## Theoretical Investigation

During the mid $20^{th}$ century new theories were beginning to emerge which questioned the Modern movement's influence on the development of the world's urban environments. This section of the dissertation seeks to examine some of the ideas put forward as well as the success of their "anti-modern" sentiments. While it may seem that many of these theories are outdated, their validity regarding the nature of this dissertation is paramount. It is precisely during this time that the precinct of Sunnyside[1] began to become the high-density residential suburb that it is today. By investigating the development of Sunnyside as well as the ideas which emerged simultaneously, it is hoped that the validity of the "anti-functional" concepts put forward will become apparent.

1. Sunnyside is a precinct within the South African capital city of Pretoria.

**Brutus and the Beast**

The line between Functionalism and Brutalism in Pretoria is indistinct. While most 'Brutalist' buildings in Pretoria are understandably labeled so as a result of their aesthetic of exposed and often untreated concrete, steel and most considerably, face-brick, the term has more depth than mere surface treatment. For reasons which will later become apparent, this dissertation will recall the origins of the term, its separation from and the disruption of its paternal Congrés Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne (CIAM) as well as its aesthetic reunification with the functionalism it once reviled.

At the 1955 meeting of CIAM, issues which had been stirring within the younger members of the group for some time came to a head. In an attempt to stem the rising tide of criticism among the younger members of the group, the older members cynically entrusted them to conduct the 10th congress in the hope that the realities of responsibility would quiet them. Team-X (so called as they were responsible for the program of CIAM-X), consisted of young architects who were affiliated with the "New Brutalist" way of thinking and "were becoming increasingly tied by… admiration for each others work"(Banham 1966:70). It included members such as van Eyck, Candilis and the Smithsons, who had become increasingly dissatisfied with the concept of a 'mechanical architecture' which abided by the four postulates of the Athens Charter: Work, Residence, Recreation and Circulation.

In the preamble for the program of CIAM, Team-X wrote how shocked they were to see "how far the wonder of the 'ville radieuse' had faded from CIAM."(Banham 1966:70) For the congress, the group decided to present works in which the method of analysis was in terms of human association rather than functional organization. This drastic break in architectural thinking presented at the congress marked the beginning of the end for CIAM, which, with more than 3000 members had become too dispersed to deal with any subject in any deserved detail. In the group's earliest published statement on town planning, they state the following:

*"Young architects today feel a monumental dissatisfaction with the buildings they see going up around them. For them, the housing estates, the social centres and the blocks of flats are meaningless and irrelevant. They feel that the majority of architects have lost contact with reality and are building yesterday's dreams when the rest of us have woken up to today."* (Banham 1966:71)

Other excerpts from the Brutalist's 1955 CIAM program explain that they were "seeking the ideal habitat for each particular place at [that] particular moment", a way of thinking contrary to that of Corbusier and his 'Radiant City', which generalized the site and idealized it to be devoid of accident. The Brutalists "proposed built environment of a particular place with all its accidental and special features, the unique solution to a unique situation."(Banham 1966:72) The Brutalists saw the 'chess board-like' documents drawn up by the Functionalists (with the most noticeable being the Athens Charter) as too diagrammatic and formalistic, and the Smithson's began redeveloping CIAM's functionalist views in a more humane and pragmatic basis.

It is somewhat strange then, that a movement so concerned with the 'situation' and the humanizing of functionalism has become synonymous with the concrete monsters which grace Pretoria's built environment. This can be attributed to the fact that after about a decade, the term 'Brutalist' had shed its "urbanistic and technological overtones, and [became] narrowed to a stylistic label concerned largely with the treatment (or non-treatment) of building surfaces."(Banham 1966:75) An ironic association was made in the 'béton brut' of Le Corbusier, where the heroic material was found to be specifically Brutalist. The irony of Le Corbusier's involvement extended further with Les Maison Jaoul, a house which epitomized the "implications of violence and crudity carried by the word 'brutal'." It also revealed "Le Corbusier rejecting the diagrammatic, formalistic and legalistic categories of the Athens Charter."(Banham 1966:85-86)

"Brutalism is thus a taste for self sufficient architectonic objects, aggressively placed in their surroundings; it is an energetic affirmation of the structure, the revenge of mass and plasticity over the aesthetics of matchboxes and cardboard; it aims to profit from the lessons of Modern Architecture stripped of all literary excuses. It is a method of working, certainly not a recipe for poesy." (Banham 1966:127)

