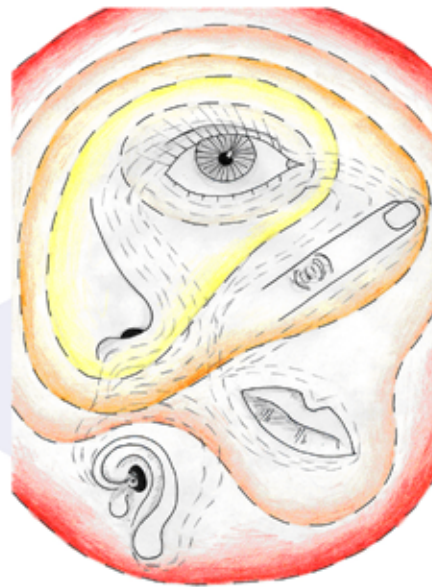


Figure 43:
The more senses one stimulates, the more intense the experience becomes (Author, 2008)

3.8) Spatial arrangements

The sensory aspects of a landscape are connected to the spatial aspects; they have a direct influence upon one another. According to Gustafson (in Amidon, 2005:26), spatial arrangements are concerned with how you move, what your eyes rest on, what the depth of feel is, what you walk through, what you sit on... Spatial arrangements determine movement and flow through the landscape having a substantial effect on what Thayer (in Swaffield, 1994:104) terms the 'Three dimensions of meaning'. Simply put, the distance from which an intervention is viewed and the sequence in which one views it will have a profound effect on the experience generated by the intervention. In particular, it will affect our sensory perceptions, as our sense of smell, attention to detail, auditory capabilities and the scale of the intervention will change as our nearness to it changes.

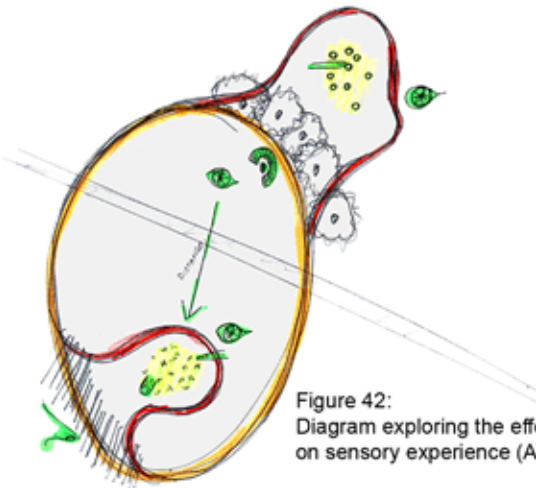


Figure 42:
Diagram exploring the effect of distance on sensory experience (Author, 2008)

The proximity, position and speed of the viewer will therefore have a definite effect on the experience. For example, "a tree may be said to have shape, but when we observe a mountain covered by trees from a distance, what strikes us is not the shape of the trees, but the texture" (Appleton, 1975:106).

Another way of accentuating the environmental experience is to emphasize the hazard element – to provide excitement and the possibility of a challenge by allowing the viewer to experience familiar environments in unfamiliar ways. This can be made possible by providing different kinds of locomotion, or by viewing the landscape from unusual angles. Also, "by altering the speed at which we pass through the landscape, we may greatly alter the time-sequences which are an integral part of our perceptive experience" (Appleton, 1975:178).



Figure 44 and 45:
Distance defines shape, texture and detail (Author, 2007)

3.9) Time

Time is therefore one of the most important elements affecting one's experience of a place, not only because of the speed at which we are moving, or the ephemeral nature of the environment, but also because the viewer's understanding increases, his/her mood changes, he/she has different emotional reactions at different times, and so on (Walmsley & Lewis, 1984:76). The purpose of the viewer also has an effect on his/her experience in that it determines how much time a person can give to looking, listening and experiencing.

3.10) Cognitive elements

Finally, one can make use of elements which are pleasing to the cognitive faculties, i.e. repetition, pattern, continuity, variation, contrast, balance and proportion (Dissanayake, 1992:54). Walker (in Francis & Hester, 1990:120-128) discusses three main ideas in this regard - gesture; hardening and flattening of the surface; and seriality. These three ideas can be linked to our earlier discussions on spatial arrangements and their impact on one's experience of a place.

The first, "gesture" can be described as "a linear statement in the landscape that becomes an organising element for perceiving the whole". He uses Robert Smithson's "*The Spiral Jetty*" as an example of this, as it persuades the viewer to look at the landscape in a new way simply because of the geometry of the design and the way it is placed. Walker also discusses the merit of Christo's "*Running Fence*" as an example of gesture because of the way in which the shimmering fence interacts with the landscape influencing its ability to "make you perceive the landscape differently" (Francis & Hester, 1990:121). Other methods of creating gesture include framing of views, emphasizing perspective, creating grand vistas along sight lines, among others.

