>>Re-Programming Public Space

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Submitted in fulfillment of part of the requirements for the degree Magister in Architecture (Professional) in the Faculty of Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology, University of Pretoria.
November 2006

Normative Position

The most intriguing aspect about the discipline of architecture, including all the fields of architecture such as interior, landscape and urban design, is how the simple act of creating, manipulating or destroying form, can alter the human psyche. The world as people know it is shaped by the mere thoughts and aspirations of an architect, using their own experiences, thoughts and opinions. What architects create will determine so much more than just shelter from the surrounding environment. What they create shapes the minds and experiences of the people exposed to it. How architecture influences the way people perceive their world places immense responsibility on the architect as the architect can either enhance that perception, or totally destroy it. Architecture, of course, is a very subjective art. What one person calls a work of art; another calls a grotesque monstrosity. Architecture must create places and spaces that are no longer about the building, but to start designing and creating spaces that respond to the people who use the spaces and respond to the environment in which the architecture is found. Architecture has the ability to not only create from anew but has the capacity to mould and transform spaces, including those not meeting the requirements of a newer generation, or should never have been created. To transform spaces into environments that will enhance the psyche and use of a space is the art. Architecture must do more than just meeting the physical requirements of spaces.

Dissertation Summary

The intention of this dissertation is to re-programme public space. The site of Strijdom Square is used to prove that through the insertion of a symbiotic building into an urban environment a public square can be regenerated. The regeneration of Strijdom Square will on an urban level increase the use and accessibility of the inner city CBD. It is an architectural intervention that attaches itself onto the existing urban fabric. The building layers the space so that it facilitates accessibility and interaction between the open space and the built environment. Together with the symbiotic building and the re-design of the square the public space will become a space that people are drawn to and want to be in.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents

List of Figures

All photos, drawings and sketches by author unless otherwise stated

Site Analysis