In the South African context this "method of working" was implemented with vigor. An economic boom, the search for Afrikaner identity in the built environment, Kahn's much publicized influence as well as a visit by the Smithson's were just some of the factors that contributed to the development of Brutalism in mid-20th century Pretoria. (Fisher, personal communication, April, 2006) In Sunnyside particularly, the stylistic variations which are now labeled 'brutalism' are apparent: The building as an unified visual image, clear and memorable; clear exhibition of its structure; a high valuation of raw, untreated materials. (Banham 1966:127)
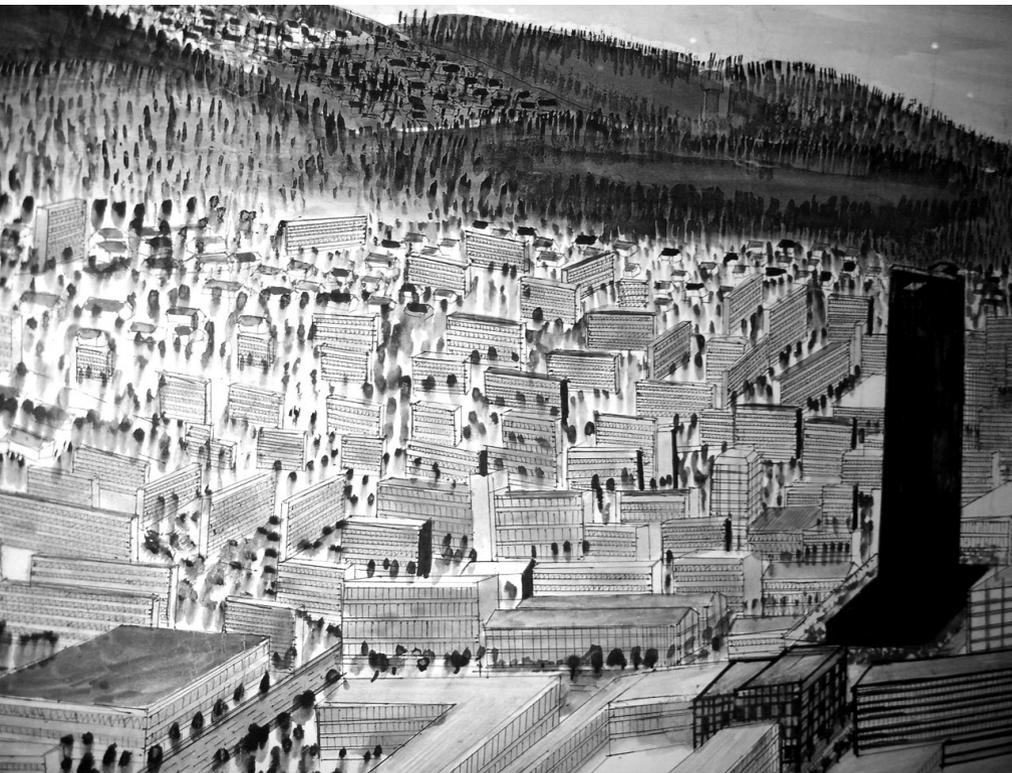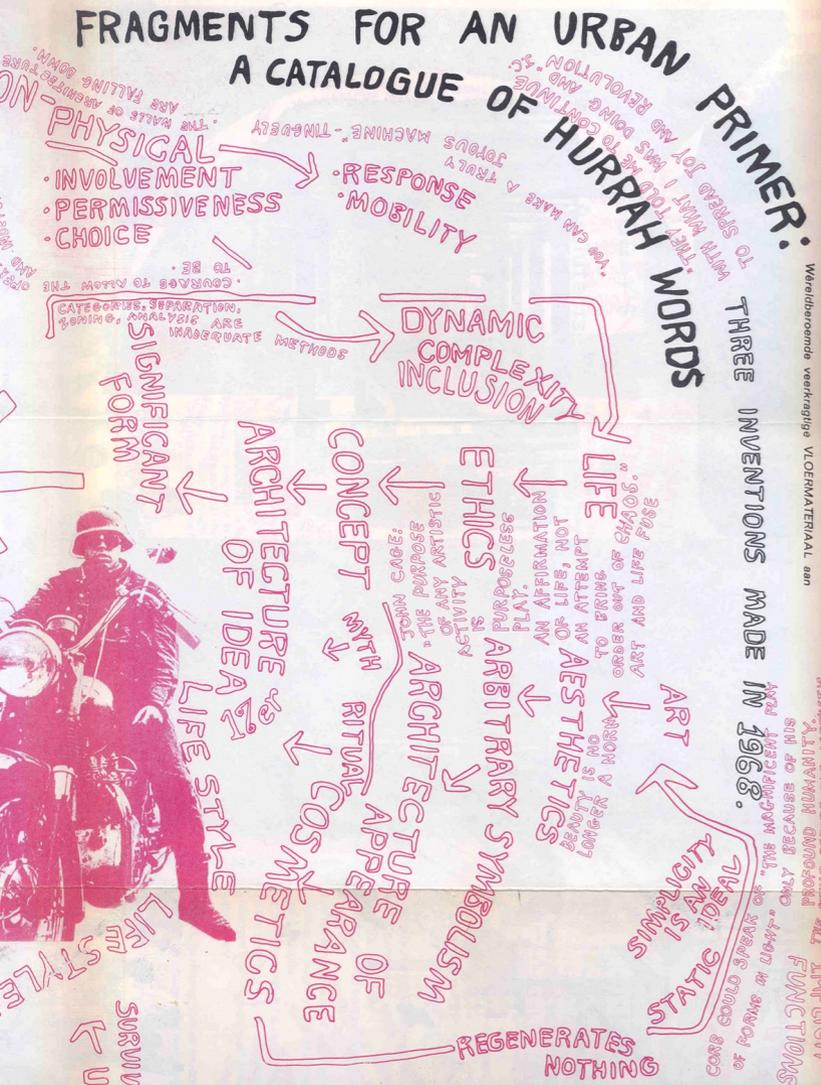


Figure 7

Titus Moteyane,
*Panorama of Pretoria*
Mixed Media, 60 x 85 cm, National History Museum, Pretoria

The negativities of the marriage of Afrikaner Nationalism and Brutalist Functionalism are perhaps best illustrated in the construction of the Rand Afrikaans University (RAU) in Johannesburg. The development, which was to "make a statement about the Afrikaner who had 'arrived' in the city" (Maré 1998: 284), was completed in 1974 by the WO Meyer partnership. Meyer, who completed his Masters degree under Kahn at the University of Pennsylvania, was understandably profoundly influenced by his mentor. Although Kahn's architecture is said to "[transcend] the reductive inclinations of the International Style architects [and pave] the way for an architecture of a richer, more complex, more symbolic and therefore more humane architecture" (Maré 1998:281), many of his buildings echo the aggressive monumentality of the Brutalists. Indeed, in the case of RAU it is not the experiential qualities that impress the visitor, but rather the sheer vastness and monumentality of the building.

"The commentator despairs of the functionality of the services and the fact that the bodily discomfort of movement through the building becomes an existential hankering after comfort. Even more desperate is his need for the discovery of interesting routes which could at least have sustained the spirit."(Maré 1998:285)

The dichotomy between the original manifesto presented by Team-X at CIAM and its eventual dilution into an aesthetic and formalistic concern is also apparent in the South African manifestation of the movement. Like their European contemporaries, a group of like-minded South African architects found themselves dissatisfied with the architectural practice of the day. They produced a newsletter every two months titled *CREDO* in which they voiced their predominantly humanistic concerns. The contributors included amongst others Danie Theron, Wilhelm Meyer, Bannie Britz and Glen Gallagher In the beginning of every issue, a paragraph is dedicated to what could perhaps be seen as a manifesto:

"We plead a new humanism in the making of our city environment – using the powerful forces which are seeking to destroy it at present, to regenerate it and to find the new city-order in the contradictions, the complexity, the richness and the shelter that human life demands from its dwelling place."(CREDO No.1 1966:1)

Similar to the concerns of Team-X, the writers of *CREDO* were pitted against the dimensionless architecture of functionalism. They longed for the city to regain its vibrancy and complexity which had been robbed by the stifling effects of a town planning rooted in the outdated Athens Charter, where residential developments were a means of storage and the high-speed movement corridor was king. "Once there were places of joy and bustle, great stages of interaction and activity… …There was excitement, uncertainty, chance meeting and diversity,"(CREDO No.1: 1966:3)