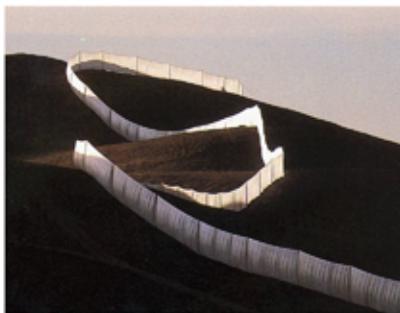


Figure 46:
Gesture - a linear statement in the landscape
(Running Fence, 1972-6 -- Christo. Ruby, 2006)



Figure 47:
Movement and speed affect our perception of the world
around us (Author, 2008)

Figure 48:
Gesture enables us to look at the landscape
in a new way (Spiral Jetty. www.at.or.at, 2003)



The second idea has to do with the hardening and flattening of surface. A simple example of this is the placing of a carpet on an undefined floor, thereby creating a defined space (Francis & Hester, 1990:124). Changes in level, even small ones will also have this effect. Intricate paving patterns are visually stronger than their surrounds and are therefore useful in the creation of 'physically undefined' space. These methods of almost abstract space creation serve to emphasize, and draw the eye; they create focal points that will be noticed by the viewer.

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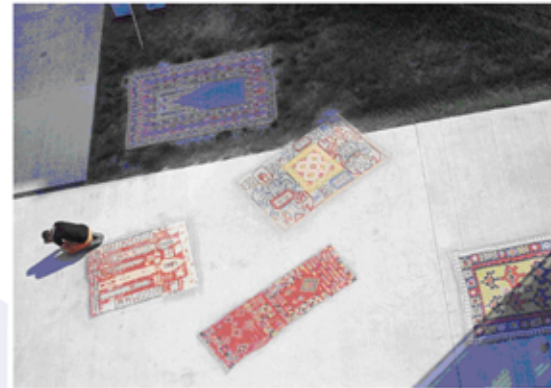


Figure 49:
Mosaic carpets - a good example of hardening and flattening of the surface (Carpets, Austria. Andraschek, 2005)

Seriality is a form of repetition which "when used with insistence begins to visually dominate the non-repetitive elements of its environment" (Francis & Hester, 1990:127). Such interventions draw your eye into the space; they demand attention and engage the mind. Even just a simple 'why?' can be enough to start a conversation or create an idea, both of which have the ability to change your way of thinking.

Combining spatial, sensory and emotional aspects can produce a rich and thought provoking experience. The landscape should therefore emphasize the importance of material elements and spatial configurations that can draw together the physical and mental worlds, stimulating the mind to wander, to contemplate and wonder, and to find satisfaction in the experience of nature (Thwaites, Helleur & Simkins, 2005:530).

The above tools, qualities and spaces encourage people to see things differently, to question, to be critical, thereby stimulating thoughts and ideas, conversations and community, a landscape of learning.

Sardello (1986:35) maintains that if learning were free to work in the world it would produce a ferment of conversation, writing, performance, speculation, investigation and the making of images in art, music, poetry and drama. Culture would flourish, bringing about a synthesis of imagination, identity and social cohesion. The University campus is thus an ideal space for such an intervention as it combines the educational, recreational and functional, thereby drawing the campus out into the communal zone and unifying the area; thus providing a place filled with ideas and the means with which to inspire ideas.



Figure 50:
Seriality is an important element in the design of The Citadel, California (Cooper & Taylor, 2000:31)



Figure 51:
An explosion of culture (Digitally manipulated by author, 2008)

Part 4: Conclusion

Bunschoten, Hoshino & Binet (2001:23) explain that the landscape can be likened to a strange dynamic skin, echoing the crust of the earth, but with different mechanics, different rhythms and undulations. Love, life, weather and seasons ripple this skin. Nature and man work together in the creation and manipulation of this skin; we are all a part of it just as it is a part of us. The landscape is what ties us together, what links us to the earth. It is where we are truly at one with nature and with our fellow man.

We need to promote the social interaction and bonding of people, and a well-designed public space that is accessible to all is the ideal way of achieving this. Any settlement is a body, with mass, skin, motion and emotion. Just as a body is a complex network of systems within a system, a settlement functions in the same manner. When you transplant a heart, it needs to be sourced, matched and prepared in order to function optimally (Bunschoten *et al*, 2001:45). The same can be said for a settlement – any intervention within its fabric needs to be carefully planned, based on the human, and uniquely and creatively implemented. It needs to be connected to the body, its main source of life, for only then will it live, thrive, and positively influence the thoughts and emotions of its users.



Figure 52:
A network of systems functioning as a single city
(Mural in Brighton, U.K. Author, 2007)



Figure 53:
A balanced ecosystem - natural and man-made
in harmony (Mural in Brighton, U.K. Author, 2007)