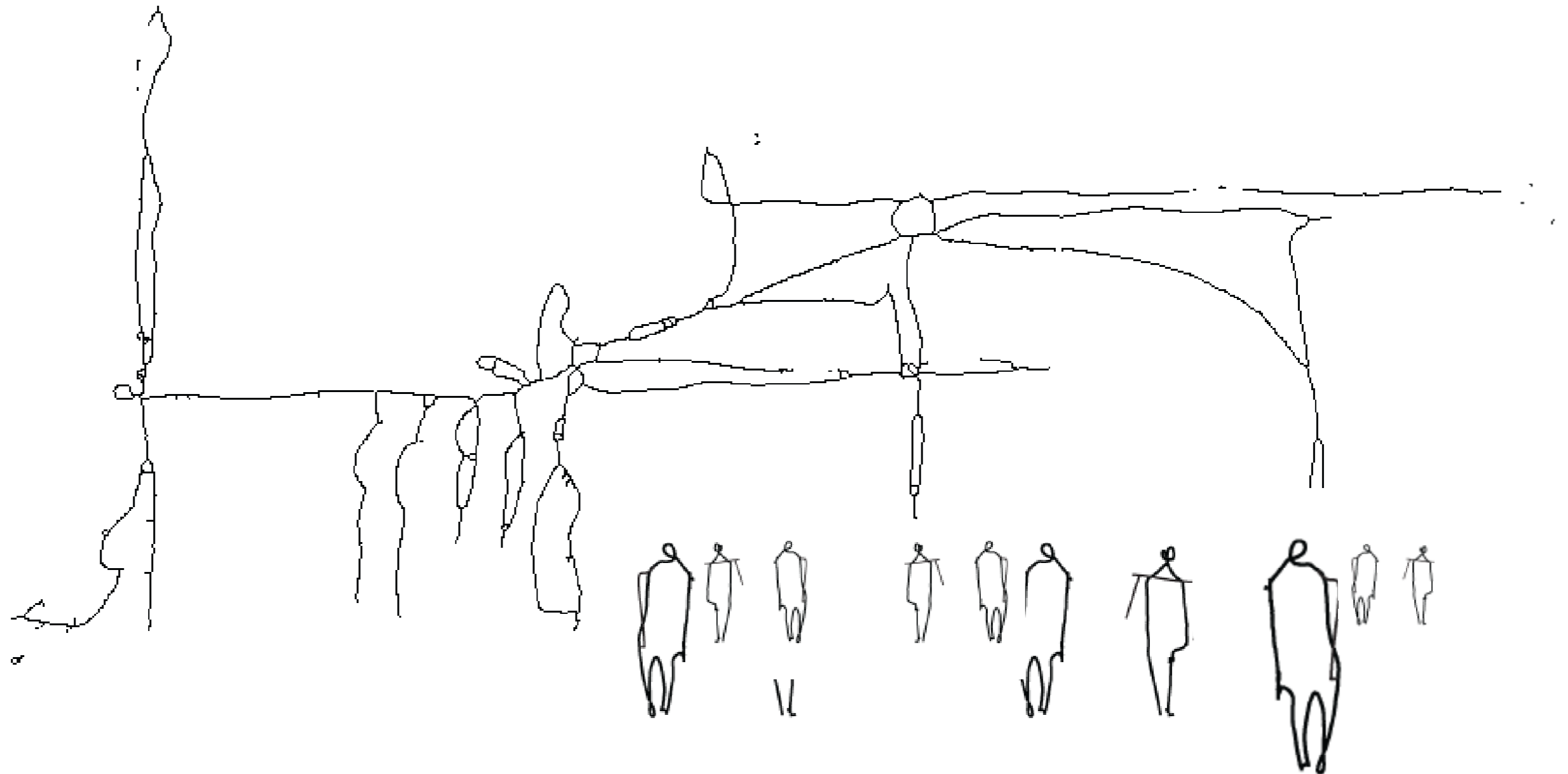


ANCE STAGE



7 Conclusion



The industrial age has left behind many urban spaces and buildings frozen in time. The city of Bilbao tackled this issue by commissioning renowned architect, Frank Gehry, to design an award winning branch of the Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao. This single injection into the urban tissue saved the city from economic and cultural depression by boosting tourism. This dissertation investigates and deconstructs the so-called “Bilbao Effect” to better understand how the principles can be applied to replicate its success in Pretoria West.

The findings of the research found that in order for a building to replicate the Bilbao Effect it must be more than a building standing in contrast to its surroundings. The buildings need to create an innovative user experience as well as conceptually be grounded to its context. A more detailed research method was designed to deconstruct landscape projects that have successfully regenerated their precinct (recreating the Bilbao Effect). By distilling each of the six projects to info-graphics, it was found that; no landscape has challenged landscape architecture the same way the GMB has challenged architecture. The program is not as important as the way the program is perceived. Some form of external exhibition needs to be present for people to visit the site and the design needs to be deeply rooted to its surroundings.

The Pretoria West Urban Vision group took on the task of identifying issues in and around Pretoria West. These urban issues all highlight the issue of frozen post-industrial precincts. The urban vision was aimed around the showgrounds. By redefining the showgrounds, several of Pretoria West’s problems could be solved. By opening the showgrounds to the public and utilizing it as a mixed-use public space, it would not sit as an impermeable barrier in the center of Pretoria West. The opportunity to create healthy, urban space presented itself.

By combining the findings of the theory to the urban vision, the following simulations were made to lead the design process through to the technification.

The site in Pretoria West does not have external exhibitions to compliment it. The

design will act as the exhibition itself; The design intervention will be an abstraction of Pretoria West, capturing and celebrating the unique character of the immediate and greater context of the site. With the site being an abstraction, it will theoretically fit in seamlessly within its context.

The theoretical approach led to the redesign of the existing showgrounds in Pretoria West. The intervention is an abstraction of the greater community by capturing and celebrating a typical industrial/agricultural built form found in and around Pretoria West. The design caters for numerous events/shows/expositions to take place and attract people by recreating the “Bilbao Effect” to essentially regenerate Pretoria West.

Although the dissertation has been mainly focused on deconstructing the elements of the Bilbao Effect and the precinct, the design comprises of the deconstructed elements being placed back together to create unique, abstract spaces. These elements come in the form of very typical agricultural structures and materials. With the combination of steel H-columns, steel I-beams, mentex grating, concrete slabs and a planting palette of precisely eight species a new park is designed to capture the spirit of Pretoria West.

Whilst the design solves functional issues on site and allows for innovative event space, the user will be exposed to the greater Pretoria West through abstract compositions. This design will place the user inside a park allowing for him/her to experience a deeply rooted, unique experience of Pretoria West, while enjoying it as event space.

Landscape architecture has not previously been linked to the “Bilbao Effect”. This thesis has attempted to do this by defining principles that will guide a methodology from which to work. It is anticipated that the future will contain more research that investigates the relation between landscape architecture and the “Bilbao Effect”, as it is both exciting and relevant in a South African context.

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