However valid and noble the intentions of this group were, the efforts of the South African 'Brutalists', like those of the 'New Bruatalists', resulted in a mere stylistic adjustment to Pretoria's Functionalism. The desire for the situation and the experience of a vibrant street life was superficially translated into a surface treatment, instead of its "courage and revolutionary spirit [leading to a] truer sense of the relation between architecture and society."(Banham 1966:127)

Figure 8 *(left)*

*Fragments for an urban primer: A catalogue of hurrah words.* in CREDO No. 13, October 1968

Figure 9 *(right)*

Original CREDO Manifesto signed by its various contributors in CREDO No. 1, October, 1966



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## Tabula Rasa

A reflection of the divergence of the theoretical intentions and the built results of the international Brutalists can be seen in the Pretoria of today. The residential flat-blocks of Sunnyside are in fact functionalist buildings constructed in the Brutalist fashion, which by all appearances, are in accordance with the Athens Charter so vehemently rejected by the early Brutalists. This 'Plan Voison' of Southern Africa exists in the myriad of north-facing residential flat blocks in Sunnyside (Fig 10). The adopted pavilion style of architecture has resulted in the promised 'sky, air and light' for the individual units, but this has been accomplished to the detriment of the city below. As the "prevailing attitude of the Functionalists was to start from a clean slate" (Trancik 1986:21), Sunnyside's heritage of corrugated farm houses was cleared to be replaced by a vision of functionalism, with a startling resemblance to the Modernist utopia of parallel rows of high-rises depicted in Ludwig Hilbersiener's 'Ideal City' of 1920. And so, victim of International style's crusade, Sunnyside "…cleared the palette for a heroic, technically competent architecture that would establish a universal, man imposed order."(Trancik 1986:23)

For the more avid 'anti-functionalists', it would be tempting prospect to adopt the attitude of the modernists and develop the city yet again from *tabula rasa*. Implementing the fantastic ideals of just one such group, the so-called 'New Urbanists' would merely be an "exercise in withdrawal from a complex world", romanticizing the past to attain some sort of "mythic communal coherence and shared identity."(Sennett 1997:67) Koolhaas, also tempted by the prospect, states the following: "But the notion of a new beginning – starting from scratch, the tabula rasa – had been taboo ever since Le Corbusier's brutal attempt with the plan Voison to scrape everything away at once. The harshness, the shock, the obvious insanity – but at the same time the incredible eloquence – of his operation closed the book on the question of the new beginning for generations to come."(Koolhaas 1995:1103)

In England, where Brutalism (arguably) began, there has been considerable effort to rescue many of the original buildings from demolition. One of them, the Old Vic Annexe, built in 1958 by Lyons Israel Ellis (Fig 11) has recently been listed to be preservation as an important historical building. David Lammy, Minister of Culture stated that the Old Vic "…is considered an important example in Britain of Brutalism."(Durrell 2006) Although "most people see the building as an incredible eye-sore", the building's place in Britain's architectural heritage has been preserved. The heritage of functionalism in Pretoria can be seen in a similar light. This coupled with our country's socio-economic situation and housing shortage, dismisses the notion of a new beginning.
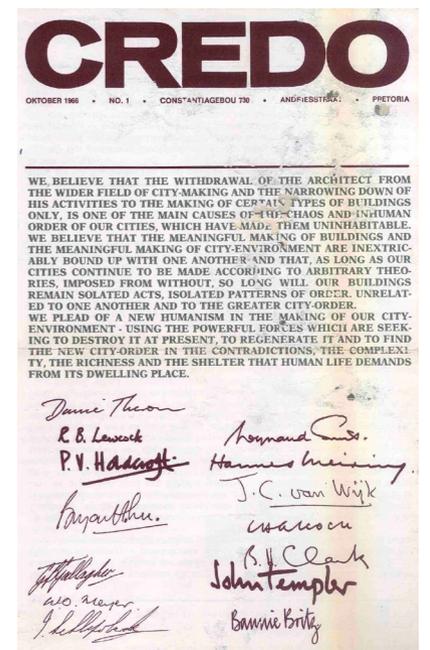


Figure 10

Diagram Equating Le Corbusier's proposed *Plan Voisin* for Paris with the Sunnyside of today. *Clockwise from top-left:* Early 20th century Paris, Aerial Photograph, 1933, *The Radiant City*; Le Corbusier's Plan Voisin for Paris, 1933, *The Radiant City*; Aerial photograph of Sunnyside Precinct, 2006, Aerial photograph of Sunnyside Precinct showing historic corrugated houses, 1938 (Author 2006)
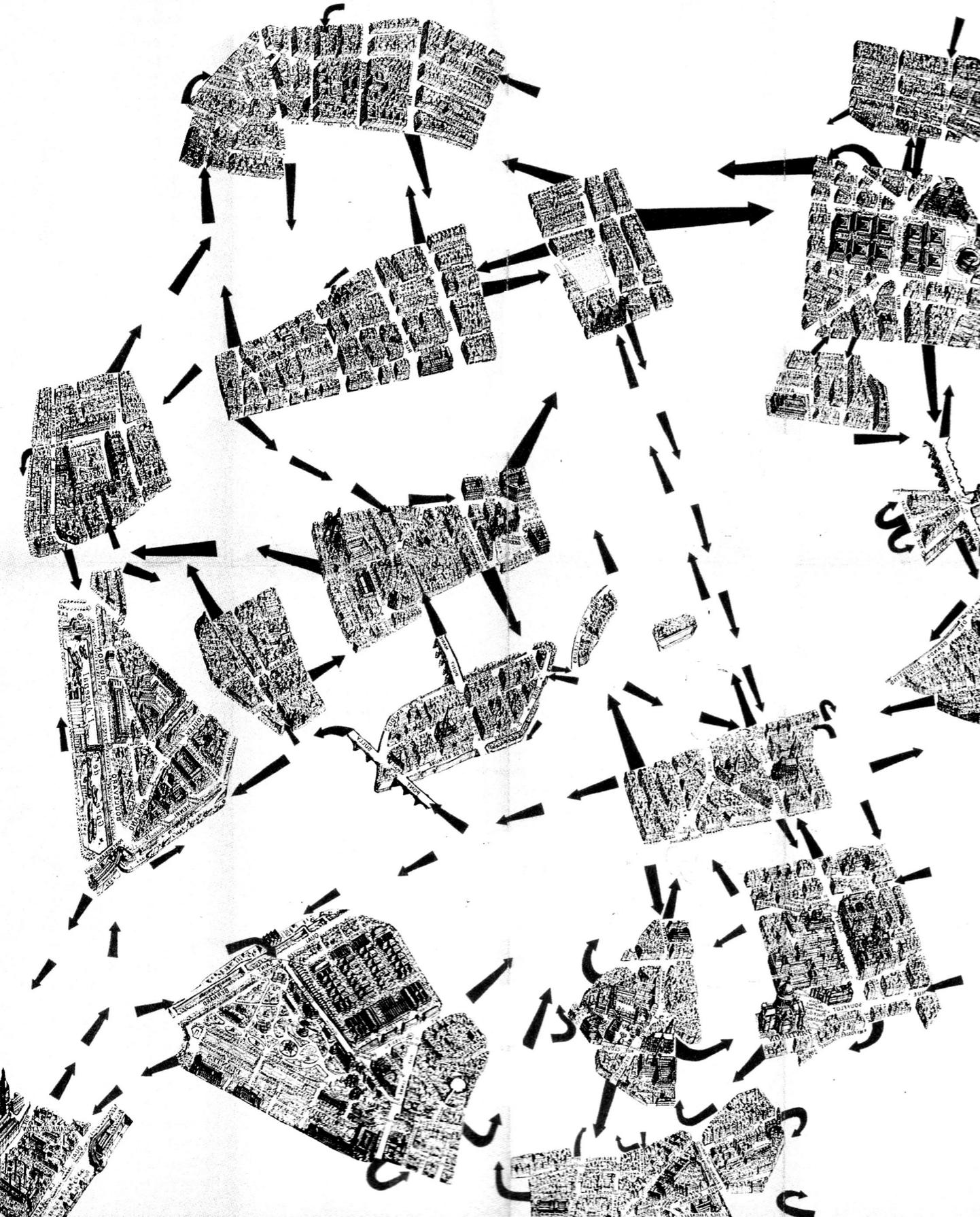
Fig 11

