



Conclusion

ARCHITECTURE AS AN EXPERIENTIAL NARRATIVE

The intention of this dissertation was to rehabilitate the forgotten fort in order to protect its heritage significance, secure its future value and introduce continuity through experiential narration.

The site is considered the main driver of the project and required a comprehensive understanding of both the historical and current context in relation to the process of ruination and isolation within highly contested continuums of change. This led to a brief reflection on specific theoretical investigations to clarify the appropriate heritage and architectural response.

In considering the phenomenological approach of enriching the human experience, the project proposed the Heritage Portal which exhibits heritage narration as an event. The design approach is largely directed by a series of narrative events. These events also adhere to the heritage legislation, ensuring its support from the local and national heritage communities. The success of the latter is not only dependent on the rehabilitation process but also on the continuous equal participation from the collective. As a beacon of continuity that protects our future and collective heritage, the fort is now transformed to an anchor of hope through collective storytelling.

The proposed architecture is based on the key aesthetic parameter of how new meets old. The intention was to clearly differentiate the old heritage fabric from the new architectural interventions. Implementing a conservation strategy, the existing heritage fabric is preserved without compromising its structural or material integrity.

Being a monument of protection, the stereotomic quality of the fort now represents the protection of our past heritage and its continuity. With the effective use of materials, form and contextual sensitivity, the architecture mediates the narrative experience from one event to another. The architecture is explored as the curator of the narrative journey, although it still allows for the experiential through individual interpretation.

By synthesizing the narrative with the architectural experience, the juxtaposition of different materials and forms defines the spatial intent of each event. With clear distinctions between old and new, past and future, landscape and building, the once hidden and neglected remnants of the past is now a celebration of our continuous and collective future.

Figure 9.1: First conceptual model of the Fort as a beacon of continuity and belonging (Author 2016)

A friend took me to the most amazing place the other day. It's called the Auguste-um. Octavian Augustus built it to house his remains. When the barbarians came they trashed it a long with everything else. The great Augustus, Rome's first true great emperor. How could he have imagined that Rome, the whole world as far as he was concerned, would be in ruins. It's one of the quietest, loneliest places in Rome. The city has grown up around it over the centuries. It feels like a precious wound, a heartbreak you won't let go of because it hurts too good.

We all want things to stay the same. Settle for living in misery because we're afraid of change, of things crumbling to ruins. Then I looked around at this place, at the chaos it has endured – the way it has been adapted, burned, pillaged and found a way to build itself back up again. And I was reassured, maybe my life hasn't been so chaotic, it's just the world that is, and the real trap is getting attached to any of it.

A ruin is a gift. A ruin is the road to transformation.

(Gilbert 2006:223)

9.1



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In accordance with Regulation 4(e) of the General Regulations (G.57) for dissertations and thesis, I declare that this thesis, which I hereby submit for the degree Master of Architecture (Professional) at the University of Pretoria, is my own work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other tertiary institution.

I further state that no part of my thesis has already been submitted for any such degree, diploma of other qualification.

I further declare that this thesis is substantially my own work. Where reference is made to the works of others, the extent to which that work has been used is indicated and fully acknowledged in the text and list of references.

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