Old Vic Annexe, a thetre workshop completed in 1958, is one of many Brutalist buildings to be proclaimed as heritage sites in England.

Modern space,
anti-space and
back again

Although the dispute against functionalism is a tired one, this dissertation deals with the typology's urban implications in Pretoria specifically, and how the spaces between the buildings have evolved with the changing demographics in post-apartheid South Africa. As with most Functionalist environments, the architects of residential Sunnyside had no concerns with open space. Functionalism "ignored or denied the importance of street space and other important outdoor rooms."(Trancik 1986: 8) While the entrance to the building was usually sensitively dealt with, it only served residents and visitors and the buildings became separate entities, estranged from their surrounding context. "Traditional qualities of urban space have been lost. Buildings are isolated objects; spaces between them are vast & formless…High vacancy rates, social pathology and boredom plague many such Functionalist developments… …The modern city dweller is forced to create a social life in personally controllable territory instead of engaging in a communal existence centered around the street."(Trancik 1986: 11)

In Pretoria, the Functionalist dilemma is exacerbated by the city's orientation and topography. As a result of its ridges acting

as natural barriers, Pretoria has developed on an east-west axis. The Langeberg and Magaliesberg cut off development to the north, while the Witwatersberg does so to the south. As Pretoria has developed unhindered in the east, the east-west vehicular movement corridors have gained in prominence, growing ever wider to link the far reaching suburbs with the Central Business District. En route to city central, these corridors tunnel through the Sunnyside suburb, fissuring its urban coherence and rendering each city block a separate entity. The narrow north-south streets act merely as links between the east-west corridors, with no commercial viability due to their lack of traffic and pedestrian activity. The Functionalist nature of the suburb's typology further impairs the nature of these north-south streets. As a result of the international style's prerogative to have a north-facing orientation (even though flat units always have the curtains drawn due to the excessive heat of an African climate), the flat-blocks inevitably throw blind east and west façades onto these streets, allowing no interaction between the buildings and the street. Also, the Functionalist imperative of a ground plain of undulating public space has been lost. The phenomenon of 'fortification' so intrinsic to the South

African public's post 1994 paranoia has resulted in the fencing in of each individual site. The fence acts as the interface between public and private spaces, a transparent impenetrable barrier between two dysfunctional spaces. "The advantage of living together has disappeared, only irritation remains."(CREDO No.4 1967:4)

All these factors have resulted in lost, unused semi-private space between the north-facing flat blocks. There is no opportunity for the street life to spill over the sidewalk into the important urban spaces which allow for the human interaction essential to a working community. "There is a yearning for the open pores of the street."(CREDO No.4 1967:4) The fenced in open areas have become wastelands of lost spaces, covered in shadow by the looming presence of Functionalist giants. The ominous nature of these spaces is further heightened by the awareness of a thousand gazes, staring down from above. The community living in a flat block is one "bounded by place only."(CREDO No.4 1967:4) Slanted eyes, quiet mutterings and sidelong glances have replaced what should be a healthy urban environment.



Figure 12 *(left)*

Continuation of
*Fragments for an
urban primer: A
catalogue of hurrah
words.* in CREDO No.
13, October 1968

Figure 13 *(above)*

*Krisis in Pretoria*
(Crisis in Pretoria),
Heading of an article
discussing the advent
of functionalism on
Pretoria's historical
heritage in CREDO
No. 7, October 1967

## Détourne (the redirection of meaning)

"Wandering in the city, getting lost purposely, has been fundamental to encounters with the ever-changing aspects and unexpected experience that the city offers constantly…as one drifts within a palimpsest of episodes and events. (Kim 2006:162)

During the first decade of post-war Europe, unrelated groups started to react against the Modern tendencies and theories advocated by Le Corbusier and championed by CIAM. These groups, of which some are discussed in this section, had similar goals to those of the 'New Brutalists'. Their methodology however, took a more radical stance, focusing on the subjective urban pedestrian rather than an objectified aesthetic. The subversive nature of their work relates to the 'anti-functional' - an antithesis.

## The Situationist International

Among these newly emerging groups was the Lettrist International group, founded by the prolific poet, filmmaker and activist Guy Debord. His group had been campaigning against functionalist architecture by means of their Potlatch newsletters since 1954. They reacted against the 'repulsive' Le Corbusier who had the 'impertinence to present his architecture as unchangeable' (and be the architect of churches - the most sickening crime of all) as well as CIAM, the 'infinitely suspect organization [that] will soon evaporate.' Guy Debord and Constant Nieuwenhuys, Co-Founder of the COBRA group of painters (Brayer, Migayrou & Nanjo 2005:65), first came into contact through a congress advocating the concept of 'unitary urbanism', organized by the International Movement for an Imaginist Bauhaus.

Debord and Nieuwenhuys then formed the Internationale Situationniste (1957), which utilized the Bauhaus Imagining into the formulation of an alternative to the Bauhaus and CIAM. (Wigley 1998:14)

While the Situationists acknowledged that there were valuable lessons to be learnt from functionalist design, they felt that it would "be dissipated by a new way of life", "a whole new unitary urbanism based on the 'construction of atmosphere.'" (Wigley 1998:14) They advanced revolutionary urban and architectural ideas contrary to those of Modernist urban planning, focusing on concepts such as 'drift' and 'constructed situations.' (Brayer, Migayrou & Nanjo 2005:22) Debord translated his 'psychogeographic ideas' into the Psychogeographic Guide to Paris, a 'fragmentary map that investigated the possibility of new social freedoms by tracing routes based on the city's potential for chance wonderings and detours, rather than on the linear passage between residence and workplace.'"(Brayer, Migayrou & Nanjo 2005:22) It was a reaction against the unity and rationality of the plan, breaking it up into urban 'unities of ambience', and mapping the subjective movements of the pedestrian. (Brayer, Migayrou & Nanjo 2005:65)

Figure 14 *(left)*

Guy Debord. *Guide psychogéographique de Paris.  Discours sur les passions de l'amour: Pentes psychogéographiques de la dérive et localisation d'unités d'ambiance*. 1957. Folded map. 59.5 x 73.5 cm.



Figure 15 *(above)*

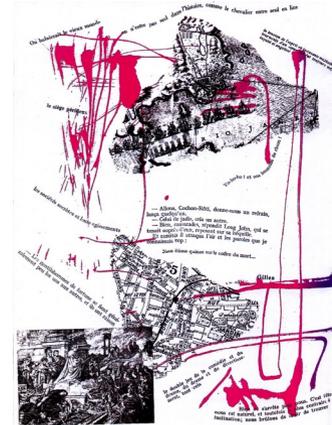Beauty is in the street, Poster, May 1968

Figure 16 *(below)*

Asger Jorn and Guy Debord, Mèmoires, 1957
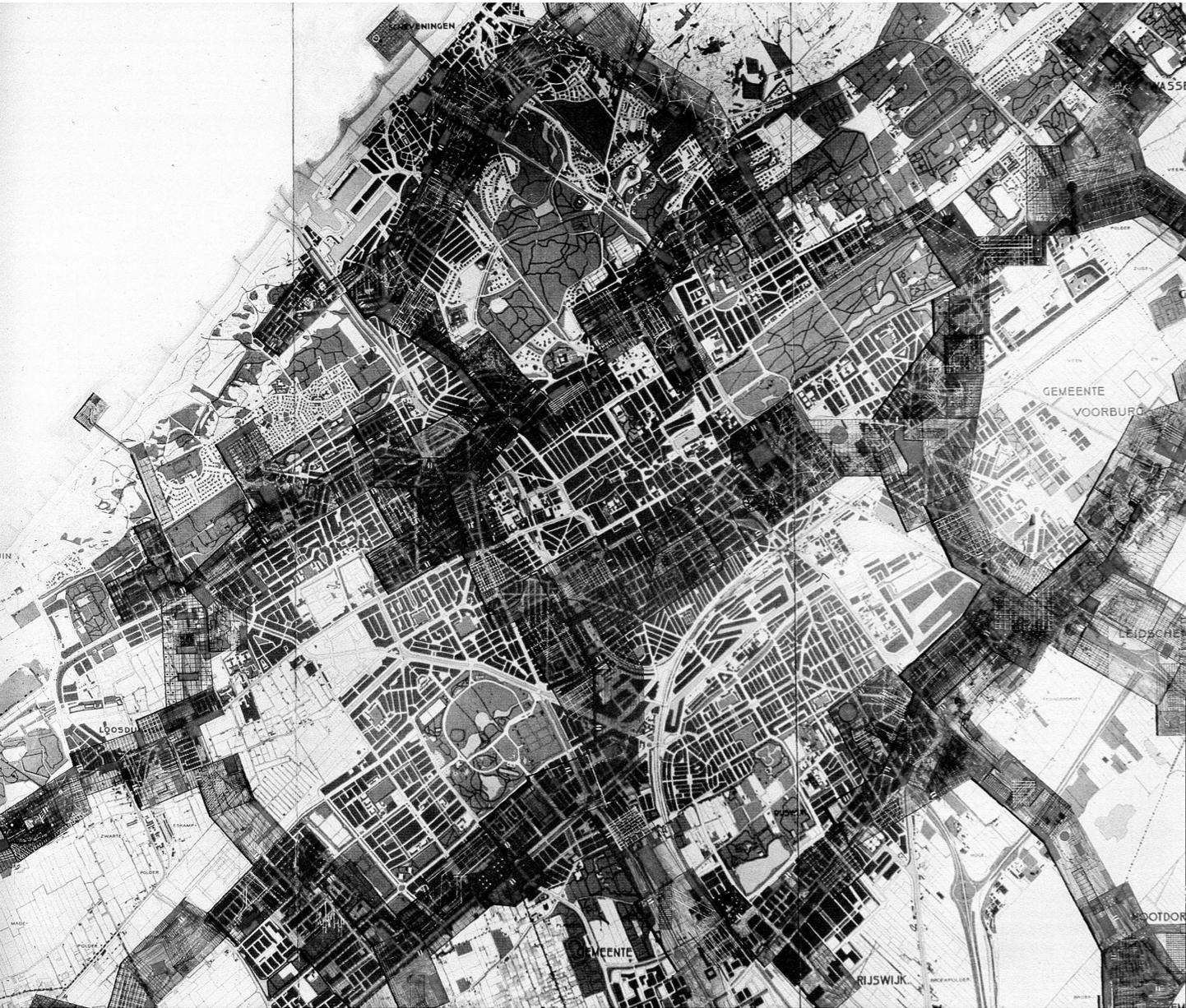


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## Constant's New Babylon



Figure 17

*New Babylon/Den Haag* (The Hague), watercolour on paper, 200 x 300 cm

Nieuwenhuys questioned the role of architecture in the city and, within the concept of a 'unitary urbanism', proclaimed that "the usual concerns for housing conditions, architectural style, form, economy and planning must give way to the free manipulation of atmosphere." He developed the idea of atmosphere (environmental conditions of climate, sound and light) producing architectural form (instead of vise versa) into a 14 year project called *New Babylon*, a visionary utopist global city which derives its forms from the desire and movement of a 'collective creativity': spaces of atmospheric intensity linked by flowing lines.(Wigley 1998:18) He rejected the urbanism of utilitarianism and social order for a "future ludic society where the 'dynamic labyrinth' would represent paradigm of both architectural and social utopia."(Ford 2005:74) The distinctions between work, leisure, public and private would disappear in favor of the concept of unitary urbanism. "A constructed situation is a means for unitary urbanism. Just as unitary urbanism is the indispensable basis for the construction of situations, in both play and seriousness, in a freer society."(Ford 2005:77)

Although Constant continued working on New Babylon until 1974, by then he had become disillusioned with the endeavor. He felt that if people were granted the unlimited freedom offered by unitary urbanism, they would come to violently abuse each other. This led to a later series of New Babylon images, "this time a dystopian nightmare."(Ford 2005:78) Constant's revelation at New Babylon's completion reveals the opposing extremity to functionalist doctrine.

The Situationists' prioritizing of the environment and context led to an architecture which became "more of a membrane in an interactive relationship with its surrounding environment rather than an individual building that was isolated from it." (Brayer, Migayrou & Nanjo 2005:23)
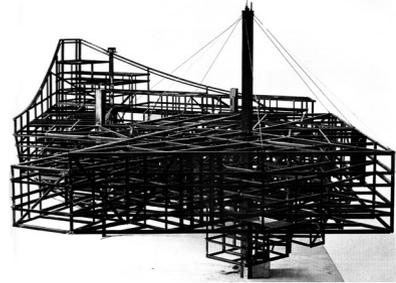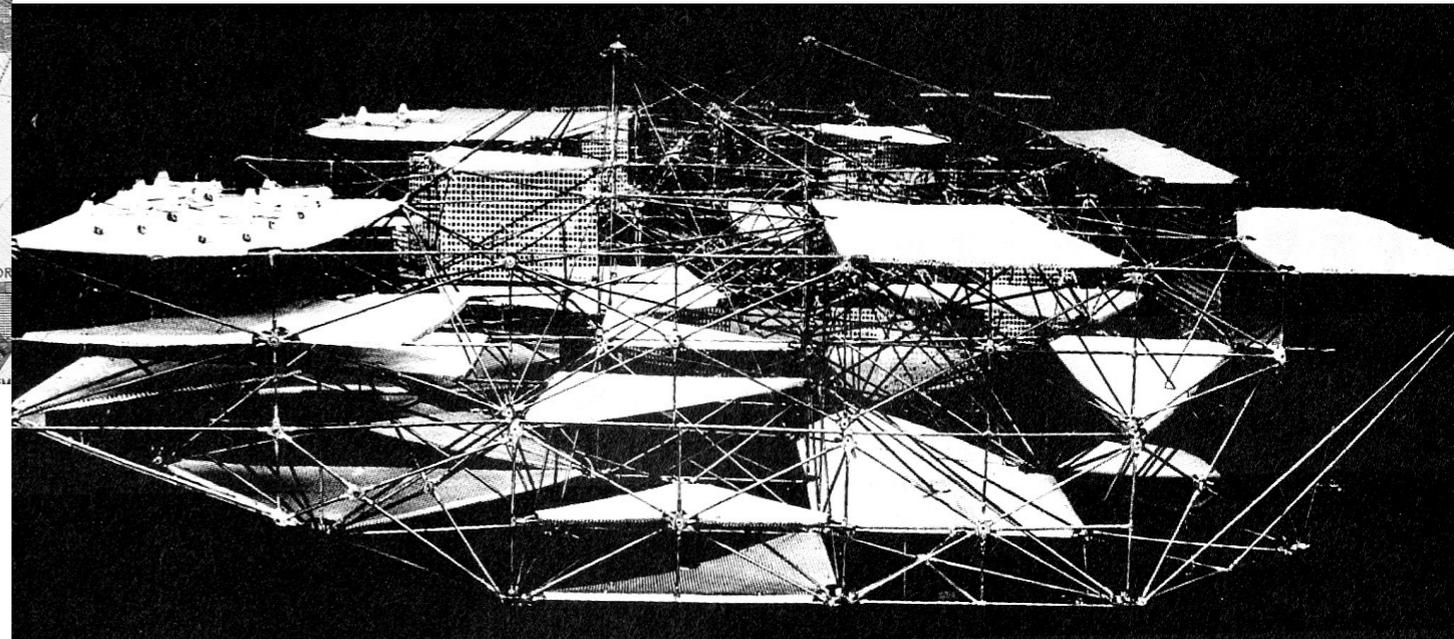


Figure 18

Early version of *Fragment van een sector* (Fragment of a Sector), 62 x 144 x 162 cm

Figure 19

*Sector constructie* (Sector Construction), metal, 280 x 160 x 160 cm, destroyed
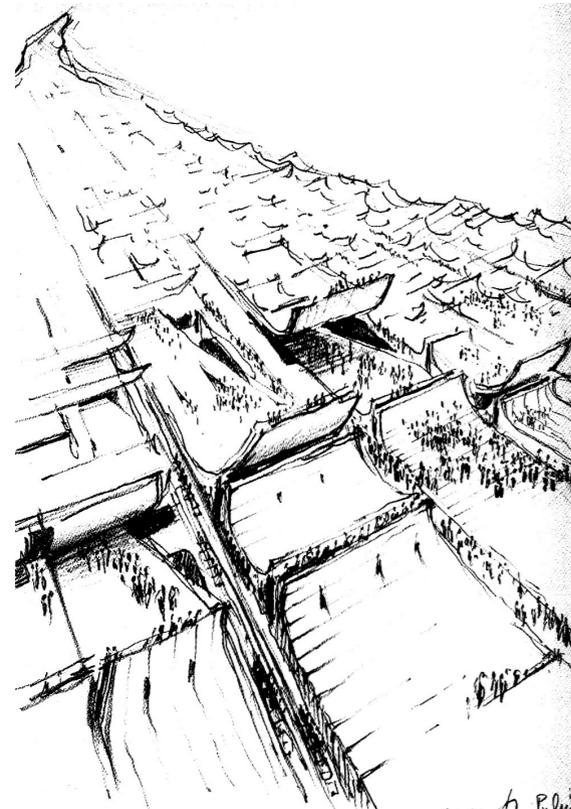
## Architecture Principe: Inhabitable Circulation

Another group contesting modernist urban planning principles was Architecture Principe. The members, Claude Parent and Paul Virilio, implemented their theory of a sloping city, a city based on the 'function of the oblique'. With the oblique city, Architecture Principe sought an alternative to the vertical spatial dimension, as they felt that successions of these verticalities were attempts at social conquest. They viewed the oblique to be the third spatial order, with the horizontal spatial order of 19th century England and the vertical spatial order of Manhattan being the first and second. In his essay, The Mediated City, Virilio questions the identity of aboveground, inhabitable structures which are seen by urban planners as merely a 'means of storage' with the primary definition being their occupation density. Virilio maintains that it is the building's relation to the ground which can alter this characteristic, and that the ground between two verticalities cannot just be regarded as a 'watershed' of residual space. "It can no longer be the 'plinth of verticality', it must become the 'axial line' of the architectonic exercise. While vertical erection had just three possibilities – 1, raising, 2, elongating, 3,

shifting – the oblique 'surrection' offers a host of possibilities through its gradients and their countless combinations"(Virilio in Brayer, Migayrou & Nanjo 2005:112). The search for the 'in-between' led to the development of 'mediate' spaces: folding and tilting structures which were both circulatory and inhabitable, providing layers of uses which could change according to the needs of the masses and the time. "Overcoming and liberating are thus shown to be the basic terms of the new urbanisation."(Virilio in Brayer, Migayrou & Nanjo 2005:112)

The oblique city was an attempt to stem the growing feelings of restriction and alienation of the postwar 1960's, a phenomenon which is now the norm within most of the South African built environment. The incline was seen as the medium of unrestricted spatial continuity, lending the route freedom and the gathering spontaneity.

"The incline precedes the human fluidity of the future, based on autonomous flight. It is a gesture of linkage with space."(Parent in Brayer, Migayrou & Nanjo 2005:111)



Figure 20

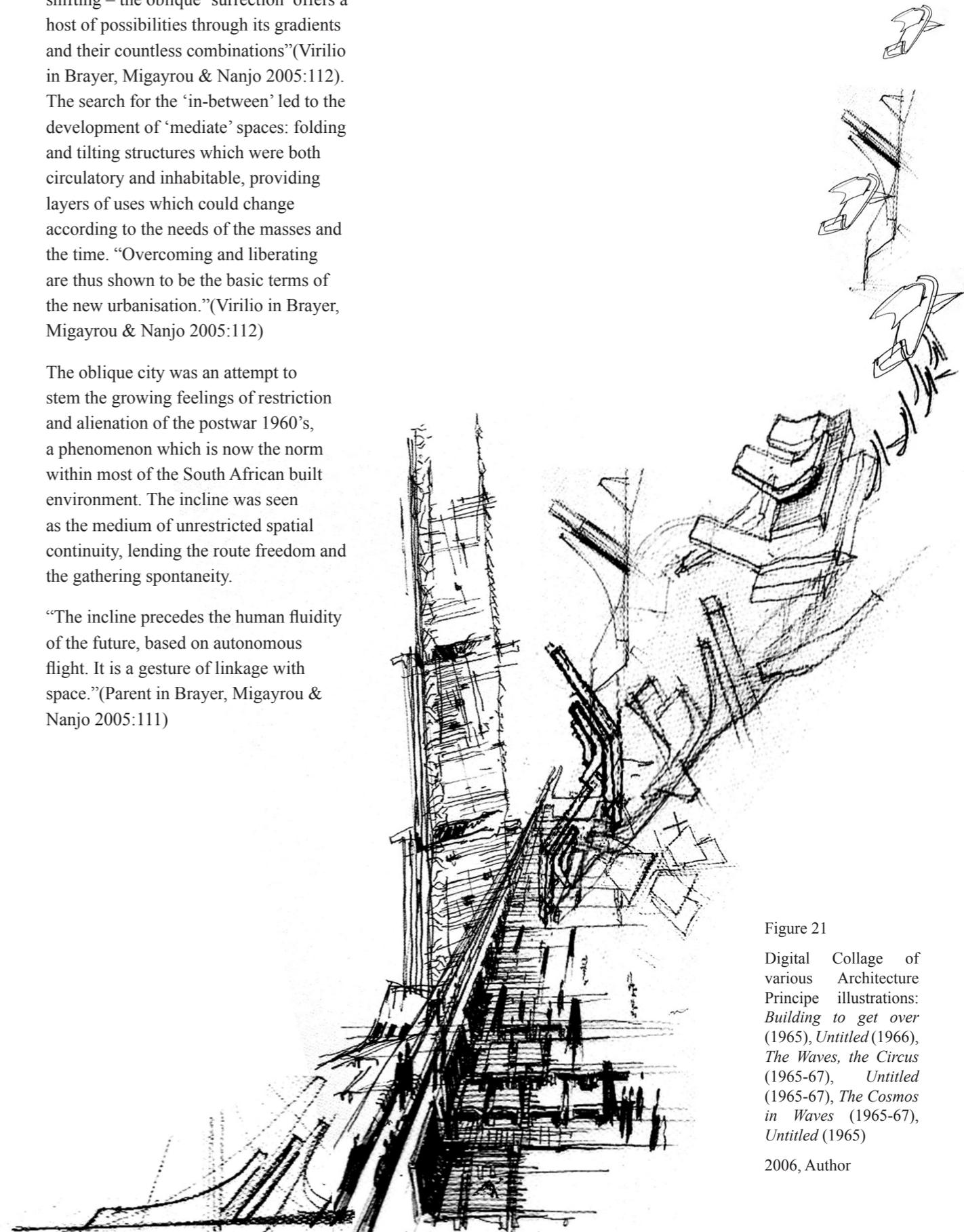*Human Impulse*, 1966, pencil paper, 299.7 x 21 cm



Figure 21

Digital Collage of various Architecture Principe illustrations: *Building to get over* (1965), *Untitled* (1966), *The Waves, the Circus* (1965-67), *Untitled* (1965-67), *The Cosmos in Waves* (1965-67), *Untitled* (1965)

2006, Author

Figure 22

Jonathan Borofsky, *Man Walking to the Sky in front of the Fridericianum during documenta 9*, Kassel, 1992, Fiberglass , aluminium, and ainted steel Pole: 24m long, Man: 198 x 141 x 55cm



## Psychogeography Revisited

Although the theories of the Situationists, the New Babylon project and Oblique City have been cited as a result of their time of fruition corresponding to that of the New Brutalists, it is interesting to note that this line of artistic and urban thought is on the rise of late.

While they may not be as influential as the Situationists nor as fanciful as Architecture Principe, contemporary artists are giving us their interpretations of urbanism, and casting new light on the concepts of *psychogeography* and our *society of spectacle*.

Figure 23

*Instructions for A, B, and C; C for Tuning, A for Humming, B for Whistling*, 2001, pencil and type on paper, 28 x 20.9 cm



Figure 24

*Zócalo* (Mexico City, 1999) is a 12 hour video documentary showing the progression of a flagpole's shadow over the city's main public square. The film reveals how chance encounters can be percieved as sculptural situations.

## Francis Alÿs

Francis Alÿs was trained as an architect in Europe but soon became more interested in how we inhabit spaces on a more subversive level. He has lived and worked in Mexico City for the past 15 years and draws inspiration from the city's chaotic, sensuous and sometimes brutal streets. Exploring forms of anonymity is one of the chief concerns of the artist. "Precisely in opposition to the modern ideal of individualism, a state of anonymity provides an escape from historically determined cultural identities and prescribed social behaviours."(Matsui 2005:14) Alÿs derives his initial concepts for projects from the simple activity of strolling through the city. Through walking spontaneously through a city, he constantly tries to situate himself in a moving environment. By coupling these strolls with a simple narrative, Alÿs attempts to displace his usual identity within a public space.

For *The Collector* (Mexico City, 1991-92) a small magnetic dog on wheels was dragged through the city. As Alÿs walked, the toy dog gradually built up a coat of the city's metallic debris. *Paradox of Praxis* (Mexico City, 1997) documents the observation that "sometimes making

something leads to nothing."(XXX) For this project, he pushed an enormous block of ice through the city streets until it had completely melted, leaving nothing but an evaporating trail of moisture behind it. For *The Leak* (Ghent, 1995) he roamed the streets with a punctured can of paint, leaving behind him a Pollock-like trail leading curious pedestrians to an art gallery in which he exhibited the empty can.

Something reminiscent of the Situationist's nomadic wondering is the investigation of the discontinuity between physical and mental space. In *Narcotourism* (Copenhagen, 1996) Alÿs walked through the city for seven days while being under the influence of a different drug each day. While the theme of anonymity and introspection are synonymous with Alÿs' work, he also documents the unexpected urban occurrences which lead to public interaction. Indeed, as the adjacent image reflects, Alÿs views the chance encounter and other minor anecdotes as the makers of urban life. In *Zocalo* (Mexico City, 1999) he documents in a twelve hour video the chance interaction between strangers seeking shade in a crowded city.

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## Glexis Novoa

Of particular relevance regarding the impact of the functionalist utopias imagined during the Modern Movement is the work of Glexis Novoa. This Cuban born artist witnessed first hand how the ideals of revolutionary Stalinist architecture degenerated into a dystopian nightmare of anonymous housing projects: dehumanized and oppressive. In his work, he often reflects how these architectural icons have become as hollow as the revolutionary slogans he once knew in Cuba. Drawing on this experience, he offers us startling lessons in appropriation. In one painting, he depicts squatters occupying the Statue of Liberty and in another, a Gothic Cathedral has been converted into an industrial warehouse.

In the depiction of his imagined bland and nondescript future cities, such as *From Murano Grande* (2002), Novoa shares Koolhaas' prediction of the generic city, one that could be anywhere, its culture and identity lost to globalization.

"The cityscapes seem ostensibly prosperous – the buildings are tall, the streets are clean – but are entirely devoid of life. There is not a single soul on the streets." (Gallo 2005:228)

Figure 25

*From Murano Grande*, 2002, graphite on travertine marble, 91.4 x 304.8 cm

## Simon Evans

The work of the two graphic artists featured on this page is, of all the work listed in this document, the most reminiscent of Guy Debord's *Psychogeographic Guide to Paris.*

A dominant theme in Simon Evans' work is a critique of the mundane functionality of everyday life, as well as the visual systems that we have invented to structure it. In *The World* (2003), Evans depicts a directory of the terrain of his own consciousness, "a spatial guide to the artist's own private purgatory."(Molon 2005:98)

Much of his other work involves the process of obsessive list making. In *1000 Smiles* (2003), Evans strips down a fundamentally human characteristic to an anonymous statistic. Through the process of self-defeating list-making, Evans investigates "the futility and absurdity of our many attempts to limit or define the boundaries of the staggering complexity of human endeavor."(Molon 2005:98)



Figure 26

*The World*, 2003,
mixed media on paper,
162.6 x 221 cm

## Stanley Donwood

The graphic artist of the band *Radiohead* built on the psychogeographic mapping tradition with his package design of the 2003 album *Hail to the Thief.* Based in Los Angeles during production, Donwood drew inspiration from the city's omnipresent road network and traffic signs. Similar to Evans, the result was an imagined city, a map built up of real and imagined observations and experiences, documenting his own personal purgatory.



Figure 27

Poster in *Radiohead:
Hail to the Thief -
Special Edition,* 2003,
70 x 48 cm

Conclusion

Although all the ideas that have been mentioned emerged from a general dissatisfaction with the Modern Movement, each theory's uniqueness is evident. While the influence of the New Brutalists in South Africa resulted in an add-on to Functionalism, the Situationists approached the dilemma from the perspective of human endeavor (a fact which can probably be attributed to their non-architectural inclination). The New Brutalists focused on solving the problem of mundane existence brought about by architecture with architecture, while the Situationists sought the solution with the concepts of *psychogeography* and *détourne*. It is for this reason that the concepts of the Situationists, Constant Niewenhuis, Architecture Principe, Superstudio as well as the contemporary artists listed will be utilized to support the "anti-functional" argument.

As mentioned before, this "anti-functional" will be used in conjunction with the existing (functional) built environment of Sunnyside. The process of its urban implementation will be discussed in the following section.